2017 Hurricane Season Expected to Be Above Normal

The 2017 Hurricane Season started June 1. Projections from NOAA indicate an above-normal season. Experts are predicting 11-17 named storms with 5-9 becoming hurricanes and 2-4 of those becoming major hurricanes.

Without knowing when or where those storms may occur, the City of Cape Coral must take every precaution. City departments work year-round to prepare the community for all hazards. Cape Coral Fire Department’s Emergency Management Division helps coordinate many of these activities including developing emergency plans, implementing new technologies such as weather monitoring devices, and conducting trainings and exercises.

One of the greatest assets that Emergency Management has at its disposal is a dedicated group of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers. These volunteers have completed various trainings and certifications to assist the community during preparedness, response and recovery efforts. This year marks the 20th Anniversary of Cape Coral’s award-winning CERT program, and the contributions made by CERT volunteers over the past two decades have been crucial to the resilience of the city.

In addition to developing emergency plans and training volunteers, Emergency Management also delivers training and planning resources to the public. One of the free resources available is the #Hurricane Strong tool kit (FLASH.org), created by the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH). This is continued on page 4

Cornell/Story Case in Top 5 for “DNA Hit of the Year”

Cape Police recognized for perseverance in solving 26-year-old cold case

The Cape Coral Police Department was recognized as a Top 5 finalist at a global convention in Austria for “DNA Hit of the Year” associated with their work in solving a 26-year-old cold case.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement CODIS Administrator Vicki Bellino nominated the Cornell/Story cold case for this globally prestigious award. More than 50 entries were submitted. “Cape Coral’s case was scientifically and forensically important and unique,” said Kyle Schroeder, Gordon Thomas.

Lisa Story
Robin Cornell

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City Attorney
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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 newsletter@capecoral.net.
Mayor’s Message

People still ask me what inspired me to run for mayor of the 10th largest city in Florida... and my response is, and always will be, “I knew I could make a difference.” With a politically active mother, I was taught at a very young age that if you don’t like something - change it. It’s that simple. When I ran for office, my platform consisted of three core messages: Increase transparency and accountability of City government, strengthen our local economy, and improve our community’s quality of life.

While keeping my campaign promises, I’ve remained committed to listening to our community by hosting 16 Mayor’s Night Out “Town Hall” meetings throughout my term. As a City, we implemented Munetrix (go to CapeCoral.net/Open Government) to add transparency to our budgeting as well as applied for and selected by the Bloomberg Philanthropies to be a “What Works City.” The program is designed to accelerate cities’ use of data and evidence to improve the lives of our residents. With the addition of our new 3-1-1 program, “CapeConnect” mobile app and revamped City website, we have proven transparency in government to be a high priority.

Additionally, our City Council reduced the millage three of the past four years and still managed to improve the level of service our citizens receive by all departments. With a new Economic Development Plan, incentive package, online permitting and reduced regulations for businesses, we have truly made a difference in how we are viewed as a city. We have grown our commercial base from just 8% to 12% in three short years. The ‘Top 10 lists we are on speak for themselves.

We have improved the quality of life in many ways. We’ve continued to support the revitalization of South Cape Coral. We approved a $6.5 million, game-changing streetscape project for SE 47th Terrace, selected a project manager for Bimini Basin, put in sidewalks, bike lanes, streetlights and improved medians throughout the city. We also completed a Parks Master Plan and equipped our first responders with much-needed vehicles, equipment and body cameras. We addressed pay parity and raises for City employees, which hadn’t been addressed in seven years, all the while remaining fiscally responsible with every decision. Fighting for improved water quality has been a priority from the beginning, which led to Cape Coral joining 164 municipalities and 19 counties affected by damaging water pollution, to sign onto the largest regional compact ever initiated in the nation.

I am proud of our City’s accomplishments; however, with both of my children now attending college and the amount of hours required as mayor, I am choosing to focus my energies on building my company when my term ends in November. Therefore, I am making the difficult decision not to seek re-election.

Now is not the time for complacency. We have an upcoming Primary election in September. Become educated on the issues facing our community and most importantly VOTE! Those seeking elected office must understand the big picture and how each decision changes future outcomes. We should strongly encourage our leaders to take active roles in the Florida League of Cities, League of Mayors, US Conference of Mayors and other organizations to bring back great ideas to improve our community.

For the remainder of my time in office, I will continue to do the right thing for our city, regardless of political opinions or the loudest voice. I want to ensure the best policies, procedures and controls are implemented for the betterment of our city and our residents.

City Manager’s Message

Welcome to the summer issue of our community newsletter. This issue features our annual focus on hurricane preparation. As you read through the publication, you will find valuable information on how you and your family can be ready for any storm that impacts our area. The experts predict 11 – 17 named storms this year, depending on the source. Please take time to organize and prepare for the hurricane season.

As you are aware, we issued a Stage I - Water Shortage Declaration in mid-April and moved to mandatory one-day watering. The freshwater canal system plummeted to critical levels, and one-day watering was the only option. While this certainly impacted the yards of many residents, the decision to move to one-day watering was necessary. With more than 800 fire hydrants installed on the irrigation pipe, maintaining pressure to the hydrants and ensuring the public safety in the event of a fire was the priority.

While this year’s dry season was an anomaly, there is no doubt we must address the supply and demand issues connected with our irrigation system. We want our residents and businesses to have a reliable, non-potable water source to irrigate their lawns and landscaping. Our irrigation system is a tremendous amenity that few cities provide, and our community has grown accustomed to having this water available. But it is not a limitless supply. We need our residents and businesses to understand that using what is necessary to maintain landscaping usually is much less than what is being used. We must evaluate options to encourage conservation and reduce demand.

We continue to address the supply side of this equation, and I am pleased to report that the City has entered into an interlocal governmental agreement with Florida Governmental Utilities Authority for up to 6 million gallons of irrigation water per day. We are in the process of constructing a pipeline that will connect our system to the North Fort Myers Wastewater System. This is a good example of intergovernmental cooperation benefiting all parties. It avoids the requirement for FGUA to dig injection wells and allows Cape Coral to utilize treated wastewater that meets our standard for irrigation purposes.

Another potential option is with the Southwest Aggregates reservoir property in Charlotte County. The City is conducting a 90-day test run to pump water from the reservoir into the drainage ditches along U.S. 41 and then to our freshwater canal system. There is an article in the newsletter about how this project came together in short order to alleviate our concerns related to fire hydrants. If the test run is successful, and we receive long-term approval from appropriate government agencies, the reservoir may be part of the long-term solution for the supply side.

I am working with City staff to craft my proposed FY 2018 – FY 2020 budget for the City of Cape Coral. Although City Council only will be adopting a budget for FY 2018, the three-year rolling budget format allows City Council and the community to consider future financial impacts of policy-related decisions and to chart the future course for the level of service we want to provide. Essentially, a multi-year budget is the foundation for economic sustainability.

We have good news on the Bimini Basin and Seven Islands projects. City staff is working with our consultant to complete a market analysis for the Bimini, while the land use change amendment for Seven Islands is moving through the process. We have brief updates on these two, exciting projects in the newsletter.

Have a great summer.
Hurricane Season

a comprehensive approach to preparedness, consisting of the following components:

1. Personal Safety
2. Family Preparedness
3. Financial Security
4. Damage Prevention
5. Community Service.

■ Personal Safety

According to FLASH, the greatest tool available to increase personal safety is hazard awareness. Examples of hazard awareness include knowing if your home is in a flood or surge zone, knowing your nearest evacuation route, as well as how to receive news and emergency information. Your awareness of the storm’s direct and indirect hazards coupled with your awareness of tropical events can ensure your personal safety by relocating to areas deemed safe by Emergency Management officials.

■ Family Preparedness

To properly prepare your family to endure and recover from an emergency, you need to compile information and resources. Your disaster kit should be small enough that you can pick up and take it with you if an evacuation is ordered. Your kit should include supplies such as food, water, cash, medications and hygiene products, as well as insurance policies, personal identification information, wills and deeds. Your family also should develop a communication plan so if an emergency suddenly occurs and family members are separated, you will know how to contact each other and where to meet.

■ Financial Security

In addition to having cash on-hand to purchase supplies in the aftermath of an emergency, having financial plans and adequate insurance in place to restore your quality of life after an emergency is critical to mitigating the harm a storm causes. Homeowner’s and renter’s insurance, as well as flood insurance, are important steps in becoming more disaster resilient. It is important to know what your insurance coverage is, how to file a claim with your insurance company, and what records your company requires to complete the claim process.

