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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KIDS WITH VISION LOSS ENJOY SUMMER CAMP

(North Fort Myers, FL) – The Lighthouse of SWFL hosted its eleventh annual summer camp for fifteen children and teens living with vision loss. The two-week long camp combined recreational and educational activities to inspire discovery and adventure! Activities included fun field trips to a horse stable, an airport, a wildlife preserve, a working farm, and a guide dog school, just to name a few.

Hearing the sound of a horse's whinny brought delight to the children as they each had the chance to pet the velvety-soft nose of a Clydesdale horse. Without vision, relying on their tactile sense is a must, and feeling a baby alligator brought out the brave ones of the bunch! For many of these children, it was their first time petting a horse or experiencing nature up close.

The teens attending the camp enjoyed sitting in the cockpit of a real airplane, holding the controls, feeling the buttons, and talking to a pilot. The trip to a guide dog school was especially important to the kids as they were each given a guide to walk with and practice. Rounding out the end of each week was a fun day spent at a water park or visiting a theatre and seeing a play. The smiles on their faces and new friendships made were proof everyone enjoyed learning new skills and integrating into the community.

The youth visited Southern Fresh Farms, Babcock Ranch, Southeastern Guide Dogs, Sun Splash, Whispering Pines, Lee County Port Authority – Page Field, and Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre. Sun Harvest Citrus and Ostego Bay Foundation provided wonderful presentations at the Lighthouse of SWFL.

Thank you to the contributors and supporters who helped make this year's camp possible: Division of Blind Services, Gorovoy M.D. Eye Specialists, Eye Associates – Stephen E. Smith, M.D., Southwest Florida Optometric Association (SWFOA), The Palms of Fort Myers – Five Star Senior Living, Trilogy Home Healthcare, Schlager, Schlager, & Levin, SNEAD Eye Group, Vanda

Pharmaceuticals, RE/Max Destination Realty, Convergent Technologies, Dr. Randall Parrish, Family Eye Care, Steve Singletary, Fran Peters, Island Vacations of Sanibel & Captiva, Jim Barfield, Rick Fox, Quigley Eye Specialists, Debi Williams, Crews Sanitation, and Ronald Riegler.

The mission of the Lighthouse of SWFL is to enable people of all ages living with a visual impairment or blindness to remain independent, active and productive in society.

Located in North Fort Myers, the Lighthouse of SWFL serves over four hundred people living with blindness and vision impairment per year in Lee, Hendry & Glades Counties. The agency provides classes in safe cooking; Braille, orientation and mobility; assistive technology, using iPhones, iPads, and voice technology.

Lighthouse of SWFL is a 501(c)3 United Way Partner that is also partially funded by the Division of Blind Services, Lee County Government and other private donors.

For more information on Lighthouse of SWFL or how you can support this vital organization, go to www.lighthouseswfl.org, call (239) 997-7797, or visit us on Facebook and Twitter.

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