



Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce

# BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

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On the web:  
[charlottecountychamber.org](http://charlottecountychamber.org)

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

Or Call: 941-627-2222

4TH QTR 2024

## Charlotte County Strong

When Hurricane Helene and Milton struck, it left a trail of destruction in its wake; homes destroyed, infrastructure damaged, and lives upended. However, amidst the chaos and despair, the Charlotte County community has a remarkable ability to come together, demonstrating resilience and solidarity. The aftermath of Hurricane Helene and Milton in our region serves as a powerful reminder of the human spirit.

In the days following the hurricanes, the streets were lined with debris, and the sounds of chainsaws echoed as residents began the daunting task of clearing their properties. Our local emergency services worked tirelessly, setting up shelters for those displaced and coordinating efforts with volunteers. Neighbors who once exchanged polite nods became immediate allies in the face of adversity. Community centers transformed into hubs of support, offering food, water, and essential supplies. Local businesses stepped up, providing meals and donations, while local volunteers and beyond arrived to lend a helping hand. This collective effort created an atmosphere of hope and camaraderie, reminding everyone that they were not alone in their struggle.

As the initial shock began to fade, the focus shifted to recovery and rebuilding. Local organizations spearheaded initiatives to assess damage and prioritize repairs. Community meetings were held to discuss resources, share information, and strategize on long-term recovery plans. Residents banded together for clean-up days, working side by side to restore parks, schools, and homes. These efforts not only rebuilt physical structures but also strengthened the bonds among community members. They shared stories, laughter, and even tears, forging connections that will last long after the debris was cleared.

In addition to physical rebuilding, mental health became a critical focus. The trauma of the hurricanes left many feeling anxious and vulnerable. Local mental health professionals offered counseling sessions, and support groups formed to provide a safe space for individuals to share their experiences. Our community recognized that healing was as important as rebuilding, and many stepped forward to help their neighbors navigate this emotional journey.



Bob

Bob White  
Executive Director

As these weeks and months pass, signs of recovery will begin to emerge. Parks reopened, schools resumed classes, and businesses start to thrive again. While the scars of these hurricanes may remain, the experience has taught our community valuable lessons about preparedness and unity. Local leaders are now investing in infrastructure improvements and emergency response training, ensuring they are better equipped for future challenges.

The story of our amazing community is a testament to the power of human connection in the face of adversity. Through collaboration, compassion, and an unwavering spirit, we will emerge stronger than before, proving that together, we can weather any storm. In the end, hurricanes may cause physical destruction, but they also reveal the unbreakable bonds within our community. As we rebuild, it will carry the knowledge that we can overcome anything—together.

## Coming Up

**Networking at Noon in October was Cancelled. We will credit any payments for this event to your account.**

### Third Wednesday Coffee CANCELLED

Wednesday, October 16

7:45 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Ctr.

75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda

Sponsor: Rotary Club of Punta Gorda

### Business Card Exchange

Thursday, October 25th

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

**Frohlich, Gordon & Beason**

18401 Murdock Cir. Port Charlotte

Halloween Themed

*Please register in the MIC (Member Portal) for all events so that we may properly plan.*

### Contact us by email:

[bwhite@charlottecountychamber.org](mailto:bwhite@charlottecountychamber.org)

[jjoannes@charlottecountychamber.org](mailto:jjoannes@charlottecountychamber.org)

[askus@charlottecountychamber.org](mailto:askus@charlottecountychamber.org)

[president@charlottecountychamber.org](mailto:president@charlottecountychamber.org)

### Visit us on the web:

[charlottecountychamber.org](http://charlottecountychamber.org)

**Recovery resources are listed on our website.**

## YOUR 2024-2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President:

Kevin Graham, Suncoast One Title & Closings, Inc.

### President Elect:

James Coalwell, Crews Bank & Trust

### Immediate Past President:

Nick Worden, Crews Bank & Trust

### VP Leadership Division:

Jessica Rhea, 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 Benghttt, Granny Nannies Home Health Agency

### Directors:

Peri Bluemer, Bert's Black Widow Harley-Davidson

Jessica Cline, Pool Boy, Inc.

Michael Ehrat, HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital

Hector Flores, Charlotte County Administration

Shawn Gilstad, The Purple House Salon by Shawn Gilstad

Craig Holt, Four Points by Sheraton

Dori Holtvoight, Big Shot Marketing & Design

John LeClair, Charlotte County Public Schools

Mike Martin, State Farm Insurance

Angie Matthiessen, United Way of Charlotte County

Jill McCrory, McCrory Law Firm

Kaley Miller, Punta Gorda Airport

Glen Nickerson, The Daily Sun

Natalie Proctor, Lake Michigan Credit Union

Kris Proudfoot, Crews Bank & Trust

Melissa Reichert, City of Punta Gorda Administration

Kay Tracy, Charlotte County Economic Dev. Office

## 2024-2025 SUSTAINING PARTNERS

### PLATINUM+

Charlotte County Ford

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center

Elite Hurricane Home Protection

HyperFiber

### PLATINUM

Ashley, Brown & Smith, CPAs, PA

Buffalo Graffix\*

Farr Law Firm

GJC Window & Door

Integrity Employee Leasing, Inc.

Life Care Center of Punta Gorda

McCrory Law Firm

Pool Boy, Inc.

ShorePoint Health Port Charlotte & Punta Gorda

Suncoast One Title & Closings, Inc.

The Daily Sun

Waste Management Charlotte County

### DIAMOND

AADisaster Restoration27/7, Inc.

