

# A SELF GUIDED TOUR OF THE OLD LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE



Photo: Lee County Board of County Commissioners



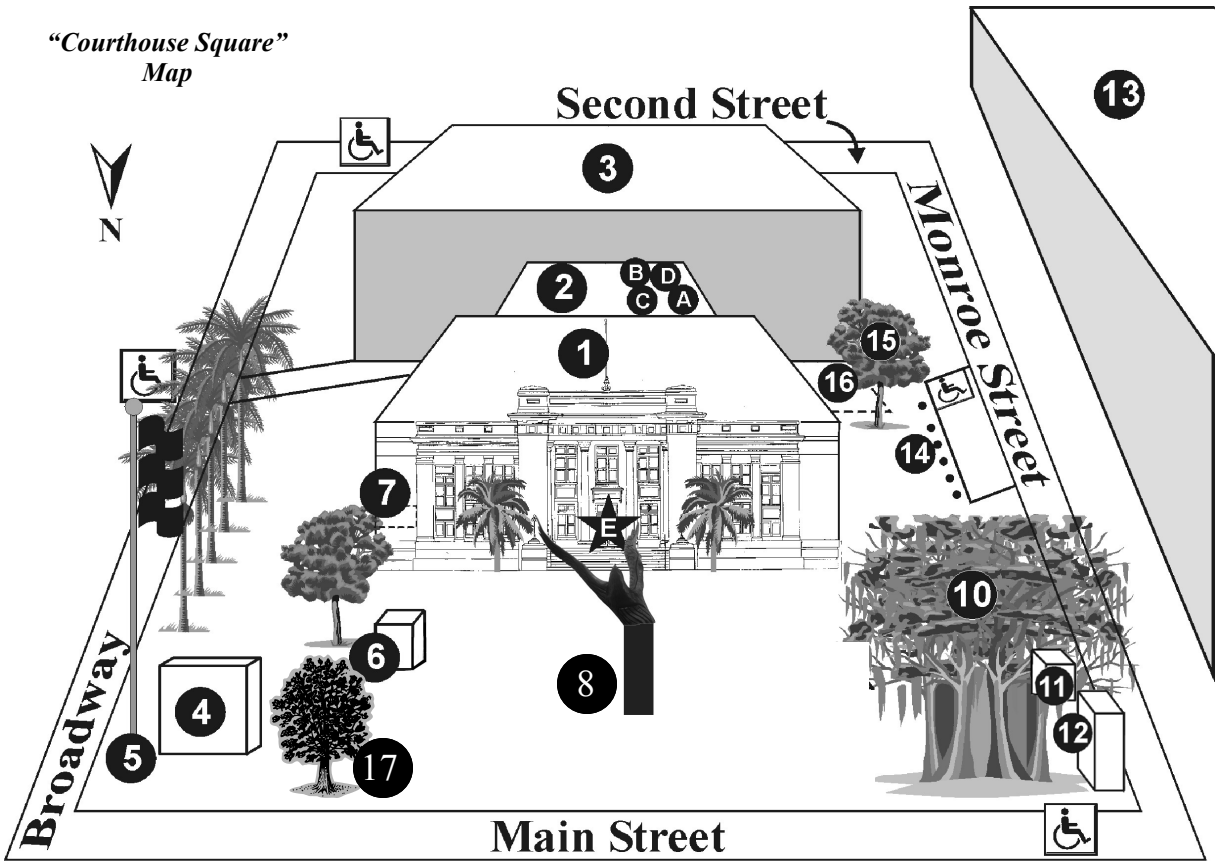
**You can also watch the Old Lee County Courthouse Tour Video On our website:**

<http://leegov.com/leegrows/courthouse>

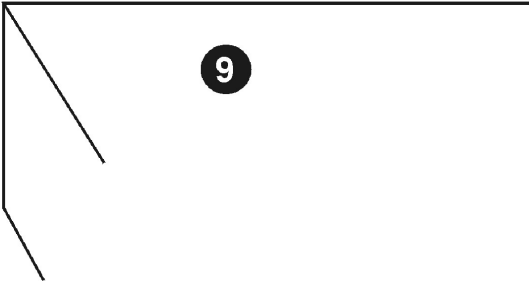
*2120 Main Street, Fort Myers, Florida*

# Grounds Self Guided Tour

*“Courthouse Square”  
Map*



- A—Elevator
- B—Rest Rooms
- C—Telephone
- D— Handicapped Access
- E— Information Desk
- ★ Start Tour Here



*The Old Lee County Courthouse and approximately 1.75 acres of surrounding grounds are the physical and symbolic center of county government in Lee County. Enclosed by three Fort Myers city streets and the Lee County Administration Office Building, the grounds today provide an appropriate setting for citizens to visit and enjoy the majestic Old Courthouse.*

*Having reviewed the above map, begin your self guided tour of the Old Courthouse grounds by facing the front of the Old Courthouse (# 1 on your map.) As you walk towards Broadway to continue the tour, follow the numbers on your grounds map on this page. While you move around the grounds take note of the 15 varieties of trees and 18 different kinds of plants.*

