

# Junior League



The Junior League of Miami, Inc. Membership Newsletter

# Journal

Vol. XVII No. 2 | Winter 2008-09

## President's Message

**"No one ever got poor by giving."**

—Anne Frank

A couple of weeks ago, we all sat down to a traditional meal surrounded by loved ones. At our table, we counted our blessings and gave thanks for food, family, and friends.

Just a few months into the League year, we are thankful to have accomplished so much toward meeting the ever-growing needs of this community.

We provided books, but more importantly, a love of reading to the families in our All Aboard literacy program. We provided gifts for the holiday season to almost 400 women and children, for most of them the only presents they received. *Thank you* to the volunteers in our community projects and all of those who donated gifts.

We finished securing the future of our beloved headquarters through the generous contributions of our members and friends of the League. *Thank you* to the JLM Headquarters Board and all our donors.

We have already raised more than \$100,000 dollars this year, funds which will go directly to supporting our mission. *Thank you* to our fundraiser chairs and all our supporters. We are training our current members in unprecedented ways and nurturing close to 100 new women who have

Continued on page 4



## Families Read by Example

By Marcia Koo, Chair, All Aboard Committee

National Family Literacy Day is officially November 1st, but many events are held throughout the month of November. The All Aboard Family Literacy committee hosted a Read-In on November 5.

Local community guests were asked to bring their favorite book to help support and celebrate family literacy. For 15 minutes we read to families residing in the Riverside Elementary School boundaries. There were over 45 families in attendance. Special guests from the community were: FPL, Miami Dade Fire Department, NBC 6 News anchor Roxanne Vargas, The Bookstore in the Grove, University of Miami, UPS, and JLM President Michelle Ramirez-Patricios.

At the end of the evening all children were given books that were donated by the Junior League members.

The next All Aboard Story Hour is January 7, 2009. The theme for the evening is Celebrating Chinese New Year – The Year of the Ox. We are reading "The Great Race: The Story of the Chinese Zodiac" by Dawn



Casey. Followed by arts and crafts with Chinese Horoscope characters.

Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Riverside Elementary and Community School 1190 SW 2nd Street, Miami, FL 33130. For more information, contact: Marcia Koo [mkoo@ups.com](mailto:mkoo@ups.com)



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**Mission** The Junior League of Miami, Inc., is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

**Vision** Our vision is to empower Miami's women, children, and families to conquer tomorrow's challenges and to build a united community.

**Reaching Out** We reach out to women of all races, religions and national origins who demonstrate an interest in and commitment to voluntarism.

**Focus Areas** We concentrate on families at risk with projects and activities involving homelessness, family violence, children's and women's health, early childhood development and foster care.

**Wish For Our Members** We hope every member derives fulfillment as we focus the energy and volunteer resources of our diverse membership to attain our vision.

**WANTED:** Tropical Topics and Junior League Journals prior to 1995. If you have copies from days gone by, we are looking for issues to borrow for archival purposes. These will be returned to you. Please contact Sondra Space for information on how to help.

*To Contact Us*

**The Junior League of Miami Headquarters** is located at 713 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL 33134. Sondra Space, Office Manager.

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# How Do I Become a Leader in JLM?

One of the unique aspects of JLM is that its leadership changes every year. From the Board of Directors to Committee Chairs and members, most of us will embark on a new adventure next summer.

The process is as follows: The Nominating Committee selects the various slated (elected) positions. All members were encouraged to nominate themselves or others interested in taking on these leadership roles. The Committee reviews these nominations, deliberates, and will present this slate at the January General Membership Meeting. The membership will vote at the February General Membership Meeting. Please remember only an evening meeting will be held in February to facilitate the voting process.

Also at the January GMM, Erin Knight, our President Elect, will distribute the "Willingness to Serve Forms," by which members express their interest in serving as a Committee Chair or in an appointed Board level position. This form will also be available online.

## Interested in a future leadership role?

Submit your Willingness to Serve Form and plan on attending the Leadership Initiative Training on January 17th at Headquarters. The training will be facilitated by AJLI Presenter-extraordinaire Vicky Clark and will include sessions for the present and incoming boards, leadership development, and diversity.

## President's Message continued from page 1

answered the call to serve with us. *Thank you* to our leadership team and to our Provisional chairs and mentors.

We have faced adversity early in the year, but rose to the challenge in typical, graceful JLM fashion. *Thank you* to the Board of Directors. You are a remarkable group of women with an amazing capacity to think strategically and collaborate. For all you give, I am incredibly grateful.

The women whose work is outlined in this *JOURNAL* have already realized that it is better to give than to receive, but there is still much more for all of us to do. During a recession, companies are not just cutting jobs, but also corporate giving. It might seem a natural and prudent course of action during these times to hold back, hunker down, and hide your savings under the mattress. I propose we take the opposite path. The numbers of those who need of our kindness and generosity has increased. Therefore, those individuals who are able to contribute to philanthropic organizations, whether monetarily or with their time, have the ability to make their impact exponential. As we enjoy this holiday season and enter a new year full of hope, remember Anne Frank. No one ever got poor by giving. In fact, we all get richer. ☪

*Thank you for the privilege to serve,  
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Michelle Ramirez-Patricios*



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# WOMEN WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Sunday, February 8, 2009 • Mandarin Oriental Miami

## Honorees Announced

By Ali Nason-Aymerich and Teresa Thornburg, Co-Chairs WWMD

The 8th Annual Women Who Make a Difference Awards will be held on Sunday, February 8th, 2009 at the luxurious Mandarin Oriental Miami located on the prestigious Brickell Key. Festivities begin at 1:00 p.m. with a lavish VIP reception in the Hong Kong Private Room, to include butler passed, Asian-inspired hors d'oeuvres, lychee martinis, champagne, and VIP-style bags. Doors open at 1:30 p.m. to all guests and a fabulous silent auction will be going on in the Ballroom Foyer during both receptions. The award ceremony commences in the Main Ballroom at 2:30 P.M. followed by a decadent Asian Tea and eye-catching entertainment!

