

**Administrator's Update for 4/18/12**  
**By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator**

I was very pleased to hear that for the eleventh consecutive month, Charlotte County Tourist Development Tax collections, commonly referred as bed tax, have increased versus the same period last year. For the month of February, bed tax collections were up 8.4 percent over 2011 and, year-to-date, collections are up 15 percent. When visitors stay overnight in accommodations such as hotels, resorts, condominiums, or RV parks for six months or less, they are charged five percent Tourist Development Tax (TDT) on top of the seven percent sales tax. Sixty percent of the TDT is allocated to fund the operations of the Charlotte Harbor Visitor and Convention Bureau and promote Charlotte County as a vacation, meetings and sporting destination. A portion of that allocation also funds operations at Stump Pass Beach State Park and beach renourishments, with the remaining 40 percent funding the bond for renovations at Charlotte Sports Park.

**Projects are progressing**

On March 27, 2012 the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved to advance funds for the Charlotte Harbor Gateway Harbor Walk (CHCRA). This project provides recreational opportunities at the harbor's edge, including a fishing pier, boat launch, pedestrian plaza and bathroom facilities, all in keeping with "old Florida" architecture style. The CHCRA is currently awaiting approval from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Upon FDOT approval, we will proceed with Requests for Proposal.

Earlier in March the BCC chose design options for the Burnt Store Road widening project (phase 3): future widening to the inside, two six-foot sidewalks on each side of the roadway, and standard lighting. The design consultant has begun the design process based on BCC decisions, and we anticipate 30 percent design plans in the middle of May.

**Helping kids**

A big thank you goes to the Tampa Bay Rays for donating \$1050 towards the summer camp scholarship program "Kids Camp Connection." Kid's Camp Connection is a scholarship program for the Charlotte County community services summer day camp. The program helps children who cannot participate during the summer months because his or her parents cannot afford the fee. To help eliminate this circumstance, community services reaches out to raise money to provide financial assistance for as many Charlotte County children as possible, so they may experience all of the wonderful benefits summer camp has to offer. If you have any questions about the Kid's Camp Connection or would like to make a donation please call 941.627.1628.

**Try Transit Day**

Once again we have teamed up with area agencies to take part in the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Commuter Services "Taking it to the Streets!" program for the month of April. The program encourages the community to save money on gas and travel and improve health by using alternative modes of transportation including walking, biking, and public transportation. Through FDOT's Commuter Services website, [CommuterServicesFL.com](http://CommuterServicesFL.com), citizens can get registered, find information on transportation choices, sign up for carpool/vanpool ride-matching and get help with Trip Track.