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WELCOME

Welcome to the of Southwest Florida

The Greater Estero area, located right in the center of the Southwest Florida region, has become a global destination for much more than its temperate climate and surrounding world-class beaches. Kissing the shores of the beautiful, spring-fed Estero River, visitors flock to the area to boat, kayak and canoe. Others love to hike or bike the beautiful trails. With an abundance of shopping and dining options available, there is always something new to discover. Golf, pickleball, tennis and more golf keep them active and thriving. That's why more and more visitors become seasonal residents after experiencing what the area has to offer.

Greater Estero encompasses some of the most economically healthy communities in Florida, so it is a natural place to relocate and/or start a business. The Village of Estero remains a strong business partner, annually reducing its property tax rate to provide an attractive business environment. The Chamber of Commerce serves as a natural advocate, helping new businesses increase exposure and build relationships. The fact that Florida has no state income tax is an added plus.

The Greater Estero area is an ideal place to raise a family or to retire, because of the perfect mix of high community standards, educational opportunities, balanced growth and environmental awareness.

Whether you are a visitor, newcomer or business owner, everything you need to know is within the pages of this magazine. Use it as a resource for yourself, your business or share it with your visiting guests.

Welcome to the
Heart of Southwest Florida...
we are glad you're here!

GREATER ESTERO 2026

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Estero's 25 Persons of
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• Board Member
• Impact Partner
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• Board Member



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Arts For All

A VIBRANT HUB FOR CREATIVITY AND LEARNING

Arts Bonita is committed to enrich the culture of our diverse communities by providing opportunities for artistic expression, education and appreciation in a supportive and nurturing environment.

Arts Bonita offers state-of-the-art facilities catering to both visual and performing arts. Celebrating its 25th anniversary, Arts Bonita holds nationally recognized art festivals, provides more than \$200,000 in scholarships annually and now hosts more than 1,000 classes that cover the artistic landscape. "We have become a vibrant hub for creativity and learning," said President Alyona Ushe, who has helmed the organization since May, 2023.

Ushe, a creative visionary, has brought her 20+ years of executive experience to Southwest Florida, displaying a fierce commitment and passion for the arts, as well as exceptional entrepreneurial leadership skills that has served to propel the centers into an exciting period of growth and vitality.



Nicole Henry



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ALYONA USHE



Alyona Ushe holds a bachelor of arts in political science and Russian language and literature from the University of Maryland, and has also completed graduate work in Russian language and literature at St. Petersburg University in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Prior to joining Arts Bonita, she served as Executive Director at St. Lucie Cultural Alliance, Executive Director at Blackrock Center for the Arts in Maryland, President & CEO of Creative City Collaborative in Delray Beach and Pompano Beach, as well as serving as Executive Director of the New Orleans Opera Association and founding Classika Theatre in Arlington Virginia.

Alyona is a proud graduate of Leadership Estero, class of 2024.



Philip Verde (Truist Bank) Alyona Ushe and Jacke McCurdy 2nd Arts Angel Award Off the Walls 2025



"Just as the City of Bonita Springs is growing by leaps and bounds, Arts Bonita is actively exploring numerous opportunities and ideas for expansion and long-term development," says Ushe. "We have outgrown our current facilities and are looking to create something truly magnificent in our next phase of growth."

Ushe believes that the Village of Estero and Bonita Springs need to better highlight the breadth of cultural activity taking place between Naples and Fort Myers and work together to grow as a unified cultural community – one that attracts not only audiences, but also artists and creative contributors.

"We have an abundance of talent living right in our own backyard," she said, "and we strongly believe that by supporting local creators while also bringing in outstanding artists across disciplines and genres, we are building an authentic and sustainable cultural landscape."

Ushe has overseen significant modernization and upgrades since she came on board, from enhanced lighting and sound in their performance venues to redesigned classrooms and studios – all to elevate the experience and inspire creativity.



Youth Ballet

"For its size, Arts Bonita is the most comprehensive and richly layered arts organization I have ever known," says Ushe. "What began as an art league has grown into an extraordinary ecosystem, offering an exceptional range of disciplines –from stone carving and glass to dance, digital art, mindfulness and wellbeing – serving students of all ages."

They have also broadened their evening and weekend class schedules, making it easier than ever to fit creativity into busy lives.

Their youth programs are thriving like never before – from homeschool enrichment and musical theater to dance and visual arts, there's something for every child to enjoy.

"Art is not a luxury or an extracurricular activity," says Ushe. "Art is essential to how we learn, how we think creatively, solve complex problems, collaborate with others



Femmes of Rock

and perceive the world with curiosity and purpose. Whether our children pursue careers in research, engineering, medicine, customer service or any other field, the skills they carry with them are rooted in the arts – and yet art is often the first program cut from schools, especially in underserved communities."

The latest performing arts lineups are the most ambitious yet, bringing in some of the hottest bands in the country, along with beloved tribute acts celebrating the works of musical icons. You will also find a dynamic mix of blues, jazz, country, cabaret, comedy and theater productions that provides something for everyone.

Ushe is very proud of the growth she has overseen in this area. "Our two auditoriums present an expansive range of genres...and our musical theatre program rivals many professional companies," she says.

While talent, dedication and passion are important elements for success, it takes more than one person's efforts to maintain a level of excellence. "I am honored to be a part of an organization with such magnitude of diverse programming, a visionary Chairman and Board of Directors, and a highly-talented staff," says Ushe.

"As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, we are now looking ahead to the next quarter century, building on a strong foundation and guided by a bold, ambitious vision for growth and expansion that will transform this region."



Stone Class



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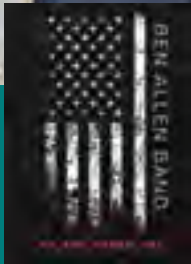


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WINGS UP! LEARNING MEETS INNOVATION

At FGCU, learning meets innovation and endless possibilities to nurture the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and changemakers.

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is a young and dynamic institution with a strong focus on sustainability, community service, and innovation. With a diverse student body, top-ranked academic programs, and successful athletic teams, FGCU offers students a well-rounded education and a supportive and engaging campus community. Whether students are interested in pursuing STEM fields, entrepreneurship, or the arts, FGCU provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where they can thrive and reach their full potential.

As the area continues to grow, so does the demand for a skilled workforce. FGCU is constantly engaging with regional employers to learn about the new jobs being created in the various industries and the types of skills that are necessary for students entering the workforce.

Further enhancing these efforts is the creation of the **FGCU President's Advisory Circle on Workforce and Economic Development**, which includes representatives across the five-county area that makes up Southwest Florida. Their feedback is helping FGCU improve their service to students and the regional workforce.

Many of our Southwest Florida community's biologists, forensic scientists, and musicians graduated from **FGCU's College of Arts and Sciences**.

Graduates from the **U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering** build our community as civil engineers and construction managers, while your go-to experts on finance or accounting

come out of the **Lutgert College of Business**.

Tourism is a huge industry in Southwest Florida, and **FGCU's Resort & Hospitality** program graduates support it by staying local after graduation. The university is also home to one of only 16 Professional Golf Association-accredited programs in the nation – and the **only one in Florida**.

Still other graduates opt to build their own businesses with the knowledge gained through the **Daveler & Kauanui School of Entrepreneurship**.

The College of Education students are **100 percent employed in grades Pre-K through 12** upon graduation.

Dr. Aysegul Timur was installed as FGCU's fifth president in January of 2024. She is very concise about the vital role this university plays in the successful growth of the area.



Photo courtesy of FGCU

“Kristi-Leigh’s dedication, creativity, and warmth allowed our 6-year-old daughter to feel seen, supported, and capable. The progress our daughter has made this year in speech and language is incredible. We’re endlessly grateful for Kristi-Leigh and feel so lucky to have her guiding our daughter’s journey.”



Tips to Create the Love of Writing for Your Child!

Make Writing Fun!

Use exciting tools! Brightly colored and scented markers! Chalk! Paint! Soap crayons! Sand! So many ways to enjoy writing and engage your senses!

Make it Personal!

Create stories with family pictures, favorite places, and adventures! Connect writing to meaningful experiences!

Go Outside!

The beach! The park! The zoo! Find special animals, make scavenger hunts, draw, and describe nature and people!

Be Imaginative!

Take turns adding details to a group story for thrilling actions and characters! Promote flexible thinking, predictions, and collaboration!

Use Creative Prompts!

“If you could be any animal, what would you be and why?” Encourage brainstorming, action, adventure, and maybe a lesson learned!

Express Emotions!

Write notes of kindness, a letter to a friend or family member, feelings in a journal, or make a unique story with one’s hopes and dreams!



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Kristi-Leigh Lyon, Speech-Language Pathologist and Owner, is a certified Wilson Reading/Dyslexia Practitioner, an approved Step Up For Students FES-UA provider and ASHA ACE Award Recipient.



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“Ms. Kristi-Leigh makes me laugh, makes me strong and shows me I can do so many things even when they are tricky!”



FGCU STATS

Misc.:

- FGCU has 16,812 students and over 50,000 Alumni
- FGCU students have performed over 5.3 million service-learning hours
- The Bower School of Music & Arts hosts over 150 local and visiting art events a year.

FGCU COLLEGES

- College of Arts & Sciences
- College of Education
- Honors College
- Lutgert College of Business
- Marieb College of Health & Human Services
- U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering

2024 FALL ENROLLMENT – CLASS OF 2029

- Total enrolled: 16,812
- Number enrolled: 2,782
- Average GPA: 4.12
- Average SAT: 1,109
- Average ACT: 22.7
- Students who reside locally: 49%

DEGREES OFFERED

- 66 Undergraduate
- 28 Master's
- 7 Doctoral
- 19 Academic Certificates
- FGCU ATHLETICS
- Women's Basketball
- Men's Basketball
- Women's Soccer
- Men's soccer
- Women's Tennis
- Men's Tennis
- Volleyball/Beach Volleyball
- Baseball
- Softball
- Men's Cross Country
- Women's Cross Country
- Men's Golf
- Women's Golf
- Swimming/Diving
- FGCU's NCAA Division 1 teams have a cumulative 3.52 GPA, and the student athletes have donated over 30,000 hours of community service in the past five years.

FGCU ACADEMY

Learning for life

- Offers non-credit, lifelong learning for adults
- Online, and at more than twenty-two locations across Southwest Florida
- More than 1,500 diverse and fascinating programs to enrich the lives, minds and social well-being of SWFL adults and seniors

"As an economist, I am always looking at an organization's comparable advantage," says Dr. Timur. "That is clear at FGCU: **we feed** our local economy with a skilled workforce."

For the second year in a row, the nursing program is the **top in the state for licensure pass rates** and has a 100 percent employment rate. They also have excellent physical therapy and physician assistant's programs that will be able to grow with this additional space.

Academic Building 10, is a state-of-the-art facility that will help expand FGCU's successful health sciences program. Thanks to the Elaine Nicpon Marieb Charitable Foundation's transformational **\$22 million gift – the largest donation in FGCU's history** – advances in cutting-edge instructional technology in the Marieb College of Health & Human Services are now taking place.

A new program to be located within the building is the **Shady Rest Institute on Positive Aging**. Initiated with a \$5 million gift, it will include practical research that will help to identify ways that our aging population can stay vital longer.

Interestingly, local environmental concerns early-on have proven to become powerful assets to the Southwest Florida region. The research coming from **The Water School** does much more than benefit our environment. It uses an interdisciplinary approach and state-of-the-art resources to educate the area's future policymakers and scientists- the very people who will be working together in the future to find solutions to the problem facing not just this region, but the entire world. Every day, this campus is connecting students to a **real-life laboratory**.

Over the summer, **FGCU was recognized as a Collegiate Purple Star Campus**. To better meet the needs of Southwest Florida veterans and their families, FGCU plans to expand

veteran services by creating a privately funded **Veterans Center for Student Success** on campus. The center will also enhance the university's direct support for enrolled veterans, their benefited families and FGCU faculty and staff.

Other veteran programs include:

- **Office of Military & Veterans Success** provides resources and guidance for servicing the unique and specific educational needs of a veteran.
- **Home Base Florida** is a free 90-day program designed to help veterans improve their physical health and well-being.
- **The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program** offers a comprehensive, tuition-free training experience designed specifically for veterans and their families.

FGCU holds the license for **WGCU Public Media**, named **Overall Station of the Year** by the Florida Association of Broadcast Journalists, which includes both public and commercial stations. It is Southwest Florida's source for PBS and NPR and monthly serves over 500,000 people on TV, radio and digital platforms.

The university has recently begun integrating their journalism program into WGCU's growing local news operation with a program called **Democracy Watch**. Top journalism students are chosen for a fellowship, where they are paid a stipend while learning how to cover local government and have their stories published on the website and radio. **WGCU earned a record 29 industry awards and nominations, including two 2025 Suncoast Emmy Awards for television.**

As part of the Florida state budget, the university is being provided with \$21.7 million to assist with the first phase of building a premier learning, research and



Photo courtesy of FGCU

Photo courtesy of FGCU



outreach facility in Charlotte County. This announcement advances the university's formal partnership signed in 2023 between FGCU and **Babcock Ranch**, which outlines a shared commitment to elevating education, research and sustainable development.