Birch's Air Conditioning & Heating

Chapman Insurance Group

Crews Bank & Trust

Elite Inspections & Pest Control

Fedora's Cigar & Wine Bar

Florida Gulf Coast University

The Firm Advertisig Agency

The Nix Team at Coldwell Banker Sunstar Realty

The Purple House Salon by Shawn Gilstad

Tommy's Express Car Wash

WhitCo Insurance - Alexia Martin Agency

### EMERALD

Achieve Credit Union

Big Shot Marketing & Design, LLC

Charlotte Players, Inc.

Four Points by Sheraton Punta Gorda Harborside

Friendly Floors

J & J One Stop Gun Shop, Inc.

Port Charlotte Florist

Premier Photographic Events, LLC

REALTORS® of Punta Gorda Port Charlotte North Port DeSoto Inc.

South Port Square

St. Andrews South Golf Club.

State Farm Insurance - Mike Martin Agency

Sunseeker Resort Charlotte Harbor

Wotitzky, Wotitzky, Ross & Young PA, Attorneys at Law

\*Charter Sustaining Partner (no years missed)



## President's Note

*Kevin Graham*

### We Mean Business: A Rallying Cry for Charlotte County's Recovery

As the incoming President of the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce, I am filled with both gratitude and a profound sense of responsibility. Our community has recently faced unprecedented challenges due to not one but two hurricanes—**Helene** and **Milton**—that have left behind flooded homes and damaged businesses. Many of those affected are not just neighbors; they are our colleagues, friends, and members of our Chamber family. To those directly impacted, please know that our thoughts and unwavering support are with you.

Our theme for the upcoming year, "**We Mean Business**," now carries even greater significance. It is more than a statement; it's a rallying cry for unity and action. We are committed to being the epicenter of all things business-related in Charlotte County, serving as the go-to hub for comprehensive business information, cutting-edge economic insights, and invaluable educational resources.

Our vision is to create a dynamic ecosystem where businesses not only recover but thrive, economies grow, and communities flourish. To achieve this, we will focus on several key initiatives:

- Enhanced Business Resources and Recovery Assistance:** We will expand our resources to help businesses navigate challenges posed by the hurricanes. This includes up-to-date market data, expert consultations, information on emergency funding, and connections to organizations specializing in reconstruction.
- Economic Education and Renewal:** We will host workshops and training sessions to equip our members with the latest trends and skills needed in today's recovering market. This includes guidance on accessing recovery programs and building resilience against future adversities.
- Strategic Partnerships for Growth and Rebuilding:** Strengthening our collaboration with county and state governments is crucial. We aim to be the primary resource for economic data and business insights related to Charlotte County's recovery efforts.
- Community Engagement and Solidarity:** We will launch initiatives that encourage corporate social responsibility, fostering a culture where businesses give back to the community. Community engagement and mutual aid are vital to our collective recovery.

However, we cannot achieve this alone. "We Mean Business" is an invitation to each of you to join hands in rebuilding our community. Your participation, ideas, and unwavering spirit are what will drive us forward.

In these challenging times, it's evident that individual commitment to a group effort is what makes a community work. Let us move forward together, transforming Charlotte County into not just a place that endures but a place that thrives against all odds.

Kevin Graham is the 2024/2025 board president of the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce. He is the owner of Suncoast One Title & Closings, Inc.

Email: [president@charlottecountychamber.org](mailto:president@charlottecountychamber.org)

# Charlotte County Chamber Corner



Jami Joannes  
Director of Business  
Development

As we start our journey towards our 100th anniversary, we are excited to offer more opportunities for our members to grow their business.

In today's fast-paced business landscape, staying ahead means continuously evolving and equipping yourself with the right tools for success. The "Unlocking Your Potential in 2025: Stages for Success" workshop series has been designed to guide participants through essential phases of business growth, offering practical insights and tools to help entrepreneurs and professionals excel.

This series is ideal for business owners, managers, and professionals who are looking to stay ahead of the curve. Whether you're new to these topics or simply looking for a refresher, these sessions are designed to provide practical, hands-on guidance to help you succeed.

Don't miss the opportunity to invest in your business's future. Join us for the "Stages for Success" workshop series, and take the steps toward unlocking your full potential in 2025. Classes start in January 2025. Registration is coming soon.

## Leadership Charlotte



Leadership Charlotte Class of 2025



Junior Leadership Charlotte Class of 2025



Leadership Charlotte Hall of Fame Inductees (above), and nominees (below)



Save time - set up AutoPay for your membership.  
In the MIC select Company, select Billing, then select Autopay & Billing to display your renewal details. Select Add/Manage Payment Profiles to view or change you card or bank/ACH information. Selecting Autopay will also open the payment profiles to allow for editing.

# Chamber Community Connections



Pamela Smith  
Chief of Police  
Punta Gorda

## Preventing Bicycle Theft: Essential Tips for Keeping Your Ride Safe

Bicycle theft is a persistent problem in cities and communities nationwide, including Punta Gorda. As cycling's popularity continues to grow, so does the necessity for effective strategies to protect your bike. Whether you use your bike for commuting, exercise, or leisure, taking proactive measures can significantly reduce the theft risk. Here are some essential tips to help keep your bicycle secure.

### 1. Invest in a Quality Lock

The foundation of bike security is a robust lock. While it might be tempting to buy the cheapest option, a high-quality lock is worth the investment. U-locks, also known as D-locks, offer superior protection compared to cable locks, which are easier to cut. For added security, consider using a combination of locks—a U-lock for the frame and wheels paired with a heavy-duty cable lock.

### 2. Lock Up Properly

When locking your bike, secure both the frame and the wheels. Use a solid, immovable object like a bike rack or a sturdy post if possible. Avoid locking your bike to objects that can be easily dismantled or cut through. Additionally, lock your bike in well-lit, busy areas where thieves are less likely to operate unnoticed.

