

Charlotte County update for 1/6/21

## Centennial year begins in Charlotte County

By Hector Flores

On Dec. 8, 2020 the Charlotte County Commission proclaimed 2021 as the Charlotte County Centennial Year. As 2021 kicks off, I want to provide an update on Charlotte County's plans to commemorate this historic year.

As you may know, Charlotte County was created on April 23, 1921, when Gov. Cary A. Hardee signed a bill passed two days earlier by the Florida Legislature that divided DeSoto County into five counties: Charlotte, Hardee, Highlands, Glades and DeSoto.

To date, commemorative activities to mark the Centennial have included:

- Adoption by the Charlotte County Commission of a Centennial seal. To view the seal or download one for use in Centennial programs, visit <https://charlottecounty100.com/centennial-seal>.
- Launched a Centennial Partners Program to coordinate Centennial programs and activities with individuals and organizations.
- Launched the Charlotte County Centennial website, [www.CharlotteCounty100.com](http://www.CharlotteCounty100.com), and Facebook page, [www.Facebook.com/CharlotteCounty100](http://www.Facebook.com/CharlotteCounty100).
- Renamed North Charlotte Regional Park as Centennial Park. Centennial Park is located at 1120 Centennial Blvd., in Port Charlotte.
- Approved a replat of a portion of Murdock Village, including the renaming of O'Donnell Boulevard as Centennial Boulevard.
- Installed 28 Centennial banners on the Albert Gilchrist and Barron Collier bridges over the Peace River.
- Launched a new and improved Charlotte County Archive. To view the archive, visit [https://charlottefl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en\\_US/resources](https://charlottefl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/resources).
- Published a Centennial calendar. For information on where calendars can be picked up, visit <https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/news/charlotte-county-centennial-calendars-available.stml>.
- Launched the Charlotte County Centennial Student Art Contest in partnership with Charlotte County Public Schools. For information on the contest, visit <https://charlottecounty100.com/art-contest>.
- Launch the Centennial Fishing Derby, which runs from Jan. 1-31, 2021. For information, visit <https://www.charlottecounty100.com/fishing-derby>.
- Installed a Centennial banner and column wraps in front of the Charlotte County Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle in Port Charlotte.

Future commemorative activities will include:

- Installation of Centennial street sign "toppers" at historical and prominent intersections in the county.
- Installation of Centennial flutter flags along prominent roads in the county.
- The Charlotte County Community Services Department has scheduled 27 Centennial-themed events, including an April 23, 2021 Centennial Gala at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. For a complete list of events, visit <https://charlottecounty100.com/calendar>.
- Display of Centennial exhibits at county libraries and offices.

If you or your organization would like to publicize your Centennial observations, celebrations or events, please submit details to [Brian.Gleason@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Brian.Gleason@CharlotteCountyFL.gov) to be added to the Centennial calendar and/or shared on the Centennial Facebook page. To be added to the Centennial mailing list, email Brian.

Several organizations have already added events. The Punta Gorda History Center's new exhibit looks at the county's creation and other significant events of 1921. It opened on Dec. 2. For information, call 941-916-8800. The Military Heritage Museum will host All That Jazz, a narrated musical look at the history of the county on March 20. For information, visit [www.militaryheritagemuseum.org](http://www.militaryheritagemuseum.org). The Port Charlotte Garden Club will host A Garden Extravaganza at Port Charlotte Beach Park March 27 with plant, craft and yard art sales, food trucks and educational exhibits. Contact Sandi Witzke at 941-661-4676 or [cswitzke@yahoo.com](mailto:cswitzke@yahoo.com).

*Readers may reach Charlotte County Administrator Hector Flores at [Hector.Flores@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Hector.Flores@CharlotteCountyFL.gov).*