

*21 years of serving the people of
Pine Island & Matlacha.*

Dear Friends of the Beacon of Hope,

As we reflect on more than 21 years of service to our island community, it is with immense pride and excitement that I share our very first **Beacon of Hope Impact Report**. This milestone comes at a pivotal moment for our organization, one in which the needs of Pine Island residents are growing, and the Beacon continues to evolve to meet them.

Since our founding, our mission of **HOPE, Helping Our People Excel**, has been the guiding light behind everything we do. It is carried forward every day by our 9 dedicated employees, our partner nonprofits, and the tireless work of more than **180 volunteers** who give their time, skills, and hearts to their neighbors.

As we enter our 21st year, we want you to know this truth clearly:

Your continued support is the reason the Beacon is still here.

You are the lifeline that allows us to serve as Pine Island's longest-standing provider of wrap-around social services.

Over the past several years, the Beacon has grown into a leadership role unlike any in our history. Because of your trust and your generosity, we continue to serve as:

Pine Island's United Way Resiliency Hub

Pine Island's Red Cross Community Adaptation Partner

A committed partner to **state and local governments** working together to help the island recover and rebuild from recurring weather events.

These partnerships reflect not only the need on our island, but also the Beacon's reliability, accountability, and readiness to respond.

Our Board of Directors has guided the Beacon of Hope with remarkable dedication, from founding members who have been here since day one to new leaders who have joined us to strengthen and sustain our mission for years to come.

With this Impact Report, our goal is simple: **to show you that your donations are in good hands.**

You can trust that every dollar you give makes a direct and meaningful difference in the lives of the people who make Pine Island feel like home. The islanders who come to the Beacon seeking assistance are the very ones who work in our construction industries and those serve you in our restaurants, maintain your landscapes and homes, harvest the seafood and fruits you enjoy, and support our visitor economy in countless ways. Your generosity ensures they can remain on the island for years to come.

Thank you for believing in the Beacon of Hope. Thank you for trusting us to be responsible stewards of your support. And thank you for helping us keep our Beacon shining brightly for every neighbor who needs a safe place to turn.

With gratitude,

Nancy Cote

Executive Director Beacon of Hope Pine Island

Center of Excellence

The Beacon's education programs are designed to **empower islanders to take an active role in improving their lives**. Pine Island is a community built on hard work. Our islands iconic white boots symbolize resilience, grit, and generations of labor on the water and in the fields. Yet that same pride can make it difficult for some neighbors to seek help when they need it most.

At the Beacon of Hope, we honor that spirit. And we meet it with compassion, respect, and opportunity.

Through our General Education (**GED**) and English Speakers of Other Languages (**ESOL**) programs, we provide education, skills training, and individualized support that help islanders build confidence, expand career paths, and pursue financial stability. Our goal is not just to meet immediate needs; it is to give people the tools to **thrive independently**, long after they no longer require our services.

Because empowering someone with education does not just change one life. **Education transforms families, strengthens the workforce, and lifts the entire island community.**



4 GED graduates in 2025.

All GED graduates report obtaining better employment thanks to the GED program.



Our ESOL students all work in our service industries.

2,912 hours of dedication from Volunteer tutors.

Beacon Bites a Senior Feeding Program

Our senior feeding program, **Beacon Bites**, helps Pine Island elders remain independent and in their homes for as long as possible. This program is more than a meal service—it is a lifeline of connection, dignity, and daily support for our island's most vulnerable neighbors.

The Beacon Bites program is made possible through the extraordinary generosity of our local restaurant partners, including **The Waterfront**, **Phuzzy's Boat Shack**, **Salty Girls Island Café**, **Burnt Store Tavern**, **Blue Dog** and **The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4353**. Each partner prepares meals with the same care and attention they would offer a family member, bringing comfort to seniors who rely on this service every day.

In addition to freshly prepared meals, the Beacon provides **quality snack packs, milk, and specialty dietary items** tailored to the changing nutritional needs of our aging population. As seniors' ability to shop, cook, or maintain specific diets evolves, we ensure they continue to receive the nourishment they need to stay healthy and safe at home.

This transformational program is sustained entirely by **community support** and the dedication of **volunteers** who deliver not only meals, but companionship, reassurance, and joy. For our seniors, the Beacon Bites volunteer may be the only friendly face they see that day, a simple act that brings immeasurable comfort.

Because of you, our seniors can remain independent, connected, and cared for today and every day.



4,840 meals delivered thanks to your support and our island partner restaurants.

1,284 volunteer hours driven.

600 gallons of milk delivered.

1,200 nutritional snacks delivered purchased at the islands Publix and Winn-Dixie.

70 is the average age of a Beacon Bites client.

