

Administrator's Update for 10/23/09
By Roger Baltz

For fiscal year 2009-10, usage at our two mini-transfer and recycling facilities increased an astonishing 78 percent over the prior year. In 2009-10, the facilities had 60,483 visitors. The facilities are open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Our locations are West Charlotte Mini-Transfer Facility, 7070 Environmental Way, Englewood and Mid County Mini-Transfer & Recycling Facility, 19675 Kenilworth Blvd, Port Charlotte.

Our Public Works Department facilitated a meeting between the City of Punta Gorda and the Charlotte County Fire Chiefs to make certain there is a coordinated plan in place when the Venice Canal Bridge closes. The bridge will be replaced and is expected to be closed for six months starting Dec. 1, 2009. The Fire Chiefs reviewed the response history in the area and developed a joint plan for the location of equipment and personnel during the time the bridge is closed.

The Hayward Channel Maintenance Dredge project construction is scheduled to commence in mid October. Notice to mariners and the public have been initiated advising of boat ramp and channel closure due to construction. The dredge project is going to take place in conjunction with the ramp/parking improvement project scheduled to commence at the end of the maintenance dredge. The dredging portion of the contract is scheduled to be complete by Dec. 22, 2009.

Public input for the SmartCharlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan ended on Sept. 30. Over 740 comments were received online via the SmartCharlotte 2050 website. Staff is now preparing the final document for review and possible transmittal to the State Department of Community Affairs for state review.

Our Veteran Services Office has received a \$4,000 grant from the Federal Department of Labor to assist with expenses for the Veteran's Stand Down. This annual event, to be held at the Family Services Center on Oct. 31, 2009, assists homeless veterans with clothing, employment, health care and food.

Library Manager Angie Patteson attended the annual Florida Public Library Director's Conference in Tallahassee. The conference is funded by a grant under the Library Services and Construction Act and featured workshop sessions on providing electronic government services, Internet safety for children and teens, hurricane preparedness and recovery, the new Florida Electronic Library (available through the library's pages at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com) and updates on legislative issues impacting libraries.

Our Growth Management Department is providing interactive workshops for all ages at Charlotte County libraries throughout the month of October. These

workshops, conducted by Planner II Roxann Read, are entitled, "Planning 101," and will feature hands-on planning demonstrations through online planning games, building blocks and Box City. The exercises illustrate land use and planning principles. All citizens are encouraged to attend one of the last two workshops to learn more about planning and discover how they can be involved in the local planning process. Port Charlotte Library hosts on Wednesday, Oct. 21 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. and the Punta Gorda Library will host the last workshop on Wednesday, Oct. 28 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

At the recent Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) October Board Meeting a major milestone was reached when the MPO Board approved the updated Transit Development Plan (TDP). The TDP provides for the necessary planning to facilitate the County's receipt of the required funds to operate the Charlotte County Transit System.

Last week we successfully hosted the Southeastern Outdoor Press Association (SEOPA) annual four-day conference. During the conference, more than 170 members attended educational sessions at the Charlotte County Event and Conference Center.