



Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce

# BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

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On the web:  
charlottecountychamber.org

At our office:  
2702 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Or Call: 941-627-2222

2ND QTR 2026

## All businesses are welcome

The Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce is excited to invite all local businesses, professionals, and community members to join us for a full lineup of engaging events this April. Whether you're a small business owner, entrepreneur, or simply looking to expand your network, our events are open to both members and non-members who want to experience the value of being part of a thriving business community.

April's calendar is packed with opportunities designed to help you connect, learn, and grow. From networking events, ribbon-cuttings, and social gatherings, each event offers a welcoming environment where meaningful relationships are built. For non-members, attending these events is a great way to get a firsthand look at how the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce supports local success. By participating, you'll have the chance to meet influential business leaders, discover new partnerships, and gain insights that can help you and your organization move forward.

Many attendees find that even a single event can lead to valuable connections, increased visibility, and fresh ideas. Beyond networking, our events often feature expert speakers and practical topics relevant to today's business climate. You'll walk away with knowledge you can apply immediately, whether it's improving your marketing, strengthening operations, or navigating economic trends.

We believe that a strong community starts with collaboration, and we welcome you to be part of that energy this April. Come see what the Charlotte County Chamber is all about, build connections that matter, and explore how becoming a member can further amplify your success. We look forward to meeting you and helping you make the most of every opportunity.



**Bob White**  
Chief Executive Officer

*Bob*

## Coming Up

### Networking at Noon

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

McAlister's Deli

19570 Cochran Blvd., Port Charlotte

11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Cost \$20.00pp

### Third Wednesday Coffee

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Association of Realtors

Loveland Blvd, Port Charlotte

Sponsor: Hometown Grill

Program: Vince Parrotta, Sunseeker

Resort, Curio by Hilton

### Business Card Exchange

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Suncoast Biplanes

27450 Challenger Blvd.

(New Air Center PG Airport)

Punta Gorda

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

If you like, please bring a small gift to promote your business.

### Be a Sponsor for Fourth-Fest 2026

Celebrate our 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence on July 4, 2026.

This event relies totally on donations as admission is FREE.

Sponsor online in the event calendar or contact Chamber Staff.

Contact us by email:

bwhite@charlottecountychamber.org

danthony@charlottecountychamber.org

jjoannes@charlottecountychamber.org

askus@charlottecountychamber.org

president@charlottecountychamber.org

**YOUR 2025-2026 BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

**President:**

James Coalwell, Crews Bank & Trust

**President Elect:**

Michael Ehrat, HCA Florida Fawcett  
Hospital

**Immediate Past President:**

Kevin Graham, Suncoast One Title &  
Closings, Inc.

**VP Leadership Division:**

Jessica Rhea, M.Ed., Florida Gulf  
Coast University

**VP Membership Services Division:**

Cristin Beverley, REALTORS® of  
Punta Gorda Port Charlotte North  
Port DeSoto Inc.

**Treasurer:**

Teresa Da Costa, Ashley, Brown &  
Smith, CPAs

**Secretary:**

Rosa Bengtth, Granny Nannies  
Home Health Agency

**Directors:**

Peri Bluemer, Bert's Black Widow  
Harley-Davidson

Jessica Cline, Pool Boy, Inc.

Hector Flores, Charlotte County  
Administration

Shawn Gilstad, Gilstad Literacy  
Foundation

Craig Holt, Four Points by Sheraton  
Dori Holtvoigt, Big Shot Marketing &  
Design

John LeClair, Charlotte County  
Public Schools

Angie Matthiessen, United Way of  
Charlotte County

Jill McCrory, McCrory Law Firm

Stacey Meyer, F.M. Don's

Kaley Miller, Punta Gorda Airport

Katharine Payne, Katharine Panye  
Law, P.A.

Natalie Proctor, Lake Michigan  
Credit Union

Kris Proudfoot, Crews Bank & Trust

Melissa Reichert, City of Punta  
Administration

Kay Tracy, Charlotte County  
Economic Development Office

Nick Worden, Crews Bank & Trust

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Bob White, Charlotte County  
Chamber of Commerce, Inc.



## President's Note

Third A.C.T.

Springtime has long been synonymous with growth. Growth doesn't happen overnight, but it does happen when the right conditions are in place. When growth is consistent, thriving happens—THRIVE represents the "T" in this year's Chamber theme, A.C.T.

As the busyness of snowbird season is winding down, now is the perfect time to begin enhancing your growth conditions and planting seeds. Reach out to someone you have not connected with recently. Attend an event you haven't tried before. Invite a fellow new member for coffee. Make an introduction between two businesses that could benefit from getting to know each other.

This is when relationships deepen. It's when new members find their place. It's when longtime members reconnect and discover new ways to support one another. And it's when small ACTIONS like these create the kind of momentum that helps all of us THRIVE.

Remember, thriving isn't about one big moment, but rather steady connection, visibility, and engagement over time. Strong communities don't grow by accident. They grow because businesses show up—for events, for conversations, for collaborations, and for each other.

By attending Chamber events, you have a consistent line-up of opportunities to stay connected, be visible within the community, and deepen your relationships with those attending and hosting these events. This is a major reason that Chamber membership matters and helps our community THRIVE.

