

# HAPPENINGS

**Weekly Edition**  
**October 18, 2024**

## **Spaceship Neptune Excelsior Completes First Full, Uncrewed Test Flight**

Florida-based space tourism company Space Perspective has successfully completed the first full, uncrewed test flight of its luxury balloon-lifted capsule to the edge of Earth's atmosphere. Spaceship Neptune Excelsior, the first of the company's teardrop-shaped pressure pods, lifted off from Space Perspective's Marine Spaceport (MS) Voyager vessel off the coast of Saint Petersburg and completed its first full flight test from takeoff to landing. Space Perspective's ascent system carried Excelsior to an altitude of approximately 100,000 feet (30,480 meters) before its slow descent to a safe ocean splashdown and recovery.

If all continues smoothly through Excelsior's remaining tests, Space Perspective founder and CEO Jane Poynter says the first crewed test flights will begin in 2025, with her and her husband, Space Perspective co-founder and CTO Taber MacCallum aboard.

Unlike other space tourism companies strapping their passengers into capsules blasting off on top of rockets, Space Perspective offers a softer, much gentler ride to the



*Excelsior lifting off MS Voyager (Credit: Space Perspective)*



*Excelsior hangs above the MS Voyager (Credit: Space Perspective)*

skies above our planet. Their Spaceship Neptune capsule hosts a luxurious interior where up to eight customers can relax, with a beverage service, as they slowly ascend to heights where the curvature of the Earth can be seen from their ergonomically cushioned seats.

Stretched to 600 feet (183 meters) above the Spaceship Neptune capsule, Space Perspective's balloon is pumped with buoyant hydrogen to ascend the pod to just 230,000 feet (70,100 meters) shy of the Kármán line — the internationally recognized boundary where space begins.

Upcoming Spaceship Neptune capsules are designed for the comfort of Space Perspective's customers, but Excelsior was instead outfitted for testing with a host of sensors and strain gauges to measure every detail of data during the vehicle's first flights.

The company currently has more than 1,800 ticket holders who have reserved seats aboard Spaceship Neptune, with customer flights expected to begin sometime late next year, or early 2026. Currently, a seat aboard Space Perspective's luxurious space-lift costs \$125,000, but future company plans for a larger capsule to accommodate a higher number of passengers may reduce that price “somewhere well below \$100,000,” Poynter says.

# Weathering Every Storm Through ‘Strength Of Community’



Floridians are no strangers to hurricanes. Each hurricane season we plan and prepare. This year, the experts predicted an “extraordinary” season. Thankfully, our Brevard community was spared the full force of Hurricanes Helene and Milton and the resulting devastation. However, many of our friends, neighbors and colleagues were not so lucky. The hardest hit communities are facing a long recovery and restoration road ahead. And, while city, county or state lines may divide us, we are united in understanding that it takes the strength of community to weather every type of storm—before, during and after.

I have lived in Brevard for 28 years and together we have weathered many storms. In that time, I have witnessed the strength of this community time and time again. Neighbors helping neighbors. City, county, state and federal barriers to aide removed. Competitors becoming collaborators. Good Samaritans’ acts of kindness and compassion.

Among the many sources of strength in our community is the manner in which our city, county and state officials organize and activate our emergency response systems. Brevard County Emergency Operations Center (BCEOC), in close communication with the State’s EOC, serves as our “mission control” when an emergency is declared. The women and men supporting the BCEOC answer the call of duty, without fail and with a common purpose—to serve and protect. From planning to preparation to response and recovery, nearly every available service agency, (local, regional and state), is part of the response team. The list is far too expansive to list each agency by name, but each is expertly coordinated through our BCEOC. Through BCEOC, citizens and pets were ensured a safe place to shelter from the storm; safe evacuations were orchestrated; wellness checks of the frail and elderly were made; restoration crews mobilized; and countless other community services and resources deployed to every corner of our community.

For those leaders that reached out to us before, during, and/or after the storm, we express our boundless appreciation. Your expressions of concern will not be forgotten. Our Care Partners were uplifted knowing that all that they had to sacrifice was recognized.

To quote from The Wisdom of the Bullfrog, “Leadership is accomplishing a task with the people and resources you have while maintaining the integrity of your institu-

tion.” You all lead with great conviction, courage, passion and honor. Thank you!