### 3. Register Your Bike

The Punta Gorda Police Department offers a bike registration program, which can help in recovering your bike if it's stolen. Registering your bike involves recording its serial number and other identifying details in a database. This not only aids in recovery but also serves as a deterrent to thieves, who may be wary of stealing a registered bike. This free service can be arranged by calling (941) 639-4111.

### 4. Choose the Right Parking Spot

When possible, park your bike in designated bike parking areas or secure bike storage facilities. Security cameras often monitor these locations and are designed to minimize the theft risk. Avoid parking in isolated or poorly lit areas where your bike is more vulnerable.

### 5. Personalize Your Bike

Making your bike easily identifiable can deter theft and help in recovery. Consider customizing your bike with unique paint or accessories or using distinct stickers. Taking photos of your bike and noting its unique features can also assist in identification if it gets stolen.

By implementing these strategies, you can significantly reduce the risk of bicycle theft and enjoy greater peace of mind while cycling. Protecting your bike safeguards your investment and ensures you can continue to enjoy your rides without unnecessary worry.

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# Chamber Community Connection



Bill Prummell  
Charlotte County Sheriff

As the hurricane season grinds to a closure, let's continue to keep a weary eye on the tropics. Word of the day.....preparedness! When we are told of an impending storm's approach, make the necessary adjustments to be safe.

The Sheriff's Office pledges to protect life and property, however we cannot be everywhere all the time. We ask business owners to assist us by making sure their properties are well lit during the dark hours. We also ask them to consider the use of surveillance cameras for added security and make them available to the Sheriff's Office if needed. For more information on how to do this, give us a call at 941-639-2101 or contact the closest District Office where your business is located.

Crimes of opportunity continue to occur throughout all areas of the county. What is a crime of opportunity you ask? Leaving your vehicle unlocked with your valuables inside and in plain view. Leaving high value items in your yard without securing them. Not protecting your purse or pocketbook while grocery shopping. These are just a few examples. Protect your property!

We have a couple of major events coming up that are near and dear to our hearts here at the Sheriff's Office. On Halloween night between the hours of 4:30-8:00 pm we have our annual Cops and Goblins event being held at the Charlotte Town Center Mall in the food court area. Last year we had 4000-5000 kids and parents attend our candy giveaway and view our static displays. This is our largest attended event of the year and loved by all. If you would like to sponsor this event, please call our Crime Prevention Specialist at 941-575-5240.

Our flagship event, our annual Shop with a Cop event, will take place in early December. The Sheriff's Office shops for Christmas gifts with selected children from our elementary schools who are chosen by school counselors and recognized as coming from families who are financially challenged. This event is entirely funded by our generous business partners and citizens of this county. This program subsidizes their holiday and makes it truly special for them. You can also donate to this event by calling 941-575-5240.

If you see something that just doesn't seem right, trust your intuition and make that call to the Sheriff's Office. Call our non-emergency line at 941-639-2101 or 911 if it's urgent. We all love this community. Let's all continue to do our part to make this the best place to live, work and play.

Be strong. Be safe and never quit!

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# Chamber Community Connection



Leanne Walker  
President, Realtors of  
Punta Gorda Port  
Charlotte North Port  
DeSoto

## The Charlotte County area Real Estate Market Sees Increased Activity in August 2024

The real estate market for single-family homes experienced significant shifts in August 2024, with increased sales activity and expanding inventory, but a slight cooling in prices. According to the latest data, this dynamic market continues to attract both buyers and sellers, leading to an overall robust performance.

Closed Sales surged by 14% compared to the same time last year, with a total of 486 homes sold in August. This notable uptick reflects strong buyer interest in the area, positioning the local area as an attractive destination for homebuyers.

Prices Cool Slightly, but Sales Volume Grows while sales activity is heating up, prices have seen a modest decline. The median sale price fell by 5.8% year-over-year to \$350,000. Despite this price dip, the overall dollar volume of sales reached \$201 million, marking a 9.5% increase from last year. The higher number of sales compensated for the lower median price, signaling sustained market interest.

Inventory Grows Dramatically as homebuyers are finding more choices than ever, with active inventory soaring by 49% to 2,924 homes. This significant rise in available homes could be contributing to the slight cooling in prices, as more sellers compete to attract buyers.

New Listings and Pending Sales Indicate Future Activity as homeowners are seizing the opportunity to sell, with 654 new listings added to the market in August—a 13% increase from last year. In addition, new pending sales rose by 5.2%, indicating that buyer interest remains strong despite the increase in inventory and the softening of prices. A Competitive Market for Both Buyers and Sellers Overall, the Punta Gorda housing market remains competitive, with plenty of opportunities for both buyers and sellers. The combination of rising inventory, strong sales, and softening prices is likely to keep the market dynamic in the coming months, offering a favorable outlook for those looking to buy or sell homes in the area.

As we move into the latter half of the year, it will be interesting to see how these trends evolve, especially with the rising number of listings and increased buyer activity shaping the market's trajectory. This latest report provides a snapshot of a bustling real estate scene, where opportunities abound despite the price adjustments seen in August.



# Chamber Community Connection



Melissa Reichert  
City of Punta Gorda

The City of Punta Gorda is delighted to promote "**Light up the Night: A Magical Christmas Event**" in Downtown Punta Gorda, a cherished tradition led by Carlene Zeches and Jackie Mays, set to come alive on December 6. "Light up the Night" is one of Downtown Punta Gorda's most beloved Christmas spectacles. Brace yourselves for a dazzling experience as the committee illuminates the heart of our city with the annual lighting of a magnificent Christmas tree. This enchanting celebration brings together the community in a joyous display of holiday spirit, complete with delightful food, captivating Christmas-themed activities, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere for the whole family.