It should also be noted that FGCU **has not raised tuition or fees** for 11 consecutive years. **Sixty-four** percent of their students **graduate debt-free**. Of the nearly 50,000 alumni, more than half live and work in Southwest Florida.

The university's five-year-plan, "**Innovating for Student Success: FGCU's Journey to Excellence**," will continue to use the newest, most modern ways to meet their students where they are, teach them, provide wrap-around services so they have fewer barriers to graduation, and connect them to the Southwest Florida community with internships and on-the-job training.

"We already excel in this area," says Dr. Timur, "but we want to continue the momentum and bring our university to the next level. It is my personal belief that every day is a new opportunity to be better than the day before - to learn, to try something new, to evolve, to grow and prosper. And, at FGCU, we want the same for our students."

Photo courtesy of FGCU



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Koreshan & Estero HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Friends of Koreshan

In 1894 the followers of Cyrus Teed, who called himself Koresh, worked out an agreement with landowner Gustave Damkohler to acquire 320 acres of land. It was the dream of the group, called the Koreshan Unity, to build a city, which they would have thought of as their New Jerusalem.

The Koreshans believed that Teed, or Master Koresh as they called him, was the seventh prophet in a line that started with Adam. Jesus had been the sixth prophet. The Koreshans used the Old and New Testaments of the Bible as their guidebook. Teed would reveal what Jesus had not—the answers to everything in the universe.

When Teed was 30, living in New York State and practicing medicine, an angel visited him, he claimed. She told him he had been sent to redeem humanity. Teed called the experience his “Divine Illumination.” After the visit, he began working out the principles of Koreshanity. Among his tenets was that maintaining a celibate lifestyle would bring about immortality. He also believed that women were equal to men. Understandably, women found this attractive, and about 75% of the Koreshan population was female. The Koreshans also believed that the earth was hollow and that we live inside, standing on its inner shell.

It took the Koreshans nine years to clear land, construct buildings,

plant crops and develop the infrastructure to support approximately 200 people.

The early 1900s were the glory years for the Koreshans, who acquired nearly 7,500 acres of land and constructed more than 70 buildings. They developed more than a dozen businesses.

On December 22, 1908, Cyrus Teed died, and this marked the beginning of a downward spiral for the Koreshan Unity. The followers, believing he would resurrect, kept his body above ground for five days and waited. But he failed to reincarnate as promised.

The membership gradually dwindled until in 1956 there were only five members remaining. In 1961, these members of the Koreshan Unity donated 305 acres to the State of Florida to make their land a historic site. This land included the historic settlement, conservation land near the mouth of the Estero River, and much of Mound Key, ancient home of the Calusa. The remaining members were allowed to live in the settlement until their death. The last Koreshan, Hedwig Michel, died in 1982 in her apartment in the Planetary Court.

Today, visitors to the site can enjoy tours of the historic settlement, kayak and canoe trips on the Estero River, a 60 site campground and many events that relate both to the natural surroundings and the history of the Koreshan Unity.



Their legacy lives on through music in the Art Hall, an annual play called Ghost Walk, historic cooking programs, blacksmith demonstrations and the running of the antique engines that powered their machine shop and electric generator.

Estero Historical Society

Nestled on scenic grounds in the Estero Community Park, The Estero Historical Society is a part of an energetic group of community entities that work together to maintain the rich culture that is Estero. "We all fit into the community beautifully, and the positive synergy is apparent," says Historical Society president Gail Langner.

The Village of Estero, The Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce, Engage Estero and the Estero Forever Foundation may all have different missions, but in the end, the goal is the same: Preserve the rich heritage that is Estero while building a strong, economically vibrant community that favorably impacts its quality of life.

Preserving Estero's heritage is the passion of the Historical Society, (see sidebar) and the key is to provide education. "We feel like we are charged with this," says Langner. Area schools bring whole classrooms to tour the buildings, and there are requests from local teachers to come with their class and actually teach in the renovated 1904 Schoolhouse.

Vice president Roslyn Gula says that their reputation has gained momentum, reaching beyond the greater Estero area. "Private schools from as far as Naples have come on field trips. All of the students are mesmerized by the Schoolhouse."

The Society, along with Engage Estero, Estero Forever Foundation and the Greater Estero Chamber, present annual scholarships to Estero High School students who compete in an Historical Essay Contest. "We honor them with the giant checks," laughs Langner. "It's always a great evening."

The Society also hosts a Speaker Series, where local historian Jacob Winge does captivating presentations on a variety of topics. "Jacob has been a noted historian since he was 14 years old," says Langner. "He did an amazing presentation on the Calusa, drawing over 125 attendees," she recalls.

For Independence Day, Winge, dressed in full regalia, does an annual reading of the Declaration of Independence. Joined by the Estero Fire Rescue, the event is a favorite of the local community.

The Estero community is tight-knit, and they step up when needed. "We were having issues with our handicap ramp," says Langner. "The base was made of wood and it was literally rotting from the inside out." Engage Estero came to the rescue by putting out a plea for donations.

There is always an exhibit on display, and they are rotated on a regular basis. Exquisite vintage clothing (including wedding and christening gowns), a turn-of-the-century baby carriage, and antique linens and other artifacts are just a few of the items that might be featured.

"One day, we noticed a woman standing over a cross-stitched piece, and she began to cry," remembers Gula. "We were concerned, so we approached her. It turns out that she had donated the item 20 years ago." "My mother made this for me," she said. "She then turned it over, and it said, 'From Mommy with love.'"

The annual Antique Assessment Fair is always a big draw. For a small fee, Richard Gannon of Gannon Antiques will assess your artwork, furniture, jewelry etc. "A Viet Nam veteran visited the faire, bringing a piece of 'glass' on a chain," says Langner. "After examining the piece, Gannon told him to call his insurance company, and have it insured for \$5,000...the 'glass' turned out to be a diamond."

Recently, a home dating back to 1919 was saved from demolition through the efforts of Langner, Gula and a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors. The home, known as the Alvarez-Smith home, stood on property owned by the Village. The Council voted to donate the home to the Historical Society instead of demolishing it. A victory indeed, but the work has only just begun. First, the structure has to be moved to the Historical Society's site. Once that is accomplished, extensive renovations will have to be made. The Society is in the midst of a major fundraising drive to accomplish this.

In September, the College of Life Foundation presented the Society with a \$50,000 check in support of the relocation and restoration of the historic 1916 Alvarez/Smith House.

The Foundation pledged to match community fundraising efforts for the project up to \$50,000. Thanks to the generosity of local donors and the Foundation's commitment, the full pledge was realized. Although the Society requested just over \$48,000 in matching funds, the College of Life Foundation went above and beyond by contributing the entire \$50,000.

"Many of us grew up in communities where everyone knew everyone. We had a sense of 'ownership' to the place where we grew up," says Langner. "That doesn't happen as much anymore, especially in Florida, where everyone is from somewhere else."

"We want to teach our local children that they have a history right here in their own backyard, and that they can own it for future generation."

For information on the Historical Society's many programs and services, as well as a calendar of upcoming events and exhibits, visit their website at EsteroHistoricalSociety.com. Society Headquarters is located at 9285 Corkscrew Palms Blvd., Estero, FL. 239-272-1911.

Honoring the Past

Founded in 1999 by Estero resident Mimi Straub (1912-2013), the Estero Historical Society is dedicated to teaching and preserving the history of Estero. The society's efforts are focused on securing a rich, historical legacy for future generations and a strong sense of community identity for the Village of Estero.



Mimi Straub

The Society is headquartered in the restored 1906 Hall-Hanson-Collier House, which was relocated to its current location in Estero Community Park in 2009. Open

to the public, the Cottage is filled with historic photographs, artifacts and early 20th-century furnishings. The Cottage is open by appointment from 1 to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (call 272-1911 to schedule).

Next door is another historic building, the 1904 Estero Creek School House, which was also relocated in 2009. The society has restored the old schoolhouse and turned it into a museum, complete with antique school desks, so that today's youngsters can experience what grammar school was like for students 100 years ago.

Volunteer docents provide intriguing details about Estero's colorful past, and maps, books and other items are available for sale. A delicious top-seller is the Society's fabled mango chutney, concocted and jarred by members and volunteers using a secret recipe created by late Estero pioneer Edith Trebell, who once owned a jelly plant in town. The savory mélange of mangos, onions, raisins, ginger, brown sugar, salt and spices was purchased in large quantities by the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City during the 1930s.

The society has also published *Early Estero*, a book documenting Estero's history. Volunteers continue to archive information about the area's past by cataloging papers and oral histories.

Straub's legacy is carried on today by active members and volunteers who help preserve a sense of place and the spirit of Old Estero via outreach initiatives: meetings with programs; a monthly newsletter; tours and field trips; and several annual events that combine history, fun, delectable food and fellowship. Visit the website for public meeting details and more information.

A Rich History AND HERITAGE

A RICH HERITAGE

Our community is named after the Estero River, a scenic freshwater ribbon that opens into Estero Bay, a treasured and protected aquatic preserve. Here, stately live oaks, color-saturated blooms, elegant wading birds and even elusive Florida panthers are all part of Estero's beautiful tapestry of plants and wildlife.

Mother Nature's year-round sunshine invites healthy outdoor fun and explorations. Our championship golf courses, miles of bike paths and well-marked paddling and nature trails present endless options. Parks, preserves and historic sites beckon every age. Just minutes away, pristine sugar-sand beaches hug the sparkling Gulf of Mexico and stretch for miles.

Greater Estero also offers exceptional community resources, state-of-the-art healthcare facilities and educational institutions, performing arts centers, museums and art galleries and world-class shopping and dining. All are within easy reach of Estero's charming neighborhoods.

Calusa Indians and Spanish Adventurers

Estero's colorful past includes Native Americans, Spanish adventurers, enterprising pirates, hardy pioneers and forward-thinking entrepreneurs. More than 2,000 years ago, several tribes of Native Americans made up the Calusa nation and established settlements in Southwest Florida near freshwater tributaries. They paddled cypress canoes to colonies

in other areas of Florida and used shells discarded from their seafood-rich diet to construct huge flat-topped pyramids, or mounds, that served as temples and dwellings. Archeologists believe that Mound Key in Estero Bay was the ceremonial center for the Calusa. This 125-acre island, soaring 33 feet high, is the highest Calusa mound in Florida and was probably the center of an extensive network of shell islands that made up the kingdom of this hunting and gathering people.

The Calusa dominated Southwest Florida until the 1500s, when Ponce de Leon and other Spanish explorers and pirates arrived. These new inhabitants named the area "Estero," the Spanish word for estuary, a body of water formed where freshwater from a river flows into the ocean.

During the 1600s, Spaniards continued exploring "La Florida." Estero Bay was a frequent hideout for pirates who raided Spanish galleons loaded with New World gold.

The Calusa culture eventually died out, as common European illnesses such as smallpox and measles decimated the sheltered tribes. By 1700, their population, once more than



20,000 strong, had been reduced to a few thousand. Bands of Native Americans from the Southeastern United States began moving into Florida and became known collectively as the Seminole.

Estero's Early Pioneers

Estero's first reported homesteaders were Gustave and Alma Damkoehler, who arrived from Germany in 1882 to raise honeybees and silkworms along the Estero River. No roads connected Estero to the outside world, so Damkoehler used the river to ship his harvests north through the Gulf of Mexico.

Estero's most noted pioneer was Cyrus R. Teed; the leader of the Utopian group known as the Koreshan Unity. Teed and some of his followers began settling along the Estero River in 1894, and Damkoehler donated 320 acres of land to them.

During the early 1900s, the Koreshans opened a post office, a store, and a blacksmith shop and sawmill. They also established a school, built an art hall for their symphony orchestra and theater group, and planted exotic vegetation gathered from around the world.

By 1904, the Koreshans were able to incorporate 110 square miles into the Town of Estero, with boundaries extending from south Fort Myers to Bonita Beach Road, in Bonita Springs, and encompassing Lovers Key State Park and the town of Fort Myers Beach. The Town of Estero was later dissolved by the State of Florida in 1907.

Today, 11 structures from that time period are maintained at the Koreshan State Historic Site. The land was given to the State of Florida in 1961 by the remaining four Koreshans.

In 1904, Estero's second public school, the one-room Estero Creek School, opened on land deeded by Mr. and Mrs. F.M. Hendry. The school operated until 1927, and the building is now part of the Estero Historical Society's headquarters at Estero Community Park. It sits next to a restored 1906 house originally owned by Frank Hall, a trustee of the school.

The Broadway Estero School, a four-room, Mediterranean Revival style school with indoor plumbing, was built in 1927 to accommodate 100 students. It was in use until 1949 and still sits next to the old post office on Broadway Avenue East.

An Evolving Community

Germain Arena (now called Hertz Arena) and Miromar Outlets arrived in 1998, increasing Estero's year-round population and real estate values. The nearby Miromar Design Center, a high-end resource of designer showrooms, also draws attention to the area. In 2006, the open-air Coconut Point Mall was completed in Estero, featuring more than 140 shops, stores and restaurants.

Greater Estero continues to evolve. In 2013, after conducting a nationwide search, Hertz Global Holdings opted to move its

KEY DATES & EVENTS IN LOCAL HISTORY

■ **1810** President James Madison declares West Florida to be a U.S. possession.

