

JULY 2024

FISH LINES NEWSLETTER

the journey home

Community Spirit at the 4th of July Parade



We had so much fun at the annual 4th of July Parade and would like to thank everyone who helped us prepare and participate. Also, a big thank you to Randy and Friends for spreading the word about FISH at your Road Rally on the 4th and to the 'Rec Center' for the post-parade festivities!



2430 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL 33957
Food Pantry Address: 2422 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL 33957
239.472.4775 ~ fishofsancap.org ~ email: info@fishofsancap.org





FISH LINES



Happy 4th of July



FISH LINES



Happy 4th of July



Back to School Supplies - School Starts Aug. 12!



Will the Rising Cost of Living Expenses Limit Back-to-School Supplies Spending?

Kids in Lee County head back to school in early August, and parents are gearing up for the 2024/2025 school year. Like last year, many are concerned that the cost of school supplies and essential clothing will continue to increase. Most parents are worried about their ability to provide for school needs that align with student success. Studies show that having the right school supplies can help children feel more prepared and less anxious as they return to school.

We help Lee County families that have a connection to the islands through residence or employment with back-to-school supplies and clothing essentials. According to a 2023 survey by Deloitte, "Back-to-school is typically the second largest spending event for families after the holiday season. With prices of school supplies increasing 23.7% in the past two years, shoppers' need for a bargain is even more evident."

"Those we serve are already making impossible choices between rent vs utilities, food vs medicine, car repairs vs health insurance," says Manuela Martinez, Disaster Administrative Director. "The cost of basic household essentials keeps rising, and families are prioritizing where they spend, and what they spend on, as it relates to back-to-school supplies and clothing."

"I just can't afford it all," notes the parent of a Sanibel school middle-school student. "My food, energy and transportation costs have skyrocketed. That, combined with everything we lost from Ian, makes it nearly impossible to cover everything on the school supply list and clothing."

FISH helps families in need with necessary items to begin the new school year. Now through July 22, community members wishing to donate items can drop off basic school supplies during normal business hours at the Sanibel Public Library, 770 Dunlop; Bank of the Islands, 1699 Periwinkle and the Sanibel & Captiva Islands Association of Realtors, 2353 Periwinkle, #201. Items including paper, glue sticks, pens, pencils, rulers, notebooks, etc. for grades K-12 are requested.

Items may also be dropped off at FISH, 2422 Periwinkle, between 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. through July 31st. FISH is also accepting monetary donations to ensure enough supplies are available on distribution day.



FISH LINES



FISH OF SANCAP
neighbors helping neighbors

BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

Black Pens	Pencil Pack
Blue Pens	Colored Pencil
Notebook (college)	Pencil Sharpener
Loose Paper (college)	Crayons
Pencil Pouch	Glue Stick
Graph Paper	Color Markers
Backpack	Comp Book
Mechanical Pencils	Highlighters
Sticky Notes	Index Cards
USB/Flash drives	Erasers
Scientific calculator	3 Ring Binder
Liquid White Glue	Subject Divers
Crayon Box	Protractors
Color Markers	Ruler
Watercolor Paint	Notebook (wide)
Scissors	Loose Paper (Wide)
Pocket Folder	

FISH needs your help! Help a child have all the necessary items for this upcoming school year! Drop-off at FISH, 2422 Periwinkle Way, or one of our partners' locations:

FISH OF SANCAP
neighbors helping neighbors

BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

July 1st - 22nd, 2024

FISH needs your help! Help a child have all the necessary items for this upcoming school year! Drop-off at FISH, 2422 Periwinkle Way, or one of our partners' locations:

Sanibel PUBLIC LIBRARY 1699 Periwinkle Way	Sanibel Captiva Islands ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS 2353 Periwinkle Way #201	SANIBEL CAPTIVA LIONS CLUB SanCap Gateway Realty 1177 Causeway Blvd	Bank of The Islands 770 Dunlop Rd
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Post Storm Mental Health Challenges - FISH Can Help

