

Vision-impaired youths receive important fire-safety instructions



Miami-Dade Fire Rescue's mascot Sparky the Fire Dog makes a new friend, camper Christian Mulet, at a special fire safety demonstration for students in the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired summer program. Photo provided to the Miami Herald

By Christina Mayo

Making preparations in case of fire is one of the most important things we can do for our families. That means installing smoke alarms and teaching everyone the planned escape route.

Safety lessons are even more critical for those who have vision limitations. Students ages 14 to 22 in the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired summer program had the chance to learn fire safety during an exciting demonstration at Miami-Dade Fire Rescue's training facility in Doral.



Christina Mayo CHARLES TRAINOR JR. Miami Herald File

The summer camp students experienced fire extinguisher training, kitchen safety, a truck demonstration, an antivenin presentation, and got to meet Miami-Dade Fire Rescue's mascot Sparky the Fire Dog.

"Reinforcing pre-fire preparations, for instance, planning and practicing an escape plan in the event of an actual emergency, installing smoke alarms, and involving the Fire Department to help plan an escape route are very important safety lessons, and even more so for our visually impaired students at Miami Lighthouse," said Virginia Jacko, president & CEO of Miami Lighthouse in a release.

ADVERTISING

For the 25 visually impaired teenage students who experienced the fire safety demonstration, it was another reinforcement of the mission of Miami Lighthouse — "It's possible to see without sight." To learn more about the group and its programs visit miamilighthouse.org.

GRANT FOR BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

Each year, more than 600 youths enjoy using the gym at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Miami-Dade's Kendall Club. To help make necessary improvements to the facility, the Miami Kiwanis Youth Foundation recently awarded a \$10,000 grant to support recreational programming and improvements.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Miami-Dade has received funding from the Miami Kiwanis Youth Foundation since 2000. The funds provide direct sports and recreational program support.

“We are very thankful to the Miami Kiwanis Youth Foundation for its generous grant,” Boys & Girls Clubs of Miami-Dade President Alex Rodriguez-Roig said in a release. “The grant will help us continue to support quality recreational programs and facilities, which are very important to youth development, at our Kendall Club.”

Awards were presented at the Kiwanis Club of Miami general meeting in June. The Miami Kiwanis Youth Foundation has long-term financial support from the Paul Zee Foundation for “the purpose of providing Miami-Dade County youth with recreational activities.” At the end of this 17th grant season, the total invested in youths in our community is at nearly \$1.3 million. This year’s grants of \$102,329 were awarded to 12 charitable organizations.

To learn more about all of the activities available at Boys & Girls Clubs of Miami-Dade and how you can volunteer to help, visit bgcmia.org. The Kiwanis Club of Miami was formed in 1921 and has been helping children since its beginnings. Visit kiwanis.org to find out how you can get involved.

CAR WASH AND RIDE

Ever want to take a spin on the NASCAR championship track at Homestead-Miami Speedway? Well, now you can at the Car Wash and Ride event from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday, July 31.

And it’s all for a good cause: to raise funds to benefit multiple charities, including Special Olympics Florida/Miami-Dade County and Driving for a Cause, Homestead-Miami Speedway’s charitable outreach program.

All it takes is a \$20 donation, which includes a car wash, to experience first-hand the Speedway’s progressive banking around the same 1.5-mile oval track that hosts championship races in NASCAR’s three national series.

Additional laps will be available for an extra \$10 donation each. Participants should enter the Speedway through Gate 18, located off SW 344th Street/Palm Drive.

Local car clubs can attend the event for a group rate. Car clubs will receive a set amount of laps around the oval and a photo opportunity on the track. Contact Brandon Ward at 305-230-5228 or bward@homesteadmiamispeedway.com for details.

On hand will be Special Olympics Florida/Miami-Dade County volunteers and athletes. Two other organizations will be at the Speedway accepting donations as well, Farm Share and Gotsneakers.

Farm Share volunteers will be collecting nonperishable food items to distribute to those in need. Gotsneakers, a local sneaker recycling organization, will be collecting used sneakers. For each pair collected, Gotsneakers will make a donation to Driving for a Cause and Special Olympics Florida/Miami-Dade County.

For more, visit goo.gl/G48S6Y or call [305-230-5243](tel:305-230-5243).

If you have news for this column, please send it to Christina Mayo at christinammayo@gmail.com.