



Mission of the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce

The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce is an organization of businesses unified in efforts to advance the economic growth of the region, promote the interests of the business community, provide key leadership on key commerce issues and preserve the county's quality of life.

Chamber Connection

915 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429 · 352-795-3149 · 106 W. Main St., Inverness, FL 34450 · 352-726-2801

Shop LOCAL for last-minute Christmas items

If you are still looking for those perfect last-minute Christmas items, shop local! Our many shops in downtown Inverness, Crystal River, Floral City and Old Homosassa, as well as throughout our county, carry many unique gift items that can provide the perfect finishes to your Christmas lists.

Also, when you shop local, you reinvest in your community and continue

to strengthen the economic base of our County through the creation and preservation of jobs. A larger portion of locally generated tax revenues get returned to our communities and local businesses are more apt to reinvest their profits in our communities through business expansion and support of many local nonprofits.



Let your holiday dollars have extra impact by reinvesting them in our community.

Suncoast Credit Union is Presenting Sponsor for Florida Manatee Festival

The Chamber is pleased to welcome back Suncoast Credit Union as the Presenting Sponsor of the Florida Manatee Festival for a second year.

From its beginnings in 1934 when a handful of local educators founded Hillsborough County Teachers Credit Union, Suncoast Credit Union has grown into the largest financial institution headquartered on the west coast of Florida where they now serve 21 counties.

Although Suncoast Credit Union is based out of the Tampa area, each branch is run locally and the philosophy is that whatever a branch does stays within that local community. Within Citrus County, Suncoast has given over \$450,000 in the past five years, and their 10 local employees have given over 680 volunteer hours in 2016 alone.

As David White, Branch Manager for their Crystal River location, says, "What community gives to us, we want to give back to them."

The Chamber also recognizes additional sponsors to date: Gold Sponsor — Citrus County Chronicle; Silver Sponsors — Citrus 95.3 / FOX 96.7, Tampa Bay Times, Plantation on



To join the growing list of sponsors for the Florida Manatee Festival, contact the Chamber at 352-795-3149.

Crystal River, Norton's Riverside; Bronze Sponsors — Brannen Bank, Hometown Values, WJXB Radio, Nick Nicholas Ford Lincoln, Citrus Sports & Apparel.

The Florida Manatee Festival, produced by the Chamber and Crystal River Rotary, will be held Jan. 14 and 15 in downtown Crystal River.

For more information: www.GoManateeFest.com

Thanks to outgoing Board members

Four members of the Chamber Board of Directors will be stepping down at the end of December as their terms conclude. The Chamber thanks them for their years of service to the Chamber and our business community.

This past year, the Chamber awarded Lifetime Director Recognition status to Charles Davis, owner of Chas. E. Davis Funeral Home, who served 38 consecutive years on the Board with his leadership and continual support. He was the senior member of the Chamber Board and instilled wisdom and advice over the years that has led us to be the successful Chamber that it is today.

Rebecca Bays, owner of Insurance Resources & Risk Management, was Board Chair in 2015 and played an instrumental role in the successful partnership between the Chamber and the Tourist Development Council that resulted in the co-location of both organizations into the Welcome Center

on U.S. 19.

During his time on the Board, Dudley Calfee, Calfee Consulting, served as Chair of the Strawberry Festival Committee and kept agricultural issues at the forefront of our Governmental Affairs Committee.

John Hodgkins, SunTrust Bank, served three years on the Board and is a native of Citrus County, and brought the perspective of a young businessman and entrepreneur to the Chamber board.

Additionally, the Chamber thanks this year's Board Chair, Dr. Jim Harvey, for his leadership, organizational skills and wisdom as we revamped many of the Chamber's policies and procedures. Dr. Harvey, who retired as Interim President of the College of Central Florida, began his chairmanship with an aggressive list of operational goals, almost all of which were accomplished this year. Dr. Harvey remains on the Chamber Board as Immediate Past Chair.

