

WEEKEND WAVE

08-19-16



Friday Economic Roundup

Heads up: Important email survey for Charlotte County

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office (EDO) is currently developing a new brand identity. This brand identity will be used to motivate businesses planning to relocate or expand. The larger goal is to create jobs, boost the economy and build a brighter future for Charlotte County.

Soon, you will receive a short, online survey titled "**20 Questions.**" It includes a brief overview of four branding options - created with guidance from the EDO, your County Commissioners and site selection data for business.

Your input is very valuable. Please watch your email for our "20 Questions" e-Survey and return it promptly. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Lucienne Pears
Director
Charlotte County Economic Development Office

July, 2016 Passenger Traffic up 24% at Punta Gorda

GIVE US YOUR OPINION

20 QUESTIONS

Vote for your favorite
business brand identity.

[» Take Our Survey](#)

Punta Gorda, FL - The Charlotte County Airport Authority announced the Punta Gorda Airport passenger count for July, 2016 was 106,142. This is a **24.2 % increase** in passenger traffic for July, 2016 compared with July, 2015 (85,468 passengers).

In July, there were 53,162 boarding passengers and 52,980 arriving passengers. This is the 34th month in a row that the Airport has seen an increase in passenger traffic in year over year monthly traffic. The rolling 12 month passenger total is **992,990**.

Kathleen Coppola, Commissioner, of the Charlotte County Airport Authority, stated "The growth in passenger numbers indicate that our year-round residents are traveling north for the summer months. We are also excited to have Frontier Airlines start service from the Punta Gorda Airport offering more options for travel for our residents and visitors alike."

Allegiant Air has non-stop service to **Thirty One cities** including Akron Canton Airport, OH; Allentown, PA; Asheville, NC; Belleville, IL, Cedar Rapids, IA, Concord/Charlotte, N.C.; Cincinnati, OH; Columbus, OH; Des Moines, IA; Ft. Wayne, IN; Grand Rapids, MI; Greenville/ Spartanburg, SC; Harrisburg, Pa., Huntington, WV; Indianapolis, IN; Kansas City, MO.; Knoxville, TN; Lexington, KY; Moline, IL; Niagara Falls, NY; Peoria, IL; Pittsburgh, PA; Plattsburgh, NY; Portsmouth, NH; Raleigh, N.C., Rockford, IL; South Bend, IN; Springfield, IL; Springfield/Branson, MO; Trenton, NJ and Toledo, OH. Allegiant Air can be reached at www.allegiantair.com or call 702-505-8888. Please check their schedule as some of the cities are seasonal.

Frontier Airlines has service to Chicago O'Hare Airport, Trenton, New Jersey and Philadelphia International Airport. Frontier Airlines can be reached at www.flyfrontier.com or call 801-401-9000.

The Charlotte County Airport Authority owns and operates the Punta Gorda Airport located at 28000 Airport Road in Punta Gorda, Florida.

Splashy new look - McGuire Park renovations planned

By ANNE EASKER Staff Writer Charlotte Sun

On a warm afternoon in July, McGuire Park in the Parkside district of Port Charlotte stands abandoned - empty playgrounds, empty swings, empty tennis courts. All this could change next year when the park is reconstructed to include a splash pad with 45 to 50 spraying elements, capable of pumping up to 350 gallons of water per minute.

"This may be a retirement community, but we still have kids, and we still have to have fun," Commissioner Tricia Duffy said at the Board of Commissioners' meeting, which approved moving the splash pad expansion into the project's Phase 1, which will likely open in the fall of next year, according to Facilities Maintenance and Construction Director David Milligan.

Construction will begin on the park after the first of the year. Citizens gave their input at several Parkside Community Redevelopment Agency meetings. The new park is intended to bind the community together, giving its residents a sense of identity and pride in their community. In addition to the splash pad, it will have separate playgrounds for 2-5- and 5-12-year-olds, a paved multi-purpose court, outdoor fitness area, walking trails, restrooms and picnic areas.

The project is part of a larger effort to revitalize the Parkside Community. Team Parkside President Stephen Carter said the park has been used for many purposes in the past, but use has dropped off in recent years.

An excerpt from the citizens' master plan says, "McGuire has large tennis courts, basketball, horseshoes, playground equipment, a Girl Scout facility, and public restrooms. Most of these features are old and broken. There is very poor line-of-sight visibility in the park, so it is very comfortable and convenient for groups of homeless people to spend their day sitting, drinking in the park.

