

## Summit Shah's investor group set to construct a new Beef 'O' Brady's restaurant in the growing Port St. John marketplace, expanding from its store in Titusville

By Ken Datzman

Beef 'O' Brady's, a popular full-service casual-dining restaurant chain based in Tampa with stores nationwide, is set to expand in Brevard County, where it has a presence in markets from Titusville to Palm Bay.

A three-partner investor franchisee group headed by area businessman Summit Shah plans to construct a 4,900-square-foot Beef 'O' Brady's in Port St. John, a rising community in North Brevard County located between Titusville and Cocoa.

The partners first became involved with the franchise in October of 2014 when they purchased an existing 4,000-square-foot Beef 'O' Brady's on Garden Street in Titusville and renovated it. The store was 10 years old when they bought it.

"That was our first business venture with Beef 'O' Brady's," said Shah. "The Titusville location has done very well. We really liked the Beef 'O' Brady's concept so we began to look for expansion opportunities in North Brevard County, which led us to Port St. John. Its demographic is similar to Titusville's. We think Port St. John is a really good location for our second store."

His partners include Ashish "Ash" Shah, the general manager of their Titusville store.

The group's new Beef 'O' Brady's will be built on acreage located just off the intersection of Fay Boulevard and Curtis Boulevard, in the middle of town.

"We're going through the permitting process right now to build the project. We hope to start construction on the Port St. John Beef 'O' Brady's restaurant later this year, perhaps in September or October," said Summit Shah, who was raised in a family of entrepreneurs.

Beef 'O' Brady's Jamie Cecil, who was recently promoted to director of franchise sales, moving up from director of development, said his company is in an expansion mode in Florida and the Space Coast has been one of their favorite markets.

"We've had tremendous success with Beef 'O' Brady's in Brevard County and believe our Port St. John location will complement that trade area."

Cecil added, "Our expansion plans are to move north into the Jacksonville DMA (designated market area). We also have a focus on Central Florida and the Southwest Florida corridor where we have an established presence."

Beef 'O' Brady's marked its 30th anniversary last year. In 1985, Jim Mellody founded the family friendly restaurant and pub in Brandon. Today, there are 196 locations around the nation, with more store openings planned.

The Beef 'O' Brady's to be built in Port St. John will have seating capacity for 163 people. The outdoor patio will be able to accommodate up to 55 people, said Summit Shah. "The outdoor patio will be one of the cool things about this particular restaurant. The bar will be inside, but there will be an area that opens up to the



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Summit Shah, left, heads a small group of investors who are expanding their Beef 'O' Brady's footprint in North Brevard County. The group currently owns and operates Beef 'O' Brady's on Garden Street in Titusville. They purchased that store in late 2014 and renovated it. Ashish 'Ash' Shah, a partner, is the general manager of the Titusville Beef 'O' Brady's. Now the investors are set to build a 4,900-square-foot 'Beef 'O' Brady's in Port St. John. The two Shahs are at their office on High Point Drive in Cocoa.

patio where people can sit, enjoy themselves, and access the bar."

With a population of more than 12,000 people, Port St. John presents opportunity to entrepreneurs to bring new services to the community. "We really like the Port St. John market," said Summit Shah. "We think the Beef 'O' Brady's concept will be a perfect fit for Port St. John. Our price point is great, the food is great, and Beef 'O' Brady's restaurants are known for their fun and family atmosphere. Most people love sports, so the concept works very well in neighborhoods."

Cecil said Beef 'O' Brady's has been experiencing

"organic growth from our current franchisees who are looking to add their second and third locations. Our AUV (average unit volume) continues to increase, which is helping to attract more multi-unit developers to the Beef 'O' Brady's brand."

Summit Shah said his investor group "is looking forward to growing with the brand and would consider a third Beef 'O' Brady's location in the county. Right now, we're concentrating on the Port St. John project, but we definitely want to grow in the future with this brand."

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With the company seeing an increase in demand for its franchises, Beef 'O' Brady's added to its development team and hired Cecil to lead the expansion effort. Cecil earned his bachelor's degree in hotel, motel, and restaurant management from the University of Kentucky. He's been with the company for more than a year as a regional franchise consultant. Cecil has years of experience in his field with brands such as Steak & Shake.

"We are excited about the future of Beef 'O' Brady's. Our commitment to the pursuit of quality, value, and connection to the communities we serve continues to be the cornerstone of our success and growth," Cecil said. Beef 'O' Brady's tagline is "good food, good sports."

The company focuses on providing value "without sacrificing quality." The Beef 'O' Brady's menu features family favorites like hearty pizza and flatbreads, award-winning wings, fresh Angus burgers, and fresh salads, along with a Kids' menu.

Summit Shah said his favorite selection on the menu is the Grilled Chicken Wrap. "I love it. The restaurant serves great salads, too. And they are known for their wings. Their burgers are popular as well. The wings and burgers are some of the best-selling items on the menu, but Beef 'O' Brady's provides customers with a lot of great selections."

There is also a lighter side of the menu which is being rolled out at Beef 'O' Brady's stores.

