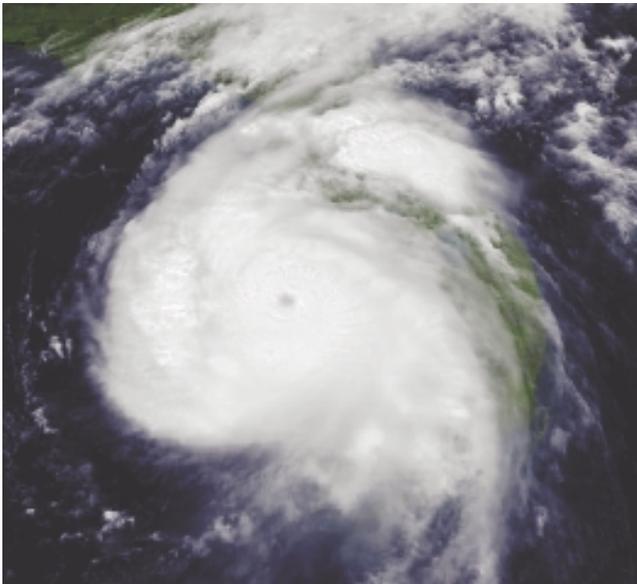




FALL 2004

# ON THE MOVE

A QUARTERLY UPDATE FROM YOUR CITY HALL



*Hurricane Charley approaches the Cape Coral/Fort Myers area.*

## Hurricane Charley

*The storm everyone said could happen, but few believed would, makes landfall in Southwest Florida.*

For years, emergency management planners in Cape Coral have said that it is not a matter of "if" Cape Coral would be impacted by a major hurricane, but rather "when" a storm would occur. The answer arrived in August on Friday the 13th when the City of Cape Coral received its first exposure to the effects of a major hurricane as "Charley" approached the coastline of Southwest Florida.

Cape Coral was not incorporated in 1960 when Hurricane Donna blew through Southwest Florida, the last time this area experienced a direct impact from a hurricane. Hurricane Charley had been projected to be a weak Category 2 hurricane, making landfall in Tampa Bay. However, by late-morning on Friday, Charley had evolved quickly into a frightening Category 4 storm. Even more frightening was Hurricane Charley had made a turn to the east, and the storm pointed squarely at the Cape Coral/Ft. Myers area.

Much to Cape Coral's relief, the storm took a last-minute jog to the north, and the eye of Hurricane Charley missed the city by only 20 miles. Unfortunately, our neighbors in Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte suffered the harshest effects of the storm, and many homes and businesses were devastated by the 140 mph winds as Charley moved through the area.

Within two hours of the storm's passing, City crews were on the street clearing downed trees from the roadways and providing access to emergency vehicles. Utilities workers were repairing breaks in the lines, and powering up generators and lift stations. After a brief break

in service, water and sewer was re-established to customers on City utilities. By Saturday evening, most of the major roads were passable.

LCEC had 500 crews working to restore power to their service area, which includes Cape Coral. Residents received a blunt reminder of our dependency on electricity when nearly a week passed before the lights came back on. While some citizens only lost power for a day, most of Cape Coral suffered without air conditioning for three nights and more. Even though residents slept in hot, humid homes, because of the efforts of the City utility crews, they did not have to go without water and sewer if their homes were in the City utility service area.

*(Hurricane Charley Continued on page 4)*

## Cape Coral is 5th Fastest Growing City in the United States

The City of Cape Coral continues to be one of the fastest growing cities in the country according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Cape grew at a 5.8 percent clip in the 12-month period ending July 1, 2003. This places Cape Coral at No. 5 for cities with more than 100,000 people and at No. 10 regardless of population. Port St. Lucie was the only other Florida city on the list.

Last year, Cape Coral was the 9th fastest growing city, and officials had expected the city to remain in the Top 10 again this year.

"We know how many building permits we issued last year, and we know how many building permits we are issuing this year," said City Manager Terry Stewart. "We expect Cape Coral to remain on everyone's radar screen for the next few years."

Cape Coral grew to 118,737 people by July 1, 2003. The City estimates that the current population is more than 134,000 residents, and the City is on pace to issue more than 5,000 single-family home permits this year.

"Cape Coral is a very attractive community for many reasons," said Stewart. "We have sunshine, waterfront property, access to the Gulf and lots of potential. I am not surprised that people from all over the world want to move to our city."

### HIGHLIGHTS

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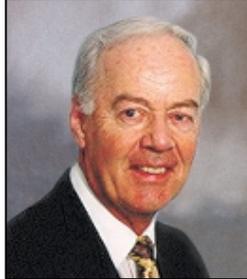
# City of Cape Coral Council Members

## DISTRICT 1



*Gloria Tate*  
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## DISTRICT 2



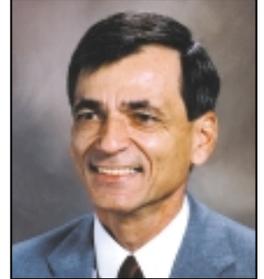
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## CITY ATTORNEY

*Dolores Menendez*

## CITY AUDITOR

*Dona J. Newman*

## CITY MANAGER

*Terry Stewart*

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CITY MANAGER**  
*Howard Kunik*

## CITY CLERK

*Bonnie Vent*

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*Carl Schwing, Director*

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

*Mark Mason, Director*

## FIRE SERVICES

*Bill Van Helden, Chief*

## HUMAN RESOURCES

*Phil Jackson, Director*

**INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**  
*John MacLean, Director*

## PARKS AND RECREATION

*Steve Pohlman, Director*

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

*Dan Alexander, Chief*

## PUBLIC WORKS

*Chuck Pavlos, Director*

**EDITOR/PUBLIC  
INFORMATION DIRECTOR**  
*Connie Barron*

On The Move is a quarterly newsletter produced by the City of Cape Coral for the citizens of the city. The publication is mailed as a courtesy to every household and business in the city. Comments or questions can be directed to the City Manager's Office, P.O. Box 150027, Cape Coral, FL 33915-0027 or by email to [cmo@capecoral.net](mailto:cmo@capecoral.net)



## From the Mayor

Since Hurricane Charley passed through our area on August 13, the City of Cape Coral's employees, private contractors, neighbors and volunteers have joined together in a shared effort to return our city to its original condition.

Many of our citizens found friendly neighbors and even strangers on their doorstep offering to help in their time of need. As Mayor of this city, I extend my sincerest gratitude to all those who came forth with such great acts of kindness. With the continued efforts and patience on everyone's part, Cape Coral can and will become an even better community tomorrow.

Most people were impacted in some way by the storm. Many citizens received damage to their homes and businesses, and the repairs will go on for several months. As our citizens and businesses continue picking up the pieces and the reality of Hurricane Charley's wrath is evident, we have come to realize that our damages, while significant, pale in comparison to our neighboring cities and surrounding areas.

With the exception of reconnects, along with a few exceptional-needed repairs and safety-related City inspections, the electric services were 95 to 98 percent restored within our city in less than two weeks. Although this is a long time, especially if you were one of the families waiting for services to be restored, this was still an accomplishment on everyone's part considering Cape Coral is a city of 114 square miles. Trash services resumed the week following the hurricane with recycle services restored as of August 30. This was made possible not only by the dedication and determination of our local utilities, but also the combined efforts of many volunteers and service providers from across the United States.

By Saturday morning, August 14, Crowder-Gulf, a specialist in disaster cleanup, was already in route to begin removal of horticulture and construction debris. Within two weeks they had mobilized a total of 80 trucks and 20 crews working seven days a week to remove the debris in our city. Due to the massive amount of debris and the vast area of our city, the process is expected to take up to two months to complete the cleanup. Your patience and understanding during the cleanup process is greatly appreciated.

As I write this message, Hurricane Frances just passed through the state and Hurricane Ivan is fast approaching and looking rather ominous. In closing I leave you with this thought. *May we gain strength, friendship and knowledge that will continue to influence our lives not only in the present but long into our future. We cannot take these storms for granted, and we must better prepare for hurricanes. I urge every citizen to reflect on the past, address the needs of the present, and look toward a positive and even better future in Cape Coral. With focus on our basic core needs and working together we will build a better Cape Coral.*

Sincerely,

***"They say that adversity brings out the true character of an individual. However, I also believe that adversity reveals the true character of a community. Based on what I observed in my capacity as the City Manager, I cannot begin to express the strength of character exhibited by your City employees and the emergency management team. "***

***~ Terry Stewart, City Manager***

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***~ Arnold Kempe, Mayor***

## From the City Manager



The original message we put together for this issue of On the Move was about the 2005 budget. However, circumstances changed with the arrival of Hurricane Charley, and so, too, did my message to the community.

