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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Megan Contreras, 239-338-3500

## Island Hopper Songwriter Fest shatters attendance record

*10-day event sees 23 percent increase over last year*

**LEE COUNTY, FL** – People love live music and this year’s Island Hopper audiences prove it.

Attendance at the fifth annual Island Hopper Songwriter Fest increased by 23 percent over last year. The 10-day event was held Sept. 21-30 on Captiva, historic downtown Fort Myers and Fort Myers Beach.

Island Hopper showcased 79 singer-songwriters in 155 performances, entertaining more than 18,000 guests with the stories behind the songs.

The attendance numbers by location:

- Captiva 6,130
- Downtown Fort Myers 2,424
- Fort Myers Beach 9,550
- **Total: 18,105** (2017 Total: 14,732)

“Island Hopper continues to energize our community when we need it the most,” said Lee County Commission Chairman and Tourist Development Council Chairman Cecil Pendergrass. “We would like to thank all of our industry partners for their help with venues, lodging, food & beverage, logistics and for being terrific hosts.”

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The VCB once again partnered with Southwest Florida Community Foundation and United Way to encourage people to help those in need via the SWFL Cares Fund. Thanks to the foundation, tolls on the Sanibel Causeway were waived from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 22-23 to encourage locals to support Captiva and Sanibel businesses and attend Island Hopper.

Island Hopper is an award-winning festival. The 2017 Island Hopper Fest received three SunSational Awards from the Florida Festival & Events Association and the Southeast Tourism Society named Island Hopper one of its “Top 20 Events.”

**Save the dates:** The sixth annual Island Hopper Songwriter Fest will be held Sept. 20-29, 2019.

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*Island Hopper is produced by the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau, iHeartMedia, Cat Country 107.1 and BMI, the largest music rights organization in the U.S. For more information visit [islandhopperfest.com](http://islandhopperfest.com) or [click here](#) to access the media tool kit. Follow the festival feeds on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).*