



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

This Holiday Season, Let's Keep the Cheer Here in Citrus

As we move into the heart of the holiday season, I want to take a moment to encourage our community to embrace something that makes Citrus County truly special: the strength of our local businesses and the neighbors behind them.

Every shop, every family-owned restaurant, every local maker at a holiday market contributes to the character and economy of our county. These businesses support our youth programs, donate to local charities, hire local residents, and help shape the welcoming spirit that defines life on the Nature Coast.

The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce is launching our annual "Keep the Cheer Here" campaign to celebrate and support the businesses that make Citrus County shine. The message is simple: when we choose to shop, dine, and gift locally, we're doing far more than checking names off a holiday list; we're investing directly back into our community.

Research consistently shows that dollars spent locally circulate through the community at a much higher rate than dollars spent online or out-of-county. Those purchases help sustain jobs, strengthen local services, and keep our business community vibrant. Even the smallest choices like a cup of coffee, a gift card, or a last-minute stocking stuffer make a meaningful difference.

I invite every resident to join us this month by choosing Citrus County first. Explore our downtowns, stop into a shop you haven't visited before, share your favorite local finds on social media using #KeepTheCheerHere, and encourage friends and family to support our neighbors in the same way.

This is a season of generosity, connection, and community pride. Let's make sure that spirit stays right here at home.

Thank you for helping us Keep the Cheer Here, and thank you to the businesses that continue to pour so much into Citrus County all year long.

— Josh Wooten
President & CEO
Citrus County Chamber of Commerce



Holiday Magic Marches Through Inverness Today!

The Inverness Christmas Parade, presented by Tony's Collision, begins at 12 p.m. this afternoon. Families, neighbors, and visitors from across the county are invited to gather in the heart of Inverness to celebrate one of Citrus County's most cherished holiday events.

This year's theme, Holiday Favorites, has inspired a variety of festive and imaginative entries. From cozy winter scenes and classic Christmas characters to fun tributes to beloved holiday films and music, each float brings a unique twist on the traditions we hold dear. Whether you grew up watching holiday parades or are just starting a new tradition, today's celebration offers something for everyone.

Leading the parade as Grand Marshal is John Thomas, a proud Citrus County native, dedicated community supporter, and lifelong farmer and rancher. His deep roots in the Inverness area and his passion for agriculture and land stewardship make him a fitting representative for this year's parade. With a quiet strength and unwavering commitment to the community, John is a true example of what it means to lead by example.

The judging panel is ready to take in all the creativity, sparkle, and spirit along the parade route. This year's judges include:

- Laura Kovach, Kovach & Baker Law
- Laurene Long, Brooksville Healthcare Center
- Trina Murphy, Publisher of the Citrus County Chronicle

They will be looking for entries that best reflect the parade's theme and the holiday spirit that makes Inverness so special.

by Dunkin Donuts and head east toward downtown Inverness, then turn off at E. Grace St. right after Mama's Kuntry Kafe. The parade will then follow Grace St. towards HCA Florida Citrus Hospital, following the curve to the right, turning left to continue on to Grace St., turning left on S. Line Ave., then turning right onto W. Highland Blvd., ending at Citrus High School. The forecast is a high of 76 and sunny....

Traffic and Road Closures

■ A Main Street detour is in effect today from 10:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. Main Street will be closed from Hwy. 44 East to Montgomery Ave. All traffic will be detoured around Main Street via Montgomery Ave. and W. Highland Blvd. N. Apopka Ave., E. Dampier Street, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. will be closed; traffic will be detoured down E. Dampier St. to N. Seminole Ave. onto Tompkins St. Grace St. will be closed; all traffic will be detoured via W. Highland Blvd.

■ Gospel Island residents will use Zephyr Street and Tompkins St. to Hwy. 41 North.

■ Highlands South community can utilize alternate routes to 41 South by utilizing Hill Street and Inverness Blvd and Pleasant Grove Road by utilizing West Arbor Street.

Please plan extra travel time and follow all posted signage and directions from law enforcement to ensure a safe and smooth experience for everyone.

Bring the family and find your favorite spot along the route.

The Inverness Christmas Parade is ready to fill the streets with joyful music, creative floats, and timeless holiday charm!

For additional information or to see the route map visit our website at www.citruscountychamber.com/christmas-parades/.

Parade Route and Viewing Information

Park along W. Main St. beginning in the area of Cherry Ave. (Next to Taco Bell), the parade will enter W. Main St.

Hop on the bus to Tallahassee: Join the Chamber for Citrus County Legislative Day

The Citrus County Chamber continues the tradition of organizing its annual Legislative Day bus trip to Tallahassee and we invite you to join us! The January 22 trip will feature a morning of legislators and agency officials who will meet with us to discuss issues of local, regional and state importance, with some time for questions and answers. It is a great way to get an overview of what is happening during the 2026 Legislative Session, with a focus on matters of significance to Citrus County.

The trip includes round-trip transportation from Crystal River via motorcoach, all speaker sessions, and a catered gourmet buffet lunch. Following lunch, you will have time to sit in on House and Senate sessions or committee meetings, or explore the Capitol area downtown before returning to Citrus County late in the afternoon.

The trip is \$90/person

and spaces are limited.

To register or for further information, go to <https://tinyurl.com/2s3e4vzn>, or contact Ardath Prendergast at ardath@citruscountychamber.com or 352-795-3149.

The Chamber thanks our presenting sponsor Crystal Tractor & Equipment, along with Dix Developments, Duke Energy, CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion, and Leadership Citrus for helping to make this trip possible.



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.

Parade Winners and Holiday Cheer at the December Chamber Mixer

The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce invites members and guests of the venue to close out the year in festive style at the December Chamber "Parade Awards" Mixer, happening on Thursday, December 18 from 5 to 7 p.m. at Sweet Citrus Acres RV Resort, located at 3995 N Turkey Oak Drive in Crystal River.

This cheerful end-of-year event will feature the official announcement of the 2025 Inverness and Crystal River Christmas Parade winners, with awards presented to the most creative and crowd-pleasing floats from both beloved community parades.

Attendees will enjoy live music by local favorite Casey Young, light refreshments, and plenty of opportunities to mix and mingle with fellow Chamber members, parade participants, and community partners.

It's the perfect way to toast a successful holiday season and wrap up the year with connection and

celebration.

Come share in the holiday cheer; celebrate our

parade winners, and enjoy an evening of music and community spirit!



Upcoming Chamber Events

- 12/13 Inverness Christmas Parade, Noon
- 12/18 Chamber Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; (members only), Sweet Citrus Acres
- 01/08 January Chamber Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; (members only), Bayside Grille
- 01/09 January Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am – 1:00pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club
- 01/17-01/18 Florida Manatee Festival; Downtown Crystal River
- 01/22 Annual Citrus County Legislative Day; Tallahassee