Lastly, thank you to those who took the time and effort to complete our recent polls. This valuable feedback not only helps us understand what matters most to our membership, but also helps the Chamber advocate for our membership and identify ways to improve our outreach. Please stay tuned for future poll opportunities

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*James M. Coalwell is the 2025/2026 board president of the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce. (AKA #100) Leadership Class of 2009 - GO GREEN! He is with Crews Bank & Trust - Punta Gorda Branch  
Email: [president@charlottecountychamber.org](mailto:president@charlottecountychamber.org)*

# Charlotte County Chamber Corner

## 2025-2026 SUSTAINING PARTNERS

### PLATINUM PLUS:

AADisaster Restoration24/7, Inc.  
Buffalo Graffix \*  
Charlotte County Economic  
Development Partnership  
Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference  
Center  
Elite Hurricane Protection  
Jarrett Ford of Charlotte County  
The Daily Sun  
Wayne Wiles Floor Coverings

### PLATINUM:

AdventHealth Port Charlotte  
Ashley, Brown & Smith, CPAs, P.A.  
Elite Inspections & Pest Solutions, LLC  
GJC Window & Door  
Integrity Employee Leasing, Inc.  
Life Care Center of Punta Gorda  
McCrary Law Firm  
Peace River Team at Morgan Stanley  
Port Charlotte Rehabilitation Center  
Suncoast One Title & Closings, Inc.  
Waste Management of Charlotte County  
WhitCo Insurance - Alexia Martin Agency

### DIAMOND:

Big Shot Marketing & Design, LLC  
Birch's Air Conditioning & Heating, Inc.  
Crews Bank & Trust  
Dubz BBQ, LLC  
Farr Law Firm  
Fedora's Cigar & Wine Bar  
Florida Gulf Coast University  
Floridacentral Credit Union  
Hessler Floor Covering  
Military Heritage Museum, Inc.  
The Firm Advertising Agency  
The Nix Team at Coldwell Banker Sunstar  
Realty  
Tommy's Express Carwash

### EMERALD:

Achieva Credit Union  
Chapman Insurance Group  
Charlotte Community Foundation  
Charlotte Memorial Funeral Home, Cemetery  
and Crematory  
Charlotte Players, Inc.  
Elite DNA Behavioral Health  
Four Points by Sheraton Punta Gorda Harborside  
Friendly Floors  
Gilstad Literacy Foundation, Inc.  
J & J One Stop Gun Shop, Inc.  
Marcia Cullinan, Realtor  
Pool Boy, Inc.  
Port Charlotte Florist  
REALTORS® of Punta Gorda Port Charlotte  
North Port DeSoto Inc.  
Southwest Florida Honor Flight  
St. Andrews South Golf Club  
State Farm- Mike Martin Agency  
Sunseeker Resort Florida Gulf Coast – Curio  
by Hilton  
Wotitzky, Wotitzky & Young PA

\*Charter Sustaining Partner (no years missed)



Jami Joannes  
Director of Programs  
and Events

## Utilizing your Member Benefits

Your Chamber Membership is designed to be an active marketing and growth platform, not just a logo on a list. Every benefit is built to help you increase visibility, strengthen credibility, and generate real business connections. The key is knowing what is available and using it consistently.

Below are the Chamber's core Member Benefits and Opportunities and how each one helps you market your business:

### Member Benefits and Opportunities

#### • **Member Directory Listing**

Showcase your business with a fully optimized profile

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/member-directory>

#### • **Business Card Exchanges**

Promote your business, make connections, and generate referrals

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/business-card-exchange>

#### • **Chamber Events and Networking**

Build relationships through our Social Club and signature events

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/events>

#### • **Sponsorship Opportunities**

Increase visibility and position your business as a community leader

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/sponsorship-opportunities>

#### • **Chamber Eblasts and Newsletter Exposure**

Promote your business directly to members through Chamber communications

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/news>

#### • **Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings**

Celebrate milestones and gain community exposure

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/ribbon-cuttings>

#### • **Event Calendar Submissions**

Promote your events to a wider audience

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/events>

#### • **Advertising Opportunities**

Keep your business top of mind with digital and print advertising

<https://www.charlottecountychamber.org/advertising>

Using these tools consistently helps you maximize your membership and drive real results. If you are not taking advantage of these opportunities, now is the time to start.

# Chamber Community Connection



Hector Flores  
Charlotte County  
Administrator

Celebrating National County Government Month and our Chamber partnership

April is recognized nationally as National County Government Month, an opportunity to highlight the role county government plays in strengthening our community and supporting local businesses.

Charlotte County Government's mission to "Delivering Exceptional Service" and vision to "Preserve and enrich our community's quality of life for those who live, work and play in our paradise" align with the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce's mission "Connecting Our Community". This connection reflects the importance of the partnership between local businesses, organizations, and public services to build a thriving, stronger, and more resilient region.

Local businesses are the economic engines that make our community a thriving, desired place to live, work, and play. Our County's services, programs and amenities add to that menu of choices for residents and visitors to the area. The good & services and also leadership provided by local businesses and the county lay the groundwork for economic opportunity, public trust, and long-term community success.

The Chamber and the business members are vital partners to my team and our entire county organization, helping bridge the very systems that support our daily lives, including emergency services, public safety, tourism, disaster resources, non-profits and economic development. Through these connections, we foster collaboration that not only enhances quality of life but also creates an environment where businesses can be successful.

My county teammates are committed to our roles in strengthening our local economy. Tourism professionals help attract visitors, generating significant economic impact and supporting jobs across our business community.

Engineers, planners, analysts, operators, and other specialists solve complex challenges—designing resilient infrastructure, planning for growth, and enhancing service delivery. Fire safety personnel protect lives and reduce risk through response, education, and prevention. Water & sewer utility professionals safeguard public health.