We are honored and thrilled to announce this year's incredible Women Who Make a Difference Award Honorees:

**Tina Carroll-Scott, MD, FAAP** - Pediatrician and Director of South Miami Children's Clinic, which provides free medical service to children.

**Caryn Lubetsky, Esq.** - Founder and Executive Director of HELP, Inc. [HIV, Education and Law Project, Inc.]

**Trudy Novicki, Esq.** - Executive Director of Kristi House, which provides healing for children and families victimized by sexual abuse.

**Ruth Wiesen** - Founder of the ballet program for low-income children in Miami, the Thomas Armour Youth Ballet.

Please help us celebrate these accomplished women and honor their monumental achievements. Tickets (\$125/VIP, \$85 regular admittance) and Tables (10 guests/\$1,250 VIP, \$850 regular) are available for purchase at [www.jlmiami.org](http://www.jlmiami.org). Limited VIP tickets are available and we

do intend for these to sell-out. Do not forget to honor the women who make a difference in your life while supporting the Junior League as well! Program tributes are available for \$25/per tribute. There will also be a raffle – one for \$25 or three for \$60.

Our community projects need you! Please consider investing in our community and its future by being a Women Who Make a Difference 2009 Corporate or Individual Dynasty Sponsor (\$10,000+), Empress Sponsor (\$5,000 to \$9,999), Golden Dragon Sponsor (\$2,500 to \$4,999) or a Jade Sponsor (\$1,000 to \$2,499). Recognition and program ads vary per level of monetary or in-kind donation. Please contact Ali Nason-Aymerich ([ali@nason-nason.com](mailto:ali@nason-nason.com)) or Teresa Thornburg ([teresa@southbeachties.com](mailto:teresa@southbeachties.com)) for more information. ☎

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## Grant Workshop A Huge Success

By Kathleen Kauffman, Program Development Chair

The Program Development Committee was delighted to see that over 75 organizations were represented at the Grant and Community Project Informational Workshop that was held at League Headquarters on the morning of November 5th.

Perhaps with this economy we should not have been so surprised, as so many organizations have seen their usual funding sources depleted. However, it was a goal of the Program Development Committee to spread the word about the workshop throughout the community in an effort to bring new organizations into the mix.

Attendees to the informational session were treated to a continental breakfast and a thorough review of the criteria and guidelines for the community project and grant applications. The most fascinating portion of the morning was when we had the different organizations introduce themselves and gave a brief synopsis of their missions. It was heartwarming to realize that people from over the county are giving of their time to volunteer for the causes they believe in.

A special thank you goes out to the league members who took up our challenge to find us new projects and organizations so that we were able to invite them to our workshop.

Grant applications and community project applications were due in the League Office December 5th. The Program Development Committee now begins its tough job of making a selection from so many worthy applicant organizations. ☪

## Future Ensured for JLM Headquarters



Thanks to the support of generous donors and to the Junior League of Miami, Inc., the Phase IV Renovation of our Coral Gables historical building is now complete. During our fund raising campaign we raised \$126,250 and these funds allowed us to ensure the integrity of our Headquarters for many years to come.

The majority of the building's windows have been reinforced and replaced by impact-resistant glass, and the exterior of the building has been repaired and resealed. New carpeting will be arriving shortly. Thank you to all those who helped us by contributing to this worthy historic preservation effort.

On the facing page is a list of donors from the most recent campaign. Their donations will be added cumulatively to previous gifts which they may have made in earlier years. The donor wall at Headquarters will be updated with all major supporters since the building's acquisition. Donations can still be made securely online at [www.jlmiami.org](http://www.jlmiami.org); click on Headquarters.





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# Community Advisory Board Update

By Catherine Grieve, CAB Liaison

The Junior League of Miami is proud to introduce Marjorie (Margie) Raines who has joined our Community Advisory Board.

After an exciting career of international and private equity investing at Chubb Corporation, Ms. Raines will be retiring in December and relocating to her home state of Florida. She will make Miami her home and fill her days with private equity consulting, travel, and her passion for charity work.

As well as her business acumen, Ms. Raines brings to the League her extensive non-profit experience. She has previously served on the advisory board of the Community Agencies Corporation of New Jersey; as a trustee and president for the Chubb Foundation; and as trustee and treasurer for Homeless Solutions, Inc.