■ **1817 to 1858** The Seminole Wars (three conflicts) were fought between the Seminoles, many of whom had formed alliances with the British or Spanish, and the U.S. Army. By the end of the wars, only about 200 Seminoles remained alive and free.

■ **1819** Spain ceded East Florida to the U.S.

■ **1845** Florida entered the Union as a slave state, with a population of about 140,000.

■ **Early 1880s** Immigrant German Gustave Damkoehler and his family moved to Estero as the area's first homesteaders, eventually owning 320 acres. Damkoehler experimented with raising honeybees, pineapples and coconuts and collected rare trees he received from a friend in Australia. Some of the trees remain in the gardens at the Koreshan State Park along with his cabin, which may be the oldest surviving building in Lee County.

■ **1884 to 1885** The Estero Land Co. was set up in Key West to sell acreage here. Per the Florida census, Estero's population was 29 people from nine families.

■ **1890s** Citrus growers arrived, including Hafner and Floweree. Estero's first schoolhouse was built, a wooden structure that was relocated to Estero Community Park by the Estero Historical Society for use as a museum and society center.

■ **1894** A celibate community, followers of "Koresh," Dr. Cyrus Teed, moved from Chicago to 300 acres along the Estero River, donated by Damkoehler.

■ **1895** The Estero Post Office was established in a small, one-room general store on the Estero River.

■ **1903** A new and larger general store replaced the original,

and the post office was transferred to Highlands Avenue in the home of Postmaster Frank Hall.

■ **1908** Floweree was the largest citrus grove owner in America, with 60,000 trees. East Broadway used to be Floweree Lane.

■ **1904** Estero was incorporated by the Koreshans.

■ **1907** The Town of Estero was dissolved by the State of Florida.

■ **2014** Estero voted to become its own municipality, the Village of Estero, within Lee County.

■ **2015** Estero held an election for the first village council. The elected council's inaugural meeting was held, and Nick Batos was voted the village's first mayor.

■ **2017** Mayor Jim Boesch was elected.

■ **2018** Lee Health opened a 30-acre medical campus at Coconut Point.

■ **2019** The 1st Annual Gulf Coast Dream Cruise was held. It included over 200 cars that made charitable donations to the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

■ **2020** Estero launches the Estero Forever Foundation with an inaugural celebration at the Club at Grandezza.

■ **2022** Hurricane Ian rocks Florida's West Coast and Estero community steps up to help residents and businesses recover quickly.

■ **2023** Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce kicks off the first annual Leadership Estero program.

■ **2025** Engage Estero celebrates 25 years of grassroots involvement resulting in a distinctive and established community.



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (RSW)

FlyRSW.com

Located in Fort Myers, Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) served more than 11 million passengers in 2024 and is one of the top 50 U.S. airports for passenger traffic. It serves five counties in Southwest Florida including Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry and Glades - and is just minutes away from the heart of Estero. The airport offers nonstop service to many destinations nationwide, as well as Germany and Canada.

The airport terminal and its roadways allow easy access from two I-75 exits, Daniels Parkway and Alico Road, as well as the Airport Direct Connect, which links the airport entrance road to I-75.



To accommodate future growth, RSW has begun several large construction projects. The first will increase the size of the main terminal building, improving airport efficiency by consolidating the security checkpoints, as well as adding concessions space and providing passengers with more amenities. The second project is building a new Concourse E with 14 additional gates. This project will also improve roadway access to the terminal.

Future airport projects will include increasing on-airport parking, rental car expansion and, eventually, the construction of a parallel runway.



headquarters to Estero. By the end of 2015, some 650 employees moved into the modern, LEED-certified building. Today, the Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce represents over 200 businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals throughout the southwest Florida area, providing many avenues where members can network and build relationships, learn how to grow their businesses, and market themselves to a wide range of other business professionals and residents.

Planning for the Future

During the early 2000s, a group of local residents, including Don Eslick and Neal Noethlich, decided to form the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL), which evolved into Engage Estero, now celebrating 25 years as an organization to address resident concerns and suggestions about how Estero should grow and evolve. Engage Estero deals with the environment, health, education, and safety of our city.

The ECCL, the Estero Community Planning Panel and Estero Design Review Committee established the architectural and landscaping guidelines that are now evident everywhere with Estero's high aesthetic and development standards.

In July 2013, the ECCL initiated incorporation efforts with a successful

result, and Estero officially became the Village of Estero on December 31, 2014. A seven-member village council was elected on March 3, 2015, and Nick Batos was elected mayor at the first Estero Village Council meeting, on March 17, 2015.

Here are some of the ways Engage Estero has been involved in helping to enhance the Greater Estero area:

- Preventing the expansion of mining along Eastern Corkscrew Road.
- Formalized the strict design/ architectural standards, including landscaping designs, in the original Estero Community Plan.
- The removal of CR 951 and Coconut Road interchange from the 2035 Transportation Plan.
- Assisted the Grandezza Community and Lee County to minimize adverse noise and visual impacts of university community development.
- Helped extend the hours at the Bonita Community Health Center to serve residents better.
- Helped Lee County Schools secure volunteers and implemented Junior Achievement programs in five Estero area schools, which has helped enhance teaching and school standards, leading to increased home values.

- At the Village's request, the organization helps inform residents about storm preparedness and emergency contact information in the event of a hurricane.
- Helped to improve paddleboard, kayak, and boat access to Estero Bay at the Bayview Development.
- Held public forums to discuss climate change and warming issues that threaten the environment and quality of life in the greater Estero area.
- Explored opportunities for workforce housing to address the difficulties faced by new teachers, healthcare workers, other young professionals, and first responders.

Our community enjoys a culture of active involvement, with residents, businesses, and local government working together for the good of the Estero community. Thoughtful development guidelines established by these visionary community leaders will help protect Estero's natural beauty for future generations. Strategic issues to be addressed in the next 5 years include:

- Improve water quality
- Improve community health
- Increase safety
- Promote culture and recreation
- Improve Greater Estero area schools
- Support economic growth

The incorporated Village of Estero—the "Village with a Vision"—continues to welcome individuals, families and businesses with attractive wages, a low cost of living, a healthy outdoor lifestyle, and friendly neighborhoods with hometown values. One visit to our community often turns into the decision to stay a lifetime!

EARLY ESTERO EDUCATION

This building housed the Estero Elementary School from 1925 to 1949, when it closed and many of its students ended up in schools in Fort Myers. Educating 65 students ranging in grades one through eight was challenging, as many of the students' families came from places as far away as Ireland and Spain. Since the school had no lunchroom, students either went home for lunch or ate in a small building behind the school. The building is now a private residence.



Estero's first school, the Estero Creek School, was open from 1896 to 1904, at which time it closed, and the students attended a larger school. You can see the school and a restored cottage at the Estero Historical Society, located in the Estero Community Park.

Please go to their website at EsteroHistoricalSociety.com for more information. Volunteers welcome. Furnishings from the time period are also welcomed.



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ESTERO COMMUNITY PARK

One of the largest parks within Lee County's Parks & Recreation System, Estero Community Park is a 55-acre wonderland for all ages. Its amenities include:

- Indoor and outdoor public Wi-Fi access
- 5K cross-country course
- Lakes and a playground
- Lighted sand volleyball courts
- Horseshoe pits and bocce courts
- Fenced off-leash dog park, with shelter
- Picnic shelters and two rentable pavilions
- Multi-purpose Bermuda fields
- Walking trails
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Fitness center
- 18-hole disc golf course

The outdoor theater is part of the 40,000-square-foot Recreation Center, which contains a teen center (TV, DVD, video game station), computer lab (for classes and personal use.)

The Rec Center also has three full-size basketball courts that can host collegiate-

level games as well as volleyball and pickle ball. Several large multi-purpose rooms accommodate dance and martial arts classes and other community activities.

An art studio, set up for instruction and complete with kiln and adjoining outdoor patio, is home to the Estero Art League.

History buffs will be intrigued by the Collier House, an old cracker-style farmhouse, and a 1904 schoolhouse recently relocated to the grounds. The restored Collier House is the headquarters for the Estero Historical Society; the schoolhouse is a museum.



Lee County residents are eligible for individual (\$10) or family (\$25) lifetime memberships that allow them to visit the center any time during open hours. The fitness center costs an additional \$20/month, \$80/six months, or \$120/year. A \$5 day pass is available for visitors.

9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd. (off Corkscrew Rd.) 239-533-1470; LeeGov.com/Parks. Park hours: 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily; Rec Center hours: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday-Thursday; 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

If you ask Estero residents to name the village's best asset, they are likely to say, "its people." Our village is a dynamic mix of young families, active retirees and business professionals who together create a strong sense of community. Here, newcomers are welcomed, long-time residents are respected, and visitors feel right at home.

Residential options abound: well-kept homes and cottages in mature neighborhoods, as well as golf course and resort communities that offer single-family homes, maintenance free villas, townhomes and condominiums. Carefully designed shopping and medical centers, office parks and business sites boast easy access and ample parking.

Clustered on both sides of U.S. 41, Estero's neighborhoods are all close to shopping, dining and entertainment; schools, including Florida Gulf Coast University; top-notch hospitals and medical facilities; pristine beaches; golf and tennis amenities; and marinas and parks.

Estero is also home to two regional shopping centers: Coconut Point Mall and Miromar Outlets. Miromar Design Center, providing everything related to interior design, is across from the outlet stores. Nearby, Gulf Coast

Town Center offers shoppers another full range of retail choices.

Estero's growth and progress is stewarded by community groups including Engage Estero and the Estero Village Council, which carefully monitor and safeguard the area's natural resources and uncommon beauty.

Educational Excellence

Estero and Lee County classrooms cover pre-school to doctoral programs, and quality education is a top priority. The public school district offers traditional, gifted and vocational schools, plus magnet schools with an emphasis on special programs. Accredited higher education facilities, including Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), Florida Southwestern State College and Keiser University, are within minutes of Estero and offer on-site and distance-learning programs for working adults.

Community & Cultural Resources

State-of-the-art health care services now serve the residents of the Estero area. Lee Health - Coconut Point is a 30-acre medical campus that opened in 2018. Services include

a freestanding ER, an outpatient surgery center, a wellness center and a variety of other medical clinics to serve the community. The 163,500-square-foot campus offers outpatient surgeries, imaging services, testing labs, a cardiac rehabilitation center, a medical observation unit and a pharmacy.

Public safety is ensured by Estero Fire Rescue, dedicated to public education, information and fire investigations in addition to rescue operations. The organization has won national awards, maintains a training school, and has five stations to effectively serve the community. The newest station, Fire Station 45, is a state-of-the-art facility located in the eastern section of Estero, opened in March 2023.

The Senior Friendship Center (SFC) in nearby Fort Myers provides medical, meal and specialty services to area seniors. Other local nonprofits, such as St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Charities and Interfaith Charities of South Lee, provide help for community members in need.

Estero's welcoming vibe is also extended by clubs, nonprofit and fraternal organizations that go out of their way to help newcomers and long-time residents feel at home.

Business Opportunities

Strategically located between Naples to the south and Fort Myers to the north, Estero is a prime site for new and relocating businesses. The village offers a wealth of office, retail and manufacturing space and is minutes away from I-75, Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) and Florida Gulf Coast University. Skyplex, at the airport, is located within a Foreign Trade Zone and has more than 1,000 acres that are zoned and ready to develop for commercial and retail use.

Estero's unique location and amenities, combined with Florida's business-friendly policies, led the Hertz Corporation to relocate its headquarters from Park Ridge, New Jersey, to Estero. It was the first relocation of a Fortune 500 headquarters to the region.

The Sunshine State is renowned as one of the nation's best for business and entrepreneurs. It has no personal income tax, state-level ad valorem taxes, property taxes on inventories, or ad valorem taxes on goods in transit.

For information on business assistance resources, see "Business Information & Demographics" in the Information Directory on page 39.

Estero Forever Foundation

The Estero Forever Foundation was formed to enhance Estero's positive growth. Historic heritage, environmental preservation, recreational facilities and sports fields, and art and cultural centers are just some of the top priorities of this organization established with the goal of "forever building a stronger community."

The Foundation envisions the Village of Estero having interconnected parks, trails and other green public spaces, recreational facilities and arts and cultural centers that foster a sense of belonging and create a sense of place and purpose. It also plans to mobilize and distribute the financial resources necessary to meet these community needs. There are many residents who love the Village of Estero and would be gratified to leave a legacy which would impact those who follow.

A number of Estero volunteers are working together to assure the success of the Foundation's mission, as well as planning annual celebrations. Village entities that support the mission and vision of the Foundation include the Village of Estero Council, the Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce, Engage Estero and many other Estero not-for-profit organizations. All community projects supported will be in line with Estero's Comprehensive Plan and in response to the needs expressed by the community.

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VILLAGE NEWS



Back – Councilmembers, Rafael Lopez, Jeff Hunt, Jon McLain and Lori Fayhee
 Front – Vice Mayor George Zalucki, Mayor Joanne Ribble, and Councilmember Jim Ward

Joanne Ribble, Mayor

George Zalucki, Vice Mayor

Jeff Hunt, Councilmember

Jon McLain, Councilmember

Lori Fayhee, Councilmember

Rafael Lopez, Councilmember

Jim Ward, Councilmember



The Village of Estero is a proud member of the Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce and an active supporter of numerous Chamber events throughout the year.

