



Chamber Connection

915 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429 · 352-795-3149 · 203 E. Dampier St., Inverness, FL 34450 · 352-726-2801

A Farewell from our Outgoing Chair

As 2023 draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on a remarkable year of service as the Chair of the Board of Directors for the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce.

It has been a year filled with immense gratitude for the privilege of leading an organization that is deeply committed to the well-being of our local businesses and the broader Citrus County community. The dedication and tireless efforts of the Chamber's staff, our members, volunteers, and the entire community have left an indelible mark on me.

The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce stands as a shining example of an organization that tirelessly advocates for the interests of our business community and the quality of life that Citrus County has to offer. Throughout my term, I have witnessed firsthand the Chamber's commitment to facilitating open communication with our local, legislative, and congressional leaders. Their advocacy efforts have been in-

strumental in promoting the interests of our community both locally and at the state level.

One of the highlights of this year was the successful hosting of two beloved festivals that brought our community together: the annual Florida Manatee Festival and the Floral City Strawberry Festival. These events not only showcased the rich culture and heritage of Citrus County but also provided a platform for local businesses to thrive and connect with our residents.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Idalia, the Chamber's dedication to supporting our community was truly remarkable. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of local businesses and community organizations, the Chamber secured funds and distributed over \$18,000 in mini-grants to affected businesses, offering a helping hand when it was needed most.

October saw the Chamber's Annual Business Appreciation



2023 Chairman of the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Tom Ryan – Central Ridge Insurers.

Month, which shone a spotlight on the vital role played by small businesses in our community. Through various events and initiatives, the Chamber celebrated the resilience and contributions of these businesses, reinforcing their significance in the fabric of Citrus County.

I am honored to say, in 2023 through our festivals, events, and outreach the Chamber has given over \$50,000 back to our community.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have dedicated their time, talent, or resources to support the Chamber's initiatives throughout the year. These events and endeavors would not have been possible without the dedication of the Chamber's staff, the commitment of our members, the hard work of event volunteers, and the generosity of our businesses.

Serving as the Chair of the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce has been a tremendous honor and a truly rewarding experience. I am profoundly grateful for the trust and confidence that the Chamber and its members have placed in me. While my term as chair is coming to a close, I am enthusiastic about staying actively involved with the Chamber in different ca-

pacities as we continue to work towards a prosperous and vibrant Citrus County.

As I pass the gavel to our incoming Chair for 2024, Debbie Reilly, I have complete confidence in her leadership. Debbie has been an invaluable member of our board and the Leadership Citrus Board of Governors for many years, and her involvement in numerous community organizations reflects her dedication to our area. With her leadership, I am confident that the Chamber will continue to thrive and bring a renewed focus to literacy and workforce development in Citrus County.

As we look forward to another impactful year in 2024 under Debbie's leadership, I am excited about the continued growth and prosperity that the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce will bring to our community. Thank you once again for the privilege of serving as your Chair, and I look forward to the bright future ahead for Citrus County.



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.

2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Debbie Reilly, Chair
Citrus County Library System
Stacey Worthington, Chair Elect
Worthington A/C & Heating
Rob Wardlow, Treasurer
Wardlow & Cash, P.A.
Kelley Paul, Secretary
Wollinka Wike Title Insurance Agency
Tom Ryan, Immediate Past Chair
Central Ridge Insurers

LIFETIME DIRECTORS

George Bendtsen
Insurance By George - posthumously
Pete Burrell
Citrus County Chronicle (ret.)
Kevin Cunningham
RE/MAX Realty One
Charles Davis
Chas. E. Davis Funeral Home
Karen Dixon
Dick Dolbow
Citrus County Schools
Joe Fallon
Retired
Mike Fitzpatrick
Century Link (ret.)

Rocky Hensley
Brannen Bank (ret.)
Gerry Mulligan
Citrus County Chronicle (ret.)
Jim Neal
James A. Neal, Jr. PA
Jack Reynolds
Brannen Bank
Janice Warren
Tax Collector
Chet White
Stanley Steamer
Janet Yant
Nature Coast Charters

2024 BOARD MEMBERS

Garret Adkins
YMCA of the Suncoast - Citrus County
Tiarra Alexander
The Pace Center for Girls
Rachel Cullen
Phoenix PEO Specialists
Cregg Dalton
Citrus County Property Appraiser
Martin Drango
Duke Energy
Carl Flanagan
PRIMERICA Advisors

Barb Fletcher
LKQ
Mark Garlock
Garlock Enterprises/ Amway
Dr. Jim Harvey
College of Central Florida (ret.)
Hiram Jacob
Florida Citrus Memorial Hospital/HCA
Veronica Kampschroer
Citrus County BOCC
Bob Kane
Kane's Ace Hardware

Dr. Vernon Lawter
College of Central Florida
Gary Mock
RMC(SW) USN (ret.)
John Murphy
Citrus County Chronicle
Marci Olinger
Bravera Health Seven Rivers
Lindsay Platz
Insight Credit Union
George Schmalstig
United Way of Citrus County

Craig Stevens
Citrus County Fire Rescue
Don Taylor
EDACC
Harold Walker
Citrus Construction Academy
Tabitha Wells
Wells Business Solutions
Julie Wilkinson
Citrus County Board of County Commissioners

UPCOMING EVENTS

01/12 January Chamber Luncheon; 11:30AM; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club; Chamber 4-1-1
01/13 – 01/14 37th Annual Florida Manatee Festival; Downtown Crystal River
01/18 January Mixer; 5PM; United Way of Citrus County
01/25 Legislative Day in Tallahassee
02/29 February Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am; The Plantation on Crystal River

02/15 February Mixer; 5PM; Builders Association of Citrus County
03/02/ - 03/03 37th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival, Floral Park
03/08 March Chamber Luncheon; 11:30AM; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club
03/21 March Mixer; 5PM; Hengesbach & Hengesbach (Beverly Hills)



37TH ANNUAL FLORIDA MANATEE FESTIVAL
JANUARY 13TH & 14TH, 2024
\$10 ADULTS | 12/UNDER FREE
\$5 ENTRY SUNDAY ONLY WITH CHRONICLE COUPON!



FREE PARKING/SHUTTLE AT CRYSTAL RIVER HIGH SCHOOL

- FOOD COURT
- BEER & WINE GARDEN
- ART IN THE PARK
- CRAFT VENDORS
- KIDS ZONES
- STREET ENTERTAINMENT
- HIPPIE VILLAGE AT HERITAGE HOUSE

WWW.COMANATEEFEST.COM



Chamber Legacy Members



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 by emailing Corrine@CitrusCountyChamber.com.