



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

NEXT WEEKEND offers 'Berry Bustin' Fun in Floral City!

Next weekend, the picturesque Floral Park, Floral City, transforms into a strawberry wonderland for the 37th annual Floral City Strawberry Festival. This beloved event, presented by Jenkins Automotive and produced by the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, promises a weekend packed with delicious strawberries, mesmerizing live entertainment, and activities that the whole family can enjoy.

Festival-goers are in for a treat with fresh strawberries picked from the local Ferris Groves, the centerpiece of the festival. Imagine indulging in mouth-watering strawberry shortcakes or taking home flats and half-flats of fresh berries to enjoy later. And if you're looking for inspiration on what to do with all those strawberries, the Berry Bakery on the festival's website is your go-to resource.

The festival kicks off on Saturday morning with a patriotic Posting of the Colors, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. The weekend is jam-packed with live music, featuring a variety of genres to cater to



every taste. Highlights include the bluegrass tunes of ReKindled Bits of Grass and the rock vibes of X-Hale, with special appearances by Sada Davidson and Julia Davis. Sunday continues the musical extravaganza with performances from George Morris & The Lariat Band, among others.

In addition to the musical lineup, the festival offers a chance to explore the roots of the community

with tours of the historic Duval-Metz House. Here, visitors can enjoy homemade strawberry ice cream and lemonade in the oldest documented home still standing in Citrus County.

The festival stays true to its American roots with traditional pie-eating contests and princess pageants. Watch as contestants vie for the title of Strawberry Princess or join in the fun of the strawberry

pie-eating contest for a chance to win a year's worth of bragging rights.

Adding to the excitement, the Soccer Collies return to dazzle attendees with their ball-handling skills, and the festival welcomes the new Wildlife Walkabout and Activity Center. This interactive experience offers a close-up look at exotic animals, including a sloth, a kangaroo, marmoset monkeys, and more, all in the name of

wildlife conservation.

With over 250 art and craft vendors, a beer garden, and a plethora of food options, the festival is a perfect weekend getaway. The kids' area ensures that the youngest visitors will have just as much fun as the adults.

Mark your calendars for March 2nd & 3rd, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is just \$5 for adults, with children 12

and under entering for free. Free parking and shuttle services are available from the Citrus County Auditorium on Saturday and the Citrus County Speedway on Sunday.

For more information, visit the Floral City Strawberry Festival website at www.GoStrawberryFest.com or find them on Facebook. Don't miss out on this "berry" exciting weekend!

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)

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 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 CUTTINGS

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.

Eighty-nine Maintenance



Welcome to the Chamber, Eighty-Nine Maintenance! They are ready to take your lawncare nightmares and turn them into a dream landscape! (352) 933-6959.

Crystal River Community Church



Welcome to the Chamber, Crystal River Community Church! Crystal River Community Church is celebrating a new beginning and a new name! They are here to share the light and love of Jesus with the community - spiritually and in ministry. They offer two Sunday services to serve their congregations with different styles of worship. 9AM is a traditional setting, and 10:30AM offers a contemporary style. Both services offer the same teachings and are also available online. Their ministries include their Twice Blessed Thrift store/ Food Pantry, Meals on Wheels, various prayer groups, bible studies, and small groups along with an additional ministry connected to the church building: Bright Blessings Preschool and Bright Blessings Learning Academy (K-4). (352) 207-1682. 4801 N. Citrus Ave Crystal River FL 34428. <https://crumc.com/>.

Clearsky Rehabilitation Hospital



Welcome to the Chamber, ClearSky Rehabilitation Hospital of Lecanto! At ClearSky Rehabilitation Hospital of Lecanto, they're dedicated to healing and transforming the lives of individuals living with disabling injuries or illnesses. Their highly trained team, specialized equipment, state-of-the-art facility, and integrative approach set them apart. They continually strive to provide patients with exceptional outcomes and quality of life, often going above and beyond normal service expectations. Authentic, Transformative Rehabilitative Care. 352.835.0819. 3967 W Norvell Bryant Hwy., Lecanto, FL 34461. <https://clearskyhealth.com/lecanto/>.

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.