We are honored to serve as a key partner within our vibrant residential and business community. Village Council and staff work together to provide the resources and services that help maintain an attractive, safe, and prosperous environment for residents of all ages and backgrounds as well as for our growing business community.

The Village has made significant initiatives not only to enhance quality of life for residents but also strengthen the foundation for business success.

In our ongoing commitment to supporting a thriving local economy, the Village continues to invest in community amenities and critical infrastructure while maintaining fiscal responsibility. Estero has successfully reduced its property tax rate to the lowest in the State and has been awarded "AAA" bond rating by Standards and Poor's, carries no debt, and funds capital improvement projects through current and future reserves.

Located in Southwest Florida, the Village of Estero offers convenient access to an international airport, beautiful beaches, and a wide range of businesses both large and small.

We are proud of our positive growth, our strong community partnerships, and our future as a leader in the continued success of Southwest Florida.

LEE COUNTY

County Commissioners in Lee County can be contacted for any issue.

Kevin Ruane, Chairman

District 1.....(239) 533-2224

Cecil Pendergrass, Vice Chairman

District 2.....(239) 533-2227

David Mulicka

District 3.....(239) 533-2223

Brian Hamman

District 4.....(239) 533-2226

Trish Petrosky

District 5.....(239) 533-2225

Estero Fire Rescue

Fire ChiefScott Vanderbrook

ChairmanBill Williams

Commissioner Jack Lienesch

Commissioner Jeff Maas

Commissioner James Mendolera

Commissioner Gerald Schleiffer

Commissioner Emeritus . Dick Schweers

Lee County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff.....Carmine Marceno

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Governor

Ron DeSantis(850) 717-9337

State Senator

Senate President

Ben Albritton

District 27(863) 534-0073

State Senator

Jonathan Martin

District 33(239) 338-2570

State Senator

Kathleen Passidomo

District 28(239) 417-6205

.....(850) 487-5028

State Representative

Adam Botana

District 80(239) 949-6279

.....(850) 717-5080

U.S. SENATE

Senator Rick Scott (R – FL)

110 Hart Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

(202) 224-5274

RickScott.Senate.gov

Senator Ashley Moody (R – FL)

SR-387 Russell Senate Office Bldg.

Washington, DC 20002

(202) 224-3041

Moody.Senate.gov

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Rep. Byron Donalds (R – FL)

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Lee County (239) 599-6033

Donalds.House.gov



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EVENTS

SPORTS & FITNESS

■ Watch the **Boston Red Sox** run their spring training bases from late February through March at JetBlue Park at Fenway South, in Fort Myers. 877-REDSOX9 (733-7699)

MLB.com/redsox/spring-training.

■ **The Minnesota Twins** also play ball in February and March at Hammond Stadium in the Lee Health Sports Complex in Fort Myers.

1-800-33-TWINS (89467)

MLB.com/twins/spring-training.

■ Summer means **Fort Myers Mighty Mussels** baseball, when this Class

A Advanced Affiliate team of the Minnesota Twins pounds the diamond at Hammond Stadium, April through September. 239-768-4210

MILB.com/fort-myers.

■ Fast-paced professional hockey hits the ice at **Hertz Arena** when the **Florida Everblades**, an East Coast Hockey League (ECHL) team, play 35 home games from October through April.

239-948-PUCK (7825)

FloridaEverblades.com.

NATURE

■ **Koreshan State Park** features boating, camping, fishing, hiking, paddling and wildlife viewing.

239-992-0311

FloridaStateParks.org/Parks-and-Trails/Koreshan-State-Park

■ **The Great Calusa Paddling Trail**

is a 190-mile marked canoe and kayak trail that meanders through the coastal waters and tributaries of Lee County, Florida. It attracts everyone from first time kayakers to advanced paddlers and is home to abundant marine life, shore birds and crustaceans.

239-338-3500

FortMyers-Sanibel.com/CalusaBlueway.

■ **CREW Land & Water Trust** Enjoy guided hikes, family nature walks and birding expeditions along the four trail systems.

239-657-2253

CrewTrust.org.

■ **Lovers Key State Park's** year-round programs include bicycling, boating, fishing, geo-seeking, hiking over more than seven miles of trails, paddling, shelling, swimming, and wildlife viewing.

239-707-6328

Floridastateparks/Lovers-key.

ART, CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT

■ **The Estero Art League** meets for Open Painting from January - May and September - December at the Lee County Parks and Recreation Community Center in Estero. Check the website for dates, times and fees.

239-729-1738

EsteroArtLeague.com.

■ Art shows and classes, exhibits, films, concerts, live theater and special events fill the calendar year-round at the **Center for Performing Arts** and the **Center for Visual Arts in Bonita Springs**. National art festivals are held in January, February and March. Call or visit online for a full schedule.

239-495-8989

ArtsBonita.org.

■ Top entertainers and recording artists appear at **Hertz Arena**. Visit the website for event and ticket information.

HertzArena.com.



SHOPPING

■ Special events and family-friendly entertainment take place throughout the year at area shopping malls. For the latest information:

- **Coconut Point**
239-992-9966
ShopCoconutPoint.com
- **Gulf Coast Town Center**
239-267-5107
GulfCoastTownCenter.com
- **Miromar Outlets**
239-948-3766
MiromarOutlets.com

EDUCATION

■ **South County Regional Library** programs for adults, toddlers, kids, teens and families include everything from informative exhibits and reading sessions to small business seminars. 239-533-4400
LeeGov.com/Library.

HISTORY

■ **Koreshan State Park Guided Historic Tours**. Explore the 19th century religious Koreshan settlement, its structures, and gardens. Join our guided walking tours and learn about these idealistic pioneers. For guided tour times and ticket purchases, call or visit 239-949-2379
FriendsofKoreshan.org.

■ **The Estero Historical Society's** restored and authentically furnished Hanson-Hall-Collier House (The Cottage) and 1904 Estero Creek School are open to visitors from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, showcasing exhibits and photos of Estero's early days. 239-272-1911
EsteroHistoricalSociety.com.

JANUARY

■ **10-11 - Bonita Springs National Art Festival at Riverside Park** is a juried fine arts and fine crafts event that attracts national and international artists. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
239-495-8989
ArtsBonita.org/Artfest.

■ **24 - 14th Annual Stangs vs. Vettes Car Show** at Coconut Point Mall, 23106 Fashion Drive, Estero, FL 33928, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

FEBRUARY

■ **7-8 - Bonita Springs National Art Festival at Riverside Park** in downtown Bonita is a juried fine arts and fine crafts event that attracts national and international artists. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
239-495-8989 ArtsBonita.org/Artfest.

■ **14-15 - The 20th Annual Coconut Point Art Festival** takes place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Coconut Point Mall. Free admission. Browse the fine art and enjoy music and more at this nationally top-rated event.
561-746-6615
ArtFestival.com/Festivals/Coconut-Point-Art-Festival-0.

■ **14-22 - The 88th Edison Festival of Light** held in downtown Fort Myers, honors one of Southwest Florida's most famous resident: Thomas Alva Edison. Food, music, crafts, fun run, car show and more throughout the celebration. The Grand Parade, the Southeast's largest night parade, begins at 7 p.m. on the 21st (visit website for parade route).
239-334-2999 EdisonFestival.org.

■ **28 - The 24th Annual Burrowing Owl Festival**, held at Rotary Park Environmental Center, in Cape Coral, includes exhibits, guided nature walks, crafts for kids, and bus tours to local owl burrows for a glimpse of these captivating, pint-sized birds. The event is sponsored by the Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife.
239-980-2593 CCFriendsOfWildlife.org.

MARCH

■ **7 - Southwest Florida Reading Festival** is a fun-packed day of discovery and creativity with family activities and celebrity authors sharing the inside scoop on their latest books. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Fort Myers Regional Library Campus, 2450 1st Street, Fort Myers.
239-533-4600 ReadFest.org.

■ **14-15 - Bonita Springs National Art Festival** at Riverside Park in downtown Bonita is a juried fine arts and fine crafts event that attracts national and international artists. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
239-495-8989 ArtsBonita.org/Artfest.

■ **21 - Estero Fest!** at Estero Community Park. Free Admission. Fun-Beats-Eats- A Community Celebration. Featuring Estero's own Ben Allen Band. Food trucks, Beer & Wine Garden, Business Expo and Kids Zone. Title Sponsor: J. Pavich Realty. 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
239-390-1197 EsteroChamber.org.

■ **28-29 - Coconut Point Crafts Festival** – featuring a variety of art and craft vendors showcasing everything from paintings and sculptures to jewelry and home decor.
23181 Via Villagio Drive, Estero, FL 33928, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

APRIL

■ **17 - Bonita Springs Short Film Festival** – This film competition is an annual celebration of the City of Bonita Springs and the surrounding community. This year's festival will take place at Prado Stadium 12 Theaters, in Bonita Springs.
239-404-3377
BonitaSpringsFilmFestival.org.

■ **28-29 - 2nd Annual Coconut Point Art & Craft Festival** – Discover unique, high-quality wares, home decor and wearable accessories at Coconut Point Mall from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
561-746-6612
ArtFestival.com/Festivals/2ndAnnual-coconut-point-art-craft-festival.

MAY

■ **2 - Greater Estero Chamber Golf Tournament**. Spring Run Golf Club in Estero. For general information or sponsorship opportunities, call 239-390-1137 or visit EsteroChamber.org.

■ **15 - "Ding" Darling & Doc Ford's Tarpon Invitational** This 14th annual "catch, release, and care" tournament is based at Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille on Fisherman's Wharf in Fort Myers Beach. This will benefit the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge. Anglers vie for 100-percent purse cash awards for the most tarpon caught. 239-789-8991;
DingDarlingSociety.org.

JUNE

■ **5 - Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Dinner** will be held at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point. Several Chamber members will be recognized, including Business and Person of the Year. The Graduation ceremony of the 2026 Leadership Estero class will also take place on this magical evening. Reservations required.
239-390-1137
EsteroChamber.org.

JULY

■ **4 - Independence Day** is celebrated throughout Estero, with special sidewalk sales and other events at Miromar Outlets, Coconut Point Mall and Gulf Coast Town Center.

● **Gulf Coast Town Center**
239-267-5107
GulfCoastTownCenter.com.

● **Coconut Point**
239-992-9966
ShopCoconutPoint.com.

● **Miromar Outlets**
239-948-3766
MiromarOutlets.com.

OCTOBER

■ **30-31 - Trick or Treat!** Family Halloween events take place at local malls. Call for details:

● **Coconut Point Mall**
239-992-9966;
ShopCoconutPoint.com.

● **Gulf Coast Town Center**
239-267-5107
GulfCoastTownCenter.com.

● **Miromar Outlets**
239-948-3766
MiromarOutlets.com.

DECEMBER

■ **TBD - Estero Community Park Yard Sale** features local residents selling their treasures at the park from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.
239-533-1470
LeeGov.com/parks.

■ **TBD - Holiday Celebrations** and events spread good cheer throughout the month at local shopping venues. Contact them for details, including when Santa is scheduled to appear:

● **Miromar Outlets**
239-948-3766
MiromarOutlets.com.

● **Coconut Point**
239-992-9966
ShopCoconutPoint.com.

● **Gulf Coast Town Center**
239-267-5107
GulfCoastTownCenter.com.

■ **5 - Coconut Point Annual Tropical Holiday Celebration** including a collectible car show, parade and tree lighting with events happening all day long.
23106 Fashion Drive, Estero, FL 33928
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

■ **26-27 - 16th Annual Coconut Point New Year's Eve Weekend Art Festival** celebrates the year as exhibitors occupy the streets of Coconut Point for two fun-filled days during this admission-free, outdoor event.
561-746-6015
ArtFestival.com/Festivals/16th-annual-Coconut-Point-New-Years-Weekend-Art-Festival.

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Ask a PPC Doctor

OUR FRIEND, THE COMMON COLD

By Dr. Angela D'Alessandro, DO, FAAP



The common cold is the most common illness in children. It's caused by a host of viruses and typically lasts about two weeks. Common symptoms of a cold include a runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, fever, cough, and fatigue. Most children with a cold will not need to see a doctor. However, there are situations when you should seek medical attention with your child. Some of these scenarios include the following: if your child has a high fever that does not go down with medication or has lasted for more than 3-4 days. Another worrisome symptom might be a severe cough that is causing your child to vomit or making it difficult to breathe. Colds come with a sore throat, but if it is making it difficult for your child to swallow, they should see their doctor. Another sign that your child may need evaluation include a cold that is not getting better after a week or two.

As we always tell our patients and families, if you are worried about the way your child or teenager looks or have questions about their illness, it is best to call your doctor's office for advice or an appointment.

If your child requires a visit to the doctor, they will discuss various evidence-based over-the-counter and home remedies that will help relieve your child's symptoms. Some of these include honey for cough (children over one year of age), nasal saline lavage for runny and stuffy nose symptoms, and lots of oral fluids and rest. Your doctor might recommend a cool mist humidifier in your child's room. Children and teens are often not hungry when they are sick. This is ok and normal. Encourage fluids and sucking on frozen fruit or a popsicle is a good way to get some glucose and fluids.