I know Hurricane season is not yet finished with us. However, I felt it important to recognize and acknowledge what we have proven is that together we are better; together we are Brevard strong.

With gratitude,

*George Mikitarian, Jr.*

President/CEO

## The Haunted Jail Trail October 18-19, 25-26



The Haunted Jail Trail opens today! The highly anticipated Haunted Jail Trail is back and will be even more frightening than last year’s and it’s all for a great cause; to help benefit first responders in Brevard County during a time of need.

The Haunted Jail Trail is a great family event for the bravest who dare to enter the trail of incarcerated lost souls waiting in the woods behind the Brevard County Jail! Will you find your way out, or will you become “one of them”?

Come if you dare, and take the walk through our Haunted Jail Trail in the backwoods of the Brevard County Jail. This twisted trail of incarcerated lost souls will stalk you as you scurry through. Try to find your way out before you become “one of them”! You will experience thrilling haunts that will have you shivering with fear.

So unless you are a big giant scaredy-cat, be sure to reserve your place in line for this year’s Haunted Jail Trail that is done in partnership between the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office and our partners at Brevard County Fire/Rescue. Admission is \$20 per person. Food Trucks will be available in the Parking Lot/Waiting Area.

To purchase tickets, visit [www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-haunted-jail-trail-tickets-948339387637](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-haunted-jail-trail-tickets-948339387637).

The Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Charity is a not-for-profit that helps support all of our first responders (law enforcement and firefighters) in a time of need and also our Sheriff’s Pet Posse that helps protect homeless pets in our community! Each year this event hosts thousands of attendees and raises thousands of dollars for local charities, so be sure to get your tickets while they last and mark your calendar for this one of a kind night! We hope you last through to the end of the Haunted Jail Trail!

## Hurricane Milton Recovery Help

Brevard EOC has created a Hurricane Milton Recovery Resources Flyer. To view the flyer, go to [https://member.everbridge.net/892807736724796/event/1817872288453547?event\\_id=73164](https://member.everbridge.net/892807736724796/event/1817872288453547?event_id=73164).

The flyer has contact information for FEMA, HOPE-FLORIDA, CRISIS CLEANUP, American Red Cross, 211 BREVARD, Business Recovery Resources, FLORIDA COMMERCE and SBA.

FPL's website shows that power has been restored to all homes and businesses in Brevard County.

### Operation Blue Roof

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) announced the start of the Operation Blue Roof Program on Tuesday. USACE is tasked by FEMA to assist eligible homeowners with temporary roof repairs. The Operation Blue Roof Program provides temporary blue covering with fiber-reinforced sheeting to help reduce further damage to property until permanent repairs can be made.

Operation Blue Roof is a free service to homeowners. The counties currently identified for the program include Brevard County. **The initial sign-up period is set for 21 days and ends November 5.**

Residents impacted by Hurricane Milton can sign-up at [www.bluroof.gov](http://www.bluroof.gov), calling 888-ROOF-BLU (888-766-3258), or visiting an ROE collection center throughout the affected areas. ROE collection center locations are listed on the website [www.bluroof.gov](http://www.bluroof.gov). There you can sign up for Blue Roof assistance using a Right of Entry (ROE) form, which gathers information about your residence.

ROE forms submitted by residents grant the government and its agents permission to go on individual properties to install the temporary roof.

Operation Blue Roof protects property, reduces temporary housing costs, and allows residents to remain in their homes while recovering from the storm.

**This program is for primary residences or a permanently occupied rental property with less than 50 percent structural damage. Vacation rental properties are not eligible for this program.**

Not all roof types qualify for the program. Roofs that are flat or made of metal or clay, slate, or asbestos tile do not qualify. The roof must be standard roof shingles, or similar material that will allow contractors to nail the tarp in place. **Contractors will consider repairs to metal roofs and mobile homes on a case-by-case basis and will install the cover if possible.**

Operation Blue Roof will remove homeowner tarps installed and minor debris to allow for proper installation. **Any large items of debris, such as a tree, must be removed from the roof by the homeowner to be eligible for the program.**



### Creating Textiles with Soluble Stabilizer

The Space Coast Weavers and Fiber Artists will meet on Saturday, October 26 at 10:00 a.m. at the Merritt Island Public Library, 1195 N. Courtenay Parkway. Following a business meeting and member show and tell, Teresa Camarata will demonstrate "Creating Textiles with Soluble Stabilizer."

