

Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council



Economic Views

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Serving Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee and Sarasota Counties Since 1973

Featured Article of the Month

Wildlife advocate David Burr dies at 56 Headed SW Fla. Regional Planning Council

By Amy Sowder - Originally posted on September 28, 2007

A Buckingham man who made preserving Southwest Florida's natural habitat his life's mission died Thursday. David Burr, 56, executive director of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, spent 32 years crusading to preserve wildlife and area waters through the council's programs.

Lee County Smart Growth Director Wayne Daltry, a friend for those 32 years, was with Burr and his family when he died. "His daughter baby-sat my kids," Daltry said. "We would tell lies on each others' behalf to our spouses on why we were out late and we worked hard on the things that were important to the region and he did not falter.

"He worked ceaselessly to help local governments work together toward common goals." Dan Trescott, a friend and colleague of Burr's for 22 years, said they used to go on camping trips together in the wilderness. "It's almost worse than losing my mother. We had so many intimate times together," Trescott, the council's principal planner. "We kind of understood each other really well," he said. "He was really a person who truly cared about the environment and the impact development has on it." Council officials fielded calls and e-mails all day from people extending regards their thoughts to Burr, who is survived by his wife, Derek, and daughter Heidi, said Ken Heatherington, planning director.

Heatherington met Burr 10 years ago when Burr made him planning director. Many of Burr's coworkers knew him more than 30 years and attended college with him. "We're a small family up here," Heatherington said. "We're more than friends." The council provides programs on affordable housing, economic development, emergency preparedness, natural resources and regional transportation for Lee, Charlotte, Hendry, Glades, Collier and Sarasota counties. Trescott said Burr was walking his dog with his wife near his home by Orange River in Buckingham on Wednesday evening when he collapsed. "He's such a young man to be eliminated so fast," Trescott said. "I can't figure it out." The two friends recently took a trip to a conference in Trescott's Prius and laughed the whole way. "He said he hadn't laughed like that in so long," Trescott said. "At least we had that."

Details of the memorial service are being arranged. Burr was born and raised in Miami. He attended the University of Florida and received a master's degree in systems ecology within the Environmental Engineering Department, School of Engineering. He also received a bachelor's degree in wildlife ecology. Burr was also a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners. Starting his career with the council in July 1975, Burr began work there as its environment planner. He became the planning director in July 1985. In September 2002, Burr became the executive director. Burr was treasurer of the Babcock Ranch Preservation Partnership where Lee County Commissioner Bob Janes worked closely with him. Janes knew Burr since the late 1980s. "He loved doing what he was doing."



Festivals & Events

October 19-21, 27-28, 2007

21ST ANNUAL OKTOBERFEST

German-American Club, Cape Coral

Contact: (239) 283-1400 or www.gasc-capecoral.com

October 20, 2007

BOO BASH

Imaginarium, Fort Myers

Contact: (239) 337-3332

October 20-11, 27-28, 2007

FRIENDLY FOREST

Calusa Nature Center & Planetarium, Fort Myers

Contact: (239) 275-3435

October 25, 2007

LASER FRIGHT NIGHT

Calusa Nature Center & Planetarium, Fort Myers

Contact: (239) 275-3435

October 26-28, 2007

JAZZ ON THE GREEN

FGCU, Fort Myers

Contact: (239) 477-4683

October 27, 2007

HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL

Boca Grande Community Center

Contact: (941) 964-2564

October 27, 2007

FALL KIDS FESTIVALS

Jaycee Park, Cape Coral

Contact: (239) 573-3121

October 27-28, 2007

SWAMP BUGGY RACES

Florida Sports Park, Naples

Contact: (239) 774-2701

October 31, 2007

CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN PARADE & TRICK OR TREATING

Centennial Park, Venice

Contact: (941) 484-6722

November 2-4, 2007

BUCKLER CRAFT FAIR

Lee Civic Center, N. Fort Myers

Contact: (239) 543-8368

November 3-4, 2007

ART FEST 2007

Downtown, Venice

Contact: (941) 484-6722

November 4, 2007

TASTE OF THE TOWN

Centennial Park, Fort Myers

Contact: (239) 277-1197

November 7-11, 2007

FORT MYERS BEACH SANDSCULPTING FESTIVALS

Fort Myers Beach

Contact: (239) 454-7500

November 11, 2007

VETERAN'S DAY CELEBRATION & PARADE

Cape Coral

Contact: (239) 566-7117

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Airport Activity

Airport passenger activity for the Southwest Florida Region decreased 9.0% in August 2007 from July 2007. Airport passengers visiting and leaving the region totaled 590,761 as compared to 649,065 in the previous month. All three Airports reported a decrease in passenger activity from the previous month.

