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## Belleview's 140th Birthday Celebration Brings the Community Together at Lake Lillian

BELLEVIEV, FL – The City of Belleview celebrated its 140th birthday on Saturday, May 3, 2025 at Lake Lillian. The community-wide celebration welcomed residents and visitors for a day of family-friendly fun, entertainment, historical reflection, activities, shopping, food and under the theme of hometown pride.

Running from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., the event featured a range of activities including a proclamation by Mayor Dobkowski, the cutting of Belleview's birthday cake and a special Time Capsule process that captured the spirit of Belleview today for future generations to experience in 2060.

“This milestone celebration was more than just a look back at our history — it was a reminder of what makes Belleview special,” said Mayor Christine Dobkowski. “It was heartwarming to see children enjoying the activities, families making memories together, and residents connecting with their neighbors and local organizations. Our city’s legacy isn’t just written in documents and dates — it’s written in moments like these, in the people who show up to celebrate and support one another. This is what 140 years of community looks like when we say Belleview is the “city with small town charm”.”

Attendees of all ages enjoyed a wide array of attractions, including:

- Face painting by Chippy Creative Services
- Cookie decorating stations by Church on the Hill
- Inflatables and Snapology STEM-based play zones
- Petting zoo
- A historical exhibit and hayride showcasing Belleview’s growth since 1885
- The official birthday cake cutting ceremony
- The Belleview Time Capsule Ceremony, where community members submitted personal notes to be sealed until the city’s 175th anniversary in 2060

“Planning this event was a labor of love, and seeing it all come together so successfully was incredibly rewarding,” said Mariah Moody, City Administrator. “There was a genuine energy throughout the day. People were smiling, kids were laughing, and our city’s story was being told not just through displays or speeches, but through connection. The Time Capsule was especially meaningful. It gave residents a chance to leave their mark, to be part of a narrative that will continue to unfold for decades. That’s the heart of what we do — building experiences that bring people together and remind them why Belleview is such a great place to live.”

The event also showcased a diverse selection of local food and drink, featuring both longtime fan favorites and exciting new vendors. Guests enjoyed everything from barbecue and hibachi to gourmet coffee, pizza, sweet treats, and refreshing frozen desserts — with several vendors offering event-exclusive specials and giveaways throughout the day.

More than 50 marketplace vendors and nonprofit organizations participated, offering handcrafted goods, community services, and interactive experiences that reflected Belleview’s strong support for local entrepreneurship and civic engagement.

The City of Belleview extends its sincere thanks to the event sponsors, whose generous support made this community celebration possible:

- FixIT Tek
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- The Church on the Hill
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- McKenney Chiropractic
- Midflorida Credit Union Belleview
- Seanie's Tasty Treats
- Snapology of Ocala
- Nothing Bundt Cakes Ocala
- FreeUp Storage Belleview
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To view photos from the event or learn more about upcoming city programs and celebrations, follow @CityofBelleview on social media.