Hurricane Charley put all of us to the test. As City Manager and as a resident of this city, I must say that I am extremely pleased with how the City staff and the community responded during this disaster event. Shortly after the storm, I sent the following personal email to your City employees:

*"Your dedication, sense of responsibility, high level performance and the caring in your hearts has been a source of strength and inspiration to me. There have been certain times during this event when I thought my energy level would become taxed. But when I looked around me and saw all of you working so hard and performing so well, it made it easier for me to reach down and find that added strength as well. I am truly proud to work for this City and to work with each of you."*

I extend those same sentiments to the many extraordinary residents of Cape Coral who went out of their way to help neighbors in need during a difficult time. I have heard so many stories about residents going door-to-door to offer their assistance to clean up debris and remove downed trees. I have seen individuals up on roofs that were not their own, spreading tarps and plastic across damaged areas to prevent further damage from rainstorms. People who had generators would offer ice and cold water to their neighbors.

Most of Cape Coral suffered without communications and electricity for several days, yet the vast majority of Cape Coral citizens did not complain. They gratefully applauded when the lights came on, and then thanked the crews who toiled for long hours in the heat to get the work done.

Volunteers manned the information line in the Emergency Operations Center, and helped the City distribute ice and water at locations in the city. When our inspectors, police and firefighters were not checking on damage, taking inventory, directing traffic or responding to calls, they were knocking on doors to check the welfare of a loved one for someone out of the area or helping with emergency repairs for those who were unable to do the work themselves.

They say that adversity brings out the true character of an individual. However, I also believe that adversity reveals the true character of a community. Based on what I observed in my capacity as the City Manager, I cannot begin to express the strength of character exhibited by your City employees and the emergency management team. And based on what I observed as a resident, the character of this community is equally as impressive. Indeed, Cape Coral is in good hands.

Thank you for your support and your contributions to this wonderful city during Hurricane Charley.

*(Hurricane Charley continued from cover)*

The damage toll from Hurricane Charley was extensive in Cape Coral. Thousands of homes were damaged along with many businesses. Most of the homes suffered downed pool cages, roof damage, and trees and shrubs uprooted. The estimate continues to climb, and the latest amount is approaching \$600 million.

The City continues to work on the cleanup portion of Hurricane Charley. A private contractor has been removing horticulture debris from streets and eventually will be removing the construction/building debris. However, this project will take some time to complete. Please be patient.

For most of the citizens of Cape Coral, and the City staff, this was the first experience with a major hurricane. Based on the damage that occurred here and just to the north, one can appreciate the intensity and power of these storms. Let's hope another 40 years passes before Southwest Florida again has to face the wrath of a Category 4 hurricane and that Hurricane Charley was our once-in-a-lifetime experience.



## City Nursery Offers Plant Sales

*By Katie Locklin*

The City has been making several improvements to the City's nursery this summer, including construction of a shade house, planting a vegetable garden and upgrading the native plant inventory.

The shade house will allow the City to save some money by growing plants from sprouts rather than purchasing larger, "ready to plant" specimens. A vegetable garden will provide a "hands-on" experience to students in the popular "veggie gardening" class, which now will be offered at the nursery instead of Rotary Park.

The native plant sales at the nursery have been well-received by the public. Native plants are a wonderful alternative for landscaping. If you would like to check out some established native plants, visit Rotary Park at 5505 Rose Garden Road. The native plants include fire bush, Jamaica caper, dahoon holly, geiger trees, beauty berry, mahogany trees, cocoa plums, muhly grass, necklace pod and golden dewdrop. These native varieties are colorful and attractive, and can spruce up any yard. Once established, native plants do not require much maintenance.

For more information on native plants, contact Rotary Park at 549-4606 or email [kalockli@capecoral.net](mailto:kalockli@capecoral.net).

## City to Offer Online Payoff Calculator

The City's Information Technology Department has been working with Customer Billing Services to develop an online "Payoff Calculator." The calculator will allow the public to obtain payoff data on loans and assessments via the City's website. The service is accessible at the "eCape" online services section at [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org).

The new automated service was developed as part of the City's E-Government and Click2Gov initiatives, which is providing City services via the web for our customers' convenience. The online payoff calculator will be a valuable resource for title companies, real estate professionals and potential residents of the Cape.

The City initiated the online payoff calculator service in two phases. The first phase converted the current "payoff information form" to a computerized format. This new format allows a search via the property address or STRAP number. The search extracts data for the specific property from billing and assessment databases, and then performs the precise payoff calculations. The completed data is presented on the payoff information form.

The second phase of the project is the online version of the payoff calculator. Individuals and companies now can obtain real-time payoff data on properties for any potential payoff date by visiting the City's web page.

Automating this process to an online service also provides a benefit to the City. The City's Customer Billing Services typically responds to about 1,000 loan payoff information requests weekly on properties located within the city. The data is required by title companies to process loan closings. Prior to the payoff calculator, assembling this data manually was time-consuming. Staff had to research current balances for lot mowing, water and sewer impact fees, and assessment and betterment loan balances for potable water, irrigation and sewer services. The precise payoff then had to be computed manually using calculators, and the information transcribed to the "payoff information" form and faxed to the title companies.

To access the online payoff calculator, go to [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org) and select "SAM" from the eCape dropdown menu.

## Members Appointed to Revamped Citizens Advisory Committee on Minority Issues

The City Council appointed nine citizens to serve on the revamped Citizens Advisory Committee on Minority Affairs. The members are:

Michael T. Foye	Milagros Jeanne Isberto	Richard Arjona
Gloria Baron	Lyndia Bradley	Helen Jones
Joseph Kibitlewski	Adele Lewis	Clifford Stewart, Jr.

This committee advises City Council on minority issues and assists in monitoring the City's progress regarding minority hiring practices. One goal is to ensure that the City continues to provide employment opportunities for minorities.

In February, City Council adopted Ordinance 18-04, which changed the composition of this committee. The number of members increased from seven to nine, and term limits were instituted. Terms are staggered with three members serving three years, three members serving two years and three members serving a year. Thereafter, the term of office for each member of the committee will be for three years. The Committee meets quarterly (October, January, April, July) at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. All meetings are open to the public and televised live on Cape TV. Special meetings are held as needed.



## Youth Center Membership Approaches 2,000

*Center provides venue for Cape's younger generation*

The Wm. "Bill" Austen Youth Center located off Nicholas Parkway is fast-becoming a local favorite of Cape Coral's younger population. The Center opened in September 2003 and now has a membership approaching 2,000 kids.

The Youth Center offers numerous activities every day of the week to kids ages 8 - 18. The annual membership fee is \$5. Members can hang with friends in the computer rooms, or play pool, air hockey and arcade games. There are monthly field trips, and special events, such as teen dances and parties. Some upcoming Teen Trips will include Busch Gardens, Lowry Zoo and Adventure Island. The Center also will be working with Sun Splash Family Waterpark to offer a teen job training program call TNT (Teens N Training).

The Center has a variety of classes and programs, including boxing, martial arts, wrestling, monthly babysitting courses and hip hop dance. Some of the new classes that will be offered this fall for kids 16 years of age and older are GED preparation and reading. These educational classes will be available at no charge. There also will be fundraisers, community and volunteer projects for the Youth Advisory Board to promote. For more information about membership or the Center, please visit the Wm. "Bill" Austen Youth Center at 315 SW 2nd Avenue, or call (239) 242-3950.

## Ben Cotroneo Named "Building Official of the Year"

Ben Cotroneo, Building Official for the City of Cape Coral, was named Building Official of the Year by the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Building Officials Association of Florida. Ben has been the City's Building Official since June 1999. He is a licensed inspector in plumbing, mechanical, building, residential electrical and commercial electrical. He also holds a license as a building code administrator. Congratulations, Ben.



## Council Hires New City Auditor

The City Council recently hired Dona J. Newman as the City's new auditor. She began her duties on July 26.

Ms. Newman was Director of Finance with the City of Tamarac. Prior to her tenure with Tamarac, Ms. Newman served as Administrative Services Director for the City of Palm Bay. She is a certified public accountant and certified government finance officer.

Fleeing cold Wisconsin winters, Ms. Newman has been a Florida resident for nearly seven years. During that time she has been active in the Florida Government Finance Officers Association, where she has been a chapter president and currently serves on

the Program Committee for the 2005 Annual Conference.

Ms. Newman has a degree in Accounting and a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is married and has three children and a son-in-law, all of whom are in college this fall. Welcome, Dona.

## Visit Arts Studio Store and Gift Shop

The Arts Studio provides an art supply store and gift shop open to students and the public. The store has an extensive inventory of fine arts and craft products at affordable prices for students, professionals and hobbyists. The next time you are working on a project and need some supplies, visit the art supply store at the Cape Coral Arts Studio. The Arts Studio is located at 4533 Coronado Parkway. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday when no classes are in session. Saturday hours are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Be sure to stop in to see the new Arts Studio Gift Shop, which now is located in the front of the art supply store. In our gift shop, you will find a variety of gifts created by students and instructors at reasonable prices.

