



## GREATER ESTERO COMMUNITY REPORT APRIL 2020

Welcome to the second quarter 2020 edition of the Greater Estero Community Report.

We are sharing this report with members who have registered for ECCL news bulletins. We intend to provide readers with timely and pertinent details on key issues and initiatives, impacting the quality of life for all residents of Estero and surrounding communities.

Please feel free to forward the report to friends and neighbors who you think would benefit accordingly.

Finally, when you have finished your review of the report, please click the Link below and complete a simple survey of three (3) questions with yes/no answers. Your input will assist us in continuing to provide you with pertinent information in future reports.



### **It's All In the Numbers**

To assess residents' views on ECCL's activities and priorities, we conducted a comprehensive Residents Survey at the close of 2019, to determine key areas of interest from the Estero residents' perspective. A total of 589 respondents, representing 15.4% of a core group of residents who receive regular ECCL communications, determined that the most critical areas of concentration moving forward should be: ***Environment, Community Development, Health &***

**Healthcare, and Transportation.** [The complete report](#) was presented at the February Membership meeting and is accessible on the ECCL website. The ECCL in general and Individual Advocacy Councils will be explicitly using this information as the foundation for planning initiatives in 2020 and beyond.

## On the Move

The **Transportation Council** has paved the way for a myriad of issues to ensure our residents' safety and quality of life. Topping the list this quarter is the **Corkscrew Road Widening Project** with an emphasis on understanding the Village's position on the project and funding intentions for lighting, landscaping, multi-use pathways, sidewalks, bike lanes, and more.



In other news, the Transportation Council will continue to provide input and advocacy to move the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) forward. Introduced by Village Manager Steve Sarkozy in February, the process encompasses an annual timetable which began with two workshops, followed by a public forum. There will be a community survey in May, and adoption of the CIP in July. More to come on these issues very soon.

## Lessons Learned

In and out of the classroom, the **Education Council** has made great strides with the Junior Achievement financial literacy program, and several other advocacy issues. This quarter, a primary focus has been the **mentorship program** at Three Oaks Middle School (TOMS), an initiative led by Kevin Tolliver, the Education Council's liaison to Lee Schools.

To date, the program has been a massive success with rave reviews from every mentor. At the time of this reporting, there are 22 mentors and 46 student mentees, reaching capacity for the program well ahead of schedule, and having created an effective system of placement and volunteer follow-up. Because of extraordinary support from the ECCL and the Village of Estero, the program has had a significant impact on many students.

## Environmentally Speaking

With a wave of support, an ECCL-sponsored flotilla set sail from the FGCU Marine Field Station on the morning of Feb. 23, with 43 volunteers on board for a special mission. The ECCL **Environmental Council** achieved its goal of an environmental cleanup of the pristine waters of Estero Bay collecting over 150 pounds of discarded debris and waste materials.

The very productive day began at 8 a.m. and included a three hour **on-the-water cleanup** as the flotilla traveled in tandem from the Vester Station to Wiggins Pass, south to Bonita Beach Road

and north to Mound Key. Volunteers enjoyed lunch provided by BlackJack Pizza, followed by a seminar conducted by Dr. Mike Parsons, FGCU Professor of Marine Science.

This first-time collaborative effort between the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL), Florida Gulf Coast University, and Bay Water Boat Club is an outstanding success. Based on the positive community reaction, we will develop plans for similar projects.



### **Easing the Transition for our Veterans**

A meaningful conversation has recently begun to address the formation of a coalition of veteran service providers assisting our area's returning veterans. Our most pressing question is: ***Are we doing enough to ease the transition of veterans to civilian life for those who have served and sacrificed so much on our behalf?*** While there have certainly been some critical initiatives, the fact is that there is much more we can and should be doing as a community.



Local communities must welcome home the men and women who have served our country. There are ways that our local organizations can collaborate and share information and services that will help our veterans. Once we understand our region's veteran demographics, we can use the data to inform public and private policy. Such analytic efforts should be fully leveraged by veteran service providers, state and local governments, and not-for-profit organizations to implement their plans, programs, and partnerships for veterans.

It is up to us to support the transition of service members to civilian life, not only in the spirit of gratitude but as an investment in the strength and security of our community.

To join the conversation and to be a part of the solution, contact us at the ECCL website <https://esterotoday.com/>

### **A Word about Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

***The ECCL is committed to keeping a safe and healthy environment*** for all residents of Estero and surrounding communities, which will include such actions as canceling our monthly Member meetings until further notice and postponing events which we co-sponsor.

We remind everyone that there is an elevated level of personal responsibility in dealing with this pandemic, including compliance with recommended personal hygiene practices and being socially responsible in interactions with others.

There is a wealth of information available for your review on this topic, including the following:

- Center for Disease Control  
[www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov)
- World Health Organization  
[www.WHO.int](http://www.WHO.int)
- Florida Department of Health  
[www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov)
- Lee Health [www.LeeHealth.org](http://www.LeeHealth.org)



The ECCL reminds everyone to be diligent in complying with all official recommendations regarding the COVID-19 situation.

### **Please Join Us**

Your ECCL volunteers are energetic and enthusiastic in their efforts to advocate for our community. But we can use your insights and would appreciate your feedback. Please visit our website to keep apprised, to check when we restore our meetings, and to share your thoughts.

We look forward to working with you to maintain and improve the beautiful greater Estero area community we call home!