The night will kick off at 5:30, with the National Anthem performed by Josie Salvitti. Step into a world of enchantment as the park opens its doors, unveiling a plethora of activities and attractions that will make your heart soar. Watch the little ones' faces light up with excitement as they engage in a variety of fun-filled activities, from face painting to games and crafts. With bounce houses to jump and play in, a mesmerizing fire truck display, and the presence of beloved masked characters like Mickey, Minnie, Goofy, Elsa from Frozen, Frosty the Snowman, and even Santa's reindeer, there's an adventure waiting for every child to enjoy.

Musical performances include the Symphony Brass Quintet, sing a long carols, and the youth holiday program that includes talented dancers. It's a delightful and heartwarming experience that will add to the enchantment of the evening.

Experience the festive atmosphere while enjoying a wide selection of food trucks offering delicious delights! But that's not all! Enjoy the 50/50 raffle. There will be pre-sale tickets and tickets sold during the event, with the drawing to be held that night.

Gather around the majestic Christmas tree as anticipation fills the air. As the clock strikes 7:00 p.m., join in a collective countdown led by the Bangpipers Band and the Guns and Hoses Pipes and Drums Band. In this enchanting moment, watch the tree come to life as it illuminates the park with a stunning display of colors. To add to the magic, gentle snowflakes fall from above, creating a whimsical winter scene. Allow yourself to be captivated by this breathtaking sight, where the shimmering lights and falling snow converge to create a truly magical experience. The event will continue with live music performances and holiday cheer until 9:30 p.m. For complete event details, please visit <https://www.lightupthenightpg.com/>.

Furthermore, the City of Punta Gorda is honored to provide the venue for the 46th Annual Christmas Parade hosted by the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce on December 14. The parade will kick off at noon from the Charlotte Performing Arts Center, proceed up Taylor Street, and disband at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. Judging will take place in front of Centennial Bank. We eagerly anticipate seeing all the Characters of Christmas entries filling our streets.

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# Chamber Community Connection



Hector Flores  
Charlotte County  
Administrator

Our County 2024/25 Fiscal Year (October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025) is underway as the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the county budget in late September. I'm pleased to share that the budget is fiscally sound, balanced and lowered ad valorem taxes on most Charlotte County homeowners.

For the upcoming year, the top priority of our team is to continue advancing our BCC's vision, goals & initiatives under their four Strategic Focus Areas - Public Services, Economic & Community Development, Infrastructure, and Efficient & Effective Government. In early 2025, we'll look to the BCC to confirm their vision and strategic goals to guide the community and our organization into the future years. Our planning processes incorporate input and engagement from residents, businesses, and stakeholders to determine community needs and demands. I anticipate that we'll maintain our focus on meeting growth demands, housing needs, and water quality initiatives.

I'm proud and honored to say we continue to have great partnerships with inter-governmental agencies such as the Clerk of the Court, Sheriff's Office, School Board, City of Punta Gorda, and PG Airport Authority to name a few. We have projects underway that will bring economic impact to the community and improve safety & quality of life. Some of the projects important to our residents, business, and visitors are William R. Gaines Jr. Veterans Memorial Park, Sheriff's Administration & Hardened 911 Facility, Port Charlotte Beach Complex, Placida Boat Ramp, Cultural Center, Mid-County Regional Library, Edgewater Drive and Harborview Road widening, and three fire station locations.

Finally, we are still focused on long term recovery from Hurricane Ian and prior storm events. We are striving to build back stronger and strengthen our resiliency.

On behalf of our team at the county, we look forward to fulfilling our Mission to keep Delivering Exceptional Services.



Michael Ehrat, CEO  
HCA Florida Fawcett  
Hospital

HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital has been serving the Charlotte County community and surrounding communities since 1975. The 265 acute care hospital offers a wide variety of healthcare services including 24/7 emergency services, orthopedic & spine, cardiovascular, oncology, general surgery, robotic-assisted surgery, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, and more. The facility is the only Comprehensive Stroke Center in Charlotte County enabling the hospital to care for the highest acuity of strokes.

The hospital is one of the largest employers in Charlotte County with over 950 employees, 608 physicians and over 75 volunteers. In 2023, the hospital had an economic impact of over \$202M and salaries, wages and benefits of over \$116M. As we've seen our communities grow, we're proud of the investment by HCA Healthcare into our facility and community to meet these growing needs. Earlier this year, the hospital completed phase one of its \$60M expansion & renovation project. The project included expansion of critical care units, the number of pre-operative treatment bays, renovation of the main lobby, waiting rooms and registration areas and addition of a chapel and coffee shop. In total, the project added 40,000 square feet of new space and renovated 20,000 square feet of existing space. This expansion allows the hospital to serve more patients and help meet the community's growing healthcare needs. Phase two is now underway and includes expansion of the facility's operating rooms.

In addition, the hospital has been expanding its access points for emergency care. In 2022, the hospital opened HCA Florida Cape Coral Emergency, a 24/7 freestanding emergency room in Cape Coral. In 2023, the hospital opened its second freestanding emergency room, HCA Florida Tamiami Trail Emergency, located at 150 Tamiami Trail in Port Charlotte. And this year, the hospital will open HCA Florida West Fort Myers Emergency located in Fort Myers, Florida. These facilities are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing full emergency services for adults and children, including laboratory, x-rays, CT scanning and ultrasound. The facilities on average add an additional 40 employees with an estimated annual salary and benefits impact to the community of over \$4 million dollars, per facility.



