

HAPPENINGS

Weekly Edition
December 13, 2024

Brevard Zoo Announces New Port Canaveral Aquarium Will Be Named the Bowen Aquarium and Conservation Center

East Coast Zoological Foundation (ECZF) has announced the name for its future aquarium will be Bowen Aquarium. The name honors two generous philanthropists whose gift launched the \$100 million Our Legacy Campaign to raise money for the Aquarium and Zoo: John and Pat Bowen. John and Pat Bowen are long-time members of Brevard Zoo, and upon their first visit, fell in love with ECZF's mission, felt a connection with the Zoo's animal residents and were impressed by their conservation efforts.

The Aquarium will be ECZF's second campus, and will be the sister campus to Brevard Zoo. For more than 30 years, ECZF has been answering the call for wildlife. The nonprofit soon expanded to become involved with helping save the Indian River Lagoon. Building an Aquarium and Conservation Center was the next step for ECZF to effect change beyond the Indian River Lagoon.

However, after \$1 million in state funding was cut, this dream was delayed – until the Bowens stepped up. After their initial gift, the Bowen's contributions have grown exponentially with millions of additional dollars given to ECZF to build the Aquarium and Conservation Center.

"They are the founding donors who put this project into motion, a regional project that's going to make a difference for all of central Florida," said Keith Winsten, CEO of ECZF. "By naming the aquarium after them, we are able to truly celebrate their generosity, their legacy and who they are, which we feel represents the best of mankind."

They offered the very first check toward ECZF's Our Legacy Campaign. That campaign is the historic \$100 million effort toward building the Aquarium and supporting Brevard Zoo. Through this campaign, East Coast Zoological Foundation will be able to expand on their mission work in animal wellbeing, conservation and education.

So far, this five-year campaign has raised more than 86% of this goal in its first three years. "We are so thankful for the generosity and support of our community to make such a progression toward our goal," Keith said. "We look forward to the continued support, and we'll be excited to celebrate once we meet our goal."

As dedicated members of the Brevard community for



*Bowen Aquarium - artist concept
image credit - ECZF*

decades, the Bowens saw the benefits of having the Aquarium's important conservation work making tangible impacts every day. They see their gift as a "thank you" to Brevard County and the community, both of which they love very deeply.

"In honor of their incredible support, we are so proud to return the "thank you" by honoring their legacy by naming this transformational campus the Bowen Aquarium," Keith said.

Groundbreaking for the future Bowen Aquarium and Conservation Center is expected in 2025, with an anticipated opening after 2-3 years of construction.

Bowen Aquarium will offer a unique experience to guests with its focus on native Florida wildlife while also serving as a regional conservation hub with an emphasis on restoring the Indian River Lagoon and surrounding ecosystems.

The Aquarium will also be home to two cutting-edge critical care facilities for sick or injured sea turtles and manatees. Hands-on learning opportunities, interactive spaces and stunning habitats will inspire conservation action among guests and foster a deeper connection between people, the environment and wildlife.

This transformative project will engage over 525,000 visitors annually, promising to become a cornerstone of the region's cultural and economic vitality. When opened, the project is expected to create more than 1,200 jobs.

The Downtown Art Gallery Presents: “Fantastic Flamingos” by Jim Boland

Step into a world of elegance and grace as The Downtown Art Gallery, nestled at 400 Orange Street in the heart of Titusville, unveils “Fantastic Flamingos,” an extraordinary collection of fine art photography by the renowned Jim Boland. This mesmerizing exhibit celebrates the striking beauty of Florida’s iconic flamingos, which are joyfully reclaiming their place in the wild.

Jim Boland, an acclaimed bird photographer and longtime Titusville resident, has a talent for capturing the spirit of avian life. His journey into wildlife photography began over 15 years ago when a flock of ducks landed near his backyard pond, sparking a lifelong fascination. A retired aerospace professional with over three decades of experience on the Space Shuttle and Space Station programs, Jim infuses his photography with a sense of wonder.

Through his camera, he invites viewers to connect with the natural world in new and awe-inspiring ways. His talent has earned him numerous accolades, features in prestigious publications and a dedicated following. A vital part of the local art scene, Jim has been a resident artist at The Downtown Art Gallery since 2011 and contributes his expertise as a volunteer for the annual Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival.

Let the Fantastic Flamingos captivate your imagination—these portraits are more than art; they’re a celebration of nature’s resilience and beauty. Don’t miss your chance to experience the magic of “Fantastic Flamingos,” on view from December 9 to January 11. The gallery welcomes visitors Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 321-268-0122.

Be sure to follow Jim’s artistic adventures on Instagram @jsblnd and immerse yourself in his unique perspective of nature.



