



CATS Monthly Newsletter-

March 2026

Dear CATS-

Happy March CATS!

The Welcome Center is officially **cashless!** Starting March 1st the Welcome Center and the Purely Polk Marketplace will not accept cash. We will accept: Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Samsung Pay.

Keep an eye out for the new Clowder Confidential tips in the newsletter.

Come to the Welcome Center for one of our special events! Celebrate the Welcome Center's 19th birthday at our **Birthday Bash** event with treats & BOGO tickets on **March 7th**. Catch a movie this spring break (**March 16-21**) with **Spring Fling Cinema**. Bring your little ones to hunt for candy-filled eggs at our **Egg Hunt** on **March 28th**.

Did you want to learn more about Water Skiing and Wake Sports? There is no better place than in the Water Ski Capital of the World with the **Water Ski and Wake Sports Hall of Fame Tour at the Welcome Center!** Tours will be held every second Tuesday of the month. Be on the first tour, this March 10th.

Stop by the Welcome Center to discover more!

Have you taken the new CATS Online Course?

This new course will be shorter and easier to complete. Everyone who has been certified will remain certified; however, we encourage EVERYONE to take the new online course.



[Sign up to take the New CATS Online Course!](#)



Are you a Purr-fessional?

Are you a Certified Ambassador of
Tourism and Sports AND working in
Polk County's Hospitality Industry?

Make sure to let our Education
Coordinator know! You may be
eligible for Purr-fessional exclusives!

[Click here to email our Education
Coordinator to confirm you are a
Purr-fessional](#)



Last Month...



The CATS toured **Colt Creek State Park** in February!

Colt Creek State Park is in the Northwest corner of Polk County and covers over 5000 acres of property in the Green Swamp. The Green Swamp is protected to help with water drainage and flooding. The land was used as a cattle ranch prior to 2006. Today guests can enjoy hiking, biking (you can use e-bikes here), and horse back riding. Visitors can also camp on property: RV/trailer campgrounds, glamping, tent, and primitive camping.

On this CATS tour we enjoyed seeing the pine flatwood forests, white-tailed deer, kestrels, butterflies, and alligators. This time of year is the best time to sight the rare Sherman's Fox Squirrel, however they managed to evade the CATS this tour. Fall is the best time to see wildflowers.

The park plans on expanding to have a rec hall, gift shop, camp store, and a horse barn where visitors can check out horses for a ride.

For more information about Colt Creek State Park and their events, check out the [Friends of Colt Creek State Park Facebook page](#).

Coming Up...



MARCH

Museum of Winter Haven History

Invitations were emailed on February 25th to Certified Ambassadors of Tourism and Sports.



APRIL

Golden Ridge Groves

Juice Tour

Invitations will be emailed on April 3rd to Certified Ambassadors of Tourism and Sports.

If you would like to come on one of our CATS Exclusive Tours,
you must be a Certified Ambassador of Tourism and Sports.

To become an ambassador, you must complete the CATS Online Course.

Our new online class is up and running! Please sign up!

CATS Exclusive Tour Invitations will be emailed to all Certified Ambassadors of
Tourism and Sports.

CATS Shirts are in!

Certified Ambassadors of Tourism & Sports can
pick up their CATS Shirts at the Welcome
Center!

How to pick up your CATS Shirt?

- First, you must be a Certified Ambassador of Tourism and Sports.
- Second, inform the front desk you are here to pick up your CATS Shirt.
- Third, show our staff your CATS Certificate!



*Shirts are limited sized, and are first come, first serve.

🐱👁️ CLOWDER CONFIDENTIAL: We love wearing our shirts on the CATS Exclusive Tours! 🍷



Welcome Center Update: We are going cashless!

As of March 1st, 2026 the Welcome Center will be completely cashless!

For the last few years, our ticket sales (LEGOLAND, Disney, Universal, SeaWorld, etc...) have gone cashless. Now we will be transitioning our Purely Polk Marketplace gift shop to accept Visa, Master Card, American Express, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Samsung Pay.

Check out the Purely Polk Marketplace as we transition into the 21st century.



