



Promotional information provided by the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce.

# Chamber Connection

915 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River · 352-795-3149 · 212 W. Main St., Inverness · 352-726-2801

**39TH ANNUAL FLORAL CITY STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL**  
MARCH 7-8, 2026

Floral Park, Floral City, FL  
Free Parking/Shuttle from Citrus County Auditorium  
ENTRY ONLY \$5.00/Adult | FREE for Children 12 & Under

**LIVE MUSIC**  
**LOCAL STRAWBERRIES**  
**PIE EATING CONTEST**  
**STRAWBERRY PRINCESS PAGEANT**

**FOOD COURT**  
**BEER & WINE GARDEN**  
**KIDS ACTIVITIES**  
**ARTS, CRAFTS, & BUSINESS VENDORS**

WWW.GO STRAWBERRYFEST.COM

## Free Training: Campaigns, Leadership & Community Impact

If you've ever thought about running for office, working on a campaign, or simply want to better understand how the election and campaign process works, an excellent opportunity is coming up for Citrus County residents.

The Florida Institute for Political Leadership (FIPL), an initiative of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, was created to assist leaders who want to strengthen their communities through service in appointed positions or elected offices. FIPL is a non-partisan program designed to recruit, train and guide individuals by providing leadership and practical training opportunities that help develop stronger community leaders across the State of Florida.

While the training is especially helpful for those considering candidacy or campaign involvement, you do not need to be interested in running for office to attend.

This program is also a great opportunity for community members who simply want to learn more about the

process, understand how campaigns are built, and become more informed and engaged citizens.

FIPL will be hosting a Statewide Campaign School & Community Leadership Training, and participants are welcome to attend one or both days.

### Event Details

Wednesday, February 11, 2026  
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM (ET)

Topic: Preparing to run and organizing your campaign

Thursday, February 12, 2026  
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM (ET)

Topic: Fundraising and running your campaign

Registration is available online at [www.FIPL.org/Register](http://www.FIPL.org/Register).

For additional information, email [info@fipl.org](mailto:info@fipl.org).

This is a valuable, free learning opportunity for anyone interested in civic education and leadership, and we encourage community members to take advantage of this program.

## Vendor Registration Closes TODAY for Floral City Strawberry Festival!

Vendor registration is closing today for the 39th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival, returning to Floral Park in Floral City on March 7 and 8, 2026.

The Floral City Strawberry Festival is one of Citrus County's most anticipated annual traditions, drawing thousands of attendees for a weekend filled with locally grown strawberries, live music, food and beverage options, family-friendly activities, and a wide variety of arts, crafts, and business vendors.

Local artisans, makers, small businesses, and food vendors interested in participating are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, as vendor spaces are limited and filling quickly.

**Application Deadline: February 7, 2026**  
**Apply Online: [www.GoStrawberryFest.com](http://www.GoStrawberryFest.com)**

For additional festival details and updates, visit [www.GoStrawberryFest.com](http://www.GoStrawberryFest.com).

### Little Miss Strawberry Princess & Miss Strawberry Princess Pageant

Saturday, March 7, 2026  
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Floral Park, Floral City

#### Age Categories:

Little Miss Strawberry Princess (ages 2-6)  
Miss Strawberry Princess (ages 7-12)

Registration: \$10 per contestant

Deadline: February 17, 2026

Registration must be completed in advance. No day-of registrations will be accepted.

**REGISTER ONLINE:**

[www.GoStrawberryFest.com/princess-pageants/](http://www.GoStrawberryFest.com/princess-pageants/)

## Tickets available online now for Annual Ball Drop & Chamber Mixer

Join us for one of the most exciting and fun traditions of the year at the February Chamber Mixer and Annual Ball Drop! The Ball Drop officially kicks off the Jim Blackshear Memorial Golf Outing and brings a whole lot of fun along with it. This crowd favorite raises funds for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Citrus County, with 50% of all proceeds supporting the clubs and the remaining portion going toward cash prizes for Closest to the Pin, Second Closest, and Furthest from the Target.

