



2024

POLK ARTS GUIDE



POLK ARTS &
CULTURAL ALLIANCE

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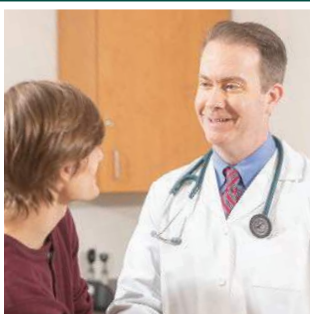


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Welcome to the HEART of Central Florida

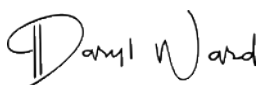
Greetings Arts & Cultural Enthusiast,

I want to welcome you to the second edition of the Polk Arts Guide – our resource for the arts and cultural opportunities available in Polk County. As the Executive Director of the Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance, I was thrilled to hear about the response of our first edition – the 2023 Polk Arts Guide. The feedback we received affirmed the opportunities it provides. First, it offers our readers with opportunities to locate and experience some of Polk County's finest arts and cultural experiences. Whether you want to know where to buy local art, where you can hear some live music, or what local theatre productions are showing, this guide is an important asset to our local residents and guests.

Second, the arts guide also provides our fantastic arts and cultural entities the opportunity to show off the best of our county. Polk is fortunate to have an award-winning community theatre, a world-class art museum, and fantastic historical and cultural spaces. It is my hope that this guide will bring all our arts and cultural organizations recognition for their tireless work in providing Polk citizens and visitors alike with tremendous arts and cultural experiences.

I continue to be grateful for PACA's partnership with Visit Central Florida for their assistance with funding and logistical support to bring you the 2024 edition. I am also grateful for the advertisers in the guide – their financial support demonstrates their commitment to the value of the arts to Polk's economic bottom line. And finally, I offer my most profound thanks to the team at CORE Wealth Advisors. Their sponsorship of this guide and of the 2024 Polk County Arts & Culture Hall of Fame Ceremony is a testimony to their belief that arts and cultural experiences improve our quality of life here in Polk County.

I trust you will find this guide insightful and informative. Enjoy!



Daryl Ward, PhD
Executive Director
Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance



Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance

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Ridge Art Association

The Mission of the Ridge Art Association is to educate and promote understanding of the Visual Arts and to sponsor cultural events within the community. Executive Director Daphne Manning knows this firsthand. Her husband, artist Trent Manning, did his first show at the Ridge Art Association 20 years ago. Now, he's a full-time artist. "It's a great place for new artists to get started," Manning said. "It really launched him into becoming a full-time artist. I would hope that it helps other artists in the area do that, too."

The Association was founded in 1950 by five women. The original gallery was on 6th Street in Winter Haven before moving to its home across the lobby from Theatre Winter Haven.

Ridge Art hosts five gallery shows a year, coinciding with the show schedule for Theatre Winter Haven. They also host five municipal shows at Winter Haven City Hall, Lake Alfred City Hall, Haines City Library, Winter Haven Airport, and MacKay Gardens in Lake Alfred.

Ridge Art is also responsible for Winter Haven's Festival of Trees and the Annual Victor Smith Law Group Central Park Art Festival. This is the 46th year for the outdoor, family-friendly art festival. It's held in Central Park in Downtown Winter Haven and boasts 75 of the country's most accomplished artists and rising stars. The Festival, which is March 9, 2024, from 9 am to 4 pm, and March 10, 2024, from 10 am to 4 pm, will include children's activities, food trucks, live music, and more.

"In addition to giving artists an outlet, a place to show their work, and exposure for their work, it's a great place for people to come in and discover if they're into artwork," Manning said. "It's not as intimidating as maybe a museum. They can stroll in and become more familiar."

For a class schedule and membership information, visit their website, www.ridgeart.org. For volunteer opportunities, call or email Daphne Manning at 863-640-5693 and DManning@ridgeart.org.



Ridge Art Association 2024 Schedule

My Winter Haven: Endless Summer

A Juried Competition inside WH City Hall

August 10th 2023, - July 20, 2024

Receiving Fri Aug 4th, 11–4 pm & August 5, 8:30–11 am- critique at 2:30 Reception Thursday, August 10. Doors open at 5:30 pm. Awards at 6:00

Rails And Trails

A juried competition inside Lake Alfred City Hall

November 2, 2023 – Oct 2024

Receiving October 20, 1-4 and October 21, 8:30–11 am Critique 2:30 Reception Thursday, November 2, 5:30 pm Awards at 6:00

The 74th Anniversary Fine Art Exhibition

A Juried Competition

Jan 18th —Feb 18th, 2024

Receiving Thur December 21, 1–4 pm, Thur January 11, 1-4, Fri Jan 12th, 10-4, & January 13, 8:30–11 am. Critique 3 pm Reception Jan 20th, 6 pm Doors open at 6 pm Awards at 6:30

Mackay Gardens 2024

Feb 2024–2025

A Juried Competition inside Mackay Gardens Estate

Receiving Friday Feb 23rd 1-4 and Saturday Feb 24th, 8:30–11, Critique at 2:30 Reception to be held March 28 at 5:30

Haines City Library “Downtown Alive” 2024

April 2024–2025

A Juried Competition inside Haines City Library Receiving April 5, 1-4 and April 6 8:30–11 Critique at 2:30



Mulberry Cultural Center

Did you know that just south of Lakeland on Highway 60, there's a beautiful gallery where you can see new exhibits every six weeks? The Mulberry Cultural Center opened in 2015 and has since been a beacon of arts and culture for the area.

Before 2015, the Mulberry Phosphate Museum across the street didn't have enough space to expand for temporary exhibits. The library, where the Mulberry Cultural Center sits today, would be moving to double its space. That meant a building owned by the City would be sitting empty.

