

## County, employees support community non-profits

Hector Flores

Charlotte County partners with 17 non-profit organizations to assist them in providing programs and services to county residents. In the current budget, the county provided \$876,546 to these organizations via the United Way of Charlotte County, which vets organizations seeking funding.

Charlotte Behavioral Health Care cares for people with behavioral health issues, addiction, or other disorders. The Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies helps victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other violent crimes. Other groups offer health care, education, counseling, after school and wellness programs. For a full list of funded organizations, visit <https://unitedwayccfl.org/fundedpartners>.

In addition to the organizations to which the United Way distributes the county finding, the county also supports other groups. The Military Heritage Museum has a collection of more than 20,000 artifacts, flight simulators, graphics and audiovisual devices. It also operates the Gulf Theater that offers meetings, lectures and live entertainment. The Civil Air Patrol conducts patrols, assists in marine searches and rescues, responds to local emergencies and promotes civil aviation.

County employees also donate their time and services to a variety of non-profits. Our People Operations Department organizes a Big Brothers/Big Sisters chapter. Forty-seven employees donated \$19,682 to the United Way, a 58.7% increase over last year. This week, the Administration Center hosted the Big Red bus in its parking lot for employees to donate blood. During the last blood drive in February, 40 employees donated 44 units of blood, enough to benefit 132 patients.

It's one thing to serve a community, but so many of our employees are an active part of the community, too.

### Sales tax

At its meeting on Tuesday, the County Commission will discuss the potential extension of the 1% local option sales tax, including the proposed project list to be presented to voters and the term. If approved by the board, the referendum will be on the Nov. 3 general election.

Once the board determines what projects will be on the final list, the sales tax webpage will be updated with information about each one, including a projected cost, the project's purpose and location. Visit [www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/salestax](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/salestax).

The Sales Tax Focus Group held the last of its 14 meetings on Thursday. The group's final duty will be to make a project list recommendation to the board.

I want to thank the focus group members for their contribution to the process. They reviewed 41 projects and held detailed discussions about the merits of each one.

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