The League's focus areas of family violence and early childhood development attracted Ms. Raines to the League and she looks forward to getting to know our members and collaborating on our projects. Welcome Marjorie Raines! ☺



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volunteer opportunities



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# Giving = Healthier Living

By Yolanda Arcay, Journal Committee

*The journal, SCIENCE, posted an article stating that the importance of giving is not in how much you give, but rather in the act of giving itself. Is it truly better to give than to receive? Are we happier if we reach out to help? It seems so.*

A few studies have been conducted in which people were asked to rate their level of happiness. One study reported that out of 632 Americans asked, those who had a higher level of giving to charity or buying gifts for others also had a higher level of happiness. In another, 46 Canadian students were given envelopes with money in it. Some were told to spend the money on themselves, the others were told to spend the money on someone else. Those told to spend the money on someone else reported a higher level of happiness than those told to spend the money on themselves. The amount of money spent in either case was of little impact.<sup>1</sup>

There are mental and physical benefits to helping others. Compassionate behaviors and emotions are associated with overall well-being, happiness, and health. The emotional benefits are a result of taking the focus of self and placing it on the needs of others. These benefits as

reported by Musick & Wilson (2003) are associated with a reduction in depressive symptoms, reduction of hostility, stress relief, and improved emotional well-being. There is also the "helper's high."

Helper's high is the result of the release of endorphins, the happy hormone. This can give the volunteer a feeling of elation followed by a feeling of calm. These feelings are present after the act of giving and even recalling the act. Physically, there is a possibility of strengthening of the immune system, decrease in intensity of pain, and the many benefits of reduced stress and overall emotional well-being.

A 30-year study of 427 married women (Moen, Dempster-McCain & Williams, 1993) concluded that 52 percent of those who did not volunteer had experienced a major illness as opposed to 36 percent of those who had.

There are a great number of people who find they want to volunteer, but not

knowing how to get started. There are also those who don't think they have anything to give or don't have enough time to volunteer.

Helping others is about your heart and willingness to do what is needed in a loving and compassionate manner. It's OK to start small. Think about where you are, what tugs at your heart and look into how to make a difference. If you wait until you have enough time, money or experience, the opportunities to help will pass. If you do not make yourself available, the opportunity will not come. Find something, commit to it, and work at it with as much energy as you have to give in that moment in time.

One act of kindness can change a person, a family, a community. In committing to help others you will inevitably enrich your own life. ☺

<sup>1</sup> It's Unanimous: Giving Leads to Happiness, Nation, MIAMI HERALD, March 21, 2008

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\*We apologize for any errors or omissions



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# Auction for Action Rings in the Holiday Season

By Betty Lopez-Castro and Kim Sarkisian, Co-Chairs, Auction for Action

The Junior League of Miami inaugurated a new kind of fundraiser this year, the Auction for Action. With the cancellation of The Second Annual Fine Wine Competition Gala Dinner, the Junior League of Miami's Board of Directors, in its incredible wisdom, made the brilliant decision to replace the Active and Sustainer Holiday parties this year with a cocktail party. Members, families and friends kicked off the season while raising money to support our mission to fund our 10 community projects, which benefit more than 500 women and children in our community.

We are proud to announce that Auction for Action was a spectacular sold-out event held on Friday, November 21st at Regions Bank, 15th Floor Rooftop Terrace located in Coral Gables. As guests arrived, they were greeted with a signature cocktail while waiting to go up to the rooftop terrace and enjoy the breathtaking views of Coral Gables. Floral centerpieces, graciously donated by Trias Flowers, beautifully adorned the cocktail tables on the terrace providing an intimate atmosphere for attendees to eat, drink and be merry. Adding to the festivities were musicians affiliated with one of the Junior League's Community Projects. The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind Band graciously provided entertainment. Listening to these young and amazingly talented people perform reinforced why raising dollars that evening was so significant.

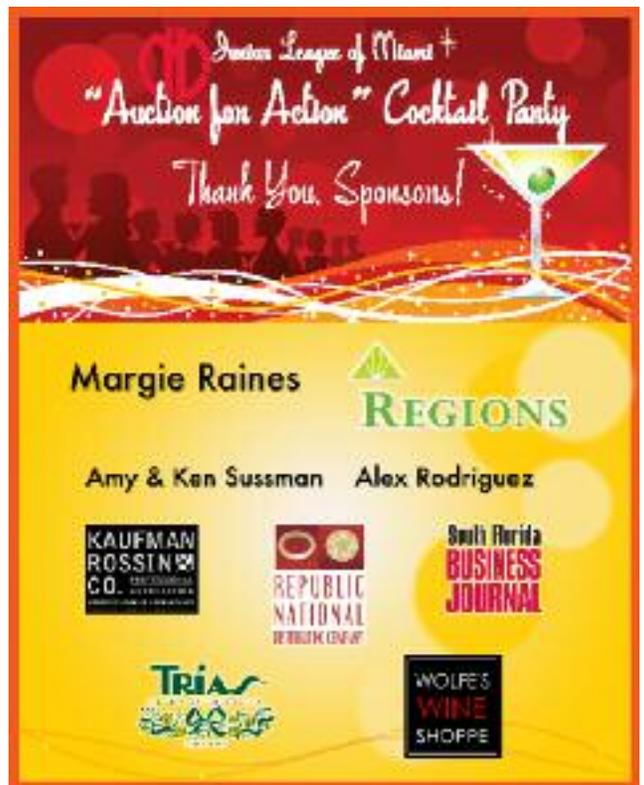
The evening's focus, however, was the impressive silent auction. The wine event committee's hard work really shined through with over 100 silent auction items to entice generous bidders. Items included an Azamara cruise from Royal

Caribbean, a NAPA Valley getaway (airfare from Air-Tran Airways, Hotel accommodations by Petite Auberge in San Francisco and the Von Strasser Cottage in NAPA Valley) and an array of jewelry, restaurants and sports memorabilia. As a special edition, Auction for Action highlighted our Community Project Wish List. For the first time at a Junior League fundraiser, guests were afforded the opportunity to donate to a specific community project of their choice.

