



MISSION OF THE CITRUS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce is an organization of businesses unified in efforts to advance the economic growth of the region, promote the interests of the business community, provide key leadership on key commerce issues and preserve the county's quality of life.

Chamber Connection

915 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429 · 352-795-3149 · 203 W. Dampier St., Inverness, FL 34450 · 352-726-2801

Bombarded with Berries!

Get ready for a BERRY BUSTIN good time! Join us on March 4th & 5th in beautiful Floral Park, for berries and pageants and pies (OH MY)! Ok, maybe more shortcake than pie, but that's even better!

The 36th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival is a salute to our local agriculture with fresh strawberries hand-picked right around the corner from the festival at Ferris Groves. Luscious strawberry shortcakes will be available for your nosing pleasure, along with flats and half-flats of whole fresh berries that you can take home with you as a sweet souvenir of your day to make your own delectable treats. Not sure what to do with them all? Check out our Berry Bakery on our website at www.GoStrawberryFest.com.

Saturday morning, the festival opens with the posting of Colors, the Pledge of Allegiance, and our National Anthem. Live music will also fill the main stage all weekend with a full performance lineup! Saturday will kick off with

music from crowd favorite, Southern Express Band from 10 A.M. – 1 P.M., Ashley Young from 1:15pm - 2:45pm, followed by headliner Homegrown: The Zac Brown Band Experience from 3 P.M. – 5 P.M. Sunday's lineup includes Bad Luck Penny from 10 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. with headliner Palomino Blonde closing out this year's festival from 1 P.M. – 4 P.M.

Sticking to its very berry American roots, the annual pie-eating contests and prince and princess pageants will be back as well! Ooh and ahh on Saturday morning as poised young ladies and gents take the stage in their favorite strawberry-themed attire for a chance to earn a crown and become the next Strawberry Princes & Princesses. Registration is open NOW for the Prince & Princess Pageants. Or maybe getting messy is more your style? Then sign up to compete in the strawberry pie-eating contests for your shot at bragging rights until next year! Competitions will be held both Saturday and Sunday with

registration that day at the festival.

While visiting the 36th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival visitors are invited to tour the Historic Duval-Metz House in Floral City. Considered to be the oldest home in Citrus County, it will be open during festival hours both Saturday, March 4th, and Sunday, March 5th, along with the Floral City Heritage Museum in the Town Center just across the street. Guests can also take a stroll downtown to see the beautiful Avenue of the Oaks and charming local shops for a true "taste" of Old Florida. Shuttles will run all day Saturday and Sunday from the festival grounds to the Town Center. Look for the bus marked "Downtown".

New this year, we are excited to welcome The Soccer Collies! They are a professional team of soccer-playing Border Collies, right out of Floral City, on a Mission to connect the soccer world with the dog rescue world. Once an hour participants will be able to form a circle around a Soccer Dog and a very soft ball. When the dog pushes the ball out of

the circle, then the dog has scored a goal! It is free to participate so make sure you schedule some time to PLAY BALL!

Round out your festival adventures by strolling the park and browsing close to 200 art and craft vendors; indulging in a cold beer, glass of wine or hard seltzer at the beer garden near the main stage; enjoying the gastronomic pleasures offered by the many food vendors; or enjoying laughs and smiles with the young ones as they "play themselves silly" in the kids' area.

Floral City Strawberry Festival hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Entrance fee is \$5.00 for adults, children 12 and under are free. Park free at the Citrus County Auditorium and take a shuttle to the festival location.

For complete information on the Floral City Strawberry Festival, visit www.GoStrawberryFest.com. On Facebook, search for "Floral City Strawberry Festival."

36th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival Sponsors:



Bootcamp Breakfast! Loyalty + Love = Longevity (in Business)

Bootcamp Breakfast! Business growth continuing education: Loyalty + Love = Longevity is coming up Feb. 16.

Learn how you can stop the money drain of customer churn, and instead attract and KEEP your customers for a lifetime of profit. More critical than ever when facing an economic downturn, the principles presented will pay dividends for years to come.

Join host Horsefly Group, a strategic advertising and

marketing communications firm, for Bootcamp Breakfast, this year a Valentine's week stroll down the possibilities of building a true Love Brand.

What's a Love Brand? Glad you asked! It's one who has put together that magical alchemy where customers end up promoting your company, stay with you through thick and thin, and even forgive you for the occasional mistake (as long as you handle it correctly!)

Holly Davis, creative director,

■ **WHEN?** Thursday, February 16, 2023, 7:30 AM - 9:30 AM
■ **WHERE?** YMCA of the Suncoast, 4127 W. Norvell Bryant Highway (County Road 486), Lecanto, FL 34461
Thank you to our sponsor, Horsefly Group!
Brought to you by The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce

will introduce Bootcamp Leader CJ Millar, digital director. CJ has 23 years' experience, including extensive time on Madison Avenue working with global brands such as Estée Lauder, MAC Cosmetics, Consumer Reports, and

LexisNexis. Her teachings will be presented with the realities of local and regional businesses and budgets in mind.

7:30 am: breakfast and networking begins

8-9 am: Loyalty + Love = Longevity presentation

Additional opportunity – Horsefly Group will be taking a limited number of private meetings with local businesses Feb 15-16 to discuss their specific opportunities and challenges. Please email [tara.j@horseflygroup.com](mailto: tara.j@horseflygroup.com) to inquire.

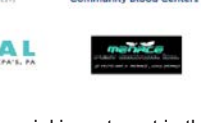
Pre-paid reservations are required. Members - \$15 / Non Members - \$20. No Walk Ins will be accepted.

Make reservations online at www.CitrusCountyChamber.com

02/16 Bootcamp Breakfast; YMCA
02/16 February Mixer hosted by the CCBA;
Citrus County Building Alliance
03/04-03/05 Floral City Strawberry Festival; Ioral Park
03/16 March Mixer hosted by Daystar Life Center; Daystar Life Center
03/22-03/23 Annual Legislative Days; Tallahassee

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chamber Legacy Members



The Chamber recognizes our Legacy Partners that have made a special investment in the Chamber to support the programs and mission of the Chamber. For information on becoming a Legacy Partner, please contact the Chamber by emailing Corrine@CitrusCountyChamber.com.

RECENT RIBBON CUTTING

The Chamber is growing every week. We welcome our new members and thank all of them for joining the Chamber. We encourage the community to support their businesses.

Kerri Kool HVAC Mechanical & Refrigeration



Welcome to the Chamber Kerri Kool HVAC Mechanical & Refrigeration! Their business strives to exceed your expectations in all your mechanical and refrigeration repair needs. At Kerri Kool, they exhibit a contemporary approach to home comfort by not only providing services that are meant to fix and maintain your air conditioning and heating system, but they also offer efficiency-boosting solutions to your home as part of their Home Comfort Inspection. (352) 770-2052. 230 S Suncoast Boulevard, Crystal River, Florida 34429. <https://kerrikoolhvac.com/services>