

MAY 2025

NEXT CHAMBER BOARD MEETING

May 8th, 2025 in the Depot Train Room

We value your input! Our meetings are open for any Chamber member to attend.



How to Reach Us!



(1) Online



Phone

www.florachamber.com

618-662-5646



florachamberofcommerce@gmail.com









Follow us on these social media platforms and stay informed!

Flora Chamber

OF COMMERCE

FOUND IN EVERY ISSUE!

- **Chamber News**
- Member News
- **3** Community Calendar
- Member Job Postings New!
- **Training Opportunities, Seminars & Grants!**

ESTABLISHED IN 1939

PH: 618-662-5646

IMPORTANT CHAMBER MEMBER INFO

March 31, 2025

Dear Chamber Members:

The Flora Chamber of Commerce continually works to keep our Membership Fees as low as possible while also giving our Members the best possible service and support. In fact, it has been four years since our last, relatively small, fee increase. However, over those same four years, costs have continued to increase substantially. I'm sure you've noticed that in your own businesses and personal lives, and, unfortunately, that's true for the Chamber as well.

As an example, one area that has affected many of us is payroll costs. Minimum wage in Illinois has raised by \$4 per hour since 2021, when we did out last fee increase. That represents a minimum annual increase of over \$8000 for each full-time employee in payroll cost alone. We believe that all employees deserve decent pay, but the reality is it simply costs more to do business today than it used to. And, Of course this isn't the only business expense that has gone up in the last four years.

With that said, the Flora Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has reluctantly decided to implement a modest fee increase effective April 1, 2025. This is not a decision that we took lightly, and it is never our wish to place further burden on any of our Members. We simply feel this is necessary to offset our rising costs. We hope that you understand and that you continue to believe in the mission of the Chamber, that of supporting local businesses and helping drive the economy of our community.

It is not our wish to lose anyone as a Member because of this decision. If you find that the increase in your Membership dues creates an undue burden for you, please reach out to myself or Anna Rounds, the Chamber's Executive Director. We will work with you to find a solution so you can continue to enjoy the many benefits the Flora Chamber of Commerce has to offer.

We thank you for your understanding, and most importantly for your continued support of the Flora Chamber of Commerce. If you have any questions, or we can help you in any way, please DO reach out to us. You can stop by the Chamber Office located at 223 W. Railroad St, call us at (618) 662-5646, contact us through Facebook Messenger, or in whatever way is most convenient for you. Again, we thank you for your support and for all you do for the Chamber and for our community.

Sincerely,

Doug Leak President Flora Chamber of Commerce

IMPORTANT CHAMBER MEMBER INFO

New Chamber Dues Rates Effective: April 1, 2025

I. Industry/Manufacturing/Public Utilities

Employees	Amount
a) 1 – 25	\$165.00
b) 26 – 50	\$250.00
c) 51 – 75	\$330.00
d) 76 – 100	\$385.00
e) 101 – over	\$395.00 + .75 per employee over 100

II. Retail/Wholesale/Service

Employees	Amount
a) 1 – 5	\$125.00
b) 6 – 15	\$150.00
c) 16 – 25	\$185.00
d) 26 – over	\$195.00 + 3.25 per employee over 25

<u>III. Professional</u> (Those holding a state issued license for their business) \$125.00 per professional person

IV. Non Profit/Churches ---- \$75.00*
V. Sales or Food Vendors ---- \$75.00

* This rate is also for individuals not engaged in business who wishes to support the Chamber.

<u>Note:</u> If more than one business holds the same tax number, the first business is charged at the above rate and the additional businesses are charged \$10.00 each.