■ Damage Prevention

In 2002, Florida enacted new building codes designed to combat the catastrophic effects of Hurricane Andrew. Those codes were tested during the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons with great results. Although building codes have improved, homeowners today can benefit by assessing their home’s vulnerability. During high winds, roof shingles and tiles can be damaged or blown away. A sealed roof deck can help prevent significant water intrusion. In addition, installing impact doors and windows will help to reinforce your home and reduce the overall impact to a home during a disaster. Having your home inspected by a qualified wind mitigation specialist can help identify additional improvements and provide homeowners with added piece of mind.

■ Community Service

The most valuable resource a community has when preparing for and recovering from an emergency is its citizens. Helping your neighbors build their kits and secure their homes prior to a storm, and assisting with cleanup in the aftermath saves lives and taxpayers’ dollars. Safety is always a concern when working around storm debris. Indirect deaths are prevalent after storms. Some indirect deaths occur from medical issues elevated by stress and restricted access to medical care. Others are preventable accidents such as falling from roofs or mishandling equipment during clean-up efforts. To avoid these accidents and assist your community in a coordinated, collaborative effort, consider joining Cape Coral’s CERT team. For additional preparedness resources or information on joining CERT, please contact Cape Coral Emergency Management at (239) 573-3022 or CapeCERT@capecoral.net.

Survey

Honeywell Governmental Affairs. “To be one of only five cases featured worldwide is an honor and a testament to the incredible work of our detectives,” said Police Chief Dave Newlan. “They worked tirelessly for more than a quarter century to bring closure to the families and obtain justice for the victims.”

Cape Coral Makes “100 Best Fleets” for 2017

The City of Cape Coral’s Fleet Management Division has been recognized as one of the “100 Best Fleets” for 2017. The program recognizes and rewards peak performing fleet operations in North America. Cape Coral landed at No. 76 on the list.

“Being named as a “100 Best Fleet” is quite an accomplishment for our Fleet Management staff and reflects the City’s commitment to excellence,” said City Manager John Szerlag. “A cost-effective and efficient fleet operation is critical to the services we provide daily to the community.”

Currently in its 16th year, 100 Best Fleets identifies and encourages ever-increasing levels of performance improvement within the fleet industry. The program evaluates fleet operations based on 12 criteria and is sponsored by Tom C. Johnson, consultant and author.
Cape Coral 2017 City Council Elections

The City of Cape Coral will be holding Primary and General Elections in 2017. The Primary Election will be Tuesday, September 12. The General Election will be held Tuesday, November 7. City voters will elect a Mayor and Council Members for Council Districts 1, 4 and 6. This is a non-partisan election.

Candidates can announce their intent to run at any time. Before accepting any contribution, or making any expenditure, the “Appointment of Campaign Treasurer” and “Designation of Campaign Depository” must be filed with the City Clerk’s Office. These forms can be found on the City Clerk’s web page on the City’s website (www.capecoral.net).

Qualifying for candidates will begin Monday, July 3 at 7:30 a.m. and end Friday, July 7 at 1 p.m. (excluding July 4th). All candidates must be continuous, full-time residents of the city for the entire calendar year preceding their qualification for office. Candidates also must reside in their respective Districts.

Please note: Although candidates must qualify in their respective districts, the elections themselves are “at large” and not district-specific races. This means all voters in Cape Coral can vote for candidates in every district.

The terms of office are four years. Candidates must pay the required fees and complete all necessary paperwork at the City Clerk’s Office during the qualifying period. A “Financial Disclosure Form” must be completed and a valid voter registration card provided.

The fee to run for office of Council Member is $426, which includes the filing fee of $100 plus the Election Assessment fee of 1 percent of the annual salary of $32,600 ($326). The fee to run for office of Mayor is $516, which includes the filing fee of $150 plus the Election Assessment fee of 1 percent of the annual salary of $36,600 ($366).

Please contact the City Clerk’s Office at (239) 574-0417 for additional information.

Cape Businesses Recognized with “Distinguished Entrepreneur of Southwest Florida” Awards

Three Cape Coral businesses were recognized at the 2017 Distinguished Entrepreneur of Southwest Florida Awards dinner on May 10 at the Southwest Florida Performing Arts Center in Bonita Springs.

The “Distinguished Entrepreneur Award” was presented to Dr. Anais Aurora Badia of the Florida Skin Center, Inc. based in Cape Coral for their overall outstanding success. The “Distinguished Business Innovator Award” was given to Guido and Susan Minaya of Minaya Learning Global Solutions LLC based in Cape Coral for the inventive process advances for their type of business. The “Business Advocate of the Year” was awarded to Cape Coral resident Brian Rist of Storm Smart for his dedication and contributions to the Southwest Florida community.

Hosted by the Florida Small Business Development Center at Florida Gulf Coast University, the awards seek out business owners in Southwest Florida who overcame challenges, discovered new technologies to streamline their procedures and dedicated themselves to contributions, mentorships and civic leadership in their communities. There was a total of 30 applicants who shared stories of obstacles they conquered to be successful.

Congratulations to our Cape Coral businesses and all the nominees for their success in helping make our region one of the fastest growing areas in business success.

Add Ping4Alerts! App for Emergency Notifications

Smartphone app provides weather, emergency and information alerts to community

The City encourages residents to add the Ping4Alerts! smartphone app to their iOS or Android devices (phone or tablet) via the app store. The app is free to download.

The City uses the Ping4Alerts! smartphone app as a notification tool to let our residents know about emergencies and other public safety conditions. The app pushes information to iOS and Android devices based on their geographic location.

The app also is used by NOAA’s National Weather Service. NOAA provides regular weather alerts, including warnings and updates on severe weather via the app.

City Council Candidate Debates Scheduled

The City of Cape Coral and CapeTV 98 will be hosting candidate debates for the upcoming primary and general elections. The Mayor’s seat and Council seats in District 1, District 4 and District 6 will be on the ballot this year.

The dates for the primary debates will be Thursday/Friday, August 24 and 25. The dates for the general election debates will be Thursday/Friday, October 26 and 27. The debates will begin at 7 p.m. and will be broadcast live from Council Chambers. They also will be streamed live on CapeTV at www.cape-tv.com and will be available for replay.
City of Cape Coral’s CAFR Report Receives “Certificate of Achievement” for 30th Consecutive Year

The “Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting” has been awarded to the City of Cape Coral by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the City’s comprehensive annual financial report. This is the 30th consecutive year Cape Coral has received the award. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

“Our Finance Department, led by Director Victoria Bateman, has done outstanding work to achieve this recognition once again,” said City Manager John Szerlag. “Receiving this award for the 30th consecutive year demonstrates the City’s continuing commitment to professional excellence.”

The certificate of achievement is awarded to local governments that go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency. The City of Cape Coral’s CAFR has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” to clearly communicate its financial story, and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR. The City’s CAFR reports are online at www.capecoral.net under the “Departments’ tab and Financial Services.”

The GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals with offices in Chicago, IL, and Washington, DC.

Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Update

Budget planning underway with all City departments

City departments are working on their proposed budgets for FY 2018 – FY 2020. Financial Services staff is meeting with City departments and City management to develop the City Manager’s Proposed Budget. The proposed budget presented to City Council will continue the three-year rolling budget for FY 2018 – 2020, a format first introduced in July 2013.

The rolling budget format supports the City’s Strategic Plan and allows for greater preplanning. Potential financial issues can be identified and addressed before they reach a crisis point. As allowed by state statute, City Council will only adopt the first year of the three-year budget.

The City’s budget consists of multiple funds; however, the General Fund is the primary operating fund of the City. The cost of providing police and fire services, parks and recreation services, transportation maintenance as well as basic administrative services of the City are budgeted in the General Fund.

The single largest revenue source to the General Fund is ad valorem taxes. Ad valorem taxes are directly tied to taxable property values and can become an unreliable and volatile revenue source. Revenue diversification is key to ensuring consistent and high-quality services to the community. The public service tax and fire service special assessment revenues provide the necessary funds to support the infrastructure needs of the city and the operations of City government. These alternative revenues also allowed City Council to lower the property tax millage rate three times in the past four years, dropping from 7.9570 to 6.75 mils. This 15% reduction in the tax rate has saved Cape Coral taxpayers almost $19 million in property taxes.