In August 2007, total airport activity for the region increased 11.7% from the previous year. All three Airports reported an increase in passenger activity from the previous year.

Airport Passengers

AIRPORT					% CHANGE	
		AUG. 07	JUL. 07	AUG. 06	JUL. 07/ AUG. 07	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07
S.W. Fla. Int'l	ARRIVALS	240,369	265,409	218,367	-9.4%	
	DEPARTURES	248,170	269,855	228,048	-8.0%	
Sarasota/ Bradenton	ARRIVALS	49,995	54,624	39,167	-8.5%	
	DEPARTURES	49,700	56,208	41,006	-11.6%	
Naples	ARRIVALS	1,323	1,600	1,167	-17.3%	
	DEPARTURES	1,204	1,369	1,075	-12.1%	
AIRPORT TOTALS = ARRIVALS + DEPARTURES				%CHANGE		
		AUG. 07	JUL. 07	AUG. 06	JUL. 07/ AUG. 07	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07
S.W. Fla. Int'l		488,539	535,264	446,415	-8.7%	9.4%
Sarasota/Brad.		99,695	110,832	80,173	-10.0%	24.3%
Naples		2,527	2,969	2,242	-14.9%	12.7%
REGION		590,761	649,065	528,830	-9.0%	11.7%

SOURCE: Local Airport Authorities.

Unemployment

The regional unemployment rate for August 2007 was 5.1%, which was higher than the revised rate of 4.9% for July 2007. Hendry County, at 9.8%, had the highest unemployment rate in the six-county region, with Glades County second at 6.2%. Sarasota County had the lowest unemployment rate at 4.5%.

The August 2007 regional unemployment rate of 5.9% was higher than the state at 4.3%. The regional unemployment rate increased by 62.5% from August 2006 to August 2007, while the state rate increased by 23.7%.

Labor Force Figures

COUNTY	LABOR FORCE		EMPLOYMENT		UNEMPLOYMENT	
	AUG. 07 (PRELIM)	JUL. 07 (REVISED)	AUG. 07 (PRELIM)	JUL. 07 (REVISED)	AUG. 07 (PRELIM)	JUL. 07 (REVISED)
CHARLOTTE	70,402	70,928	66,450	67,018	3,952	3,910
COLLIER	157,091	157,726	148,899	150,042	8,192	7,684
GLADES	4,642	4,512	4,355	4,231	287	281
HENDRY	18,048	17,745	16,279	15,990	1,769	1,755
LEE	294,182	294,710	279,720	280,850	14,462	13,860
SARASOTA	184,741	187,137	176,506	178,852	8,235	8,285
REGION	729,106	732,758	692,209	696,983	36,897	35,775
STATE	9,284,000	9,316,000	8,887,000	8,924,000	397,000	393,000

Unemployment Rate

COUNTY	% CHANGE				
	AUG. 07 (PRELIM)	JUL. 07 (REVISED)	AUG. 06 (REVISED)	JUL. 07 AUG. 07	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07
CHARLOTTE	5.6%	5.5%	3.5%	1.1%	77.4%
COLLIER	5.2%	4.9%	3.6%	6.6%	49.5%
GLADES	6.2%	6.2%	6.1%	2.1%	23.7%
HENDRY	9.8%	9.9%	9.0%	0.8%	18.9%
LEE	4.9%	4.7%	2.8%	4.3%	80.5%
SARASOTA	4.5%	4.4%	2.9%	-0.6%	56.5%
REGION	5.1%	4.9%	3.2%	3.1%	62.5%
STATE	4.3%	4.2%	3.6%	1.0%	23.7%

Note: Sum of detail may not equal totals due to rounding.

Source: Agency for Workforce Innovation.

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Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for all urban consumers measures the cost of items in several specific categories and is used as an indicator of the general rate of inflation through time. The CPI-U during August 2007 decreased 0.2% from July 2006. The CPI-U for August 2007 was 207.9, an increase of 2.0% from August 2006.