Parrish Healthcare Partners with Toys for Tots to Spread Holiday Cheer in Brevard County

Parrish Healthcare is proud to announce its partnership with Toys for Tots, a program organized by the Marine Corps Reserve that collects and distributes toys to children in need. Every Christmas season for nearly 30 years, Parrish Healthcare Care Partners have supported area charities with donations of thousands of new toys to benefit families in need. This year, we are proud to be a drop-off location for Toys for Tots and invite community members to join us in collecting new, unwrapped toys to reach even more families in need.

From now until Thursday, December 19, please consider donating a new, unwrapped toy at one of our three convenient drop-off locations: Parrish Medical Center, (951 North Washington Avenue, Titusville), Parrish Healthcare Center at Titus Landing, (250 Harrison Street, Titusville) and Parrish Healthcare Center at Port St. John, (5005 Port St. John Parkway Port St. John).

Toys can be placed in clearly labeled Toys for Tots bins located at the entrances of all locations. Donations for children of all ages are welcomed and appreciated. Every toy

will go directly to children in our North Brevard community, including Scottsmoor, Mims, Titusville, Port St. John, Cocoa, Rockledge, Cape Canaveral, Port Canaveral, Merritt Island, and Cocoa Beach.

To help maximize the impact of this initiative, please consider sharing it with your friends, family and community networks. Together, we can make a difference for children in need.

If you or someone you know would like to request a toy for a child, please apply directly through the Toys for Tots website at: <https://mims-fl.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/default.aspx?nPageID=0&nPreviewInd=0&nRedirectInd=3>.

Parrish Healthcare is proud to join our community in giving back and bringing joy to children and families this holiday season. Together, we can make the holidays brighter for everyone.



Dr. Chaudhari Achieves Subspecialty Board Certification in CytoPathology

Medical Group is proud to announce that Jigisha Chaudhari, MD has successfully passed the subspecialty board certification in CytoPathology. This prestigious achievement formally recognizes Dr. Chaudhari for her exceptional expertise in the field of pathology.

Dr. Chaudhari achieved her certification in the combined Anatomic and Clinical Pathology in 2023 and is recognized as a diplomate of the American Board of Pathology, the highest certification achievement in the field of Anatomic and Clinical Pathology. Her recent CytoPathology subspecialty certification is also presented by the American Board of Pathology. Designation of ABPath diplomate demonstrates that Dr. Jigisha Chaudhari has passed a comprehensive written examination to demonstrate competency and skills in Anatomic and Clinical pathology and the subspecialty of Cytopathology.

Certification by the ABPath is a hallmark of public and professional trust, indicating the diplomate's dedication to providing the highest standard of care. Through the voluntary certification process, Dr. Jigisha Chaudhari has proven her commitment to meeting the standards of the subspecialty field and to providing high-quality subspecialty care to patients.

Dr. Chaudhari completed her medical education at Maharaja Sayajirao University in Baroda, Gujarat, India. Her post-graduate training in pathology included residency at Pennsylvania Hospital through the University of Pennsylvania Health Systems in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as well as a pathology residency at SSG Hospital through Maharaja Sayajirao University in Baroda, Gujarat, India. This rigorous preparation, combined with her dedication to excellence, equips Dr. Chaudhari to provide advanced diagnostic services and enhance patient care in pathology.

"Board certification represents the pinnacle of professional achievement in the field of medicine," said Kevat Patel, MD, MSc, CHCQM, FACP, Medical Director of Parrish Healthcare. "Dr. Chaudhari's commitment to excellence in Pathology ensures that our patients receive the highest quality care based on the latest scientific advancements and diagnostic accuracy. The process of achieving Board Certification is rigorous, and accomplishing this feat is a true testament of one's dedication to the practice of medicine."

As a board-certified pathologist, Dr. Chaudhari will continue to play a pivotal role in diagnosing and treating complex medical conditions by providing precise laboratory and diagnostic insights to the medical team. Her expertise is integral to ensuring optimal outcomes for patients across our community.

"I'm honored to achieve subspecialty board certification in CytoPathology," said Dr. Chaudhari. "This milestone reflects the passion I have for my work and my ongoing commitment to meet the standards of subspecialty care and hence, continuing to contribute to the health and well-being of our patients."

Parrish Medical Group congratulates Dr. Chaudhari on this significant accomplishment and looks forward to her continued contributions to our mission of delivering exceptional healthcare.

Parrish Medical Center Named to U.S. News & World Report 2025 Best Hospitals for Maternity Care

U.S. News & World Report, the global authority in hospital rankings and consumer advice, has named Parrish Medical Center as a 2025 High Performing hospital for Maternity Care. This is the highest award a hospital can earn as part of U.S. News' Best Hospitals for Maternity Care annual study.

U.S. News began evaluating maternity care hospitals in 2021, rating hospitals that provide labor and delivery services and submit detailed data to the publication for analysis. Best Hospitals for Maternity Care assist expectant parents, in consultation with their prenatal care team, in making informed decisions about where to receive maternity services that best meets their family's needs.