In the "Wine Room" guests were invited to bid on more than 150 bottles of wine that were entered into the Second Annual American Fine Wine Competition. Each bottle was signed by the winemakers and donated to our Silent Auction. Thanks to our committee members who carefully packaged a selection of wines and cleverly named them — "Instant Wine Cellars" and "Sonoma meets Burgundy" — this room for the Silent Auction proved to be a huge hit with attendees assisting to raise significant \$\$.

It was an excellent way for guests to begin their own personal wine cellars or add to existing ones.

As a final touch to the evening, each guest parted with a gift bag to show our appreciation for supporting this worthy event. Thanks to Hershey Chocolates, Estabella Medspa, LaSalle Dry Cleaners,



The Sports Club/LA and Tourneau for contributing goodies to combine with a Schott Zweisel wine glass.

Auction for Action was a marvelous way to ring in the holiday season, spend time with friends, and most importantly, raise \$50,000 for our community projects! The success of this event goes to the fantastic Auction for Action committee and the Board of Directors for their innovative idea to create the event for all to enjoy.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all our sponsors who ensured this event such a smashing success: Margie Raines, Regions Bank, South Florida Business Journal, Alex Rodriguez, Ken and Amy Sussman, Kaufman Rossin & Co., Relish Miami LLC, Trias Flowers, Wolfe's Wine Shoppe, Republic National Distributing Company, DFASS, and Nestle water. ☺



## Fundraiser Roundup

# JLM Golf Tournament Committee Swings and Succeeds at Raising Funds for League Projects

By Wilca Gallagher, Junior League Journal Committee and Loretta Nido, Golf Tournament Co-chair

Once again, League members, sponsors and friends showed up to play on one of South Florida's best golf courses at the 5th Annual Golf Tournament presented by the Junior League of Miami. The event was held at the Crandon Golf Course on Key Biscayne on October 2.

Despite the threat of rain, the golfers and our Junior League volunteers were blessed with sun and the right amount of cool trade winds off Biscayne Bay to enjoy a 12:30 p.m. tee off preceded by a hearty lunch of wraps donated by Fresh Market in Aventura, Cuban steak sandwiches donated by Tamiami Chrysler Jeep Dodge and snacks and drinks donated by Wal-Mart, and Lakewood Organic Juices and Republic National Distributing Company. Throughout the afternoon, the players enjoyed Mojitos served by Rums of Puerto Rico. Following play, players and guests were treated to an awards ceremony and cocktail reception also hosted by Rums of Puerto Rico at the on-site Links Restaurant.

Although no player managed to hit a hole-



in-one to win the Williamson Cadillac, players and guests had a chance to win generous raffle prizes including, among many others, a 6 day/5 night all inclusive stay at Divi Resort in Aruba, a 3 day/2 night cruise departing from any port on Carnival Cruise Lines, a 3 day/2 night golf and hotel package from PGA National Resort & Spa and a 3 day/2 night golf and hotel package from the Doral Resort & Spa. All golfers received a complimentary gift bag filled with tees, golf towels, golf balls, socks and myriad

other golf and sports related treats.

Golf Co-chairs Loretta Nido and Lauren Hunt and their committee of 17 members raised close to \$27,000 in net proceeds which will be used to benefit the projects and grants selected by the membership for the 2009-2010 League year. Many thanks to all of the League members and sponsors in supporting our mission. ♡



Golf Co-Chairs Lauren Hunt and Loretta Nido



Maria Maloof and Kim Sarkisian



## Done In A Day One Day at a Time

October 18 — Race for the Cure



# 'Tis better to give, with a Discount!

By Nicole Jacomo, Assistant Editor, Junior League Journal Committee

This year the Junior League of Miami presented the first annual Shopping Card for a Cause event which was such a hit that it is expected to become a local tradition. Christy Quinones-Spurling and Christie Wolfe have spent the better of part of the last two years researching and developing the event. They took the lead from the Junior League of Dallas, where the Shopping Card for a Cause is quite a success. This year, shoppers purchased cards for \$50, 100% of which went directly to the League. The card entitled shoppers to a 20% discount at retail stores, restaurants and salons in Greater Miami, many of which do not typically offer such promotions.

The event started out on October 23 at the Tory Burch boutique in Bal Harbour

Shops. Belkys Nerey of WSVN served as honorary chair, kicking off the event as shoppers enjoyed cocktails and hors d'oeuvres and also engaged in a little retail therapy by taking advantage of discounts at Tory Burch, Brooks Brothers, Lacoste and Books & Books.