Ball Drop Tickets are 1 for \$20 or 6 for \$100 and can be purchased online or tickets will also be available during the mixer, so be sure to grab yours before they sell out and join the excitement.

Ball Drop Tickets are 1 for \$20 or 6 for \$100. You never know, your lucky ball might just be the one that steals the show!

Food will be provided by Blue Door Pizza Truck, a workforce development program of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Citrus County. Connect with Chamber members, local business leaders, and guests while enjoying great food, great company, and a great cause.

February 19th, 2026; 5pm – 7pm;  
Citrus County Chamber Office

Benefits: Boys & Girls Clubs of Citrus County  
Ticket Pricing: 1 for \$20 and 6 for \$100

Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.eventeny.com/events/ticket/?id=22869>.

**JIM BLACKSHEAR MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING**  
**CHAMBER MIXER ANNUAL BALL-DROP**  
FEBRUARY 19, 2026  
5-7 PM  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OFFICE  
915 N SUNCOAST BLVD  
CRYSTAL RIVER, FL 34429  
LAST YEAR'S PAYOUT \$1,650!!

3 CASH PRIZE WINNERS  
BALL DROP TRICKETS  
1 FOR \$20  
6 FOR \$100

Florida Institute for Political Leadership  
AN INITIATIVE BY FLORIDA CHAMBER of Commerce

STATEWIDE

## CAMPAIGN SCHOOL & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TRAINING

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
<b>February 11, 2026</b> 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM (ET) Preparing to run & organizing your campaign	<b>February 12, 2026</b> 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM (ET) Fundraising & running your campaign

Participants are welcome to attend any or both days offered.

**REGISTER ONLINE AT: [www.FIPL.org/Register](http://www.FIPL.org/Register)**  
For more information, please email [info@fipl.org](mailto:info@fipl.org)

## UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

- 02/13 February Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am – 1:00pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club; Sponsor: Centratel; Speaker: Citrus County Administrator Steve Howard
- 02/19 February Chamber "Ball Drop" Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; Chamber Office
- 02/22 CCBA Annual Jim Blackshear Memorial Golf Outing; Twisted Oaks Golf Course
- 03/07 – 03/08 39th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival; Floral Park
- 03/13 March Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am – 1:00pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club; Sponsor: Seven Rivers Christian School, Speaker: TBA
- 03/19 March Chamber Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; Realtors Association Citrus County, Sponsored by: Suncoast Business Masters

## Chamber Legacy Members

**JENKINS AUTO GROUP**  
**TRUSTED SOLUTIONS**  
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.  
[www.trustedolutionsins.com](http://www.trustedolutionsins.com)

**DIX DEVELOPMENTS**  
**State Farm**  
Michael D. Bays

**CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE**  
**CRYSTAL TRACTOR & MOTORCYCLE GROUP**

**WAVE**  
**Seacoast Bank REALTORS**  
ASSOCIATION OF CITRUS COUNTY, INC.

**ARBOR TRAIL**  
REHAB & SKILLED NURSING CENTER

**TGH Tampa General Hospital**  
CRYSTAL RIVER

**Signs**  
**LifeStream**  
**WM WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**QUALITY PIRE ROOFING, LLC**  
**ROOFING + GUTTERS**  
352-220-7367

**Ag-Pro**  
**WORTHINGTON**  
AG & EQUINE CARE

**ClearSky**  
Rehabilitation Hospital of Leesaco

**SOIL WIZARDS**  
Rehabilitation Hospital of Leesaco

**LIFSOUTH**  
Community Blood Centers

**Nature Coast Clinical Research**  
Member of the Suncoast Group

**Central Motel**  
**HOMETOWN Citrus**

**COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA**  
Better the public good...  
**CoreCivic**

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](mailto:Corrine@CitrusCountyChamber.com).