

Weekly Update from Administration for 11/09/11
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

We are continuing to identify and improve processes to be more efficient and improve customer service. To that end, our community development department has now added another service to help businesses—online application and payment for the Additional Signage permit. In conjunction with the changes to the regulations surrounding additional signage allowed, the department has developed the service to apply for and pay for this application online. Go to <https://www2.charlottefl.com/citizenaccess/> and click “Apply for An Additional Signage Permit.” All correspondence with the department, including issuance of the permit will be done via e-mail removing the need for business owners to take the time to visit the department.

Paving program update

The contractor has completed paving operations in the Greater Port Charlotte, Manasota Key, and Road and Bridge districts. The total amount of asphalt placed in these districts is 46,249 tons. The contractor has completed the repairs on Peachland Boulevard, although the repairs ran longer than anticipated due to rain. In the Manasota Key and Road & Bridge districts, the restoration process has begun and is currently ongoing. The contractor has mobilized into the Tropical Gulf Acres MSBU and started the reclamation and paving operations. Approximately 60 percent of the contracted work has been completed.

Dick Loftus bridge

In October the Board of County Commissioners approved a resolution dedicating the new Melbourne Bridge to Dick Loftus in recognition for his service to the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Mr. Loftus was appointed to the first Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee in 1992 by the Board of County Commissioners. He served as chairman on the Advisory Committee from 1996 thru 2006, when he resigned from the committee to further his service to the community as an elected official. Charlotte County currently has four bridges named for individuals: Tom Adams, Emil R. Swepston MD, Michael Kosinski; and Anne Merry.

Crash drill

Charlotte County Fire/EMS station number 7, at the Charlotte County Airport, conducted an aircraft crash exercise on Nov. 1, 2011. This exercise is to comply with FAA rules which require one exercise every 3 years as to aircraft emergencies. The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, Punta Gorda Fire/EMS, and four area hospitals were among the entities that collaborated on the exercise. This exercise allows the department to evaluate the skills and proficiencies of the aircraft firefighting personnel. It also evaluates the response and resources to provide emergency care for a large incident involving 50 or more patients who are injured.

Cemetery history

At the end of October, the Charlotte County Historical Center held a walking tour event at the Indian Spring Cemetery. “Tales of Indian Spring Cemetery: A Hauntingly Historical Walking Tour” was sold out and a huge success. Families enjoyed an educational walking tour of the cemetery, which is rich with history. This annual event is an excellent opportunity to learn about our county's past.

Veterans stand down

Our veteran services division held the seventh annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down. Thirty-nine homeless veterans attended the event and received a hot meal, non-perishable food items, new clothing, haircuts, flu shots, medical and mental health exams, sleeping bags, toiletries and other essential items. This event was provided in partnership with over 22 community partners who provided volunteer labor, in-kind services and monetary donations.