



# News Release

## For Immediate Release

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### **Billy Keel elected to Florida Strawberry Festival Board of Directors**

PLANT CITY, Fla. (October 11, 2018) – The Florida Strawberry Festival board of directors voted last night to elect its newest member, Billy Keel. Keel, who has served as an associate director for 18 years, was elected from a field of 14 fellow associate directors.

“It is a special honor to be elected to the board of directors,” said Keel. “It is bittersweet in light of Floyd Hall’s untimely passing in September, as he was a great man and a dear friend. He was someone that I worked closely with on the Finance Committee and other areas for many years.”

Keel has been a longtime volunteer and associate director. He has served on many festival committees throughout the years including the Stadium Operations, Long Range Planning, Gates, Media Party, Parade Day Luncheon, Real Estate, and Finance. His wife Donna has also been a longtime volunteer serving as a former Chair of the Junior Royalty pageant for many years, and is currently Co-Chair of the Strawberry Queen’s Coordinator Committee.

Keel is a lifelong resident of Plant City. He is a former Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and former President of the Rotary Club. He has also been involved in many other civic and community organizations. He served on the City of Plant City’s Planning Board and Pension Board for many years and is a former City Commissioner of Plant City. He is married to his wife Donna for 26 years and have two sons, Justin (24) and Bryson (19).

“Billy has played an integral part in the success of our festival,” said festival President Paul Davis. “I look forward to seeing great things from him. He will be an asset to our board of directors, not only because of his strong work ethic and background in finance, but more importantly because of his sincere love for the festival and its prosperity.”

With Keel’s election comes a vacancy in the group of associate directors. “The board of directors plans to elect a new associate director in the future,” said Chairman Sandee Parke Sytsma.

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## **About the Florida Strawberry Festival**

The Florida Strawberry Festival is an 11-day community event celebrating the strawberry harvest of Eastern Hillsborough County. Each year, over 500,000 visitors enjoy the festival's headline entertainment, youth livestock shows, exhibits of commerce and, of course, its strawberry shortcake. The 2019 Florida Strawberry Festival where "It's A Hit!" will take place February 28-March 10 in Plant City, Fla. For more information, visit [www.flstrawberryfestival.com](http://www.flstrawberryfestival.com), Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (#berryfest19).

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