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Blind Fest 2026 Brings Adaptive Recreation and a Celebration of Inclusion to South Padre Island

Annual event welcomes blind and visually impaired visitors from across the country for three days of recreation, entertainment and community, October 16-18

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas, September 1, 2026 - For the third straight year, South Padre Island is set to host blind and visually impaired guests, along with their families and friends from all over the country, for [Blind Fest SPI 2026](#), October 16-18 at the Holiday Inn South Padre Island Resort. This three-day event features accessible recreation, sports, educational and artistic activities, entertainment and many chances to enjoy everything the Island has to offer.

Blind Fest SPI is held each year by Visionaries The Blind in Action, a nonprofit group focused on connecting the blind community with resources, opportunities, and experiences that encourage independence, inclusion, and active living. For the third year, Holiday Inn South Padre Island Resort is hosting the conference and serves as a co-host.

"Blind Fest is much more than a conference. It gives people who are blind or visually impaired a chance to discover new possibilities, build confidence, form lasting friendships, and celebrate the many talents within their community," said **Macarena Pena, blind artist and founder of Visionaries The Blind in Action**. "We want participants to have an unforgettable weekend, while also showing the wider community that vision loss does not limit a person's ability to create, compete, explore, or live an active and fulfilling life."

Blind Fest will include a wide variety of accessible activities throughout the weekend, including fishing, adaptive beach experiences, boogie boarding, yoga, water aerobics, horseback riding, boat rides, and a runners clinic. Arts, entertainment and social events will feature an exhibition of works by blind artists, a talent showcase, a domino tournament, Casino Night, and Lotería, as well as resource and technology exhibits.

The weekend's main event will be the traditional White Cane Walk through South Padre Island, held Saturday, October 17th at 1:30 PM in the Entertainment District. The White Cane Walk celebrates the independence of people who are blind or visually impaired and helps raise public awareness about blindness. Sighted participants will have the chance to wear blindfolds and use white canes to better understand how people with vision loss move through their environment.

Adaptive fishing will once again play a key role in the weekend, coordinated by the South Texas Blind Anglers Chapter of Fishing's Future. Fishing activities will take place on Friday and Saturday, October 17th and 18th from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the pier by the Holiday Inn

Resort. There will also be surf fishing from the beach during the rest of the weekend. Fishing's Future will provide all equipment for participating fishers.

"The goal is to make sure every participant has a safe, engaging, and memorable experience," said **Daniel Martinez, certified guide with Fishing's Future's South Texas Blind Anglers.**

"Fishing is a very sensory experience. You don't have to see the water to feel the excitement of a fish hitting the line, sense its movement, or just enjoy being outdoors with friends and family. We want people to try fishing and other activities they may never have thought were possible, and to leave South Padre Island excited about what they can do next."

Visit South Padre Island is supporting Blind Fest as part of its ongoing effort to welcome visitors of all abilities and to highlight accessible experiences available across the destination. For example, accessible features for visitors with mobility challenges include Mobi-Mats at many beach access points and Mobi-Chairs that allow greater beach access.

"South Padre Island should be a place where everyone feels welcome and has the chance to experience what makes our Island special," said **Kelly deSchaun, CEO of Visit South Padre Island.** "Blind Fest shows what is possible when organizations, businesses, and volunteers come together to remove barriers and create opportunities. We are proud to support this event and welcome participants, their families, and volunteers to enjoy three memorable days on the Island."

"People with disabilities too often have to ask whether a destination or activity is accessible before they can ask whether it will be fun," said **Shane Wilson, founder of Fishing's Future.** "Blind Fest is about showing people what is possible and opening doors to experiences they may not have considered before. South Padre Island has made important progress in accessibility, and this weekend is a chance for some special people to enjoy everything the island has to offer."

Volunteer and sponsorship opportunities are still available for Blind Fest SPI 2026. Volunteers are needed to help participants with fishing and other activities, while sponsorships will help cover the cost of equipment, tackle, and other event expenses.

For volunteer registration, sponsorship details or more information about Blind Fest SPI 2026, visit <https://theblindinaction.org/blindfest/> or email visionaries@theblindinaction.org. The event is free for participants, and special hotel room rates have been negotiated for the weekend.

More information about Visionaries-The Blind in Action:
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/theblindinaction/>

More information about Fishing's Future:
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fishingsfuture/>
Webpage: <https://fishingsfuture.org/>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fishingsfuture/>

About South Padre Island

With miles of pristine shoreline and clear emerald water, South Padre Island is Texas' only tropical island paradise. Calm weather and more than 300 days of sunshine make South Padre Island a year-round destination offering a variety of nature tourism attractions, water sports, and activities for the entire family. For more information, visit www.visitsouthpadreisland.com.

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