Public Works ensures safe transportation, roads & waterways maintenance, mosquito control. Parks, libraries, community development, and human services help shape not just how a community functions, but how it feels to live there.

This month - and I believe should naturally happen every month - I encourage you to join us in recognizing and supporting all local businesses (Shop Local!) and our dedicated public servants who make a lasting difference in our community. Let's bring awareness and appreciate the partnerships that make our community stronger.

Many of the local business owners & their staff, along with public servants live in the community, creating a powerful connection to place and a shared commitment to long-term success. Together, we are connecting people, strengthening partnerships, and building a vibrant future for Charlotte County.

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# Chamber Community Connection



**Bill Prummell**  
Charlotte County Sheriff

Greetings, Charlotte County! As we round out the first quarter of the year, I am excited about the upcoming transition into our new Administration Building at 3310 Loveland Blvd. in Port Charlotte. This more centralized facility is looking incredible and will serve as CCSO's home for many, many years. Thank you to the team at Wharton Smith, Inc. for their beautiful work and attention to detail. While a move of this size is certainly challenging, we have worked hard to create a strategy that will minimize any impact on in-person services. That means we are dedicated to making sure your needs are met no matter where we are in this process - and of course - emergency services will not be interrupted.

As we look forward to the summer months, I am excited to share some information on a couple of events. On May 1st and 2nd, the annual First Responder Dive Team Challenge is happening again in beautiful Babcock Ranch. Each year, this event has gotten bigger and better, and this year we will be including teams from all over the country! Come out and cheer on YOUR Charlotte County Sheriff's Office and support us as we fight to keep the trophy right here at home. Proceeds from the event benefit the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches.

For the third year now, we will host a "Back to School" edition of Shop With A Cop. Because the students are selected based on need, we don't advertise this event and there are no photos or video taken. Deputies will accompany students as they shop for appropriate clothing and shoes to get them ready for the school year. We also provide a selection of personal hygiene items that they can take, which are kept in a private area at the event. I want to issue a challenge to my fellow Chamber members: help us stock that room with personal care items. We are looking for (new and unopened) body wash, shampoo/conditioner, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, hairbrushes, toothbrushes/toothpaste, undergarments, makeup, etc. Will you help us by taking up a collection at your place of business? With your support, we know we can provide these kids with the necessities to not only be ready for school, but to be successful all year long. If you are willing to help, please contact my Community Affairs team at [events@ccsofl.net](mailto:events@ccsofl.net).

Thank you for the incredible support of CCSO and all that we do for our community. As I have always said, what makes Charlotte County better than anywhere else... is the people.

Be strong. Be safe. And never quit! And may God bless you all.

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# Chamber Community Connection



**Melissa Reichert**  
City of Punta Gorda

Each year, alongside the budget development process, the City of Punta Gorda advances a strategic plan that helps guide how public resources are aligned with community priorities. For our business community, this planning effort is especially important—it ensures that decisions about infrastructure, services, and investment are made with a clear focus on maintaining our small-town character while supporting economic vitality and long-term sustainability.

The City Council has identified three core priorities that shape this work: infrastructure, financial and economic stability, and quality of place. Together, these priorities create a framework that supports a strong local economy and a business-friendly environment.

A key component of this approach is maintaining financial and economic sustainability. Delivering reliable, high-quality public services in a cost-effective manner is essential to supporting both residents and businesses. The City continues to emphasize balanced budgeting, responsible spending policies, and operational efficiency. Recent investments in technology—such as digital plan review, streamlined public records systems, automated invoice processing, and modernized ordinance codification—are improving turnaround times and making it easier to interact with City services. These efforts are designed to reduce administrative friction and support timely development and business operations.

Infrastructure remains another critical focus area. The City maintains a wide range of assets that directly support economic activity, including roadways, utilities, public facilities, parks, and waterfront infrastructure. Ongoing maintenance and targeted capital improvements help ensure reliability, safety, and resilience—factors that are essential for business continuity and future investment. From utility system enhancements to quality-of-life improvements that attract visitors and residents alike, these projects play a direct role in sustaining a competitive and vibrant local economy.

Equally important is the City's commitment to quality of place. Punta Gorda's identity as a welcoming, safe, and attractive community is a significant driver of economic success. Continued investments in public safety, emergency preparedness, and storm resilience help protect both residents and businesses. At the same time, efforts to support downtown vitality, preserve historic character, expand accessibility, and promote the community as a destination for boating, fishing, and cycling all contribute to a strong sense of place that benefits local commerce.

As we look ahead to the development of the FY2027 budget, the City is working to further refine and prioritize the initiatives that will have the greatest impact. Input from the business community is a valuable part of this process. Feedback helps ensure that our strategic direction continues to support economic growth, operational efficiency, and the overall success of Punta Gorda.

Business owners and stakeholders are encouraged to share their perspectives as this work moves forward. Comments regarding the budget and strategic plan can be submitted to [mreichert@cityofpuntagordafl.com](mailto:mreichert@cityofpuntagordafl.com)

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# Chamber Community Connections



Pamela Smith  
Chief of Police  
Punta Gorda

## Stay Safe with the Punta Gorda Police Department's Away from Home Program

When you're away from home, whether on vacation, for the season, or just spending time somewhere else, the last thing you want to worry about is the safety of your property. The Punta Gorda Police Department offers a helpful service to give residents peace of mind while they're gone, the Away from Home Program. This free service is a great resource for residents looking for extra reassurance that their home is secure, even when they're away.