# Chamber Community Connection



Jimi Smith Feliciano  
2024 CDBIA President

## Don't get scammed hiring construction companies.

There are thousands of legitimate, ethical contractors in business in Florida. Unfortunately, there are also scam artists looking to cheat you out of your money who pose as legitimate contractors or storm chasers. These “fly-by-night” operators often show up in communities impacted by natural disasters to try to scam distressed home owners into paying for shoddy repairs or work that they will never show up to perform.

Here are some warning signs to look out for:

- **Doesn't have license and insurance.** All Florida contractors should be insured and able to show their certificate proving such insurance. A contractor will be proud to show you their license. It is also recommended to make sure you meet with the contractor. After recent storms, there were reports of scammers writing down any license number to get a down payment.
- **Asks you to sign anything before you've hired them.** If they want you to sign an “estimate” or “authorization” before you've made the decision to hire the contractor, look out. They may be trying to get you to sign what is an actual binding contract.
- **Doesn't write contracts.** Professionals have clear contracts that outline the job, process, the cost, and helps clarify how problems will be managed. If you don't have a contract, you are not protected when something goes wrong. Don't hire anyone who tells you a contract “won't be necessary.”
- **Requires cash or payment in full before starting the job.** Shady businesses demand cash and then run with the money. Many home owners have been stranded by paying in full up front. A deposit towards materials is common, but only pay it once you have a contract signed by both you and the contractor. It's also suspect you're asked to pay cash to a salesperson instead of a check or money order to a company. If a business states that if you pay more than 10% we will get your project started earlier, that is a red flag.
- **Vastly underbids all other contractors.** They may have the best price, but that doesn't guarantee the best work. Such contractors may cut costs on quality, which can end up costing you more when you have to have the substandard work redone. After Hurricane Ian, many people accepted lower bids, paid a deposit and the businesses left town. Protect yourself.
- **Cannot provide customer references of local homeowners or business owners.** Contractors should have current references they can provide from current and past clients — and you should be able to reach those references, not just an answering machine.
- **Difficulty contacting the contractor.** Professionals have a physical office, mailing address, phone, and email. They should respond to your queries in a timely manner. Make sure you can verify the contractor's business address.
- **Tells you to obtain the building or remodeling permits.** Professional contractors go to the county or state offices and get permits for their work themselves. Asking the home owner to do it is a sign they may not have the license to pull the permit.

Your best bet is to take your time, do your research and choose someone you feel completely comfortable with. The Charlotte DeSoto Building Industry offers a free service to verify if a company has the license to do the work you want to hire the company for. To verify online, or for many other tips that can be helpful after a storm, please visit [need](#). You can also call us at the office at 941-625-0804.

Jimi Smith Feliciano is the CDBIA President and can be reached at 941-249-5030 or email [ajfconstruction16@gmail.com](mailto:ajfconstruction16@gmail.com)

# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS



Stars Academy/Gulf Coast Partnership - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
July 11, 2024



Bricks & Minifigs - Ribbon Cutting Celebration  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
July 22, 2024



MonarchDirect The Factory - Ribbon Cutting Celebration  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 1, 2024



Major League Plumbing - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 13, 2024

People and Pets Network  
2015 NW 3rd Terrace  
Cape Coral, FL 33993  
(954) 319-2287  
Roger Linde  
Roger@peopleandpetsnetwork.com  
<http://www.peopleandpetsnetwork.com>

Christian Brothers Auto of Port Charlotte  
24130 Beatrix Blvd.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
(941) 444-0163  
Marcia Krumenacker  
marcia.krumenacker@cbauto.net  
<http://www.cbac.com/port-charlotte>

Akumin  
2625 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952-6478  
(941) 235-4646  
Elizabeth Grados  
elizabeth.grados@akumin.com  
<http://www.akumin.com>

Superior Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning  
214 Wood Street, Unit 113  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(941) 575-9818  
Bill Comber  
bill@superiorcc.net  
<https://www.superiorcarpetcleaninginc.com>

Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness  
260 Milus Street  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
(941) 637-0911  
Stacy Calvino  
mailto:stacy@calvinofamilymd.com  
<http://www.calvinofamilymd.com>

The Florida Center for Early Childhood  
4620 17th St.  
Sarasota, FL34235  
(941) 371-8820  
Kae Reed  
kate.reed@thefloridacenter.org  
<https://www.thefloridacenter.org/>

Stop Traffic Digital Mobile Billboards  
Call or Email for Information  
North Port, FL34286  
(941) 539-2403  
Brenda VanSalisbury  
Ceo@stoptraffiddigitalmobilebillboards.com

Advanced Refreshments  
Call or Email for Information  
Punta Gorda, FL 33955  
724-316-3730  
Rick Ley  
rley@advancedrefreshments.com  
advancedrefreshments.com

Protean Design Group  
201 W. Marion Ave., Suite 1201  
Punta Gorda, FL33950  
941-676-8448  
Drew Rossi  
drossi@proteandg.com

IG Management Group, LLC  
1460 S. McCall Rd., Bldg. A, Unit E1  
Englewood, FL34223  
941-275-0013  
Julie Urmanche-Meyer  
igggroup.fl@gmail.com

Costa Oil 10-Minute Oil Change  
1182 Tamiami Trail, Unit E  
Port Charlotte, FL33953  
941-787-1212  
Ryan Wellspring  
ryanwellspring@hotmail.ca

Double M. Supply Inc.  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL33953  
516-672-1504  
Samm Socolow  
ssdoublem29@gmail.com

Kona Ice of Charlotte County  
Call or Email for Information  
Punta Gorda, FL33950  
941-310-7611  
Sara Urhahn  
johnandsarah@kona-ice.com  
<https://www.kona-ice.com/local-site/kona-ice-of-charlotte-county/>