IMPORTANT CHAMBER MEMBER INFO





CLAY COUNTY HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CLINICS 911 Stacy Burk Drive • Flora, IL 62839 618.662.2131







"A Better Choice in Banking"

Entry Fee:

\$25 per player
Additional \$10 if signing up for
an extra division plus Mixed
Doubles



Adult Male Beginner 9 AM

Adult Male Inter/ Adv 10:45 AM Adult Female Beginner 12:30 PM

Adult Female Inter/ Adv 2:15 PM Adult Mix Beginner 4:00 PM

Adult Mix Inter/ Adv 5:45 PM

Entry fee \$25 per person, additional \$10 for mix. Guaranteed 6 games in all skill levels!



SATURDAY MAY 17TH, 2025



CITY OF FLORA PICKLEBALL COURTS

King/Queen of the court tournament. Sign up by May 14th.

friendly competition, and community spirit!





Visit Our Website www.florachamber.com



What to Bring:

Your own paddle (pickleballs provided)

Your best friend (player #2)

Competitive spirit and enthusiasm!

Register by: May 14, 2025

APRIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT RECAP



















Furniture Co

Welcome New April Members!

Green Sprout Living

Beautiful Strandz Salon

ESTABLISHED IN 1939 PH: 618-662-5646

FLORACHAMBER.COM

April Chamber Member Spotlight Re-Cap Word Search

Q D S R Y Q P G G C H E T Y Q Y H K O S P M T D L E F L D J C Z E N B T Y A L R T O M L B C J H N F A K Y Z I E Z I E L E Y Z L N G E G Z A G O P M J C O L M K A Z E U D MOSTHOMELALTWESAHLGBS

Word Bank

BIGTPETSECURITY
CLAYCOUNTYFARMBUREAU
CLAYCOUNTYHOSPITAL
DASZLE
EDLEWISTRUCKING

FLORABANKANDTRUST
FLORASAVINGSBANK
HELLA
ITSALMOSTHOME
NORTHAMERICANLIGHTING

Chamber Sponsorship Opportunities

Want to boost your business visibility while supporting local events? Our 2025 Sponsorship Opportunities are now available — and we'd love to have your business involved! From high-energy events like the Chamber Golf Scramble and Paddle Battle, to community favorites like the 4th of July Celebration and Disc Golf Tournament, there's something for every interest and budget.

Why Sponsor?

- Increase your brand's visibility at well-attended local events
- Build community goodwill by showing support for Flora
- Connect with new customers and fellow business leaders
- Enjoy exclusive benefits like event signage, promotion, and discounts!

Whether you're a returning supporter or a first-time sponsor, this is your chance to make an impact all year long.

To view the full list of sponsorship packages, visit our website at florachamber.com and download the printable PDF.

Let's make 2025 unforgettable — together!

