

Administrator's Update for 12/11/13
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

I'd like to introduce our new permitting/development ombudsman in the community development department, Don Jascomb. This special position is intended to assist with customer-service type issues relating to the permitting and land development processes and recommend improvements to those processes. The ombudsman is also here to help with outreach to keep the residents and development community up-to-date on things that are happening in the community development department.

The Charlotte County ombudsman is an advocate or problem solver that helps facilitate various types of permits or permit approvals for what can often be complex regulatory issues. This means that when the manager identifies an issue that the ombudsman can help solve, he is assigned to the task of researching the situation and facilitating a solution to the issue. This can include anything from a backyard storage sheds, swimming pools, pool cages, fences, and tree removal to single family and commercial building permits or large scale development. If assigned to the ombudsman, he will assemble an in-house team of staff experts whenever needed in community development to help solve the problem.

Don is originally from the Atlanta area and moved to southwest Florida two years ago. He has a background in city/county planning and was the development division director in a suburban Atlanta county for 14 years. He has extensive experience with resolving customer service complaints, implementing new land development and building regulations, implementing customer service improvements and educating the public about regulations. Please join me in welcoming Don Jascomb.

15th Annual Santa Firehouse Pancake Breakfasts

For fifteen years Charlotte County Fire/EMS has held these wonderful holiday events, welcoming the community into the firehouses for firehouse and apparatus tours, fire safety education, and a great social time filled with fun and excitement. A pancake breakfast starts at 9:00 a.m. with sausage and pancake fixings, and Santa arrives on a fire engine. Breakfast ends when the food is gone but Santa and his elves are guaranteed to stay until each and every child has the opportunity to talk with Santa. Charlotte County Fire/EMS department is very fortunate to have Englewood Community Hospital and Fawcett Memorial Hospital sponsor these events.

This year's breakfasts are from 9 to 11 a.m. on two different days. Friday, Dec. 20 the event will be held at Charlotte County Fire/EMS Station 4, 13600 Marathon Boulevard in Gulf Cove. The second breakfast is on Monday, Dec. 23 at Charlotte County Fire/EMS Station 12, 2001 Luther Road, Deep Creek. Reservations are needed for both events—please call Charlotte County Fire/EMS Headquarters at 941.833.5600.

Holidays on the Harbor and in the Parks

There are a lot of special events happening during this season, put on by community services at our recreation centers and parks.

Starting at dusk on Friday, Dec. 13 is the annual Holiday on the Harbor event. Santa arrives at Bayshore Live Oak Park. The community gathers on chairs or blankets to watch a movie and enjoy performances by Charlotte High School Band and Punta Gorda Middle School Jazz Band at this free event. Vendors will be on site with refreshments.

Two Santa's Candy Land events will be held on Dec. 14 at the Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center, 4500 Harbor Boulevard, Port Charlotte. The Adaptive Santa's Candy Land event will be from 1 to 2 p.m. for children with disabilities and their families. The Santa's Candy Land event will be from 5:30 to 8 p.m. At both of these free events there will be beautiful holiday decorations, music, games and activities for the kids, plus a photo opportunity for your camera with Santa.