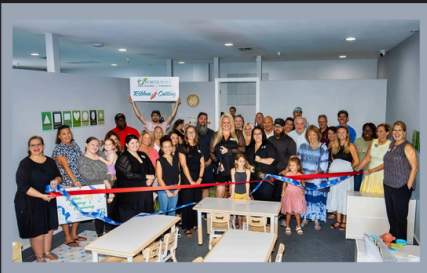
Good Stuff Marketing  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL33952  
941-961-0060  
Danielle Gallagher  
dani@goodstuffmarketing.com  
<http://goodstuffmarketing.com>

# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS



Fedora's Cigar & Wine Bar - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 16, 2024



Anderson Academy, LLC - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 20, 2024



FFA Ag Feed Store - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 21, 2024



Monster Self Storage - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 27, 2024

Lisa Ehlen Realtor RE/MAX Palm Realty  
1808 Tamiami Trail, Unit D-2  
Port Charlotte, FL33948  
941-740-7304  
Lisa Ehlen  
LisaEhlenSold@gmail.com

AdamsCo Inc.  
24123 Peachland Blvd., C4 Suite 308  
Punta Gorda, FL33954  
941-626-1410  
John Adams  
Info@AdamsCo.US  
<http://www.AdamsCo.US>

Scoop Soldiers  
Call or Email for Information  
Bonita Springs, FL34135  
239-944-1287  
Gayle Todd  
Gayletodd@scoopsoldiers.com  
<http://www.scoopsoldiers.com>

MK Construction Group LLC, DBA  
Remodeling Showroom and Design  
3762 N. Tamiami Trail, # A  
Port Charlotte, FL33952  
941-225-8659  
Miroslaw Kawula  
info@mkcsinc.com

Vicky Reilly's Cleaning, Inc.  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL33952  
941-276-0700  
Virginia Reilly  
Virginiareilly64@gmail.com

Conserva Irrigation of SWFL, Inc.  
1897 Manzana Ave.  
Punta Gorda, FL33950  
941-249-9690  
Mike & Colleen Ferrara  
swfl@conservationirrigation.com  
<http://conservairrigation.com>

Louie Askew  
Call or Email for Information  
Punta Gorda, FL33950  
757-615-7768  
Louie Askew  
rudyaskew@yahoo.com

Effectv – Comcast-Xfinity Advertising Division  
9530 Marketplace Rd., Suite 104  
Fort Myers, FL33912  
239-994-7568  
Ramon Garcia-Ramirez  
Ramon\_Garcia-Ramirez@Comcast.com  
<https://www.effectv.com/>

Hiram's Grill at 115  
25349 Airport Rd.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-527-7366  
Nelson Silverstein  
nsilverstein12@gmail.com  
<https://hiramsgrille.com>

The Rotary Club of Charlotte Harbor Sunset  
2414 Tamiami Trail, Unit 1  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
(941) 421-7155  
Sherry Penfield  
charlotteharborsunsetrotary@gmail.com  
<https://www.charlotteharborsunset.org/>

Rainer Health Insurance Specialists, Inc.  
309 Tamiami Trail, Suite 6  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-456-2175  
Lori Rainer  
lori@rainerhealthins.com  
<http://rainerhealthins.com>

Heavenly Balloon Bar  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
941-402-6383  
Kenzie Lewellen  
mail@heavenlyballoonbar.com  
<http://www.heavenlyballoonbar.com>

Alex Andreae Agent – RE/MAX Harbor Realty  
2815 Tamiami Trail  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-833-4217  
Alex Andreae  
alex@andreaegroup.com  
<http://discoverpuntagorda.com>

Way Maker Signs  
Call or Email for Information  
Englewood, FL 34223  
941-336-7277  
Debra Conley  
debby@wmsigns.com  
<http://wmsigns.com>

# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS

HyperFiber  
Call or Email for Information  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
314-489-3701  
Maegan Hampton  
mhampton@hyperfiber.com  
<http://hyperfiber.com>

Top Notch Painters  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
813-591-5339  
Alexander Perkins  
topnotchpaintersfl@gmail.com  
<http://TopNotchPaintersFL.com>

All U Need Pest Control, Inc.  
20020 Veterans Blvd., Unit 12  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
888-239-2847  
Tyler Moore  
tyler@alluneedpest.com  
<http://www.alluneedpest.com>

Modern Movers  
5607 8th St. W.  
Lehigh Acres, FL 33971  
239-939-7983  
Tracey Toscano  
Tracey@movefla.com  
<http://Movefla.com>

Bluefin Mechanical, LLC  
28065 Cleveland Ave.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33982  
833-222-2583  
Roger LePage  
info@bluefinmech.com  
<https://www.bluefinmech.com/>

Punta Gorda Adventures  
1133 Bal Harbor Blvd., #218  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-646-8454  
Zach Gloer  
experiences@puntagordaadventures.com  
<http://puntagordaadventures.com>

Little World Academy  
1603 Castlerock Lane  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
941-255-5442  
Sheena Palacios  
littleworldacademy24@gmail.com  
<https://www.littleworldacademy.org/>

PCBS Band Boosters, Inc.  
PO Box 381257  
Murdock, FL 33938  
941-628-1417  
Tanya Mashall  
tmarshall796@outlook.com

Smash It  
3280 Tamiami Trail, Unit 23  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
941-875-3328  
Kyle Myers  
myrninc@gmail.com  
<http://smashitpc.com>

Patriot Plumbing Corp.  
17426 Abbott Ave.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
941-613-6785  
Gregory Allen  
info.patriotplumbingcorp@gmail.com

Always Level Design & Contracting, LLC  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
239-322-7673  
Rich Lancette  
rich@alwaysleveldesign.com  
<http://www.alwaysleveldesign.com>