Over-the-counter pain/fever relievers like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and acetaminophen (Tylenol) are safe and should only be used if necessary, as fever is a natural response to illness (however they may be used more often to treat headache, body aches, and sore throat pain that can come with a bad cold).

Angela D'Alessandro, DO, FAAP, is a pediatrician with Physicians' Primary Care of Southwest Florida.

EXPLORE

ENJOY Nature, The Arts, Shopping AND Sports

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Cultural organizations play an enriching, vibrant role in Greater Estero and include museums, galleries, symphony orchestras, theater groups and world-class centers for the arts.

Artis-Naples

5833 Pelican Bay Blvd., Naples, FL 34108
239-597-1900; ArtisNaples.org
Artis—an epicenter for the visual and performing arts—is home to the Naples Philharmonic and The Baker Museum, a 30,000-square-foot art museum.

Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall at FSW

13350 FSW Pkwy., Fort Myers, FL 33919
239-481-4849; BBMANNPAH.com
The largest proscenium stage in Southwest Florida that presents National Touring Broadway musicals, comedy acts, concerts and more.

Arts Bonita

Center for Visual Arts
26100 Old U.S. 41
Bonita Springs, FL 34135
Center for Performing Arts
10150 Bonita Beach Rd,
Bonita Springs, FL 34135
239-495-8989; ArtCenterBonita.org
The Center for Visual Arts offers classes for all ages and includes galleries and a gift shop on its 10-acre campus. It features ongoing art exhibits and hosts major art festivals. The 29,000-square-foot Center for Performing Arts hosts a film series and international film festival, plus musical, theatrical, dance and comedic entertainment for all ages.

COCO Art Gallery

8074 Mediterranean Drive
Estero, FL 33928
239-949-3073; cocoartgallery.com
COCO Art Gallery is a non-profit cooperative operated by the Art Council of Southwest

Florida, providing a venue for exhibiting and selling the works of talented artists from over 21 affiliate Southwest Florida art associations. Open daily 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Gulfshore Opera

9911 Corkscrew Road
Estero, FL 33928
239-592-3925; gulfshoreopera.org
Beginning its journey in June 2014 with the vision of bringing high-quality opera to Southwest Florida in a collaborative, inclusive environment, the company quickly established itself as a regional cultural force, staging concerts and full opera productions across Collier, Lee, and Charlotte counties.

Estero Art League

Located in the Estero Community Center
9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd.,
Estero, FL 33928
239-729-1738; EsteroArtLeague.com
The league offers classes, open painting workshops and shows during season and meets for open painting on Monday and Thursday mornings from September to May at the Estero Community Center.

Hertz Arena

11000 Everblades Pkwy., Estero, FL 33928
239-948-7825; HertzArena.com
Home to the Florida Everblades, a minor-league hockey team (see page 31), Hertz Arena also hosts year-round concerts and family entertainment.

Theatre Zone

13275 Livingston Rd., Naples, FL 34109
888-966-3352; info@theatre.zone
Premier musical theatre, offering Broadway-quality shows featuring professional equity actors, singers, dancers and musicians.



BEACHES

Southwest Florida's beaches consistently rank among the nation's finest, with miles of sugar-white sand and warm Gulf waters. Lee Tran trolleys and buses travel to local beaches; call 239-533-8726 or visit RideLeeTran.com for schedules. Get real-time trolley arrivals on your cell phone by downloading the app at Ride Lee Tran and choose your stop from the drop-down list. Beaches and beach parks have not been restored to pre-storm damage conditions. Amenities such as restroom facilities, piers and walkovers have not been repaired or replaced at this time. Debris continues to wash onshore and may quickly be obscured by sand. Beach shoes should be worn at all times. Debris can still be found in near-shore areas, such as dunes or mangrove-lined coastlines. Closure signs are posted where necessary. Visit Leeparks.org for status updates.

Bonita Beach Park

27954 Hickory Blvd.
Bonita Springs, FL 34134
239-949-4615

LeeGov.com/parks/beaches

Parking: \$2/hour
(Lee County parking subscriptions not accepted.)

This family-friendly park has picnic shelters, restrooms and a sand volleyball court. Walk to watersports rentals, food concessions and restaurants.

Bowditch Point Park

50 Estero Blvd.,
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
239-229-1610;
LeeGov.com/parks/beaches

Parking: \$2/hour

The beach here is renowned for its gentle slope and shallow water. The 17-acre park hugs Estero Bay and the Gulf. Amenities include restrooms, picnic tables, grills, a food and gift concession, hiking trails, a handicap-accessible boardwalk and a 10-acre nature preserve. Bowditch is an entry point for the Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail. The park is also a designated Great Florida Birding Trail site.

Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park

(Check website or call for re-opening)

11135 Gulfshore Drive
Naples, FL 34108
239-597-6196

FloridaStateParks.org

\$6/vehicle; \$4 single occupant vehicle;
\$2/pedestrian

This 166-acre wooded barrier island, separated from the mainland by mangrove marshes and tidal waters, is filled with wildlife and boasts one of the most pristine beaches in the world. Amenities include a nature trail and observation tower; geocaching; a boat launch; restrooms and showers; a concessionaire offering food, beverages and canoe/kayak rentals and tours; and a large, shady picnic area with grills. Beach wheelchairs can be reserved by calling ahead.

Dog Beach Park

8800 Estero Blvd.,
Bonita Springs, FL 33931
239-949-4615
LeeGov.com/parks/dog-parks
Open daily from 7 a.m. to dusk.

Free parking

Well-behaved dogs can run free here. Owners must clean up after their pets (bags and trash cans are provided). The park has a portable toilet and a doggie shower station. Bring drinking water.

Lovers Key State Park

8700 Estero Boulevard,
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
239-707-6328

FloridaStateParks.org

\$8/vehicle, \$4/single-occupancy vehicle or motorcycle, \$2/bicyclist or on foot

A haven for wildlife, the park's 712 acres include two miles of unspoiled beach, nature and bike trails, accessible via boardwalk. Fishing and shelling are popular, and amenities include a picnic area, concessionaire, wedding pavilion, restrooms and a boat ramp/canoe launch. Kayak tours and rentals are available by calling 239-765-7788.

Lynn Hall Memorial Park

(Check website or call for re-opening)

950 Estero Blvd. at Times Square
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
239-229-1610

LeeGov.com/parks/beaches

Parking: \$2/hour

A family favorite, this lively beach park offers a playground, licensed fishing pier, bait/gift shop and picnic huts. Times Square, a pedestrian mall with trees and outdoor tables, brims with unique shops and restaurants.

ECO-EXPLORATIONS

Southwest Florida, site of the majestic Everglades, is also home to several local, state and national parks and preserves that showcase intriguing biodiversity. Hiking, biking and paddling trails and guided tours let you discover the area's wealth of flora and fauna.

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary & Blair Audubon Visitor Center

375 Sanctuary Road
Naples, FL 34120
239-348-9151

CorkscrewAudubon.org

Home to nearly 200 bird species, Corkscrew is a designated National Audubon Society sanctuary. A 2.25-mile boardwalk with shaded benches showcases the largest old-growth Bald Cypress forest in North America. The center includes multimedia presentations, exhibits, nature-inspired gifts and a cafe that serves fresh sandwiches and salads. Open daily from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Last admission is 1:00 p.m. Admission fee: \$17/adult; \$6/6 to 14 years old. Children under 6 are free.



CREW Land & Water Trust Trails

Bird Rookery Swamp
1295 Shady Hollow Blvd W
Naples, FL 34120

CREW Marsh Trails
4600 County Road 850
Immokalee, FL 34142

CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails
15970 Bonita Beach Road
Bonita Springs, FL 34135

CREW Cypress Dome Trails and
Caracara Prairie Preserve
3980 County Road 850
Immokalee, FL 34142
239-657-2253

CrewTrust.org

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed's (CREW) 60,000 acres provide aquifer recharge, natural flood protection, water purification and preservation of wildlife habitat. Nearly 30 miles of hiking and biking trails, some allowing leashed dogs, wind through pine flatwoods, oak hammocks, a sawgrass marsh and a pop ash slough. Visit the website for geocaching information, trail conditions and maps. Special events take place throughout the year. *(See Calendar of Events on page 25.)*

Estero Bay Preserve State Park

(Managed by Koreshan State Park)

4940 Broadway West
Estero, FL 33928
239-992-0311

FloridaStateParks.org

\$2 entry fee

Sheltered by barrier islands, this lush haven is the first aquatic preserve established in Florida. It hugs Estero's western border and is home to a variety of wildlife, including bald eagles. Canoe or kayak in the bay or on the Estero River, or bike or hike the easy trails. Trail access: Go west on Broadway off U.S. 41. Continue past the FPL grid station for signs and parking. Self-guided trail maps.

Estero Community Park

9200 Corkscrew Palms Boulevard
Estero, FL 33928
239-533-1470

LeeGov.com/parks/

Every age and interest can find something to enjoy at this huge 55-acre multi-purpose park that includes lakes, sports fields and a large community recreation center. *(See page 20 for more details.)*



Photo credit: NPS.gov/Ever

Everglades National Park

305-242-7700
NPS.gov/Ever

This largest subtropical wilderness in the U.S. is also a World Heritage Site, International Biosphere Reserve and a Wetland of International Importance. It encompasses more than 1.5 million acres that are home to alligators, deer, bobcats, Florida panthers, and hundreds of other species of plants, birds and animals. The Gulf Coast Visitors Center building is closed during construction. Alternate launch sites for back country access include The Rod and Gun Club (239) 695-2101, Outdoor Resorts of Chokoloskee (239) 695-2881 and Chokoloskee Island Park and Marina. (239) 695-2414.

The Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail

239-338-3500
VisitFortMyers.com/CalusaBlueway

Birds and wildlife abound along this 190-mile marked canoe and kayak trail that meanders through Lee County's scenic coastal waterways and inland tributaries. The serene waters are suitable for first-time kayakers as well as seasoned paddlers, and detailed trail maps, information and a smart phone app are available online.

J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge

One Wildlife Drive
 Sanibel, FL 33957
 239-472-1100
FWS.gov/Refuge/JN-Ding-Darling
 \$10/vehicle, \$1/pedestrians/bicyclists

This world-renowned sanctuary, part of the largest undeveloped mangrove ecosystem in the U.S., shelters more than 245 species of birds. Drive, walk, bike or take a trolley along Wildlife Drive, a five-mile stretch of coastal habitat. The Visitor & Education Center offers displays, videos, interactive programs, volunteers to answer questions, and a Nature Gift Store. The refuge is closed on Fridays.

Koreshan State Park

3800 Corkscrew Road
 Estero, 33928
FloridaStateParks.org/Parks-and-Trails/Koreshan
 Parking: \$5/vehicle; \$4 single-occupancy vehicles. \$2/pedestrians, bicyclists

The former site of a self-sufficient Utopian community, Koreshan's 100 acres include restored buildings. Docents conduct narrated history tours and visitors can visit the Historic Settlement, walk the trails and fish, canoe or picnic along the scenic Estero River. Amenities include a boat ramp (closed to boat trailers at this time).

Mound Key Archaeological State Park

239-992-0311
Floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/mound-key-archaeological-state-park
 No entrance fee.

Framed in forests of mangrove trees, the shell mounds and ridges of Mound Key rise more than 30 feet above the waters of Estero Bay. The highest point for miles around, this 125-acre island was created from centuries of shells, bones and pottery discarded by the Calusa Indians and is believed to have been their cultural center. The park is managed by Koreshan State Park and is accessible only by water (public boat launches are available at Koreshan State Park and Lovers Key State Park). It has no facilities.

Six-Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

7791 Penzance Boulevard
 Fort Myers, FL 33966
 239-218-1032
SloughPreserve.org
 Parking: \$1/hour or \$5/day

Glimpse natural Florida at this 3,500-acre wetland ecosystem. Amenities include a 1.2-mile boardwalk trail with observation decks, picnic/ shelter areas, restrooms, a Rock and Stroll Garden and a Butterfly Garden. The Interpretive Center, open Tuesday to Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., is Lee County's first public, certified green building. Guided walks are available; the current schedule is online. Speaker series to be announced. The preserve is open every day dawn to dusk.

SHOPPING & DESIGN CENTERS

Coconut Point

23106 Fashion Drive
 Estero, FL 33928
 (South Tamiami Trail & Coconut Road)
 239-992-9966
ShopCoconutPoint.com
 This picturesque open-air mall features more than 110 stores, casual and upscale dining, and a megaplex theater, all surrounded by lakes and a boardwalk.



Gulf Coast Town Center

9903 Gulf Coast Main Street
 Fort Myers, FL 33913
 (I-75 Exit 128 - Alico Road)
 239-267-5107
GulfCoastTownCenter.com

A Main Street-style outdoor mall, the center includes 19 anchor stores, more than 90 specialty shops, restaurants and a megaplex theater.

Miromar Design Center

10800 Corkscrew Road
 Estero, FL 33928
 (I-75, Exit 123)
 239-895-9172
MiromarDesignCenter.com

Enjoy one-stop shopping at more than 40 home furnishing stores that showcase everything related to interior design. The center also offers design referral services, a gourmet bistro, free WiFi, design seminars and special events.

