

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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AUGUST 2025 CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF



Welcome to
Charlotte County

Welcome to August!

Charlotte County Economic Development is riding high with wins from the national stage to our own backyard. A Charlotte Technical College culinary arts student took first place at the national SkillsUSA competition, earning a full scholarship to The Culinary Institute of America and showcasing our strong workforce pipeline. We're also celebrating infrastructure upgrades, groundbreaking programs, high-profile events, and major property opportunities that are putting Charlotte County on the map.

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Business & Site Development News



FEATURED PROPERTY

Located at I-75, Exit 164, and across from Punta Gorda Airport, this newly listed 53.9-acre property offers unmatched visibility to more than 133,000 vehicles per day. Zoned ECAP, the site is perfectly suited for industrial outdoor storage, logistics, warehousing, hotel, and, mixed-use development. All infrastructure, telecommunications, and utilities are already in place, making this parcel ideal for fast-track projects.

[**View Full GIS Property Listing**](#)

PGD Advanced Manufacturing Training Center Funded

Charlotte County will be home to the SWFL Advanced Manufacturing Training Center at PGD's ECAP, due to \$1.75 million in state funding. This cutting-edge facility will train high school students and adult learners in aerospace and advanced manufacturing, creating pathways to high-wage local careers. The project strengthens our workforce, supports employers, and boosts regional competitiveness.

[**Read More**](#)



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Business & Site Development News

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TAKE ONE

Businesses of Florida

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BUSINESS TODAY ON

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Our Business Services
Our Trade Show in Fort Myers
and Lee County is the community's
"Meet" local businesses that pro-
vide products and services to make
their business more successful.



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Legislature expands, clarifies Live Local Act

Submitted by Jacob Ogle, Editor
Special to SWIFT

The Florida Legislature this year voted to update the Live Local Act, a state law requiring governments for local governments to allow construction of high-density, affordable housing.

A bill signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis in June expands the applicability of requirements to cover HealthByz and arts.

Changes allow for nonprofits and faith-based groups to put into the effort of building affordable projects on land those organizations own. It also sets up a system to allow more employer-sponsored living arrangements.

All that builds on the original Live Local Act, for the former Senate President, Sen. Kathleen Passidomo, in 2023 when she served as Senate President. This year, the new language added to the statute was developed in the Senate Rules Committee, which Passidomo chairs.

"I'm encouraged to see the Live Local Act expand access to affordable housing in the two years since we developed the legislation. Every new project made possible by this policy makes a difference for the community and increasing options for the workforce," Passidomo said.

Charlotte County is 'cleared for takeoff'

Submitted by Karen P. Moore, Publisher
Special to SWIFT



Charlotte County Economic Development Office's Mark Odell discusses the industrial development potential of the county.

"In just 20 months—from June 2023 to February 2025—our population

Unprecedented growth in several levels—not only population, but how to manage it was discussed by Charlotte County officials at recent gatherings of local commercial Realtors.

Kay Tracy, Charlotte County Economic Development Director, said, "We have this kind of population growth, we know if infrastructure, services and commercial amenities need to scale to a congregate, even though our population growth is concentrating certain areas."

Charlotte County Economic Development Organization's Research, Retention & Expansion Manager Mark Odell added, "Let's talk about industrial development potential. This sector represents some of the most significant long-term opportunities in our county."

He noted, "Our analysis shows that by 2030, Charlotte County should be supported by an additional 1.1 million square feet of development, across approximately 153 additional acres. Industrial employment is currently representing roughly 2.5% of all the jobs in Charlotte County, but each industrial job brings additional jobs to our county. That's called a multiplier effect and that is quite significant."

They noted one of the strengths of Charlotte County's come-growth trajectory is the diversification across multiple commercial sectors. "We're seeing expansion across aviation, advanced manufacturing, logistics—and in energy, healthcare and cyber security sectors."

To capitalize on this, Odell indicated, "At our schools, we

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA BUSINESS TODAY FEATURE

Charlotte County's thriving manufacturing and distribution sectors earned front-page coverage in Southwest Florida Business Today. The article spotlighted the success of companies like Vestas Air Coil, Proglider Boats, and Cheney Brothers. These businesses exemplify the diversity and strength of our local economy.

