

# CONGRATULATIONS AND A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL THE HANDS ACROSS THE HARBOR SPONSORS!

- Waste Management
- Sirata Beach Resort and Conference Center
- Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. - 4th year of support
  - Fawcett Memorial Hospital - 4th year of support
    - Mosaic
    - Marketing Arm International
- Tampa Bay Rays - Street Team and Donation for the Raffle Prize
  - Farr Law Firm - 4th year of support
    - The Ecology Group
- Charlotte County Sheriff's Office - providing free bicycle helmets for the kids
  - Michael's Hibiscus Band
  - Acme Bicycle Shop
  - Harborwalk Scoops & Bites
    - Charlotte County
    - City of Punta Gorda
  - Festa Italia; - Second year of partnership
    - Sweetbay Supermarkets
    - Engelwood Review
      - The Parrot
  - Peace River Audubon Society
    - Coastal Wildlife Club Inc.
    - McCrory Law Firm



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Innovation

2

Industry

Contest

Premier Event

Sponsors



## 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](mailto:FloridaEDO@charlottefl.com).

## Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon

**FEBRUARY 21st**

**Sponsored by**



**Register to Attend!**

**Learn about Charlotte County's proposed high speed fiber optic network for business use throughout the county and add your input to the project.**

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office will be hosting the February Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon on February 21st at the Captain's Table in Fisherman's Village, Punta Gorda, FL. Networking begins at 11:30 and the meeting is from 12 to 1 PM. Members \$15.00, Guests \$25.00. Lunch is included. **Register Online.**

The Suncoast Technology Forum concentrates its efforts in support of technology professionals and their businesses across multiple business sectors. These efforts will include attracting and retaining top industry talent and deeper collaboration with area schools and universities to develop the highly skilled workforce the area will need to support a growing high tech sector well into the future. The organization works within Sarasota, Manatee and Charlotte Counties.

This month's speakers will be John Honker of Magellan Advisors and Ray Desjardins, Senior Division Manager of the Charlotte County Information Technology Department. The topic will be Charlotte County's proposed community broadband model.

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, hightech and engineering.

Charlotte County is currently seeking input from local businesses to gain a more thorough understanding of broadband access, availability and speeds.

If you are a consummate technology professional or a business in need of solutions, Suncoast Technology Forum is the place to network and solve technology business needs. To learn more about Suncoast Technology Forum, please visit their web site at <http://suncoasttechnologyforum.com/>.

**Broadband Initiative Flyer**



Incubator Sponsor



In-Kind Sponsors



The Judging Has Begun

6 Finalists Have Been Selected

Winners Announced  
March 1, 2012

Incubator  
and  
In-Kind Sponsorships  
needed  
in the following  
areas:

- Space to House the Business
- Marketing
- Advertising
- Accounting Services
- Bookkeeping Services
- Legal Services
- Phone Service
- Internet Service Provider
- Printing
- IT/Networking
- Insurance
- Electric Service (if not included in location/CAM)

## REGISTER TODAY!

### Right of Entry Agreement

On Tuesday, January 10, 2012, the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners approved the Right of Entry Agreement with the private property owner adjacent to the Harborwalk Project site in the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Area. This approval of this agreement will allow this signature project to move forward in getting the final approvals from the Florida Department of Transportation.

To learn more about the Harborwalk Project, visit [HarborWalk](#).

### Hands Across the Harbor

Congratulations to all the sponsors and volunteers that participated in the 4th Annual Hands Across the Harbor event that was held on Saturday, January 28. Due to their support the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center will have additional funding to educate the students of Charlotte County on Charlotte Harbor and its tributaries.

Organized by the Charlotte Harbor and Punta Gorda Community Redevelopment Agencies, this year the two agencies were pleased to announce the partnership with the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center. All proceeds from the Hands Across the Harbor event will benefit the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC). For the past 20 years, CHEC has focused on educating the public on the complex and fragile ecosystem of Charlotte Harbor and its tributaries. Established in 1987 to promote environmental conservation, protection and preservation of the natural resources, the non-profit organization provides environmental education, recreation, environmental research, and conservation lands management services to residents and visitors to the region.

Special thanks to the title sponsor Waste Management for not only contributing \$4,000 to CHEC but for providing staff support to plan the event. The Waste Management team was willing to assist whenever necessary to assure a successful event. Over 300 registered participants enjoyed the beautiful morning and vistas of Charlotte Harbor. Save the date for the 5th Annual Hands Across the Harbor - January 26, 2013!

### Consumer Electronics Show

Tom Patton, Charlotte County Economic Development

- **Water** (if not included in location/CAM)
- **Pest Services**
- **Moving Services** (maybe local or long distance)
- **Banking**

**If you would like to be part of the support team for the new businesses, but would rather your sponsorship not be that of a business service, the i2iFL Contest is also accepting monetary sponsorships.**

For  
[Sponsorship Opportunities](#)  
please call  
**941-764-4941**  
OR  
[Visit the web site](#)  
OR email  
[theECEC@gmail.com](mailto:theECEC@gmail.com)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

February 2 - Hottest Business Day in Paradise, Charlotte Harbor Event Center, 10 AM - 4 PM.

February 6 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 11:00 AM, Room 119

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

February 20 - EDO closed

Director, attended the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, NV during the week of January 9th, where word is, 20,000 new products will be launched this year.

