

SEPTEMBER 2024

FISH LINES



NEWSLETTER

the journey home

FISH Awarded \$6.9 Million in CDBG-DR Grant Funding



FISH of Sanibel-Captiva (FISH) is thrilled to announce that they have been awarded \$6,990,194.00 in Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding in cooperation with the City of Sanibel.

This vital federal funding will cover much of the costs required to repair and rebuild FISH facilities, which sustained significant damage during Hurricane Ian.

With this generous capital grant funding, FISH will be able to repair and rebuild their facilities that support all community programs. It will allow the organization to continue providing essential services to the Sanibel and Captiva communities while also building back better to ensure future resilience.

The organization is deeply grateful for the partnership with the City of Sanibel and the support of the Lee County Commissioners, who have recognized the critical needs of the local community through this award.

“We are overwhelmingly thankful for this funding, which allows us to address the damage to our facilities and enhance our ability to serve our neighbors,” said Maria Espinoza, Executive Director of FISH. “Our heartfelt thanks go out to the City of Sanibel, Lee County Commissioners, and everyone involved in recognizing and supporting our community’s recovery needs. We are excited to begin our repairs and remain committed to serving our community today and in the future.”

FISH plans to reveal detailed plans for the repair and rebuilding process to stakeholders in the near future. The organization is eager to begin this new chapter and continue to be a beacon of hope and support for the residents and workforce of Sanibel and Captiva Islands.



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, FGCU Spruce Up Sanibel Properties



FISH partnered with FGCU Pike Fraternity, United Way of Lee, Hendry and Glades Counties, and local organizations to help Sanibel residents beautify their properties in preparation for the City of Sanibel's 50th anniversary celebration.

Over the Labor Day holiday weekend, 50 dedicated volunteers from the Pike Fraternity gave their time and energy to assist their neighbors in need.

The volunteer group worked tirelessly on various projects, including painting houses, rearranging furniture, maintaining yards, and landscaping—helping restore the island charm of properties still recovering from the impact of Hurricane Ian. Their efforts not only helped enhance individual properties but also strengthened community relationships as Sanibel prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary.

“We are incredibly grateful to these hardworking volunteers who chose to spend their holiday weekend serving our community,” said Manuela Martinez, Disaster Administrative Director of FISH. “Their dedication to helping our neighbors recover and prepare for the City’s milestone celebration reflects their true willingness to help others.”

FISH coordinated this community effort by surveying residents on their long-term recovery waiting list and collaborating with the City of Sanibel. The response was overwhelming, with many grateful residents signing up to receive much-needed help to bring their properties back to life. This initiative would not have been possible without the support of several key partners including FGCU Pike Fraternity; United Way of Lee, Hendry and Glades Counties; Landgraphics and Saint Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church.





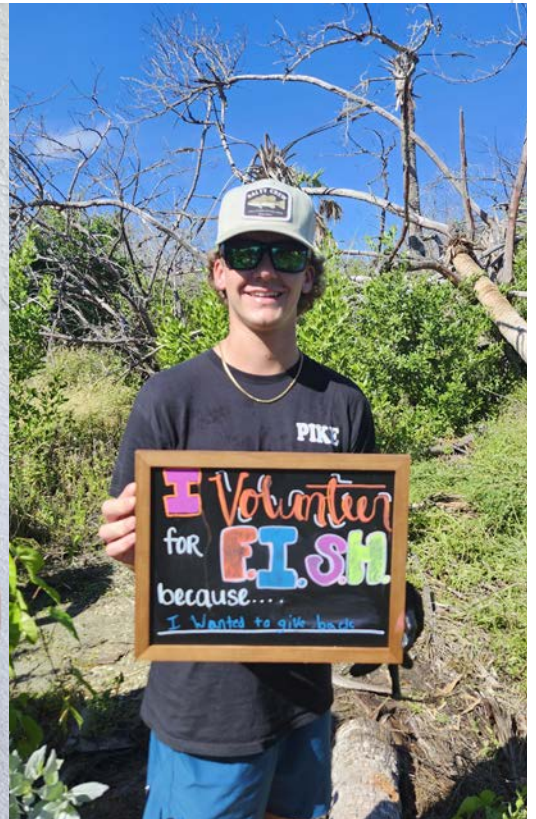
FISH LINES



THANK YOU!



FISH LINES



THANK YOU!



FISH Honors Partnership with Trademark Roofing

FISH of SanCap (FISH) is thrilled to honor their partnership with Trademark Roofing, a leading provider of high-quality roofing solutions in Southwest Florida. This collaboration represents a significant step forward in FISH's ongoing long-term recovery efforts, aimed at addressing the unmet needs of the community and ensuring a stronger, more resilient future.