The Away from Home Program is a courtesy service offered by the Punta Gorda Police Department to assist residents who are temporarily away from their property. This program is open to year-round residents, seasonal residents, and vacationers. Its main purpose is to enable quick contact with residents in the event of issues at their homes, such as suspicious activity, utility emergencies, or other urgent matters.

When you enroll in the Away from Home Program, you'll provide the Punta Gorda Police Department with contact information for yourself or a designated key holder. This enables the department to quickly notify you or your designee if a problem occurs at your home while you're away. Whether it's a security issue, a utility failure, or a more serious emergency, the police will be able to contact you or your designated contact promptly.

One of the program's unique features is that the Volunteers on Patrol (VOP) team can conduct occasional house checks while you're away. These volunteers are trained to spot signs of suspicious activity, damage, or other unusual activity. If they find any issues, they will quickly inform you or your designated keyholder to ensure quick resolution.

It's important to understand that the Away from Home Program is not a replacement for home security systems or private security services. Instead, it adds an extra layer of protection to help the Punta Gorda Police Department respond rapidly to emergencies. While home security systems notify you and the authorities of potential intrusions, the Away from Home Program provides an additional level of vigilance and support from local law enforcement and volunteers when you're away.

Signing up for the Away from Home Program is easy. Just visit the Punta Gorda Police Department's official website at [www.PuntaGordaPolice.com](http://www.PuntaGordaPolice.com), where you can quickly submit your contact information and that of your designated key holder. After registering, you can feel confident knowing that the Punta Gorda Police Department is watching over your home while you're away.

The Away from Home Program offers Punta Gorda residents peace of mind when they're away from their homes. It's a free, valuable service designed to improve security and allow the police department to respond quickly to emergencies if needed. Whether you're going on vacation or away for other reasons, the Punta Gorda Police Department is here to help keep your property safe and secure

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# Chamber Community Connections



Kay Tracy, Director  
Charlotte County  
Economic Development  
Office

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office remains focused on strengthening our local economy by supporting existing businesses, attracting new investment, and promoting long-term economic resilience across the county.

Our economic development strategy centers on collaboration with local government, the business community, educational institutions, and regional partners. Through these partnerships, we work to support business retention and expansion while positioning Charlotte County as a competitive location for strategic industry growth. Key sectors we are actively focusing on include aviation and aerospace, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, medical device manufacturing, the marine industry, and transportation and logistics. These industries align with Charlotte County's assets, infrastructure, and workforce potential, while creating opportunities for innovation, high-quality jobs, and long-term economic diversification.

Workforce readiness continues to be an important component of our efforts. The EDO works closely with our educational institutions, workforce training providers, and industry partners to ensure that talent development aligns with the evolving needs of employers. Strengthening career pathways in technical and specialized fields helps prepare residents for opportunities in manufacturing, technology, aerospace operations, medical device production, marine-related industries, and supply chain and logistics.

Looking ahead, Charlotte County remains committed to thoughtful growth that supports both economic opportunity and quality of life. Strategic infrastructure investment, a supportive business environment, and continued collaboration with community partners help position our county as a place where businesses can grow, innovate, and succeed. We appreciate the Chamber's continued partnership in supporting a strong and resilient local business community.

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# Chamber Community Connection



**Sean Doherty**  
Tourism Director

While FY 2025 was a challenging year for tourism nationwide, the Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) has been hopeful for FY 2026 based on a number of factors including industry insights that suggest a positive rebound this year. While some challenges such as current gas prices and TSA delays at airports exist, tourism numbers have experienced a modest bounce back through the first four months of the fiscal year (Oct. 2025-Jan. 2026). An improvement over last year's Tourist Development Tax collections have been reported in three out of the four months resulting in a cumulative increase of 1.4% versus this time last year. With a full slate of spring training games this year, along with an increase in the number of teams participating in the Snowbird Baseball Classic, combined with the facts that this winter was especially cold and snowy up north and more vacation homes have come back online after finishing repairs from the 2024 hurricanes, we remain optimistic that our February and March TDT numbers will be reflective of that.

In addition to the sports business mentioned above, several other tournaments and events recruited and/or supported by the Visitor & Convention Bureau have taken place this past quarter including multiple pickleball, basketball and softball tournaments, the annual Princess Classic gymnastics meet, an AKC Dog Agility Competition and the Destination Athletes Centennial National Invitation Swim Meet which draws several hundred swimmers each year, many from out of state. These events alone generate thousands of hotel room nights and millions in economic impact. On the meetings and conventions side, VCB staff continue to remain active partners with Sunseeker Resort generating leads and helping to close business. Of note, the VCB partnered with Sunseeker to secure a conference March 24-26 that saw approximately 300 Hilton sales executives come to town. In addition to the positive economic impact of this group, the conference also served as a large site visit for Hilton national sales staff who actively prospect business for Hilton properties around the country. While Sunseeker is obviously our destination's prime meetings and conventions venue, VCB staff also proactively focus on bringing meetings business to other venues such as the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, most recently partnering with the Florida International Air Show to host the Southeast Council of Air Shows in March.

Lastly, on March 12 the VCB collaborated with the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC), Sunseeker Resort and the Englewood Chamber of Commerce to host 14 students from Grand Valley State University who were in the region for their alternative spring break participating in various service projects that benefitted the Charlotte/Sarasota region. While in Charlotte County, the students assisted in capturing social media content to help benefit our marketing efforts, toured Sunseeker Resort, participated in an educational wading tour and built and installed vertical oyster gardens which will assist CHEC with their conservation efforts, ultimately benefitting our tourism product—our aquatic resources that are so valuable to our efforts in attracting potential visitors.