[Read More](#)

BIG BUCKS FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL — AND CHARLOTTE COUNTY!

State Representative Danny Nix secured over \$8 million to boost Charlotte County infrastructure, funding high-water rescue vehicles, traffic signal upgrades near Education Way, and a permanent South Gulf Cove Boat Lock. These improvements will enhance safety, emergency response, and community resilience—a win for schools, residents, and long-term growth.

[READ MORE](#)



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Business & Site Development News



FEATURED PROPERTY 60 AC IN ECAP

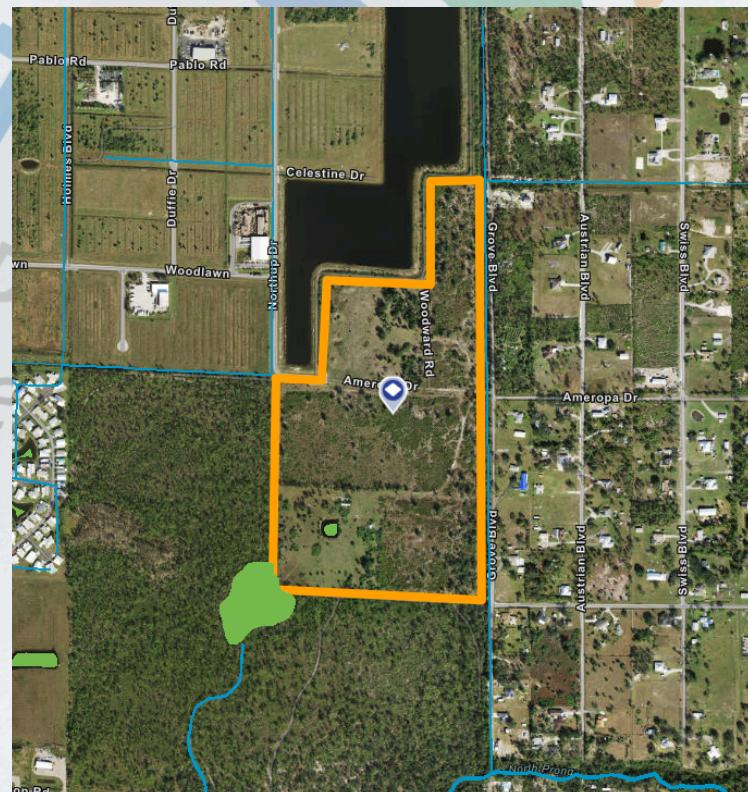
Prime 60-acre site at 27550 Jones Loop Road in Punta Gorda, zoned for industrial, commercial, or flex uses. Offers utilities, excellent transport access, and subdivision potential—perfect for logistics, manufacturing, or mixed-use projects.

[View Full GIS Property Listing](#)

NEW TAX LAW SUPERCHARGES CHARLOTTE COUNTY GROWTH

100% expensing for new factories, equipment, and R&D is now law—and Charlotte County is perfectly positioned to benefit. With shovel-ready sites, a skilled workforce, and unbeatable logistics, manufacturers can expand faster and more cost-effectively here than almost anywhere else. This powerful incentive could spark the next wave of local job creation and investment. Local leaders are ready to help businesses take full advantage of this historic opportunity.

[Read more](#)



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Workforce Development and Education



CHARLOTTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EARNS "B" RATING

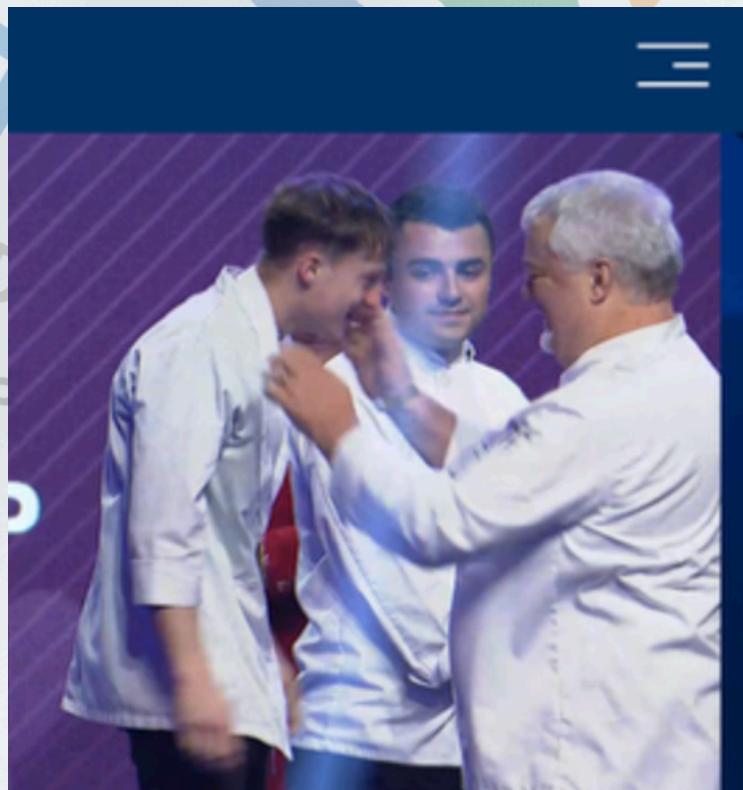
Charlotte County Public Schools earned a "B" grade from the Florida Department of Education for 2024–2025, falling just 0.25% short of an "A". The district saw an 80% increase in A-rated schools, a drop in C-rated schools, and zero "D" or "F" schools. Academic gains in reading, math, science, and history reflect the impact of strong leadership and a mission-driven focus on "Success for All." These results showcase a district on the rise and committed to preparing students for a competitive future.

[Read more](#)

CTC STUDENT WINS NATIONAL CULINARY CHAMPIONSHIP

Aydan Brady, a Culinary Arts student at Charlotte Technical College and head chef at UnWINEd, won first place at the national SkillsUSA competition. This achievement earned him a full scholarship to The Culinary Institute of America.

[READ MORE](#)



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Workforce Development & Education

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN ACTION

Charlotte County is turning workforce development into a long-term growth engine. From middle school aviation programs to high school students earning industry certifications before graduation, the talent pipeline is strong and expanding. By aligning education, industry, and economic development, we're preparing graduates for high-demand careers. This teamwork is creating prosperity from the inside out.

[Read more](#)

SBDC AT FGCU HOSTS GOOGLE BUSINESS WORKSHOP

Patti Guerzo of the SBDC at FGCU led a sold-out, hands-on Google workshop for local entrepreneurs. Attendees learned to define their brand, optimize their Google presence, and attract more customers. The interactive session delivered practical tools and takeaways businesses could apply right away.

[READ MORE](#)



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Business Support and Networking



#MARKONTHEMOVE – NETWORKING AT NOON

Mark joined members of the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce for a lively networking lunch at Leroy's Southern Kitchen & Bar. The gathering showcased the power of face-to-face connections in building business relationships. Conversations covered everything from local market trends to upcoming projects in our area. It was a reminder that business growth starts with strong community ties.

[Click here to learn about the Chamber.](#)

JULY 16TH BUSINESS MIXER

Our July 16th mixer brought together a dynamic mix of entrepreneurs, executives, and community leaders. The event fostered meaningful connections, sparked collaboration, and introduced new resources to local businesses. Networking like this is the foundation of a thriving business community. We're proud to provide opportunities that keep Charlotte County's economy connected and growing.

[Read More](#)



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Recognition and Community Highlights



BEEF 'O' BRADY'S RECEIVED THE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD

We honored Chris Lansdale and the Beef 'O' Brady's team with the Excellence in Business Award for their leadership, growth, and community commitment. Over the last decade, Lansdale has grown the business from a 3,000-square-foot pub into a 12,000-square-foot community hub, with two additional locations. The team has contributed more than \$160,000 to local causes, living by their motto: "If we can help, we will." This award celebrates the powerful link between business success and community service.