You can choose from many different media, including handmade jewelry, fused glass, pottery and paintings.

For more information on classes, programs or the supply and gift shops at the Arts Studio, please call 574-0802.



## Meeting Agendas Online

Want to know what's on the agenda for City Council and other City boards and committees? You can access the agendas for these meetings on the City of Cape Coral's website. Follow these steps:

- Go to the City's website: [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org)
- Click on "Quick Links" at the top of the page.
- Select "Meeting Agendas."

This opens to a page with the current City Council agenda.

For other agendas, click on "Meetings of Boards & Commissions" in the navigation bar to the left. If you have any questions about the agendas, please contact the City Clerk's office at 574-0411.

# Navigating the Cape Coral Waterways

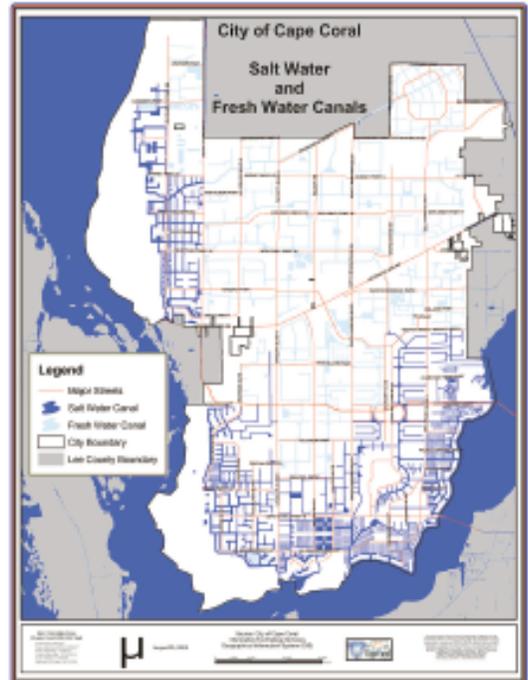
The City of Cape Coral has more than 400 miles of waterway, with 222 miles of saltwater canals and 156 miles of freshwater canals. When you add the 31 miles of shoreline to the total, Cape Coral boasts 409 miles of waterways.

Boaters often may be confused about the speed limits in the City's waterways. With an "idle speed" designation and a "slow speed" designation, the confusion can be understandable. The one key point that boaters (and jet skiers) always should remember is that all of the City's canals are "idle speed" only. "Idle speed" means the minimum speed required for the boat to maintain steerage. At idle speed, the vessel cannot emit a wake.

"Slow speed" is just a little bit different. A vessel at slow speed may emit no wake or a minimum wake. The boat can travel through the water at a slightly quicker pace than "idle speed" as long as it is not on plane or coming off plane. "Slow speed" zones include saltwater basins, lakes, harbors and bays.

Boaters and skiers who want to exceed these speed limits must limit their activities to the freshwater basins, lakes, harbors and bays, which are not posted as "idle" or "slow" speed zones. Examples include Lake Kennedy, Saratoga Lake, Weatherly Lake, Alhambra Lake, Shamrock Lake, Holiday Lake and Manitoba Lake.

For more information about the speed limits in the City's waterways, contact Sergeant Todd LaBair with the Cape Coral Police Department's Marine Patrol Unit at 549-9900.



## Council Will Move Ahead with South Elementary School for 2005

Following the recommendation of the Cape Coral Charter School Board, the City Council voted to proceed with construction of the south elementary school for the 2005-2006 school year. Because of zoning requirements and unresolved land acquisition issues associated with the north site, Council decided it was more prudent to proceed with only the south elementary school in 2005, and then move forward with the second elementary and a middle school in 2006. In addition to the charter elementary school in the North Cape, the City also is acquiring several acres of property in the general vicinity for a North Government Complex.

## Travel Opportunities at Cape Coral Senior Centers

*By Nan Rodriguez, Social Service Superintendent*

Whether you are looking for a Florida day trip or want to travel to Branson, Las Vegas or the Great Smoky Mountains, Cape Coral's Lake Kennedy and Tony Rotino Senior Centers offer a wide variety of exciting travel opportunities. Here are a few of the exciting senior day trips you can participate in during the next year: Naples, Broadway Palm and Youkey dinner theatres, Epcot Center, Ritz Carlton, Actor's Playhouse, St. Armand's Circle, Sea World, Hard Rock Casino, Mystery Trip, Lion Country Safari, Princess Diana Exhibit and the Gaylord Palms. Extended tours offered at the centers include Las Vegas, Key West, Branson, the Smoky Mountains and two cruises.

The senior centers also plan a variety of special events. They include anniversary parties, New Year's Celebration, Senior Games, Thanksgiving Dinner and Christmas Day Brunch, Cape Coral's Tour De Lights, Senior Idol Contest and "The Court Room" (a live senior theatre production). Stop by or call Lake Kennedy (574-0575) or Tony Rotino (574-0807).



## City Produces Tribute to President Ronald Reagan

In a tribute to the nation's 40th president, the City of Cape Coral produced a 26-minute video tribute to Ronald Wilson Reagan, which played on CapeTV during the official period of national mourning. President Reagan died on June 5 from complications related to Alzheimer's disease. He was 93 years old.

The video featured still images of the President scrolling on the screen as his farewell address to the nation from January 1989 played in the background. The tribute ends with images from the memorials and State funeral set to "Taps" and "Amazing Grace."

"The City wanted to show its respect for President Reagan, and this video tribute is a nice way to honor our 40th president," said City Manager Terry Stewart.

The tribute video was put together by John Heck of National Media Services as a courtesy to the City. As with all video production on CapeTV, copies can be obtained by contacting the City Clerk's Office at 574-0411. The cost for a VHS or DVD is \$7. Those who want VHS copies should supply a blank VHS.

## Kayak Rentals Available at Eco Preserve

Are you ready to get back outside? The reopening of the kayak shack at Eco Preserve is just around the corner (October), and that means kayaking. If you have not been to Eco Preserve in the past few years, or ever, come over some weekend and take a paddle along the gently moving currents through the narrow mangrove tunnels.

The City has single kayaks, double kayaks and even a couple of canoes available to rent. For the beginner, you can take a short paddle to the portage and back. For the more skilled paddlers, you can carry your boat along the portage trail to access more tunnels and paths along Alligator Creek or to get to the Caloosahatchee River. Once you reach the river, the paddling may be more difficult, but it is worth the effort. There is so much more to explore, and you can take a break at one of the shelters in Four Mile Cove.

Possible sightings include bald eagles, osprey, herons, ibis, cormorants, dolphins, alligators, manatees, raccoons and otters.

If you are interested in paddling lessons or going with a group, the Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of programs for you. The popular Beginner's Guide to Kayaking resumes as well as the ACA Intro to Kayaking. A Kids Kayakityak Camp takes place at Eco over Christmas break as well as a new class - Intro to Kayak Fishing.

A handful of guided kayaking trips also are scheduled for fall. There will be two night paddles through Eco Preserve on Halloween weekend, a trip to Fisheating Creek in November, and another night paddle along the Boat-A-Long route the night before the Boat-A-Long in December. For details on these trips and other opportunities, call Rotary Park at 549-4606 or email kalockli@capecoral.net.



## New Business Plan Tracks City Progress and Objectives

In coordination with the budget process, the City administration has prepared a new document that compiles and coordinates City programs, policies and strategic objectives. The Business Plan brings all the various resources together into a single point of reference.

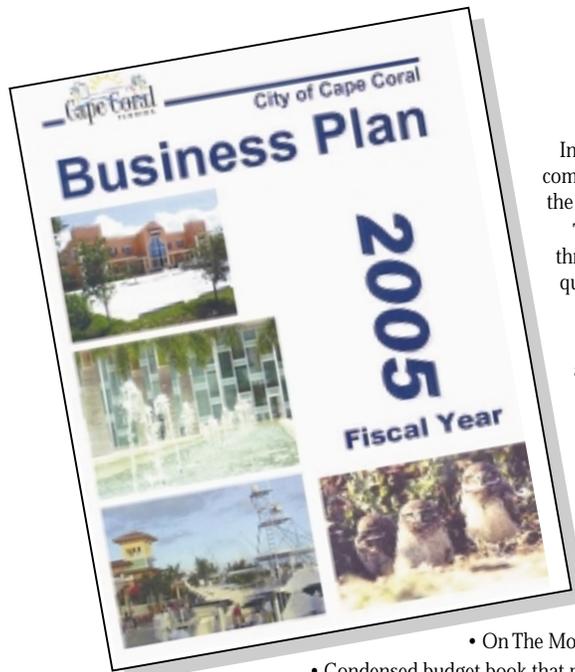
The Business Plan is another tool to help elected officials and the community track the City's progress through the fiscal year. The document illustrates our sustained commitment to delivering the highest quality of customer service to our community in the most responsive and responsible manner.