MENTAL HEALTH WEDNESDAYS

AVAILABILITY

30 minute sessions
free of charge

with **Laura Guarino, MA, LMHC,**
CBHCMS of community partner
SalusCare

Mental health issues after a catastrophic event can affect people for years, according to a Health Hub article from Lee Health. “We noticed people struggling with stress, anxiety and sadness, and PTSD-like symptoms when other storms came close by after Ian,” says Erika Broyles, FISH Senior Services Director. “We connected with SalusCare and began offering counseling to those who need it, at no charge to the participant. Now that we are in hurricane season, more folks are looking for mental health support, particularly since this season is predicted to be overactive. We’re glad to offer help in a convenient location on Sanibel.”

In a recent study titled Association Between Repeated Exposure to Hurricanes and Mental Health, results highlight the need to address the mental health implications of exposure to natural hazards, particularly in areas such as the Gulf Coast that are at high risk for repeated hurricane exposure. Additionally, the anniversary of a disaster event combined with hurricane season may cause survivors to experience symptoms such as worry, fear, panic attacks and other. “Traumatic events like Hurricane Ian are marked by a sense of horror, helplessness, serious injury, or the threat of serious injury or death,” says Dr. Ronald Smallwood, a psychiatrist with Lee Health/Lee Physician Group. “They affect survivors, rescue workers, and the friends and relatives of victims who have been involved.”

To address storm related and other mental health concerns, FISH and SalusCare offer services by appointment on Wednesdays. A trained professional provides one-on-one therapy sessions focusing on PTSD, trauma and loss, mental exhaustion and more. Anyone who is coping with anxiety, depression and/or PTSD, regardless of the source, is welcome and encouraged to seek guidance.

“Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an intense physical and emotional response to thoughts and reminders of the traumatic event,” notes Smallwood in a Health Hub interview. “PTSD can disrupt a person’s life, job, relationships, health, and enjoyment of everyday activities. Oftentimes, the first instinct of someone who’s undergone trauma is to withdraw. Isolating ourselves from the things that we love and that give us meaning only worsens things in the long run. One suggestion is to continue to do the things that make you happy and healthy in life. Happiness often comes from the purpose gained from doing things we define as meaningful to ourselves.”

FISH encourages those experiencing PTSD-like symptoms, depression, anxiety or other mental health concerns to seek assistance. To schedule a session with a trained SalusCare professional, contact Erika Broyles at 239-472-4775 or erika@fishofsancap.org. Other sources of information include the Post traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Alliance, an alliance of professional and advocacy organizations that provide educational resources to individuals diagnosed with PTSD and their loved ones; those at risk for developing PTSD; and medical, healthcare and other professionals. Visit www.ptsdalliance.org or call 1-877-507-PTSD.



We Provide Relief When the Heat Cranks Up

Southwest Florida experienced the hottest May on record, prompting Lee County, in collaboration with United Way, to establish cooling stations at various locations to assist those unable to escape the dangerous heat. FISH will be the designated cooling station for the islands, offering a comfortable location for anyone seeking relief from the heat.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Heat Exhaustion

What to look for

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, and clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Fainting (passing out)

What to do

- Move to a cool place
 - Loosen your clothes
 - Put cool, wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath
 - Sip water
- Get medical help right away if:**
- You are throwing up
 - Your symptoms get worse
 - Your symptoms last longer than 1 hour

www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/



Cooling stations will be activated by the County when the National Weather Service issues a Heat Watch or Warning, indicating temperatures exceeding 103° or a Heat Index above 108°.

The FISH cooling station, located at 2422 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL, will provide beverages, cooling towels, electrolyte drinks, and snacks. Once activated, the station will be open to the public from 11 am to 4 pm.