City of Mulberry Director of Culture and Programming, Chelsea Young, has a background in art history. She was excited at the prospect of the former library being repurposed for a thoughtful gallery space with classroom possibilities. Young presented the idea to City Manager Rick Johnson, who asked her to write a proposal for the project. It was presented to the Commission and passed with flying colors. Everyone saw a need for such a space in Mulberry.

"Then we had this project on our hands that was exciting but also intimidating because it all happened pretty quickly," Young said. They transformed the space, knocking out walls, installing flooring, and hanging new lights. More importantly, they needed to ensure exhibits were lined up while still in the build-out process. Young sent a proposal to the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibitions for consideration.

The Mulberry Cultural Center was one of only six to be selected. The Center opened in 2015 with an exhibit from the Smithsonian.

The Mulberry Cultural Center is host to a range of changing exhibitions. "We started that first year by determining a schedule changing every six weeks. The City Manager was clear that he wanted it to rotate every six weeks," Young said. "It's a pretty ambitious schedule that we've been able to keep up with since 2015."

They've so far had over 50 exhibits ranging from local to international artists with



subjects varying from fiber arts and tattoos to the history of Blues in Florida and woodworking. "Our pride and joy is working with local artists to showcase their talent and to be that learning experience too," said Young. Most of their artists are emerging with their first solo show. The Center works with them on promoting their voice and exhibit design.

"We want to showcase everyone's story uniquely so our space is always changing in its look," she said.

In addition to their gallery, the MCC offers classroom spaces with rotating classes primarily for elementary school students. These have included art history, paint along, and clay sculpture classes to name a few. They are currently looking into geography classes as they are a humanities-based organization focussing on the visual arts and anything relating to people.

"Everyone has their own story, and we want to tell them. We want to showcase arts and culture and make it accessible to everyone," Young said of the Center's mission. "You might not love every exhibit or every class, but there will be something that inspires you."

Young emphasized the importance of such a space in the city. "Arts and culture is for everyone, and it should be accessible," she said. "Going back even 15 years ago, no one would have thought that Mulberry would be a place where arts and culture were promoted and thriving. I think we have developed that. [...] Your creativity, your stories, they all matter, and we want to showcase them. It enriches lives and builds economic development. To have a thriving community, you need arts and culture."

To become involved with the Mulberry Cultural Center, sign up for their mailing list to stay apprised of upcoming classes and exhibits. Those interested can sign up on their website, www.mulberryculturalcenter.com, or by emailing Chelsea Young at cyoung@cityofmulberryfl.com.



Frank Lloyd Wright at Florida Southern College

Over 20 years, esteemed American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) delivered 18 distinctive building designs to Florida Southern College. The most extensive commission of his career, Wright's work at FSC joins 28 of Wright's projects as National Historic Landmarks. With 13 proposed structures funded and built, one of them posthumously, Florida Southern College boasts the world's largest single-site collection of Wright's architecture for one client.

According to www.flsouthern.edu/frank-lloyd-wright-home/history, Wright "pioneered a style of "organic architecture" that connects buildings harmoniously with the natural landscape around them."

"Founded in 1852 as a Methodist seminary, Florida Southern is the oldest private college in the state. The school relocated several times during its early history before settling in Lakeland in 1921, purchasing a 67-acre defunct citrus grove to serve as its new campus. Despite losing the majority of its enrollment at the outbreak of the Great Depression, Florida Southern survived and recovered, thanks largely to Dr. Ludd Spivey, the College's president since 1925. By the late 1930s, Dr. Spivey resolved to find a new architect who could transform the small, obscure college into an institution of national consequence by creating a true 'campus of tomorrow.'"

In January of 1938, Dr. Spivey sent the following telegram to Wright:

Mr. Wright,

Desire a conference with you to discuss the construction of a great educat[ion] temple in Florida. Please collect wire when and where I can see you.

Dr. Ludd Spivey

President, Florida Southern College



The pair met at Wright's estate in Wisconsin, Taliesin.

Wright first visited the campus on May 8, 1938, at nearly 71 years old. He surveyed the landscape and remarked that he could envision buildings on this landscape that would grow "out of the ground and into the light – a Child of the Sun."

Wright retreated to his Wisconsin home to begin design work for the school and returned several months later to present the first building in his plan, the Annie Pfeiffer Chapel.

"Located in the heart of Wright's campus plan, the Pfeiffer Chapel – with its iconic, 65-foot-tall bell tower – would be the nation's first college chapel with an architecturally modern design, its interior defined by massive vaulted skylights framing the natural heavens above," according to FSC.

An interesting fact is that construction on the chapel lasted from 1938 to 1941 and utilized student labor, as did the following four Wright-designed buildings. The construction crew was made up almost entirely of women.

The campus buildings designed by the renowned architect were linked by the longest system of covered walkways in Wright's career and became known as the Esplanade. It runs more than a mile in length and features "uniformly designed columns that are said to evoke the orange trees that once filled the campus grounds."

The Emile E. Watson and Benjamin Fine Administration Buildings and the Water Dome were constructed almost simultaneously in 1948. Three more of his designs were erected in the 1950s.

FRANK LLOYD

WRIGHT

IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

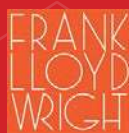


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**Explore the genius of America's
greatest architect through his
most fully articulated vision.**

Florida Southern College is home to thirteen remarkable Wright structures, including the previously unbuilt Usonian House and Wright's most significant water feature, the stunning Water Dome.



FLORIDA SOUTHERN
COLLEGE



For more information

"Dr. Spivey's retirement in 1957 and the architect's passing in 1959 brought the continued execution of Wright's campus plan to an end. The College hired a former Wright apprentice, Nils M. Schweizer, to serve as the new campus architect," according to the college. "[...] In 1939, Dr. Spivey had commissioned Wright for a single-family house, the first of an envisioned faculty-housing neighborhood on campus. Wright delivered a beautiful and quintessential example of his Usonian style of residential design, a concept for affordable housing for the typical American family. While this home design was not utilized in Wright's time because of funding issues, its construction was undertaken more than seven decades later as the centerpiece of the Sharp Family Tourism & Education Center. Completed in 2013, the Usonian house joined the ranks to become Florida Southern's thirteenth Wright-designed structure."

