



109 NW 3rd Ave, Chiefland, FL 32626

(352) 493-6797 / www.naturecoast.org

David J. Pieklik – Executive Director -- [Email us](#)

APRIL 2017

TIMBER!

The College of Central Florida is starting a new Timber Harvesting Equipment program this month. The eight-week noncredit program will cover a variety of topics, including:

- Basic forest management
- Timber harvesting operations
- Silvicultural and wildlife best management practices
- Timber harvesting safety
- Basic operation of a feller-buncher, skidder and loader

The program runs from May 8 – June 30, 2017 and full tuition scholarships. The timber industry is vital to Levy County, with 724,035 acres of timberland in the county. In the region, paper manufacturing accounts for a \$350-million economic output, while wood products account for \$75-million.

To learn more about the timber program, including eligibility, log onto our [Facebook page](#).



Board of Directors

- Chris Cowart
Levy County School Board
- Denny George
Duke Energy
- Dick Streeter,
Withlacoochee-Gulf Area Chamber of Commerce; *vice chairman/treasurer to the Board*
- Greg Galpin
Weyerhaeuser; *Chairman to the Board*
- Jeff Edison
Superintendent of Schools
- Joyce Wilson,
Unity Family Community Center
- Mark Meyer
Florida Northern Railroad
- Phil Geist
Small Business Development Center
- Rayanne Giddis
College of Central Florida
- Ryan Watson
Central Florida Electric Cooperative

NEWS AND NOTES

- **How-To Guide Shaping Up:** Starting your own business can be exciting, it can also feel overwhelming. From developing a business plan to considering a location, securing financing or finding help, there is a lot to consider. We have developed a guide that will walk you through typical processes you often will face, making the path to prosperity smooth and quick. [Check it out.](#)
- **Region Sees Dip In Jobless Rate:** The region’s unemployment rate stands at 5.9 percent entering April, while the number of those without a job decreased over the last month. The unemployment rate for the region of Citrus, Levy and Marion counties has continued its decline since January, with Levy maintaining the lowest rate at 5.0 percent. According to the latest data from the Department of Economic Opportunity, out of a regional labor force of 200,814, there 11,802 unemployed, a 1,396-person decrease.
- **FEDC Conference Registration Deadline Approaching:** The Florida Economic Development Conference is May 7-9, 2017. This is a great networking and professional development opportunity. This year’s conference is at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale. The registration deadline is April 17. Click [here](#) for more.
- **Walker Spotlighthted As ‘Entrepreneur of the Month’:** [Al Walker](#) of Foss Foam Products of Florida, Inc. is featured by the [Florida High Tech Corridor](#) as one of its Entrepreneurs of the Month for April. The company produces “more sailboat rudders than anyone else in the world,” according to its [website](#); 50,000 since 1978.

ADD IT TO YOUR CALENDARS

April 4 & 18	March 7 & 21	April 13	April 18
Levy Board of County Commissioners regular meeting 9 am, County Courthouse, Bronson	MRMA tour – E-One, Ocala 11:30 am – 1:00 pm mrma.events@gmail.com for more information.	NCBDC board/RESTORE Act Advisory Committee meeting 3 pm, College of Central Florida, 114 Rodgers Blvd., Chiefland	RESTORE Act advisory committee meeting 3 pm, County Courthouse, Bronson

OUR VALUABLE PARTNERS

- [CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion](#)
- [Department of Economic Opportunity](#)
- [Enterprise Florida](#)
- [Levy County](#)
- [North Florida Economic Development Partnership](#)
- [Virtual Entrepreneur Center](#)