Meetings between staff and City Council will continue through the final adoption of the budget. Listed below are some important dates:

- **June 1** - Estimated Property Valuations from Property Appraiser
- **July 1** - Preliminary Certification of Tax Roll from Property Appraiser
- **July 15** - Release of City Manager’s Proposed Budget
- **July 20** - City Council Meeting: Review of City Manager’s Proposed Budget

The City also must select a date for City Council to set the tentative millage rate. This must be done by August 4.

Two public hearings will be held in September to adopt the City’s FY 2018 Operating Budget. Those dates have not yet been determined.

Students Learn About Public Works at “Public Education Day”

On March 9, Public Works held their annual Public Works Education Day. More than 300 Charter School third graders and Special Populations attended. Guests visited 12 stations, each representing different areas of Public Works.

Staff demonstrated the role of Public Works in keeping the city operating. Some areas provided “hands-on” experiences such as searching for iron pins with metal detectors, and operating the lights and sirens of a police car. Students learned about the various pieces of heavy equipment used by Public Works crews in the field.

After each station was visited, third graders went to Council Chambers and listened to several Council members explain aspects of government. After that, each child received a bag that contained safety information and lots of goodies.

Special thanks to City Council, City staff, Oasis and Christa McAuliffe charter schools, Safe Routes To School, Florida Department of Transportation, Waste Pro, Banks Engineering and Tetra Tech, Inc.
City of Cape Coral Issues Burn Ban

On April 11, Gov. Rick Scott issued a Declaration of a State of Emergency for Wildfires due to the significant drought conditions across the state. At the time of the Declaration, there were 107 active wildfires affecting 23,827 acres, and at least 17 homes had been destroyed. The Declaration was enacted so that precautions could be taken to protect the lives and property of the people in threatened communities, the natural environment, and the general welfare of the State of Florida.

In response to the Governor's Declaration, the City of Cape Coral issued a temporary burn ban. We anticipate the ban will be lifted once the rainy season begins sometime in mid- to late-June. A review of the burn policies, both in and out of a burn ban, is important to protecting the lives and property of the citizens of Cape Coral. For more details on the burn ban and restrictions, or open burning in Cape Coral, please contact Life Safety at (239) 242-3264 or visit the Cape Coral Fire Department web page at www.capecoral.net/Fire.

Wildfire Season Active

Cape Coral Fire Department responded to numerous wildland fires during this year’s wildfire season. Wildfire season is January through June.

The Fire Department battled a couple of fires that burned dangerously close to homes. These fires were on SE 24th Avenue (March) and Ceitus Parkway (May).

While dry conditions should be over by the end of June, residents are encouraged to be vigilant about fire safety year-round. About 90 percent of all wildfires start due to human activities, which means most fires are preventable.

Council Hires Andrea Butola as City Auditor

In March, City Council selected Andrea Butola as the new City Auditor to replace Margaret Krym, who retired March 31. Butola brings a wealth of audit experience and professional certifications to the City. She is a licensed Certified Public Accountant, a Certified Fraud Examiner, and a Chartered Global Management Accountant. Butola has worked at various organizations in Rhode Island, including the Office of Internal Audit, Department of Transportation, MetLife Internal Audit and Office of the Auditor General. Butola has a Bachelor of Science in Business Management and Master’s in Accounting from Salve Regina University, Newport, RI.

Krym spent five years as the City Auditor for Cape Coral. She successfully achieved peer review certification for the City Auditor’s Office, which assures compliance with the Government Accounting Standards set forth by the United States Government Accountability Office.

The City Auditor reports directly to the City Council, which protects the objectivity and independence of the audit office, and assures independent unbiased reporting of audit results.

Cape Coral Wins 2017 “Best Tasting Drinking Water” Contest

Cape Coral’s drinking water was recognized as the “Best Tasting Drinking Water” by the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association Region V. The organization held their annual in March.

The best tasting drinking water contest included utilities from a three-county region of Southwest Florida (Collier, Hendry and Lee). In addition to Cape Coral, six local utilities participated: Town of Ave Maria, City of Bonita Springs, Collier County, Lee County, City of Marco Island and the Seminole Tribe.

Water samples are judged on taste, color, clarity and aroma. The judging was completely subjective and not scientific in any way. Based on the judges’ results, the City of Cape Coral won first place and was selected as the “Best Tasting Drinking Water,” giving the City bragging rights as the best tasting drinking water in the three-county region for 2017.

Congratulations to the Utilities Department’s Water Production and Collection/Distribution divisions. Water Production staff produces the City’s high-quality drinking water and sends the water into the distribution system maintained by the Collection/Distribution staff. This award further recognizes the Utilities Department’s hard work, dedication, and exemplary commitment to maintaining and operating the water treatment facilities and distribution system.
Click & Capture Cape Coral Photo Contest a Big Success

A picture can be worth a thousand words...or in the case of Cape Coral Parks & Recreation's recent “Click & Capture Cape Coral Photo Contest,” it can be worth a nice prize package.

Thanks to the support of area partners in making donations and helping get the word out, the contest was a huge success with more than $2,700 available in prizes. Contestants submitted more than 1,100 digital photographs from March 10-April 30.

The Parks & Recreation contest highlighted three categories: “Active & Healthy,” “Nature of the Cape,” and “Event Fun.” First place winners in each of the categories received a one-night stay at The Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village, a $200 Amazon Gift Card, a $100 Parks & Recreation Gift Card and two VIP tickets to the 2017 “Red, White & Boom!” Runners-Up in each category received a $100 Amazon Gift Card, a $100 Parks & Recreation Gift Card, four General Admission Tickets to Cape Coral MSA, tied for No. 1 on American Lung Association’s list of “Cleanest Metropolitan Areas in the Country for Ozone”

Sun Splash Family Waterpark and a twosome of golf at Coral Oaks Golf Course. A “Fan Favorite” photograph was selected by the public the final week of the contest, and the winner received a $100 Parks & Recreation Gift Card, four tickets to Sun Splash and a twosome of golf at Coral Oaks.

A big thank you to our partners and to everyone who went to the parks and other Cape Coral locations to take photos and participate in the contest this spring.

We hope you had fun getting engaged and look forward to sharing some spectacular photographs throughout the year!

Cape Coral’s Oasis High School Makes Top 50 List of Nation’s “Most Challenging High Schools”

The City of Cape Coral’s Oasis High School has landed at No. 47 on the list of “Most Challenging High Schools” in the United States – a 15-spot jump from 2016. The list is compiled by the Washington Post using a Challenge Index* to rate public high schools in the United States. Only 2,323 of the nation’s 22,000 public high schools managed to reach the minimum standard of the index, which places Oasis High School in the Top 1 percent of high schools in the country.

“This is quite an honor for our high school, our students, faculty and parents,” said Interim Superintendent Jackie Collins. “We have established a world-class learning opportunity at our charter schools, and we appreciate the hard work and support we receive from so many people.”

Of the 350 high schools in the state of Florida that made the list, Oasis was ranked No. 13. Oasis High School is part of the City of Cape Coral’s Municipal Charter School System, which includes Oasis Elementary, Christa McAuliffe Elementary and Oasis Middle schools.

*The Challenge Index is determined by the total number of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Cambridge tests given at a school each year divided by the number of seniors who graduated in May or June. With a few exceptions, public schools that achieved a ratio of at least 1.00, meaning they had as many tests in 2016 as they had graduates, were put on the national list.

Cape Coral Landing on 2017 Top Lists

Cape Coral is continuing to make several top lists in 2017. Here is what we have so far:

- Trulia ranked Cape Coral No. 2 on “Top 10 Cities Where People Are Moving in 2017”
- Cape Coral landed at No. 75 on Millennial Finance’s list of “Top 150 Cities for Millennials”
- Forbes.com has Cape Coral in the No. 1 spot for “Fastest Growing Cities in the U.S.”
- Cape Coral is No. 15 on Milken Institute list for “Best Performing Cities” in 2016 for Large Cities.
- Cape Coral landed at No. 34 on the LendEDU.com list for “Best Cities to Start a Family.” Pembroke Pines was the only Florida city to rank higher (No. 30) on LendEDU’s listing of the best 300 cities.
- Cape Coral – Fort Myers is No. 5 on U.S. Census Bureau’s list of 25 Fastest Growing Metro Areas.
- Cape Coral is No. 38 on the list of “Top 50 Happiest Cities” based on Gallup-Healthways “Well Being Index”
- Cape Coral MSA tied for No. 1 on American Lung Association’s list of “Cleanest Metropolitan Areas in the Country for Ozone”
- Cape Coral MSA tied for No. 1 for “Cleanest City in the Country” for 24-Hour Particle Pollution by American Lung Association
- American Lung Association ranks Cape Coral metro area No. 10 in Top 25 Cleanest Cities for Year-Round Particle Pollution.
Chiquita Lock Removal Process Continues

The City is continuing the process to remove the Chiquita Lock in the southwest Cape. The permit application for removal of the lock was submitted to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in October 2016.

