

Charlotte County Weekly Update for 5/30/08 by Roger Baltz

County Commissioners and staff have been involved in a series of budget review meetings over the past week. A department by department review is occurring in order to address preparing the budget for the coming year.

We are very pleased to report that one of our Building and Construction Services (BCS) employees, Julia Galofre, Plans Examiner, has received certification in Green Construction from the Florida Green Building Coalition. We understand that she is one of the first in Southwest Florida to receive this certification. Green building encourages energy efficiencies and environmentally responsible.

The proposed extension of the existing 1% local option sales tax has officially been placed on the August 26 ballot. If your community group would like more information on the proposed projects, funding or past sales tax projects, please give us a call (941.743.1944) and we will be happy to provide a speaker for your group.

Our Sea Grant agent, Betty Staugler learned this week that she is the recipient of two awards from the Florida Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals (FANREP). The FANREP Awards of Excellence Program fosters high standards among its members and helps expand the use of high quality, innovative educational materials and programs by honoring the outstanding members and partners who developed them. The Sea Grant agent will receive the Individual Program Leadership Award for her work coordinating the mangrove restoration project in Charlotte Harbor. The second award, for the Kid's Redfish Cup tracking website, will be shared with County employees Kristy Hanlon and Roger DeBruler from Environmental Services and Raju Gopinath and Kevin Edwards from GIS.

Mosquito Control operations is now using its new heliport on Burnt Store Road. This heliport is located next to the salt marsh which is a huge breeding habitat for mosquitoes. Having the heliport located in close proximity to the treatment zone increases efficiency and productivity.

The Tampa Bay Rays Baseball organization sponsored a worker appreciation day at the Charlotte County Stadium on Friday. This was to recognize the workers for keeping the construction project on time and for having no workplace accidents. The Sports Stadium project continues to move forward and we are looking forward to major league spring baseball returning to Charlotte County.

We just completed our annual Hurricane Caravan. This event reaches thousands of county residents to remind them to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season, which begins on June 1.

Charlotte County, through our Veterans Services office, hosted a community forum on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). A leading authority on PTSD spoke to a crowd of approximately 140, which included local and state officials, law enforcement and health care providers, as well as veterans and their families.

Charlotte County employees have been recognized by United Way for being in the top three companies for giving this year.