The Sharp Family Tourism and Education Center and GEICO Gift Shop were opened as part of an ongoing effort by FSC to better educate visitors about the Frank Lloyd Wright architecture on campus. The Center comprises the Usonian Faculty House and GEICO Gift Shop, where daily guided tours depart.

Tours include a 90-minute guided Basic Tour led by an experienced docent. The tour begins with an overview of the campus project, detailing how Frank Lloyd Wright assembled his vision for the college and the unique method of construction he chose for the site. As you walk the campus grounds, your guide will inform you of the history and design of all 13 Wright-designed structures. The interiors of the Annie Pfeiffer Chapel, the Danforth Chapel, and the new Usonian Faculty House are visited.

The Usonian House Tour is a guided tour of the recently completed Usonian Faculty House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1939. After a guided tour of the house, guests also have the opportunity to watch the film "Frank Lloyd Wright's Great American Campus," providing an overview of all 13 Wright-designed structures at Florida Southern College.

The extended 2.5-hour In-Depth Tour included everything featured in the Basic Campus Tour while revealing new details and insights into the history, design, and construction of the "Child of the Sun." The tour will also journey inside 6 Wright-designed buildings: the E.T. Roux Library, Ordway Arts Building, and Polk County Science Building will be explored in addition to the Annie Pfeiffer Chapel, Danforth Chapel, and Usonian House.

Architecture aficionados can also opt for the Behind the Scenes Tour. This tour, led by an expert guide, delves into the history and design of Wright's structures on the Florida Southern campus. Included in the tour are all interior spaces from our other tours, plus many additional locations exclusive to this experience – including the interior of the only planetarium designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Reservations required. The group size is limited to 10 persons.

For more information on Frank Lloyd Wright's work at Florida Southern College and tour prices and information, visit their website at www.flsouthern.edu.





Polk County History Center

For a well-curated glimpse into Polk County's illustrious past, look no further than the Polk County History Center (PCHC). The History Center is housed in the former Polk County Courthouse, built in 1908. According to Visit Central Florida, "the courthouse is a representation of the neoclassical architectural style that flourished from 1890 into the early twentieth century. This particular style is recognized through the use of tall columns, symmetrical fixtures, triangular pediments, and accentuated domes. Through careful preservation, the building has been frozen in time and longtime residents consistently reflect on fond memories on their own experiences walking the courthouse halls."

The Polk County History Center opened in September 1998 and has served the county through special events, educational programs, and volunteer opportunities. The Polk County History Center is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm, and admission is free.

The History Center is home to a historical museum and genealogical library. According to Polk-county.net, "The museum collection includes natural and cultural objects related to Polk and the greater Central Florida area that represent our history from pre-Columbian to present-day eras. The artifacts on display at the Museum represent individuals, cultural groups, and events significant to the region."

Ongoing exhibitions feature artifacts on display that include:

- Miocene Fossils
- Paleo Era dugout canoe
- Pioneer clothing and tools
- Vintage farm and mining equipment
- Artisan fishing lures
- Military relics

Traveling exhibits from the Smithsonian or Florida Humanities Council often come through the PCHC as they partner with the state humanities council.



The Museum boasts 11 permanent and four temporary galleries. The first floor is home to seven galleries exploring everything from Polk's pioneers to its veterans. The History Center offers two galleries for children. Kids can dress as pioneers, put on a puppet show, and explore replicas of a Seminole Chickee and pioneer cracker home. A fossil exhibit features teeth and bones from the megalodon and mastodon and the American crocodile and sabretooth cat.

The 1926 Courtroom, a fully restored 1908 courtroom on the second floor, includes artifacts from an original judge's bench, a thirteen-person jury box, and the bar that separated members of the court from the viewing gallery.

Also located on the second floor of the History Center is the Polk County Historical and Genealogical Library. The Polk County Historical and Genealogical Library was first opened to the public in January 1940. It has one of the largest genealogical collections in the Southeast United States, with more than 40,000 items, including books, microfilm, and periodicals. Materials explicitly related to the county's history include newspapers, aerial photographs, maps, city directories, property tax rolls, cemetery records, and more.

Looking to explore Polk County's vibrant history beyond the Museum's walls? The Polk County Heritage Trail allows the public to explore many historic homes, cemeteries, monuments, vintage hotels, and more.

Polk County History Center
100 E Main Street, Bartow
(863) 534-4386

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Small works art show
Mulberry Cultural Center
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Florida Arts Journal

One Wall / City Gallery

Artist Exhibits & Grant Projects

More information
betsy@thebohrergallery.com

Dominice Gilbert



How To Use This Guide

The following arts and cultural entities are listed by category in alphabetical order. Each listing has its physical location noted as well as contact information. Please check with the individual organizations to confirm specific events or hours of operation. Member organizations of the Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance have enhanced listings with logos and additional information. The listing categories are:

- **Arts & Cultural Events Organizers**
- **Art Councils, Guilds, & Cultural/ Historical Societies/Main Street Organizations**
- **Art Museums & Art Galleries**
- **Educational Institutions**
- **Live Music Venues**
- **Municipalities/Chambers of Commerce**
- **Museums & History Centers**
- **Performing/Cultural Arts Venues**
- **Performing Arts – Music**
- **Performing Arts – Theatre & Dance**
- **Theaters & Theatrical Companies**

ART & CULTURAL EVENTS ORGANIZERS

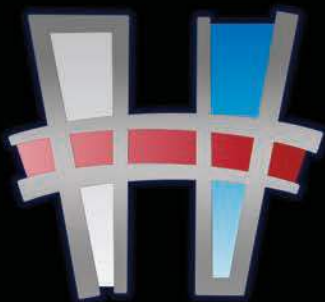


Art Crawl, Inc.