And there's great news for everyone who can't work the remote on your TV and all those gadgets attached to it. That complicated remote with all those buttons for this and buttons for that will be replaced with voice activation or hand gestures in the future. The photo shows how your TV will interact with the internet and other applications.



New technology projects your Garmin on the windshield so you can see your directions on the horizon rather than taking your eyes off the road to look down below your dash board.

"Intelligizing" is the new buzz word. Intelligizing captures information in a more systematic way in order to make more informed decisions. Your electronic gadgets will become smarter, more intelligent and better able to satisfy your needs.

The computer as we know it is dead. Thin client computing is in along with the cloud. Cloud technology will help you control everything in your home, health and personal life from just about anywhere. People will be mobile and still be connected.

Learn more about the [Consumer Electronics Show](#).

## Gulf Coast Venture Forum

Lucienne Pears, Charlotte County Business Development Specialist, made a presentation to the general membership of the Gulf Coast Venture Forum (GCVF), Sarasota Chapter, on behalf of Tom Patton, Charlotte County Economic Director, on January 11th to discuss the economic development strategy of Charlotte County and the regional partnership with our neighbors to the north; Sarasota and Manatee counties. The other panelists were Mr. Mark Huey, President and CEO of the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota and Ms. Sharon Hillstrom, Director of the Manatee Economic Development Council. During the panel discussion, the presenters discussed the positive attributes that attract businesses from early stage to more mature to the Gulf Coast region: weather, water, educational facilities, arts and culture as well as a lack of state income taxes.

The purpose of the Gulf Coast Venture Forum is to promote the success of southwest Florida's new and emerging businesses by bringing together the best entrepreneurs, early stage venture capital firms and Angel Investors. Members of the GCVF meet monthly to hear about local investment opportunities, and they also offer informative educational programs presented by seasoned, recognized professionals and business people, providing a place for the sharing and exchange of business and technical experience. Monthly meetings are scheduled October through June

for President's Day

February 21 - Suncoast  
Technology Forum  
Luncheon, 11:30 - 1 PM,  
Captain's Table,  
Fisherman's Village

March 1 - ECEC  
Meeting (Call for  
Information)

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

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  
Information)

April 9 - Murdock Village  
CRA Advisory Committee  
Meeting 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 - Suncoast  
Technology Forum  
Technology Conference  
and Expo 2012, 12-5 PM,  
Sarasota

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

each year.

To learn more about the Gulf Coast Venture Forum and what they offer, please visit their [web site](#).

## Cheney Brothers Buyers Show

Kay Tracy and Lucienne Pears, Charlotte County Economic Development Business Specialists, attended the Cheney Brothers Annual Buyers Show in Orlando, FL on January 9-10. The show is one of two held each year by Cheney Brothers. The annual event, organized by Cheney Brothers Inc., a Riviera Beach-based food distributor, is all about giving restaurateurs a way to hook customers. Attendance soared to an estimated 5,000 restaurant owners, country club managers and other food-service professionals, as well as over 460 food and restaurant vendors.

Founded in 1925, Cheney Brothers has grown from a distributor of milk and eggs into one of the largest Food Service Distributors in the South. Today, Cheney Brothers inventories over 15,000 items with yearly revenues exceeding \$800 million. Cheney Brothers will be constructing a 250,000 square foot distribution center in Charlotte County to handle its expanding markets in Southwest Florida as well as to increase efficiencies in exports to South and Central America.

Visit the [Cheney Brothers web site](#) to learn more about the company.

## Social Media Bootcamp

Debrah Forester, Charlotte County Redevelopment Manager, and Sharon Fumei, Charlotte County Research Analyst, attended Florida Gulf Coast University's "Social Media Boot Camp ~ Building Traffic to Your Website Through Social Media Outlets!" seminar. The course was taught over a three week, 9-hr hands on instruction format beginning on January 13th and ending on January 27th. Students were taught how to use social media and web optimization for their organization's over-all marketing strategy to increase website traffic.

## Livability Solutions

Charlotte County was selected as one of the 10 communities in the U.S. to receive Technical Assistance from the Livability Solutions organization, funded by EPA Office of Sustainable Communities. The assistance will be used in Charlotte Harbor and Parkside Community Redevelopment Areas and will focus on the relationship of US 41 and key intersections in these communities with the goals to improve walkability and mobility in each of these two redevelopment areas. Members of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute will be arriving in Charlotte County to review existing conditions, meet with stakeholders and host a workshop. More details will be announced in the future.

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 11:00 AM, Room 119

July 4 - EDO closed for Independence Day

July 5 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

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

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

October 3 - 4th Annual Energy Options Conference

January 26 - 5th Annual Hands Across The Harbor

## SandStar Remodeling

If case you haven't seen the February 2102 edition of Florida Trends magazine, SandStar Remodeling from Punta Gorda, Florida is on page 28. Pick up a copy and read about how they have weathered the recent economic storm.



## Business Expo

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office will be participating in the Business Expo on February 2nd at the Charlotte County Event and Conference Center, 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, FL. Stop by and enter into a drawing to win a basket of goodies. The first 50 people to complete a survey will win a 2GB flash drive.

For more information about the Business Expo, contact Sara at the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce at 941-627-2222.

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Web Site: <http://www.FloridasInnovationCoast.com>