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The Journey Has Just Begun

By Nancy Johnson, CEO

The City of Punta Gorda has announced plans to begin a citizen input process in March with the goal of creating a Citywide Master plan. With the planned community input meetings, referred to as charrettes, coming up in March, this is the time when Punta Gorda residents should be thinking about what they would like to see in this town in the future. To this end, 700 people turned out for our recent *Journey to the Future*, a conference on best practices in community development. If you attended, you probably got some good ideas. If you did not, you can view the video of the event at our website, www.teampuntagorda.org. The journey is not yet complete. In fact, it has just begun.

Volunteerism is truly a way of life in Punta Gorda. In 2018, over 548 dedicated volunteers participated in our programs, and their accomplishments never cease to amaze me. I'm really pleased that TEAM Punta Gorda volunteers are once again building a Habitat for Humanity house for a deserving family. This is the second year of this collaboration which is intended to become an annual event. Habitat has such a great mission. Building over thirty homes a year using volunteers, they are a major source of affordable housing in our County. Spirits were high when I visited the build site this week. The build will continue until the end of March.

Registration is now open for Southwest Florida's premier bicycling event, Pedal & Play in Paradise which will take place March 22 & 23. Each spring this event attracts more than 600 cyclists to our waterfront as TEAM Punta Gorda and the Isles Yacht Club join forces to raise thousands of dollars for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, as well as TEAM's bicycling initiatives. With your Pedal & Play registration comes the choice of four rides of various lengths, lunch, music, free beer and even a free massage if you want one. It's great fun, so don't miss it! Register at www.pedalandplayinparadise.com .

Most of the funds we raise at TEAM Punta Gorda are spent directly on community projects. Each year we end the season with a fundraiser that benefits TEAM's operations. We would be unable to do what we do without the funds raised at our annual Golf Tournament. If you like the work we do in this community, there are several ways for you to be a part of this event.



TEAM is currently looking for sponsors and players for its 14th Annual Golf Scramble taking place on March 23 at St. Andrews South Golf Club. If you are interested in playing or putting together a foursome, registration forms are available at St. Andrews South Golf Club (1901 Deborah Dr.) and also on TEAM's website. The scramble format is open to men and women of all abilities. Thank you for your support!

Please join us for another evening of fun at TEAM's February 19 mixer. Thanks to Carmelo's for hosting this free event from 5:30 to 7:30 PM.

If you want to work with others that care about the future of our community, we'll be glad to put you to work supporting a long list of community service projects. If you'd like to volunteer, just let us know. Nancy Johnson is the CEO of TEAM Punta Gorda. TEAM Punta Gorda is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Ideas or questions can be addressed to team@teampuntagorda.org or visit our website: www.teampuntagorda.org.