

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT

Andrea Hill

Director of Marketing & Communications

321-254-9453, ext. 233

AHill@brevardzoo.org



Brevard Zoo Celebrates 30 Years at Safari Under the Stars Event

MELBOURNE, Fla., May 14, 2024 — Brevard Zoo marked its 30th anniversary at a special iteration of its annual fundraising event, Safari Under the Stars, raising a record-breaking \$654,000 during an evening full of Zoo memories and celebration. This event was presented by Flammio Financial Group, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

“From our Zoo’s start, our community has understood the importance of supporting our conservation, education and animal wellbeing programs,” said CEO Keith Winsten. “We appreciate this support and were thrilled to showcase some of our Zoo’s milestones during this special event.”

Attendees of this sold-out event enjoyed a special pre-party cocktail hour that included animal encounters, signature local entertainment throughout the event, and a magical Safari After Dark party featuring band Hot Pink.

During the event, the Zoo honored its history by presenting the Swann Award to its second recipient: David Mannes. Named after two original Zoo founders, Jim and Jonnie Swann, the annual award celebrates exceptional community members who helped make Brevard Zoo what it is today.

Mannes worked as an animal caretaker at the Houser’s Grove and Zoo. A modern zoo was a longtime dream for Mannes, and upon the closure of Houser’s Zoo, he worked with other local community members to make it a reality. Mannes’ steadfast work helping to bring key community members to the project, like developer Jim Swann, brought Brevard Zoo to life.

Made from one of the original Brevard Zoo bricks, the award itself honored Mannes’ unique contribution toward this community-built organization. Local artist Anne Conroy-Baiter transformed the brick into incredible under-the-sea themed art that especially highlighted pearls, the traditional gift for a 30th anniversary.

The Zoo also looked to the future with its annual Give From the Heart initiative centered around fundraising toward the Zoo's programs helping native species like Florida black bears, manatees, sea turtles, Florida grasshopper sparrows, Perdido Key beach mice and frosted flatwood salamanders. About \$102,000 was raised to sustain and grow these programs.

"Over our initial 30 years, Brevard Zoo has built a legacy of protecting threatened Florida wildlife - thanks to the help of our community," Winsten said. "As we kick off our next 30 years, we want to have an even bigger impact and redefine our area as a place where people and wildlife alike can thrive."

Safari Under the Stars is a sponsored event. For more information on how to support this event, please reach out to our Corporate Relations Officer Bri Richards at 321-254-9453 extension 241.

Special thanks to our signature sponsors Stifel- Garvin Wealth Management Team, Amazon, Artemis IT, and Jim & Darleen Barfield.

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Brevard Zoo is home to more than 800 animals representing 170 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education and conservation. More information is available at www.brevardzoo.org.