

## **BIG ARTS HOSTS FIVE FREE COMMUNITY EVENTS**

March, 2023 – Sanibel Island

BIG ARTS, and our entire community, has been challenged beyond measure. In the wake of Hurricane Ian, we all have had to gather the strength and courage to rise above a cataclysmic event that has forever changed our Island home.

When the water receded, the beautiful building, finished in 2020, was still standing, thanks to the generosity of the community that built it. BIG ARTS was created more than 40 years ago, by, and for, the community. We had a responsibility to carry that torch forward as never before.

We recommitted ourselves to be a warm and welcoming gathering place that celebrates the artist in all of us and reminds us of our shared humanity. Once the dozens of trucks and first responders left our parking lot, we got to work. We opened our doors and hearts and created five free gatherings, complete with entertainment, food, beverages, art demonstrations, gallery shows and activities for children and adults alike. It was a joy to watch the happiness of the more than 1,550 people who walked through BIG ARTS doors. As one person commented, “For a moment, the world seemed normal again.”

Now, we begin anew with hope, determination and, yes, happiness. We have created a bright new BIG ARTS season brimming with music, theater, dance, films, fine arts, learning experiences and, most of all, a place to share the sheer joy of being together again.