Through this partnership, Trademark Roofing is committed to supporting FISH's mission of providing critical assistance to those in need on Sanibel and Captiva Islands. As part of the collaboration, Trademark Roofing has worked closely with FISH on a variety of projects that included a canvassing initiative in partnership with Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU). This initiative involved community outreach to identify and address unmet needs, particularly those related to home repairs.



Trademark Roofing has already demonstrated their commitment to this partnership by promptly addressing a roof leak at the FISH facility, ensuring that operations can continue without disruption. This immediate response emphasizes their dedication to supporting the essential work that FISH does for the community.

"We are incredibly grateful for Trademark Roofing's support and expertise," said Maria Espinoza, Executive Director of FISH. "Their involvement not only helps us address urgent needs within our own facilities but also strengthens our ability to assist residents and the workforce with recovery and rebuilding efforts. This partnership is a testament to the power of community collaboration in creating long-term, sustainable solutions."

Trademark Roofing's contributions play a pivotal role in FISH's long-term recovery program, which focuses on providing services to the community, including but not limited to repair assistance, financial aid, food support and emotional support. By partnering with local businesses like Trademark Roofing, FISH can expand its reach and impact, ensuring that unmet needs are filled.

"We are honored to partner with FISH of SANCAP," said Tristan Starbird of Trademark Roofing. "Our company is committed to giving back to the community, and this partnership allows us to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who need it most. We look forward to working together to build a stronger, more resilient Sanibel and Captiva Islands."

As FISH continues to lead the charge in disaster recovery and community support, partnerships like the one with Trademark Roofing are essential in fulfilling their mission. Together, they will continue to serve as a beacon of hope and assistance for all those in need



FISH Celebrates National Food Bank Day: Standing Against Food Insecurity in Lee County



In honor of National Food Bank Day on Sept. 6, we are shining a spotlight on our Food Pantry program and how it helps curb food insecurity in Lee County. As many residents face the impossible choices between paying bills or putting food on the table, FISH is here to ensure that no one goes hungry.

The cost of feeding a family can lead to immense consequences. According to finding in the Feeding America Meal Gap, Lee County and 2023 ALICE Report, Lee County, a single parent with a school-age child and working full-time can spend nearly a quarter of their paycheck on food alone.

The FISH Food Pantry serves as a lifeline for families and individuals struggling to make ends meet. FISH offers a “choice pantry,” allowing clients to select the items they need, ensuring that nothing goes to waste and dietary needs and preferences are met. Beyond providing nutritious food, the pantry also supplies essential personal hygiene products, paper goods, and pet care items, recognizing that basic needs extend beyond food alone.

Available to all Lee County residents, the FISH Food Pantry is open Monday-Wednesday-Friday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM and Tuesday & Thursday from 10:00 AM to 7:30 PM. To participate, clients are asked to provide basic information such as proof of residency and household size. Last year, FISH welcomed 5,486 visits to their Food Pantry, making a notable difference in the lives of those facing financial hardship.

In these challenging times, when so many are forced to make difficult choices, FISH is proud to offer support and relief. “No one should go to bed hungry,” says Maria Espinoza, FISH Executive Director. “Not one child. Not one parent. Not one senior. At FISH we’re working hard to make sure every person has enough to eat and never faces an impossible choice.”

While celebrating National Food Bank Day, FISH encourages everyone to remember the importance of access to food and the vital role food pantries and food banks play in building a stronger, healthier community.

To continue our efforts, we’re asking for your help. Donations of peanut butter, canned tuna, or any non-perishable items you feel comfortable contributing are greatly appreciated. Your generosity ensures that we can provide essential nutrition to those in need and make a meaningful difference in our community.



Highlighting Our Commitment to Senior Care During World Alzheimer's Month



September marks World Alzheimer's Month, a time to raise awareness and oppose the stigma surrounding dementia. We believe in the power of programs that provide support to seniors and the impact it has on the lives of those affected by Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

Our commitment to the health and wellness of the senior population is a high priority. The senior programs and services we offer shows our dedication to ensuring that every senior in the community can age in place with comfort and dignity.

We provide a range of senior services designed to support older community members, particularly those facing the challenges of memory loss. Erika Arnowitz, Senior Services Director who recently earned a certification in dementia care, leads these efforts with a deep understanding of the unique needs of

Alzheimer's patients. This specialized training allows us to offer even more compassionate and informed care to seniors, ensuring they receive the attention and respect they deserve.

Aging in place is a priority for many seniors, and we are dedicated to making that possible. Through various programs, we provide the resources and support necessary for older residents to live independently in their own homes, surrounded by the community they love.

Whether it's through transportation services, home visits, meal delivery, or mental health resources, FISH is there to help seniors live with the dignity they deserve.