### *The Business Plan is divided into five sections:*

**Economic Outlook** looks at demographic and economic market forces to identify emerging issues and items of concern to residents. **Community Survey** highlights the results of recent opinion surveys. **Service Initiatives** documents initiatives used to achieve intended outcomes for each strategic objective adopted by City Council. **Financial Strategy** presents financial management policies and debt management practices used to maintain and/or enhance the City's financial position. **Measuring Results** evaluates the City's progress through outcome-oriented performance measures.

During the past few years, the City has implemented several tools to guide the decision-making process and communicate progress. Those tools include:

- Adoption of Strategic Objectives
- Budget summary mailed to every resident and business
- On The Move and Annual Report mailed to every resident and business
- Condensed budget book that provides a brief, clear depiction of the main budget document
- Quarterly financial performance, strategic objectives status and victory list report to measure our performance in meeting Council's strategic plan
- Refinement and upgrading of departmental performance measures geared toward definable outcomes
- Weekly report provided to Council that highlights pertinent updates of departmental activities



**TURN LANE AT VISCAYA PARKWAY AND DEL PRADO BOULEVARD REALIGNED**

Earlier this summer, the City realigned the west side of the Viscaya Parkway/Del Prado Boulevard intersection. The previous approach to this intersection was plagued with numerous delays due to short left- and right-turn lanes. The proximity of the City's Industrial Park meant that many large trucks and vehicles with trailers would quickly maximize the capacity of the turning lanes. These delays increased dramatically during rush-hour traffic.

To increase the capacity of the turning lanes, the previous median was converted into a four-foot concrete median separator. This new median was extended to the west to remove the full median opening at SE 15th Place, which had been the site of several crashes. The eastbound left-turn lane on Viscaya Parkway was extended 200 feet to the west, and a new 200-foot exclusive right-turn lane was created. All four lanes eastbound and both westbound lanes were resurfaced and re-stripped to provide a better navigation.

The new intersection alignment has increased the flow of traffic and resulted in far fewer people waiting through multiple traffic signal cycles at Del Prado Boulevard.

**CITY CONTINUES SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CAPE**

The City is continuing its sidewalk improvement program with several projects underway and one nearing completion.

***Country Club and Viscaya Parkway***

Country Club Boulevard and Viscaya Parkway will be the next main stretch to receive sidewalks. Sidewalks will be added to the south side, east of SE 9th Lane to Del Prado Boulevard. Sidewalks also will be added on the north side, between SE 9th Lane and SE 9th Street. The north side will be completed when two planned developments east of SE 9th Street are built. The plans require installation of sidewalks, which will complete a contiguous sidewalk to Del Prado Boulevard on the north side as well.

***Nicholas Parkway***

Sidewalks currently are being installed on both sides of Nicholas Parkway, between Country Club Boulevard and Santa Barbara Boulevard. The contractor will complete this project and return to Country Club Boulevard to finish the sidewalks between Nicholas Parkway and SE 9th Street.

***Surfside***

Sidewalk construction will begin on both sides of Surfside Boulevard, between Veterans Parkway and Gleason Parkway in September 2004.

***Future Project***

Sidewalks will be installed on SE 8th Street between SE 8th Place and Cape Coral Hospital/School Road, on the north side only. This project is being funded with a Community Development Block Grant. Construction is to begin by January of 2005.

Once construction is complete on SE 8th Street, sidewalks will be installed on the west side only of Surfside Boulevard south of Gleason Parkway and connect to Sands Boulevard.

**MEDIAN CURBING**

Pending Council's budgetary approval, the next median curbing project will be installed on Nicholas Parkway, between Academy Boulevard and Santa Barbara Boulevard. Turn lanes will be added, along with landscaping and street lighting. Construction is to begin next year after design.

**DRY SEASON REQUIRES AWARENESS OF WATER LIMITATIONS**

The City of Cape Coral continues to experience rapid growth. This growth rate has required an accelerated schedule for completion of the City's new potable water plant as well as utility plant expansions at the City's Everest and Southwest Water Reclamation facilities. These expansions must be completed to enable the City to extend water, sewer and irrigation service to its citizens.

While we are trying to stay ahead of the development curve, certain areas of Cape Coral do not have City utility services but continue to see an influx of new homes. These areas rely on private wells and septic tanks to meet utility needs. This past year, particularly in the dry season when irrigation demand was high, many of our citizens on private wells experienced problems with their wells drying up. This resulted from a large drop in the water table because of the high irrigation water demand. The area experiencing the most numerous problems with wells was south of Pine Island Road, north of Gleason Parkway, west of Santa Barbara Blvd. and east of Surfside. The wells affected were usually the older, shallower wells around 100 to 120 feet deep with 80 feet of casing. Most of the residents could lower the pumps and restore service. However, in some instances, a new well had to be drilled. New well installations are typically cased from 100 to 120 feet.

The City is not scheduled to provide utility services to this area until 2007 and 2009. City officials have discussed the situation with the South Florida Water Management District, and they are willing to assist the City where possible. Our joint concern is that the water table will continue to drop next year during the high water demand irrigation season. This would produce additional well problems and potentially harm the aquifer supplying the water.

There is not an unlimited supply of water and the demand is increasing, so what can homeowners in this area do? First, practice water conservation 365 days a year. Follow the City's year-round watering schedule and only water on your designated days and during the hours permitted. When it rains, turn off your sprinklers or get a rain sensor installed on your sprinkler system if you do not have one. Second, select grasses that can live on less water.

Homeowners who have City utilities and live around this area also can help. If you have City irrigation available at your home and have not connected, consider abandoning your well and connecting to the City's irrigation system. This will remove additional pressure from the aquifer and water table, and help your neighbors who do not yet have City services.

**UTILITY EXPANSION PROJECT**

The City's current five-year Utility Expansion Program was recently expanded to include the new Southeast One (SE 1) project. It is estimated that construction for SE 1 project will start in the 2nd quarter of 2005.

To date, the City has completed the following assessment projects:

**North Loop Pine Island Road Southwest One Southwest Three**

The Southwest Two (SW 2) Assessment project began December 2003 and is nearly 70 percent complete. Chiquita Boulevard south of Savona Parkway has been reduced to two lanes of traffic as utility work is being completed in the northbound lanes. We hope to have it back to the full four lanes by this Fall. The project is scheduled for final completion in March 2005.

The final assessment resolution for SW 2 was approved by Council on July 19, 2004, and the assessments will be levied on the November 2005 tax bill.

Council approved moving forward with the new 2005 - 2010 Utility Extension Program. The program as planned will provide full utility service to all the remaining platted lots south of Pine Island Road. Four new projects will be Southwest 4, 5, 6 and 7. Expansion maps showing the new project areas and the proposed schedule are on sale at the City Clerk's Office for \$1.

# CAPE CORAL POLICE DEPARTMENT

## BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS

School is back in session and the Cape Coral Police Department has the following safety tips for motorists, parents, and students:

### **Motorists**

- Remember that it is illegal to pass any school bus picking up or discharging passengers.
- Pay attention to reduced speed limits in school zones.
- Allow a few minutes extra time to reach your destination; there will be more vehicles on the road, lower speed limits around schools, and possible delays at school bus stops.
- Be alert for children at intersections and school bus stops.

### **Parents**

- Educate your children about the dangers of horseplay at school bus stops.
- Remind children not to wander into moving lanes of traffic while waiting for their bus.
- Warn your children about "stranger danger."

### **Students**

- Always be aware of traffic while waiting for your school bus.
- While waiting for your school bus, stay with the other children at the stop; do not wander away or walk into a moving lane of traffic.
- Do not approach a stranger's car; do not allow a stranger to get close to you.
- Cape Coral Police traffic officers will be monitoring school bus stops around the city throughout the school year to help ensure the safety of our children.

## "LOCK IT OR LOSE IT"

In August 2003, the Cape Coral Police Department introduced a new community policing crime prevention initiative called "Lock It or Lose It."

The goal of the "Lock It or Lose It" program is to work with citizens to identify problems and create solutions. An issue of primary concern is the disturbing dilemma of crimes involving unlocked motor vehicles. For example, from April to June 2003, there were 317 vehicle burglaries committed in Cape Coral. One year later, due in great part to citizen awareness brought about by the "Lock It or Lose It" program, the number of vehicle burglaries for the same months (April through June 2004) was reduced to 143. While this represents a significant improvement, the percentage of burglaries committed at unlocked vehicles remains high - 54 percent in April, 64 percent in May, and 57 percent in June. To continue the reduction in vehicle burglaries, residents are encouraged to keep their vehicles locked, and never leave valuables visible inside.