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# Chamber Community Connection



**Roger D. Eaton**  
Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court  
and County Comptroller

The Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller serves as a cornerstone of local government, upholding transparency, accountability, and public trust while delivering essential services to the community. As the official record keeper for the courts, the Clerk's office maintains and safeguards court records, processes legal filings, and supports the administration of justice. In its role as County Comptroller, the office is also responsible for managing public funds, processing payments, auditing county operations, and ensuring responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Through these combined responsibilities, the Clerk's office plays a critical role in both the judicial system and the financial integrity of county government.

To better serve residents, many services are available online at [CharlotteClerk.com](https://CharlotteClerk.com), where user-friendly tools make it easy to access records, pay fines, apply for passports, and complete other transactions without visiting an office in person. Guided by Clerk Eaton's commitment to continuous innovation and improvement, the office consistently seeks new ways to enhance efficiency, expand digital access, and improve the overall customer experience.

In 2025, the Clerk's office demonstrated both operational excellence and a strong commitment to community engagement. The office received the 2025 Government Experience Award for integrating its electronic recording platform with the Accela permitting system, allowing residents and contractors to seamlessly submit and record Notices of Commencement online. This advancement simplifies the permitting process and reduces the need for multiple in-person visits. Beyond its professional achievements, the office remained actively involved in the community through initiatives such as the "Eaton Eats" program in partnership with the Animal Welfare League, which collects food donations for local animals in need. The Jury Pay Donation Program continued to support the Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies (CARE), while additional fundraising efforts benefited Meals on Wheels and the Charlotte County Boys & Girls Club. In recognition of Veterans Day, the office also honored veterans and active-duty service members throughout November by offering complimentary passport photos and certified copies, reflecting its ongoing commitment to serving those who have served our country.

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# Chamber Community Connection



James Parish  
Punta Gorda Airport

We've had several notable changes at Punta Gorda Airport during the first quarter of 2026. In late January, Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) launched a new online feature, FlyMyAirport™, that allows passengers to plan and book their flights from [www.FlyPGD.com](http://www.FlyPGD.com). Passengers can use it to search for flights, compare prices, and explore rental car and hotel deals all in one place. The more frequently that passengers use the search function on FlyPGD.com to book their flights, the better insight we will gain into new destinations and days of the week that our travelers want to visit.

In February, Allegiant launched two new routes to Atlantic City and Trenton, New Jersey. The Trenton flight continues year round on Mondays and Fridays, whereas the seasonal Atlantic City flight is scheduled to return in October. Also in February, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) started requiring all passengers who do not have a REAL ID or passport to pay a \$45 fee to use a modernized alternative identity verification system, TSA ConfirmID, to establish identity at security checkpoints.

In late March, Allegiant announced that passengers whose flights are scheduled to depart between now and the end of the partial government shutdown can change or cancel their itineraries at no additional cost, making it easier to plan trips with confidence. Visit [AllegiantAir.com](http://AllegiantAir.com) for details.

Here at PGD, we are not experiencing delays related to screening. Punta Gorda Airport is part of [TSA's Screening Partnership Program](#). As employees of a contract company, security screeners at PGD continue to be paid during a shutdown. However, we still encourage passengers to arrive at PGD at least two hours early, especially if you need to park and check a bag at the ticket counter. If you're wondering how busy the airport will be, just check the [Flight Status](#) page and click "Departures" to gauge how many people will be at the airport at the same time you are. As always, we wish you safe travels and thank you for Flying PGD!

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# Chamber Community Connection



Shan Swellan  
President, CDBIA

## Now is the time to purchase a new home.

If you're thinking about buying a home, today's market presents a strategic opportunity for both lifestyle and financial reasons. Unlike the ultra-competitive housing conditions of recent years, 2025–2026 has brought a more balanced and buyer-friendly market in this scenic coastal region of Southwest Florida. One of the most noticeable shifts buyers will appreciate is the increase in inventory. With more homes available for sale than in the past, buyers now have greater choice across neighborhoods, home styles, and price points. This elevated supply gives home shoppers more time to compare options, conduct thorough inspections, and make informed decisions without feeling rushed or forced into bidding wars.

Additionally, contractors in Charlotte County are more open to negotiation than in the frenzied markets of the early 2020s. Many are offering price reductions, closing cost credits, and flexible terms, creating real opportunities for buyers to secure favorable deals or upgrades.

Affordability remains a key advantage. Median home prices in the county are still moderate compared with many larger Florida coastal markets, making Charlotte County appealing to first-time buyers, families, and retirees alike. And while homes may spend a bit longer on the market, this is a positive change for buyers looking for leverage and negotiation power.

Beyond market dynamics, Charlotte County offers an enviable quality of life—from Gulf Coast beaches and boating to charming towns like Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte. With more inventory, stronger buyer leverage, and a stable market environment, now is an excellent time to consider purchasing a home in Charlotte County, Florida.

If you are renting, this is the best time to meet with a mortgage lender to see what you can do to start investing in your own future. For mortgage companies or if you are looking for a builder, you can visit [www.cdbia.com](http://www.cdbia.com)

# Chamber Community Connection



Mark Vianello  
Superintendent  
Charlotte County  
Public Schools

Across Charlotte County Public Schools, you can feel the momentum building in our classrooms and across our campuses. Our students are setting goals, making plans, and thinking seriously about what comes next. Last year, our graduation rate reached 91.6 percent, the highest in district history and a significant increase from last year. That number tells a powerful story about students who are putting in the work and a school system that is focused on helping them move forward with purpose. Whether their path leads to employment, enlistment, or enrollment, our priority is making sure every student leaves us with direction and confidence in their next step.