Miromar Outlets

10801 Corkscrew Road
 Estero, FL 33928 (I-75, Exit 123)
 239-948-3766;
MiromarOutlets.com

A Mediterranean lakefront setting, covered walkways and a Playland for kids make this upscale center a family-favorite destination. More than 140 top designer and brand-name outlets nestle side-by-side with cafes and restaurants. Miromar presents a concert series from late October through the winter season and hosts numerous special events throughout the year.

SPORTS & RECREATION

Year-round sunshine and pleasant weather translate to plenty of opportunities for outdoor fun and spectator sports.

BASEBALL

The Boston Red Sox
 JetBlue Park
 11500 Fenway South Drive Fort Myers, FL 33913
 877-REDSOX-9
MLB.com/redsox
SpringTrainingConnection.com
 The Boston Red Sox visit JetBlue Park for spring training in February and March.

The Fort Myers Mighty Mussels

Hammond Stadium,
Lee Health Sports Complex
14100 Ben C. Pratt/
Six Mile Cypress Pkwy.
Fort Myers, FL 33912
239-768-4210
MLB.com/fort-myers

Minor league baseball provides plenty of summer family fun when the Mighty Mussels team, a Class A Advanced Affiliate of the Minnesota Twins, runs the bases April through September.

The Minnesota Twins

Lee Health Sports Complex
14100 Ben C. Pratt/Six Mile Cypress Pkwy.
Fort Myers, FL 33912
800-33-TWINS
MLB.com/Twins

The Minnesota Twins also play ball in February and March at the renovated Lee Health Sports Complex in Fort Myers.

BIKING

An impressive network of well-marked bike paths traverse Southwest Florida and meander through Estero's safe and scenic neighborhoods.

BOATING/FISHING CHARTERS & CANOE/KAYAK RENTALS

Explore our waterways, islands and beaches on a guided shelling or sightseeing excursion, opt for a half- or full-day fishing charter, or rent a canoe or kayak.

Estero River Outfitters

20991 South Tamiami Trail,
Estero, FL 33928
239-992-4050
EsteroRiverOutfitters.com

Since 1977, this historic location has offered kayak and canoe rentals and sales, a full fishing tackle shop and live bait. They also sell paddle boards and paddle gear.

Lovers Key Adventures and Events

8720 Estero Blvd.
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
(239) 765-7788
Loverskeyadventures.com

Kayak, canoe, paddleboard, beach chairs/ umbrella rentals and guided tours available, as well as special events. The gift shop is open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Mike's Coastal Expeditions

Big Hickory Island
Bonita Springs, FL 33913
(239) 791-2638
Mike@mce.tours

What began as a small operation with just a few kayaks has grown to provide exceptional tours and experiences that connect people with nature, while maintaining safety, quality, and environmental stewardship.
Open Monday - Sunday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

GOLF

Southwest Florida, called the "Golf Course Capital of the World," is home to courses designed by many of the world's leading golf architects. Some are private and open only to members; others welcome the public during all or part of the year. Golfers must call ahead to reserve tee times and confirm green fees and cart rental information.

The Cave

9250 Corkscrew Road, Suite 13
Estero, FL 33928
239-359-9025
TheCaveSWFL.com
State-of-the-Art Indoor Trackman Golf Simulators - Sports Bar & Grill. Open Daily 9 a.m. to Midnight

Mike Calbot International Golf Academy

Old Corkscrew Golf Club
17320 Corkscrew Road
Estero, FL 33928
239-482-0900
GolfDoctorUSA.com
Mike Calbot is a professional golf swing analyst and master golf instructor. The school offers learning experiences for all levels of golfers, including advanced player-development programs.



HOCKEY & ICE SKATING

The Florida Everblades

Hertz Arena
11000 Everblades Parkway
Estero, FL 33928
239-948-7825
FloridaEverblades.com
Hertz Arena is home to the Florida Everblades (East Coast Hockey League). The team plays a full schedule of home games when they take to the ice from October to April.

Hertz Arena

11000 Everblades Parkway
Estero, FL 33928
239-948-7825
SkateEverblades.com
Public skating and hockey and skating lessons are offered year-round on twin rinks. Skate rentals are available.

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ADVENTURES FOR EVERYONE

OUTSIDE ADVENTURES

Estero's great outdoors is a wonderful learning laboratory for the entire family. Adventure seekers can enjoy the thrill of the hunt at Lovers Key State Park (*page 29*) for a morning or afternoon of geocaching. This outdoor treasure hunt uses GPS devices to navigate to a specific set of coordinates. Once there, the search to find the hidden container, or geocache, begins!

History buffs can accompany a guide at Koreshan State Park (*page 30*) for Saturday or Sunday morning strolls through the park's gardens and intriguing structures. Learn local historic lore while identifying native and exotic plants. After the walking tour, meander the riverside trail where birds and wildlife are abundant and bobcats, foxes, river otters, alligators and manatees are occasionally sighted. You can also check out the geocaches hidden in the park. Beginner geocaching classes are also offered.

Join a park volunteer at Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park (*page 29*) for a fun, interactive beachcombing adventure (free with park admission). Uncover beach treasures, and learn about seashells, sea creatures and tidal movements. Treasures of a different sort await discovery at Delnor-Wiggins' geocache sites; visit Geocaching.com for location details.



In nearby Bonita Springs, explore Everglades Wonder Gardens, a 3.5-acre botanical jungle filled with alligators, plants and rescued birds and animals.

More sunbathing alligators and dozens of species of spectacular waterbirds can be spotted at J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge (*page 30*). Bring drinking water, binoculars, and cameras, and rent bikes for a full or half-day at nearby Tarpon Bay Explorers (TarponBayExplorers.com). Start your day at the Visitor & Education Center, where you can pick up a brochure guide to the refuge. Then pedal along Wildlife Drive, marveling at clusters of roseate spoonbills, snowy egrets and stately blue herons.

Soft sand, a gentle surf, a jungle-gym playground and shaded picnic tables all add up to beach-time fun for every age at Lynn Hall Memorial Park (*page 29*.)



Image courtesy of floridasplendors.com

For a memorable canoe or kayak adventure, visit Estero River Outfitters (*page 32*) and paddle down the Estero River Canoe Trail. It winds through subtropical hammocks and mangrove swamps where you'll be wrapped in the sounds of nature and amazed by sightings of yellow-crowned night herons, anhingas and cormorants. Experienced paddlers may want to stop at Mound Key Archaeological State Park for a picnic lunch or a short walk on the nature trails.

INDOOR ADVENTURES

Take a break from the sun at a variety of Estero's indoor venues. From karate and martial arts to table tennis and tai chi, classes and activities abound at the Estero Recreation Center. The center includes a gymnasium, video game station, computer lab and fitness center. The center's after-school Club Rec program provides fun and learning for kids with organized games, activities, clubs, sports, crafts and homework time.

The entire family can lace up and whirl around the ice skating rink at Hertz Arena while listening to the weekly Top 20 tunes. A disco ball and laser show add to the fun. Rental skates are available in sizes 8 (child) through 12 (adult).



Image courtesy Hertz Arena Recreation Department

The Cave Indoor Trackman Golf Simulators offers a chance to practice your golf swing and play many courses from all over. They even offer private instruction.

No one can resist bargain shopping destinations, and Miromar Outlets (*page 32*) offers the best deals on designer clothing, accessories, and places to eat. Keep the younger set occupied at the WINK Playland, a covered kids' play area where hours of exercise and exploration takes place from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day.

It's never too early to cultivate an appreciation of the arts. The Centers for the Arts of Bonita Springs (*page 30*) hosts gallery exhibitions and youth theater presentations throughout the year. Residents benefit from a full program of visual and performing arts classes, workshops and summer camps specifically designed for youngsters and teens.

School-age kids, smart phones in hand, will be transported in time when they see the circa-1904 Estero Creek School House (*page 27*), located in the Estero Community Park. The learning environment was quite different then, using writing slates and you'll even see a dunce chair. Next door, wander through another world at the Cottage, where photos and artifacts portray early 20th-century life. Displays are provided by the Estero Historical Society.

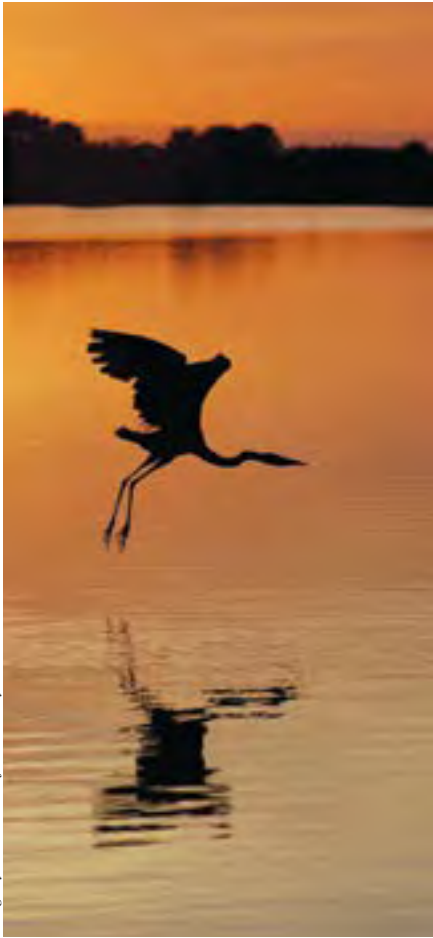


Image by Ken Thornton from Pixabay

EST. 1994

All Animals Pet Sitting

Tamara Randolph, Former Vet Tech
 Sitting & Boarding
 239-272-2386
 AllAnimalPets@hotmail.com

Get back to *living*

Our state-of-the-art rehabilitation services will get you back to the life you love, sooner.

- Inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation
- Physical, occupational and speech therapy
- Rehab-to-home program, *Ready...Set...Go!*

239.495.4000
 3850 Williams Rd.
 Estero, FL 33928
www.LifeCareCenterOfEstero.com

INFORMATION

THE VILLAGE OF Estero

Estero was an unincorporated area of Lee County until it voted to become its own village in 2014, making it Southwest Florida's ninth municipality. Estero's first village election was held on March 3, 2015, and the first Village Council meeting was held on March 17, 2015.

The newly formed Village of Estero operates under a Council-Manager form of government, comprising seven council members elected at large from each of seven districts. The Council members in turn elect a Mayor and Vice Mayor from their membership and appoint a Village Manager as the chief administrative officer of the Village. The Council also appoints a Village Attorney, Assistant Village Manager and Village Clerk. Council members serve four-year terms, with elections held every two years.



VILLAGE OF ESTERO ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

9401 Corkscrew Palms Circle
Suite 101, Estero, Florida 33928
Email Info@Estero-FL.gov
Phone 239-221-5035

ADMINISTRATIVE

Mayor Joanne Ribble
Vice Mayor George Zalucki
Village Manager Steven Sarkozy
Village Attorney Robert Eschenfelder
Finance Director Kevin Greenville
Director of Community Development Mary Gibbs
Village Clerk Carol Sacco
Communications Specialist Marilyn Edwards

VILLAGE COUNCIL

District 1 Joanne Ribble
District 2 Jeff Hunt
District 3 Jon McLain
District 4 Lori Fayhee
District 5 Rafael Lopez
District 6 Jim Ward
District 7 George Zalucki

STATS AT A GLANCE

ESTERO

Village Area approx. 30 square miles
Population - year-round 36,939
Population - seasonal (winter) 63,009
Business Establishments 1,467
Housing Units 26,916
Median Household Income \$100,459
Median Age 65 years
Residents with a College Degree 49.7%
Median Home List Price \$551,000
Home Price per square foot \$281
Median Home Closing Price \$560,000

Estero offers competitively priced housing and a cost of living index that compares favorably with the national average. Housing costs vary based upon size, amenities and location, with a variety of neighborhoods that cater to families, singles, retirees and all age groups.

LEE COUNTY

Population (year-round, 2025, estimated) 860,959
Median Household Income \$92,500
Median Age 49.3 years
Residents with a college degree .. 44.4%
Density (population per square mile) 1,100

Noteworthy Business News

■ State funding request for \$800,000 to protect the Estero River and improve safety were approved by Council on October 15, 2025.

Sources: BEER.UFL.edu;
DataUSA.io/Profile/Geo/Lee-County-FL/Census.gov
Estero-Florida.gov; LeeCountyBusiness.com; Realtor.com

FOR EMERGENCIES Dial 911

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce
Visitors Center & Estero
Executive Office**

239-390-1137

9990 Coconut Road, Suite 337

Estero, FL 34135

EsteroChamber.org

Provides essential visitor and seasonal or permanent relocation information online and in print. This information is focused on area attractions, cultural venues, dining, accommodations, recreational opportunities and health and educational amenities.

CLERK OF COURTS

Information & directions 239-533-5000

Jury duty questions..... 239-533-2929

LeeClerk.org

Marriage licenses, passport services, domestic violence support services, child support collection and disbursement, traffic citation payments and small claims assistance. Go online for locations and hours.

DRIVER'S LICENSE & TAGS

Lee County Tax Collector

25987 S. Tamiami Trail, Ste. 112

Bonita Springs, FL 34134

239-533-6000

LeeTC.com/Vehicles-titles-and-registrations

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mon. – Fri.

Registration, tag and title services, and disability permits. New Florida residents must register vehicles within 10 days of the owner either becoming employed, placing children in a public school or establishing residency.