Parrish Medical Center earned a High Performing designation in recognition of maternity care as measured by factors such as severe unexpected newborn complication rates, birthing-friendly practices and transparency on racial/ethnic disparities, among other measures.

"We are excited to be recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the Best Hospitals for Maternity Care," said George Mikitarian, Parrish Healthcare President and CEO. "This honor reflects our unwavering commitment to providing exceptional care for mothers and their families, ensuring every birth is a safe and memorable experience. Our dedicated team of Care Partners go above and beyond every day, and this recognition is a testament to their hard work and passion for excellence in maternal care."

"The hospitals recognized by U.S. News as Best Hospitals for Maternity Care showcase exceptional care for expectant parents," said Jennifer Winston, Ph.D., health data scientist at U.S. News. "These hospitals demonstrate significantly lower C-section rates and severe unexpected newborn complications compared to hospitals not recognized by U.S. News."

The U.S. News Best Hospitals for Maternity Care methodology is based entirely on objective measures of quality, such as C-section rates in lower-risk pregnancies, severe unexpected newborn complication rates, exclusive breast milk feeding rates, birthing-friendly practices and reporting on racial/ethnic disparities, among other measures.

For more information, visit Best Hospitals for Maternity Care and use #BestMaternityHospitals on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X. For more information on Parrish Medical Center and/or Parrish Healthcare, please visit parrishhealthcare.com.



Port St. John Public Library

6500 Carole Ave., PSJ

Library Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday 12-8 p.m. and Sunday, 12-5 p.m.

Adult Programs:

The Library will be closed on December 24-25.

Adult Programs:

Paint Party with the Friends of the Port St. John Library. Saturday, December 14 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Join the Friends of the Port St. John Public Library for a paint party every first Saturday of the month. During this class you will create custom wooden door hangers. Adults and teens ages 16+. \$40/per person. Payment is due at sign up. Deadline to register at the Reference Desk by Wednesday, December 11.

Community Support Advocate: Mondays, December 23 from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m.: The community support advocate provides assistance with housing, SNAP, social security, healthcare and insurance, and senior resources.

Memory Kits - Brevard County Libraries is now offering Memory Kits available for check out at select locations. Memory Kits are specially designed activity kits that include resources and hands-on activities for persons living with dementia, Alzheimer's and other forms of cognitive impairment. Each kit includes curated materials such as interactive books, puzzles, arts and crafts, and guided discussion prompts for caregivers. Kits currently focus on three different themes: 1960s Nostalgia, Animals, and the Great Outdoors.

Family Programs

Spice Club: Friday, December 20 at 3:30 p.m.: Come to the meeting to pick up a spice kit and share food, recipes, and cooking adventures.

This month come visit the library and check out our community puzzle.

Youth Services:

Sensory Sundays: Every Sunday from 2:00-3:00 p.m., children can join the library staff for quiet time with sensory bins and activities. Sensory bin activities are exciting and engaging ways for kids to explore different textures, colors and materials. Designed for children ages 6-12, these activities help develop fine motor skills, encourage imaginative play and offer a hands-on learning experience. This event requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

STEAM Activity Time: STEAM is every Tuesday from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Port St. John public library in the

meeting room. Come build and make things with us! We will have activities centered around science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. This event is for ages 6-11 and requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

No STEAM on the 24th or 31st.

Read Your Way to K: Babies: Baby story time at the Port St. John Public Library is from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. every Friday morning in the meeting room. Join us for some songs, short stories and surprise activities. This event is for babies ages 3 and under and requires parent or adult supervision at all times. No story times on December 27th.

Read Your Way to K: Toddlers: Toddler Story Time at the Port St. John public library is from 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. every Friday morning in the meeting room. Join us for songs, stories, and a craft. This story time is for toddlers ages 3 to 5 and is intended to prepare toddlers for preschool with active listening, group participation, developing fine motor skills, and socializing with others. This event requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

STEAM kits are available in Youth Services!

SpaceX Starship Getting Ready For Florida Launches

I've given an overview in the past on the gigantic SpaceX Starship. The reusable rocket is 397 feet tall, 29.5 feet in diameter, and can carry up to 150 tons (300,000 lb.). According to an article in the November 4th SPACeREPORT, in order to meet their goal of launching from Florida sometime in 2026, they are expanding their facilities at KSC and Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

SpaceX is expanding its Roberts Road facility in Florida, including spreading out their footprint, new buildings and getting ready to produce Starships in Florida. Apparently SpaceX has already tried twice to bring Starship to Cape Canaveral, but both failed. They have already built a building, originally planned to be a Starfactory, that they plan to use for Starship production. They have cleared space for the first mega bay to stack starship parts.

They only have the foundation completed, so they are putting up a 40 x 40 meter tent (40 meters = 131.234 feet). This new tent will probably be used for various tasks like building tower sections or orbital launch mount components or maybe even the beginning of Starship production in Florida. The tent could also be used for building nose cones or stacking ring sections. ~ Maureen Rupe

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