

Administrator's Update 10/17/2008
By Roger Baltz

This past week our Economic Development director, Don Root, attended a World Pharmaceutical Convention. He met with several prospective companies, a few of which showed interest in possible relocation to the Charlotte County area. We will continue to work with these companies by providing additional information and by offering incentives to encourage them to set up business here.

Through the conservation efforts of County staff and electrical upgrades by our Facilities Department, the County has reduced electricity consumption 2,138,000 KWH over the previous year's usage. Thus far we have realized a savings of over \$532,000 on our electric bills. We estimate that next year we could see an additional \$280,000 savings.

Our Utilities and Facilities departments have been coordinating closely regarding our Charlotte Sports Complex project. Once renovations are completed in January 2009, the site will be connecting to the regional reclaimed water line that we recently installed along SR-776. This will enable the use of reclaimed water for irrigation of the Complex's 115 acres, helping to conserve our groundwater and drinking water supplies. The Complex could use up to 100,000 gallons of water per day once it is fully operational.

Our County Public Works department has completed the installation of 165 sabal palms in the medians on Veterans Boulevard. The project involved planting the trees between Murdock Circle and Peachland Boulevard. Funding for the work was provided by the Native Tree Fund and no ad valorem taxes were used.

A year-long transition from the Charlotte-Glades Library System to the Charlotte County Library System concluded on Sept. 30 when Charlotte and Glades Counties ended a 32 year relationship to provide public library services. The Glades County Public Library joined DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties in the new Heartland Library Cooperative on Oct. 1. The move to the Heartland Cooperative allows Glades to join with other similar rural, central Florida counties to provide public library services to its residents. Charlotte County citizens will not see any major changes in library services as a result of the change.

Bids have been opened for the stump pass low profile groin field removal. The bids will next go to our County Commissioners for possible award. Our intention is to schedule work to commence in November, 2008 and to be completed no later than the end of December.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management has approved a Scope of Work for our Emergency Management department. The Scope of Work is a list of 12 requirements that must be accomplished in order to receive grant funds.

Maintenance of comprehensive emergency plans, mitigation strategies, emergency housing plans, levels of training and debris management planning are among some of the requirements. A new Scope of Work begins every October 1st with a new list of accomplishments to be completed for the coming year. The grant funds are a vital component of the emergency management operating budget and supports daily operations.

Several of our County firefighters recently participated in a training event at McDill Air Force Base in Tampa. This training enabled the Charlotte County Fire/EMS Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Team to receive their recertification. This group of firefighters handles the unique fire needs of the Charlotte County Airport.

Our County staff is working with the City of Punta Gorda to move forward with actions needed to grant an easement to the City across County owned land. If the easement can be worked out it will be located in the vicinity of Marion Avenue and Nesbitt Street. It will allow the installation of storm water pipes to reduce flooding in the downtown area.

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