# Grounds Self Guided Tour

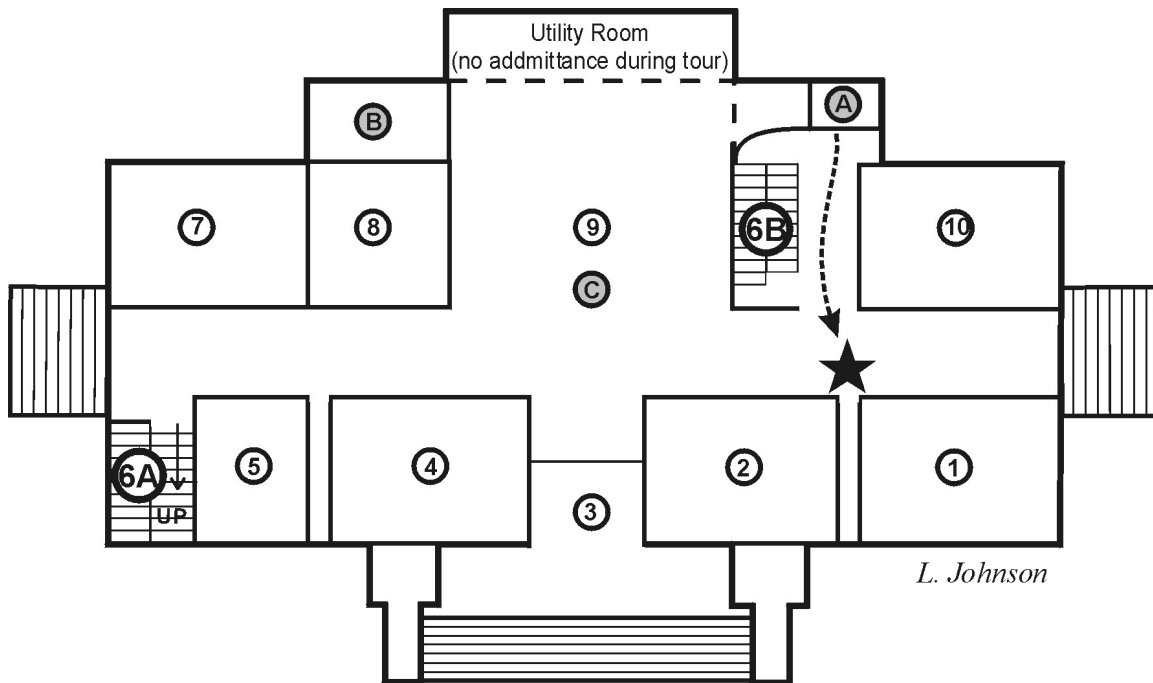
## “Courthouse Square” Map Legend

1. Old Lee County Courthouse: The County’s second courthouse, was built at a cost of \$100,000 and opened in 1916 with Neoclassical architecture and Doric Order fluted columns.
2. Courthouse Addition: This was built in 1926 at a cost of \$35,000. (Narrow tan brick extension from the back of the Old Courthouse)
3. Lee County Administration Office Building: The first four floors were built in 1962. The 5th and 6th floors were added in 1976. Many of the Commissioners’ staff work in this facility. (White brick/blue siding building that abuts the Courthouse addition)
4. Lee County 1921 WWI Plaque: This is a memorial to those Lee County citizens who gave their life during the war.
5. Flag Pole: The U.S., Florida & POW/MIA flags fly every hour of the year.
6. 2000 Millennium Time Capsule: It contains 27 items contributed from both the general public and “VIP organizations”. (The cities, Minnesota Twins, Public School District, etc.)
7. Courthouse Cornerstone: Which contained the 1915 Time Capsule. The contents were discovered during a \$5,000,000 renovation in 1989 and are on display on the 2nd floor of the courthouse.
8. Eagle Carving from old Oak Tree that was planted in the 1800’s.
9. Federal Courthouse: The six story facility opened in 1998 at a cost of \$23,600,000. Trials of criminal law violations against the U.S. Government are heard.
10. Banyan Tree: It is estimated to have been planted in the 1920’s.
11. Lee County Centennial Monument: The County was established on May 13, 1887, as Florida’s 41st County.
12. Lee County 1967 Veterans Memorial Plaque: Memorial to those Lee County citizens who gave their life during United States’ wars during the 20th and 21st centuries.
13. Lee County Justice Center: Site of the County and 20th Judicial Circuit Courtrooms and County Jail, it was built in 1984 at a cost of \$32,500,000.
14. Historic Information: These signs were created in 2001 to assist with the self guided tour.
15. Open Air Lunch/Picnic Area: This is a popular area for the County staff during lunch breaks.
16. Monroe Street entrance to Lee County Administration Building.
17. Replacement Oak Tree, transplanted from Alva in 2010.