The list of participants included more than 100 other great names like Lilly Pulitzer, Tommy Bahama, Chiropilates and the Container Store. This year, the event raised \$22,000 which will help the League to meet many of its charitable goals. Once other retailers got wind of the event's popularity, they contacted event chairs to confirm their participation for next year. Based on this year's incredible success we are all looking forward to future Shopping Card events. JLM thanks



presents



Junior League of Miami

Christy and Christie for all of their hard work, as well as all generous sponsors, including Bill Seidler's Auto Group.



Michelle Ramirez-Patricios, Belkys Nerey of WSVN, Natacha Lamour of Tory Burch, Event Co-Chair Christie Wolfe



Jennifer Seidle, Presenting Sponsor Bill Seidler, Fundraiser Chair-Elect Amber Seidle Lazo, and VP of Development Maria Maloof

November 1 — Alzheimer's Race



November 8 — "Hope Totes" for Miami Rescue Mission



November 15 — Thanksgiving Baskets for Inn Transition North



# JLM Salutes Its Military Service Personnel

November 11 was more than just the date of our recent Area Meetings, it was also Veteran's Day. Not long after, the Army installed its first female 4-star General, breaking through what has been called the "brass ceiling." *The Journal* salutes all of our members who have served our country throughout the years. Two of them shared their stories with us below.

**Luisa Santiago**, a Provisional Member, served 13-and-a-half years on Active Duty with the U.S. Army (Judge Advocate General), including deployment to the Afghanistan conflict zone in 2004. Leaving Active service as a Major, she continues to serve in the Army Reserve at U.S. Special Operations Command in Tampa — a "weekend warrior now."

Luisa says, "I am very proud of my service and miss the military dearly. I just got off active duty in March of this year and joined Dept. of Homeland Security in Miami. I served in a number of great locations throughout the world: Germany, Hawaii, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Bosnia, Washington, D.C., and a myriad

of other locations throughout the continental US. I would do it all over again..."

**Maria (Rettig) Maloof** joined the Marine Corps in 1990 seeking challenge and an adventure. Those of us that know her may find it hard to believe that Maria's original orders were to train as a field wireman "(in civilian terms that means climbing 30-foot high telephone poles with gaffs)". Desert Storm began, and orders changed so that Maria instead was part of a skeleton crew of 4,000 remaining at Camp Lejeune (typically housing 40,000), assigned as a roving guard for her designated section of the base and armory. "This consisted of patrolling 24 hours on and 24 hours off with my M-16." She later served as an administrative assistant to the base commanding General, then after Desert Storm was declared over, worked as a fiscal clerk/chief for Headquarters Battalion, 2nd & 3rd Force Service Support Group, then served in Okinawa, Japan during her last year of Active Duty. "Field training consisting of 15 mile force marches, weapons training, war games, and intensive exercise, etc. was [also] a major part of my four-year

experience."

Only six months after swearing she never wanted to see a pair of combat boots again, Maria realized "how much I missed the structure of Marine Corps and the camaraderie of my fellow Marines," and switched to active reserves, stationed at a Marine squadron at the Naval Air Station Atlanta and later with the Headquarters and Service Company, 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion, 4th Marine Division in Tampa.

Maria says, "The U.S. Marine Corps is the smallest military branch with just under 200,000 soldiers. Female Marines only comprise approximately 10% of that figure. The pride I feel knowing that I was a part of this noble brotherhood is something that I cannot place into words. I am ultimately grateful for the skills the Marines instilled in me. They gave a once timid girl a back bone, pushed her past her fears, showed her the importance of being a team player, and taught her how to lead. My experience at times was grueling, but I am proud to have stayed the course. The expression rings true, "Once a Marine always a Marine! *Semper Parit*"



**Tania M. Paredes**  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker  
Diplomate in Clinical Social Work  
JLM Member

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## Parliamentary Points

By **Lori Tashman-Corrada**,  
Bylaws Parliamentarian



What is a parliamentarian anyway? Have you noticed that there is a bylaws/parliamentarian on the Board of Directors but you're not sure what that is?

The parliamentarian advises the presiding officer and committee members on matters of parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary law is the procedural safeguard that protects the individual and group in their exercise of their rights of free speech, free assembly, and the freedom to unite as a group for the achievement of common aims.

These rights can become meaningless if parliamentary procedure is not observed. This person is also the guardian of our governing documents, the bylaws and standing rules, making sure they reflect current practices and that they are adhered to by the Board of Directors and the membership.

The Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter once stated that "the history of liberty has largely been the history of observance of procedural safeguards."

So if one of these nights you are looking for some "light" reading, pick up a copy of JLM's Bylaws and Standing Rules and sleep tight knowing that someone on your board is keeping them safe.

# Therapy Dogs Going Strong

By Tania Peredes, Co-chair, Therapy Dogs

The Junior League of Miami's Therapy Dog's Committee started this year with a bang. With visits already underway at Heartland Health Care Center and the launch of the program "Paws 2 Read" at the brand new Miami-Dade Public Library Pinecrest Branch. On November 1, the library opened its doors to the community including children's activities such as face painters, a balloon sculptor, story time and all 16 therapy dogs.

"Paws 2 Read" was designed to improve the literacy skills of children with the assistance of registered canine read-

ing companions in a fun and relaxed environment, without judgment. The Committee's efforts at the library were also featured on UMTV's *Newsvision*.