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Recognition and Community Highlights

CHARLOTTE HARBOR DRAGONS REPRESENT TEAM USA

Four members of the Charlotte Harbor Dragons will compete at the 17th IDBF World Dragon Boat Racing Championships in Germany. Lisa Krumme, Tracy Camp, Mike Camp, and Sandy Bailey will proudly represent Team USA on the global stage. Their dedication to training and teamwork is a source of local pride. We wish them success and safe travels as they take Charlotte County spirit abroad.

📸: Charlotte Harbor Dragons

[**READ MORE**](#)



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Recognition and Community Highlights



MILITARY HERITAGE MUSEUM NOMINATED FOR BEST OF FLORIDA

The Military Heritage Museum in Punta Gorda is more than a collection of artifacts—it's a living tribute to those who served. With immersive simulators, 30,000+ artifacts, and educational programs, it plays a vital role in civic engagement and youth education. Being nominated for Best of Florida recognizes the museum's contribution to preserving history and fostering community pride.

2026 CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST

The annual photo contest invites residents and visitors to capture the essence of living, working, and playing in Charlotte County. Winning images will be featured in the 2026 Charlotte County Calendar, showcasing the beauty and vibrancy of our community. Photos must be taken in Charlotte County and submitted in horizontal format by August 15. This is a great opportunity to share your perspective on what makes our area special.

[READ MORE](#)



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Recognition and Community Highlights



NEW PGD RENTAL CAR CENTER SIGNALS GROWTH

PGD's new rental car center is more than a convenience—it's a strategic boost to Charlotte County's transportation infrastructure. Located just steps from the terminal, it streamlines business travel, supports site selection, and enhances first impressions for visitors and relocating talent. This upgrade strengthens the county's competitiveness and reinforces our readiness for growth.

[**READ MORE**](#)

FOOD TRUCKS AT PGD ADD FLAVOR TO CHARLOTTE COUNTY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

PGD's growing food truck program is more than a tasty perk—it's a smart piece of Charlotte County's economic strategy. By giving local entrepreneurs a high-visibility launchpad, the program boosts small business growth, enhances the visitor experience, and strengthens our region's brand.

[**READ MORE**](#)



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Upcoming Events

Paychecks for Patriots A Win for Employers and Veterans

Charlotte County is proud to support those who served. The upcoming Paychecks for Patriots Hiring Event on August 20, 2025, connects veteran job seekers with employers who value their leadership, discipline, and experience.

Hosted by CareerSource Southwest Florida in partnership with Charlotte County Economic Development, the event gives veterans early access from 9:00–10:00 AM, with the general public welcomed from 10:00 AM–1:00 PM.

Why it matters:

Veterans bring proven skills to the workforce, and Charlotte County offers a veteran-friendly environment with strong support systems and job opportunities across industries.

📍 3745 Tamiami Trail

[Register Your Business](#)

 **CareerSource
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

A proud partner of the  network

In conjunction with [Charlotte County Economic Development](#)

Attention Vendors!
Paychecks for Patriots JobFair
August 20, 2025
9:00AM-1:00PM
REGISTER TO SECURE YOUR TABLE!

Calling all businesses in Southwest Florida to register for the Paychecks for Patriots Hiring Event

Doors open to:
Veteran job seekers: 9:00am to 10:00am
General public: 10:00am to 1:00pm

Register Online: [Click or Scan to Register](#) 

Event Details:
3745 Tamiami Trail
Port Charlotte, FL 33952
August 20, 2025
Check in: 8:30AM

Questions:
Bill Welch
Business Services Director
wwelch@sawd.org
(239) 931-8200 Ext: 1805

An equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice/telephone numbers on this document may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay/Service at 711. CareerSource Southwest Florida is the direct service provider for various workforce programs which are fully supported by the U.S. Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture as part of awards totaling \$13.3 million. All statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, public statements, social media, bulletins, resource guides, website and visual presentations are fully funded with federal money.