Flora	Business Name:		Chamber Golf Scramble: Bronze Sponsor Hole sponsorship highlighting your business on a 2x3 sign. (Due no later than: June 1, 2025)	\$100
Chamber of Commerce	Phone Number: Please return to: 223 West Railroad Street Flora, IL 62839 ns/advertising budget for 2025, please consider sponsoring		4th of July Celebration: Band Sponsor Logo or business name listed in all fliers, graphics, and promotional items. Stage Banner with your business name or logo. (Due no later than: June 4, 2025)	
"As you pan your promounts asset using usuage to a 200, please consule sportsoring a Flora Chamber of Commerce event Through the generosity of our members, we offer 7 major events this year to both our membership and the general public. Sponsoring an event has several benefits for your business: Increase Brand Visibility: Put your brand in front of large audiences! You can increase your			4th of July Celebration: Attraction Sponsor Logo or business name listed in all fliers, graphics, and promotional items, 2x3 sign placed in high traffic area throughout Charley Brown Park. (Due no later than: June 4, 2025)	\$300
brand visibility through sponsor benefits, see those details below! Business Exposure through Community Goodwill: Customers and clients trust brands that care about investing in their community. Community involvement will set your business apart, and create an incentive for the community to support your business over the competition.		Amateur Doubles Disc Golf Tournament: Silver Sponsor Hole sponsorship highlighting your business on a 2x3 sign, logo or business name listed in all fliers, graphics, and promotional items. (Due no later than: Oct. 1, 2025)	\$200	
 Efficiently Generate New Leads: Not only do Chamber events connect you with a compatible customer base, they also allow you to show the "human side" of your business. By sponsoring and attending, you can interact with potential customers, learn about their needs, promote your products, and build a strong contact list. 		Amateur Doubles Disc Golf Tournament: Bronze Sponsor Hole sponsorship highlighting your business on a 2x3 sign. (Due no later than: Oct. 1, 2025)	\$200	
5th Annual Bowling Tournamen Logo or business name listed in	all fliers, graphics, and promotional items. e of the lanes. and a team of 4 included!	\$200	Chamber Bucks Sponsor Chamber Bucks are given out at various events such as the 4th of July Celebration, Moonlight Madness, FHS Food Service Class (Gingerbread House winners), and multiple social media promotions. As a sponsor, your business name will be listed on our website under "Chamber Bucks" as a sponsor as well as the Chamber Bucks brochure that is passed out when Chamber Bucks are given out. (Can be sponsored all year long)	\$50
	all fliers, graphics, and promotional items, ed on fence, and a team of 2 included!	\$150	Total amount for my sponsorship packages: \$	included
	our business on a 2x3 sign, logo or , graphics, and promotional items, plus	\$400	THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE FLORA CHAMBER OF COMMI The Flora Chamber of Commerce is your voice of business in Flora, We	ERCE! are here to
Chamber Gelf Scramble: Silver Sponsor Hole sponsorship highlighting your business on a 2x3 sign, logo or business name listed in all fliers, graphics, and promotional items. (Due no later than: May 20, 2025)		\$200	assure the business concerns of our members are addressed and property Our priority is to promote Flora businesses present and future and to ass anyone local or not so local receives any and all the information they migh expand or create new business in our own area.	

Upcoming Member Events



WNOI IS CELEBRATING SUMMER 2025 WITH A FUN NEW BEACH TOWEL PROMOTION!

1200+ - WNOI/CCC Summer 2025 Sublimated Beach Towels featuring BOTH of our Station Logos along with 30 SPONSOR LOGOS will be given away at local fairs, festivals, parades & events this summer!

As a WNOI/CLAY COUNTY COUNTRY SUMMER BEACH TOWEL SPONSOR, you'll receive: numerous radio promos on BOTH stations, Facebook Promotions/Post Shares &

200 - :30 RADIO ADS to use NOW through September 30™ 2025!

Your investment is just \$240/month May-September 2025!

SIGN UP TODAY-SPACE IS LIMITED!

Accepted for Business

Today's Date

Business Name

Accepted for 99.3/103.9



THE GREAT

DUCK HUNT

SUNDRY, JUNE 1, 2025 Registration: 12:00 PM - 1 PM

Entry Fee: \$30 Donation Entry Fee Per Vehicle

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO SUPPORT CAVE OF ADULLAM MISSION TRIP IN COSTA RICA THIS SUMMER

PORK BURGER SALE

- LOTS OF GREAT PRIZES
- OVER A 1000 DUCKS TO HUNT
- NO JEEP NEEDED



CLAY CO CAMPUS 200 N OLIVE FLORA. IL



Every Saturday starting May 3rd - Sept. 27th 8am - Noon

Flora Library Park



Flora Clean-Up Days

May 19th - 23rd, 2025



Flora City-Wide Yard Sales

May 16th & 17th, 2025







Member News

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVES

5/7 - Flora Depot (1-5pm) @ Flora Depot Train Room

5/21 - Clay Electric Coop (1-5pm) @ CEC Conference Room

5/27 - Full Armor (2-6pm) @ FACA Gym

5/30 - Clay County Health Dept (1-5pm) @ CCHD Conference Room

May Promo: Come to give blood May 1-18 and get a \$20 e-gift card to a merchant of your choice. PLUS, get a chance to win a U.S. trip of choice for you and a guest!

