

LEE COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR ANNUAL REPORT TO OUR CITIZENS



January 2015

From the Desk of Larry Hart, Tax Collector

2014 has been an encouraging and prosperous year for Lee County. Unemployment continues to fall across Southwest Florida showing signs of strong recovery from economic recession. As the real estate market improves, property values are also on the rise. Here at the Tax Collector's office we have stayed committed to continuous improvement and exemplary service as we meet the needs of a growing and changing community.

In this report you will learn more about some of the changes, improvements, and community involvement that allows our organization to meet and exceed the expectations of taxpayers. Through customer surveys, we measure satisfaction levels in our service offices and call center. You have repeatedly told us we are doing a good job with a score of

92 – 97%. Thank you for your feedback, and suggestions for making service delivery even better!

In 2014, Florida Legislators voted to reduce vehicle registration fees and allow Tax Collectors to process applications for concealed weapons license as agents for the Department of Agriculture. In conjunction with the Department of Health, we also offer duplicate Florida birth certificates in all our service offices. Opportunities to join with state and local government offices for more customer convenience are always on our radar.

It is a pleasure to serve as your Tax Collector and we look forward to a great year in 2015.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry D. Hart".



Concealed Weapons License Application Process



Adam H. Putnam, Carole Jean Jordan, Diane Nelson, Wilton Simpson,
J. W. Grant and Larry D. Hart

Adam H. Putnam, Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, celebrated with Tax Collectors this year as "fast track" services were kicked off in Pinellas County this past October. Initial pilot sites also included Indian River, Highlands, Nassau and Okaloosa Counties. Lee County will offer application services early 2015.

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The Technological Edge...

We value continuous improvement, and focus on improvements that make doing business with the Lee County Tax Collector faster and easier. In August of 2014 we launched a new website with improved navigation and additional information pages available. Visit us online at www.leetc.com and explore!



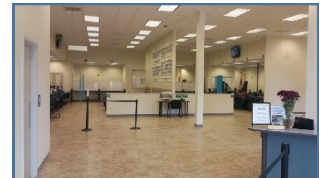
New Office Location in Bonita Springs...

The goal of the Tax Collector's office is to provide excellent service to the growing area of Bonita Springs through an expanded facility that can accommodate the resident's needs.



The Bonita Springs service office was relocated in August 2014, providing space for additional personnel and improved customer flow. One of six service locations in Lee County, the office provides vehicle and vessel title and registration, driver license and identification credentials, hunting and fishing license, local business tax receipts, and collection of property taxes.

The Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce provided the ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the new business location.



Changes in Florida Legislation...

Senate Bill 156 was passed in the 2014 Florida Legislative Session, lowering the cost of most vehicle registrations. The reduction in fees is an overall savings of \$400 million to Florida taxpayers, who experienced a \$13 - \$25 savings per vehicle.

Florida Senate President, Don Gaetz and Speaker of the House, Will Weatherford, joined Governor Rick Scott when he signed the bill into law on April 2, 2014. Also present were several Florida Tax Collectors and representatives from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Together they celebrated cutting taxes and fees to pre-2009 levels.

"The Florida House was proud to make lowering fees for Florida drivers a priority this session. Governor Scott has been a leader on keeping taxes low for Florida's families and I thank him for signing one of our top priorities into law today," said Will Weatherford.



Florida Legislatures and Tax Collectors join Governor Rick Scott as he signs tax-cutting legislation.

LCTC Employees Honor Veterans...



Larry Hart pictured with WWII Veteran, Harry Beeman

Lee County Tax Collector employees wanted a way to visibly and tangibly honor the 60,000+ veterans that call Lee County home. A distinctive community outreach campaign called "Honor Our Veterans" was initiated in May 2014 in conjunction with Memorial Day. A designated fund has been established with employee funding that will pay the \$1 fee for the Veteran Designation on a Florida driver license or identification card. This benefit is extended to all Lee County veterans when renewing their license or ID card. The campaign also offers information for available military license plates.

Continued funding is promoted by the employees the first Monday of each month when they are permitted to wear jeans and an office shirt for a \$2 donation. Freedom bracelets are also sold to members of the community who want to support this effort.

Since the program began in May, a total of **\$2983** has been collected and **1101** veteran designations were funded as of December 31, 2014.

