LAKE COUNTY
FLORIDA
Where the best comes into view

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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COUNTY MESSAGE:
From the County Manager's Desk

I am pleased to announce a reorganization plan of County departments that was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, Aug. 11.

As County Government has downsized to streamline operations, the timing to relook at its structure was opportune. The reorganization accomplishes four priorities:

1. It creates a new department, which will be dedicated to providing leisure and quality of life services to the public. The resulting synergy among the talented individuals in the new Department of Public Resources will offer a creative and proactive approach to integrate events and programs. Sports, recreation, environmental opportunities, children's events and educational programs related to these activities and others will be mutually supportive. This department combines Agricultural Extension, Library Services, Parks & Trails, Public Lands, Tourism & Business Relations and Volunteer Services.

2. It provides greater financial oversight to contracted public services. Public transportation and housing programs are handled through contracts with other providers, and are supported by state and federal grant programs with complex tracking requirements.

3. It reduces the number of departments. Information Outreach, years ago a function of Information Technology (IT), has merged with IT in order to offer a more unified approach to the County's technological capabilities. As mentioned above, Tourism & Business Relations has merged into the larger Department of Public Resources to support a more global approach to leisure services.

4. It places many of the diverse services formerly in the Department of Community Services, such as Probation and various medical programs, in existing departments with similar areas of expertise and interest. Community Services will continue to focus on critical social services provided to our citizens.

Cindy Hall | **Cindy Hall,** *County Manager*

pinpointPOST | Cultivating Information

WHAT: Lake County Agricultural Center
WHERE: 1951 Woodlea Road, Tavares, FL 32778
HOURS: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday
PHONE: (352) 343-4101
STAFFED: 12 full-time positions, 2 part-time, many volunteer positions

SERVICES AVAILABLE: The Lake County Extension Service is a cooperative of the University of Florida, Lake County and the USDA. It provides research based information from the University of Florida including educational programs on residential and commercial horticulture, animal science, fruit production, nutrition, food safety, the home environment and financial management; 4-H youth programs; plant clinic for homeowners and landscapers; pesticide applicator licensing; and Best Management Practices training and certification.

Making ¢ents:

THE COST OF OPERATING THE ANIMAL SHELTER

***Fast Fact:** The Lake County Animal Services Division averages 750 to 800 service calls every five days in addition to its 30,000 annual visitors.*

When Marjorie Boyd, Director of the Lake County Department of Public Safety, Animal Services Division, arrived in 1996 at the County's animal shelter, located at 28123 County Road 561 in Tavares, it was handling about 4,500 animals annually.

Flipping the dog dish to 2009 and the County's animal shelter is expected to surpass the 20,000 mark of animals handled. While the sheer number of pets and livestock traipsing through the facility adds to the Division's expenses, the additional employees needed to care for the influx is where the majority of the budget is consumed.

"The most expensive part of running a shelter is the staff," Boyd said. "When you are dealing with animals in a shelter like ours you deal with numerous types of animals — reptiles, horses, cows, dogs and cats — so the employees need to be cross-trained."

Routine training can be expensive. Animal-control officers are required to be certified in multiple areas, such as euthanasia, chemical capture and neglect & cruelty. The courses cost $500-$800 a piece and officers are required to attend training every two years.

The Division's 12 animal-control officers respond to calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week and for multiple jurisdictions. In addition to patrolling unincorporated Lake County, Animal Services provides services to 11 of the County's 14 municipalities. The cost of adding a new animal-control officer to the staff is a pricey venture.

For one officer, the personnel cost, including salary, benefits and insurance, tops $40,000. The officer's truck, radio and laptop costs an additional $60,000. On top of the initial $100,000, operating expenses, such as vehicle fuel, cell phone charges and animal traps, adds another $20,000.

There are two sides of the Lake County Animal Services Division facility, field operations, which includes the animal control officers, and shelter operations. Shelter operations has 16 employees, such as dispatchers, administration personnel, euthanasia technicians and shelter technicians. The animal shelter is open six days a week to the public, but staff needs to be available to care for the shelter animals constantly.

While shelter expenses can escalate with additional animals — the average cost of taking care of a dog for five days is $150 — it's the unexpected cases that turn the budget upside down. For example, earlier this year the Division seized 100 emaciated cattle. The cattle were eventually auctioned off for less than $28,000. Unfortunately, the total cost of treating and feeding the cattle cost the County more than $45,000

"What a 100 head of cattle eats a day is crazy," Boyd said. "You can't predict that type of cost in your budget because you don't know what kind of cases you'll have during the year.

"We are the authorities so we can't provide mediocre care. We have to supply good care."

IN THE FOLD: Fiscal Road

Position: Director of Funding & Production Division

Department & Division: Public Works

Employee: Lori Conway

What are the main responsibilities of your job?