“According to the CDC, higher temperatures increase the risk of heat exhaustion, dehydration, and breathing problems, particularly for those with disabilities and chronic health conditions,” notes Manuela Martinez, Disaster Administrative Director, FISH. “We are committed to providing relief to those who need it, and will be checking on our senior residents and families with young children to ensure they are staying cool and healthy.” Martinez highlighted the National Integrated Heat Health Information System’s findings that the groups most at risk include children, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, people with pre-existing conditions, people with disabilities, indoor and outdoor workers, emergency responders, low-income communities, pregnant people, athletes, and more.

High temperatures can lead to heat stroke and other serious health issues. In response to high heat indexes across the nation, cooling stations are becoming increasingly more common. According to heat.gov, in the second week of June, heat-related illnesses per 100,000 people nationwide jumped 107% from 2020 to the same period this year. “We urge everyone to monitor temperatures and stay indoors in air-conditioned environments when it’s particularly hot,” added Martinez. “Stay hydrated, especially when outdoors, and avoid being outside during the peak heat of the day, usually late afternoon.”

Additional reminders include never leaving children, seniors, or pets in a parked car, even briefly. If someone shows signs of heat exhaustion, heatstroke, or another health emergency, seek medical help immediately. FISH encourages community members to follow their social media accounts for updates on cooling stations and safety tips throughout the high-heat months.



We Are Committed to Protecting Seniors

While World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) was on June 15, we are committed to protecting seniors year-round. This year's WEAAD theme – ensuring older people's safety in emergencies – is something we are very familiar with, especially in the wake of Hurricane Ian. "The safety and care of our senior neighbors is extremely important to us," notes Erika Broyles, Senior Services Director. "We collaborate closely with our older community members to make sure they feel secure, particularly during weather-related threats. It is important for them to know we are available to assist when they feel most vulnerable."

WEAAD aims to promote a better understanding of the abuse and neglect of older people by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic, and demographic factors affecting elder abuse and neglect.

The National Center of Elder Abuse reports that elder abuse is widespread. Every year an estimated 1 in 10 older Americans are victims of elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation. "In addition to making our seniors feel safe during emergencies, our team is well-versed on the signs of other types of elder abuse. Abuse comes in many forms, including emotional/psychological, neglect or self-neglect and financial abuse. If we notice unusual behaviors or patterns, such as increased anxiety, isolation, unpaid bills, or unattended medical needs, we can investigate further and take action to address the issue together," continues Broyles.

FISH offers robust social support through services and programs dedicated to seniors. Our monthly Friendly Faces Luncheon lets older people and others build relationships and participate in a social gathering with neighbors, addressing isolation issues that have become more common since Ian. We also provide transportation to reduce social isolation and to help seniors complete daily living tasks within the community. Reassurance calls and home visits keep seniors connected and engaged, offering opportunities for us to spot signs of self-neglect or other needs a senior may be hesitant to discuss.

We are keenly focused on the unique issues and challenges pertaining to the everyday lives of seniors, including mobility, isolation, and loneliness. Through our programs, we feed both the physical and emotional needs of seniors to help them remain healthy, independent, engaged, allowing them to age in place with dignity. If you or someone you know could benefit from our Senior Services, contact Erika Broyles, Senior Services Director at 239-472-4775 or erika@fishofsancap.org. If you suspect elder abuse in any form, contact the FL Department of Elder Affairs Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).



**WORLD ELDER ABUSE
AWARENESS DAY**
Building Strong Support for Elders



Help Us Obtain our 2024 Great Nonprofit Badge



Every year we receive a Great Nonprofit Badge, based on public reviews of our organization. To receive the 2024 badge, we need at least ten 4+ star ratings on the public Great Nonprofit website.

If you love our work then tell the world! Stories about us from people like you will help us make an even bigger impact in our community. GreatNonprofits – the #1 source of nonprofit stories and feedback – is honoring highly regarded nonprofits with their 2024 Top-Rated List. Won't you help us raise visibility for our work by posting a brief story of your experience with

us? All content will be visible to potential donors and volunteers. It's easy and only takes 3 minutes!
[Go here to get started!](#)

Thank You Tiffany - FISH Volunteer of the Month



Tiffany regularly volunteers in our Food Pantry at FISH, and recently volunteered as one of 10 camp counselors for Camp Noah.

