

The Jupiter  
**Courier**

**Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center turtles to be 'adopted' by students**



LOUIS HILLARY PARK

staff photographer

Sandy Fournies, center with clipboard, takes down some last-minute information Saturday about Lucy, a 220-pound sea turtle that had been recuperating at the Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center in Juno Beach.



staff photographer

A few minutes later, after being taken to the beach on a gurney, Lucy headed back to the ocean as about 75 volunteers and well-wishers looked on.

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Lucy the turtle was freed on Saturday, but other endangered sea turtles are still in rehab at Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach.

These turtles, up to 20 of them, are slated for "adoption" by a fourth grade class, according to Raymond Graziotto, co-owner of Loggerhead Club & Marina, whose nine marinas helped collect toys for the Toys for Tots program and also collected donations during the 2005 Holiday Boat Parade of the Palm Beaches.

Donations given during the parade will be used to adopt up to 20 of the sea turtles.

"We'll extend the educational value of this gift by encouraging a fourth grade elementary school class to actually name each of the adopted turtles and track their progress," said Graziotto. The school has not yet been selected.

Prior to the boat parade, which wound its way from Peanut Island north to Jonathan's Landing, Loggerhead Club & Marina hosted a viewing event. Those attending were asked to bring an unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots and were encouraged to make a donation to the marinelife center in Juno Beach.

Loggerhead Marinelife Center, which now is building a new facility in Loggerhead Park, has received a major donor gift from the marina corporation, and Loggerhead Club & Marina is now leading a fundraising effort for the commission of a local artist to design a full-size bronze turtle statue to be located at the marinelife center and at each one of the corporation's marinas.

On Saturday, some 75 people showed up at the center Saturday to witness the release of Lucy, a 220-pound sea turtle.

Lucy was rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard on Nov. 11, about a mile off the Broward County coastline. She was suffering from shell damage, most likely from being struck by a boat.

Led by rehabilitation specialist Sandy Fournies, a team of half a dozen volunteers carefully lifted Lucy out of her tank and onto a gurney. They rolled her down to the beach, carried her onto the sand. As onlookers applauded and snapped photos, the volunteers watched as Lucy struggled briefly in the sand, then scrambled back into the ocean.

*Louis Park contributed to this report.*