"Lock It or Lose It" includes a communications tool called the "Crime Prevention Alert." This two-sided card has the "Crime Prevention Alert" on one side notifying citizens that a police employee has observed a potential crime opportunity at the person's home, business or vehicle, and the card recommends necessary action to correct the situation. The card also has a section on the form to indicate that everything was found to be secure where no apparent discrepancies are detected. The reverse side of the card contains crime prevention tips.

**For up-to-minute information from the Cape Coral Police Department, visit our website at [www.capecops.com](http://www.capecops.com). You will find pages containing the department's latest news releases, crime prevention tips, crime statistics and much more.**

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### FALL KIDS FESTIVAL

The Harney Point Kiwanis Club and the Cape Coral Parks & Recreation Department have joined together to present the 7th Annual Fall Kids Festival. This health and safety fair for children will be held Saturday, October 30 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Jaycee Park (at the end of Beach Parkway). Admission is free. The Fall Kids Festival will have a stage and activity center that will host activities and demonstrations with puppet shows, dancing, karate, singing and costume contests. Some of our community's most beloved characters also will be on hand including Ronald McDonald, Freddy the Four Freedoms Frog and Swish the Fish. Lee County Sheriff's Office will provide an electronic scan of a child's fingerprints, a digital photo, a place for dental charts, and a DNA self-collection kit all in one. The Festival will have plenty of food, craft and retail vendors along with clowns, balloons, candy and giveaways. Costume contests will be held at 10 a.m., Noon and 2:30 p.m. with prizes to the winners. Canned food donations for the Cape Coral Caring Center would be appreciated and will be accepted at the main entrance to the Festival. For more information, please call the Parks & Recreation Department at 573-3123.

### VETERAN'S DAY PARADE & CELEBRATION

The Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department will host the 6th Annual Veteran's Day Parade on November 11. The parade will take place along SE 47th Terrace in Downtown Cape Coral beginning at 5 p.m. The parade is an opportunity to pay tribute to the veterans of Lee County. This year's theme is "Honoring the Heritage of Freedom," which recognizes our veterans who have defended our country during times of peace and war. This event is hosted with the support of Lee County Parks and Recreation, United Veteran's of Lee County, Lee County Board of County Commissioners, Lee County Sheriff's Office, School District of Lee County, City of Cape Coral Police Department, City of Fort Myers, City of Ft. Myers Police Department, Veteran's Day Planning Committee, Veteran's Midpoint Memorial Charitable Trust, Inc., YMCA of Lee County, Ft. Myers Track Club and the Citizens of Lee County. Please honor and support our local veterans by watching the annual parade on SE 47th Terrace. If you are interested in participating as a unit or by placing an advertisement in the Official Veteran's Day Parade Program, contact the Parks Department at 573-3122.

### CAPE CORAL TURKEY TROT

The 25th Annual Cape Coral Turkey Trot will begin at Cape Coral Hospital's Wellness Center on Thursday, November 25. Registration starts at 6 a.m., and the 5k starts at 7:30 a.m. This event includes a 5k Run/Walk, 1-mile Fun Run/Walk and the Tot Trot. Pre-registration for the 5k is \$15, 1-Mile is \$10 and the Tot Trot is free. Race day registration is \$20. Participants receive a special T-shirt and goodie bag. Cape Coral's event concludes with a continental breakfast, beverages, live music, awards ceremony, raffles, prizes and post run massages. What has been a Thanksgiving family tradition in Southwest Florida for 25 years is also a tradition all across the country. The Turkey Trot is one of more than 50 Turkey Trots nationwide. Register online at <http://turkeytrot5k.tripod.com> or call 573-3123 for more information. Join us on Thanksgiving morning, and make this event a part of your family's Thanksgiving Day tradition.

## Job Opportunities with the City

The City of Cape Coral has many employment opportunities available, and every Monday, the Human Resources Department updates the current job openings available. A jobs listing can be accessed online at [www.capecgov.org](http://www.capecgov.org), and select "Jobs" under the "Quick Links" dropdown menu. The job listing will provide positions, wages and the job descriptions and qualifications required. An online application is available, and most positions do require an online application to be considered for employment. If you do not have access to a computer, a public kiosk is available at the Human Resources Department in City Hall. The library also may be able to provide a computer for public use.

The City encourages candidates who are bilingual to consider employment with the City. Having bilingual employees on staff allows the City to provide a greater range of service to the community and our employees as well. The City has an excellent benefits package that includes opportunities for advancement through our education reimbursement program. As our minority employee base continues to grow, the number of minority employees in degree-seeking programs also has increased. About 14 percent of employees taking advantage of the educational reimbursement are minorities.

# 10 Questions for Fire Chief Bill Van Helden

*As the City's fire chief, Bill Van Helden heads the City's emergency planning operations. On the Move posed 10 questions to the chief about his thoughts on Hurricane Charley.*

## ***Bill, when did you and county emergency management actually begin following the track of Hurricane Charley?***

We always keep a pretty close eye on any storm formation activity that occurs during the hurricane season. There was no doubt that Charley was going to be a Gulf storm; however, it wasn't until about 4 days out that Cape Coral and Southwest Florida became a major player in the forecast track put out by the National Hurricane Center. That's when we started paying much closer attention.

## ***When did you realize that Hurricane Charley was no longer going to follow the projected path to landfall and was making a turn toward Cape Coral?***

It was not until the final few hours that the storm took a "jog" to the right of the forecast track and put Cape Coral in harms way. In fact, when we were watching the morning forecast track on Friday from the EOC, Cape Coral actually was out of the potential landfall area, and the experts were predicting that Tampa Bay or just south would be the target landfall. Then, quite quickly, Charley turned east. This was quite troubling on our end because we needed 18 to 20 hours to evacuate people from a Category 4 hurricane, and we only had about 1 hour before tropical force winds affected our area.

## ***Once Charley appeared to be heading in our direction, it gained strength very rapidly. What was going through your mind at the time?***

The first thought was that we had a Category 4 storm fast approaching, which could devastate our community, and we did not have enough time to get people out of harm's way where projected storm surge levels were going to be in excess of 14 feet.

## ***What was the most difficult period of time for you during this event?***

When we had to stop running calls due to hurricane-force winds. As public safety professionals, our job is to respond to and protect the public. When the danger posed by storm made it necessary for us to secure our own people and get them out of harm's way, that was a tough time for all of us. We knew that there were calls holding and people needed help, but we could not respond and put our own staff at risk until the hurricane-force winds subsided. It also was very difficult for me being away from my family as a Category 4 hurricane approached. And my son, Joey, had his birthday the same day Charley made landfall.

## ***Now that you have had a little time to reflect on Hurricane Charley and the City's response, what was your greatest source of pride?***

The fact that there was no one person who made the City's response so successful. The City Manager has put together a team of professionals committed to public service, and I am extremely proud to serve alongside this group of individuals. They make my job easier. Nowhere was that reflected more than in the collection of staff who were serving the public throughout the event. There was no job too big or too small for City staff — they just did whatever it took. I also have to add that the citizens of Cape Coral did the same and should be commended for their sense of community spirit and poise during the greatest challenge our city has faced.

## ***What caused you the most disappointment or concern?***

That there were some citizens, though few, who did not take the storm threat



*Fire Chief Bill Van Helden follows the track of Hurricane Charley.*

Photo courtesy of The News-Press

seriously. Had this storm made landfall with Category 4 winds, I fear the consequences for some could have been very catastrophic.

## ***What might you do differently if you could start over and do it again?***

Work harder with the media to properly convey to our citizens and businesses what the City was doing on their behalf. We were providing the information; however, it did not seem to be getting relayed to the citizens. I also would require those who use generators to have battery-operated carbon monoxide detectors available for their homes and businesses. We had hundreds of generators running in the Cape, and about two dozen people went to the hospital with carbon monoxide poisoning. The hazards of these machines were on display during Hurricane Charley, and they must be taken seriously.

## ***Some citizens in Cape Coral have criticized the City's recovery response and information efforts. How would you respond to the criticisms?***

It's a double-edged sword. The greatest media coverage usually goes to the hardest hit areas. For years, the Emergency Management Director for Charlotte County complained that the media in Fort Myers was not properly representing their county and citizens. Unfortunately, it took an event like Charley to get them the coverage they wanted. However, we then found ourselves in their position. Most of the media coverage went to the places like Punta Gorda and the barrier islands. In Cape Coral, we were the victims of our own success. We had the roads cleared within a couple of days, water and sewer services functioning after only a few hours of downtime, and electricity re-established in most of the city within a few days. Residents had been evacuated from Pine Island, Sanibel, Captiva and Ft. Myers Beach and could not return home, while many residents in Punta Gorda had no homes to return to. It's easy to see where the media will focus their coverage given those circumstances.

