

Charlotte County update for 2/24/16

## **Smoke testing in Parkside to begin March 1**

By Raymond Sandrock, Charlotte County Administrator

The Charlotte County Utilities Department will conduct smoke testing of the sewer system in the Parkside Community Redevelopment Area from March 1 through March 24. Door hangers will be distributed in the areas to be tested one to three days before the tests.

Smoke testing is conducted by forcing a non-toxic, artificially-created smoke into sewer pipes. The smoke will reveal places where sewer pipes have been compromised, including cracks in private sewer lines that might need to be repaired. Homeowners will be notified if a problem is identified in the sewer line connected to their homes.

The smoke does not create a fire hazard and is not harmful to humans, pets, food or household items, such as furniture, clothing or drapery. It does not leave a residue or stain and has a discreet scent. Smoke should exhaust through homes' vent stacks during the testing.

For information, call the Utilities Department at 941.764.4304 or go to [www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov) and click on the smoke testing press release under News & Alerts.

### **Stump Pass**

The county has received approval of its Stump Pass dredging project from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Construction on the project, which includes dredging the pass and constructing a groin system designed to slow beach erosion and lengthen the time between required dredging, is scheduled to begin in August.

On Tuesday, the County Commission approved a resolution requesting an easement from the state covering the upland part of the groin project at Stump Pass Beach State Park. The \$19.3 million dredging and groin system are part of the county's 10-year beach and inlet management plan, which is funded through an assessment on properties within two Stump Pass taxing units. The county is seeking state funding, as well. Sand dredged from the pass will be used to renourish beaches on Knight and Don Pedro islands south of the pass. Additional sand taken from offshore will be used to augment the sand dredged from the pass.

### **Rays report**

Tampa Bay Rays pitchers, catchers and staff reported for spring training at the Charlotte Sports Park last week. For the sixth year, the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau welcomed media covering the event by sponsoring the spring training opening press conference lunch. The event was attended by about 50 members of the media and Rays staff and provided an opportunity to reconnect with members of the media and remind them of what there is to do in Charlotte County.

For more on Rays spring training, check out the original CC-TV News You Can Use feature Rays Game Day on-demand at [CharlotteCountyFL.com/cctv](http://CharlotteCountyFL.com/cctv) or on CC-TV's YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/CharlotteCounty](http://www.youtube.com/user/CharlotteCounty).

### **Senior Games**

The Community Services Department has extended registration for the 2016 Fit For Life Senior Games until Thursday. This extension covers all events, except tennis, table tennis and pickleball. The competition runs from March 1 to March 27. The games are sanctioned by the Florida Sports Foundation and serve as a qualifier for the Florida Senior Games State Championships.

For information, call 941.625.7529 or go to [www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov). Click on Parks/Pools under Popular Links.

### **Historical marker**

County commissioners will dedicate the Hickory Bluff Cemetery historical marker at 10 a.m., Thursday. The marker honors the third of only three known African-American cemeteries maintained by the county. Located at 4051 Rowland Drive off Harborview Road, the Hickory Bluff Cemetery was established in the late 1800s, adjacent to land owned by July Roberts, an early African-American settler.

Initial burials include freed African-American slaves who settled in the area and engaged in farming and fishing. Burial records prior to 1908 were undocumented and the last recorded burial was in 1947, although there were burials in unmarked graves as late as the 1950s.

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