

CONGRATULATIONS!



Congratulations to Terri Elder from Buelow Tax Service for winning the Economic Development Office Gift Basket at the Charlotte County Chamber Business Expo. Buelow Tax Service has been providing bookkeeping, tax preparation, investment and financial planning since 1972. Dale Buelow, is the president and founder of the business. The business is located in the Charlotte Harbor CRA at 21942 Edgewater Drive. Ms. Elder has been an accountant with the firm since 1993. Ms. Elder participated in the Expo and stated she enjoyed the event. For more information on the firm please visit www.buelowtaxservice.com.



Welcome to Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter

Please enjoy the your copy of the Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact our office at 941-764-4941 or at FloridaEDO@charlottefl.com.

Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon Charlotte County Broadband Initiative

The Suncoast Technology Forum hosted their monthly meeting for the first time ever in Charlotte County on Tuesday, February 21, 2012. Over sixty people from various technology businesses and educational institutions attended the luncheon meeting which was held at the Captain's Table in Fisherman's Village in Punta Gorda overlooking the beautiful Charlotte Harbor.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Innovation

2

Industry

Contest

Judging

Has Ended

Watch for the
Announcement
of the Winners
at the ECEC
Luncheon
May 3, 2012

Premier Event

Suncoast Technology Forum is a technology organization that works within Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota counties. STF offers its members various 'business-relevant' educational initiatives on a variety of technology related topics via monthly Techbyte Luncheons, quarterly technology seminars and other networking and trade events. The Suncoast Technology Forum is ideal for entrepreneurs, CEOs and IT professionals who want to stay informed on the latest tech trends and build new business relationships across the region. More information about STF can be found on their web site; <http://suncoasttechnologyforum.com/>.

This month's meeting was sponsored by Magellan Advisors. Magellan Advisors is a full service community broadband planning and technology services firm, specializing in all aspects of broadband telecommunications planning, implementation and management. They serve both the public and private sectors. To learn more about Magellan Advisors visit their web site; <http://www.magellan-advisors.com/>.

John Honker of Magellan Advisors, along with Ray Desjardins, Senior Division Manager for Charlotte County Information Technology, were the speakers for the event. They presented an overview of Charlotte County's proposed broadband initiative. Charlotte County is currently evaluating the opportunities that a community broadband network would present to the area, through strategic investments in fiberoptic infrastructure. This network would serve the local business community with advanced fiber-based broadband services at competitive prices. It would also provide a significant economic development tool to attract new business and develop new industry sectors within the County, such as life sciences, research, healthcare, high-tech and engineering. The Parkside district, formerly the Medical Arts District, is currently slated as a proposed "Pilot" for the project, which if successful would be expanded to other areas of the County.

In the community broadband model, the County would not sell services directly, but rather utilize its extensive County-owned fiber-optic network to enable local telecommunications providers to extend their reach and deliver new fiber-rich services, in a model known as "open-access." Similar to the local road system, the County would own and maintain these "digital highways" while telecommunications providers would use the system to deliver high-speed Internet, voice, video and other services to Charlotte's business community. The net effect would enhance Charlotte County's economic development potential and enable new services for its business community.

The County is currently seeking input from Charlotte County local businesses to gain a more thorough understanding of broadband access, availability and speeds. This input will provide important information for Charlotte's broadband

Sponsors



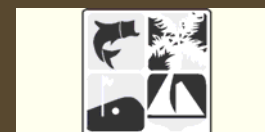
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Charlotte County
Chamber of Commerce



W. Kevin Russell P.A.
Attorney at Law

[Visit the web site](#)

planning processes, which will allow the County to better serve the needs of the community. The brief eleven question online survey can be completed at the following web address: www.charlottefl.com/broadbandsurvey.

i2iFL Sponsorships

In addition to the contest's four Premier Events Sponsors; Ambitrans, Kitson & Partners, Mosaic and USF Polytechnic, many other local businesses have stepped up and donated their services to support the Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council's three contest winners.

SandStar Remodeling is providing a location to house one of the winning businesses. M&I Bank, a part of BMO Financial Group and Calusa National Bank are providing banking maintenance fees. The Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce and the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce are providing memberships. W. Kevin Russell Law Firm is providing legal services to all three winners and Paradise Acting Company has offered to provide public speaking and networking classes. Century Link is offering to provide phone and internet access.

Port Charlotte SCORE will be conducting a Quickbooks class for the contest winners and runners-up. All three winners will be attending a class on how to write a business plan to get their business plans ready to begin the seeking financing opportunities.

This is a great start, but more is still needed to make this endeavor a success. The Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council is asking for others to help. Please see the list of services that are still needed and please help where you can. Your sponsorship is not only a great way to bring a new business to life and provide jobs to our community, but you can get a new business client in the process.

If you prefer not to offer a service, but still want to be part of the birth of three new businesses, you can donate with any size monetary sponsorship which will then be used in turn to acquire the needed services for these businesses.

Needed Services:

- A location with a minimum of 1200 SF for the manufacturing/assembling a product (This sponsorship comes with a 1 yr ECEC membership as a Corporate member if your location is selected)
- Accounting/Bookkeeping services
- Tax Services
- Web design
- Web hosting
- Graphics for packaging and other media
- Printing

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 1 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

March 3,10,17 - Social Media Bootcamp Call 239-745-3700

March 5 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11:00 AM, Room 119

March 8,15,22,29 - Time to Write that Business Plan Call 239-745-3700

March 12-April16 - Passion to Profits Call 941-637-5669

March 13 - May 1 - How to Write a Successful Business Plan Call 941-637-5669

Mach 14 - FAQ About Starting a Business Call 239-745-3700

March 14-April 18 - Passion to Profits Call 941-637-5669

March 15 - Business Opportunities with Germany Call 941-748-4842, x 125

March 21 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 504

April 2 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11:00 AM, Room 119

April 5 - ECEC Meeting (Call for

- Marketing
- Business insurance
- Payroll services

If you have a service not listed that you feel is important to these new businesses, please call 941-764-4946 to make your contribution.