Consumer Price Index

GROUP	% CHANGE				
	AUG. 07	JUL. 07	AUG. 06	JUL. 06/ AUG. 07	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07
ALL ITEMS	207.9	208.3	203.9	-0.2%	2.0%
FOOD & BEVERAGES	204.3	203.5	196.0	0.4%	4.2%
HOUSING	211.1	211.3	205.1	-0.1%	2.9%
APPAREL	114.4	113.5	116.1	0.8%	-1.5%
TRANSPORTATION	184.5	187.7	188.5	-1.7%	-2.1%
MEDICAL CARE	353.1	351.6	333.7	0.4%	5.8%
RECREATION	111.1	111.3	111.3	-0.2%	-0.2%
EDUCATION/ COMMUN.	120.3	119.0	117.5	1.1%	2.4%
OTHER GOODS/SVCS	333.3	333.4	321.7	-0.0%	3.6%

Purchasing power of the consumer dollar.

1982- 1984= \$1.00	AUG. 07 =	0.481
1967= \$1.00	AUG. 07 =	0.161

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor

Sales Activity

Sales activity in Southwest Florida is measured by gross and taxable sales for each county. For July 2007, gross and taxable sales in the region totaled approximately \$4.0 billion and \$2.1 billion, respectively. This is a 3.0% increase in gross sales and a 4.9% decrease in taxable sales from June 2007. Charlotte and Hendry Counties were the only two to report a decrease in gross sales and all counties reported a decrease in taxable sales this month as compared to June 2007.

Gross sales in the region between July 2006 and July 2007 decreased 13.1%. Taxable sales decreased 17.1% during the same period. By incorporating the change in the cost of living (2.0%) and the average annual population growth rate (4.3%) for the same time period, real gross sales decreased 22.2% per capita. Real taxable sales decreased 28.2%.

Sales Activity

**Regional sales data is not yet released, current data is July 2007 compared with July 2006 data.

GROSS SALES (\$000)

COUNTY	% CHANGE				
	JUL. 07 (PRELIM)	JUN. 07 (PRELIM)	JUL. 06 (REVISED)	JUN. 07/ JUL. 07	JUL. 2006/ JUL. 2007
CHARLOTTE	306,706	315,296	342,132	-2.7%	-10.4%
COLLIER	894,584	862,595	989,875	3.7%	-9.6%
GLADES	9,468	9,333	9,468	1.4%	0.0%
HENDRY	115,373	130,914	121,780	-11.9%	-5.3%
LEE	1,571,147	1,559,282	1,850,888	0.8%	-15.1%
SARASOTA	1,112,157	1,015,788	1,298,410	9.5%	-14.3%
REGION	4,009,435	3,893,208	4,612,553	3.0%	-13.1%

TAXABLE SALES (\$000)

COUNTY	% CHANGE				
	JUL. 07 (PRELIM)	JUN. 07 (PRELIM)	JUL. 06 (REVISED)	JUN. 07/ JUL. 07	JUL. 2006/ JUL. 2007
CHARLOTTE	172,920	200,639	207,451	-13.8%	-16.6%
COLLIER	465,844	491,281	545,174	-5.2%	-14.6%
GLADES	2,313	2,469	3,839	-6.3%	-39.7%
HENDRY	27,538	30,723	36,507	-10.4%	-24.6%
LEE	894,421	926,362	1,101,770	-3.4%	-18.8%
SARASOTA	527,599	546,679	628,392	-3.5%	-16.0%
REGION	2,090,635	2,198,153	2,523,133	-4.9%	-17.1%

SOURCE: Florida Department of Tax Research.

SWFRPC Meeting Schedule

Regional Planning Council	Third Thursday of each month
Lee County MPO	Bi-Monthly
Technical Advisory Committee	Bi-Monthly
Citizen Advisory Committee	Bi-Monthly
LEPC	Quarterly
Disaster Preparedness	Thursday after LEPC meeting
Lee Trans. Disadvantaged	Quarterly
Glades/Hendry Trans. Disadvantaged	Quarterly

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Building Permits

Residential building activity is measured by the number of single-family and multifamily building permits issued during a given month. In August 2007, 433 residential permits were issued in Southwest Florida. This is 1288 less permits than were issued in August 2006. The number of units covered by these permits decreased by 1,468 from 2,164 in August 2006 to 696 in August 2007. Compared with the figures reported for July 2007, the number of units for August 2007 increased by 63. From July 2007 to August 2007, permits issued decreased by 136.