Lakeland, FL | artcrawlfl.com

Art Crawl, Inc. is a non-profit organization serving as a catalyst to celebrate the emergence of new and innovative artists in and around Central Florida.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 -



HARRISON

SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS



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HarrisonArts.com/season
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750 HOLLINGSWORTH ROAD | LAKELAND, FL 33801

Buena Market

buenamarket.com

Central Florida Tix

863-332-2787 | centralfloridatix.com



Destroyer Media & Marketing

326 Ave C SW, Winter Haven | (863) 202-9172
destroyermediaandmarketing.com

Award-winning, hyperlocal coverage through social media and free, monthly publications. Haven and LKLD are the most awarded magazines in Polk County, with 18 awards from the Florida Magazine Association.

Dorothy Jean's Dream Initiative

PO Box 538, Fort Meade | (863) 274-3809
dorothyjeansdream.com



Emporium Tattoo, Piercing and Art Collective

4035 Florida Avenue South, Lakeland
863-937-9235

We provide opportunities for artists, including exhibitions, galleries, markets & more. Our tattoo shop location also maintains a growing library of art supplies for members.

Lakeland Punk Rock Flea Market

FB: Lakeland Punk Rock Flea Market

Long Live Vintage

333 Ave C SW, Winter Haven
(863) 845-5001 | llvproductions.com



Platform Art, Inc.

829 E Palmetto St., Lakeland | 863-838-2262
platformart.org

Platform Art supports the creation of public art in communities.

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The Bohrer Gallery

Lakeland, FL | thebohrergallery.com

The Bohrer Gallery LLC is a privately-owned creative arts organization producing signature annual events: Fine Art at the Magnolia & Scholarship, 4 Squared Makers, The Florida Arts Journal, and One Wall Artist Exhibits & Grant Projects.

ART COUNCILS, GUILDS, & CULTURAL/HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, MAINSTREET ORGS.



Bartow Art Guild

1242 E. Main St., Bartow | 863-329-9893
bartowartguild.com

Bartow Art Guild advances the cultural arts by providing art exhibits, programs, services, and support for artists and the local community.



Davenport Historical Society, Inc.

5 South Allapaha Ave., Davenport | 863-258-7800
davenporthistory.org

DHS aims to preserve the city's history and share this heritage by contributing to the records of the state of Florida and the United States of America in an effort that will embrace our past while working toward a brighter future for all of Davenport's citizens.

Frostproof Historical Society

210 S Scenic Hwy, Frostproof | 863-635-7865
frostproofmuseum.com

The Frostproof Historical Museum's mission is to preserve, protect, and restore historical artifacts and to share the history of their town and the people who made Frostproof what it is today.



Lakeland Arts Association

2607 Orleans Ave, Lakeland | (863)-514-7408
lakelandartguild.clubexpress.com

Artists and arts-minded community members working together to create, support, and nurture the visual arts in the greater Lakeland area. The non-profit focuses on visual fine arts through education, exhibitions, and professional development. All are welcome.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 -

ARTS

ENRICHING,
INSPIRING
& EDUCATING
our Community

LAKE WALES ARTS FESTIVAL

February 23-25



EXHIBITIONS

Explore exhibitions showcasing talent from near and far.



CLASSES

Explore our diverse range of courses, workshops and camps that inspire creativity

and foster artistic growth for students of all ages and skill levels.

CONCERTS & EVENTS



January 19. Lake Wales Live: Black Eyed Soozie, Downtown Lake Wales

January 20. Laila Biali with the Lake Wales Jazz Connection

February 17. A Jazz Tribute to Duke Ellington with the Lake Wales Jazz Connection

March 9. A Jazz Tribute to John Coltrane with the Lake Wales Jazz Connection

March 15. Lake Wales Live: The Jamband, Downtown Lake Wales

April 12. Concert Under the Stars Series at Bok Tower Gardens: **The Fitzgeralds**

April 14. Lake Wales Chorale Spring Concert

April 26. Concert Under the Stars Series at Bok Tower Gardens: **Unspoken Tradition**

May 3. Lake Wales Live: The Gnarbuckles, Downtown Lake Wales



EST. 1972
LAKE WALES ARTS COUNCIL



1099 STATE ROAD 60 E | LAKE WALES, FL 33853
863-676-8426 | LAKEWALESARTSCOUNCIL.ORG



Lake Alfred Historical Society

210 N Seminole Ave, Lake Alfred | 863-224-2792
lakealfredhistoricalsociety.org

The mission of the Lake Alfred Historical Society is to provide and protect Lake Alfred's history and heritage for present and future generations.



Lake Wales Arts Council

1099 E State Rd 60 E, Lake Wales | (863) 676-8426
lakewalesartscouncil.org

The LWAC's mission is to enrich the lives of all people in Central Florida by providing innovative arts education programs and world-class performance and visual arts experiences.

Lake Wales Main Street

P.o. Box 4125, Lake Wales | (863) 678-4023
lwmainstreet.com

Main Street Bartow

180 Central Ave., Bartow | 863-519-0508
mainstreetbartowfl.com

Main Street Winter Haven

254 W Central Ave Suite F, Winter Haven
(863) 295-9422 | mainstreetwh.com



Ridge Art Association

210 Cypress Gardens Blvd. SW, Winter Haven
(863) 291-5661 | ridgeart.org

Ridge Art is a 73-year-old nonprofit competition art gallery giving away over \$25,000 a year in prize money to artists.

ART MUSEUMS & ART GALLERIES



ART/ifact Studios

820 N. Massachusetts Ave., #2, Lakeland
artifactstudios.org

ART/ifact is a 1924 warehouse turned art collective + gallery space. The non-profit organization focusses on building a vibrant community by fostering contemporary art and cultivating local artists.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 27 -



Where Massage
Meets Artistry.