It is now time to begin your self guided tour inside the Old Courthouse. Please enter the Administration Office Building through either set of doors directly in front the Open Air Lunch/Picnic area, items 15 & 16 on the map. The doors to the right are handicapped accessible. Once inside, turn to your left and take the elevator to the first floor and proceed to the main corridor.

# Old Courthouse Self Guided Tour

## First Floor Map



L. Johnson



- A—Elevator
- B—Rest Rooms
- C—Information Desk
- ★ -Start Tour Here

*Since 1895, Courthouse Square has been the site of the Lee County Courthouse. The building has stood as a symbol of citizen participation and involvement in local government. It has been the seat of County Government, and a place where the public has met to participate in the democratic process and deal with the issues of the day.*

*Having reviewed the above map, begin your self guided tour of the Old Courthouse. Start at office #1 and then proceed through the building following the numbers on your Old Courthouse map on this page. As you tour the main corridor and lobby take note of the displays and photos, including Red Sox World Series Rings.*

# Old Courthouse Self Guided Tour First Floor Map Legend

1. **County Commissioner Office: Cecil L Pendergrass, District 2**
2. **County Commissioner Office: Frank Mann, District 5**
3. **Vestibule**
4. **County Commissioner Office: Kevin Ruane, District 1**
5. **Meeting room**
6. **6A/6B Stairs**
7. **County Commissioner Office: Ray Sandelli, District 3**
8. **Office Work Room**
9. **Lobby: Commissioners' Inauguration Ceremonies, receptions, and occasional press conferences are held.**
10. **County Commissioner Office: Brian Hamman, District 4**

*The Old Courthouse self guided tour continues on the second floor.  
Please take the elevator to the second floor and walk into the  
Commission Chambers (meeting room).*

**Keep Informed About the Latest  
Lee County Government Actions**

- Attend **County Commissioners' Meetings** in the Old Courthouse Commission Chambers or watch the meetings live on **LEE TV** on your cable government access channel 97 on Comcast.
- Visit the Commissioners' web site at **[www.leegov.com](http://www.leegov.com)**



# Old Courthouse Self Guided Tour

## Second Floor Map Legend

1. Commission Chambers: Seating Capacity is 275
  - A) **Painting of Civil War General Robert E. Lee.**

On Feb 6, 1929, the County Commissioners asked the governor of Lee's home state of Virginia, Honorable R.E. Byrd and Speaker of the House of Representatives of Virginia, Honorable E. Calin for their assistance in obtaining a painting of Robert E. Lee "to be displayed in the auditorium of the County Courthouse at Fort Myers, Florida, the county seat." The painting by Kermit Larson was obtained from the State of Virginia and has hung in the Commissioners' meeting room ever since. Lee County was named by the Legislature of the State of Florida in memory of Confederate General Robert E. Lee.
  - B) The Lee County Board of County Commissioners meets bi-weekly in this room. During a County Commissioners' meeting, the five commissioners sit at the dais facing the audience. County Administration sits at the tables in the front of the room to the right of the aisle as you face the dais. County Attorneys sit at the tables to the left of the aisle. Citizens, staff, and Department Directors sit in the cushioned green seats.
  - C) From 1916 to 1963, the Old Courthouse was a segregated facility. During that period, African Americans were restricted to the balcony. White citizens sat in the area beneath the balcony.
2. Chambers TV Control Room: The public can watch each Board meeting live as a county employee operates the 4 cameras. *No admittance during self guided tour.*
3. Media Room - Most local media representatives sit in this room during the meeting.
4. Empty
5. 5A, 5B, 5C Staircases
6. East Room: Meeting room for County business.
7. History of Lee County displays, and exhibits.
8. Lee Room - Meeting room for County business.
9. Lee County Administration Office Building where many of the Commissioners' staff have their offices.
10. Storage Room: *No admittance permitted during self guided tour.*
11. Empty
12. Florida State House of Representatives Office: Heather Fitzenhagen, District 78
13. Chambers Break Room

This concludes the self guided tour of the Old Lee County Courthouse and grounds. Thank you for taking the time to visit the headquarters of Lee County government. You're welcome back anytime and next time bring your friends.

# Lee County Board of County Commissioners



Kevin Ruane  
District One  
533-2224



Cecil L Pendergrass  
District Two  
533-2227



Ray Sandelli  
District Three  
533-2223



Brian Hamman  
District Four  
533-2226



Frank Mann  
District Five  
533-2225

**Visitor and Self Guided Tour Guidelines-** Photography is permitted on both the Courthouse Grounds and Courthouse tours. All tour areas are handicapped accessible.

## **Grounds Tour:**

Grounds are open and available for daily tours during the daylight hours. In order to preserve the appearance and ambiance of the Courthouse grounds, please do not disturb the landscaping.

## **Courthouse Tour:**

Courthouse is open for tours 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., Monday through Friday. As you tour, please be mindful that there may be meetings in progress in various rooms. Food and beverages are not permitted on the tour. Visiting any elected official's office is subject to his/her office schedule.

## **Acknowledgments**

County Administration: Roger Desjarlais, Doug Meurer, Pete Winton, Christine Brady, David Harner and Glen Salyer.