Our special pups are putting their hard work to use throughout our community in other areas. On November 26 they visited Little Lighthouse at Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and on December 1 they took part in a special event promoting the importance of reading at Cool de Sac in South Miami, where book donations were being collected for JLM's Holiday Book Drive. ☹



Therapy Dogs Co-Chair Nicole Brown



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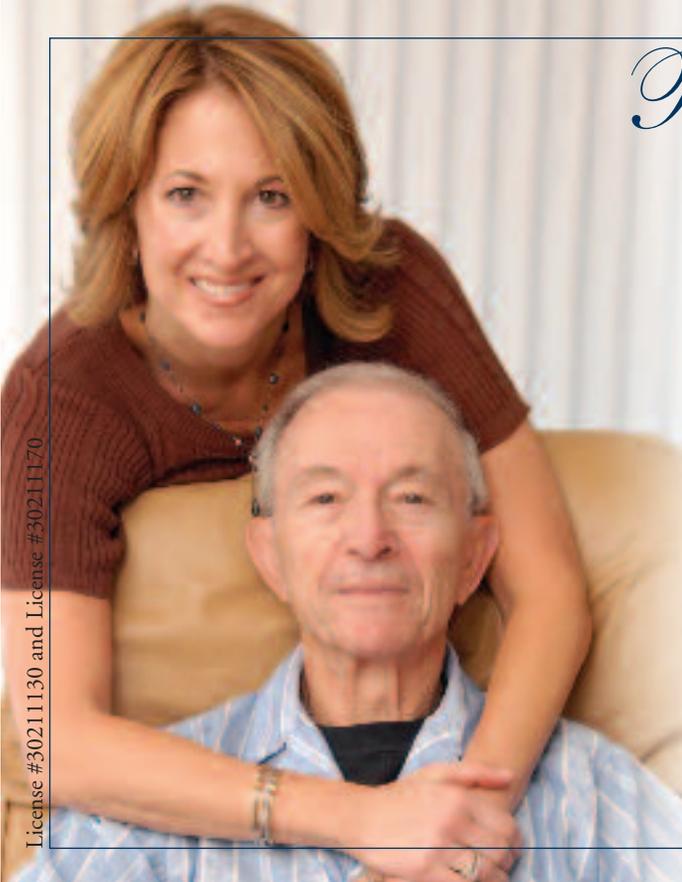
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*Mary Jane Hague, owner of Caring Home Care  
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# Food Stamp Challenge

## Can You to Stick to a Food Budget?

By Kathleen Duran, Co-Chair, Step Up to the Plate Committee

In the spring of 1999, prior to moving to Miami, I served as a juror on a murder trial. The defendant was charged with killing her five-year-old daughter, Charnae, by starving her and forcing her to live in the basement of their Philadelphia home. My fellow jurors acknowledged with rueful irony the fact that I earned my living by feeding others. The harsh evidence of the trial was horrifying. Nearly 10 years later, and now a mother myself, the memory is even more so.

"Hunger is exclusion." I heartily agree with these words of Brazilian geographer, physician, writer and activist Josué de Castro, world renown for his efforts to eliminate hunger. Charnae suffered the ultimate exclusion—she died of hunger. Many Americans who suffer with food insecurity are silently excluded every day. Food insecurity refers to an individual's limited access to a variety of nutritional foods. The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) reports "36.2 million people in food insecure households in 2007 includes 12.4 million children (16.9 percent of children in the U.S.)." FRAC, a national nonprofit, works to eliminate hunger and poor nutrition in the United States through improved public policies and public-private collaboration.

Three barriers to food security are mental, financial, and physical. The Association of Junior Leagues International's Kids in the Kitchen initiative, and the Junior League of Miami's Step Up to the Plate project seek to conquer the mental barrier by providing access to food and nutrition literacy. Educational programs like these are essential, but if the healthy foods suggested by these programs are difficult to find (physical barrier) or afford (financial barrier) our messages are likely to fall on deaf ears. If Junior Leagues are to effectively change the food system and the overlapping concerns of obesity and poor

nutrition, it behooves us to confront the other barriers.

To draw attention to the financial barrier the Step Up to the Plate committee invites you to participate in the Food Stamp Challenge for seven days, Sunday, January 18th through Saturday, January 24th. We challenge you to stick to the Thrifty Food Plan budget, which is one of four official USDA food plans set forth by the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. The current weekly budget for women age 19-50 is \$35.90 as published in Official USDA Food Plans: Cost of Food at Home at Four Levels, U.S. Average, September 2008. The Thrifty Food Plan is used as a tool in figuring maximum food stamp allotments as it strives to communicate a nutritious diet for the least amount of money. Dividing \$35.90 by 21 meals is about \$1.71 per meal. To create a meal that is healthy and appealing on this budget, is a formidable challenge for a trained cook, let alone an average food stamp recipient.

Processed food is more fattening and lacks both the water content and the fiber of fresh produce; it is also cheaper than fresh produce as many of the ingredients in processed food items are subsidized by government funding. "Therefore, if you are eating on a budget, the most rational economic strategy is to eat badly—and get fat."<sup>1</sup>

The 2008 Farm Bill represents great improvement over previous policy. Over



Girls from Girl Scout Troop 717 explored "Food is Place" at a Step Up to the Plate event November 1st.