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(863) 695-2246 | 335 Doris Drive, Lakeland



Florida Wildflower Studios

12 E Wall St, Frostproof | (863) 206-9691
floridawildflowerstudios.com

Chip Newton & Jacque Palomaki created Florida Wildflower Studios to provide a place for Florida-based artists to gather, share ideas, and ensure that art education and assistance are available to everyone.



Mulberry Cultural Center

103 E Canal St, Mulberry, FL 33860 | (863) 354-6570
mulberryculturalcenter.com

The Mulberry Cultural Center is a municipally governed gallery and classroom space that seeks to serve the community through exhibitions, programs, and special events promoting the arts and humanities.



Polk Museum of Art

800 E Palmetto St, Lakeland | (863) 688-7743
polkmuseumofart.org

The Polk Museum of Art at Florida Southern College is a teaching museum that enhances lives through inspirational and engaging art experiences for all.

Pressed LKLD

213 E Bay St, Lakeland | (863) 603-3166
pressedlkld.com

The Loft Art Gallery Downtown

254 W Central Ave D, Winter Haven | (863) 409-5771
loftartgallerydowntown.com

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS



Auburndale High School Fine & Performing Arts Departments

1 Bloodhound Trail, Auburndale | (863) 965-6200
auburndalehighschool.com

Auburndale High School's Fine and Performing Arts Departments offer students high-quality artistic instruction in visual arts, music, digital media, and theatre.



THEATRE WINTER HAVEN ACADEMY

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on arts education!**

CLASSES

Weekly classes are great for aspiring young actors interested in gaining confidence while developing good dramatic skills.

SUMMER CAMPS

Join us for one or more of our summer camps in June and/or July. Our Summer youth productions offer many opportunities for young artists to hone their skills for the stage.

ACADEMY PRODUCTIONS

Our Student Productions are full musical productions and are presented with school performances during the week and public performances through the weekend.

Visit our website www.theatrewinterhaven.com
or email molly@theatrewinterhaven.com



Davenport School of the Arts

4751 County Rd 547, Davenport | (863) 420-2557
davenportschoolofthearts.com

Davenport School of the Arts is a Polk County Magnet/Choice school that excels in the fine arts and leadership.



Dr. J. Owens Academy of Fine Arts, Inc.

1708 2nd St NE, Winter Haven | (863) 604-5415
drjowensacademyoffineartsinc.org

The Academy is a non-profit organization that provides music education to low-income, disadvantaged youth and adults throughout Polk County.



Florida Southern College

111 Lake Hollingsworth Dr., Lakeland | (863) 680-4111
flsouthern.edu/home.aspx

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musicranch.org

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- CONTINUED ON PAGE 33 -

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Greater Bartow Chamber of Commerce

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bartowchamber.com

Greater Winter Haven Chamber of Commerce

401 Avenue B NW, Winter Haven | (863) 293-2138
winterhavenchamber.com

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 35 -



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Lake Alfred Chamber of Commerce

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lakealfredchamber.com

Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce

340 W Central Ave, Lake Wales | (863) 676-3445
lakewaleschamber.com

Mulberry Chamber of Commerce

705 N Church Ave, Mulberry | (863) 425-4414
mulberrychamber.org

Northeast Polk Chamber of Commerce

35610 Hwy 27, Haines City | (863) 422-3751
northeastpolkchamber.com

Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Polk County

PO Box 2135, Bartow | (863) 838-2084
prhccpc.com

MUSEUMS & HISTORY CENTERS

Bartow Airbase History Museum

5993 Airport Blvd, Bartow | (863) 533-1195
bartow-airport.com/history

Florida Air Museum

4175 Medulla Rd, Lakeland | (863) 904-6833
floridaairmuseum.org



Florida Children's Museum

600 Bonnet Spgs Blvd, Lakeland | (863) 687-3869
explorebcm.org

As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, the Florida Children's Museum serves as a center of the community. They hope to inspire the next generation and equip them with confidence, creativity, and a love of learning.

Florida Natural Grove House

20160 Highway 27, Lake Wales | (863) 679-4110
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- CONTINUED ON PAGE 37 -



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fortmeadehismuseum.com

Haines City Historical Museum

1001 Ingraham Ave, Haines City
FB: Haines City Historical Museum

Lakeland History & Culture Center at the Lakeland Public Library

100 Lake Morton Drive, Lakeland | (863) 834-4269
lakelandgov.net/departments/library/lakeland-
history-culture-center

Lake Alfred Historical Society Museum

210 N Seminole Ave, Lake Alfred | (863) 287-3093
lakealfredhistoricalsociety.org

Lake Wales History Museum

325 S Scenic Hwy, Lake Wales | (863) 676-1759
lakewaleshistory.org



Luster African American Heritage Museum

585 E Summerlin St, Bartow | (863) 797-6111 | laahm.org

A place where visitors can learn about the rich and diverse experiences of being a person of African American descent in Central Florida. The Museum seeks to educate people of all races to value the countless contributions of Black Americans to the United States.

Museum Of Winter Haven History

660 Pope Ave NW, Winter Haven | (863) 206-6855
FB: Museum of Winter Haven History



Polk County History Center

100 E Main St, Bartow | (863) 534-4386
polk-county.net/history-center

The museum serves Polk's community through educational programs, special events, and volunteer opportunities.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 39 -



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centralfloridasports.com/local-sports/halls-of-fame/
polk-county-sports-hall-of-fame

The LB Brown House

470 S L.B. Brown Ave, Bartow | (863) 944-6136
lbbrown.com

The Brown house was built in 1892 by Lawrence Bernard Brown, who was born into slavery in Wacahoota. Brown moved to Bartow during the 1880s and built many dwellings, including the L. B. Brown House, now on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Mulberry Phosphate Museum

101 SE 1st St, Mulberry | (863) 425-2823
cityofmulberryfl.org/phosphate-museum

USA Water Ski & Wake Sports Foundation Hall of Fame Museum

101 Adventure Ct, Davenport | (863) 324-2472
usa-wwf.org

PERFORMING/CULTURAL ARTS - VENUES



Bok Tower Gardens

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Bonnet Springs Park

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(863) 732-7000 | bonnetspringspark.com



GEM Theatre - Mulberry

118 NW 1st Ave, Mulberry | (863) 354-6570
gemtheatermulberry.org

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- CONTINUED ON PAGE 41 -

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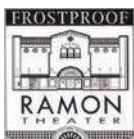
Historic Ritz Theatre

263 W Central Ave, Winter Haven | (863) 937-1414
ritzwinterhaven.com

The Ritz Theatre has been downtown's stage since 1925. The theater was beautifully restored and reopened in 2013. Today the Ritz is home to concerts, film screenings, community events, and more.