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Upcoming Events

See You at the Innovator's STEM Pavilion at the Florida International Airshow

- 📍 Location: Florida International Airshow
- 📅 Dates: November 1-2, 2025
- 🕒 Demonstrations: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- 🔧 Setup: Friday, Oct 31 from 12:00 – 5:00 PM or Saturday, Nov 1 from 7:30 – 9:00 AM

Attention Businesses: Be a part of a dynamic, hands-on STEM showcase that brings together students, educators, and professionals from across Southwest Florida to inspire the next generation of innovators. Whether you're working with virtual reality, robotics, medical tech, or aerospace, there's a place for you in the Pavilion.

How to Apply:

- Deadline: September 30, 2025
- Complete the form [HERE](#).
- Or email the form to: dbconsulting.cteservices@gmail.com



Be among the first to participate in the Innovator's Stem Pavilion at the Florida International AirShow

Education is the foundation of our future! By participating in our Hands-On STEM Pavilion Showcase, you have the unique opportunity to inspire and empower the next generation of innovators and leaders.

Are you passionate about career education and sharing your passion with others? Do you have students in your classroom that wish to showcase a hands-on project? Do you love experimenting, creating, and showcasing your innovative projects? We have just the event for you!

What is the Hands-On STEM Showcase?

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Our interactive STEM Pavilion at the Florida International Airshow is designed to bring together students, educators, parents, and enthusiasts to celebrate and explore the diverse career programs available in Charlotte County and Southwest Florida. This event provides a platform for participants to present projects, share ideas, and inspire others to pursue STEM fields. Examples of STEM events could include: Use of Virtual Reality Goggles to design & build, Drones in Schools program, Entrepreneurship projects, use of medical diagnostic equipment including interactive mannequins, Professional audio/video technology, use of robots for Agriculture, Airplane structures/riveting and many other fascinating projects to arouse those interested in learning more about a career in STEM.

EVENT DETAILS

Dates: November 1st and 2nd, during the Florida International Airshow
Setup: Friday from 12:00 – 5:00pm or Saturday morning from 7:30 – 9:00 am
Demonstrations: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Please submit your participation form by September 30th. Sign up by scanning the QR code or visiting FloridaAirshow.com/STEM to fill out the application or submit this form to dbconsulting.cteservices@gmail.com.

Questions? Please email dbconsulting.cteservices@gmail.com

Complete the form below to register:

SPONSORED BY:
 CHARLOTTE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
FUNDING OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE

2025 FIAS Innovator's STEM Pavilion Entry Form

Participant Information:

Name of School/Organization: _____

Grade Level: Elementary Middle School High School College

Contact Person: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Project Information:

Title of Project: _____

Description of Project: _____

Number of Participants: _____ Saturday/Sunday Saturday Only Sunday Only

STEM Vendor Benefits and Pricing:

\$250 per STEM Vendor (Fees will increase for submissions after August 30th). Includes: 10x10 space space under the STEM tent, a table, 2 chairs, electricity, parking, and 30th free tickets per day.

Additional spaces are \$250 each, and for more than two spaces, please contact DeeLynn Bennett at dbconsulting.cteservices@gmail.com

Submission Details:

- Submission Deadline: September 30, 2025
- Submit this form to: dbconsulting.cteservices@gmail.com

Additional Information:

A virtual meeting will be held for all participants to discuss setup and breakdown details.

Virtual sessions via Microsoft Teams:

- October 9 – 10 AM
- October 14 – 6:30 PM

Invitations will be sent to the email provided on the application.

Note:
No vehicle movement within the FAA area between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm.

Signature: _____



UPCOMING EVENTS



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Upcoming Events

Click here for more details: <https://cleared4takeoff.com/category/event/>



**3rd Quarter ESO Meeting
2-4 PM**



**Local Experts Ready to Help Your
Business Grow – No Cost
Consultations 9-10:30 AM**



Paychecks for Patriots 9 to 1 PM



**Entrepreneur Support Organization
2-4 PM**



**New Business Networking Event
5-7 PM**