## Step Up TO THE Plate



### A Junior League of Miami Project

10 years \$1.3 million dollars will be provided for specialty crops such as fruits, vegetables and nuts, and programs to support local healthy foods. Implementing the changes of the new bill will now move to the forefront and Congress needs to hear from people who eat! I urge everyone to visit the American Farmland Trust at [www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org). Cast your "Farm and Food in '09" vote and sign the petition letter.

Our real food stamp challenge is this: changing the rules of the American food game so that they are more inclusive – so that healthy options are the right of all ☺

<sup>1</sup> Polla, Michael, "You are what you grow," New York Times, April 22, 2007.

### SAVE THE DATE!



Features . . .

**The Edible Alphabet:  
A Tasting Starring  
Fruits & Vegetables**

**Friday, March 20, 2009**

# JLM's Family Day 2008 Highlights

Thank you to the many League members who contributed to the successful promotion of Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children:

**Mary Snow** – for ensuring that The City of Coral Gables issued a Proclamation.

**Deborah Korge** – for inviting the 75 families of our Inn Transition North and South programs to participate in this important national movement.

**Mara Menachem-Karlinsky** – for inviting the 15 families of our Step Up to the Plate program to participate in this important national movement.

**Maureen Haley** – for arranging three opportunities to broadcast our promotion to the audiences of NBC South Florida Today, CBS Jim & Jade Show, and Fox News Parent-to-Parent Reports.

**Bonita Whytehead, Jessica Lancaster, Lauren Dowlen, Veronica Ramirez, Cristina Sotolongo, Jennifer Herskowitz, Shaila Sil-**

**verio, Katie Lane-Arriola, Jessica Mason, Jackie Winter, Elvira Larrain, Courtney Stiefel, Johanne Nicoleau, Debbie Deitz, Amy Stone and Lucienne DeNunzio** – for submitting your pledges to eat dinner with your families three or more times weekly and for sharing your personal stories regarding the importance of these family dinners.

**Jennifer Herskowitz** – for welcoming Parent-to-Parent producer, Leisa Williams and her camera into your home during dinner. Jennifer says about that night:

*"Our children shared stories with us from their activities at school and my husband and I were able to talk about something other than work for a change. I look back on that night and remember how important having dinner together is, and now we make sure it happens at least a few times a week."*

The Step Up to the Plate committee asks everyone to consider a few thought-

provoking questions until the next celebration of Family Day, which will be held on Monday, September 28, 2009. Miriam Weinstein asks the following in her book *The Surprising Power of Family Meals – How Eating Together Makes Us Smarter, Stronger, Healthier, and Happier*:

- How is suppertime different for you now than it was 10 years ago? 20? 30?
- What factors in your community are discouraging family suppers? What can you do to begin to change them?
- What do you think your children are learning from your eating habits? What would you like them to learn?
- When your children are grown, what would you like them to remember about their childhood meals?

Please remember that meals aren't just about food! ☺

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## Actively Involved in Community Projects

By Marlene Fernandez & Melissa Hernandez, Provisional Co-Chairs

Aside from attending trainings and membership meetings, each provisional mentor group is required to create and participate in a community project involving our focus areas. This requirement provides the provisionals an opportunity to experience first hand what we as an organization can accomplish together. Additionally, since the provisionals are responsible for all planning and execution of the project, it also helps them learn teamwork, organizational skills and cooperation that will serve them throughout their tenure with the Junior League.

The 98 provisionals this year are truly an incredible group of women. Here is a glimpse into what they, along with their mentors, have planned for their group projects.

**Anika Allen's group** went to the Salvation Army shelter with donations of stuffed animals and children's board games. Prior to holding its event, Anika's group attended a Storytelling Training

training session. During the event the provisionals played board games with the children and read them stories. The group also brought juice, cookies, chips and other snacks for the families.

**Michelle Austero's group** is hosting the Memorial Candle Lighting for the Children's Bereavement Center on December 15. The Children's Bereavement Center is a past League project that provides support for children and their families who have lost a loved one. The holidays are difficult after suffering such a loss in the family. The vigil commemorates those lost loved ones. Michelle's group will provide dinner, dessert, and candles for the lighting ceremony. Currently they are gathering donations to create gift bags for the children (already have movie tickets and smoothies). Her group also attended a training session to be able to effectively engage with the participants.

**E. Lee Crabtree's group** will create a greatly needed library for the children at the Linda Ray Intervention Center ([www.iin.org](http://www.iin.org)). The children at this center, ranging from newborn to four years old, were prenatally exposed to crack cocaine. The Center strives to build and strengthen these children's motor, language and cognitive skills, social and emotional development, and self-help techniques. Lee's group will be gathering both used and new books and bookshelves for the Center.

**Mary Claire Espenkotter's group** was very enthusiastic about the sound of

the Lotus House Project Lift committee's work since they first met at Super Saturday. They made "Welcome Home" baskets for the ladies the committee helps to move into new homes each month. The group brainstormed, shopped, assembled and distributed their first basket on November 15. Through teamwork, division of labor, and true *esprit de corps* the group priced about 35 items at 6 different stores! During the shopping portion of the project, the group split into shopping pairs – two ladies on a hunt for the best-priced pots visited 11 Publix stores! Members of last year's Sundari Committee will appreciate that during one of these shopping adventures, two provisionals ran into Michelle, a Project Lift success. She overheard what this group was doing and approached, in tears, to ask if they were with the Junior League. She recounted the difference the Junior League made in her life when we moved her last May.