Laugh Out Lounge

19 3rd St NW, Winter Haven
winterhavenlol.com/calendar



Ramon Theatre

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PERFORMING ARTS - MUSIC

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Bartow, FL | FB: Bartow Adult Concert Band

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Lakeland Choral Society

lkldchoralsociety.org

Lakeland Concert Band

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lakelandconcertband.org



Lakeland Symphony Orchestra

111 Lake Hollingsworth Dr, Lakeland | (863) 688-3743

lkldsymphony.org

The LSO is an arts organization that produces and presents symphonic performances, ensemble concerts, school-based outreach, interactive family events, and an annual opera.

Lake Wales Chorale

1099 E State Rd 60 E, Lake Wales | (863) 676-8426

lakewalesartscouncil.org



Swan City Piano Festival

Lakeland, FL | swancitypianofestival.com

The Swan City Piano Festival aims to engage the vibrant arts culture of Lakeland through a multi-day celebration of pianists and piano repertoire, past and present.

The Lakeland Music Club

1515 Williamsburg Square, Lakeland

lakelandmc.com

PERFORMING ARTS - THEATRE & DANCE



Florida Dance Theatre

305 W Main St, Lakeland | (863) 802-0399

floridadancetheatre.org

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Haines City Community Theatre

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hainescitytheatre.com

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Lakeland Community Theatre

121 S Lake Ave, Lakeland | (863) 603-7529
lakelandcommunitytheatre.com

The Theatre aims to provide an affordable, high-quality theatre experience for the people of Lakeland and its surrounding areas and to create an opportunity for individuals of all ages to develop and showcase their talents in a safe, nurturing, educational environment.

Lake Wales Little Theatre

411 N 3rd St, Lake Wales | (863) 676-1266 | lwlt.org



Theatre Winter Haven

210 Cypress Gardens Blvd, Winter Haven
(863) 294-7469 | theatrewinterhaven.com

Since its founding, TWH has worked to fulfill its mission to inspire, challenge, entertain, and educate our community by creating exceptional theatrical experiences.

Out of the Box Improv

FB: Out of the Box Improv

Polk Theatre

121 Florida Ave S, Lakeland | (863) 682-7553
polktheatre.org

Swan City Improv

swancityimprov.com

THEATERS

Cinemark Lakeland Square Mall and XD

3800 US Hwy 98 N Suite 910, Lakeland | (863) 859-3140
cinemark.com/theatres/fl-lakeland

CMX Cinemas Lakeside 18 & IMAX

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cmxcinemas.com/showtimes

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cmxcinemas.com/Locationdetail/Grand-10-Cinemas

Polk County IMAX

5500 Grandview Pkwy, Davenport | (863) 547-0480
cinopolisusa.com/our-locations/x0vqk-cinopolis-polk-county-imax

Regal Cinemas Eagle Ridge Mall 12

955 Eagle Ridge Drive &, US-27, Lake Wales
(844) 462-7342
regmovies.com/theatres/regal-eagle-ridge-mall

Silver Moon Drive-In Theatre

4100 New Tampa Hwy, Lakeland | (863) 682-0849
silvermoondrivein.com

*Every effort has been made to make this an inclusive guide for patrons looking for arts and cultural experiences. It is possible, however, that organizations or events have been overlooked. The Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance apologizes in advance for any unintentional omissions.



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Betsy Bohrer

Visual Arts – Painting
thebohrergallery.com

Lisa Ciccia

Visual Arts - Mixed Media,
Painting
leesahciccia.wixsite.com/
lisacicciaportfolio

Samuel Ciccia

Visual Arts - Mixed Media,
Painting
sam520@tampabay.rr.com

Craig S. Collins

Visual Arts – Photography
admin@sterlingcreative.com

Toni Doku

Visual Arts - Mixed Media,
Stained Glass
toniwithaneye.com

Heather Earl

Visual Arts – Photography
3-heather-earl.pixels.com

Andy Glogower

Visual Arts - Photography
andyglogower.com

George D. Gordon, III

Visual Arts – Photography
gdg3.com

John Guiseppi

Visual Arts - Drawing
johnguiseppi.com

Stephen Koury

Visual Arts - Painting
skoury.com

Michael Laurino

Performing Arts - Theatre
michaellaurino.com

Karen Moore

Visual Arts - Photography
pezgirl1955@gmail.com

Robert Phillips

Performing Arts – Music
robert-phillips.com

Denise Settles

Visual Arts – Drawing, Mixed
Media, Painting
denisesettles.com

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Visual Arts – Painting
colorcurio.com

Maegan Carroll-Simmons

Visual Arts – Graphic Design,
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carrolldesign.co

Gretchen Suárez-Peña

Performing Arts - Theatre
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Wallacemeg@live.com

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Visual Arts - Photography
wardworldphotos.com

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calise.weber@gmail.com



The Lake Wales History Museum

From cattle and citrus to turpentine and railways, Lake Wales has an exciting history to explore. Curating and preserving that history is the Lake Wales History Museum. The Lake Wales History Museum is located inside the former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Station, built in 1928, and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The Museum is home to permanent and changing historical exhibits. All of the exhibits are self-guided and display artifacts, images, and documents about the natural history of the Lake Wales Ridge, from Florida's native people to the development of Lake Wales' railroad, industry, and residents of the 20th century.

