



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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## **Manatee County's Largest, All-Free Civic Event Gets Bigger, Faster and More Explosive for 2026**

**BRADENTON, Fla.**— Manatee County's largest and **FREE** civic event—the Bradenton Area River Regatta presented by LECOM—will be a lot bigger and faster in 2026 when high-powered Formula One powerboats invade the Manatee River for this year's 11<sup>th</sup> annual event, **Friday evening and all day Saturday, Feb. 20-21.**

The supercharged Formula 1 boats replace the smaller Formula 2 watercrafts as the marquee racing event for Regatta. Seebold Sports, one of the dominant circuits in outboard powerboat racing, brings its high-speed Formula 1 team to compete in the inaugural Florida Formula 1 Championships and navigate the tight turns and waves of the Manatee River for its first race in the Bradenton/Palmetto area. Two other powerboat classes will also compete at the event—Formula Lights and Tri-Hulls (the latter also appearing for the first time)—to provide the most dramatic racing experience ever for spectators at the festival.

Continuing its two-day format, the 2026 all-**FREE** Regatta kicks off Friday, Feb. 20, with *Friday Night Flash*—a spectacular drone light show culminating in a dazzling fireworks extravaganza. Multiple bands also will provide musical entertainment from 5-9 p.m. at Bradenton's Rossi Park Pavilion Stage, including up-and-coming singer/songwriter Bella Garland, who comes directly from Nashville's Belmont University, followed by the rhythmic, high-energy dance tunes of national ABBA tribute band ABBA Nova—and national Fleetwood Mac tribute band, Sweet Fleet.

Highlighted by the Regatta's marquee powerboat racing, Saturday's activities begin at 10 a.m. and feature a variety of family-fun entertainment and chart-topping musical acts all day on both sides of the river. Other events include electrifying aerobatics on water, world-class stunt dogs along the Bradenton Riverwalk, the PUBLIX Family Fun Zone in Bradenton and United States Army and U.S. National Guard Family Fun Zone in Palmetto. Festivities conclude with a **FREE** racing awards celebration, beginning at 5 p.m. at the new Palmetto Marriott Resort & Spa, where the winning drivers from the Formula 1 races will be recognized, followed by a concert featuring Florida's only national Beach Boys tribute band, Beach Buoys.

The LECOM 5k Run/Walk leads Saturday's festivities, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at Pier 22 Restaurant. Details and registration information can be found at [www.raceroster.com/events/2026/110241/lecom-5k-run-the-green-bridge](http://www.raceroster.com/events/2026/110241/lecom-5k-run-the-green-bridge). The DeSoto Little Anglers Fishing Tourney kicks off activities in Palmetto at the Riverside Boat Ramp at 8:30 a.m.

"We are proud to announce with our partners—the City of Bradenton and Manatee County—the return of the Bradenton Area River Regatta for the 11<sup>th</sup> year," said Palmetto Mayor Dan West. "All are welcome to two days of free, family-fun events."

—more—

## add one...bradenton area river regatta returns for 11<sup>th</sup> year

“The City of Bradenton is extremely excited to have Regatta return for another fantastic two-day event, and it is all free,” said Bradenton Mayor Gene Brown.

“The River Regatta is an annual event that not only creates awareness of our urban core and its unique characteristics but also helps stimulate additional revenues for the small businesses in the downtown areas of Palmetto and Bradenton,” said Elliot Falcone, executive director of The Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Full details, schedule and additional information are available at [bradentonarearegatta.com](http://bradentonarearegatta.com). Follow all the fun and activities on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RiverwalkRegatta](http://www.facebook.com/RiverwalkRegatta).

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## 2026 Schedule of Events

*[Schedule Subject to Change]*

### FRIDAY, FEB. 20 “Friday Night Flash”

#### Bradenton Riverwalk Rossi Park

Time	Event	Location
5 p.m.	Bella Garland Band	Rossi Park Stage
5:30 p.m.	ABBA-Nova-National ABBA Tribute	Rossi Park Stage
7 p.m.	Friday Night Flash Lighted Drone/Fireworks	Above Manatee River
7:30 p.m.	<i>Sweet Fleet</i> National Fleetwood Mac Tribute Band	Rossi Park Stage

### SATURDAY, FEB. 21

#### In Bradenton

Time	Event	Location
8:30 a.m.	LECOM 5K/Run	<i>Pier 22 Restaurant</i>
Starts 10 a.m./All Day	Publix “Family Fun Zone”	<i>Bradenton Riverwalk</i>
11:30 a.m., 1:30, 3:30	All Star Stunt Dog Shows	<i>Bradenton Riverwalk Amphitheater</i>
5:30 p.m.		
Noon, 2, 4, 6 p.m.	All-Star Stunt Dog Frisbee Shows	<i>Bradenton Riverwalk Main Lawn</i>
10:30 a.m., 12:30, 2:30,	The “Moogician” Variety Show	<i>Bradenton Riverwalk Amphitheater</i>
4:30, 6 p.m.	Kristen “The Destroyer” Smoyer	<i>Manatee River</i>
Noon-4:30 p.m.		
<i>Between boat races</i>		

#### In Palmetto

Time	Event	Location
8:30 a.m.	DeSoto Little Anglers Fishing Tourney	<i>Palmetto Riverside Park Pier</i>
10 a.m.-6 p.m.	Powerboat Village	<i>Riverside Ave./Riverside West Park</i>
	Vintage Powerboat on display up-close	
10 a.m.-6 p.m.	“Family Fun Zone”	<i>Riverside West Park</i>
	United States Army and U.S. National Guard...	

—more—

add two...bradenton area river regatta returns for 11<sup>th</sup> year

**In Palmetto (cont.)**

10 a.m.-6 p.m.	Tampa Bay Bucs Streets Team	<i>Riverside West Park</i>
10 a.m.-6 p.m.	Tampa Bay Lightning Rolling Thunder	<i>Riverside West Park</i>
10 a.m.-6 p.m.	Local Food Vendors	<i>Riverside West Park</i>

**Bradenton Riverwalk- Rossi Park Stage**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
10:45 a.m.	Artist Showcase
Noon	Weeping Angel Bank
1:30 p.m.	Francesca Tarantino
3 p.m.	Trop Rock Junkies
4:30 p.m.	Burnouts

**Palmetto-Riverside Park Stage**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
10:45 a.m.	Table for 2
Noon	Witch Trails
1:30 p.m.	Sunbleached
3 p.m.	Killjoy
4:30 p.m.	Black Mariah

**Florida Formula 1 Championship**

*All Racing on Manatee River*

***(All times approximate)***

10:30 a.m.—Noon	Test Runs
11:45 a.m.	Opening Ceremonies

**QUALIFYING HEATS**

Noon	Formula Lights
12:45 p.m.	Tri-Hulls
1:15 p.m.	Formula 1

**CHAMPIONSHIP RACES**

2:15 p.m.	Formula Lights
2:45 p.m.	Tri-Hulls
3:15 p.m.	Formula 1

5 p.m. **FREE** Racing Awards Celebration (Palmetto Marriott Resort & Spa)

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