Since the permit application was submitted, the City has received two Requests for Additional Information from FDEP, and is completing the response to the second request.

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Classes

Using principles in FYN, residents can have drought-tolerant Florida-friendly landscaping

The Florida Yards and Neighborhood program provides principles on planning and maintaining your landscaping. Each principle includes actions you can take to make your yard friendlier to the environment. This is a goal-oriented program. When you reach your goal, your yard is recognized, and a sign is provided to let your neighbors know that your yard is Florida-friendly through the Florida Yards and Neighborhood program.

- **Florida Yards and Neighborhood Classes and Plant Sale**
  - Introductory Class will be July 21 from 6 p.m.-9 p.m.
  - Summer Plant Sale will be Saturday, July 29 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
  - Rain Barrel Workshop is also Saturday, July 29 from 9 a.m.-Noon.

Classes are held at Rotary Park Environmental Center at 5505 Rose Garden Road. For more information regarding Florida Yards and Neighborhood classes or other home gardening classes, please call Rotary Park at (239) 549-4606.

Gulf Coast Village Opens Palmview

Gulf Coast Village officially opened “Palmview,” a state-of-the-art assisted living and memory support residence facility. The facility is located by Gulf Coast Village’s Santa Barbara Boulevard campus.

Officials from Volunteers of America, owners of Gulf Coast Village and Palmview, hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour attended by leaders from across the community. The 130,980-square foot facility is built on a former City-owned parking lot, which was acquired by Gulf Coast about 10 years ago. Palmview offers resort-like amenities that will allow residents of the facility to enjoy medical attention without sacrificing quality of life.

Inside the walls of Palmview are a variety of one- and two-bedroom residences with living rooms, kitchens equipped with modern appliances, walk-in closets, a TV and Wi-Fi. The facility also features six separate dining areas to offer residents variety.

This is just one of several new assisted living facilities that will be developed in Cape Coral over the next few years to help meet a growing demand for this type of service in our community.

The subsequent steps in the permit application process are generally as follows:

1. FDEP has 30 days upon receipt of the City’s response to review the information for completeness. FDEP can request additional information, or if the City’s response is deemed adequate, FDEP can determine that the application is complete.

2. FDEP must issue or deny the permit within 90 days of receiving a complete application.

3. If FDEP intends to issue a permit, the agency will issue a Notice of Intent to issue a permit.

4. A petition for Formal Administrative Hearing pursuant to Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, challenging the issuance of a permit may be filed within the 21 days following publication of the Notice of Intent. Timing for resolution of such a petition, if filed, will vary.

The water quality modeling and environmental assessment provided in the permit application shows that there will be no substantive detrimental impact on water quality if the lock was to be removed. Hence, no water quality improvement projects were proposed to be necessary for removal of the lock.
It is important for all citizens and business owners to understand the potential risks of flooding. In 2008, the federal government issued new flood hazard maps for Lee County based on updated engineering studies. Please familiarize yourself with the maps and review the actions you can take to minimize health and property risks associated with flooding.

Flooding in Cape Coral can occur from two causes—heavy rain and storm surge. Aside from localized street flooding, the Cape’s stormwater infrastructure has proven to perform well relative to preventing flood losses to homes and businesses during torrential rainstorms. However, it may not have adequate capacity if it rains hard enough for an extended period or if pipes get clogged. The other flood threat, storm surge, is a phenomenon usually associated with hurricanes. Amazingly, the storm surge can be as high as 25 feet in an intense hurricane. The areas most susceptible to storm surge are located near the coastline of Charlotte Harbor, the Caloosahatchee River and Matlacha Pass.

Historically, high tides up to 12 feet above normal were reported at Fort Myers and Punta Rasa during the 1926 Miami hurricane. In 1960, Hurricane Donna caused high-water marks of 10 to 11 feet on Estero Island.

In 2004, Hurricane Charley made landfall on the southwest coast of Florida, near Cayo Costa, with maximum sustained winds of 130 knots. Because the eye shrank considerably in the 12 hours before landfall, these extreme winds were confined to a very small area, reducing storm surge potential. During landfall, the local area received an average of 3.91 inches of rainfall. Other municipalities within Florida reported storm surge of more than 7 feet and North Naples reported rainfall of 7.48 inches.

If a hurricane watch is issued, please keep in mind that every hurricane is different. Base an action plan on information specifically pertaining to the incoming storm.

The flood map in this publication is transcribed from large-scale flood maps and shows the “Special Flood Hazard Area” (SFHA) within the City of Cape Coral. The SFHA is the area where floodplain management regulations must be enforced and mandatory purchase of flood insurance applies. The SFHA includes Zones AE and VE. These large-scale flood maps and other flood protection references are available at City Hall and the Cape Coral Public Library. If you would like assistance with reading the map, please call (239) 574-0553 to ask for help from the Planning Division staff.

The following information provides suggestions of actions you can take to protect yourself and your property.

### 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 9-15.
Flooding .......................................................... from page 10

Further, Section 9-107 prohibits the sweeping or blowing of vegetative material into stormwater drains, ditches, conveyances, water bodies, wetlands, sidewalks, or roadways. This includes lawn clippings, horticultural trimmings, dirt and fill material, and other debris. Any dirt or lawn clippings blown into the street eventually will be washed into the drainage system. Also, all construction sites are required to have erosion protection devices, as silt and sand can reduce the capacity of the drainage system. If this occurs, the drainage system cannot carry the water away as the system was engineered to do. If you see violations, please notify Code Compliance at (239) 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 Building Division at (239) 574-0546 before you build on, alter, regrade, or deposit fill on your property. You may need a permit to ensure that your project does not cause drainage problems on other properties nearby. If you see building or filling without a City permit sign posted, please notify Code Compliance at (239) 574-0613.

■ Property Protection Measures

If flooding is predicted, one protection measure that costs nothing is to elevate valuables. This involves putting them on counters, upper cabinets, attics, or upper floors. As Cape Coral is located within a hurricane region, consider installing storm shutters and reinforcing your garage door.

Measures to protect a property from flood damage include retrofitting, re-grading your yard, and correcting local drainage problems. If your property has a low finished floor elevation, you may consider retrofitting your structure. If you don’t know your property’s current floor elevation, you can obtain copies of elevation certificates for buildings that were built since 1993 on the City’s website, www.capecoral.net or by calling (239) 574-0411. Retrofitting can include elevating the structure, flood-proofing doors and walls, re-grading, or installing earthen berms and/or concrete walls. Although these remedies may require a considerable investment, these measures may help protect your property during flooding.

City staff is available for site visits to review flooding, drainage, and sewer problems and to provide one-on-one advice to the property owner about property protection (such as retrofitting techniques and drainage improvements). Staff can also offer assistance with your selection process if you need to hire a qualified contractor or consultant to help you solve and/or prevent a particular flooding problem. Please contact the Planning Division at (239) 573-3160, if you need such technical assistance.

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, the Lee County library or the internet. All development within a floodplain requires a permit. For information on obtaining a permit, please contact the Building Division, 1015 Cultural Park Blvd., Cape Coral, FL 33990, (239) 574-0546.

■ Flood Insurance

Most homeowner’s and renter’s insurance policies exclude protection from damage caused by flooding. If you don’t have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Structures under construction are also insurable. 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. Contents of insurable buildings can be covered by a separate policy, also making flood insurance available to renters. 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. Don’t wait for the next flood to buy insurance protection.

■ 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 also must be brought up to the same standards. Article VI of the City of Cape Coral Land Use and Development Regulations specifies details on flood damage prevention. This information is available at the City Clerk’s office and on the City website at www.capecoral.net.

■ 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 Ecological Preserve. 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 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 effect reduces storm erosion and decreases the speed of the flow of tidal inundation and allows the settling of particulate matter. The mangroves use these sediments and the nutrients in the water for growth. Additionally, the mangrove environments 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.