According to the Museum, "Three additional historic buildings are included on the property – a 1920 Historic Crystal Lodge, which was the original site of the Lake Wales Women's Club, first library and later the chamber of commerce; the original 1916 Seaboard Air Line Freight Station; and, the 1920 Historic Stuart House, built by area pioneer E.C. Stuart. Guests may also visit the three original train cars including the 1926 Seaboard Air Line Railroad Caboose, 1886 Pullman-style Office Car, and the 1944 US Army Locomotive Engine."

From the founding of Lake Wales in 1911 through the formation of the city and essential industries, the Museum delves into the area's colorful past. The Museum opened in 1976 and has become a hub for the public to enjoy free exhibits, educational programming, and events.

According to Visit Central Florida, "The Lake Wales History Museum includes both chronological and thematic exhibits. Chronological exhibits cover land development and the evolution of the city itself, while thematic exhibits highlight the cattle, citrus and turpentine industry, and tourism."

The Museum welcomes all visitors and works to provide an inclusive experience for all people. For any persons with mobility disabilities, they have a zero-entry ramp to the main galleries of the Museum. They have designated accessible parking spaces and restrooms. Although the second level of the house is only accessible via stairs,



plans are in motion to add a wheelchair lift. Exhibit text is set in larger fonts, and audio tags can provide additional information.

In addition to their exhibits, the Lake Wales History Museum hosts the annual Pioneer Days Festival. This will be the 48th year of the festival, which is a free, two-day heritage celebration. Festivities include historical demonstrators, pioneer camps, early American trades, craft market vendors, live music, food and drinks, a car and tractor show, and more. According to Visit Central Florida, "You can visit with your favorite community organization booths and join in the Pioneer of the Year Celebration to honor pioneers from the past and present an annual recognition award. Funds raised at the event support the Museum's historic preservation projects and public programming."

In April 2023, the Lake Wales History Museum temporarily closed and remains so for maintenance and upkeep.

Lake Wales History Museum
325 S Scenic Hwy, Lake Wales
(863) 676-1759



The Lakeland Community Theatre

For 35 years, Lakeland Community Theatre (LCT) has captivated audiences with quality productions for Lakeland and the surrounding areas – over 250, to be exact. The Lake Mirror Center Complex, with a history spanning 60 years, is home to the Lakeland Community Theatre, now in its 36th season.

LCT states, “The first to occupy the Lake Mirror Centre Theatre was The Lakeland Little Theatre, organized in 1951. This was a volunteer group of actors, stagehands, costumers, etc., and a Board of Directors whose goal was to bring live theater to the community. The first production was a one-night performance of Ayn Rand’s comedy-drama, “The Night of January 16,” at Mayhall Auditorium (which was located on the site of the current City Hall buildings, actually the current City Commission chambers) on April 3, 1951.”

The Lakeland Little Theatre moved to the new Lake Mirror Centre Complex Theatre in 1958 before being urged by the City to move its productions to the newly completed civic center, now known as The Lakeland Center. They returned to their Lake Mirror Centre Theatre home in 1980 until its closure in 1982. “The final play was “Sunday in New York.” The production was directed by James Dyas, who also directed “Send Me No Flowers” on Broadway.”

The Lakeland Players were formed in 1982 and produced a limited season of plays for four years before disbanding.

The Pied Piper Players began as a group of volunteers in 1986 who were “committed to providing the children of Lakeland and their families the opportunity to enjoy educational and cultural enrichment through participating in and the viewing of live theatre by producing two children’s shows per season.”

Today, known as the Lakeland Community Theatre, the organization is in its 36th season with a Main Stage season of six productions; The Eunice Fuller Theatre for Youth three-show season as well as classes, summer camps, workshops, Master Classes; The Edge: Alternative Stage Read Series; The Page to Stage Traveling Troupe serving area schools;



The Out of the Box Troupe for special needs youth and adults, Senior Troupe and many special productions, and events each year.

Productions by the Eunice Fuller Theatre for Youth are available to students of Polk County through the implementation of school day and summer camp production matinees at reduced or no cost. According to the Theatre, they “also provide scholarships to summer camps, classes, and workshops to under-resourced youth.” Throughout the past 35 years, over 65,000 students have benefited from these Youth Education programs.

“Dedicated to keeping ticket prices affordable and still operating on the original expectation of the Theatre raising its revenue to cover costs, the Theatre engages the community’s support through a sponsorship and advertising base, grants, and major fundraisers to support the ever-growing needs of the Theatre. The City of Lakeland has been a vital partner and asset in creating and maintaining a home of its Community Theatre, in kind,” noted the Theatre.

Since its inception, the Lakeland Community Theatre “has given over 4,750 volunteer community performers the opportunity to be on stage, over 8,750 other volunteers the opportunity to work behind the scenes, and over 420,000 audience members the opportunity to see live theatre.” Over 450 of those volunteer actors and backstage personnel who started with the Theatre have pursued careers in the entertainment industry.

The Theatre donates, partners with, and supports community organizations, including the SPCA of Lakeland, Lighthouse Ministries, The Imperial Symphony Orchestra, Southeastern University, The Historic Polk Theatre, Theatre Winter Haven, Platform Florida, Polk Museum of Art, Talbot House Ministries, Parker Street Ministries, VISTE, and more.

Lakeland Community Theatre
121 S Lake Ave, Lakeland
lakelandcommunitytheatre.com



Davenport Historical Society

In addition to lovely parks, recreational facilities, shopping, dining, and more, Davenport has an elaborate and exciting history. Davenport became a city in 1985 with a city manager and a mayor. It has been home to a Medal of Honor recipient, Sgt. James Hendrix and many of the original residential and commercial structures built downtown are in the National Historic Registry district.

