



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 E. Dampier St., Inverness, FL 34450 · 352-726-2801

A “Berry” Exciting Weekend of Fun and Festivities!

The Floral City Strawberry Festival, a beloved tradition in Citrus County, is back for its 37th year of berry-filled fun and excitement. Presented by Jenkins Automotive and produced by the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, this year's festival promises a weekend overflowing with strawberries, entertainment, and family-friendly activities. Mark your calendars for March 2nd & 3rd, 2024, and join us at Floral Park for a celebration of local agriculture and community spirit.

With fresh strawberries hand-picked right around the corner from the festival at Ferris Groves, you can look forward to luscious strawberry shortcakes 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 the Colors, the Pledge of Allegiance and our National Anthem. Live music and entertainment will fill the main stage all weekend with a full performance lineup! Saturday will kick off with the sweet sounds of bluegrass with ReKindled Bits of Grass from 10 A.M. – 1 P.M., followed by headliner X-Hale from 2 P.M. – 5 P.M. with special guest appearances by Sada Davidson and Julia Davis. Sunday will feature Sada Davidson with Kevin Banks from 10 A.M. – 12 P.M. followed by headliner George Morris & The Lariat Band from 1 P.M. – 4 P.M.

Additionally, take your time to explore the roots of our beautiful

We want your experience to be as STRESS-FREE as possible! Please follow these recommended parking instructions to ensure your visit goes as smoothly as possible!

Set your GPS to the designated parking areas:

SATURDAY: The Citrus County Auditorium, 3610 S Florida Ave, Inverness, FL 34450.

SUNDAY: The Citrus County Speedway, 3600 S. Florida Ave, Inverness, FL 34450.

Free shuttles will be available to bring you directly to the gate entrance at Floral Park.

Please be advised, parking at the festival is extremely limited and not recommended during festival hours to ensure the safety of all involved.

community with a tour of the Historic Duval-Metz House in Floral City where they will be making homemade strawberry ice cream and strawberry lemonade for visitors. The oldest documented home in Citrus County still standing, the Duval-Metz House will be open both days from 12pm – 4pm. Quick shuttles will transport you from the festival grounds(?) to the heart of Floral City where you can view this historic destination and explore the quaint town offering a true taste of old Florida.

Sticking to its very berry American

roots, the annual pie-eating contests and princess pageants will be back as well! Ooh and ahh on Saturday morning as poised young ladies take the stage in their favorite strawberry-themed attire for a chance to earn a crown and become the next Strawberry Princesses. Maybe getting messy is more your style? Then sign up to compete in the strawberry pie-eating contests for your shot at a year's worth of bragging rights! Pie eating competitions are free to enter and will be held at 1 P.M. both Saturday and Sunday with registration that day at the festival. There are limited slots so make sure you get signed up early!

We are also excited to welcome back last year's fan favorite, the Soccer Collies! Kids of all ages (and even adults) won't want to miss this fun and exciting free attraction as the Collies take on festival attendees once an hour beginning at 9:45 a.m. Participants will line up in a circle around the trained dogs as they use their skills to score “goals”, pushing the ball outside of the human goalie line. Think you have what it takes to take on the Soccer Collies? Join us to find out!

Round out your festival adventures by strolling the park and browsing over 250 art and craft vendors. Indulge in a cold beer; a glass of wine or hard seltzer at the beer garden near the main stage; enjoy the gastronomic pleasures offered by the many food vendors; or share in 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 on Saturday or the Citrus County Speedway on Sunday and take a shuttle to the festival location. Floral Park is located at 9530 S. Parkside Ave., Floral City, FL 34426

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



March Luncheon to feature Superintendent Sam Himmel

As Superintendent Himmel approaches her well-deserved retirement, we are privileged to have her as our keynote speaker one final time. Gain valuable insights into the state of our school district, its history, and its growth over the years.

Superintendent Himmel will share her perspectives on the educational journey of Citrus County and



Sandra “Sam” Himmel

provide an update on current initiatives and future projects.

Event Details:

Date: March 8th, 2024

Time: 11:30 AM - 1 PM

Pricing: Chamber

Members: \$25 and

Non-Members: \$35

Advanced reservations are required. Walk-ups will not be accepted. Reserve online now at www.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.

Absolute Therapeutic Massage



Welcome to the Chamber Absolute Therapeutic Massage LLC. #43735! They are a home-based and mobile Therapeutic massage business catering to businesses that care for there employees' health and wellness. They are trained to meet the needs of their clients through a variety of techniques and modalities. As an experienced leader in promoting Massage and Reiki within our community, they are a trusted source of care. 989-329-7949. <https://absolutetherapeutic.massagetherapy.com/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

03/02 - 03/03 37th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival, Floral Park
03/08 March Chamber Luncheon; 11:30AM; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club
03/21 March Mixer; 5PM; Hengesbach & Hengesbach (Beverly Hills)

Chamber Legacy Members

TRUSTED SOLUTIONS
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www.trustedsolutionsins.com

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RE/MAX REALTY ONE
CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE
CRYSTAL TRACTOR & MOTORCYCLE GROUP

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WAVE
LIFE REALTY PARTNERS

TGH Tampa General Hospital
CRYSTAL RIVER

ARBOR TRAIL
REHAB & SKILLED NURSING CENTER

HCA Florida Citrus Hospital

LHS Langley HEALTH SERVICES

FREEWAY
LOCAL CLUB

LIFESOUTH
Community Blood Centers

WAVE
LIFE REALTY PARTNERS

Ag-Pro

COASTAL
ACCOUNTING & TAX ADVISORS, CPA'S, PA

HOMETOWN
CROCKA

Insight
CREDIT UNION

LUCAS, MACYSZYN & DYER
LAW FIRM

WM
WASTE MANAGEMENT

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.