Teresa makes unique textiles by layering even the tiniest scraps of fabric, yarns, threads, ribbons or any other fiber between soluble stabilizer. After the fabric is stitched, the stabilizer is rinsed away. She uses the technique to create table runners, coasters, mug rugs, scarves, book covers, purses and really, most anything you can make with fabric. Most fiber lovers have a stash of fabric scraps and this is a clever way to use them.

Teresa is a multi-talented artist who credits her mother for nurturing her creativity. "She was in college when I started kindergarten and I always wanted to copy whatever she was doing for art classes. I earned a BA in Studio Arts at the University of West Florida. Although I spent my career in public service, I always made time for creative pursuits. I can't seem to pare down the mediums I enjoy; so be it!"

Since 1983 SCW&FA has been Brevard's go-to guild for fiber arts: spinning, weaving, basketry, rug hooking, and more. The guild helps fiber artists, beginning or advanced, learn through workshops and the informal exchange of ideas. They also work to educate the public about the fiber arts. Meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, call Jeanie McCormack at 321-266-1610.

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***Why isn't there a mouse-flavored cat food?***



## Spotlight Artist - 50 Years in Fibers

The Downtown Art Gallery at 400 Orange Street in Titusville is proud to feature October's Spotlight Artist, Ann Welly Revels, with her exhibition, "50 Years in Fibers."

Ann Revels, a master fiber artist, has spent decades exploring the rich potential of natural materials. Her work spans textiles, traditional Appalachian and plaited basketry, weaving on a range of looms, papermaking, and felting flax fibers. Lately, she has turned her focus to an eco-conscious practice—crafting baskets from the boots of tropical palms, transforming discarded natural elements into beautiful, functional art.

A prominent figure in the fiber arts community, Ann has held leadership roles in state and local weaving guilds and served as Florida's representative to the Handweavers Guild of America. Her award-winning work consistently reflects her deep connection to nature, using organic materials in ways that honor their origins. Whether woven into wall hangings, pressed into handmade paper, or integrated into basketry, her pieces inspire a renewed appreciation for the natural world's beauty and diversity. Ann's art will be on display October 7th through November 9th, alongside works by 20 local artists.

The Downtown Art Gallery is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 321-268-0122 or visit the Gallery on Facebook or Instagram.

## Free Entrance Day in National Parks

Come experience the national parks! On November 11, 2024 - Veterans Day - all National Park Service sites that charge an entrance fee will offer free admission to everyone. That includes Canaveral National Seashore Park and more than 400 parks.

**VOTE EARLY**

**YOUR TIME | YOUR VOICE | YOUR VOTE**

## Best Pets of Brevard 2025 Calendar

The Brevard Humane Society is thrilled to announce the annual sale of its "Best Pets of Brevard" 2025 calendar, now available for purchase. This year's calendar features heartwarming photographs of local pets and serves as a vital fundraiser to support the organization's mission to save the homeless animal population in Brevard County.

Funds raised from calendar sales will directly contribute to the Brevard Humane Society's efforts to rescue animals in need, as well as support the rebuilding of our adoption center. Each calendar sold represents a step toward providing safe shelter and care for countless animals awaiting their forever homes.

"We are excited to showcase the beloved pets of our community through this calendar," said Kyle Anderson, Media Specialist at the Brevard Humane Society. "By purchasing a calendar, you're not just getting a beautiful keepsake; you're making a significant impact on the lives of animals in need."

The "Best Pets of Brevard" 2025 Calendar is now available for purchase at [www.brevardhumanesociety.org](http://www.brevardhumanesociety.org). Don't miss the chance to support a great cause while enjoying the adorable faces of Brevard's pets all year long!

The Brevard Humane Society is dedicated to improving the lives of homeless and neglected animals in our community through rescue, and adoption. With a commitment to finding loving homes for every animal, the Brevard Humane Society works tirelessly to create a better future for pets and their owners.

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