

Luminaries

November 10, 2025

Martin Co., St. Lucie Co., Indian River Co.

MARTIN COUNTY

Festival of Giving returning to The Children’s Museum

Christina McIntosh
The Children’s Museum of the Treasure Coast

JENSEN BEACH — The Festival of Giving returns to The Children’s Museum of the Treasure Coast Nov. 12-22, uniting community spirit, creativity, and charitable giving during the holiday season.

The museum is grateful to presenting sponsor Tracey MacLeod, Realtor with Illustrated Properties, The Ngo Group, for helping bring this beloved tradition to life.

Formerly known as the Festival of Trees and benefiting Tykes and Teens for 16 years, the event found a new home at the museum in 2024. This year continues the celebration of its mission: bringing nonprofits together to share their stories, connect with visitors, and amplify their voices. Nearly 70 beautifully decorated wreaths, trees, and centerpieces will fill the Explorer’s Gallery, each representing a nonprofit serving children, families, education, or animals across the Treasure Coast, Palm Beach, and Okeechobee County.

Guests can stroll through the display and purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win their favorite decorations. Every ticket supports the nonprofit that the item represents, helping raise funds while introducing visitors to organizations they may not yet

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The Festival of Giving Committee is mapping out where 70-plus trees, wreaths and centerpieces will be staged for the event. Pictured here (starting in the back row) are Eve Watson, Tracy Armstrong, Robert Whitlach, Beth Garcia Svopa, Stacy Myron, Sharon Savageaux, Jeannie Dieffenbauger, Brigitte Babine, Christina McIntosh, and Evie Klaassen. PROVIDED BY SEVIN BULLWINKLE

ST. LUCIE COUNTY



Kneeling from left: Ruth Stromak, Veronica Montoya; standing from left: Elizabeth Barbella, Arlin Villari, Kavitha Rao, Diane Stark-Kennedy, Marsha Jones, Gwen Cunningham, Anne Rosey, Cris Adams, Judy Salmon, Linda Gallagher, Canieria Gardner, and Janet Maffucci. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MARISOL GUNTOWSKI

Impact 100 St. Lucie awards \$100K to Tykes & Teens for Walk-In Assessment Center

Canieria Gardner
Impact 100 St. Lucie

PORT ST. LUCIE — On Oct. 25, Impact 100 St. Lucie held its annual award celebration, where members came together to make a profound difference in their community.

This year’s \$100,000 Impact grant was awarded to Tykes & Teens for its Walk-In Assessment Center, which provides immediate access to compassionate behavioral health care for children and teens in crisis.

Tykes & Teens is the largest nonprofit in St. Lucie County dedicated exclusively to children’s mental health services, serving youth from infancy through young adulthood.

Their mission is to be a trusted provider of prevention and treatment services delivered with compassion and excellence.

During the event, CEO Ann Posey gave a powerful and heartfelt speech,



Kayla Palacios, COO of last year’s award winner Better Together.

sharing that “nearly 30% of the youth in our community have thought about dying by suicide — that’s one out of every three children.”

Her words underscored the urgency of Tykes & Teens’ work and the life-changing impact of this grant.

Founded in 2001 by Wendy Steele, Impact100 began as a simple yet revolutionary concept: women coming together to make a big impact in their communities.

The model unites at least 100 women, each contributing \$1,000, to collectively award a \$100,000 transformational grant to one local nonprofit organization.

Since its founding, Impact 100 chapters worldwide have donated more than \$160 million and, locally, Impact 100 St. Lucie has contributed \$663,589 since 2019.

Two additional finalists each received \$2,500: The Arc of the Treasure Coast, empowering children and adults with disabilities to achieve their full potential; and The Source Dignity Bus,

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INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

‘Hidden Faces’ provides behind-the-scenes look at The Source

Beverly Paris
The Source

VERO BEACH — The most commonly asked question about the homeless is what do people, who have no job, have no home, a disowned family, and who hunger for food and support have in common?

The answer is found right here in Vero Beach: It’s The Source, a trusted symbol for hope.

The biggest cause of homelessness is a profound, catastrophic loss of family. The homeless gravitate to a sense of community found at The Source. Our members take the skills we teach, the programs we offer and the services that can help enrich their lives and use them all to better themselves. These members are the hidden faces. Just ask the nearly 200 people who attended the annual “Hidden Faces,” at The Richardson Cen-

ter of Indian River State College that was held on Thursday, Oct. 16.

“Hidden Faces” introduced attendees to a behind the scenes look at what The Source does and the people they help daily. They met some of those members who now have a job, a roof over their heads, have enjoyed a reunion with their separated family and even have received a reinstatement of a driver’s license. And, thanks to the culinary program and three meals served restaurant style daily at The Source, they are not hungry anymore.

The audience was captivated during the program, which included individual member’s success stories as well as testimonials from community members who have partnered with The Source.