A big part of that preparation comes from the strong partnerships we share with our local business community. When businesses step into our schools, offer real-world insight, and open doors for our students, it creates meaningful opportunities. That is why we are inviting our community partners to be part of our upcoming Career Fair and Hiring Event on April 20, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. This event connects high school juniors and seniors directly with local employers, giving students the chance to explore career pathways while helping businesses meet and invest in their future workforce.

This work takes all of us. It takes a community that is willing to show up, share expertise, and believe in the potential of our students. If you are a local business or organization, we encourage you to join us and be part of what comes next for these students by registering at <https://bit.ly/CCPSHIRE26>. Together, we are creating opportunities that extend far beyond graduation and strengthening the future of our community.

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# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS

Torch & Needle  
18215 Paulson Drive, Unit D  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
(801) 808-5261  
Kyle Everts  
info@torchandneedle.com  
<http://www.torchandneedle.com>

Gatsby Glass  
6660 Taylor Road, Unit 110  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(239) 232-6622  
Tony Reese  
areese@gatsbyglass.com  
<http://www.gatsbyglass.com/cape-coral-fl/>

Paradise Golf Course  
8135 SW Sunnybreeze Rd.  
Arcadia, FL 34269  
(863) 444-1813  
Mike Gray  
mike.gray@paradisegolfcourse.com  
<http://www.paradisegolfcourse.com>

Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in  
America Lodge # 2507  
3725 Easy Street  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
(941) 764-9003  
Dan Pare  
secretary.osdia2507@gmail.com

Melaleuca - RiverBend Ranch Steaks  
Punta Gorda, FL 33955  
(239) 284-3238  
Michelle Yamamoto  
riverbendranchsteaks@gmail.com  
<http://riverbendranchsteaks.com/downtown>

Maxwell Mortgage Team-CCM/Stormy  
Wilder  
9115 Galleria Court, Suite 200  
Naples, FL 34109  
(239) 699-2411  
Stormy Wilder  
stormy@maxwellmortgageloans.com  
<http://ccm.com/stormy-wilder>

Expedia Cruises Air, Land & Sea  
150 Laishley Court, Suite 1112  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(201) 230-5315  
Cindy Tichy  
ctichy@expediacruzises.com  
[www.expediacruzises.com/cindytichy](http://www.expediacruzises.com/cindytichy)

Goombah Coffee  
23188 Freedom Ave  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980  
(732) 674-1636  
Nicole Randazzo & Deborah Randazzo  
Nicole@goombahcoffee.com  
<http://goombahcoffee.com>

ComBid Pro, LLC dba ComBid Metals  
8190 Uzita Dr., Unit 170  
Sarasota, FL 34240  
(941) 899-4936  
Dan Polezahayev  
combidpro@gmail.com  
<http://combidpro.com>

Cameron South Inc.  
North Port, FL 34288  
(941) 317-0430  
Charles Muddiman & Mario Cancio  
cm.csiconstruction@gmail.com  
mc.csiconstruction@gmail.com

Seven Grill  
1100 El Jobean Rd, Unit 128  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(239) 560-3435  
Steven Brodie  
drstevengbrodie@gmail.com

Pink Pantha, LLC. - North Port  
1103 N. Toledo Blade Blvd.  
North Port, FL 34288  
(941) 276-5672  
Jennifer Kyser  
pinkpanthaclothingstore@yahoo.com  
<http://pinkpanthaclothingstore.com>

Gulfshore Opera Inc  
9911 Corkscrew Rd., Suite 105  
Estero, FL 33928  
(239) 529-3925  
Michelle Westley  
info@gulfshoreopera.org  
<http://www.gulfshoreopera.org>

Wild Orchid  
124 Cross Street  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(239) 443-0244  
Jennifer Bennet  
sacredsoulsllc@gmail.com  
<https://www.wildorchidgallery.com/>



The Loveland Center Garden Party - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
January 7, 2026



The Back Nine Golf - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
January 5, 2026



The Salty Tarpon - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
January 9, 2026



Bruno's Appliance Repair - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
January 14, 2026

## RIBBON CUTTINGS



Ciela's Boutique - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
January 29, 2026



Pink Pantha - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
January 27, 2026



AIS Tax and Financial, LLC - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 6, 2026



Babe's Plumbing - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 4, 2026

## NEW MEMBERS

Secure-A-Lift Incorporated  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(920) 410-6702  
Aaron Rositch  
info@securealift.com  
<http://www.securealift.com>

Serene Oaks Venues  
33061 Serene Drive, IRR  
Punta Gorda, FL 33938  
(833) 737-3631  
Timothy Bell  
contact@SereneOaksVenues.com  
<https://www.sereneoaksvenues.com/>

Blackhedge Capital Partners  
791 Crandon Blvd., Unit 1105  
Key Biscayne, FL 33149  
(917) 326-9303  
Charles Pilney  
charlespilney@blackhedge.com  
<http://www.blackhedge.com>

Metalfer LLC  
4055 Tamiami Trail, Unit 15  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
(941) 666-4020  
Armando Castillo  
info@metalferflorida.com

loanDepot  
18501 Murdock Cir., Unit 204  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(941) 916-8001  
Kelly Stinefast  
kstinefast@loandepot.com  
<http://www.loandepot.com/kstinefast>