Terms apply: rcblood.org/may

Come to give blood May 19-31 and get an exclusive Red Cross solar lantern, while supplies last. PLUS, get a chance to win a U.S. trip of choice for you and a guest!

Terms apply: rcblood.org/may.



Clay County Hospital

Thursday, May 8 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Medical Building Conference Infusions Room

911 Stacey Burk Drive, Flora, IL

BLOOD DRIVE



GIVE BLOOD

To schedule an appt, scan QR code, or call ImpactLife at 800.747.5401

Tourism News

We had 5 teams for our BBQ competition for our first annual Spring Fest!

The categories judged were: Chicken, Ribs, Pork Butt, people's choice and overall winner.

A huge thank you to all the teams and especially Dawn and Ryan Wiles & Ryan Scott for putting this together. It would not have happened without their vision and direction!

Would also like to thank Storm Brewing for allowing us to use their overflow room for judging and for providing entertainment.

Thank you all and Congratulations!



Training Opportunities, Seminars, & Grants

HOW TO START A SMALL BUSINESS IN ILLINOIS WORKSHOP

From Dream to Reality: Your Illinois Small Business Journey Starts Here

When: Thursday, May 15, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM

Where: Flora Chamber of Commerce Train Room inside B&O Depot 223 West Railroad Street Flora IL





Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. SBA, the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, and the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges.

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance.

Contact Michelle Brooks at 618-562-3744.

Thinking of Starting a Business? Join Our Free Workshop!

Have you been dreaming of opening your own business but don't know where to begin? You're not alone—and we're here to help.

The Flora Chamber of Commerce is excited to host a free "How to Start a Small Business in Illinois" Workshop on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 1:00 PM in the Train Room inside the B&O Depot, located at 223 West Railroad Street, Flora, IL.

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Presented by America's SBDC at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, this workshop will guide you through the key steps in launching your business successfully in Illinois. Whether you're just starting to explore an idea or ready to take the next step, this session will provide practical information on:

- Business structure and registration
- Licenses and permits
- Financing options and resources
- Planning for long-term success
- Support services available through the SBDC

This is a great opportunity to get your questions answered, connect with other local entrepreneurs, and take the first step toward making your dream a reality.

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. For more information, contact Michelle Brooks at 618-562-3744.

No registration fee-just bring your ideas and questions!

Attracting Talent in Today's Job Market: Tips for Local Businesses

In today's competitive job market, attracting quality employees is more challenging—and more important—than ever. For small businesses in our community, standing out as a great place to work can make all the difference. Here are several strategies to help you recruit and retain top talent:

1. Promote Your Culture and Values

People want more than a paycheck—they want purpose and a positive environment. Use your website and social media to showcase your team, celebrate wins, and highlight what makes your business a great place to work.

2. Offer Flexibility Where You Can

Flexible hours, part-time options, or remote work (when possible) are highly attractive to today's workforce. Even small adjustments can open the door to more applicants.

3. Create Clear Job Descriptions

Make sure your job postings are specific and easy to understand. Include responsibilities, required skills, and most importantly, what your business offers in return—like training, growth opportunities, or unique perks.

4. Tap Into Local Resources

Connect with high schools, community colleges, and local workforce centers. Many have job boards or programs that can help you reach qualified candidates. The Chamber can also assist in sharing your openings with our network.

5. Offer Development Opportunities

Employees are more likely to stay with a company that invests in their growth. Whether it's cross-training, mentorship, or paying for certification courses, investing in development shows you value your team.

6. Highlight Employee Testimonials

Ask current employees to share why they enjoy working for you. Featuring their stories in job ads or social media builds trust and gives potential hires a sense of what it's really like to work with you.

7. Streamline Your Hiring Process

Don't lose good candidates due to delays. Make sure your interview and decision-making process is organized and timely.

Hiring is never one-size-fits-all, but with the right strategies in place, local businesses can compete—and thrive—in attracting talent that will help them grow. For more hiring tips or to share your job openings, contact the Chamber office. We're here to help.

