

Kite event has theme of unity, friendship

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SURFSIDE BEACH — Hundreds of kites, some multicolored, others shaped like various animals, were spread out across the summer sky, part of an event focused on getting the community outdoors and together.

Organized by nonprofit organization Inspirational Crossroads, “Kites Take Flight” encourages communities and families to step away from their schedules and come together. With about hundreds of kites flying above the beach at Surfside, local and out-of-town kite flyers came out to show off their elaborate designs and enjoy food and friends.

The organization recognizes loneliness and depression have grown at a fast rate and the kite-themed event is meant to offer the community a day of friendship, event organizer Sharon Hudson said.

“We recognized that so we wanted to put together an organization where we could get people to get together as family and let people know that we care and you’re not alone,” she said. “There are a lot of people in the community that care. I just get inspired with the events and this event, I had been thinking about it last year.”

She wants people to get outdoors more and enjoy time away from electronic devices, Hudson said.

“Although we appreciate social media and it’s a good tool to have, we want people to get out and interact with each other,” she said. “We are kind of separated and disconnected from each other. We are trying to get people to reconnect. When we were kids, we used to play outside until we got dragged in.”

Out and about along the beach flying his own trilobite and frog-shaped kites was Surfside Flyers Club member Billy Mladenka.

Kite flying is a natural activity that gets the public outdoors and allows them to have a day of fun, Mladenka said.

“I’ve been flying down here a long time,” he said. “This is very special.”

It’s always good for Surfside Beach kite events to get as much attention as possible because it gets more of the community intrigued in kite flying, Mladenka said.

“There are a lot of kites,” she said. “They are checking out the kites and that’s what we love.”

He always jumps at the chance to get out to the beach and have some fun with his family, Seabrook kite flyer Wayne Carpenter said.

“It’s real important,” he said. “I got my parents down here. I got my daughter and grandson. It’s the whole family out here flying kites and spending time together.”

People are here for each other and events such as this foster that kind of positive environment, Hudson said.

“I believe that we were born to help each other,” she said. “We are here to encourage and help each other.”

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