8 Veterans and 3 hospice patients.



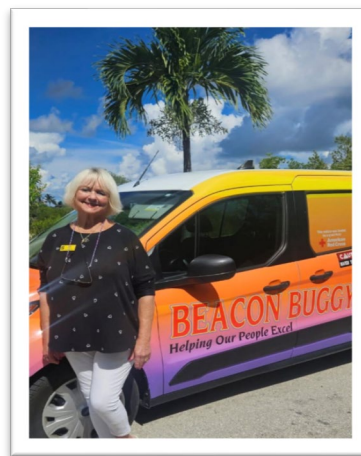
Beacon Buggy Transportation

Delivering Access, Safety & Peace of Mind

For many island seniors and families, the **Beacon Buggy** is more than a ride, it is the only way they can reach essential medical care off the island. With no public transportation capable of providing consistent, door-to-door service, the Buggy fills a critical gap that would otherwise leave our neighbors without lifesaving treatment and care. *This remains a FREE service thanks to your donations.*

Each week, residents depend on the Beacon Buggy to get to **vital health services**. Our drivers pick up islanders at their front door, ensure they arrive safely to their medical provider, and return them home with comfort and dignity. This personalized support is something standard public transit simply cannot offer. For those battling chronic illnesses, for new parents preparing to welcome a child, and for elders striving to remain independent, the Beacon Buggy is a vital link to health, stability, and hope.

Donations to the Beacon Buggy ensure that medical care is never out of reach for Pine Island residents. Every contribution keeps this essential service on the road, reducing barriers, improving health outcomes, and giving our neighbors the ability to care for themselves and their families.



1,484 rides provided to island seniors & families.

49,449 miles driven to medical appointments in Lee County.

3,297 gallons of fuel used.

Top ride destinations:

- **Veterans Affairs**
- **Lee Health**
- **Family Health Centers**
- **Dialysis Centers**
- **Surgery Centers**
- **Oncology providers.**



Social Services & Direct Assistance

The Beacon's Direct Assistance Program provides essential **one-time financial support** to island residents facing unexpected hardship. Many of our neighbors work in local service industries where work hours often decrease during **summertime**, following **post-hurricane recovery periods**, or when **water conditions** limit access to normal employment. When these circumstances, or sudden medical crises, create financial instability, our program steps in to help families stay secure.

Each client meets with our team for a thorough assessment of their income, the cause of their crisis, and their plan for moving forward. This process ensures that the assistance we provide is **empowering, not enabling**. We support clients only when a legitimate, verifiable crisis exists, giving donors confidence that every dollar goes to **islanders in true need**.

When the total cost of a client's needs exceeds our available resources, we collaborate with partner agencies across the community to create a coordinated support plan. Direct assistance funds are **never provided to clients directly**. Instead, payments are issued on their behalf to trusted vendors. Vendors include the Pine Island Water Company, LCEC, landlords, mortgage companies, and medical providers. This ensures that donations are used responsibly and for their intended purpose.

At the Beacon of Hope, we believe that direct assistance should offer a **bridge through crisis**, empowering families to regain stability and move forward with dignity.

A hand up. Never a handout.



28,785 points of contact made at our Social Services office.

2,386 islanders helped by our Case Managers with Medicaid and Food Stamp applications, notary services, & government program applications.

\$60,000 in direct assistance provided to island families and seniors in crisis.

Top Payment assistance needs:

- Rent/mortgage
- Electric and Water
- Medical care
- Car repairs
- Relocation due to domestic violence
- Relocation due to raising rent prices
- Hurricane related repairs



United Way Resiliency Hub & American Red Cross Community Adaptation Partner

As Pine Island's designated **United Way Resiliency Hub**, the Beacon of Hope carries the trust not only of our island community, but also of the United Way partners who stand behind us. This distinction reflects our commitment to being more than a provider of services. We are a steady, dependable **hub of support, connection, and recovery** for our neighbors. We know that in Southwest Florida, true resilience comes from working together.

That is why we revitalized our **Pine Island Cares** meetings, bringing nonprofits and off-island agencies directly to our island leaders. These monthly gatherings have become a central intake point where organizations can share resources, collaborate, and make sure help reaches those who need it most.

Our partnership with United Way continues to make a meaningful difference. Through their **Gifts in Kind** program, we have been able to help families rebuild, replace essentials, and regain stability in the amount of \$210,230.57 of home goods and reconstruction items. For longtime residents still navigating post-storm recovery, this network has been a lifeline.

The Beacon was also honored to have our **Center of Excellence revitalized by the American Red Cross**, who recognizes us as a Pine Island **Community Adaptation Partner**. As leaders throughout the long recovery since Hurricane Ian, their investment allows us to continue providing dependable support in the moments that matter most. The upgraded classroom now serves as a safe, reliable space for islanders in the aftermath of storms where neighbors can connect with loved ones, charge devices, access information, and gather for comfort and support.

With **Starlink internet** provided by our **Greater Pine Island Emergency Task Force**, a Generac generator, and a charging station provided by the American Red Cross, we are equipped to be the island's anchor in *both blue-sky days and grey-sky emergencies*.

We are deeply grateful to both United Way and the American Red Cross for recognizing us as a trusted leader for Pine Island. Their confidence in us reflects the same belief we hear every day from island residents: **When we stand together, our island stands strong.**

We could not do any of this without the incredible dedication of our **volunteers** and the generosity of our donors. In 2025, our volunteers contributed **16,196 hours** of service to the Beacon of Hope, an extraordinary gift of time, care, and commitment.

Your compassion and support make every success story possible.

Thank you for being a vital part of our impact in 2025.