## ***What is your favorite anecdote from Hurricane Charley?***

My favorite anecdote probably was waking up at the Emergency Operations Center at 2 a.m. the day the storm hit and hearing the City Manager singing in his sleep. And what was most entertaining was that he was singing "on key."

## ***What would be the one lesson you would want the public to learn from Hurricane Charley?***

Even though the National Hurricane Center has the most sophisticated equipment, experienced personnel, and computer-generated models, hurricane forecasting is not an exact science. We need to pay very close attention. For years, we have been saying that it is not a matter of "if" a hurricane will impact our area, it is just a matter of "when." We now know that it can happen, as well as the devastation that these storms can bring. Had it not been for a last-minute bump to the north, Cape Coral could have been in the eye of hurricane and suffered the extensive damage as did our neighbors to the north in Punta Gorda. I hope the public will have a hurricane preparedness plan in place and take nothing for granted. Plan for the worst and hope for the best.

## CITY ISSUES RECORD NUMBER OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOME PERMITS

The City of Cape Coral continues to break records for single-family building permits. With 477 permits issued in August, the City's total FY 2004 is 4,952. The City issued a record number of permits in July, with 577 single-family home permits processed. The City has one more month left in the fiscal year, and even with Hurricane Charley slowing things slightly, the City anticipates issuing close to 5,500 single-family home permits this year.

As expected, during this same period, the City inspections team has kept very busy. Inspectors have conducted 124,317 inspections, a 33 percent increase from the previous year.

## PERMITTING SUPERVISOR HIRED, DEPUTY BUILDING OFFICIAL/CHIEF INSPECTOR APPOINTED

The Department of Community Development welcomes Mike Burrock as the new Permitting Supervisor. Mike has worked in the information technology and software development field, and has extensive management and supervisory experience. His broad-based experience coupled with his ability to assist in developing short- and long-range computer system plans will be a major asset to the City. "The Building Division is operating at a very fast pace, and we needed someone who could jump in and meet the challenge," said Carl Schwing, director of Community Development. "Mike brings a great skill set to the position, and he will be working with a terrific staff to meet the demands of economic growth."



## BILL SELVIA PROMOTED TO DEPUTY BUILDING OFFICIAL

William "Bill" Selvia, Lead Building Inspector for the past five years, was appointed to fill the Deputy Building Official/Chief Inspector position. Bill has more than 30 years of construction experience throughout the state of Florida. His knowledge of construction coupled with his familiarity with accounting practices and procedures is a major asset to the City. Congratulations, Bill!



## CLICK2GOV IMPLEMENTED

One of the City's new online applications, Click2Gov, is improving access to the City's building permits application. The program was implemented on July 12, and the response from the building industry has been very positive. Contractors no longer have to wait for staff assistance to schedule inspections, and they receive real-time information about the status of applications/plan reviews and inspection results. Contractors and office personnel interested in training on the new system should contact Business & Industry Services (High Tech North) at 239/574-7579. The cost of the class is \$10 per person. Coming soon - Click2Gov will offer electronic payment of application and reinspection fees.

## BOAT CANOPY REGISTRATION SET TO EXPIRE

On September 9, the registration period expired for owners of boat canopies constructed prior to March 8, 2004. When City Council approved permitting and installation standards for canopies in March, owners of existing boat canopies were given until September 9 to register their canopy as required by the ordinance. The ordinance also requires any nonconforming boat canopies to be removed or brought into conformity no later than January 1, 2010.

If you have not registered your boat canopy with the Department of Community Development, please call 239/574-0553 to obtain a "Boat Canopy Registration" form and registration requirements. The City will be conducting a code compliance sweep to identify unregistered canopies.

## ANNEXATIONS WILL ADD ACREAGE TO CAPE CORAL

The owners of some large parcels of land north of the city have petitioned for annexation into Cape Coral. These areas consist of properties along Burnt Store Road, in the general proximity of Caloosa Parkway. The parcels in this area include about 584 acres. Additionally, there are two parcels farther east of Burnt Store Road, consisting of 674 acres and 144 acres. These areas will add 2.2 square miles to the city. The same property owners also are proposing that the City annex another 2 square miles of land with frontage on U.S. 41.

Another 50-acre annexation has been proposed between Pine Island Road and Pondella Road, with frontage on both roads. This land is considered an "enclave," which means the property is part of unincorporated Lee County but falls within the boundaries of Cape Coral. The City will conduct public hearings on these proposed annexations at some time in the near future. Check the meeting agendas for City Council at the City's web page at [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org). Go to "Quick Links" and "Meeting Agendas."

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The City recently annexed an area along Pine Island Road, known as the Judd Creek area. The City currently is processing a request to reclassify the land for development of multi-family, residential uses and uses consistent with the Pine Island Road District. The District allows mixed uses including shopping and office purposes. A large portion of land along Judd Creek will be classified as Natural Resources/Preservation, which does not allow alterations that would degrade the natural systems.

## DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS COMING TO THE CAPE

The City's Planning Division currently is processing the following Planned Development Projects (PDPs) and/or Site Plans for Cape Coral:

### *Hampton Inn*

A PDP application is under review for a Hampton Inn Hotel in Downtown Cape Coral. The plan is for a multi-story hotel with about 70 rooms.

### *B.J.'s Warehouse*

The City is reviewing a proposal for a B.J.'s Discount Warehouse to be located on the north side of Pine Island Road, east of Del Prado Boulevard and the existing Lowe's and Albertson's. The proposed discount retail center is 122,000 square feet with a gas station facility.

### *First Community Bank Of Southwest Florida*

This bank is proposed to be located at the existing Santa Barbara Center Commercial Center located at Pine Island Road, Santa Barbara Boulevard, and Hancock Bridge Parkway. It will be located adjacent to the existing Ritter's Frozen Custard.

## REAL ESTATE NEWSLETTER ONLINE

Each month, the Planning Division prepares "The Real Estate Newsletter," which lists all future land use changes, zoning changes and ordinance changes of interest to the real estate community. Recently, we were able to incorporate the newsletter on our website. Anyone interested in this information can register their email address through the City's eFlash service. Go to [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org) and select the Planning Division from the "Community Development" link under the "Government" dropdown menu. The "Real Estate Newsletter" can be accessed at the bottom of the navigation bar on the left. The direct link to the page is: [www.capecoral.net/citydept/comdev/cdv\\_realestatenewsletter.cfm](http://www.capecoral.net/citydept/comdev/cdv_realestatenewsletter.cfm)

# The Fish Hawk

## *Ospreys in Cape Coral*

*Susan Scott, Planning Technician*

One of Cape Coral's most common wildlife residents is the osprey, *Pandion Haliaeetus*. Also called fish hawk or fish eagle, ospreys are in the same family of birds as our bald eagles, and get their common names from the fact that they primarily eat fish. Ospreys are large birds of prey, 21-24 inches long with a wingspan of 4.5 feet to 6 feet. They have white heads and underbodies, with brown to black wings. They are distinguished by a dark line that runs through the eye and the side of the face. Their feet are a dull grey in color, their bills are dark and eyes are yellow. With their mostly white heads and large size, they often are confused with bald eagles.

Much like eagles, ospreys faced the same declines in the mid-1900s due to the extensive use of DDT. Because of federal and state protections, these birds are quite common again and are found from Alaska through Canada, and south through Florida and the Western United States. Some ospreys winter in South America. Here in Southwest Florida, we have migrant as well as year-round resident ospreys.

Ospreys typically nest in dead trees, preferably near open water for protection of their eggs and young from predators. Nests are made of large sticks that the ospreys drop from the air into snags (dead trees), power poles, towers and man-made platforms. Usually three eggs are laid, and one to two chicks hatch and fledge (fly on their own). However, a well-established nest here in Cape Coral produced five fledglings one year. Their nesting season closely follows that of the bald eagle, beginning around early December.

The call of the osprey is one of the most plaintive bird calls. When calling to other osprey, they often sound as if one is in trouble. Once you've learned to identify their call, the sound is unmistakable. (The National Wildlife Federation's website has information on ospreys along with a recording of their call. Simply go to <http://enature.com>.) You can often hear an osprey before you see it, and many times you can catch them in mid-flight chasing a bald eagle that has stolen their catch. These beautiful birds catch their prey by flying over open water searching for fish. When the osprey sees a fish, they dive quickly, talons outstretched, and splash into the water. When the bird resurfaces with a fish, it will fly away, adjusting the fish so the head is pointing forward. Osprey will often use the same perch trees repeatedly to eat their catch.