■ Emergency Warning System

The Lee County Emergency Operations Center provides the Emergency Warning System for Cape Coral. A hurricane watch for Lee County will be announced if hurricane conditions are possible for our area within the next 36 hours. A Hurricane Watch means it is time to put the early stages of your hurricane plan into action. Tune in to local radio or television stations listed for the latest distribution of emergency information. Severe weather and flood warning threats are also continuously broadcast by the National Weather Service on special weather radios, on Channel 4, 162.475 MHz. Emergency vehicles also may broadcast emergency information over an amplified speaker.

Cape Coral uses a free smartphone app — Ping4alerts! — to instantly notify citizens of public safety concerns. Residents and visitors can download the app on their Apple or Android devices. Ping4alerts! delivers relevant, real-time emergency messages to mobile devices, including up-to-the-minute severe weather advisories and alerts from the National Weather Service. This app is a free iOS and Android app that uses the location-based technology inherent in today’s smartphones to deliver notifications within a highly localized area, which ensures accuracy.

In addition to Ping4alerts!, Lee County has the CodeRED high-speed telephone emergency notification service. The CodeRED system gives County officials the ability to deliver pre-recorded emergency telephone information to targeted areas or the entire county at a rate of up to 60,000 calls per hour. Visit the Lee County website at www.LeeEOC.com or call (239) 477-1228 to enter your contact information in the CodeRED database.

There is a 30-day waiting period before National Flood Insurance Program coverage takes effect. Contact your insurance agent for more information on rates and coverage.

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Flooding ........................................ from page 12

If the County declares an evacuation advisory or evacuation order for your area, please heed the warning and give yourself plenty of time to leave the area.

Because any storm is likely to interrupt electric power, it is important that you have a radio or television that can operate on battery power and that you have a supply of fresh batteries. Be prepared for interruptions of service from cable television and telephone providers.

- **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 and 6 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 further. Flood waters 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 attempt to drive around road barriers as the road or bridge may be washed out.
  - **AVOID power lines and electrical wires.** The No. 2 cause of death is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to LCEC or City emergency management offices. Disconnect electricity and gas lines prior to flooding.
  - **LOOK OUT for animals, especially snakes.** Small animals flooded out of their environment may seek shelter in homes. Use a pole or stick to poke to turn things over and scare away small animals.
  - **LOOK before you step.** After a flood, the ground and floors may be covered with debris, including broken glass and nails. Floors and stairs covered with mud can be very slippery.
  - **NEVER USE a generator indoors or in an attached garage.** A portable generator uses an internal combustion engine that emits deadly carbon monoxide. Place the generator outside – where exhaust fumes will not enter the house. Only operate it outdoors in a well-ventilated, dry area, away from air intakes to the home, and protected from direct exposure to rain. After Hurricane Charley in 2004, the Cape Coral Fire Department conducted more than 400 safety inspections of households in the City using generators. One-fourth of the homes had potentially dangerous levels of carbon monoxide in their houses, and 10 people required hospital treatment. If you own a generator, consider purchasing a carbon monoxide detector.

- **Hurricane Evacuation Safety Tips**
  Experts who have studied the problem of storm damage and ways to mitigate the consequences formulated the recommendations provided herein.

  Additional information is available in the **Lee County All Hazards Guide**, at the Lee County Emergency Management. The guide is available at City Hall, Fire & Police Headquarters, the library, the post office, and online at www.leececc.com.

  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.

  For more information on flooding, please visit the City’s website at www.capecoral.net and select “Flood Information” from the “Services” menu or contact the City’s Planning Division at (239) 573-3160.

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**Rainy Season Brings Standing Water**

Cape Coral receives an average of 54 inches of rain each year. Most of the rain occurs during the annual rainy season, which begins in June and continues through September. Rainfall can be heavy at times, and when that happens, the City receives reports and complaints about flooding.

Some residents have a misconception that rainfall should drain quickly, and if it does not, there must be something wrong with the stormwater system. This is not the case.

The City of Cape Coral has one of the best stormwater management systems in the state, one which can handle most severe weather events. During and after a storm, rainwater travels through the swales. Swales are considered “secondary” drainage, along with more than 500 miles of storm pipes and almost 23,000 catch basins/inlets. Swales act as a filter and conduit by removing silt deposits before the rainwater enters the inlets. This protects our canal system from potential pollutants.

The secondary drainage facilities carry the stormwater into 400 miles of manmade canals throughout the city. These canals are defined as “primary” stormwater conveyance facilities (drainage systems).

During a heavy storm, rain may collect in swales and in front of inlets. This may result in standing water at a road intersection. The reason the water does not drain immediately usually is because canal levels are higher than normal – to the point where the storm pipes are unable to convey excessive water. If the canal levels get too high in the freshwater system, risers at structures called “weirs” can be lowered to release water and bring the level down to an acceptable level. This enables the standing water in the roads to drain.

Tidal action in the saltwater canals also can affect the secondary drainage facilities when there is a high tide. As the tide recedes, more water is allowed to flow through the outfall pipes, and water disperses from the swale areas.

During the rainy season, we ask residents to be patient and cautious. Allow up to 72 hours for the rainwater to drain, and use caution in navigating rain-soaked streets. If no additional rain is received, most of the water will drain within a day or two. This is how the City’s stormwater system is intended to work.

There are circumstances when standing water remains for several days, and these are the situations that become a priority for the City to address.

Working together, City staff and residents can get through the daily summer deluges without incident or injury. If you have any questions or concerns about flooding or drainage, please contact the 311 Call Center by dialing 3-1-1.

Note: The City only is responsible for flooding that occurs in the public right of way. The homeowner is responsible for addressing standing water in their backyard and side yards. While the City can provide suggestions or guidance to the homeowner on how to address standing water issues on private property, actual maintenance is the responsibility of the homeowner.
Cape Coral Receives $600,000 Grant for Stormwater Improvements

The City of Cape Coral received a $600,000 grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for stormwater improvement projects in the city. Cape Coral will use the funds to upgrade about 300 catch basins and install swales in a 725-acre area west of Burnt Store Road as part of the North 2 utilities project. The new catch basins will enhance water quality by enabling more stormwater runoff to filter into the ground rather than flowing directly through storm drains into the canal system, and ultimately into Charlotte Harbor.

Charlotte Harbor is a natural estuary and the state’s second largest bay.

Florida DEP awarded $1.8 million in TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) water-quality restoration grants to seven communities. The grants focus on projects designed to reduce pollutants to impaired waters from stormwater discharges. Cape Coral’s project provides significant nutrient reduction to the Charlotte Harbor estuary and bay.

Cape Coral maintains an extensive stormwater management program supported by an annual fee to all properties. The program includes street sweeping, swales, weirs, catch basins, stormwater pipes and dredging services.

What’s the Green Stuff in the Canals?

Duckweed may begin appearing in canals and waterways

As summer comes around, the City often receives calls from residents concerned about the green stuff forming in the canals. The complaints begin usually right after rainy season starts. This unsightly but very common visitor to the waterways is “duckweed.”

Duckweed is a small, freshwater plant and a favorite food of ducks. The plant is moved by wind and tides. It enters saltwater areas from the river and freshwater canals. Once rainy season begins, the duckweed becomes more prevalent. Why? Because rain causes the salt content (salinity) of the water to drop, and duckweed grows quickly. Typically, the salinity stays below seven parts per million from July until late-October. Once rainy season eases, the salinity starts to rise, and the duckweed dies off.

People who live on canals should expect to see duckweed every year. Patience is necessary. Duckweed is unsightly, but it will go away. The plant is not harmful, and other than making the canals green, there is no adverse effect. For duckweed problems, call Lee County Hyacinth Control at 694-2174.

“Pirates Cove” Opens at Sun Splash Waterpark

Sun Splash is open, and the season is in full swing with more than 14 acres of pools, slides and fun activities taking place this summer. New this season is “Pirates Cove,” which replaces the old “Tots” area and offers 32 interactive features to engage visitors. The new attraction has been a big hit with the patrons this year.

Sun Splash’s is open daily from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (weather permitting). The summer operating hours will be in effect through August 9, at which time the park will move to a weekend only schedule until closing for the season on Sunday, September 24.

The park will host “Friday Slide Night” and “Saturday Slide Night” events again this summer season. The waterpark will be open from 5 p.m.-9 p.m. on alternating Friday and Saturday nights. The cost of admission on these nights is $10.95 for children and $12.95 for adults (plus tax) for Cape Coral residents, and $12.95 for children and $14.95 for adults (plus tax) for non-residents. Visit the website www.SunSplashWaterpark.com for the schedule.

Other special events at Sun Splash this summer include a Father’s Day Weekend promotion where dads can splash for free with the purchase of a regular-priced child or teen General Admission ticket on June 17-18. Dads will be eligible to win some great prizes in honor of their special day.