**Florida Department of Highway Safety
and Motor Vehicles**

Customer Service Center 1-850-617-2000

15680 Pine Ridge Road,

South Fort Myers, FL 33908

239-533-6000

FLHSMV.gov

An out-of-state driver's license that is not expired beyond 30 days can be converted without a written or road test, but a vision test is required. Road tests by appointment only.

Note: It is illegal to text while driving in Florida.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Lee County Economic Development

of Southwest Florida..... 239-533-6800

2201 Second Street, Ste. 500

Fort Myers, FL 33901

LeeCountyBusiness.com

#WhereBusinessIsTrending

Works to improve the overall business environment in Lee County by providing free, confidential services for local, domestic and international businesses seeking assistance with location or expansion.

EDUCATION

(See also "Education" in the Membership Directory)

School District of Lee County

General Information..... 239-334-1102

2855 Colonial Blvd.

Fort Myers, FL 33966

LeeSchools.net

The Student Enrollment Department handles all school registrations.

Call 239-337-8247 or visit

Leeschools.net and go to Student Enrollment.

■ Pinewoods Elementary School

239-947-7500

11900 Stoneybrook Golf Dr.

Estero 33928

■ Three Oaks Middle School

239-267-5757

18500 Three Oaks Pkwy.

Fort Myers 33967

■ Estero High School

239-947-9400

21900 River Ranch Road

Estero 33928

ADULT & CAREER EDUCATION

Lee County Public Schools Adult

& Career Education

LeeSchools.net/ace

Adult Education Classes 239-939-6310

Career and Technical Education

..... 239-939-6300

SPECIAL CENTERS

Fort Myers Technical College

239-334-4544

FortMyersTech.edu

3800 Michigan Ave.

Fort Myers, FL 33916

Cape Coral Technical College

239-574-4440

CapeCoralTech.edu

360 Santa Barbara Blvd. N.

Cape Coral, FL 33993

Southwest Florida

Public Service Academy

239-334-3897

SWFPSA.org

4312 Michigan Ave.

Fort Myers, FL 33905

COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)

10501 FGCU Boulevard S.

Fort Myers, FL 33965

239-590-1000

FGCU.edu

FGCU offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs through its College of Arts and Sciences, including the Bower School of Music and the Arts; Lutgert College of Business; College of Education; The School of Resort & Hospitality Management; U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering; and the College of Health Professions and Social Work, including the School of Nursing.

The Lutgert College of Business includes several faculty-led research/consultative institutes that support the region's business community through focus on entrepreneurship, technical innovation, real estate development and finance, and regional economic research.

FGCU's Small Business Development Center (FSBDCSWFL.org; 239-745-3700) provides entrepreneurial and business development services for new and existing businesses.

FGCU's Academy presents opportunities for adult learners through hands-on experiences, study tours, volunteerism, concerts and lectures. Visit fgcu.edu/academy.

Florida Southwest State College

8099 College Parkway

Fort Myers, FL 33919

239-489-9300

FSW.edu/lee

Classes, certificate programs, and two-and-four-year degrees to suit individual goals and aspirations are available on the Lee Campus. Students may choose from more than 20 major fields of study for university transfer or for job-ready two-year and four-year degrees in business, healthcare, public service and other fields.

Keiser University

9100 Forum Corporate Pkwy.

Fort Myers, FL 33905

239-277-1336

KeiserUniversity.edu

Regionally accredited, Keiser offers more than 100 certificates and associate, bachelor's, master's, specialist and doctoral degrees.

OTHER SCHOOLS

Mike Calbot International

Golf Studio & School

Old Corkscrew Golf Club
17320 Corkscrew Road
Estero, FL 33928
239-482-0900

GolfDoctorUSA.com

Private instruction, clinics, seminars, lectures, schools and golf travel trips. Golf Digest named Calbot as Best Teacher in Florida for 2013-2014.

New Horizons of SW Florida

Estero United Methodist Church

8008 Lord's Way
Estero, FL 33928
239-948-4146

NewHorizonsofSWFL.org

A non-profit organization dedicated to helping at-risk children and teens by providing after-school tutoring and mentoring at no cost to their families.

Sylvan Learning

10011 Estero Town Commons Drive, #107

Estero, FL 33928

239-301-3779

SylvanLearning.com

Sylvan Learning uses a personal approach and interactive technology to offer homework help and tutoring in math, reading and writing.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Lee County

Emergency Operations Center

2675 Ortiz Ave.

Fort Myers, FL 33905

239-533-0622

LeeGov.com/publicsafety/

EmergencyManagement

Visit the website for a list of area public shelters and emergency evacuation routes.

FIRE & RESCUE

Estero Fire Rescue District

21500 Three Oaks Parkway

Estero, FL 33928

239-390-8000

EsteroFire.org

San Carlos Park Fire

Protection & Rescue Service District

19591 Ben Hill Griffin Parkway

Fort Myers, FL 33913

239-267-7525

SanCarlosFire.org

HEALTH CARE

(See also "Health & Medical Care" in the Chamber Membership Directory.)

HOSPITALS, URGENT CARE

& WALK-IN CLINICS

Bonita Community Health Center

3501 Health Center Boulevard

Bonita Springs, FL 34135

239-468-8500

LeeHealth.org

Urgent-care walk-in clinic (Lee Health Convenient Care), comprehensive outpatient diagnostics, imaging services, same-day surgery, employee health services, pain management and physical therapy.

Estero Medical Center

10201 Arcos Avenue

Estero, FL 33928

239-482-2663

WoodsideHealth.com

A multi-specialty physician alliance that includes family medical care, an urgent care center, a sleep disorder center, physical therapy, pain management, radiology, dermatology, ear/nose/throat and allergy, neurology, obstetrics/gynecology and orthopedics. Visit the website for physician names, specialties and phone numbers.

Lee Health Coconut Point

23450 Via Coconut Point

Estero, FL 34135

239-468-0000

LeeHealth.org

Lee Health opened in Coconut Point as a 30-acre medical center. The 163,000 sq. ft. campus offers: 24/7 emergency medicine, gastroenterology, general surgery, imaging (radiology), orthopedics, primary care, obstetrics & gynecology, lab services, women's care, cardiovascular services and rehabilitation.

Other Lee Health Hospitals and Medical Centers:

- Gulf Coast Medical Center 239-343-1000
- HealthPark Medical Center 239-343-5000
- Lee Memorial Hospital 239-343-2000
- Cape Coral Hospital 239-424-2000
- Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida 239-343-5437

NCH Healthcare System

239-624-5000; NCHMD.org

- NCH Baker Hospital Downtown 239-624-5000
- NCH North Naples Hospital.... 239-552-7000
- NCH Bonita Emergency 239-624-6900

Providing comprehensive health and wellness care through two hospitals and an alliance of more than 700 physicians and medical facilities in dozens of locations throughout Southwest Florida.

NCH Healthcare System is a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network and includes the NCH Heart Institute and NCH Regional Cancer Institute.

Physicians' Primary Care of Southwest Florida

10200 Arcos Ave., Suite 101

Estero, FL 33928

239-482-1010

PPCSWFL.com.

Comprehensive care and treatment, specializing in Adult Medicine, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine.



Members of the Estero Fire Rescue:
(L-R) Mitchell Sibert, Alejanvro Llantén,
Laura Whelan, Ryan Mollica and Jason Fiora.



SENIOR CARE RESOURCES

All Ways Caring Home Care

9696 Bonita Beach Road Southeast #206
Bonita Springs, FL 34135
239-208-6570
AllWaysCaring.com
Affordable, expert home care services from professional caregivers you can trust.

American House Coconut Point

8460 Murano Del Lago Drive
Estero, FL 34135
239-217-4186
AmericanHouse.com
An upscale senior living community with 130 units of independent and assisted living, plus 64 memory care apartments. Promoting an active lifestyle, premium amenities include excursions, a spa and salon, theater, resort-style pool, gourmet coffee bar and library. Across from Lee Health-Coconut Point.

Gulf Coast Memory Care

22900 Lyden Dr.
Estero, FL 33928
239-221-6120
GulfCoastMemoryCare.com
Gulf Coast Memory Care embraces an innovative approach to life for those living with Alzheimer's and other memory impairments. Residents enjoy personalized support, as well as amenities, services and innovative programs for a lifestyle of meaning, engagement and fulfillment.

Canterfield of Fort Myers

18301 Trifecta Lane
Fort Myers, FL 33967
239-990-6100
CanterfieldSeniorLiving/FortMyers.com
Luxury independent, assisted and memory care community.

Comfort Keepers

12480 Brantley Commons Court, #101
Ft. Myers, FL 33907
239-986-9981
ComfortKeepers.com

A leading provider of in-home senior care services for elderly loved ones.

Life Care Center of Estero

3850 Williams Road
Estero, FL 33928
239-495-4000
LCCA.com/locations/FL/Estero
Nursing home services for residents include skilled and intermediate care, long term care, specialized care for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, and inpatient/outpatient rehabilitation therapies. The center also provides respite services.

The Terraces at Bonita Springs

26455 S. Tamiami Trail
Bonita Springs, FL 34134
239-949-7555

ACTSHealthServices.org/locations/Florida
A continuing care senior living community that offers independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing and memory support settings for residents with Alzheimer's or dementia. rehabilitation and therapy services are also available.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

Lee County Property Appraiser's Office

2480 Thompson Street, 4th Floor
Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-533-6100
LeePA.org
This constitutional benefit provides up to a \$50,000 exemption from your assessed property value. Applicants must possess title to real property and be state residents making the dwelling their permanent home on January 1. Documentation is required. Filing details are online.

LIBRARY

South County Regional Library

Relocated to temporary site:
Three Oaks Community Park
18251 Three Oaks Parkway
Fort Myers, FL 33967
239-533-4400
LeeGov.com/library
Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

NEWSPAPERS

Florida Weekly

2891 Center Pointe Drive, Suite 300
Fort Myers, FL 33916
239-333-2135
Floridaweekly.com

The News-Press

4415 Metro Parkway, Suite 300
Fort Myers, FL 33916
800-468-0233
News-Press.com

Naples Daily News/The Banner

1100 Immokalee Road
Naples, FL 34110
239-213-6000
844-900-7105
NaplesNews.com/Community/The-Banner

DOMESTIC PET LICENSES

Lee County Animal Services

5600 Banner Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33912
239-533-7387
LeeGov.com/AnimalServices
Agency deals with stray animals. See the website to search for adoptable animals, lost pets, pet licensing and veterinary services. All cats, dogs and ferrets four months or older must be vaccinated against rabies and licensed by the County. Many veterinarians sell licenses.

POST OFFICE

U.S. Postal Service - Estero

20791 Three Oaks Parkway
Estero, FL 33928
239-390-0823
USPS.com
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday; 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday.

LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Emergency 9-1-1
Non-emergency 239-477-1000
SheriffLeeFL.org

SOCIAL SECURITY

Fort Myers
4220 Executive Circle, Suite 25
Fort Myers, FL 33916
800-772-1213; SSA.gov

TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

Lee County Tax Collector

2480 Thompson Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-533-6000
LeeTC.com

TRANSPORTATION

AIRPORTS

Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW)

11000 Terminal Access Road
Fort Myers, FL 33913
239-590-4800
FlyLRSW.com
International airport serviced by all major airlines. Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) status.

Page Field, Fort Myers (FMY)

5200 Captain Channing Page Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33907
239-590-6600
FlyLCPA.com/FMY
Business and general aviation airport.

BUS SERVICE

Lee County Transit (LeeTran)

239-533-8726
LeeGov.com/LeeTran
LeeTran operates 24 scheduled bus routes, trolley service, a paratransit service for the disabled called Passport, and an employer vanpool program.

MAJOR HIGHWAYS

- I-75 north/south and east from Naples to Ft. Lauderdale area with connections to I-95
- U.S. 41 north/south, then east to Miami

PORT WATERWAYS

- Port Boca Grande (Gulf of Mexico)
 - Okeechobee Waterway (extends coast to coast through Lake Okeechobee)
- OffShoreBlue.com/cruising/
okeechobee.php

RAILROAD (FREIGHT)

Seminole Gulf Railway

.....239-275-6060
FloridaRail.com
SemGulf.com/Freight

UTILITIES & RECYCLING

Curbside Recycling & Waste Disposal

Lee County Solid Waste.....239-533-8000
LeeGov.com/SolidWaste

Waste Pro USA 239-337-0800
WasteProUSA.com

PHONE/CABLE/INTERNET

Comcast / Xfinity 800-934-6489
23181 Village Shops Way
Suite 107
Estero, FL 33928
Xfinity.com

CenturyLink

Ordering Services855-263-9576
CenturyLink.com

ELECTRIC

Florida Power & Light (FPL)

Start/stop service calls.....888-988-8249
Outage reports..... 800-468-8243
FPL.com

NATURAL GAS

TECO Peoples Gas877-832-6747
PeoplesGas.com

WATER & SEWER

Bonita Springs Utilities, Inc.

..... 239-992-0711
BSU.us

Lee County Utilities239-533-8845
LeeGov.com/Utilities

VOTER REGISTRATION

Lee County

Melvin Morgan Constitutional Complex 2480
Thompson Street, 3rd Floor
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
239-533-8683
Lee.Vote

Florida is a closed-primary state. Voter registration closes 29 days before each election. Download applications online.