We value the opportunities to be a part of the community by being involved in events, as well as offering information about our services. 2014 was a full year...



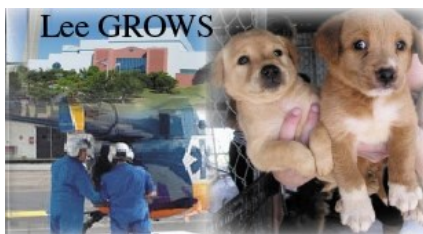
Larry Hart takes the “Ice Bucket Challenge “ in support ALS awareness.



Children seated in a booster seat in the rear of the car are 45% less likely to be injured in a crash than those using a safety belt alone.
Learn more at AAA.com/Foundation



Child restraint necessary for an adult, and all seats must be installed in a vehicle by a Certified CPS Tech to receive a seat. AAA membership not required.
 The Auto Club Group Traffic Safety Foundation (ACGSF) is a non-profit, tax-exempt public charity created under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code. ACGSF is funded by voluntary fee deductions collected from organizations and individuals who accept ACGSF's offer to produce a significant and continuous reduction in traffic crashes, injuries, and deaths. ACGSF's Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 33-0948699. For more information, visit www.aacpsf.org.
 ACGSF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible. For more information, visit www.aacpsf.org.
 DONATIONS BY CALLING 1-800-455-7592 (CALL 1-800-455-7592 FROM OUTSIDE OF FLORIDA). DONATIONS BY MAIL OR BY CALLING 1-800-455-7592 FROM OUTSIDE OF FLORIDA. REQUISITION DOES NOT APPLY. INDICATION OF APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE ACGSF DOES NOT IMPLY AGRANT OF CONTRIBUTION.



A woman wearing a teal t-shirt with 'Len County' and 'Tax Collector' printed on it, a white visor, and a backpack is holding a white sign that reads 'Thank you' in cursive, followed by 'Len County Tax Collector' in bold block letters. She is standing on a paved path in a park-like setting with trees and other people in the background.

Employee donations help sponsor
the Children's Network 9th Annual
Walk-a-thon



Alive today...
because someone like you said "YES" to
organ, tissue & eye donation.

Today you will be asked
"Do you want to be an
organ donor?"
Save Lives. Say "YES!"

They did!



 www.DonatelifeFlorida.org

Sponsored by FLORIDA COORDINATING GIFT DONORS, INC. (FCGD)
ORGAN DONOR: FLA 1133263 and the State of Florida, AGENCY FOR HEALTH
CARE COMPLIANCE.



Linda Doggett, Clerk of Court and Larry Hart challenge each office's fundraising efforts for United Way



Susan G. Komen Walk



“Blankets of Love” began in 2008 when a few employees crocheted and knitted 13 blankets for kids and babies...this year, 61 blankets were donated to the Children's Home Society.



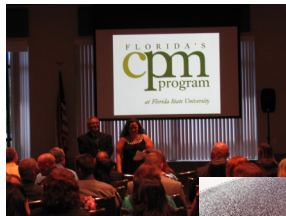
Leadership...



2014 Legacy Award received for financial accountability



First chairman of Florida Gulf Coast University's Eagle Advocacy



Florida Tax Collector's Association Board
Larry Hart will serve as the Association's 2nd Vice President
He also continues his role as Legislative Committee Co-Chair

...that we eagerly follow

In October 2014, 13 employees who have been promoted to management positions or are preparing for leadership roles in the organization, graduated from the Certified Public Manager's Program. The program is administered by the Florida Center for Public Management, at FSU.

The CPM program is a nationally recognized leadership development program that includes 32 days of classroom instruction delivered in 8 four-day courses.

EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP continues at all levels!

Florida Birth Certificates Available at Lee County Tax Collector

As a reminder, the Department of Health, Vital Statistics Office has partnered with Florida Tax Collectors across the state who can now provide a copy of a Florida birth certificate.

If you or your child were born in Florida, you can now visit the Lee County Tax Collector's Office to obtain a certified copy. Proof of identification must be shown, and only those records currently in the system can be provided. Any changes needing to be made to a record must be processed at the Vital Statistics office located in North Ft. Myers.



Certified Birth Certificate copies available at all six service office locations. *Shown: Cape Coral Service Center*