Season passes are available and may be purchased at any time during the season. The passes provide unlimited admission to Sun Splash during regular operating hours, plus discounts on parking, learn to swim classes, and food and merchandise throughout the park.

To view the complete operating schedule, as well as admission rates, details about hosting your next birthday party or group outing at Sun Splash, and to join the free email list, visit www.SunSplashWaterpark.com. Be sure to follow Sun Splash on Facebook www.facebook.com/sunsplashcc and Twitter www.twitter.com/sunsplashcc to learn inside park details, and have quick and easy access to special deals and events.
Cape Coral Yacht Club Median Landscape Project

Early this spring, the City’s contractor began upgrading the landscaping in the medians between Cape Coral Parkway and the Yacht Club along Coronado/Lucerne/Driftwood parkways. City Council approved the funding from Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department.

The project was on schedule to be completed well ahead of schedule in mid-April. City staff and the City’s contractor elected to delay the final planting due to the drought. The project will be completed by June when summer rains should begin.

The new landscaping will include drought-tolerant plantings and a high-efficiency irrigation system. The proposed plants provide a “beach” theme and offer some color to the medians. A variety of palms also are proposed throughout the corridor. Roadway medians are a harsh environment for plants since heat, vehicle traffic and the narrow space make it difficult for plant survival. The City will use plants that show tolerance for these conditions.

During the design of the planting plans, staff sought to minimize removal of existing landscaping. Unfortunately, many of the trees obstructed the view of drivers. Existing tree canopies also intertwined with electric distribution lines; structural roots of trees lifted sections of curbing; and, roots began to lift/crack the adjacent pavement. These issues required the removal of the trees to prevent further damage. The new landscaping promotes greater visibility and installation methods will limit root damage to the infrastructure.

Median Maintenance FAQs

- **How many medians does the City maintain?**
  The City is responsible for about 40 miles of medians and nearly 79 acres of landscaped right-of-way areas. These areas have multiple watering zones, thousands of irrigation heads, and hundreds of irrigation valves and timers.

- **Why does it look like the City is watering constantly?**
  The City follows the year-round watering schedule and irrigates twice a week from midnight to 8 a.m.* Medians and rights of way have multiple zones, and more time is required to properly irrigate these locations. Typically, each zone is irrigated to mimic about ½-inch of rainfall per hour, and most zones run 15-30 minutes.

  Using Santa Barbara Boulevard medians as an example, one median section of Santa Barbara from Hancock to Trafalgar has 26 zones. At a minimum 15 minutes for each zone, this section needs 6.5 hours to irrigate all 26 zones. While this gives the impression sprinklers run all night in one location, the irrigation system is actually rotating through 26 zones.

  *City currently watering one day per week due to drought.

- **Is it necessary to irrigate so long the water spills into the road?**
  Medians are designed to drain, and water shed will occur. The medians have slopes running both laterally and longitudinally, which create positive drainage for the roadway per design. This is not the irrigation system malfunctioning and spraying water in the roads.

  At the same time, our irrigation systems are not perfect. Plant materials grow, irrigation heads clog or break, valves get stuck, nozzles get twisted and misaligned. These are typical issues that happen with all irrigation systems, including residential systems. We try to catch and fix as many as we can by doing monthly checks. Please call 3-1-1 if you see a sprinkler malfunctioning.

- **Why not use drip irrigation to keep water retained in the medians?**
  There is a common misconception that drip irrigation systems are the most water-wise option available. However, most of the water loss occurs underground below the root zones of the plants. These types of systems have a higher precipitation rate and often mimic about 1.5 inches of rain per hour (as compared to our target of ½-inch of rain). That is the equivalent to a very heavy summer thunderstorm with torrential downpours.

  As noted above, the medians are designed to drain. We do have limited use of drip irrigation in our medians. The medians on Del Prado Extension between State Road 78 and Kismet Parkway are drip irrigation.

- **What type of irrigation system does the City use?**
  The newly planted medians of Cape Coral Parkway have high-efficiency rotator heads. These nozzles have a precipitation rate mimicking ½-inch of rainfall per hour or less. This is equivalent to a slow, soft, steady rain event. These irrigation heads use about one-third of the water that a standard drip irrigation would use.

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RV Parking Permits Now Available Online

The City has added the application for RV Parking Permits online to provide convenient access to residents. RV permits are required for parking of any vehicle for human habitation on premises zoned for residential purposes. This includes family or friends who are visiting Cape Coral residents, and Cape Coral residents who own RVs.

Applicants can print the permit or save it, and the permit will be sent in an email. There is no charge for the permits.

Non-residents can obtain a permit to park an RV on the premises for a period not exceeding 10 days. The city manager may, for good cause, authorize a second 10-day permit.

Residents who own RVs can get a permit to park their vehicle on their premises for a 72-hour period for the purposes of loading and cleaning the RV. The vehicle subsequently can be parked on the premises for 72 hours for unloading after a trip provided another permit is acquired and at least 48 hours has passed between the expiration of the first permit and the application for the second permit.

To access the RV Parking Permit online, go to egov.capecoral.net/rvpermits or visit www.capecoral.net. Under “I Want to,” select “Apply for” and go the “Permits” page. The link for the RV permit is at the bottom of the page.
2017 Citizen Survey Wrapping Up
Residents can still provide input via the online opt-in version

The City is offering an opportunity for residents to participate in the 2017 Citizen Survey via an online opt-in option. The City conducts the Citizen Survey every two years using the National Research Center and is currently soliciting feedback from the community. Typically, a defined number of residents are randomly selected to fill out the survey and represent the community. This year, residents who were not among the randomly selected Cape Coral citizens can provide their input using the online survey. The online link is: http://bit.ly/2q2XsDO.

“The online survey option provides the opportunity for any Cape Coral resident to participate in our citizen survey,” said Public Affairs Manager Connie Barron. “We encourage our citizens to complete the survey and provide input on a variety of services.”

About 1,500 residents were selected randomly to participate in the mail survey. Once the survey is complete and the results tabulated, the findings will be presented to City Council. The City anticipates completion of the project and a final report from the National Research Center by the end of June.

The Center is associated with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and staff members employ scientific methods in conducting the research for the city. By using tried and true methods of data collection and analysis, the City is assured of receiving good and valid results.

July is “National Park and Recreation Month”
Cape Parks & Recreation will offer variety of specials during the month

In recognition of all the positive benefits that start in parks, Cape Coral Parks & Recreation Department is proud to join other municipalities across the state and nation in celebrating July as “National Park and Recreation Month.”

The department will host a free “Discover Parks & Recreation Day” at the Cape Coral Yacht Club on Saturday, July 15 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This special event will include live entertainment, crafts, games, demonstrations and giveaways throughout the day. Learn more about “Discover Parks & Recreation Day” and other summer activities in the Parks & Recreation insert in this newsletter or visit the Parks & Recreation website at www.CapeParks.com.

As part of the month-long celebration, local children’s artwork featuring Cape Coral parks will be on display in City Hall from July 3-28. Coral Oaks also will offer “Family Golf Month” specials.

Cape Coral Parks & Recreation Department maintains 43 parks and recreational facilities, including 20 parks with playground areas, and 20 parks with covered picnic shelters, which can be reserved for a nominal fee. Several parks have boat ramps, tennis/basketball courts and walking/exercise trails.

To view a Cape Coral parks map, find out about upcoming activities, or register for classes and programs online, visit the Parks & Recreation website at www.CapeParks.com. You also can follow Cape Coral Parks & Recreation on Facebook and Twitter for the latest happenings. Whether your motivation is achieving better health, making new friends, or getting more involved in your community, “It Starts in Parks!”

Lightning Detection System in Place for 18 Parks Facilities
Visitors should heed any warning blast and seek shelter

The City’s Parks & Recreation Department has the WeatherBug Lightning Detection and Alerting System at 18 facilities. The system will detect lightning up to 10 miles away, and alert the public at specific parks’ locations using sound (horn) and strobe lights.

If lightning is detected, the horn will sound a continuous blast for 15 seconds, advising the public to seek shelter. If lightning is in the specific area, the strobe light will begin flashing. Once the lightning has cleared and it is safe to resume outdoor activities, the horn will sound three, short, five-second blasts.

The alert system provides an option for users to monitor the conditions at any specific park online via the WeatherBug page on the City’s website (www.capecoral.net/weatherbug). When an alert has sounded at a location, users can watch a “live” status update with a time estimate until the “All Clear” signal.