The Davenport Historical Society (DHS) is dedicated to conserving this history. Their mission is to preserve the city's history and share this heritage by contributing to the records of the state of Florida and the United States of America in an effort that will embrace our past while working toward a brighter future for all of Davenport's citizens.

In her "President's Message," Freida Priest, President of DHS, notes, "Ever since May 2021, the Historical Society has brought quality exhibits and has educated many new residents on the overwhelming historical facts about our city."

DHS provides a free self-guided or docent-led walking tour of Historic Downtown Davenport. The tour begins downtown and continues to six locations in the city's government center. The tour finishes with residential areas before returning to City Hall. A complete walking tour, led by a docent, is available by appointment. This tour takes about an hour and covers both the history and architecture of the locations.

They also host a series called "Front Porch Memories," in which residents 75 or older who have lived in Davenport for more than 50 years are invited to sit on the porch with two other pioneers and talk about their memories of growing up in Northeast Polk County. There is no audience, but the oral history is filmed. They are in the process of editing the first three sessions and hope to have them available soon.




The Davenport Historical Society partners with the Davenport Quilts and Tea Committee Project to put on the Central Florida Quilt Trail. The festival is a community effort that has drawn visitors from Zambia, South Africa, Ireland, England, and South America. They put up hand-painted quilt squares in the city of Davenport. According to DHS, "Each of the squares is a history repository of the site where they hang. We feel this is giving a voice to the buildings and to the occupants who host these squares. Visiting the squares throughout Central Florida is a great way to discover what our communities and counties have to offer. We think these quilt squares mirror who we are. The more squares we put up, the more visitors we can expect to drive through our cities and counties and impact our businesses and events."

In addition to the Central Florida Quilt Tour and Historical Walking Tours, the DHS founded the Citrus Label Tour. The Citrus Label Tour of Polk County was inspired by a partnership between the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame, Visit Central Florida, and the Polk County History Center's History and Heritage Trail. According to www.polk-county.net, "This driving experience explores part of the historic marketing portion of citrus through enlarged reproductions of the artistic labels that once adorned the old wooden crates used to ship the fresh fruit off to northern markets in the early 1900s."

Reproductions of the citrus labels can be found at many sites around the county. "Each carefully selected citrus label displayed represents the history of the land, the building, the family, or the historic site in relation to the industry," notes Visit Central Florida.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 57 -



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Maps are available to download on the DHS website, davenporthistory.org, and at the Polk County History Center in Bartow. The driving tour map includes a brief history of each label, its design, utility, and artistry. The labels are displayed at various sites along the tour trail. Those interested in securing citrus labels for display should contact the History Center for details and an application.

The historical society's president urges visitors to come in and see the "Little Gallery" featuring artists from the area around Davenport. Upcoming museum exhibits include "Retro Techno" from January 2024 through March. It is a look into the past and where we came from regarding technology. "Historic Lake Play & May Days" will run from April 2024 through June and explores the history of Lake Play and its association with May Day celebrations of the past.

The museum is currently seeking volunteers to serve as ambassadors, including event coordinators, tour guides, and administrative staff.

Peter Rust Civic Center
5 S. Allapaha Ave., Davenport
(863) 258-7800
davenporthistory.org

Florida Dance Theatre

POLK COUNTY'S PROFESSIONAL DANCE COMPANY
& TRAINING ACADEMY



Inspiring life-changing interactions through unparalleled performances, professional education and accessible outreach.

Serving Polk County for 3 decades!

Ballet • Jazz • Contemporary and more!

For more information visit www.floridadancetheatre.org
or call (863) 320-2434



Central Avenue Antiques

Monday 1pm - 5pm, Tues - Friday 11am - 5pm, Saturday 10am - 4:30pm

126 West Central Avenue, WH | (863) 656-1929 | 1memorieslane@gmail.com



The Ball and the Red Staircase
Fort Blount Park in Bartow

WE UNDERSTAND
THE MEANINGFUL
IMPACT OF THE
ARTS IN OUR
COMMUNITY.
**THAT'S WHY WE
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OUR SUPPORT.**



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Upcoming Events*

Polk Tales: A Storytelling Festival

Feb. 9-11 – polkarts.org/story

PlatformKIDS Art Festival

February 10 - platformart.org

Lake Wales Arts Festival

February 23-25 - lakewalesartscouncil.org

Original Highwaymen Art Extravaganza

March 1-2 – City of Davenport

Bloomin' Arts

March 2-3 – Bartow

Central Park Art Festival

March 9-10 – ridgeart.org

Polk County Schools' Visual Arts Festival

April 27 - polkschoolsfl.com/finearts

Platform Art Community Forum: Seminole Tribe of Florida: History, Culture & Redress

April 3 – platformart.org

Florida Children's Museum Watermelon Festival

May 4– explorefcm.org

Mayfaire By-The-Lake

May 11-12 - mayfairebythelake.org

Swan City Piano Festival

June 6-9 - swancitypianofestival.com

Fine Arts at the Magnolia

August 17-18 – thebohrrgallery.com

4 Squared Makers

October 10-November 22 - thebohrrgallery.com

Polk Arts & Culture Hall of Fame Ceremony

October 17 – polkarts.org

Platform Art Community Forum: The Era of the American Revolution

November 6 – platformart.org

Artful Bowl 2024

December 7 - platformart.org

*This list is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all the arts and cultural festivals/activities in Polk County. Please consult the following event calendars for specifics:

visitcentralflorida.org/events
centralfloridatix.com/events
lkldnow.com/calendar
lkldarts.org/calendar



Citrus grown 10 minutes away.

Locally sourced egg from just up the road.

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The perfect long weekend trip awaits. After taking in the beautiful historic architecture and art around Polk County, come grab a table at one of our local restaurants. We welcome hungry people from anywhere and everywhere to pull up a seat and find out just how delicious Central Florida truly is. Learn more about the local food and art scene at ArtsCentral.org