In Cape Coral, ospreys often build their nests in the lights at athletic fields. This is usually not a problem until the lights malfunction. If City staff is unable to repair the fixture without impairment to the nest, the City of Cape Coral applies to the State of Florida for a special permit to remove the nest. This only is done during the non-nesting season after all chicks have successfully fledged. The permit also requires the City to offer a replacement structure for the ospreys. We have discovered that our ospreys typically will not use the open-faced, round dishes and prefer another light fixture instead. Because of this, the City will be offering another alternative when a nest must be removed for light repairs. The City will place an elevated box above the light fixture that the birds originally used. This will provide a nest site for the ospreys and access for the City should future repairs be required on the light fixture. Keeping snags available in yards, parks and other open areas can help a great deal.

As part of our WildCam project, the City added an osprey camera to the mix. The pictures were amazing until the camera failed. However, we are working on some new options and hope to have a new OspreyCam available for the upcoming nesting season. Be sure to go to [capegov.org](http://capegov.org) and check out the WildCam projects.



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## Greenwerx Takes Over Parks Maintenance

To provide the highest quality park and athletic field facilities, the Parks Division has contracted with Greenwerx Groundskeeping, Inc. to assist the City with grounds maintenance within park facilities.

Beginning June 1, Greenwerx took over grounds maintenance, which includes the mowing, irrigation, pest and weed control, tree and bush trimming, general repairs and litter control. Contracting with Greenwerx allows Parks maintenance staff to concentrate on improving the level of ground maintenance at the 10 athletic complexes within the city, ensuring that the fields are in top shape year-round.

The Parks Division also has been replacing park signs at all City parks with new, attractive and uniform signs. These signs are being installed along with decorative landscaping. These upgrades include brick pavers, flowers and plants, and decorative mulch. This project should be completed by staff within the next several months.

## COMMERCIAL PAPER PROGRAM

*By Linda Senne*

In June 2004, the City implemented a commercial paper program, which will be used to fund capital projects on a short-term basis prior to securing long-term financing. With the current utilities expansion program and other capital projects on the horizon, it was prudent for the City to create a funding mechanism on a short-term basis. Creating our own commercial paper program will save the City any higher costs associated with using an outside party to perform the same function.

Tax-exempt commercial paper is limited to short-term capital improvement funding. This financing will be used to enhance capital improvement cash flows for a limited period of time until long-term financing is obtained or the debt is paid off with current cash.

Borrowing funds through a short-term mechanism such commercial paper provides flexibility, which is helpful when final construction costs have not yet been determined. However, once final costs are known, long-term financing then can be obtained. Using commercial paper avoids the need to use bond financing or note financing with uncertain amounts.

## BANK OF AMERICA SELECTED AS THE CITY OF CAPE CORAL'S BANK OF RECORD

*By Linda Senne*

Effective October 1, 2004, Bank of America will be the bank of record for the City of Cape Coral for its banking and merchant services. Bank of America is one of the world's largest financial institutions and ranked the most technologically advanced financial institution in the nation by rating agencies.

The City selected Bank of America due to their technology, new innovative products, number of offices and ATM's and their advisory role to the City. Bank of America offers four full-service banking centers and two Publix in-store locations in Cape Coral. In addition, the City will save about \$22,000 in annual treasury fees and about \$28,000 in merchant processing fees.

## EPROCUREMENT - CITY'S PROCUREMENT SERVICES ARE GOING ELECTRONIC

*By Jeanne Landry*

The City of Cape Coral's Procurement Division is going electronic. Bids, quotes and request for proposals now will be available online through a company called Demand Star by Onvia. Interested businesses can sign up by contacting Demand Star at 1-800-711-1712 or [www.demandstar.com](http://www.demandstar.com). There is a fee for businesses; however, once you register, your company automatically will be notified of Procurement requests from any entities posting to Demand Star. Companies are welcome to visit the Procurement Division to see a demonstration by appointment. You may contact the Procurement Division by calling (239) 574-0831 or [jlandry@capecoral.net](mailto:jlandry@capecoral.net). The City plans to include this same technology on the City's website by the end of September.

Another technological improvement Procurement is looking to make is to move to eProcurement. Currently, the City prints purchase orders for every purchase and mails or faxes the orders to the vendors. Several companies have the capability for the City to open one master purchase order and then place online purchases for items as needed. By moving to this process, the City will be more efficient and receive the orders more quickly.

The City also has moved to online auctions on the Internet at [www.govdeals.com](http://www.govdeals.com). The City will be adding this feature to the City website by the end of September as well, so keep checking [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org). The City will be selling equipment as soon as it becomes obsolete, as well as old vehicles and equipment at our Fleet compound.

We're very excited about these new changes and will keep the public informed of future updates to the City's procurement services.

## PROPERTY VALUES INCREASE

*By Mark Mason*

The City's assessed property values increased by \$2.1 billion dollars in 2004 or 28.8 percent from 2003. New construction provided 27.6 percent of the increase, and existing homes and businesses accounted for the remaining increase.

For the 36,090 properties that have the "homestead exemption," the maximum increase in assessed value will be 1.9 percent. A "homesteaded property" receives certain benefits and protection from increases in property value. Even if the market value of a homesteaded property may have increased 15 percent this year, for property tax purposes, the value of that property only can increase 1.9 percent.

What this means is that if the millage rate were to remain the same as last year (5.6831 mills for general government operations), a \$100,000 property after the homestead exemption would see a maximum increase in taxes of \$10.80. However, because the General Obligation Debt millage rate will decrease .1907 mills, the overall decrease in taxes for a homesteaded property will be \$9.07. For non-homesteaded residential properties, as well as vacant land and business entities, the increase/decrease in taxes is tied to the increase/decrease in the assessed value of the property. In Cape Coral, 70.3 percent of all residential properties are protected by the homestead exemption.

It should be noted that although the total assessed value of property in the City of Cape Coral increased 28.8 percent, the overall taxes do not increase by a like amount for the majority of the city residents. The increase in assessed value includes a number of factors. New construction added to the tax rolls, vacant land value increases resulting from evaluating adjacent land sales, and existing property values being adjusted to a percentage of market value affect the increase in assessed value.

## PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2005

*By Sheena Milliken*

The City Manager's Fiscal Year 2005 proposed operating budget was submitted to City Council on July 21. The annual operating budget is a plan to provide cost effective public services to the residents of Cape Coral. The budget provides funding to address the strategic objectives identified by the City Council as well as the priorities identified by residents through the Citizen's Survey.

On August 2, 2004, City Council approved the following proposed millage rates:

General Operations:	5.6831
Debt Service:	.2311
Total Proposed	5.9142

This is 0.1907 mills or 3.1 percent lower than the adopted millage rates for the current year. The Cape Coral portion of the property tax bill will decrease for a property owner that has a homestead exemption.

The proposed millage rates above are not-to-exceed rates and may be reduced by City Council prior to final adoption of the budget. The proposed millage rates and operating budget will be discussed at public hearings that have been scheduled for Tuesday, September 14 and Tuesday, September 28 at 5:01 p.m. These meetings will be held in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 1015 Cultural Park Boulevard.

The City Manager's proposed operating budget is online and can be found by logging onto the City website at [www.capegov.org](http://www.capegov.org). Click on "Government" and select Financial Services and then Budget.

# Hurricane Charley Won't be the Last

## Be Prepared for the Next Storm

In the aftermath of Hurricane Charley, we now know that a hurricane can inflict damage on Cape Coral. The damages from the wind were severe; however, we also received warnings of potential flooding from storm surge that did not occur. Many factors affect the storm surge potential including the direction of the storm center's path, its speed, and its width. Experts may learn much more about the potential effects of future storms by studying Hurricane Charley. Nevertheless, the best available science indicates that storm surge could inundate large land areas in Cape Coral. We also need to recognize that flooding events not associated with a hurricane can occur in many areas, even though they may have a relatively low chance of causing flooding from storm surge.

## Cape Coral's Flooding Threat

Flooding in Cape Coral can occur from two causes, heavy rain and storm surge. Torrential rain is often associated with tropical storms. Aside from localized street flooding, the Cape's stormwater infrastructure has performed well in preventing flood losses to homes and businesses during torrential rainstorms. However, the City's stormwater system may not have adequate capacity if it rains hard enough for an extended period or if pipes get clogged. Many of the underground pipes, particularly in the Southeast section of the city are susceptible to corrosion. When this happens, soil can enter the system and severely reduce the capacity.

The other flood threat, storm surge, is a phenomenon usually associated with hurricanes. It results from air pressure driving waters against the gravitational forces that usually determine the boundaries between land and sea. Amazingly, the storm surge can be as high as 25 feet in an intense hurricane. The flood zone map indicates the susceptibility of each area to flooding. The following information provides suggestions of action you can take to protect yourself and your property.