The lightning detection system will be activated at athletic parks only during scheduled games/events and from dawn to dusk daily at neighborhood parks.

Here are the athletic fields and neighborhood parks equipped with the new system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burston Memorial Park</th>
<th>Caloosa Golf Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cape Coral Sports Complex</td>
<td>Coral Oaks Golf Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Freedoms Park</td>
<td>Jason Verdow Memorial Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaycee Park</td>
<td>Jim Jeffers Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Stona Park</td>
<td>Koza/Saleldino Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Softball Complex</td>
<td>Pelican Baseball Complex*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Soccer Complex*</td>
<td>Storm Football Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strauss/BMX Sports Complex</td>
<td>Sun Splash Family Waterpark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winn “Bill” Austen Youth Center</td>
<td>Yacht Club Community Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One system covers both facilities.
City to Discontinue Accepting Credit Card Payments Over Phone

Ensuring security of customer payment card data is top priority

Beginning June 12, the City of Cape Coral Customer Billing Services Division will no longer accept credit card payments over the phone for utility payments.

Credit card fraud is increasing every year, and criminals are getting smarter. In this day of wireless devices and cellular phones, the risk of fraud has never been higher. The City wants to protect customers against any possible credit card misuse when paying for utility services. Compliance with the PCI Data Security Standard is vital for all merchants who accept credit cards, online or offline.

What if I still want to pay my utility bill with my credit card?

Customers can use their credit card to pay their utility bill using our automated IVR payment system at (239) 574-7058. Customers also can go online to www.capecoral.net and under "I Want To," select "Pay" then "Water Bill." You will need your full account number and the phone number associated with the account. The site is fully PCI compliant, and the City does not store customer credit card information.

Credit card payments also can be made in person at the Customer Billing Services counter or Cashier Window at Cape Coral City Hall located at 1015 Cultural Park Boulevard. Hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

What other options are available to pay my utility bill?

- Customers can enroll for E-bill service and receive electronic presentment of their bill, along with options to schedule one-time or automatic payments by either credit card or checking account.
- Most banks have a bill payment function built into their online banking. The City regularly receives payments from many banks for customers who use this feature through their personal accounts. For payment to post electronically to the utility account, please ensure the full account number is entered correctly on the online bill payment. Check with your bank for information on this payment option.
- Payments can be sent in a check or money order the "old fashioned" way via U.S. Mail. Customers also can use the payment drop box located at the front entrance of City Hall.
- The City offers automatic bank drafting for utility bill payments. Contact a Customer Service Technician at (239) 242-3852 for more information about this feature.

Please do not hesitate to contact a Customer Billing Services representative by calling (239) 574-7722 or stop by City Hall to speak to a representative in person.

Seven Islands Land Use Change Moving Forward

Land use change necessary for future development plans

The City’s Planning and Zoning Commission approved the land use change for the Seven Islands Development Project. The land use changes the future land use from “Residential” to “Mixed Use.” Mixed Use allows for the range of uses in the Council-adopted Seven Islands Vision Plan. The land use change must be approved by City Council.

Bimini Basin Market Assessment Nearly Complete

The City’s project consultant for the Bimini Basin is finalizing the Bimini Basin Market Analysis. Redevelopment Management Associates has spent the past few months meeting with the community and businesses within the Bimini Basin area to solicit input on various opportunities for the Bimini area. RMA set up online survey tools to get feedback from residents and businesses about what their vision was for the Bimini Basin.

Once the report is finalized, the City can evaluate the information and determine the next steps to keep the Bimini Basin Project moving forward. The report also will be available online for the public to view.

Coral Oaks Renovation Underway

Course will remain open during $300,000 improvement project

Coral Oaks is going through a major renovation this summer. The City is investing $307,000 to make improvements to the course. The course will remain open during the project and will offer reduced rates.

Every putting surface on the golf course will be cored 5 inches, reshaped to its original size and regrassed with Tif Eagle Bermudgrass. The construction portion of the project will be complete by mid-June, with the grow-in phase to take 14 to 16 weeks. In addition to the putting surfaces, repairs are being made at the teeing grounds on three holes and the fairways on two holes. Some landscaping work also will be done. The course is expected to be fully open by October 1. During the renovation, reduced rates will be just $20 before 3 p.m. and $15 after 3 p.m. for 18 holes with cart, including tax.

Coral Oaks offers several special programs during the summer. Ladies Night is every Tuesday during the summer through September 5 and is for players of all skill levels. The program includes a free weekly clinic at 4 p.m. followed by a 9-hole fun scramble at 5 p.m. with help from the golf professionals. A beverage with snacks is provided after scramble plus gift card drawings. The cost is $20 each week. The atmosphere is more fun than competitive, and ladies can make new friends while being out in a beautiful evening setting. The field is limited to the first 48 players each week, and registration opens at 7 a.m. one week in advance of each Ladies Night.

The summer tradition of the Coral Oaks Junior Golf Association program is in full swing. This program is a terrific opportunity for kids to learn, improve, and most of all have fun at golf.

If you are looking to improve your game, Coral Oaks offers a variety of golf instruction. Class-A PGA professionals with more than 75 years of combined experience offer weekly clinics on Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday. Comprehensive golf schools and personalized instruction also are available to help improve your game.

For more information on Coral Oaks’ golfing programs, private parties and group outings, or to book tee times up to seven days in advance, call (239) 573-3100 or visit www.CoralOaksGolf.com. Be sure to follow the course on Facebook for special deals. Remember, every day is a great day at Coral Oaks. We look forward to seeing you soon.
City Conducting Test Run on Reservoir in Charlotte County

When the City moved to a one-day watering schedule due to the severe drought, City staff continued to evaluate opportunities to address the supply side of the irrigation equation. One opportunity was the large mining pit reservoir owned by Southwest Aggregates in Charlotte County.

With concerns about canal levels and being able to provide adequate pressure for fire hydrants installed on the irrigation pipe, the Utilities Department advanced a plan to use water from the reservoir to replenish our freshwater canal system in the north Cape. Utilities staff worked with key state agencies to obtain approval to conduct a test run to see if the reservoir project would be a viable option. In a demonstration of how agencies can work together to achieve a shared goal, the City obtained the necessary permits from the Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest Florida Water Management District and the South Florida Water Management District to set up a 90-day test to begin moving water from the large reservoir into the drainage ditches bordering U.S. 41. These ditches carried the water to the Gator Slough canal in the northeast Cape and ultimately into the freshwater canal system. Gator Slough is the primary recharge canal that feeds the City’s extensive freshwater canal system.

The test operation has been very successful, and Cape Coral currently is pumping up to 17 million gallons per day from the Southwest Aggregates reservoir. This emergency water supply will provide critical fire protection for one-third of the City’s fire hydrants that utilize the city’s canal water supply. The emergency water supply reservoir project will provide valuable information regarding groundwater seepage rates near the mine as well as data regarding the hydraulics and seepage rates from the drainage ditches along U.S. 41.

At a recent Council meeting, the City officially recognized the four regulatory agencies for their roles in assisting City staff in obtaining expeditious regulatory approval to get the project underway in a short timeframe. Special thanks also to Water Science Associates who worked just as quickly to set up all the required monitoring systems for the project. If all goes well, the City will evaluate the feasibility of the reservoir as part of a long-term solution.

Guest Services Building Nearing Completion at Sun Splash

Construction is moving along on the new Sun Splash Guest Services building destroyed in a fire last summer. The new building is tentatively scheduled to reopen in August and will highlight a modern guest services/concession area and more efficient kitchen to support the hundreds of patrons the park serves daily.

Rebuilding the 25-year-old facility required incorporating several new building code requirements.

Funding for the rebuild is secured as an insurance claim through the Florida League of Cities, Florida Municipal Insurance Trust. For additional details about Sun Splash Waterpark, visit their website at www.SunSplashWaterpark.com.

Summer Camps Available for Kids

If you are looking for fun, safe, active and educational ways for your children to spend their summer break, Cape Coral Parks & Recreation Department offers a variety of traditional and specialty summer camps for children ages 3-18. Most of the camps are offered in weekly increments with different themes, field trips, guest speakers and activities planned. Several camps began the week of May 30, and camps will run through the week of July 31.

The Youth Center is hosting its traditional summer recreation programs for children entering grades K-8. Summer CAMPtacular is offered at two locations: Oasis Elementary and the Youth Center. The camp includes weekly themes, multiple field trips, activities and guest speakers. Staycation Camp (onsite with no traveling) has returned to Christa McAuliffe Elementary School. August Adventures will run the final week of summer break from July 31-August 4.