According to Alzheimer's Disease International, "Dementia affects more than 55 million people worldwide, with a new case of dementia occurring somewhere in the world every 3 seconds. Dementia can also affect individuals under the age of 65 (young onset dementia). Greater awareness and understanding of dementia is important to challenge the myths and misconceptions that surround the condition. There is currently no cure for most types of dementia, but treatment and support are available."

During World Alzheimer's Month, FISH encourages the community to come together in support of those living with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia by continuing to advocate for better care, greater understanding, and a future where no one faces this journey alone.



JOG N JAM Merchandise Sales Support Community and Spirit



For the first time ever, FISH is excited to launch exclusive event merchandise for our JOG AND JAM event, designed to enhance community support and spirit. This new initiative allows participants and supporters to proudly showcase their connection to FISH while contributing to the organization’s mission.

The merchandise lineup includes a variety of high-quality items perfect for showing your ‘love of FISH’, including baseball caps, light hoodies, and both short and long sleeve t-shirts, in adult and youth sizes. Whether gearing up for the race, attending the concert, or simply want to support FISH’s vital programs, these items offer a fashionable way to make a difference.

“We are thrilled to offer this new way for our community to engage with and support FISH,” said Maria Espinoza, Executive Director of FISH. “Every purchase not only shows your commitment to the islands but also directly supports our mission of serving those in need.”

Net proceeds from all merchandise sales will go directly to support FISH’s programs, which include a long-term recovery program since Hurricane Ian and programs representing their four major pillars – food, island-based education, senior services and helping hands for those living or working on Sanibel and Captiva islands. This initiative aligns with FISH’s ongoing efforts to strengthen the community and ensure that everyone on the islands has access to the support they need.

Merchandise is now available for purchase online at [FISH’s Shopify Store](#). For those who prefer to shop locally, we will have pop-up sales every Wednesday at the Sanibel Community House from 11:00a-1:00p.





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!](#)



Supplies for Teachers!



We recently fulfilled the wishlists of amazing teachers at the Sanibel School!

Thanks to our generous supporters, we were able to provide essential school supplies and special requests to equip classrooms for the school year!

We are so happy to support our educators who take such good care nourishing and supporting our young neighbors.

We had so much fun celebrating 20 years of Chocolattés and are thankful to be their nonprofit of choice!





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



Coming in Oct. - Friendly Faces with Susie Wilson

neighbors helping neighbors FRIENDLY FACES LUNCHEON TUESDAY, OCT. 8 @11:00 a.m.

Islanders, friends and family are invited to the community-wide FISH OF SANCAP Friendly Faces Luncheon! Susie Wilson with the OI Foundation is our guest speaker.



Susie Wilson, a woman living with Type III-IV osteogenesis imperfecta (OI) will discuss this rare condition and share her life experiences.

She has been involved with the OI Foundation since 1992 and served on their Board of Directors for six years; she co-chairs the Tampa OI Support Group, and Chairs the Bone China Tea Fundraiser. Susie will talk about growing up with Osteogenesis Imperfecta and will present and give tips on being your own patient advocate in the medical world.

Locally, Susie volunteers at J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge and serves as a vestry member at St. Michael All Angel Episcopal Church.

- 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, Oct. 8

TIME:
Beginning at 11:00 am

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

RSVP:
To Erika Arnowitz, FISH
By Oct. 4
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





FACING IMPOSSIBLE CHOICES



"No one should go to bed hungry. Not one child. Not one parent. Not one senior. At FISH, we're working hard to make sure every person has enough to eat and never faces an impossible choice."

—Maria Espinoza, FISH Executive Director



food is life—

no one should go without

Food is life. But the cost of feeding a family can lead to immense consequences. Financial hardship and hunger are closely linked. Hunger leads to poor health, poor performance at work and poor performance at school. *Yet, in our community, a single parent with a school-age child and working full-time can spend nearly a quarter of their paycheck on food alone.* One unexpected expense can lead to impossible choices.

FISH continues to fight food insecurity with programs including Meals-by-FISH, which delivers hot meals to shut-ins, and the Backpack Program which helps feed kids during weekends and school breaks. **During 2023, the Food Pantry also hosted 5,486 visits. Holiday Food Baskets went to 896 families.**

These programs depend on the generosity of food banks, local grocers, food drives and financial support.

Please consider a gift today.

DONATE TODAY!



FOOD INSECURITY IN OUR REGION

	% of population	# of people
all groups	11.6%	85,350
children (under 18)	16.9%	22,260

*sources—Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, Lee County, 2019, tinyurl.com/mr3ejvzw; 2023 ALICE Report, Lee County, United For ALICE, tinyurl.com/2hy22tpr

NOTE: 26% of food-insecure children live in homes that are ineligible for federal nutrition programs.

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Our Volunteers, Partners & Team in Action



THANK YOU!



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