

## **Administrator's Update for 12/4/13**

### **By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator**

On the Saturday before Thanksgiving, the second annual Tippecanoe Trail and Mud Run was held at Tippecanoe environmental park. Over 250 people of all ages ran through mud and tackled obstacles such as a ten foot wall. Organized by Charlotte County community services, the event included a 5K and 10K slippery obstacle course constructed within the environmental park with no permanent effects to the natural habitats. The participants had to climb through the weaving spider webs, scale a vertical wall, jump or crawl under hurdles, scramble up a cargo climb, slip down the waters slide and crawl through the mud pit. Awards for participants in their age groups were customized military-style dog tags instead of traditional medals and overall winners received slate plaques and cash awards. At the conclusion of the race the participants were treated to a pulled pork lunch. Next year's third annual event is already scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 22, 2014—save the date!

### **Tourist tax revenue is up**

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) has reported that tourist development tax (TDT) revenues collected during fiscal year 2012 to 2013 totaled \$2,533,627. This number is an increase of 6 percent over the prior Fiscal Year 2011-2012. Even more significant is that it is a record amount—since the VCB's inception in 1997, this is the most TDT revenues Charlotte County has collected in one fiscal year. TDT is a tax paid by visitors when accommodations are rented, including hotel rooms, short-term housing rentals, and RV park spaces.

### **Fire/EMS updates**

Recent changes in the child care standards of the Department of Children and Families Florida Administrative Code require fire extinguisher training for childcare facility personnel. To meet the needs of our community, Charlotte County Fire/EMS put together a class which will provide fire extinguisher training tailored to childcare facilities' needs. The first two classes were filled within less than 48 hours of the training announcement. Another class will be held Dec. 10, and another may be scheduled sometime in January based on demand. For more information on the childcare fire extinguisher training class at the Public Safety Complex in Punta Gorda, call Charlotte County Fire/EMS headquarters 941.833.5600 during regular business hours.

Fire Station 6 on Disston Avenue in Punta Gorda is nearing completion of a remodel with only a couple of final inspections remaining. The station is a metal structure built in 1982 and needed refurbishing or replacement of air conditioning systems, plumbing, lighting, and interior and some exterior details. Once the contractor is completed, furniture will be placed back in, telephone and computers connected, and radio equipment installed. The station has been closed since the late spring of this year, with personnel redistributed to other stations to help with the extra coverage. Fire Station 6 is projected to reopen later this month.

### **Parkside Fall Festival a team effort**

In mid-November several county departments participated in the 2013 Parkside Fall Festival and co-sponsored the event with Team Parkside. The second annual festival drew 600 people this year. Community services organized the Kids Zone providing games, face painting, and balloon sculptures, and 4-H booth. The kids also enjoyed the Touch-a-Truck display, made possible in part by the Charlotte County Fire/EMS, the public works department and Waste Management. The Port Charlotte Public Library provided books to children at no cost. Master Gardeners were also present as were the Friends of the Port Charlotte Library. Despite a wet start, the event was a success and all who attended enjoyed a great community event.