The main responsibility of my job is to manage the budget for the Department of Public Works. The proposed fiscal year 2010 budget for the Department is about $48 million, and of that amount, about $14 million is gas tax revenue. Gas tax revenue supports the operation of the Department and directly relates to road-related services that are provided to the citizens of Lake County. Other funding sources available are for capital improvements that the Department oversees such as road construction projects, stormwater retrofitting, resurfacing and sidewalk & trail construction.

What are you currently working on?

I am currently working on the road construction bidding for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 projects. Through Local Agency Program Agreements with the Florida Department of Transportation, my office will oversee the bidding, construction inspection and contract administration of 10 resurfacing projects throughout Lake County. The estimated cost of these projects is $5.3 million.

What has been one of your favorite projects to work on?

My favorite project is the Five-Year Transportation Construction Program. This capital program is updated annually and provides direction for the Department on what road construction projects to focus on. From Project Development & Environment Study, Engineering Design & Permitting, Right-of-Way Acquisition and Construction, each aspect of a project is programmed according to priorities, available revenue and projected revenue over the next five-year period. Current funding sources for these projects are grants through agreements with the Florida Department of Transportation, road impact fees and the renewal infrastructure sales tax. Though it is somewhat challenging to balance priorities and funding availability, it is rewarding to me when projects are ultimately constructed. A constructed project marks the success of teamwork as it takes the support of many people to bring a project from inception to completion.

FEATURE FUNCTION:

The ins and outs of recycling

When Lake County took over its recycling program from a vendor in October 2007, it was primarily to help increase the County's revenues from the sale of the recyclables, but it also opened new opportunities for the County to promote recycling.

In 2007, the County accepted newspapers, plastic beverage containers, glass containers, steel cans and aluminum beverage cans through its curbside-collection recycling program. In 2008, the County added corrugated cardboard to the program.

The County allows citizens to pitch all of their recyclables into the provided single recycling container. Trucks pick up the recyclables and transport them to the County's Recycling Center at the Lake County Central Solid Waste Management Facility, located at 13130 County Landfill Road in Tavares.

At the Recycling Center, staff sort through the dropped truckloads of recyclables separating them into piles. Some of the materials, such as cardboard, are baled in a machine while others are loaded into a tractor-trailer to be hauled away to a buyer. The revenue from each commodity varies dramatically, but the price of corrugated cardboard is currently doing rather well at about $90 a ton.

In addition to curbside recycling, Lake County offers citizens the opportunity to drop of an assortment of other products for recycling at the Central Solid Waste Management Facility, including batteries of all sizes, electronics, propane tanks, paint and, as of July, bicycles. Residents disposing of bicycles at the Central Solid Waste Management Facility are asked if they would like to participate in the RE-Cycle Program by making their bicycle available for reuse.

The reusable bicycles are available to Lake County residents at no charge. An individual wishing to adopt one of the bicycles needs to visit the Central Solid Waste Management Facility and provide proof of Lake County residency. Selection is limited to one bicycle per household per month; however, residents may visit the bicycle corral as often as needed until they find a suitable match.

For more information, call the Lake County Department of Environmental Utilities at (352) 343-3776 or log on to www.lakecountyfl.gov, keyword: recycling.

INSIDE SCOOP:

Prepare for HURRICANE SEASON 2009

When a disaster strikes, it may not leave your family much time to prepare. After a disaster, local emergency officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they will not be able to reach everyone immediately. It could take hours or even days before help can get to your neighborhood. Preparing a disaster supply kit will help your family better cope with the situation. Some necessary items in every disaster supply kit include:

- ☐ One gallon of water per person for five days
- ☐ Enough non-perishable food for the household for at least five days
- ☐ A non-electric can opener; cooking tools and fuel; paper plates; and plastic utensils
- ☐ Toiletries, such as toothpaste and brush; deodorant and soap; shaving equipment; personal hygiene supplies; shampoo; wash cloth and towel; and toilet paper
- ☐ Garbage bags, re-sealable plastic bags and tarps
- ☐ Supplies for infants, including diapers and formula
- ☐ Supplies for senior citizens, including special dietary considerations and incontinence pads
- ☐ Blankets, pillows and extra clothing
- ☐ At least a two-week supply of prescribed family medicines, as well as a typical first-aid kit with bandages, antibiotic cream, headache medicine and antacids.
- ☐ Battery-powered NOAA weather radio and flashlight; and extra batteries
- ☐ A waterproof container with extra cash and important documents, such as insurance, bank account and Social Security cards
- ☐ A list of important phone numbers including the family's local pharmacy, doctors and designated contacts the family can call in case of an emergency
- ☐ Tool kit
- ☐ Camera to record damage
- ☐ Rain gear and hard sole shoes

For more hurricane-preparation information, contact the Lake County Department of Public Safety, Emergency Management Division, at (352) 343-9420, e-mail disasterready@lakecountyfl.gov or log on to www.lakecountyfl.gov, keyword: emergency.