The region reported a residential building valuation of \$153,752,084 in August 2007. This is a decrease of 66.1% compared to the valuation of residential permits issued in August 2006, which totaled \$453,249,847.

Building Permit Activity

COUNTY	AUGUST 2007			RESIDENTIAL VALUE	JULY 2007			RESIDENTIAL VALUE
	SINGLE FAMILY	MULTI-FAMILY PERMITS	UNITS		SINGLE FAMILY	MULTI-FAMILY PERMITS	UNITS	
CHARLOTTE	86	2	4	\$22,478,948	72	9	24	\$16,735,256
COLLIER	50	13	128	\$59,470,300	89	8	40	\$52,401,490
GLADES	4	0	0	\$885,000	1	0	0	\$196,814
HENDRY	19	0	0	\$1,773,259	11	1	5	\$1,680,958
LEE	149	25	159	\$49,501,063	191	9	24	\$56,582,939
SARASOTA	70	15	27	\$19,643,514	176	2	0	\$35,708,167
REGION*	378	55	318	\$153,752,084	540	29	93	\$163,305,624

COUNTY	AUGUST 2006			RESIDENTIAL VALUE	UNIT CHANGE		% CHANGE	
	SINGLE FAMILY	MULTI-FAMILY PERMITS	UNITS		AUG. 07/ JUL. 07	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07/	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07/	AUG. 06/ AUG. 07/
CHARLOTTE	198	19	44	\$51,351,671	-6	-152	34.3%	-56.2%
COLLIER	226	23	152	\$78,429,000	49	-200	13.5%	-24.2%
GLADES	2	0	0	\$300,000	3	2	349.7%	195.0%
HENDRY	29	0	0	\$2,655,095	3	-10	5.5%	-33.2%
LEE	934	93	382	\$282,441,294	93	-1,008	-12.5%	-82.5%
SARASOTA	197	0	0	\$38,072,787	-79	-100	-45.0%	-48.4%
REGION*	1,586	135	578	\$453,249,847	63	-1,468	-5.9%	-66.1%

*Data does not include Everglades City and Longboat Key

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Summary Economic Indicators

Economic Indicators

INDICATORS	AUGUST 2007 (PRELIM)	AUGUST 2006 (REVISED)	% CHANGE
UNEMPLOYMENT			
State	4.3%	3.6%	23.7%
Region	5.1%	3.2%	62.5%
County			
Charlotte	5.6%	3.5%	77.4%
Collier	5.2%	3.6%	49.5%
Glades	5.2%	6.1%	23.7%
Hendry	9.8%	9.0%	18.9%
Lee	4.9%	2.8%	80.5%
Sarasota	4.5%	2.9%	56.5%
LABOR FORCE			
State	9,284,000	9,021,000	2.9%
Region	729,106	702,945	3.7%
EMPLOYED			
State	8,887,000	8,701,000	2.1%
Region	692,209	680,246	1.8%
UNEMPLOYED			
State	397,000	321,000	23.7%
Region	36,897	22,699	62.5%
AIRPORT PASSENGERS			
Region	590,761	528,830	11.7%
S. W. Int'l Airport	488,539	446,415	9.4%
Sarasota/Bradenton	99,695	80,173	24.3%
Naples	2,527	2,242	12.7%
BUILDING PERMITS			
Regional	433	1,721	-74.8%
Single Family	378	1,586	-76.2%
Multi-Family	55	135	-59.3%
TOTAL VALUE			
Residential	\$153,752,084	\$453,249,847	-66.1%
All Permit Activity	\$452,441,303	\$799,206,489	-43.4%
REGIONAL SALES (\$000)**			
Taxable Sales	\$2,090,635	\$2,523,133	-17.1%
Gross Sales	\$4,009,435	\$4,612,553	-13.1%

**Regional sales data not yet released, current data is January 2007 compared with January 2006 data.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	207.9	203.9	2.0%
PRIME INTEREST RATE	8.3%	8.3%	-0.6%

