

Editor's note

This weekly listing of reader-submitted events is prepared in advance. However, since most public events across South Florida are rescheduled or canceled, we are suspending the weekly calendars temporarily to provide the public with the latest information. In the meantime, please look for our listings of local restaurants that are staying open and offering carryout or delivery service at sunsentinel.com/takeout. Stay safe and stay healthy. We are all in this together.

Bike to Build meets goal to help Habitat for Humanity

By Emmett Hall

Bike riders from First Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale and the community strapped on their gear for a cause that was near and dear to their hearts as the eighth annual Bike to Build event for Habitat for Humanity of Broward got underway before the days of social distancing.

The event, which drew about 30 participants plus a team of dedicated volunteers, was not a race but a fun bike ride that had a 25-mile course that started at the church along Las Olas Boulevard.

The riders proceeded north along State Road A1A to the Hillsboro Inlet and back to the starting point. For the more adventurous riders, there was a 50-mile course that traveled up to Linton Boulevard in Delray Beach and back to First Presbyterian Church.

The bike riders braved the wet and soggy conditions

with a support truck in tow to lend a hand if necessary. There were two rest stops along the route. Following the wet ride, there was a healthy brunch waiting for cyclists and volunteers who got to spin their tales of their road experiences.

Kathy Craven, a leader of the steering committee from First Presbyterian Church, was one of the team members who came up with the idea for the bike ride eight years ago. She is also a past board chairwoman for Habitat for Humanity of Broward. The event is the church's primary fundraiser for Habitat, along with other social fundraisers that take place throughout the year.

"It was a very successful event, and we reached our goal of raising \$80,000, which is what it takes to sponsor a house with Habitat for Humanity of Broward," Craven said. "The house is in the foundation stage, and the next phase begins on March 14. Since 1992 after Hurri-

cane Andrew, First Presbyterian Church has sponsored 20 homes for Habitat for Humanity of Broward. We consider ourselves partners with the new homeowners, volunteers and sponsors. When the house is turned over, it is an indescribable feeling."

Habitat for Humanity of Broward has been bringing people together to build homes for low-income families who have been unable to qualify for conventional financing. Habitat homeowners put in a minimum of 300 hours of sweat equity as part of their commitment to ownership. The loan to the homeowners is interest-free. When everything is complete, there is a house dedication ceremony for the family moving in.

Homes are being built in the Rick Case Habitat Community in Pompano Beach, and when the project is complete, there will be 77 homes built in that area.

Visit habitatbroward.org.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH/COURTESY

Cyclists joined First Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale and Habitat for Humanity of Broward for a 25- or 50-mile out and back ride as part of the fundraiser.

South Florida yogis bend over backwards to stay connected

By Amy Beth Bennett

Najat Watts is a stay-at-home mom to two young kids and needs her yoga.

"I don't know what I can do without yoga. It's like my medicine every day."

Watts, a 10-year practitioner, prefers Bikram yoga, which is typically practiced in studios because it requires extreme heat above 100 degrees and at least 40 percent humidity.

Since the novel coronavirus has closed brick-and-mortar yoga studios, she's been practicing with YouTube videos in her front yard, using the South Florida sun to simulate conditions during a class.

But Watts is excited to work again with her teacher, Pachi Shanaberger, who owns Prana Hot Yoga + Bodywork in Fort Lauderdale. Shanaberger has taken her business virtual, offering classes and private sessions over Zoom video conferencing.

"I don't typically teach virtually," says Shanaberger. "It has been a challenge to get all the tech stuff going to be able to provide these classes but I am hoping to help my students stay calm and feel good through this stressful time."

"This has been a creative way to keep serving our members who have decided to stay with us during this time and many of them have not canceled their membership as a way to support us."

David Shapiro has been practicing yoga for four years but considers himself relatively new to it. He was working in corporate finance and his bad back had him turning to yoga for relief.

Recently Shapiro took a class on Zoom with Peter Grauer, the co-owner of PS



AMY BETH BENNETT/SUN SENTINEL

Najat Watts takes a private yoga class with Pachi Shanaberger, the owner of Prana Hot Yoga + Bodywork, via Zoom video conference on her cell phone at her Fort Lauderdale home on March 20.

Yoga in Oakland Park.

"I could I wear AirPods during the whole class. Ironically, I don't need to watch my iPhone/TV in a virtual class as I focus, listen, and close my eyes during class," said Shapiro. "I was excited to practice with my dog at my side for the first time. She's a little stressed too, so I think it helped her as well."

Shapiro says he's grateful that Grauer was nimble enough to move to online classes so he doesn't have to give up seeing his fellow regulars. "Yoga in SoFla is such a wonderful, interesting, and diverse community," he said.

For his part, Grauer is hoping to keep those community ties in these times of isolation. "It is certainly a different energy, but with this platform students can see me and thumbnails of other students should they decide to leave their camera on. So that sense of community is still present. And we even had some snowbirds from Canada, Michigan and

New Mexico join the class."

Grauer is optimistic by nature, he says, but how the shutdowns will ultimately affect his business does give him pause. "As far as staying afloat, that largely depends on how long this lasts. We have worked too hard to build this community to just walk away without a fight."

In Aventura, Lili Ribeiro will also tune in via Zoom to practice with her favorite teacher. Ribeiro, 29, was a model for 10 years in Barcelona and says she was miserable. "I was living for later. Bikram [Yoga] was the trigger that made me face all of the things I had to do." She got out of a long relationship, quit modeling and began regular practice of yoga.

Ribeiro feels it's important for her mental health to consistently practice as it offers her dedicated time for self-reflection. "The class is in front of a mirror and you have to look at yourself for 90 minutes. Yoga [has] taught me a lot about patience."