

Administrator's Update for 7/13/11
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Charlotte County is one of a few gulf coast communities selected to participate in renewable energy discussions at the White House next week. Two staff members and one commissioner will attend a special morning session and then the Gulf Coast Sustainable Economies roundtable event. The purpose of the roundtable discussion is to share local success stories, discuss best practices and opportunities, and to connect local leaders with resources. The event was organized by the Clean Economy Development Center, which also organized the Clean Energy Roadshow last fall.

Emergency management

The Charlotte County emergency management division has been conducting meet-n-greet sessions at the Charlotte County Libraries. These sessions provide a venue for the public to visit one-on-one and ask questions in a quiet setting. Printed materials are available and a display educates attendees on the purpose and advantages of the new evacuation zone markers. The next meet-n-greet session will be held at 1:00 p.m. on July 14 at the Mid-County Regional Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd. Port Charlotte.

The new evacuation zone markers are colored markers placed on the post of strategically-located Stop signs throughout the county. So far the emergency management division, along with extensive help from volunteers, has installed 4500 markers out of 6000 in Charlotte County. CC-TV has produced an educational video about the evacuation zone markers—the video is available for viewing anytime at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com.

Snowbird classic impact

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor and Convention Bureau reports that economic impact data from the month-long Snowbird Baseball Classic, held at various ballparks throughout Charlotte County, has been released. Twenty-three Division III schools and two Division I colleges participated in the third annual event, held Feb. 24 through March 20, 2011, which included a Division I game at the Charlotte Sports Park. The event generated an estimated \$3.8 million in direct expenditures as a result of the 4,054 out-of-state participants, spectators and members of the media who occupied 3,200 hotel room nights. These visitors also generated an estimated \$268,000 in state sales tax revenue.

Our Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau had applied for a \$10,000 grant from the Florida Sports Foundation, which was awarded and allocated to the tournament. The grant offset the cost of marketing, equipment rental, a portion of the site fees, and baseballs for the 2011 tournament.

Thanks to the tournament's overwhelming success, several Division I teams have already committed to the 2012 Snowbird Baseball Classic. These teams include Miami of Ohio, Michigan State, Ohio State, St. Louis University, University of Michigan, Western Michigan and Xavier University.

Bridge replacements

The Board of County Commissioners recently approved the award of contracts for the removal and replacement of three Charlotte County bridges: the Melbourne Street bridge at the tidal creek; the Elkcam North bridge where US41 North Access Road crosses the Elkcam Waterway; and the Elkcam

South bridge where US41 South Access Road crosses the Elkcam Waterway. Next steps for these projects include meetings with the firms to discuss construction schedules and scheduling public meetings. Each project will have a public meeting prior to starting construction so that residents are informed about the projects before any roadways are closed.