Everyone enjoyed an award-winning dinner cooked by The Source’s Dignity



Dignity Programs offer job opportunities to participants. Pictured here from left: Sherman, Dignity Bus; Sheila, Dining with Dignity; Kenny, Dignity Food Truck; Russell, Dignity Smiles; Marilyn, Dignity Wellness; Sam, Dignity Hospitality; Pernell, Community Works; and Georgette, Dignity Jobs. PROVIDED BY MARYANN KETCHAM

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FROM THE COVER

The Source

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Catering program and served by students of their Dining with Dignity Culinary Training Program.

When Source members move into their own home, they receive an oversized key with a sign that says “Not Homeless.” As a featured dessert, everyone enjoyed an individually wrapped cookie shaped like a key reminding them of this most memorable evening.

While homelessness is prevalent throughout the nation, this event offered insight on how The Source has been tackling this issue over the past 30 years. Everyone in attendance witnessed a night filled with professionalism, passion and pride. They walked away from the evening with more awareness about homelessness and felt

proud to learn just how it is being eradicated right here in Indian River County. There are less hidden faces now than ever before. Thanks to The Source, they are now as visible as us all.

Thanks to our supportive sponsors including Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dixon, Douglas and Susanne Sweeny, Mr. and Mrs. James Dornan, Elisa Hesse, Andy and Helen Bowler, Mr. and Mrs. David McDonald, Dr. Tom and Joanne Balshi, Emmett and Margaret Anne Evans, Suzanne Chesser, Lucas Roofing, Inc., Kiwanis Youth Programs, Frazier Foundation, First Presbyterian Men’s Group, Mr. Bill and Mrs. Diantha Harris, Jean and Gene Cravens, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lindsay, Robert Lyles and Jeanmarie Hajla, Berg Insurance, Crown Painting, Alex MacWilliam Real Estate, Omega Public Adjusting, ABC Printing and Lauren’s Cookie Co VB.

For more Source information, visit www.iamthesource.org or email jona-than.orozco@iamthesource.org.



Jade Alexander, The Source's neighbor services director, holds up an oversized key, which is a symbol for each newly housed member who was previously homeless. PROVIDED BY MARYANN KETCHAM



Impact 100 St. Lucie's members and friends toast the organization's successful year. PROVIDED BY MARISOL GUNTOWSKI

Impact 100

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providing services, support, and spiritual guidance to homeless individuals

in need. At the ceremony, each finalist had seven minutes to present their project before members voted in person and online. Votes were immediately tallied while Kayla Palacios, the COO of last year's grant winner Better Together,

shared how their grant helped over 800 children and families in crisis stay together through hope and community connection.

“It's an amazing feeling to know our money is going to a worthwhile organization and truly making an impact,” said

Impact 100 St. Lucie President Janet Maffucci. “I've donated to charities before, but nothing has ever made an impact like Impact 100 does.”

To learn more or to join this movement of women creating lasting change, visit www.impact100slc.org.



Alyssa Neely, Lourdes D'aragona, Nicole Vaughn, Alexys Rivera, Rihanna Vaughn, Christine Rigg, and Dyanne Davis during the Festival of Giving Night Before Christmas Adult PJ & Cocktail Party in 2024. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MARYANN KETCHAM



Mary's Home Executive Director Alean Timm with Operations & Events Manager Kim Gaudet. Local nonprofits have shone brightly throughout the Festival of Giving with incredible trees, wreaths and centerpieces telling their stories.

Museum

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know. Nonprofits also gain valuable networking opportunities with one another, sparking new collaborations that strengthen local impact.

Over the 10-day event, the museum will host pop-up performances from community groups and student performers.

A popular tradition returns on Nov. 17, when more than 150 business leaders gather for the networking breakfast sponsored by Sandhill Cove Retirement Living. That same day, WPTV hosts its “Let’s Hear It” event from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., inviting guests to share their own community stories with the news team.

Family Night on Nov. 18 promises festive fun with Santa, crafts, and cookie decorating, thanks to support from Deakins-Carroll Insurance.

The signature celebration, the

adults-only Night Before Christmas PJ & Cocktail Party, takes place Friday, November 21, with Hurricane Boat Lifts as presenting party sponsor. Guests are encouraged to wear their most spirited holiday pajamas for a chance to win the costume contest.

Admission to the festival is free on the ship side of the museum, where all raffle items are displayed. Guests may play on the town side and in the Children’s Garden with reduced-price admission or a museum membership.

“We are only in our second year and the community continues to love the idea of supporting multiple nonprofits at one event,” said Christina McIntosh, community outreach & event coordinator. “We can’t wait to see what this year brings.”

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.childrensmuseumtc.org/festival-of-giving or call 772-225-7575, ext. 205. Join the celebration and experience the spirit of giving in action this holiday season.