Walka's Electrical Services  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
941-288-6323  
Andrew Walka  
andrew@walkaelectric.com  
<https://walkaelectric.com/>

Ellianos Coffee  
19175 Peachland Blvd.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
941-249-4491  
Erinn Rasmussen  
erinn@coffee4allbrewing.com  
<http://ellianos.com>

Guru Internet Services, LLC  
Call or Email for Information  
North Port, FL 34286  
941-541-2080  
Chrisopher Harden  
info@guru-is.com  
<http://guru-is.com>



Buffalo Wild Wings GO - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
August 28, 2024



Tulips Flower Shop - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
September 4, 2024



GFWC Woman's Club of Port Charlotte - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
September 6, 2024



Del Taco - Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
September 17, 2024

# RIBBON CUTTINGS

# NEW MEMBERS

Dreher & Associates CPA, PA  
252 West Olympia Ave.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-637-0544  
Carol Dreher  
Carol@DreherCPA.com  
<http://www.DreherCPA.com>

CenterPointe Counseling and Recovery  
1578 El Jobean Rd., Unit B  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
941-488-4811  
Carrie Phelps  
cphelps@centerpointerecovery.com  
<http://www.CenterpointeRecovery.com>

WellRN Hydration and Wellness  
Medspa, LLC  
2395 Tamiami Trail, Unit 209  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
941-499-4469  
Zakia Orneas  
Wellrnwellness@gmail.com  
<http://Wellrnwellness.com>

Wright and Young Funeral Home  
20329 Kinderkernac Ave.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
786-439-5829  
Stephanie Wright  
swright2007@comcast.net

Florida Fingerprinting Service  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
941-280-0980

Ime Umana  
info@floridafingerprintingservicesandmore.com  
[www.floridafingerprintingservicesandmore.com](http://www.floridafingerprintingservicesandmore.com)

Artesian Plumbing, Inc.  
7105 Erbes Ct.  
North Port, FL 34287  
941-268-2691  
Neal Erbes  
nealerbes@gmail.com

Suvak Sunshine Ventures, Inc.  
4245 South Access Rd.  
Englewood, FL 34224  
412-498-5920  
Chad Suvak  
suvak sunshineventures@gmail.com

F.M. Don's  
201 W. Marion Ave.  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-637-8800  
Stacey & Keith Meyer  
staceyfmdons@gmail.com  
<http://www.fmdons.com>

Granite Forever USA, LLC  
1544 Market Circle, Unit 906  
Port Charlotte, FL 33953  
941-625-6271  
Mikhail Zyrianov  
office@graniteforever.com  
<http://www.graniteforever.com>

ADG Architecture, LLC  
3820 Colonial Blvd., Unit 100A  
Fort Myers, FL 33966  
239-277-0554  
Mitra Shaffy  
info@alliancedesigngroup.com  
<https://adgarchitecture.com/>

Tom Joyce Rentals  
18260 Paulson Dr., Unit D-3  
Port Charlotte, FL 33954  
941-303-0391  
Tom Joyce Jr.  
tomjoycerentals@gmail.com

Jewelry Box Exchange Inc.  
675 Tamiami Trail, Unit 6  
Port Charlotte, FL 33953  
941-699-6035  
Dee Flansburg  
jewelryboxexchange@gmail.com

Stars Academy  
2230 Harriet St.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33952  
941-685-7939  
Angela Hogan & Maria Guerrero  
maria@stars-academy.org  
Stars-academy.org

April Davis Mortgage Advisor  
NMLS#2633230  
Call or Email for Information  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948  
941-303-0391  
April Davis  
april@machmortgage.com

Relocators  
4203 James St.  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980  
888-570-7356  
David Cook  
info@usrelocators.com  
<http://www.usrelocators.com>

Bayport Lending  
265 E. Marion Ave., Unit 116  
Punta Gorda, FL 33954  
941-243-4117  
Daniel Hughes  
Daniel@bayportlending.com  
<http://www.bayportlending.com>



Well RN Hydration and Wellness Med Spa, LLC - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
September 18, 2024



Clique Photo Booth Rental - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
September 18, 2024



Sandhill Healing Center, Inc. - Ribbon Cutting  
Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
September 24, 2024

Corporate Valuation Advisors Inc.  
3916 Gibraltar Dr.  
Naples, FL 34119  
(239) 686-0220  
JR Helfrich  
jr@corporateevaluation.com  
<http://www.corporateevaluationadvisors.com>



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Lindsey  
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- IRS Tax Problems & Representation

**Ashley, Brown & Smith, CPAs** is a full-service accounting firm serving clients throughout the area, dedicated to providing our clients with professional, personalized services and guidance in a wide range of financial and business needs. Whether you are an individual or business in or around Charlotte County, our firm has years of valuable experience assisting professionals with their accounting needs.

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6660 TAYLOR ROAD, UNIT 109, PUNTA GORDA, FL 33950

**PRODUCTION FACILITY:**

18320 PAULSON DRIVE, UNIT A, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33954



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## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Saturday 10/5 – Oktoberfest 3-9pm