Most residents of Cape Coral live in a flood zone that falls into a category called a "Special Flood Hazard Area." Maps are available that show the flood zones within Cape Coral. B-Zones and C-Zones are considered to be out of the Special Flood Hazard Area. The fact that your property is in one of the less-susceptible flood zones does not mean you have no need for concern. Twenty-five percent of flooding occurs outside areas formally designated as being in a flood zone. While flood insurance is required for many property owners, it also is available to properties in B-Zone and C-Zone at a lower insurance premium.

It is important to know your flood hazard. Maps are available that show flood zones within Cape Coral. These large-scale flood maps and other flood protection references are available at the Cape Coral Branch of the Lee County Public Library. You also can come to City Hall to view the Flood Zone maps, known as Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). If you would like assistance reading the maps, please ask for help from the Planning Division staff. Any person, including lending institutions, real estate agents, and insurance agents, can call (239) 574-0553 with the block and lot numbers of your property or properties of interest to find out the flood zone rating.

## What You Can Do:

Several of the City's efforts to prevent flooding depend on your cooperation and assistance. This is how you can help:

- Do not dump or throw anything into the swales, drainage inlets, canals, basins or river. Dumping into these waters is a violation of City of Cape Coral Code of Ordinances, Section 9-16. This includes lawn clippings, horticultural trimmings, dirt and fill material, and other construction debris. Keep in mind that any dirt or lawn clippings blown into the street eventually will be washed into the drainage system. Also, construction sites are required to have erosion protection devices. Material such as silt and sand can reduce the capacity or plug the drainage system.

If this occurs, the system cannot carry the water away as it was engineered to do. If you see dumping, please notify Code Enforcement at 574-0613.

- If your property is next to a drainage inlet, canal, or river, please keep inlets open and the banks clear of brush and debris.
- Always check with the Department of Community Development, Building Division (574-0546) before you build on, alter, regrade, or deposit fill on your property. You may need a permit to ensure that projects do not cause problems on other properties. If you see building or filling without a city permit sign posted, notify Code Enforcement at 574-0613.
- Familiarize yourself with the following information on the flood warning system, flood safety, property protection, flood insurance, remodeling requirements, and beneficial functions of wetlands.

## Emergency Warning System

The Lee County Emergency Operations Center provides the Emergency Warning System for Cape Coral. Tune in local radio or television stations listed below for the latest distribution of emergency information. Severe weather and flood warning threats also are continuously broadcast by the National Weather Service on special weather radios, Channel 4, 162.475 MHz. Because any storm is likely to interrupt electric power, it is important that you have a tuner that can operate on battery power and that you have a supply of fresh batteries. Be prepared for interruptions of service from cable television providers. Emergency vehicles may also broadcast emergency information over an amplified speaker.

AM STATIONS	WARO-FM 94.5	TELEVISION STATIONS	
WHAM-AM 770	WILZ-FM 95.3	Time-Warner Cable Broadcast (Air)	
WKII-AM 1070	WRXK-FM 96.1	WBBH (NBC) 2	20
WTLQ-AM 1200	WINK-FM 96.9	WTVK (WB) 6	46
WINK-AM 1240	WDRR-FM 98.5	WZVN (ABC) 7	26
WCRM-AM 1350	WJBX-FM 99.3	WFTX (FOX) 4	36
WMYR-AM 1410	WOST-FM 100.1	WINK (CBS) 5	11
WWCL-AM 1440	WAVV-FM 101.1	WEVU (IND) 23	7
	WWGR-FM 101.9	WGCU (PBS) 3	30
FM STATIONS	WXKB-FM 103.9		
WAYJ-FM 88.7	WXRK-FM 105.5		
WSRX 89.5	WJST-FM 106.3		
WGCU-FM 90.1	WJST 106.3		
WSOR-FM 90.9	WCKT-FM 107.1		
WJYO-FM 91.5			
WTKT-FM 93.5			

## Flood Safety

- Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the No. 1 cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you must walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure that the ground is still there before you step farther. Floodwaters also can carry microorganisms capable of causing disease via skin contact.
- Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Do not drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out.
- Avoid power lines and electrical wires. The No. 2 flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the power company or City emergency management offices.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals flooded out of their homes

may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn things over and scare away small animals.

- Look before you step. After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs covered with mud can be very slippery.

## Property Protection Measures

If your property has a low finished floor elevation, you may consider retrofitting your structure. Retrofitting can include elevating the structure, flood-proofing doors and walls, re-grading, or installing earthen berms and/or concrete walls. Although costly, professionals may recommend these measures to help protect your property during flooding. An approach everyone can use is to raise the elevation of certain valuables at the time flooding is predicted. This involves putting them on counters, upper cabinets, and attics or upper floors. If you are interested in learning more about these options, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have publications available on these topics. Many publications are available, free of charge, at the Department of Community Development.

## Flood Insurance

Most homeowner's and renter's insurance policies exclude protection from damage caused by flooding. Almost any building with at least two walls and a roof is insurable against flooding through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which offers affordable, federally-backed insurance. Structures under construction are also insurable. Contents of insurable buildings can be covered by a separate policy, also making flood insurance available to renters. Because the City provides more than the minimum required flood plain management, properties within the city are eligible for a CRS discount.

Many people purchased flood insurance because the lending institution required it when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Unless you requested that your flood insurance policy cover the contents, it may only cover the structure. It is possible that flooding waters could cause more damage to the contents than to the structure. If you are in a V-Zone or an A-Zone, you are four times more likely to experience a flood than a fire. For properties in a B, C, or X-Zone, the insurance premium is significantly less. Note that nearly one-third of the claims that the National Flood Insurance Program receives come from these lower risk areas.

## Substantial Improvement Requirements

The National Flood Insurance Program requires that if the cost of reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement to a building equals or exceeds 50 percent of the building's market value, then the building must meet current flood zone construction requirements. Substantially damaged buildings must also be brought up to the same standards. Article VI of the City of Cape Coral Land Use and Development Regulations (pages LU-194 through LU-211.5) specifies details on flood damage prevention. This information is available at the City Clerk's office.

## Natural and Beneficial Functions of Wetlands

In Cape Coral, the areas most susceptible to tropical storm tidal surge are located near the coastline of Charlotte Harbor, Matlacha Pass, and the Caloosahatchee River. These vast areas extend from Burnt Store Marina to just north of Four Mile Cove Eco Park. Most of these areas with the highest susceptibility to flooding are preservation lands owned by the State of Florida. By preserving the native vegetation consisting of salt marshes and mangrove communities, residents of



Hurricane Frances pounds Florida's East Coast shoreline.

St. Pete Times: Clifford Douglas

Cape Coral gain significant protection. The mangroves, in particular, stabilize the shoreline during hurricanes. The mangroves have prop roots, leaves and branches that offer frictional resistance to flowing water. This reduces storm erosion and decreases the speed of the flow of tidal inundation. It also allows the settling of particulate matter. Trees use these sediments and the nutrients in the water for growth. Additionally, the wetlands provide areas for propagation of marine life, bird life, water quality enhancement for surrounding waters and aesthetic benefits. It is in the best interest of Cape Coral to make sure that the functional integrity of these areas is not degraded.

## Flood Protection Assistance

If requested, the Community Development Department and/or Public Works Department will visit a property to review its flood problem and explain ways to stop flooding or prevent flood damage. These services are free. If you are in a floodplain or have had a flood, drainage, or sewer backup problem, check out these sources of assistance. We also can offer assistance with your selection process if you need to hire a qualified contractor or a consultant to help you solve and/or prevent a particular flooding problem. Also, if you need advice and assistance with retrofitting a structure to address flooding concerns, the City can provide this for you. Please contact the Planning Division at 574-0552 if you need such technical assistance.

Additional information about hurricane procedures is available in the Sprint Yellow Pages directory. It contains a map showing evacuation zones for Lee County, primary evacuation routes and the locations of emergency public shelters managed by Red Cross. The telephone directory has lists of materials you should have on hand for a hurricane or flood event. More detailed information is available in the All Hazards Guide: 2004 Edition, prepared by Lee County Emergency Management, available at City Hall. By considering this information, attending hurricane seminars, purchasing flood insurance, and tuning into media broadcasts and other sources of information, you may prevent loss of property and life.

Lastly, please do not assume that because it was 40 years between Hurricane Donna and Hurricane Charley, we are not likely to have another storm soon. Where a hurricane goes is not predictable or logical – they just form and follow a path. That path, as evidenced by Charley, can come right across Southwest Florida at any given time.

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**BREEZE AD TO BE PLACED  
HERE AT TIME OF OUTPUT**