A past school teacher, Tiffany brought boundless energy, creativity, and compassion to Camp Noah, enriching the experience for every child involved.

"Neighbors helping neighbors is not only the FISH motto, but the Sanibel motto. It is all encompassing and means what it says. We're all here to support and lift each other up no matter what the circumstance." - Tiffany

Thank You Sanibel Fire Rescue District

Thanks to our neighbors, Sanibel Fire Rescue District, for donating some shelf stable food to our pantry! They take care of our community in more ways than one!

We are always in need of pantry items such as juice boxes, peanut butter & jelly, soups, canned goods and paper products. To donate, visit us at 2422 Periwinkle between 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.





Taming Trauma: We Sponsored a Camp Program Helping Children Recover from Impact of Hurricane Ian



While often scary, childhood nightmares are usually just figments of kids' imaginative minds. But sometimes the root of their fear is all too real—like the lasting trauma from a devastating hurricane.

To counter that trauma, we partnered with Camp Noah to offer a free, week-long day camp for local elementary-age children. Held June 3-7 at Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, the nationally recognized program helped 40 young campers deal with the emotional impact of Hurricane Ian.

“Rebuilding our island communities after Ian must go beyond bricks and mortar. It has to include helping our children come to grips with what happened, supporting them in their emotional recovery, and building preparedness and resilience that will serve them their whole lives,” said Maria Espinoza, Executive Director of FISH OF SANCAP.

The June program was Camp Noah's first ever held locally. Each day, campers took part in special programs built around fun, friendship, resilience and reconnection with life in the community. Campers also received supplies, a T-shirt, a preparedness backpack, and a blanket.

The camp was facilitated by the FISH team, 10 volunteers, and three counselors from mental health provider Azul Mind Space. Other participants included:

- Lynn Saladini, Beach Floor & Décor, who donated a book for every child and invited children's book author Ken Skelton to visit and read to the group;
- Sanibel Fire Department, which shared about safety, a day in the life of a firefighter, and held a fire truck presentation;
- Kim Berghes, a volunteer for American Red Cross, who introduced the “Pillowcase Project” that teaches kids about personal and family preparedness and safety skills;
- Brittany Laster, Education and Outreach Coordinator, CROW Animal Ambassador Program, who showcased what CROW (Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife) does and what happens to animals during storms;
- Joy Robertson, J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge, who presented about Ding Darling and the importance of conservation and preservation of wildlife and their habitats.



Camp Noah continued

Kids and parents alike had much to say about Camp Noah.

- “I am so happy you had this camp,” wrote one parent. “We lost our home to the hurricane, and my son still thanks God during dinner grace for keeping us safe.”
- “I learned how to be prepared and how to get bad thoughts out of my head,” said a 10-year-old camper.
- “I learned that I am so special, and I made many great friends,” an eight-year-old camper noted.
- “This is a 1,000-out-of-10 camp, and I loved it!” another 10-year-old camper wrote.

Manuela Martinez, Disaster Administrative Director at FISH OF SANCAP, said the community’s support for Camp Noah was outstanding. “We are so thankful to the many partners and volunteers who were so generous with their time, knowledge, and care for our young campers,” says she said. “It’s amazing to witness how powerful and healing Camp Noah was for everyone involved.”

Martinez also extended thanks to local food providers, including Jerry’s, Sanibel Deli, Doc Ford’s, and Rosalita’s Cantina. “Our food partners were amazing, and no one went hungry,” said Martinez. “Camp Noah was a huge success thanks to everyone. From the venue to the activities, food, and supplies, some of which we borrowed from CECI, this was a real team effort. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts,” she added.

While Camp Noah was complimentary to participants, other camps charge a fee. For those who qualify, FISH offers scholarships for families to send their children to summer camps throughout Lee County. The program offers limited financial assistance for families who cannot afford the rising cost of summer childcare and camps. Households that can receive a youth scholarship must have an island connection through residency or employment. For additional information, contact Nitza Lopez, nitza@fishofsancap, or 239-472-4775.