Business Expo

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office participated in the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce Business Expo held on February 2. The expo provided an opportunity to meet with county businesses and explain existing support services available including an opportunity to participate in the Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center website, www.flvec.com, which provides an opportunity for local businesses and service providers that offer business-related products and/or services such as accounting; marketing; or legal to market their company at no cost by registering with the Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center. To register your company simply visit the website and fill out the form. Once registered you can upload your company information to the online web portal and become a resource for other businesses.

The Economic Development Office also participated in one of the 7.7.7 presentations in which 7 professionals presented 7 tips in 7 minutes. The Economic Development Office introduced the audience to the Local Entrepreneurial Support Organization (ESO) being developed that includes SCORE; Small Business Development Center; and Southwest Florida Works and Small Business Development LLC.

Entrepreneur of the Year Award

The Small Business Development Center at Florida Gulf Coast University is hosting their Inaugural Entrepreneur of the Year Award. To be eligible a company must be a for profit organization from Glades, Hendry, Lee, Charlotte or Collier Counties, in business for three or more years and in compliance with all local, state and federal business guidelines.

Applications are being accepted Feb. 1, 2012 through March 31, 2012. Applications are in narrative form and answer nine questions that can be found on the [SBDC website](#) or downloaded in [PDF Format](#). The winner will be announced at the awards dinner on Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at Cohen Center, Florida Gulf Coast University.

Information)

April 9 - Murdock Village
CRA Advisory Committee 5
PM at the EDO Conference
Room 504

April 18 - IDA Meeting Noon
at the EDO Conference
Room 504

May 3 - ECEC Meeting (Call
for Information)

May 4 - STF Technology
Expo and Conference 2012

May 7 - Charlotte Harbor
CRA Advisory Committee
Meeting 11:00 AM, Room
119

May 16 - IDA Meeting Noon
at the EDO Conference
Room 504

May 28 - EDO closed for
Memorial Day

June 4 - Charlotte
Harbor CRA Advisory
Committee Meeting 11 AM,
Room 119

June 7 - ECEC Meeting
(Call for Information)

June 20 - IDA Meeting Noon
at the EDO Conference
Room 504

July 2 - Charlotte
Harbor CRA Advisory
Committee Meeting 11 AM,
Room 119

July 4 - EDO closed for the
Independence Day Holiday

July 5 - ECEC Meeting (Call
for Information)

July 9 - Murdock Village
CRA Advisory Committee 5
PM at the EDO Conference
Room 504

Applications can be mailed, faxed or [emailed](#) to:
Small Business Development Center at FGCU
10501 FGCU Blvd.
S.Fort Myers, Florida 33965-6565
Fax: 239-745-3710

For information please contact [Dan Regelski](#), 239-745-3705
or Debra Newman 239-560-3648.

Business Opportunities with Germany

**Enterprise Florida in partnership with the
Manatee & Sarasota Economic Development Corporations,
Charlotte County Economic Development
and the International Business Council**

Invite you to a complimentary business briefing

Business Opportunities with Germany

DATE: Thursday, March 15, 2012
TIME: 9:00 A.M.-11:00 A.M.
VENUE: Gold Coast Eagle Distributing
7051 Wireless Court, Sarasota, FL 34240

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Michael Hass, Director, Enterprise Florida (EFI) - Germany Office
Alexander (Alex) Bothmann, Deputy Director, Enterprise Florida -
Germany Office

The speakers will discuss business opportunities in Germany and free services available to Florida companies. The EFI Germany team assists Florida exporters, organizes business development missions from Florida to Germany and has worked with numerous German companies that have invested or plan to invest in Florida. They promote Florida's businesses nationwide in Germany and generate both foreign direct investment and trade leads for Florida.

- The German economy is the world's fourth largest
- Germany is the largest consumer market in the European Union with a population of over 82 million.
- Total Merchandise Trade between Florida and Germany experienced a gain of \$5.7 million in 2010-2011.
- Leading sectors for trade & investment in Germany include, but are not limited to: Computer and Peripheral Equipment, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Medical Equipment, Industrial Chemicals, Management Consulting Services, Automotive Parts and Services, Telecommunications Equipment, Sporting Goods, Travel & Tourism, Biotechnology, Renewable Energies, Scientific and Laboratory Instrumentation, Agricultural Sectors

July 18 - IDA Meeting Noon
at the EDO Conference
Room 504

August 2 - ECEC Meeting
(Call for Information)

August 15 - IDA Meeting
Noon at the EDO
Conference Room 504

October 3 - 4th Annual
Energy Options Conference

January 26 - 5th Annual
Hands Across the Harbor

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

This event is free but you must register due to limited seating.

Registration Deadline: Friday, March 9, 2011

To register to contact: Sandy Miles

E-mail: sandym@manateeedc.com

or call: 941-748-4842, ext. 125

CRA Advisory Committees

The Murdock Village CRA Advisory Committee held a meeting on February 13 and new officers were elected. Andy Dodd is Chairperson; Erik Howard is Vice Chair. Learn more about the [Murdock Village CRA](#).

Earlier this month at a Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee, Jim Herston was reappointed as Chairperson and Garland Wilson was elected as Vice Chair. Learn more about the [Charlotte Harbor CRA](#).

Tom Patton, Director
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Web Site: <http://www.FloridasInnovationCoast.com>