

**Administrator's Update for 8/14/13**  
**By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator**

As the school year begins, county staff is working to make preparations throughout the community. A public works maintenance and operations crew installed new bicycle racks at nine school bus stops located throughout South Gulf Cove as requested by the area's advisory committee (and paid for by the MSBU).

The facilities and construction maintenance staff focused on library maintenance in anticipation of the school year. Technicians went through each library to ensure proper lighting and addressing plumbing and electrical issues, and ensured all automatic and handicap doors are functioning properly. Repairs were made to faulty lighting fixtures in book drop off areas and parking lots, as well as to air conditioning systems. The libraries are well prepared to welcome the students back as they start the new school year. Watch their calendar for some back-to-school open houses in the libraries that will help parents and teachers discover what is available for homework help.

**Dredging update**

Several dredging projects around the county are in the construction phase. The Buena Vista Waterway maintenance dredging contract was awarded on July 23, 2013 and construction will begin Sept. 5, 2013. The northwest Port Charlotte exterior channel dredging project will provide new access channels into the waterway system and connect to the Myakka River navigation channel. Construction began in July 2013 and will continue through January 2014—currently the contractors are dredging in the Apollo Waterway. Dredging is also underway for the Suncoast Waterway maintenance project and will continue through February 2014.

**Volunteers needed**

The Charlotte County library and historical division is always in need of volunteers and we have something for every interest. The new historical archive at the Englewood Library needs volunteers to help process and receive materials. The Historical Center on Bayshore Road needs volunteers to process and digitize materials to preserve our history. All of the county libraries need help shelving, making phone calls, staffing the book stores, greeting people and helping with many other tasks. Call 941.613.3201 or visit any library or the Historical Center for more information.

**Team effort at the visitor center**

The former Southwest Florida Visitor Center at Jones Loop Road and I-75 will now be operated by the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Charlotte County, Englewood and North Port Chambers of Commerce and our tourism development department, the Charlotte County Visitor and Convention Bureau. Area realtors have volunteered to staff the visitor center each day from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. although the center will be open 24 hours a day as it is contiguous with a convenience store. The initial arrangement for the operation of the center is for four months. If all goes well, the lease will be extended for a year.