



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

Music, Manatees, and Memories await at the 39th Annual Florida Manatee Festival

The Florida Manatee Festival returns for its 39th year to the Manatee Capital of the World, downtown Crystal River, on Saturday and Sunday, January 17th and 18th. Produced by the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, this signature community event proudly welcomes Coast to Coast Heating and Air as the presenting sponsor for the second year in a row. Consistently rated as one of the best outdoor events in Citrus County, the Florida Manatee Festival offers a full weekend of entertainment, family fun, and opportunities to experience the natural beauty of our Nature Coast!

Festivalgoers are encouraged to come hungry and thirsty and enjoy two food courts and two beer and wine gardens located throughout the festival grounds, offering a wide variety of delicious options to satisfy every craving. Back by popular demand, guided kayak tours with Paddle Tails will be available for a nominal fee, allowing participants to explore Kings Bay and the Hunter Springs area while learning more about the local ecosystem from experienced guides.

Admission to the festival also includes free transportation and entry to world-famous Three



Sisters Springs and the new Friends of the Crystal River Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center.

Shuttle buses will operate both days from 9 AM to 2:30 PM, with pick-up and drop-off located at

the 5th Street gate. During Manatee Season, hundreds of manatees gather in the springs to enjoy the constant 72-degree waters, offering visitors an unforgettable opportunity to view these gentle giants in their natural habitat.

Live musical entertainment will take place throughout the weekend across four entertainment areas. The Alexander Real Estate Waterfront Main Stage will feature high-energy performances including Money for Nothin', Sada Davidson Band, and Moonflower, along with popular tribute act The British Rock Invasion, celebrating classic rock favorites Foreigner and Bad Company. Additional performances throughout the festival grounds add to the lively atmosphere and ensure there is always something to see and hear.

New this year, themed family entertainment will take place at the Black Shades Pump House Stage, located near Town Square and Art in the Park. Mer-Tailor's Mermaid Photo Op will be available Saturday and Sunday from 9 AM to 11 AM, offering guests the chance to meet real mermaids during the Mermaid Aquarium Encounter and capture a one-of-a-kind photo experience perfect for families and children of all ages. Also at the

Black Shades Pump House Stage, Pump House Plunder Live Pirate Improv presented by Twisted Arts Initiative, will be making appearances Saturday from 9 AM to 5 PM and Sunday from 9 AM to 4 PM. This interactive comedy experience features roaming pirate performers delivering quick wit, audience participation, and laugh-out-loud moments inspired by improvisational theater with a swashbuckling twist.

In addition to entertainment, a vast array of fine art, craft, business marketplace, and non-profit vendors will line both the north and south sides of Citrus Avenue in downtown Crystal River. Art in the Park, located in Town Square, provides the perfect setting to browse and purchase original artwork and unique pieces with lasting meaning. Families will also enjoy a designated Kids Zone and activities throughout the festival grounds, including inflatables, face painting, balloon pop, spider jump, and more.

With something to entertain every age and interest, the 39th Annual Florida Manatee Festival continues to be a must-attend event for residents and visitors alike. For full schedules, details, and updates, visit www.GoManateeFest.com.



FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

FEBRUARY 13TH, 2026
11:30AM - 1:00PM
Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club

County Administrator
STEVE HOWARD

Sponsored By:  **Centratel**
Cloud Solutions Ground Support

February Luncheon: The Road Ahead for Citrus County

Join us for our February Chamber Luncheon featuring County Administrator Steve Howard. He will be providing a comprehensive wrap-up of 2025 and share some forward-looking updates on priorities and plans for the new year. Attendees will gain insight into countywide growth, infrastructure, and key initiatives shaping the future of Citrus County.

February 13th, 2026; 11:30am-1pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club

Networking: 11:30am-12pm
Program/Speaker: 12pm-1pm
Speaker: County Administrator Steve Howard
Sponsor: Centratel
Pricing:
\$30 – Members
\$35 – Non-members
Advanced reservations are required, online at www.CitrusCountyChamber.com. No walk-ups will be accepted.

UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

- 01/17-01/18 Florida Manatee Festival; Downtown Crystal River
- 01/22 Annual Citrus County Legislative Day; Tallahassee
- 02/13 February Chamber Luncheon; 11:30am – 1:00pm; Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club
- 02/19 February Chamber "Ball Drop" Mixer; 5:00pm – 7:00pm; Chamber Office
- 02/22 CCBA Annual Jim Blackshear Memorial Golf Outing; Twisted Oaks Golf Course
- 03/07 – 03/08 39th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival; Floral Park

Join the Fun! Vendor Registration Open for the Floral City Strawberry Festival

Vendors applications are now open for the 39th Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival, taking place March 7th and 8th, 2026, at Floral Park in Floral City. This well-loved community festival draws thousands of attendees and features locally grown strawberries from Ferris Groves, live music, food and beverage options, family friendly activities like the annual pie eating contests and Strawberry Princess Pageants, and a wide variety of arts, crafts, and business vendors.

Interested vendors are encouraged to register now at www.gostrawberryfest.com. For additional information, please contact Missy Slanker, Events Manager, at 352 795 3149.

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.

Langley Health Services - Inverness Behavioral Health



Welcome to the Chamber, Langley Health Services – Inverness Behavioral Health! As part of Langley Health Services, a Federally Qualified Health Center, the Inverness Behavioral Health location provides compassionate, patient-centered mental health care to our community. Their team is dedicated to offering accessible, high-quality behavioral health services to individuals and families, ensuring that every patient receives the support they need on their journey toward wellness. You can find them at 314 Line Ave, Inverness FL 34452, call them at (352) 419-5760, or visit their website at www.langleyhealth.com. We are excited to welcome such a vital resource committed to improving lives 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.