Community Calendar

Date Time Event Location

May 5	9:00-11:00 AM	Food Pantry	Clay County Ministerial Aliance
May 5	10:00-2:00 PM	Pulled Pork Sale	Flora High School
May 7	11:30-12:30 PM	Children's Orthopedic Clinic	Flora Medical Clinic
May 7	1:00-5:00 PM	Blood Drive	Flora Depot Community Room
May 8	9:30-1:30 PM	Blood Drive	Clay County Hospital
May 8	3:30-6:30 PM	CCHD Spring Resource Carnival	Charley Brown Park
May 10	12:00-3:00 PM	Ladies Day Out	Storm Brewing
May 12	9:00-11:00 AM	Food Pantry	Clay County Ministerial Aliance
May 15	1:00 PM	"How to Start a Small Business" Seminar	Flora Depot Train Room
May 16	All Day	Flora City Wide Sales	City of Flora
May 17	All Day	Flora City Wide Sales	City of Flora
May 17	9:00 AM	9th Annual 6K Run for Water	Flora Christian Church
May 17	Varies	Flora Chamber Paddle Battle	Flora City Pickleball Courts
May 19	9:00-11:00 AM	Food Pantry	Clay County Ministerial Aliance
May 20	2:00 PM	Seasoned Circle	Clay County Hospital
May 21	1:00-5:00 PM	Blood Drive	Clay Electric Coop
May 25	TBA	Flora Rotary Disc Golf Tournament	Charley Brown Park
May 26	9:00-11:00 AM	Food Pantry	Clay County Ministerial Aliance
May 27	2:00-6:00 PM	Blood Drive	Full Armor FACA Gymnasium
May 30	1:00-5:00 PM	Blood Drive	CCHD Conference Room
May 31	10:00-12:00 PM	Fish Truck Days	Tractor Supply

To add your community event to our community calendar, please look at our pinned posts on our Facebook page and comment under that months community calendar post!

Deadline for all June Newsletter submissions will be Monday



Thank you for your continued support!

FLORA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

223 W. RAILROAD ST. FLORA, IL 62839

618-662-5646 PHONE/FAX

EMAIL:

FLORACHAMBEROFCOMMERCE@GMAIL.COM

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

8 AM TO 5 PM (CLOSED FOR LUNCH)



THE MEMBERS CREED

I BELONG TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BECAUSE: I REALIZE IN UNITY THERE IS STRENGTH; IT IS THE BEST MEDIUM FOR SERVING MY COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE; I BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE GROWTH AND PROGRESS OF MY CITY; IT'S ONLY QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IS GOOD CITIZENSHIP: I WANT TO WORK WITH MY FELLOW TOWNSMEN FOR THE COMMON INTEREST OF ALL; I WANT TO BENEFIT FROM THEIR CONCERTED PLANNING, COUNSEL, AND ACTION; IT IS A CLEARING HOUSE FOR BUSINESS INFORMATION, SERVICE, AND COMMUNITY EFFORT; MEMBERSHIP BUSINESS PAYS A HIGH RATE OF INTEREST INSERVICE, PERSONAL CONTACTS, COMMUNITY BETTERMENT AND CIVIC PRIDE; EXPERIENCE AND THE RECORDS OF THE PAST HAVE CONCLUSIVELY DEMONSTRATED ITS USEFULNESS AND JUSTIFIED EXISTENCE, NOT ONLY IN THIS COMMUNITY BUT IN PRACTICALLY EVERY OTHER PART OF THE WORLD.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: DOUG LEAK
VICE PRESIDENT: MICHAEL GILL
TREASURER: CHRIS THOMPSON

DIRECTORS
MANDY HARGIS, JOE HARRIS, STEPHEN SMITH
BARBARA SCHAFER, JASON SMITH, GREG SCHAFER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ANNA ROUNDS