FISH LINES

Coming in August - Friendly Faces with LCEC Presenting

neighbors helping neighbors
FRIENDLY FACES LUNCHEON
TUESDAY, AUG. 13, @11:00 a.m.



Islanders, friends and family are invited to the community-wide FISH OF SANCAP Friendly Faces Luncheon! LCEC Energy Experts Jason Hoover and Andy Molina will be presenting tips and tricks for energy savings at the August Friendly Faces Event. Their presentation will cover a variety of information regarding the importance of surge protection, generator safety, energy tips during the heat of summer, solar, and how you can do your own energy walk through in your home.

- The cost of the luncheon, provided by community partner Sanibel Deli, is complimentary to guests -- meal selections for in-person guests will be provided upon RSVP
- **Space is limited, please RSVP early**
- Future Friendly Faces luncheons are on the 2nd Tuesday of each month throughout 2024

FISH continues to help neighbors in meeting their physical, mental and emotional needs. As always, we are committed to being a safety net for all. At the end of the day, our message is simple -- FISH is for everyone.

DATE:
Tuesday, August 13

TIME:
Beginning at 11:00 am

LOCATION:
Sanibel Rec Center
3880 CanCap Road
also
Virtual Zoom Call

RSVP:
To Erika Broyles, FISH
By August 9
239-472-4775
erika@fishofsancap.org



neighbors helping neighbors

FISH is committed to the safety and well-being of our island community, and hurricane season is no exception. Hurricane hazards come in many forms, including storm surge, heavy rainfall, inland flooding, high winds, etc.

It is essential to be ready before a storm approaches and crucial to know what to do if a storm makes landfall.

FISH can help—

before & after THE STORM

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS PACKETS

Our annual **FISH Hurricane Preparedness Packet** is a valuable resource available to anyone who requests one. The packet provides detailed information on where to go, what to do, and how/when to begin preparing for hurricane season, including:

- **Suggested Do's and Don'ts**
- **City of Sanibel Hurricane Pass Application**
- **Special Medical Needs Application**
- **Checklists**
- **List of Hotels**
- **List of Shelters**
- **Pet Information**
- **Hotline Numbers**

If you or someone you know could benefit from this vital program, packets may be obtained in the following ways:

- **PICKED UP** at FISH—2422 Periwinkle Way
- **DOWNLOADED** at fishofsancap.org
- **MAILED TO YOU** upon request by calling 239.472.4775 or email erika@fishofsancap.org

HURRICANE RECOVERY

In the event a storm makes landfall, please contact FISH after the storm for information and assistance at **239.472.0404 (24-hour hotline)** or email info@fishofsancap.org

In 2023, FISH helped neighbors through the storms with:



745

HURRICANE PACKETS
DISTRIBUTED &

4,018

HURRICANE RECOVERY
SERVICES & SUPPLIES PROVIDED

2422 Periwinkle Way
Sanibel FL 33957
239.472.4775
fishofsancap.org





530
RUNNERS
IN 2023

SANIBEL'S
ONLY
RACE

BOTH
5K
AND
10K

COME
walk, run OR jog
our 17th annual road race

**SATURDAY
DECEMBER 7, 2024**

BEGINS & ENDS AT THE SANIBEL COMMUNITY HOUSE

RACING BEGINS 7:00a—registration from 6:00-6:45a

Visit RunSignUp.com for details & to register. *The earlier you register, the less you pay—scan here!*

Sign up for the Kids Fun Run following the road race—FREE under age 10.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. For additional information, email: events@fishofsancap.org



2430 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL 33957 • 239.472.4775 • fishofsancap.org



CITY OF SANIBEL



Our Volunteers, Partners & Team in Action



THANK YOU!



Our Volunteers, Partners & Team in Action



THANK YOU!



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