Christmas Parade award winners

The 2016 Christmas Parade award winners were announced at the Dec. 15 Chamber mixer at Suncoast Plumbing:



We once again thank our Presenting Sponsors for the parades, Elite Roofing for the Crystal River Parade and Angelo's Golf Carts for the Inverness Parade.



Winners in the Crystal River Parade were: Wow Factor — Center Stage Dance Academy and Tony's Collision Center; Religious Entry — Joy & Praise Fellowship A/G; Commercial Entry — Elite Roofing; Non-Commercial Entry — Cub Scouts Packs 462 and 415 and Troop 415; School/Association Entry — Red Level Horsemen's Association and Red Level Ranchers 4-H. Additionally, a Special Recognition Award was presented to the Rotary Club of Crystal River for their Santa's Sleigh float.



Winners in the Inverness Christmas Parade were Wow Factor — Tony's Collision Center; Religious Entry — First Baptist Church; Commercial Entry — Citrus Memorial Hospital; Non-Commercial Entry — Citrus County 4-H Shooting Sports; School/Association Entry — Solid Rock Christian Academy.

Sheriff-elect Prendergast is January luncheon speaker



Mike Prendergast

Sheriff-elect Mike Prendergast is the keynote speaker for the Chamber's January luncheon on Jan. 20 at the Plantation on Crystal River. This will be

one of the new Sheriff's first public speaking engagements following his swearing-in as the new Citrus County Sheriff on Jan. 3. The luncheon is

sponsored by United Way of Citrus County. To RSVP, call Janet at 352-795-3149.

RECENT RIBBON CUTTINGS

Welcome New Chamber Members: The Chamber continues to grow weekly! We welcome our new members and thank all of them for joining the Chamber. We encourage the community to patronize their businesses.

The UPS Store

352-53-3507 • www.TheUPSStoreLocal.com



The Chamber would like to welcome Sally Sherman, owner; Bill Watts, manager; and Joe Nicolosi, associate of the UPS Store located at 2609 N Forest Ridge Blvd. in Hernando. They offer printing services, document finishing, packing and shipping, mailbox services, postal products and services, along with notary services. Ambassadors to welcome them include Bill Hardin, Black Diamond Ranch; Mary Pericht, Cadence Bank; Arnold Virgilio, Virgilio Insurance Services; Dennis Pfeiffer, Orkin Pest Control; George Bendtsen, Insurance by George; and Jennifer Duca, Fidelity Title Services. Call 352-513-3507; www.TheUPSStoreLocal.com.

'Chamber Report' on WYKE



Don Taylor

Watch the weekly "Chamber Report" show on WYKE-TV to stay abreast of Chamber events, issues and member spotlights with host Josh Wooten. "Chamber Report" is broadcast on Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. on Bright House Channel 16 and Channel 47 (digital antenna). It can also be accessed on LiveStream.com by searching for WYKE.

This week's show features Don Taylor, president of the Economic Development Authority for Citrus County (EDACC) who talks with Josh about the Citrus County economic climate and the various initiatives of EDACC.

"Chamber Report" is your ticket to the many happenings in Citrus County!

Chamber Legacy Partners

The Chamber recognizes our Legacy Partners that have made a special investment in the Chamber to support the programs and mission of the Chamber. For information on becoming a Legacy Partner, please contact the Chamber at 352-795-3149.



Chamber events

Jan. 14-15 — 30th annual Manatee Festival, downtown Crystal River
Jan. 20 — Chamber Luncheon at the Plantation on Crystal River; guest speaker Sheriff-elect Mike Prendergast; sponsored by United Way
Feb. 10 — Chamber Luncheon at Citrus Hills; guest speaker Commission Chair Scott Carnahan; sponsored by Citrus Memorial Health
For more information on all Chamber events, call 352-795-3149 or go to www.CitrusCountyChamber.com.