A variety of specialty camp options for children of all ages are available at other Parks facilities. This includes Eco Adventure Nature Camp at Rotary Park and Fine Arts for Kids Camp at the Arts Studio. Preschool Summer Camp, Super Science Camp, and Ready, Set, College are offered at Four Freedoms Park. The Yacht Club has Beach Buddies, Advanced Beach Bums Exploration, Paddleboard Camp, Kids Kayak Camp and a new Drone Camp. Kids can participate in Camp Neptune at the Yacht Club Pool, Jr. Lifeguard and Splash Camp at Sun Splash Waterpark and the Yacht Club Pool. Lake Kennedy Center has Dress Like a Diva Design Camp and Find Your Voice Karaoke Camp for older kids.

Part-time Tennis Camps are held at the Yacht Club tennis courts.

While some families may choose to stay with the same program/location for their children throughout the summer, the option is available to “mix and match” camp weeks among the different facilities.

For prices and information about specific camps, view the 2017 Summer Camp Guide with direct links to online registration at www.CapeParks.com. The guide is available City Hall or any recreation center, or call the division hosting the camp at the following phone numbers:

- Cape Coral Arts Studio: 574-0802
- Four Freedoms Park: 574-0804
- Lake Kennedy Center: 574-0575
- Rotary Park: 549-4606
- Sun Splash: 574-0558
- Yacht Club & Pool: 574-0806
- Yacht Club Tennis Courts: 574-0808
- Youth Center: 242-3950
- Youth Services Division: 242-3950

Keep in mind that there is limited space available in many of the camps so register early. For more information on summer camps and other Parks & Recreation programs and events, visit www.CapeParks.com.
When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!
Southwest Florida is a top location for lightning strikes

Each year in the United States, more than 400 people are struck by lightning. On average, about 50 people are killed annually, and hundreds of others suffer permanent neurological disabilities. When thunderstorms threaten, get to a safe place immediately.

Lightning strikes are most common in June, July and August but can happen at any time of the year. These simple precautions can save lives during a lightning storm:

Stay Alert

- Monitor local weather conditions regularly with a special weather radio or AM/FM radio. Before going outdoors, check the forecast for thunderstorms.
- Postpone activities to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- Recognize the signs of an oncoming thunderstorm and lightning – towering clouds with a “cauliflower” shape, dark skies and distant rumbles of thunder or flashes of lightning.
- All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.
- Do not wait for lightning to strike nearby before taking cover. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. It is time to seek shelter.

Seek Shelter

- Look for a large, enclosed building when a thunderstorm or lightning threatens. That is the best choice.
- If you are in a car and it has a hard top, stay inside and keep the windows rolled up.
- Avoid small sheds, lean-tos or partial shelters such as pavilions.
- Stay at least a few feet away from open windows, sinks, toilets, tubs, showers, electric boxes and outlets, and appliances. Lightning can flow through these and “jump” to a person.
- Do not shower or take a bath during a thunderstorm or lightning.
- Avoid using regular telephones or computers, except in an emergency. If lightning hits the telephone lines, it could flow to the phone. Cell phones or cordless phones that are not connected to the building’s wiring are safe to use.

If you are caught outside there is no safe place. If you are unable to reach a safe building or car, knowing what to do can save your life.

- Look for the warning signs. If your skin tingles or your hair stands on the end, a lightning strike may be about to happen. Crouch down on the balls of your feet with your feet close together. Keep your hands on your knees and lower your head. Get as low as possible without touching your hands or knees to the ground. Do not lie down!
- If you are swimming, fishing or boating, and there are clouds, dark skies and distant rumbles of thunder or flashes of lightning, get to land immediately and seek shelter.
- If you are in a boat and cannot get to shore, crouch down in the middle of the boat. Go below if possible.
- If you are on land, find a low spot away from trees, metal fences, pipes, tall or long objects.
- If you are in the woods, look for an area of shorter trees. Crouch down away from tree trunks.

North 2 Utilities Project Bid Process Completed

The City of Cape Coral uses handheld lightning detectors in the field to detect lightning in the area and advises guests to seek cover. But with today’s technology, parents and families also can know about a lightning threat in the area simply by installing an app on their smartphone. Many Parks staff also have the “WeatherBug Spark” Lightning Alert” app and “Lightning Finder” app installed on their smartphones as another source of information.

The City encourages smartphone owners to download one of the lightning apps available. While visitors to our Parks facilities can have confidence that City staff is monitoring the skies for storms and lightning, it is wise to use the technology available to track storms for your own personal comfort.
Red, White & Boom Set for Tuesday, July 4

“Here comes the BOOM!” The City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department is proud to present the Storm Smart “Red, White & Boom” on Tuesday, July 4 from 5 p.m. - 10 p.m. at the foot of the Cape Coral Bridge on Cape Coral Parkway.

For more than 20 years, the best of Cape Coral’s business community have come together to celebrate the 4th of July with a day full of patriotic fun, entertainment and spectacular fireworks show. This event is free to attend and has earned the reputation as the best place in Southwest Florida to honor America on the July 4. More than 40,000 people attend the event each year.

This year’s “Red, White & Boom” will include “Kids Patriot Park” with a zip line, games, face painting, climbing walls and obstacle courses. More than 60 vendors will be offering food, drinks, novelty items, jewelry, arts and crafts and drawings for free giveaways.

National entertainment will be featured on the City’s stage, and this year’s headliner will be country music star Jerrod Niemann. Niemann will be performing at about 8 p.m., followed by the best fireworks display in Southwest Florida presented by the City of Cape Coral.

Thank you to several sponsors who are stepping forward to help make this event happen: Storm Smart, Culver’s, ACHIEVA Credit Union, The Westin, 94.5 The Arrow, Cat Country 107.1, Budweiser and Dolphin Key Resort. For more details, call the City of Cape Coral Parks & Recreation at (239) 573-3128 or visit www.CapeBoom.com.

Tropical Breeze Fun Park Opens in the Cape

New park offers mini-golf course with extreme laser tag coming soon

A common request we receive in Economic Development is to bring in more opportunities for our younger residents who are looking for fun things to do. The opening of Tropical Breeze Fun Park will add another family entertainment venue to Cape Coral. Tropical Breeze currently offers 18 holes of miniature golf in a beautifully landscaped setting and features the “World’s Longest Hole.” An iCombat tactical laser tag center will open soon with state-of-the-art equipment. Tropical Breeze Fun Park is located at 234 Santa Barbara Boulevard in front of Bowland bowling alley. The park is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day. For more information, call (239) 574-3939 or go to their website: www.tropicalbreezefunpark.com.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day Results

Lee County Solid Waste Division collected hazardous waste in Cape Coral on Saturday, March 18 at the Public Works Annex on Everest Parkway. Cape residents dropped off 40,807 lbs. of household hazardous waste, and 45 percent was recycled. The percentage recycled is much lower this year because Lee County no longer has a recycler to process the latex paint. Household chemical waste cannot be placed in dumpsters, compactors or curbside. Citizens need to dispose of these items at a scheduled drop-off collection day, which is a free service provided by Lee County Solid Waste. Most household chemical waste also can be brought to Lee County’s Topaz Court Solid Waste Annex at 6441 Topaz Court in Fort Myers. Operating hours are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and the first Saturday of each month from 8 a.m.-noon. Call (239) 533-8000 for more information.

City Developing Pilot Program to Address Housing Issues

Cape Coral has deficiencies in senior/workforce housing units

Last year, City staff provided a presentation to City Council focusing on housing issues in the City of Cape Coral. Staff provided an overview of the need for workforce housing in Cape Coral, as well as several potential policies and programs to incentivize the development of workforce/senior housing.

The City recently completed a rental need study that showed Cape Coral was lacking in the availability of multi-family rental housing. The study indicated the city needed an additional 1,480 units of multi-family rental housing per year over the next five years to meet the market demand. Of these units, 1,170 are needed for families/households making less than 120 percent of the area median income. For a family of four in Cape Coral, this would be an annual income of less than $69,400.

One of the potential policies the City is evaluating is to incentivize the development of workforce/senior housing. This includes a pilot program to buy down impact fees for the development of multi-family housing. The City also is examining another pilot program that will defer impact fees for non-profit partner agencies participating in our single-family workforce housing programs. The deferral of impact fees for these agencies will allow them to construct more homes. This program would be a five-year program and be capped at 150 units.