

# It's your turn to tell us how are we doing

Recently I've had the opportunity to review documentation about Team Punta Gorda's formation after Hurricane Charley visited our precious slice of paradise on Aug. 13, 2004. It is a very moving story of how citizens, who were themselves distressed from Charley's ravages, found the time to form an organization that has contributed much to the transformation of a large sector of Charlotte County. It would make a wonderful screen play with a great, feel-good ending.

According to local historian Vernon Peeples, our population historically has turned over on the average of every eight years. If this holds true today, this would mean that there is only a 12.5 percent chance that people reading this might have even been residing here when Charley made



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landfall. What? Don't worry. Since Team Punta Gorda is nearly seven years old, there is a chance that the remaining 87.5 percent of our population may understand what transpired here and you might have even heard of some of the achievements of our citizen-based organization. We detail what we've done on our website at [www.teampuntagorda.org](http://www.teampuntagorda.org). As an all-volunteer organization, we're now dedicated to making the greater Punta Gorda community a better place to live, work, and play. We want all of Charlotte County to thrive.

Like many organizations, we want to know how we're doing. We collect specific, measureable data on program performance. Measures of success may include how many rides are taken on our free loaner bicycles, how many spaces are leased at the Artisans' Atelier, or how many garden plots are reserved for our community garden at the South County Regional Park that we expect to open around the Nov. 1 time frame. By the way, call the park now at 941-505-8686 to reserve your plot. Thanks to a grant from the Charlotte Community Foundation we'll even have handicapped-accessible plots.

Another way to find out how we're doing is to gather feedback directly from the community we serve.

It's important to know how you feel about our organiza-

tion and what more we can be doing as we continue the journey. This is your chance and we're ready to listen! To accommodate busy schedules, we've prepared a very short, seven-question, online survey that is designed to minimize the time it will take to respond and yet provide valuable information for future planning. To participate in the survey, go to the Team Punta Gorda website where you'll conveniently find a survey button to select on the home page.

All responses are anonymous. Thank you in advance for participating.

Here's the best part. We'll be sharing the results of this survey at our annual meeting on Nov. 16 at the Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association.

The meeting is free, open to the public, and begins at 7 p.m. The

theme of this year's meeting is "Economic Development: It's Our Future." The keynote speaker will be John Rhodes, Senior Principal with the firm of Moran, Stahl and Boyer. Join us as John shares the results of the recent economic development study done by Charlotte County and Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council to expand the economy and create local jobs. This promises to be an engaging and interactive presentation that you don't want to miss. More information about the annual meeting and John Rhodes is available on the Team

Punta Gorda website. We'll also be collecting non-perishable food items for the Good Samaritan's of Charlotte County food pantry.

We also welcome you to become a Team Punta Gorda volunteer! From office volunteers to committee members, we'll find a rewarding opportunity just for you. We're also on Facebook. Keep tabs on Team Punta Gorda through Team Talk, our monthly e-newsletter, by signing up on our website.

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