Poor line-of-sight visibility also makes this park a magnet for criminal activity."

Carter said all these issues will be eliminated with the new design by Kimley-Horn design consulting firm, which has good visibility and lighting. According to Carter, the redevelopment will be not just a face-lift, but a new park for Parkside residents and all of Charlotte County to enjoy.

"The whole point of the CRA and the redevelopment of the area is we're looking to make this a place you can live, work, play and shop," Carter said.

Kissinger Joins Board Of Directors

Waste Management announced Stephanie Kissinger to the Recycle Florida Today Board of Directors. Kissinger will assist the organization in advancing its mission to improve the recycling industry through professional development, advocacy and educational outreach.

Icard Merrill

The Icard Merrill law firm celebrated the expansion of its practice into Charlotte and Lee counties with a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 12 at its new Port Charlotte office, at 18501 Murdock Circle, Suite 304. Port Charlotte.

Joining in the celebration were members of the Charlotte County and Punta Gorda chambers of commerce, as well as friends and colleagues of the firm, Robert Lyons, president of Icard Merrill, and Mark Martella, member of the firm in Charlotte and Lee counties.

Martella merged his practice with Icard Merrill in April. He has 28 years of legal experience, including 10 in Charlotte County.

Icard Merrill now has four offices - in Port Charlotte, Fort Myers, Sarasota and Bradenton. 941-206-3700.

22nd Annual Blue Chip Community Business Award

The 22nd annual Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Business Award, coordinated and sponsored by BB&T-Oswald Trippe and Company and BB&T Bank will take place Thursday, Nov. 3 at Harborside Event Center, located at 1375 Monroe Street in Fort Myers. The annual Blue Chip Award program recognizes successful, small business owners who have overcome adversity to achieve success.

Larry Brudnicki, legendary U.S. Coast Guard Captain, has been selected as the keynote speaker for the 22nd Annual Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Award luncheon.

Captain Brudnicki was the Commanding Officer of the USCGC TAMAROA in New Castle, NH where he performed two dramatic rescues during the worst weather in more than 100 years. This event became known as "The Perfect Storm" and inspired The New York Times best-selling book and the blockbuster movie starring George Clooney and Mark Wahlberg.

Captain Brudnicki retired from the Coast Guard in March 2002 after 30 years of active duty. During his career he supervised more than 15,000 search and rescue cases, which saved property valued at \$135 million and more than 1,600 lives. He also supervised the search for survivors of the Alaska Air Flight #261 tragedy.

Brudnicki holds a Merchant Marine Master's license and has won numerous awards for his accomplishments including, the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (two time winner), the Coast Guard Commendation Medal (four time winner), the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Coast Guard Achievement Medal and the Humanitarian Service Medal (two time winner).

Now that he has retired, Brudnicki uses the experience he gained from leading successful high-risk missions with international visibility to deliver his message of leadership, teamwork and risk management. Brudnicki speaks to corporations, associations and organizations so that they can implement the steps necessary for success while avoiding pitfalls.

Charlotte, Collier and Lee County for-profit businesses that have been in operation for at least three years under the same ownership and employ five to 400 people are eligible for the Blue Chip Award. Applications must be submitted no later than Sept. 6, 2016 and independent judges will select the winning entry.

For information on attending the Blue Chip Award program or for submitting an application, please contact Stacey Mercado at 239- 433-7189 or SMercado@BBandT.com.

FLORIDA ECONOMIC NEWS

- Florida added 16,400 jobs in July, outpacing the nation ([Sarasota Herald-Tribune](#))
- Florida's solar industry growing, leading to more higher-paying jobs ([WFTS](#))
- Florida cities rank high on list of best places to retire ([Tampa Bay Times](#))
- Sarasota ranks among top 20 cities in the U.S. for starting a business ([Tampa Bay Business Journal](#))
- West Palm startup to hire 50 after opening downtown office ([South Florida Business Journal](#))
- 15 local firms make Inc. 5000 growth list ([Sarasota Herald-Tribune](#))
- Big Port Manatee tenant signs up to stay ([Sarasota Herald-Tribune](#))
- Florida added more than 26,000 jobs in July ([Florida Trend](#))

ENTREPRENEUR NEWS

- Gainesville has become a tech hub for engineering entrepreneurs ([Ron Stein](#))
- When hiring, give people with criminal records a second chance ([Jerry Osteryoung](#))
- Is your business prepared for disaster? There's a free app for that ([Miami Herald](#))



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