

**Administrator's Update for 3/14/12**  
**By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator**

At the end of February Charlotte County community services held a dedication ceremony at the main pavilion on Englewood Beach. The main pavilion was dedicated in honor of Lt. Col Samuel Harris for his contributions to Charlotte County. Approximately 60 people were in attendance at this "Remembering Sam" celebration, including family, friends and community leaders. Speakers included the honoree's son, Carter Harris; Englewood Sun Reporter, poet and friend, Steve Riley; personal longtime friend, Bonnie Elliot; Charlotte County Commissioner Robert Skidmore; Parks and Recreation advisory board chair, Bill Dryburgh; and Charlotte County Community Services Director, John Jackson.

**New website, new look**

Our information technology division and public information office have been working on a new look and feel for our website. The first few pages of this substantial project are available to view and links are available for sending feedback. I invite you to give it a try and send us your thoughts via the feedback link. The new website and survey are available via links from the current website, [www.CharlotteCountyFL.com](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.com), or go directly to the new website, [www.CharlotteCountyFL.GOV](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.GOV). As we continue to develop the new site, we need your input to help us provide the best services through the online portal.

**Storm-ready county**

Our office of emergency management has scheduled Skywarn Weather Spotter Training for residents and the director has made his required biennial visit to the Tampa Bay Weather Office in Ruskin. These items completed our requirements for a four-year extension of our "Storm-Ready County" designation by the weather service. All counties and many cities and universities complete a detailed application to achieve this label of being better prepared.

**Trench rescue course**

Charlotte County Fire/EMS hosted a trench rescue course last week. This 40-hour course includes extensive field exercises to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct basic trench rescue operations. An overview of OSHA regulations for excavations and trenching is covered, as well as hands on training in shoring systems, hazard recognition and control methods, soil classification and mechanics, types of collapses, and patient care considerations. This type of training is funded through a homeland security grant for members of the department's light technical rescue team and other department teams within the area.

**Transit applications online**

The transportation disadvantaged and medicaid transportation applications used for Sunshine Ride by our Charlotte County human services' transit division are now available on our current website. Visit [www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/HumanServices](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/HumanServices) and click Transportation Services. Existing and potential new clients can download the applications. This new feature enables clients to have immediate access to the applications for quicker approval time and will also save transit staff time and postage fees.

**New LIHEAP location**

Our Charlotte County human services' family services division has now established a new LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) outreach office site in Punta Gorda through a partnership with the Punta Gorda Housing Authority. Citizens that reside in Punta Gorda may access this service on Wednesday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon at 340 Gulf Breeze Avenue, Punta Gorda. For more information and to make an appointment through our human services department please call 833-6500.

### **Tourism numbers**

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor and Convention Bureau has collected economic impact data for the 2012 IFDS Disabled Sailing World Championships which were held in Charlotte Harbor for nine days this past January. The event generated \$460,789 in direct expenditures for Charlotte County. It attracted 77 competitors on 44 boats from twelve countries. Approximately 115 family and friends attended, in addition to 24 coaches, fifteen officials and seven out-of-town members of the media, utilizing 504 hotel rooms.