D.I.S. Tech Services Inc.  
223 Taylor St, Suite 1215  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(941) 867-9772  
Joshua Montgomery  
jmontgomery@distechusa.com  
<https://distechusa.com>

Florida Robotics  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
(407) 568-6146  
Fay Leuzzi  
fay.leuzzi@gmail.com  
<http://www.floridarobotics.com>

Coastal Breeze Garage Doors  
1498 S. McCall Rd. Englewood, FL 34223  
(941) 393-2752  
Ashley Koeppen  
Office@coastalbreezegaragedoors.com  
<http://www.coastalbreezegaragedoors.com>

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
& Event Center  
24411 Rampart Blvd.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980  
(941) 621-3185 (941) 787-9677  
(941) 629-3873 (F)  
Stacie McKinnon  
holytrinityeventcenter@gmail.com  
<http://www.holytrinitypc.com>

RYCO Marine  
4329 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980  
(239) 799-7926  
Kristina Brummund  
kristina@rycomarine.com  
<http://www.rycomarine.com>

ADR Handyman Solutions, LLC  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(941) 769-7710  
Andy Wheale  
helpinghandyandy24@gmail.com

Liberty Drain Company  
3461 Bay Ridge Way  
Port Charlotte, FL 33953  
(941) 740-7256  
Dave Jenkins  
dave@libertydrainco.com  
<http://www.libertydrainco.com>

Coastal Current Electrical  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
(941) 979-7440  
Morgan Ozburn Camp  
christian@coastalcurrentelectrical.com  
<http://www.coastalcurrentelectrical.com>

Coastal Play & Progress, PLLC.  
2032 El Jobean Rd., Unit 4  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(941) 237-0017  
Nichole Burns  
info@coastalplayandprogress.com  
<http://www.coastalplayandprogress.com>

# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS



Walt's Garage - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 2, 2026



The Visual Arts Center - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 13, 2026



Beach Bums Coastal Gifts & Decor - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 12, 2026



El Guero Tacos - Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 24, 2026

Rembr Inc.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
Jesus Escobar  
admin@rembr.com  
<https://rembr.com/la-compania/>

Filipino American Society, Inc  
PO Box 380003  
Port Charlotte, FL 33938  
(941) 882-2095  
Iylin Flock  
filmsociety@gmail.com  
<http://filmsociety.org>

Robert Hancik – Candidate for Airport  
Authority, District 2  
Punta Gorda, FL 33955  
(941) 276-6391  
Robert Hancik  
rdhancik@gmail.com  
<http://re-electhancik.com>

Harbor Marine  
4329 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980  
(941) 661-5067  
Andrew Wadsworth  
andrew.wadsworth@harbornissan.com  
<http://harborboatspc.com>

Guard Space Storage & U-Haul  
19160 Peachland Blvd.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(941) 255-0600  
Lorrie Smith  
guardspacestoragepc@gmail.com  
<http://Guardspacestorage.com>

Turning Point Home Solutions, LLC.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(941) 268-3143  
Kristen Hansen  
turningpointhomesolutions13@gmail.com

Crime Shield Fire & Security Inc.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33980  
(941) 429-0031  
Jon Brock  
crimeshieldsales1@gmail.com  
<https://www.crimeshield.net/>

Jeri Julian  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(305) 978-2441  
Jeri Julian  
jerijulian@aol.com

SWFL Soccer Club  
4085 Hancock Bridge Parkway,  
Unit 112-200  
N. Fort Myers. FL 33903  
(239) 413-0364  
Renaldo Ray Gomes  
info@swflsc.org  
<http://swflsc.org>

Veteran Mobile Inc.  
1441 S. Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(800) 931-1445  
Bill Rogers  
Bill@veteranmobile.com  
<https://www.veteranmobile.com/>

Painting with a Twist  
18700 Veterans Blvd., Suite 8  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
(941) 764-3914  
Jennifer Harris  
studio234@paintingwithatwist.com  
<http://www.paintingwithatwist.com/port-charlotte>

Surv of Port Charlotte  
North Port, FL 34286  
(941) 344-6024  
Justin Kopetsky  
ptcharlotte@wesurv.com  
<https://www.wesurv.com/surv-port-charlotte/>

Jones Brothers Consulting  
14234 River Beach Dr.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33953  
(941) 626-4025  
Steve Jones  
steve@jonesbrothersconsulting.com  
<http://www.JonesBrothersConsulting.com>

Convention of State  
Port Charlotte, FL 33953  
(508) 450-9151  
Deborah Gard  
dgard@cocosaction.com  
<https://conventionofstates.com/>

Big Boy Toyz Productions  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(305) 761-8860  
Brian Turner  
bigboytoyzexpo@gmail.com

# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS

Heartland Business Systems  
Punta Gorda, FL  
(715) 216-1040  
Bill Goetz  
bgoetz@hbs.net  
<http://www.hbs.net>

941 Vending Company  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
(479) 935-0629  
Dakota Mendenhall  
hello@941vendingco.com  
<http://www.941vendingco.com>

Native Sun Homes LLC  
265 E. Marion Ave  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(863) 263-4726  
Ryan McGee  
contactus@nativesunhomesllc.com

The Traveling Vine FL  
27318 Porto Nacional Drive  
Punta Gorda, FL 33983  
(941) 419-1194  
Rita Puglise  
ritavinetowine@gmail.com  
<http://www.thetravelingvinefl.com>