Saturday 10/12 – Music Bingo 7-9pm

Thursday 10/17 – Ortigia Cigar Event 6-9pm

Thursday 10/24 – Oliva Cigar Event 5-9pm

Saturday 11/2 – Halloween Party 5-9pm

Saturday 11/9 – Music Bingo 7-9pm

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INSTAGRAM



**Thursday, February 13, 2025**  
Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center

**DON'T MISS OUT!**

**Opportunity  
to showcase  
your business to  
1,000+ attendees,  
all in one day!**

## PLATINUM TITLE

### Platinum Sponsor Benefits Include:

- **Exclusive - Only One Available Per Industry**
- **TWO Booths in a prominent location**
- Discounts on Supporting Sponsorship Opportunities and additional Booths
- Special Lanyard
- All Exhibitor Benefits
- Ad on the Event Map (size TBD)
- 10 Complimentary After-Hours Party Tickets
- 4 Entries to the Pre-Event KICK-OFF & WORKSHOP
- Spreadsheet of contact information of Event participants
- 3' x 8' Event Sponsor Banner
- Logo or company name prominently on Event Marketing Materials including but not limited to:
  - Event Website, Chamber Blog, Social Media, Posters, Banners, Handouts, Chamber and Event Publications, Newspaper Ads & Radio Promotions

Three Available

**\$2,700**

## GOLD PRESENTING

### Gold Sponsor Benefits Include:

- One Booth in a prominent location
- Discounts on Supporting Sponsorship Opportunities and additional Booths
- All Exhibitor Benefits
- Ad on the Event Map (size TBD)
- 8 Complimentary After-Hours Party Tickets
- 2 Entries to the Pre-Event KICK-OFF & WORKSHOP
- Spreadsheet of contact information of Event participants
- 3' x 6' Event Sponsor Banner
- Logo or company name prominently on Event Marketing Materials including but not limited to:
  - Event Website, Chamber Blog, Social Media, Posters, Banners, Handouts, Chamber and Event Publications, Newspaper Ads & Radio Promotions

Five Available

**\$1,700**

## SILVER ASSOCIATE

### Silver Sponsor Benefits Include:

- One Booth in a prominent location
- Discounts on Supporting Sponsorship Opportunities and additional Booths
- All Exhibitor Benefits
- Ad on the Event Map (size TBD)
- 6 Complimentary After-Hours Party Tickets
- 2 Entries to the Pre-Event KICK-OFF & WORKSHOP
- Spreadsheet of contact information of Event participants
- 2' x 6' Event Sponsor Banner
- Logo or company name prominently on Event Marketing Materials including but not limited to:
  - Event Website, Chamber Blog, Social Media, Posters, Banners, Handouts, Chamber and Event Publications, Newspaper Ads & Radio Promotions

Five Available

**\$1,100**

## BRONZE PARTICIPATING

### Bronze Sponsor Benefits Include:

- One Booth in a prominent location
- Discounts on Supporting Sponsorship Opportunities and additional Booths
- All Exhibitor Benefits
- 4 Complimentary After-Hours Party Tickets
- 2' x 4' Event Sponsor Banner
- Logo or company name prominently on Event Marketing Materials including but not limited to:
  - Event Website, Chamber Blog, Social Media, Posters, Banners, Handouts, Chamber and Event Publications, Newspaper Ads & Radio Promotions

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## Renewing Members August 16 – September 15, 2024

The following members have renewed their membership in the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce this month. We congratulate them on their anniversary and thank them for their continued support.

### 30+ Years

United Way of Charlotte County, Inc.  
Maple Leaf Golf & Country Club

### 25+ Years

Charlotte Preparatory School  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Charlotte County  
SERVPRO of Venice and Port Charlotte  
Florida SBDC at Florida Gulf Coast University

### 20+ Years

The Mosaic Company, Community Relations  
Royal Order of Ponce de Leon Conquistadors Foundation  
Flex-Path, Inc. dba Pool Deck Lady LLC

### 15+ Years

D.R. Horton  
Frantz EyeCare  
Witala Financial Services: Ronald C. Witala  
Hoff's Air Authority, LLC

### 10+ Years

Florida SouthWestern Collegiate High School  
Signs-R-Us, LLC  
Family Church PC

### 10+ Years continued

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast, Inc.  
Joiner & Savasuk, CPAs, PLLC  
Granny Nannies Home Health Agency  
Your Health Consultant  
Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute  
Charlotte Memorial Funeral Home, Cemetery and Crematory  
RE/MAX Palm Realty  
Peace River Team at Morgan Stanley

### 9 Years

Bert's Black Widow Harley-Davidson  
Allison James Estates & Homes  
Denise Henry Broker Associate RE/MAX Anchor Realty

### 7 Years

American Imaging of Southwest FL  
Bill Dryburgh-Punta Gorda City Councilman Dist. 2 Vice Mayor  
RE/MAX Palm Realty on Peachland

### 6 Years

Edward Jones - Financial Advisor, Steve Muse  
Carrie's Interiors & Boutique

### 5 Years

Advocate Radiation Oncology

### 4 Years

Gilley's Custom Homes  
Rita's Italian Ice  
Dreher Martin CPAs PA  
Sunset Home Specialist, LLC

### 3 Years

Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home  
Gemma Schaefer Photography  
Place In The Sun Vacation Rentals

### 2 Years

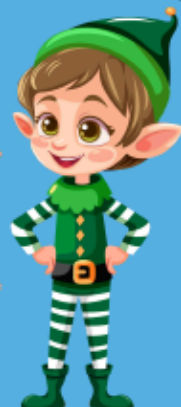
Armageddon Laser Tag  
Sunseeker Resort Charlotte Harbor  
Titanium Tint  
Family Extended Care of Punta Gorda

### 1 Year

Harbor View on the Bay  
Gladrich Florist Shoppe  
Steri-Clean of SW Florida  
Kittle Property Group/Swiftwater at West Port Luxury Apartments  
Charlotte Harbor Center School  
Grosscare Innovations, Inc  
Botico Signs & Design, Inc.

## Charlotte County Chamber Presents

# The 46th Annual Christmas Parade Characters of Christmas



Be part of our Annual Christmas Parade. Sign up your \*Business \*Club \*Organization \*Church Group in the MIC. Click here for the details.