

Administrator's Update for 3/4/15
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Last Friday the Charlotte County Historical Center held a historical marker dedication ceremony for the Lieutenant Carl Bailey Cemetery. The marker dedication was scheduled during Black History Month, to honor the many African-American leaders and residents in the cemetery. Among the more than 85 attendees at the ceremony were re-enactors of the 2nd infantry regiment, United States Colored Troops from Tallahassee; Commissioner Chris Constance; Punta Gorda Mayor Carolyn Freeland and Vice-Mayor Kim Devine; and Dr. Martha Bireda from the Blanchard House Museum of African-American History and Culture of Charlotte County.

The cemetery is located on Scott Avenue in Punta Gorda and was previously named "Cleveland Cemetery." It was re-named the Lieutenant Carl Bailey Cemetery in 1957 in honor of Lt. Carl A. Bailey, who served as a jet fighter pilot in the United States Air Force during the Korean War. Lieutenant Bailey's parents, along with most of the Bailey family, are buried in this cemetery.

The historical marker placed at the cemetery is one of many throughout Charlotte County. Other current sites include the Charlotte County Courthouse, the Cookie House, the site of Hotel Punta Gorda, the site of the Myakka River Civil War Skirmish, and other cemeteries including Indian Spring Cemetery. The Charlotte County Historical Marker Program recognizes historic resources, persons and events that are significant in architecture, archaeology, Charlotte County history and traditional culture. The placement of historical markers and plaques at sites increases public awareness of the rich cultural heritage of the county, encourages historic preservation, and enhances the enjoyment of the local historic sites.

A historical marker starts with an application submitted to the Historical Advisory Committee through the historical center, where the application is reviewed for completeness. The Historical Markers Subcommittee then reviews each complete application for historical accuracy and merit, compliance with adopted criteria, and then makes its recommendation for approval or disapproval to the Historical Advisory Committee. The established cost of each Charlotte County Historical Marker is paid by the applicant, unless a marker award is approved. The cost varies from \$1500 to \$2500. For more information contact the Charlotte County Historical Center at 941.629.7278

Indian Spring Cemetery Walking Tour March 7

Indian Spring Cemetery is another historical marker site and coming up this weekend is the annual walking tour "Tales of Indian Spring Cemetery" from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 7. Located off Taylor Road in Punta Gorda, the 40-acre cemetery is Charlotte County's second oldest public cemetery, with the first interment recorded in 1886. Historians from the Charlotte County Historical Center will host the tour along the cemetery paths as guests 'meet' local historical characters including Marshal John Bowman, Mary Lula Sandlin, and Joel Bean. Please call the Charlotte County Historical Center at 941.629.7278 for ticket information.

Opportunity: Government Academy

The registration deadline for the next Charlotte County Government Academy is this Friday, March 6. The Government Academy is a series of four half-day workshops scheduled for 8:00 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. on March 11 and 18 in locations throughout the county. Charlotte County Government Academy provides opportunities to learn about the various departments under the Board of County Commissioners. Registration forms are available in county buildings, online www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov, or sign up by phone: 941.623.1092.