Jones Family Insurance  
312 Mary St.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(941) 205-0191  
Matthew Jones  
matt@jonesfamilyins.com  
<https://jonesfamilyins.com>

Angel's No Wings Catering LLC  
11770-A Metro Parkway  
Fort Myers, FL 33966  
(786) 748-7448  
Angel Colon  
angelnowingscatering2024@gmail.com

SimPilot, Inc.  
18350 Murdock Circle, Suite 103  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(800) 893-4517  
(305) 934-0117  
Alexander Rodriguez  
alexrod@simpilot.us  
<http://www.simpilot.us>

Michael Franks, FACMPE - Independent  
Insurance Broker  
North Port, FL 34286  
(727) 543-0581  
Michael Franks  
Mike@sbginurancegroup.com

Charlotte County Boat and RV Storage  
25505 Old Landfill Rd.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33980  
(941) 867-6800  
Rance Kleiber  
rkleiber@icloud.com  
<https://charlottecountyrvandboatstorage.com/>

Leskovich Law Group, PA  
306 E. Olympia Ave.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950-3834  
(941) 575-5100  
Steven Leskovich  
office@southernjustice.com  
<http://www.southernjustice.com>

Unity Roofing, LLC  
2468 Linton Lane  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
(941) 979-6799  
Liliannah Sosa  
UnityRoofingFL@gmail.com

Advanced Orthopedic Center  
1641 Tamiami Trail, Suite 1  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
(941) 629-6262  
Alexa Hoover, John Williams  
marketing@advancedorthopediccenter.com  
<http://www.advancedorthopediccenter.com>



Goombah Coffee - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
February 20, 2026



New Life in Christ Church Playground - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
March 3, 2026



Straight 2U HealthCare - Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
March 10, 2026



Burg's Bar - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
March 12, 2026



Ace Drums - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
March 19, 2026



SWFL Soccer Club - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
March 25, 2026



**Girls on the run**  
5k



**Register Today!**

**April 26, 2026**  
**South County Regional Park, Punta Gorda**  
**Gates Open 7:00am**  
**5k Begins 8:00am**  
**Festivities and Awards 9:00am**

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**Saturday, May 16 | 10 AM - 3 PM**

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# Fourth - Fest 2026

Celebrate  
America's 250<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary

## SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

### AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL:

**\$10,000 - 1 Available**

- VIP area up to 10 ppl incl. food & beverages
- Business logo on banners at main stage & gate
- Logo on event website
- Free Booth Space
- Logo/name on Jumbotron, emcee, TV, Radio, press releases

### WATER MANIA:

**\$3,500 - 1 Available**

- Banner at Entrance to the Kids Area
- VIP area up to 6 ppl incl. food & beverages
- Business name on banners at main stage & gate
- Name on event website
- Free Booth Space
- Name on Jumbotron, emcee, TV, Radio, press releases

### THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND:

**\$1500**

- VIP area up to 4 ppl incl. food & beverages
- Business name on banners at main stage & gate
- Name on event website
- Name on Jumbotron, emcee, promotional flyers

### STARS AND STRIPES:

**\$500**

- All day recognition by emcee, name listed as a supporter of the fireworks on website and Jumbotron

### STAGE:

**\$4,000 - 1 Available**

- Banner on Stage and naming rights to Stage
- VIP area up to 6 ppl incl. food & beverages
- Business name on banners at main stage & gate
- Name on event website
- Free Booth Space
- Name on Jumbotron, emcee, TV, Radio, press releases

### BORN IN THE USA:

**\$2,500**

- VIP area up to 6 ppl incl. food & beverages
- Business name on banners at main stage & gate
- Name on event website
- Free Booth Space
- Name on Jumbotron, emcee, TV, Radio, press releases

### YANKEE DOODLE DANDY:

**\$1,000**

- VIP area up to 2 ppl incl. food & beverages
- Name on event website
- Name on Jumbotron, & emcee,

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Information

Credit Card Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address for card \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsorship: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



If mailing a check, send to  
Charlotte Chamber Community Foundation  
2702 Tamiami Trail Port Charlotte FL. 33952

**Fourth Fest is 100% funded by sponsors & donations**









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*The Hearts Behind the Night*

-  **Red – Love & Compassion**  
*Supporting children and families at Valerie's House*
-  **Yellow – Hope & Healing**  
*Because no child should grieve alone*
-  **Blue – Loyalty & Trust**  
*Standing with rescued animals in our community*
-  **Green – Growth & New Beginnings**  
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— *Benefiting:* —



Animal Welfare League



Valerie's House



*Two causes. One community. One unforgettable night.*

*Sponsorship Opportunities Available*



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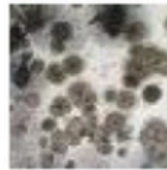
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---

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- Smoke/Cigarette Odor Removal
- Water Damage
- Mold Damage
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- Mold Remediation
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- Contents Restoration
- Dehumidification

- Dry Out
- Leak Evaluation



- Fire/Smoke/Soot Damage Restoration

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**Kevin Koch, Owner**  
FL Mold Remediator –  
Lic # MRSR31  
FL Certified Bldg Contractor –  
Lic # CBC1259116



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**941-625-2833**  
**buffalograffix.com**  
**orders@buffalograffix.com**

---

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- Small Business Accounting

### **Audit & Assurance Services**

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- Federal & State Single Audits

### **Tax Services**

- Individual Tax Preparation & Planning
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