Birthday Bash

March 7 | 9AM-12PM

The Welcome Center is turning 19! Come celebrate our birthday with us! The Welcome Center's Birthday Bash, is a free, family friendly event featuring free cookies and light refreshments (while supplies last), free caricatures, giveaways and more. We will also have **Buy One Get One Free tickets** for Bok Tower Gardens (Cash or Credit Card) and LEGOLAND (Date specific & Credit card only). The first 100 visitors will receive a **free gift** and vendors will be on site with local goods and treats for sale.



Water Ski & Water Sports Hall of Fame Tours at the Welcome Center

Every second Tuesday, March 10 | 10AM

Explore the last century of water skiing and wake sports with an expert from the field! See highlights from the nine disciplines, starting with the skis that started it all in the Water Ski Capital of the World!



Spring Fling Cinema

March 16-21 | 10AM & 1PM

The Welcome Center is hosting movies over Spring Break! Each movie is being shown at 10am and then again at 1pm. Bring a blanket or chair and enjoy a movie with FREE snacks!

3/16 - KPOP DEMON HUNTERS

3/17 - THE WILD ROBOT

3/18 - SPIDERMAN: INTO THE SPIDERVERSE

3/19 - ZOOTOPIA

3/20 - RISE OF THE GUARDIANS

3/21 - HOP



Egg Hunt

March 28 | 9AM-12PM

The Welcome Center is featuring kid-friendly activities, **giveaways and egg hunts** beginning at the top of each hour (children will be separated into three age groups for each of the three sessions). There will be chances to win special prizes each hunt and vendors will be on hand with local goods and treats for sale.

[Save the Dates 2023](#)

🐱👁️ CLOWDER CONFIDENTIAL:

- 🖼️ The Season of Color Art Show coming to the Welcome Center this May
- ✈️ Sun N Fun Aerospace Expo
- 🌪️ Hurricane Prep Week at the Welcome Center in May
- 🚚 Maybe some Food Trucks?



Visit Central Florida's Visitor Experience Team and the Welcome Center is excited to announce the launch of its official Instagram and Facebook pages!

Now, visitors and locals alike can stay connected and up-to-date with the latest events, attractions, travel tips, and exciting happenings throughout the county. By following these social media platforms, you'll get insider information, special offers, and a closer look at everything Central Florida and the Visitor Experience Team has to offer. Be sure to follow them today to explore the best of Central Florida and make the most of your visit!

[Follow Visit Central Florida's Visitor Experience Team on Instagram](#)

[Follow Visit Central Florida's Visitor Experience Team on Facebook](#)

PS. CATS have an entire highlight on our [@WelcomeCentralFL](#) Instagram page!



[Check out our Visit Central Florida Event Page for more fun!](#)

[Download the 'What's Happening in Polk County' E-flyer here.](#)

[View digital guides from Visit Central Florida](#)

🐱👁️ CLOWDER CONFIDENTIAL: Keep an eye open at events around Polk County, you might find the Welcome On Wheels! 🚗



Avelo Airlines & Lakeland International Airport

Avelo announced the return of the Atlanta and Charlotte/Concord routes for seasonal flights.

They also announced adding a Detroit route, just in time for spring training season!

[Learn more about flying out of LAL here.](#)

Routes include:

- Atlanta, GA
- Charlotte/Concord, NC
- Detroit, MI
- Grand Rapids, MI
- Nashville, TN
- New Haven, CT
- Philadelphia/ Wilmington, DE
- Rochester, NY

- San Juan, PR

Passes

DISCOVER, SIP, SAVOR & EXPLORE POLK COUNTY

From colorful murals to mouthwatering BBQ and refreshing craft brews, our free Visit Central Florida Passes help you experience the best of Polk County like a local.



Sunshine Savings Pass

Enjoy exclusive deals and discounts from local attractions, restaurants, and shops — perfect for exploring more for less!



Adventure on Tap: Central Florida Craft Beer Pass

Discover local breweries and sip your way through Polk County. Enjoy exclusive discounts and earn prizes when you check in.



Fire & Flavor BBQ Trail Pass

Follow the scent of smoky perfection and taste your way through Polk County's best BBQ joints while saving along the way.



Mural Magic Pass

Explore the art that brings our communities to life. Visit stunning murals across the county, snap photos, check in, and earn rewards along the way.

[Sign up for passes here](#)

  CLOWDER CONFIDENTIAL: New pass may be coming soon!

ANY QUESTIONS?

[Email our Education Coordinator](#)

Thank you, CATS!