FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ADVISORY: CHIMPANZEEs TO HAVE ECHOCARDIOGRAM PERFORMED BY LOCAL CARDIOLOGIST
3D technology to be used for the first time

WHO: Artimus and Brandy
WHAT: echocardiograms
WHEN: Thursday, March 9, 2017
WHERE: Chattanooga Zoo
WHY: heart health check-up
  - We welcome the media to come observe this experience. Due to limited space where the procedure will be performed, we ask you to contact us to make a reservation. Please email Hannah Hammon at hhammon@chattzoo.org.

CHATTANOOGA, TN – Artimus and Brandy, two of the Chattanooga Zoo’s seven chimpanzees, will have an echocardiogram at the Chattanooga Zoo on Thursday, March 9, 2017. William Warren, M.D., cardiologist at The Chattanooga Heart Institute will perform the echocardiograms. This is the sixth time the Chattanooga Zoo and Dr. Warren have partnered to check the chimpanzees’ heart health. New this year, Dr. Warren will perform a 3D echocardiogram, which will provide more information including closer images of the valves and views from several different angles.

“Heart disease is the number one cause of death in chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas living in captivity,” says Dr. Anthony Ashley, DVM, veterinarian at the Chattanooga Zoo. “We don’t anticipate finding any heart problems in Artimus or Brandy from this test, but if heart disease is found, we will consider our treatment options including placing them on medications much like a person would be given. If there isn’t any sign of heart disease, we’ll have a baseline echo showing normal heart functions that we can then compare with future echos.”

An echocardiogram uses sound waves to show images of the heart. “A chimpanzee’s heart is very similar to a human heart. This test will help us determine the strength and thickness of the chimpanzee’s heart muscle and how the heart valves are functioning,” explains Dr. Warren. The echocardiogram procedure lasts 15-20 minutes and the animals will be sedated for that time.

In addition to providing Zoo officials with information on their chimpanzees’ heart health, the echocardiograms and blood work will be sent to Zoo Atlanta as part of “The Great Ape Heart Project,” a ground-breaking national project that studies heart diseases in great apes. This project consists of gathering echocardiograms and blood work from apes around the country with the ultimate goal of preventing heart disease in these animals. The Chattanooga Zoo’s CEO and President, Dardenelle Long adds, “We are so thankful to once again partner with The Chattanooga Heart Institute for this groundbreaking primate initiative. It is our hope that this partnership will keep our chimpanzees, including Artimus and Brandy, healthy and strong for many years to come.”
**About The Chattanooga Heart Institute**

With 23 board-certified cardiologists—including specialists in interventional procedures, electrophysiology, imaging and vascular disease—and three cardiothoracic surgeons on staff, The Chattanooga Heart Institute at Memorial offers a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach to cardiac care. Our cardiologists exceed national standards for education, training and skill—putting The Chattanooga Heart Institute at Memorial on par with the nation’s top cardiovascular practices. With six locations in Chattanooga, Hixson, Ooltewah, Cleveland, and Jasper, Tennessee and Ringgold, Georgia, The Chattanooga Heart Institute offers access to the region’s leading cardiologists in locations convenient for you. To learn more, visit [www.ChattanoogaHeart.com](http://www.ChattanoogaHeart.com).

**About Chattanooga Zoo**

The 14-acre Chattanooga Zoo (historically referred to as the Chattanooga Zoo at Warner Park) is accredited by the national Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), assuring the highest standards of animal care and husbandry. The Zoo is dedicated to its mission of engaging and inspiring all citizens of the community to better understand and preserve wildlife by creating meaningful connections between people and animals. With its intimate, innovative exhibits, wide-ranging education offerings and commitment to conservation, the Chattanooga Zoo fills a unique niche within the community. The Zoo is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day. For more information, visit [www.chattzoo.org](http://www.chattzoo.org).

**About CHI Memorial**

CHI Memorial is a not-for-profit, faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to the healing ministry of the Church. Founded by the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth and strengthened as part of Catholic Health Initiatives, it offers a continuum of care including preventative, primary and acute hospital care, as well as cancer and cardiac care, orthopedic and rehabilitation services. CHI Memorial is a regional referral center of choice with 3,500 associates and more than 600 affiliated physicians providing health care throughout Southeast Tennessee, North Georgia and Northwest Alabama. To learn more, visit [www.memorial.org](http://www.memorial.org).

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