



Promotional information provided by the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce.

# Chamber Connection

915 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River · 352-795-3149 · 212 W. Main St., Inverness · 352-726-2801

## A Sizzling Success! Citrus County Packs 2025 BIG BAM BBQ

More than 1,000 local leaders, business professionals, and community members gathered under the stars at M&B Dairy in Lecanto for the 2025 Business Appreciation Month (BAM) BBQ, presented by Nick Nicholas Ford, on October 23rd. The largest BAM BBQ yet, this year's celebration brought together Citrus County's business community for a night of incredible food, live music, and high-energy entertainment that truly embodied the spirit of Citrus County.

Guests enjoyed Leon McClellan's famous barbeque, Larry Rook's crispy fried okra, Dixie Hollins' southern fried green tomatoes, and sweet desserts from The Ice Cream Club, made with

cream made from M&B Dairy's own cows. The atmosphere was electric as Echo Sixx took the stage, keeping the crowd on their feet all evening. Adding even more excitement, fire performer 1GirlFire lit up the night with a dazzling display that left the audience in awe.

Among those in attendance were Congressman Gus Bilirakis, Commissioners Rebecca Bays, Holly Davis, Janet Barek, Mayor Joe Meek, and many of Citrus County's local leaders, who joined business owners and community members to celebrate the impact and resilience of the local business community. The BAM BBQ once again proved to be the biggest networking celebration of the year, where friendships are



strengthened, partnerships are formed, and Citrus County pride shines brightest.

Each year, the BAM BBQ serves as the grand finale of Business Appreciation Month, honoring the businesses that

fuel our economy and support the quality of life we all enjoy. The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce extends its heartfelt thanks to the many BAM sponsors whose continued support makes this event possible.



### UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

- 11/14 November Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am – 1:00pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club; Speaker: Heather Cogar, Florida Chamber Statewide Director of Prosperity Initiative
- 11/20 November Chamber Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; The Oaks B&B
- 12/06 Crystal River Christmas Parade, 6pm
- 12/12 Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am – 1:00pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club
- 12/13 Inverness Christmas Parade, Noon
- 12/18 Chamber Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; (members only), Sweet Citrus Acres

### Calling All Vendors for the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Manatee Festival

Get ready to be part of one of Citrus County's most beloved annual traditions, the 39th Annual Florida Manatee Festival, happening January 17 & 18, 2026 in downtown Crystal River. Presented by Coast-to-Coast Heating and Air Conditioning, this two-day celebration draws thousands of visitors to enjoy art, food, live music, and family fun in the heart of the Nature Coast.

Now is the time for vendors and exhibitors to secure their place at one of the largest and most anticipated festivals in the region. Whether you are a talented artist, a local business, a community organization, or a food vendor, the Florida Manatee Festival is the perfect opportunity to showcase your products,



services, and creativity in front of thousands of enthusiastic attendees.

Vendor spaces fill quickly each year, so early registration is encouraged. From handcrafted art and specialty goods to delicious treats and family activities, this event offers something for everyone while supporting the community spirit that makes Crystal River so special.

To apply, visit [www.GoManateeFest.com](http://www.GoManateeFest.com) and complete your vendor application today. For questions or more information, contact Missy at [Events@CitrusCountyChamber.com](mailto:Events@CitrusCountyChamber.com).

Be part of the excitement and join us for a weekend celebrating the charm, creativity, and community pride that make Citrus County shine.

### RECENT RIBBON CUTTING

The Chamber is growing every week. We welcome our new members and thank all of them for joining the Chamber. We encourage the community to support their businesses.

#### Epperson Family Tree



Welcome Epperson Family Tree to the Chamber! Serving the Citrus County area, Epperson Family Tree is here to help with professional mowing, yard clean-up, and complete property clean-outs. Whether it's regular lawn maintenance or tackling a big clean-up project, their team is ready to provide dependable service with care and attention to detail. You can reach them at (352) 549-1715 or by email at [eppersonfamilytree2018@gmail.com](mailto:eppersonfamilytree2018@gmail.com).

### Get Ready to Celebrate 'Holiday Favorites' at the Christmas Parades!

As the holiday season approaches, excitement is building for this year's Crystal River and Inverness Christmas Parades, set to celebrate a Holiday Favorites theme! These cherished annual events will once again fill the streets with the sights and sounds of the season, bringing neighbors and friends together to share in the joy of community tradition.

**The Crystal River Parade will take place on Saturday December 6 at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Inverness Parade on Saturday December 13 at 12:00 p.m.**

This year's theme invites participants to capture the heart of the holidays by bringing their favorite seasonal memories to life. From cozy fireplaces and classic carols to timeless holiday movies and childhood traditions, every float is an opportunity to showcase the magic of

the season.

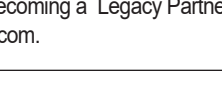
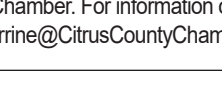
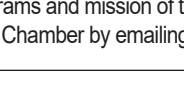
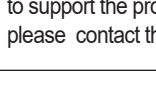
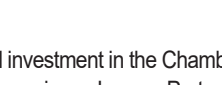
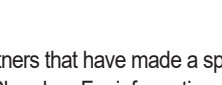
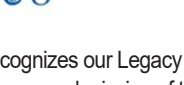
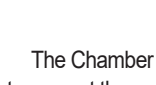
Community members, organizations, and businesses are all encouraged to join in the merriment. Applications for float participation are open now at [www.CitrusCountyChamber.com](http://www.CitrusCountyChamber.com), and the deadline to apply is Friday November 14. Whether you are a returning participant or creating your first-ever float, this is a wonderful chance to connect with the community and help make this year's celebrations truly unforgettable.

Let's come together once again to deck the streets of Citrus County in "Holiday Favorites" and spread cheer to all who gather along the parade routes. For more information on float registration, route maps, or road closures, contact the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce at 352-795-3149.

Don't wait to join the fun. Submit your application today and be part of the magic that makes this season shine bright in Citrus County!



### 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](mailto:Corrine@CitrusCountyChamber.com).