



## Welcome to Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter

Please enjoy 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](mailto:FloridaEDO@charlottefl.com).

### Business Disaster Plan

If your business does not have a disaster plan, now is the time to create one. The State of Florida has a website that will better prepare you and your business for future disasters by helping you create a Business Disaster Plan.

Go to <http://www.floridadisaster.org/business/> to create your business disaster plan.

### i2iFL Update

Thomas Contreras, the first place winning in the innovation 2 industry Florida contest, has his TAC device for sale in Laishley Marine on US 41 in Punta Gorda and Fantasea Scuba Dive Center on US 41 in Port Charlotte. Divers can purchase the lobster snare at



TAC Device Lobster snare advertised in Laishley Marine window



these locations or on his [web site](#).

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS

### Charlotte County New Business Tax Receipts

June - 119

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS

August 2 - Public Open House Enterprise Zone, 9 AM, Events Center

August 2 - ECEC Meeting (Call for information)

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

August 21 - Suncoast Technology Forum

Interested distributors and wholesalers may contact Thomas via his [web site](#).

## Brazilian Chamber of Commerce

On Wednesday, July 18, 2012, Kay Tracy, Charlotte

County Business Development Specialist, attended a meeting with the newly named Florida Gulf Coast Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (formerly called the Brazil / Tampa



Chamber). Its purpose is to promote trade, investment, and employment opportunities between communities in the Gulf Coast of Florida and Brazil.

The guest speaker, Frank Ryll, Global Outreach Director of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, spoke on organizational and management issues. The Florida Chamber of Commerce supports the promotion of international trade and the integration of the work force to include the talents and skills of local and foreign workers.

## Familiarization Tour

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office participated in the Western Hemisphere Familiarization Tour of Southwest Florida along with our regional partners from Sarasota, Lee, Collier, Hendry and Glades counties on July 9th, 2012.

Lucienne Pears, Business Development Specialist, represented Charlotte County in the all day event, hosted by Florida Gulf Coast University in which representatives from Canada, Chile, Mexico and Ecuador were hosted and introduced to our region. The event was organized in coordination with US Representative Connie Mack, FGCU's Lutgert College of Business and the regional Economic Development Offices.

The event included tours of both Southwest Florida Regional airport and the FGCU campus. Guests had a luncheon presentation of the region as a whole, as well as a presentation by each of the individual economic development organizations.

This event is yet another successful regional partnership

Luncheon, Polo Grill, Lakewood Ranch, Noon

August 23 - Regional Broadband meeting, 4 PM, B106

September 6 - ECEC Meeting (Call for information)

September 10 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 10:30 AM, Room 119

September 12-15 - American Planning Association Conference

September 18 - Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon, Polo Grill, Lakewood Ranch, Noon

September 19 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 504

October 1 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11 AM, Room 119

October 4 - ECEC Meeting (Call for information)

October 8 - Murdock Village CRA Advisory Committee 5 PM at the EDO Conference Room 504

October 13 - Bayshore Wine & Beer Fest, 2-6 PM

October 16 - Suncoast Technology Luncheon in Charlotte County

October 17 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 504

November 1 - ECEC Meeting (Call for information)

event geared towards raising the profile and awareness of Southwest Florida in the international marketplace, particularly in South and Central America and Canada.

## Enterprise Zone

A Public Open House is scheduled for Thursday, August 2 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon at the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, Peace River Room B, 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, to gather public input on the proposed Charlotte County Enterprise Zone boundaries.

The Enterprise Zone program was created to encourage economic development in economically distressed areas of the state by providing incentives to induce private investment for businesses locating in the Enterprise Zone to encourage revitalization the area and create new jobs.

Some of the benefits for being included in an Enterprise Zone include the following:

1. Jobs Tax Credit (Sales Tax Credit or Corporate Income Tax) - Allows a business located in an Urban Enterprise Zone to take a sales tax credit or Corporate tax credit for 20 to 30 percent of the wages paid to new employees who reside in the zone.
2. Business Equipment Sales Tax Refund - A refund is available for sales taxes paid on the purchase of certain business property, which is used exclusively in an Enterprise Zone for at least three years.
3. Building Materials Sales Tax Refund - A refund is available for sales taxes paid on the purchase of building materials used exclusively in an Enterprise Zone.

The public is encouraged to stop by the open house to review the proposed boundaries and receive additional information on the Enterprise Zone.

Following the public open house, the boundaries will be finalized and brought forward to the Board of County Commissioners for their approval. Once the boundaries are finalized, an Enterprise Zone Development Agency will be created and an Enterprise Zone Development Plan will be drafted. The County is required to complete these steps and submit an application to the State of Florida for final approval of the Enterprise Zone by December 31, 2012.

November 5 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11 AM, Room 119

November 12 - EDO closed for Veterans Day

November 12-18 - Global Entrepreneur Week

November 20 - Suncoast Technology Luncheon, Polo Grill, Lakewood Ranch, Noon

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

November 22 & 23 - EDO closed for Thanksgiving

December 3 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11 AM, Room 119

December 6 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

December 15 - Chamber Christmas Parade, 12 noon

December 19- IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 504

December 24 & 25 - EDO closed for Christmas

January 3 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

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

January 26 - Hands Across the Harbor

## Blue Chip

Owners of small businesses who have successfully overcome adversity are invited to apply for the 18th Annual Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Business Award.



BB&T-Oswald Trippe and Company and BB&T Bank coordinate and sponsor the program to recognize successful small businesses and share their stories as models for other entrepreneurs. Applications must be submitted by Monday, Sept. 10.

The competition is open to companies that meet the following criteria: for-profit business; operating under the same ownership for at least three continuous years with principal office located in Lee, Collier or Charlotte counties; employs five to 400 people; and has overcome adversity to achieve success.

As victors from previous years can attest, winning this prestigious award only enhances business.

Business owners may nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else. Assistance is available to draft applications. For information and applications, contact Stacey Mercado at 239-433-7189 or [SMercado@BBandT.com](mailto:SMercado@BBandT.com).

Independent judges will select one Lee, Collier or Charlotte business from the field of applicants to receive the 2012 award. Winners will be recognized Thursday, Nov. 1, during a luncheon ceremony at Harborside Event Center, located at 1375 Monroe Street in Fort Myers. Registration begins at 11 a.m. The program starts at 11:30 a.m.

The Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Business Award is endorsed by the Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce, Cape Coral Chamber of Commerce, Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce, Charlotte County Economic Development Office, Christian Chamber of Southwest Florida, City of Cape Coral Economic Development Office, Edison State College, Englewood-Cape Haze Area Chamber of Commerce, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida Weekly, Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce, Greater Lehigh Acres Chamber of Commerce, Gulf Coast Business Review, Gulfshore Business, Hodges University, Lee County Economic Development Office/Horizon Council, Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce, Sanibel & Captiva Islands Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Fort Myers Beach Area Chamber of Commerce and The Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce.



"They replaced me with my smartphone."

Tom Patton, Director  
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