



CATS Monthly Newsletter-

May 2026

Dear CATS-

Welcome to May, CATS!

Right here in the heart of Central Florida, you are the friendly faces who turn visits into lasting memories. From sporting events to scenic escapes, your passion helps showcase the very best of Polk County.

Let's dive into what's new this month and keep making our destination shine!

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 had an exclusive juice tasting at **Golden Ridge Groves** in April.

The CATS were invited to sample the different juices that Golden Ridge Groves produces. **We sampled their Orange Juice, Swamp Juice** (Blueberry & Honeybell), **and Grapefruit Juice**. During our sampling, Katie Bevilacqua, the owner, explained different facets of the citrus industry. She explained the ability to control more of the environment than ever before with CUPS (Citrus Under Protective Screens). Many of her citrus are in acres surrounded by screens. This is beneficial for many reasons. CUPS helps protect citrus from freezes, wind, and diseases (including the citrus greening bacterial disease caused by the Asian citrus psyllid).

After our samples, we all enjoyed a **trip to the sunflower field** to find two flowers of our own. Golden Ridge Groves offers many seasonal U-Pick experiences: oranges, grapefruits, strawberries and flowers. They plan to have peaches and blueberries in the future. Check out our Sunshine Savings Pass for discounts on their U-Picks.

After sunflower picking, we cooled down with some delicious soft serve **ice cream!**

Coming Up...



MAY



JUNE

Camp Margaritaville

Invitations were emailed on April 16th to Certified Ambassadors of Tourism and Sports.

**Frank Lloyd Wright Architecture
Tour with Florida Southern College's
Visitor Center**

Invitations will be emailed in May 22nd 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!



CLOWDER CONFIDENTIAL: The Welcome Center is

CASHLESS now!



Season of Color Art Show

Opening Reception: May 1 | 5PM-7PM

Art Show: May 2 - 24 | 8AM-5PM

Come see local Florida art by the talented students of Ridge Community High School at the Welcome Center this May. Vote for your favorite piece for the Season of Color visitor choice awards! Join us for the reception and enjoy light hors-d'œuvres with the announcements of our art awards.



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

Every second Tuesday, May 12 | 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!



Hurricane Prep Week

May 25 - June 1 | 8AM-5PM

Visit the Central Florida Welcome Center for Hurricane Prep Week and receive a FREE hurricane preparedness bag that includes a hurricane shelter map, hurricane prep checklists, and other helpful information for storms.



Bites at Sunset

June 26 | 4PM-8PM

Are you ready for the best bites around? Stop by the Welcome Center on June 26th for our Bites at Sunset Food Truck Rally! This event will be held from 4pm to 8pm, with good eats from all over Central Florida! Bring the family to enjoy great food and a beautiful sunset!

Save the Dates 2025



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' EBook 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!