"We've introduced several new items on our latest

menu," said Cecil. "On our lighter-side menu, we feature Lettuce Wraps with romaine lettuce, Wonton Strips, and Cabbage Slaw served with broccoli or quinoa, as well as a host of other dishes including a Quinoa Power Salad with grilled chicken." The lighter-side menu also features a Deconstructed "Bun Less" Burger with quinoa, a Garden Salad, and a Mediterranean Salad with romaine lettuce, Kalamata olives, and feta cheese served with a Greek dressing.

Chris Elliott is the chief executive officer of FSC Franchise Co. LLC, the parent company of Beef 'O' Brady's and The Brass Tap. Since being named to that position in 2010, the University of Georgia business graduate has led the company to new heights. His team has put Beef 'O' Brady's on a growth track.

"Beef 'O' Brady's current management is very strong and that's one of the things that attracted our group to the franchise," said Summit Shah.

In 2012, with Elliott at the helm, Beef 'O' Brady's acquired the rights to franchise The Brass Tap, the fast-growing network of upscale bars best known for their wide selection of craft beers and premium wines.

At the heart of every Beef 'O' Brady's franchise is a "commitment to the community." Each franchisee works with adults and youth athletics, local schools, and area organizations to create a "sense of community."

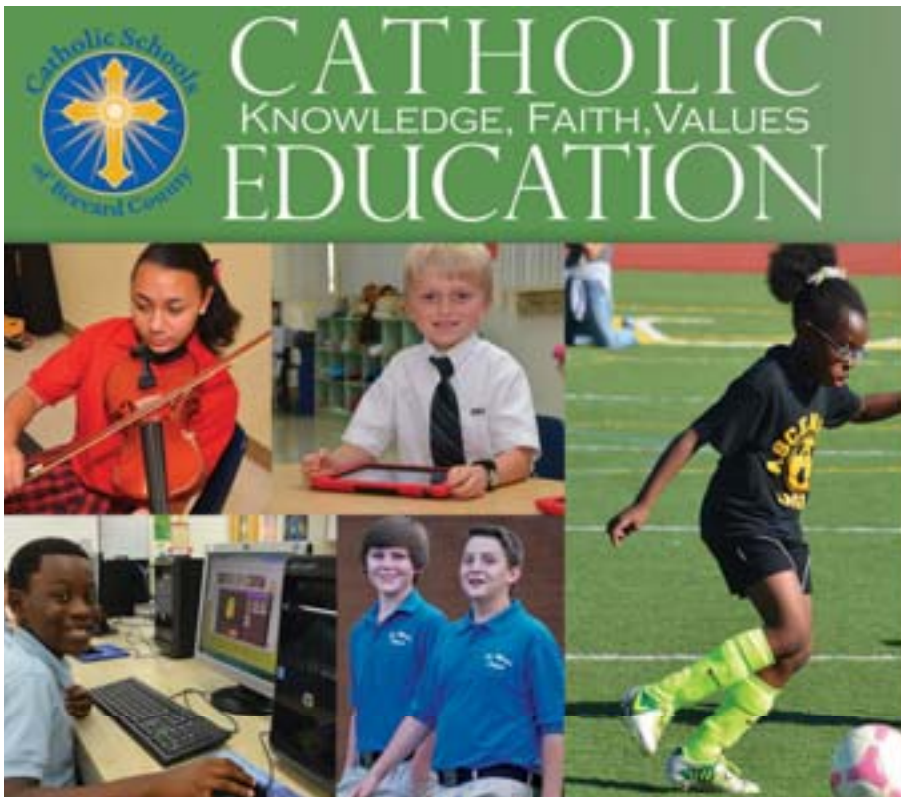
"Beef 'O' Brady's has a great track record in Brevard County reaching out to the community," said Summit Shah. "It's an important part of their operating philoso-

phy because Beef 'O' Brady's is a neighborhood-based business. The community commitment is big, and we really believe in that."

The Shah family has a long history of supporting nonprofits and community organizations in Brevard County. Among the many causes and organizations they support are Crosswinds Youth Services, the Sharing Center of Central Brevard, the Scott Center for Autism Treatment, United Way of Brevard, Health First Foundation, Junior Achievement of the Space Coast, American Red Cross, Indiafest, The Historic Cocoa Village Playhouse, Project Hunger, Brevard Schools Foundation, Doctors' Goodwill Foundation, and Eastern Florida State College Foundation.

Starting with just one gas station in 1980, Mahesh "Mike" Shah and his wife Rashmi have built Southeast Petro into a thriving enterprise, based in Cocoa. The company is one of the largest fuel wholesalers in the Southeast, supplying fuel to more than 400 independently owned gas stations and employing more than 100 people. The day-to-day business is now primarily overseen by Mike and Rashmi's son, Summit Shah.

"At Southeast Petro, our family business, we are very involved in giving back to the community. The community has been great to us over the years. It has allowed Southeast Petro to grow and expand. We try to give back and help the community as much as we can. So Beef 'O' Brady's is a nice fit in that sense. It's a community-minded restaurant chain," said Summit Shah.



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