WEATHER *(Averages in Estero)*

Season	High	Low	Rain
January	74°F	56°F	1.7"
April	83°F	64°F	1.8"
July	90°F	73°F	5.8"
October	85°F	75°F	2.8"

WORSHIP

Apostolic Christian Church

19690 Cypress View Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33967
239-405-7828
FortMyersACchurch.org

Calvary Chapel Gulf Coast

20991 Three Oaks Parkway
Estero, FL 33928
239-949-0914
CalvaryGC.org

Chabad Jewish Center

24611 Production Circle
Bonita Springs, FL 34135
239-949-6900
Jewishbonita.com

Christ Community Ministries

8681 County Road
Estero, FL 33928
239-498-4352
CCMChurch.com

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

20601 Three Oaks Parkway
Estero, FL 33928
954-601-3853
ChurchofJesusChrist.org

Estero Global Methodist Church

8088 Lord's Way
Estero, FL 33928
239-992-5516
Estero.Church

Estero Community Church

21115 Design Parc Lane
Estero, FL 33928
239-267-3331
EsteroCommunityChurch.com

Lamb of God

Lutheran Episcopal Church

19691 Cypress View Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33967
239-267-3525
LambOfGodChurch.net

Naples Jewish Congregation

6340 Napa Woods Way
Naples, FL 34116
239-431-3858
naplesjewishcongregation.org

Ocean Church

22100 S. Tamiami Trail
Estero, FL 33928
239-992-3040
OceanChurch.com

Or Lady of Light Catholic Church

19680 Cypress View Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33967
239-267-7088
OurLadyOfLight.com

River of Life Assembly of God Church

21580 River Ranch Road
Estero, FL 33928
239-495-0400
RiverOfLife.ag

Summit Church

19601 Ben Hill Griffin Parkway
Fort Myers, FL 33912
239-947-7070
SummitLife.com

Thrive Community Church

20041 S. Tamiami Trail
Suite 1
Estero, FL 33928
239-687-3430
Thrive-FL.org

BUSINESS SOURCES & SERVICES: LEE COUNTY & ESTERO

LICENSES & PERMITS

Community Development Department

Village of Estero 239-221-5036
Estero-FL.gov

(Departments/Services menu)

Coordinates the land use, zoning, site development and permit process within Estero. Construction, reconstruction and remodeling projects require building permits and inspections. Download application forms, check permit status and schedule inspections online.

Occupational Licenses

(Business Tax Account) 239-533-6000
LeeTC.com

Businesses in Estero must obtain a Lee County business tax account which is issued annually by the Lee County Tax Collector. Visit the website for details and to download an application.

BUSINESS DEMOGRAPHICS: LEE COUNTY

Top Employers

COMPANY	TYPE OF BUSINESS	EMPLOYEES
Lee Memorial Health System	Nonprofit Hospital/Healthcare System	14,000
Lee County Public Schools	Education	12,000
Lee County	Local Government	9,553
Publix Super Markets	Grocer, Retail	5,726
Chico's FAS, Inc.	Retail Apparel	3,938
Herc Rentals	Heavy Equipment Rental	2,400
Amazon	Retail Shipping	2,200
Gartner, Inc.	Management Consulting	2,100
Florida Gulf Coast University	Higher Education	1,778
Shell Point Retirement Community	Senior Living	1,546
Walmart	Retail	1,509
Radiology Regional Center	Healthcare System	1,247
Florida Southwestern State College	Higher Education	1,245
McDonald's	Retail Restaurant	1,150
Home Depot	Retail Trade	1,120

Average Hourly Wages

(Selected Occupational Groups in Lee County)

Sales and Related Services	\$59.11
Legal	57.00
Management	56.89
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	52.20
Computer & Mathematical	48.40
Architecture & Engineering	42.51
Life, Physical & Social Science	42.50
Business & Financial Operations	40.65
Arts, Entertainment, Sports & Media	30.62
Community and Social Service	29.39
Protective Service	28.59
Office and Administrative Support	27.55
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	27.20
Educational Instruction & Library	26.50
Construction & Extraction	25.36
Transportation and Material Moving	23.46
Healthcare Support	21.00
Building and Grounds Maintenance	19.00
Production	17.45
Personal Care and Services	17.17
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	16.58
Food Prep and Serving	14.00



Projected Population Growth

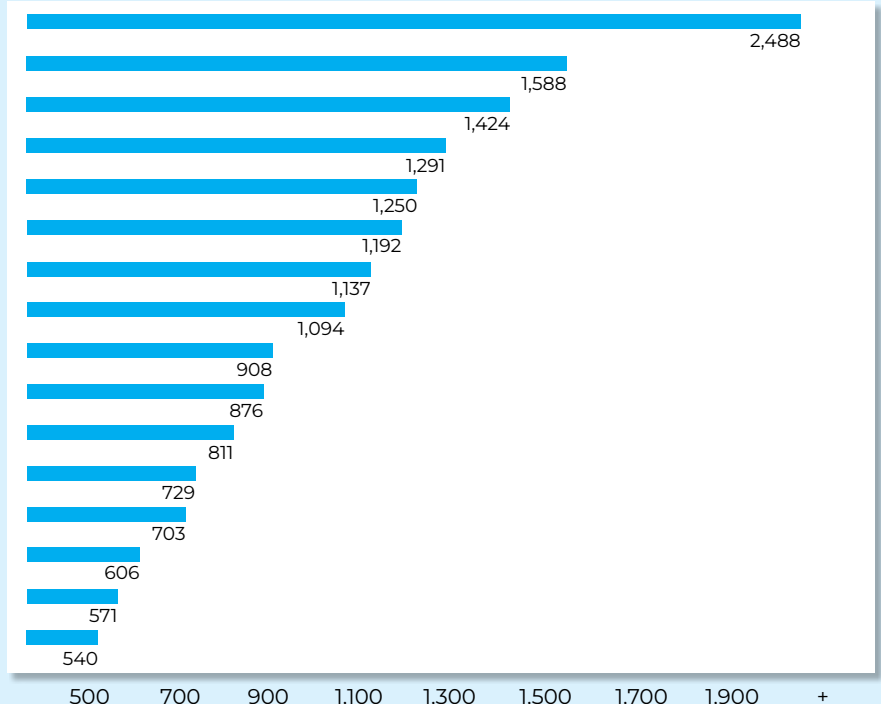
Includes: Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, Estero and unincorporated portions of Lee County
 2025-20271.689 Million

Source for all information on this page comes from Lee County Economic Development Office

INDUSTRY / OCCUPATION BY RANK

Construction Trades Workers	1
Healthcare Treating Practitioners	2
Food and Beverage Serving Workers	3
Business Operations Specialists	4
Material Moving Workers	5
Retail Sales Workers	6
Other Management Occupations	7
Home Health and Personal Care	8
Motor Vehicle Operators	9
Cooks and Food Prep Workers	10
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	11
Building Cleaning and Pest Control	12
Health Technologists and Technicians	13
Computer Occupations	14
Grounds Maintenance	15
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	16

Industries Gaining the Most New Jobs Thru 2029





- ✓ Event Planning ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Branding ✓ Website Design
- ✓ Public Relations



An award-winning, **full-service marketing agency**, TLC Marketing has been helping businesses enhance their community presence for over **17 years**. With a team of dedicated professionals, TLC is committed to delivering superior service and fostering outstanding relationships by upholding quality, positivity, and social responsibility.

Every business needs a little TLC!

239-405-8115
TLC Podast: Together Let's Chat
9240 Bonita Beach Rd, Ste 3317
Bonita Springs, FL 34135



Professional Regulation.....850-487-1395
 MyFloridaLicense.com
 The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation in Tallahassee is the agency charged with licensing and regulating the state's businesses and professionals, such as cosmetologists, veterinarians, real estate agents, etc. View licensing requirements and apply for or update a license online.

INFORMATION SOURCES
Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce
 9990 Coconut Road, Suite 337
 Estero, FL. 34134
 239-390-1137
 EsteroChamber.org

The Estero Chamber of Commerce represents over 200 businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals throughout the Southwest Florida area, providing many avenues where members can network and build relationships, learn how to grow their businesses, and market themselves to a wide range of other business professionals and residents.

Lee County Economic Development of Southwest Florida
 2201 Second Street, Ste. 500
 Fort Myers, FL 33901
 239-533-6800
 #WhereBusinessIsTrending
 LeeCountyBusiness.com
 Supports local business and brings new business to Lee County. (See Economic Development on page 35.)

SelectFlorida
 305-808-3660;
 SelectFlorida.org
 SelectFlorida is a public-private partnership between Florida's business and government leaders, with a mission to expand and diversify the state's economy through job creation. It focuses its efforts on a wide range of industry sectors and is the state's primary entity for trade and export development. SelectFlorida also supports small and minority businesses through its capital programs.

Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau
 2201 Second Street, Suite 600
 Fort Myers 33901
 239-338-3500
 800-237-6444
 VisitFortMyers.com
 The Lee County VCB offers comprehensive visitor resources and destination marketing information and assistance.

Small Business Development Center at Florida Gulf Coast University
 239-745-3700
 SBDC.FGCU.EDU
 Training workshops, programs, services and minority certification designed to help small business owners, including no-cost business counseling and guidance by professionally certified business consultants at multiple locations.



Image by Christiana from Pixabay

Hospital for Special Surgery

NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY NOW OPEN

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Located at 11190 Health Park Blvd., Naples, FL 34110. Call 239-624-2999 or visit HSSatNCH.org to schedule an appointment, for more information or to take a virtual tour of the facility.



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

YOUR THRIVING Chamber of Commerce

GREATER ESTERO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce represents the collective interests of the business community and provides tangible benefits for its members and the broader Southwest Florida area.

The Chamber advocates for their member businesses by providing opportunities for networking and collaboration, member services and support that range from professional development programs and peer mentoring to marketing support.

The Chamber also contributes to the area economic vitality by attracting investment, supporting startups and promoting local businesses.

Beyond supporting business, the Chamber plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life in the communities, partnering with local government, educational institutions and non-profits that benefit the great Greater Estero area.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

- Monthly Events such as the “Food for Thought” informational luncheons and the “Alive After Five” socials provide the members with valuable business tips and ideas’ as well as excellent sources for networking and forming valuable connections.
- Annual events such as the Annual Awards Dinner and Annual Golf Tournament offer additional opportunities for sponsorships and business exposure.
- Ribbon Cuttings celebrates new business openings and introduces them to the community.

CHAMBER COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Join us at the Estero Community Park (9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd) on **March 21** for Estero Fest 2026, a free, fun-filled event hosted by the Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce.

Discover endless excitement at the Business Expo, with vendors galore, and bring the kids to enjoy the Kids Zone, featuring a bounce house, Too Tall Torrie, action figures, a face painter, and more!

Dance and sing along to live music all day, culminating in a show-stopping performance by the Ben Allen Band. VIP tickets are available for an exclusive experience, including access to the Beer Garden Tent, which stretches all the way to the stage.

Satisfy your cravings with delicious offerings from food trucks and enjoy beer and wine available for purchase throughout the day.

Meet community heroes with displays from the Lee County Sheriff’s Office and Estero Fire Rescue.

Mark your calendars—don’t miss this unforgettable day of music, fun, and community spirit at Estero Fest 2026!

CONTACT:

Greater Estero Chamber of Commerce
239-390-1137 or
Info@EsteroChamber.org





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Leadership Estero is now in its fourth year, introducing a broad range of Southwest Florida participants to the Estero Community, its unique history, and key issues that impact the region. The 7-month program includes intensive days spent thoroughly indoctrinating participants in topics important to the area, including:

- Government & History
- Public Safety
- Arts & Tourism
- Social Services
- Environment
- Education
- Healthcare

Through behind-the-scenes tours and workshops with community partners and leaders, participants develop lasting relationships, bolster their leadership skills and work collaboratively on a community project.

Special thanks to our Leading the Way sponsor, **MBI Tours** (MBICharterBus.com) for making sure our Leadership Class is always present for their latest experience!



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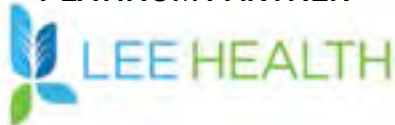
For more information on Chamber programs, membership and sponsorship opportunities, visit their website at: EsteroChamber.org.

MEMBERSHIP

GREATER ESTERO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IMPACT PARTNERS

You are funding the Plan for the Chamber's Growth Strategy. Thank you to the Major Investors, an elite group who will have a tremendous impact on the Chamber's future growth. Please visit the Chamber's Website for information on becoming an Impact Partner.

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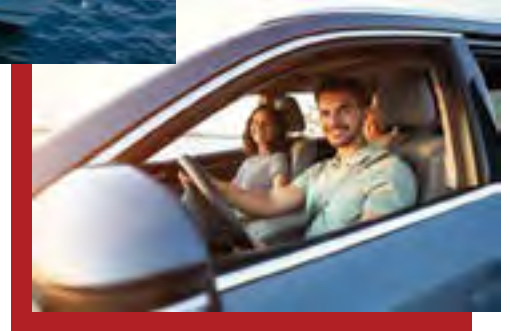


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for you and your family

(239) 624-7777

7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

7 days a week



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