**Colleen's Kitchen's group** held a "sleepover" and activity party for the children of Community Partnership for the Homeless on November 14th. The Community Partnership for the Homeless assists men, women and children in transitioning off the streets of Miami-Dade County and on their way to attaining greater stability and self-sufficiency in their lives. The provisionals organized a great event for over 50 boys and girls that included Arts & Crafts, Freeze Dance, Jump Roping Contests and Charades. The biggest hit of the party was that each child was able to design and decorate a t-shirt with paint, glitter, and stencils. Not only did they get to keep their new "night" shirts, they really got to express their artistic side. The night ended with snacks and refreshments for all the kids and parents. Together with the help of the great staff at Community Partnership for the Homeless the night was a great success.

**Susan Lerner's group** also wanted to assist the participants of the Children's Bereavement Center. Her group volunteered on Sunday November 9th for the

continued on next page

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## Provisionals continued from previous page

CBC's fundraiser at Splitsville – the new bowling alley in South Miami. Susan's group was in charge of organizing the children into their lanes and score keeping and also playing games with the children who were not bowling. The children and provisionals truly enjoyed their day!

**Alexandra Page's group** obtained donations such as books, diapers, and toys for the children that receive services through Kristi House. Kristi House, a former League project, provides a healing environment for all child victims of sexual abuse and their families, regardless of income, through prevention, treatment and services from its community partners. The ladies attended the "7 Signs of Sexual Abuse" workshop in order to gain a better understanding of this serious issue that affects so many children in Miami. The provisionals planned a shopping trip on December 6th for five teenage girls who are participating in the commercial sexual exploitation program and are scheduled to "graduate" on December 10th. Each teenager will receive a \$30 gift card, help in selecting a graduation outfit, and a make-over that the provisionals arranged.

**Amy Stone's group** was inspired by visiting the Lotus House during the Community Bus Tour where many League projects were introduced. They will help the residents landscape a portion of their garden area with plants native to Florida on December 14. The provisionals also hope to be able to give each resident a

lucky bamboo plant, donated by a local nursery.

**Candace Vassillion's and Ameli Padron's groups** sponsored an employment workshop for the women of signature projects Inn Transition South (ITS) and Inn Transition North (ITN), respectively. Each workshop entitled "Resume Writing, Job Hunting and How to Dress for Success—Information You've Wanted and Needed to Know" also included information on interviewing skills. All the residents had great questions and were eager to learn ways to enhance her respective marketing abilities for the interview process.

Candace's group held its project at ITS on November 16th, and more than 27 residents attended. Helen Picard and Veronica Ramirez, co-chairs of ITS, were extremely helpful and instrumental in their efforts to make this program materialize. From the perspective of their career backgrounds, the provisional group includes several attorneys, a public relations director, a private banker, a human resource manager for a law firm and a human resource manager for a retail company. Having the broad range of career paths enabled the provisionals to approach her portion of the presentation from a unique perspective. Many JLM members donated business attire and



accessories for the residents on their career development path.

Ameli's provisionals hosted the women and children of ITN to a pizza party and workshop at ITN on November 19th. In addition to speaking to the women on the selected topics, the group distributed a booklet that the women could refer back to. The booklet included information on how to apply for and attend adult education classes and how to efficiently utilize the Miami-Dade Public Library System. The provisionals also provided crafts for the children of the ITN residents could attend the workshop. Going forward, the provisionals will remain involved with the women of ITN by proofreading any cover letters and resumes before they are submitted to third parties for potential employment.

The lesson learned from each of these projects is that JLM'S WORK MAKES A LASTING DIFFERENCE! ☪



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January 9	January 16
February 4	February 11
March 18	March 27
April 17	April 29

# Journal Notes *Report from Provisional Priscilla Greear On the Bus Tour*



As my alarm beeped at 7:30 a.m., I awoke for the Jr. League early bird Saturday morning bus tour, let's just say, not with zeal but with a temptation to skip after a touch of insomnia. You see, I am one of those slightly reluctant Provisionals, older than the average at 35 and still a little introvert-variety shy (despite having joyfully worked a decade as a reporter). But, I am finally heeding the advice of my League Sustainer mother who has always asked "why don't you give Junior League a try?" After my husband took a faculty position at the University of Miami and I bid adieu with tears to my newspaper colleagues in Atlanta, I found myself in Miami with no friends and a desire to get plugged in.

I knew this outing would be a great way to check out the projects, as one of the things most appealing about JLM is how it provides a way to volunteer in a committed, disciplined fashion. And since my neurotic side envisioned two busloads of women waiting and asking, "Where is Priscilla Greear?" and I had already registered to attend, I put on my running shoes and comfy cords, ate my Cornflakes and headed out the door.

I chatted with friendly people at the morning reception, including past president Susan Lerner who made me feel welcome. Like a junior high girl on a field trip, I was off to a good start as I sat on the bus next to refreshingly authentic Bonita Whytehead, who shared why she joined the League after hearing firsthand of its impact from families.

At the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind, I reflected on a comment of how blind little girls can't learn simple things like how to brush their hair by watching their mothers. League volunteers support these families by playing with the children, developing their skills and helping them experience quotidian joys of childhood.

As we stood in the garden respite outside of Lotus House in Overtown and learned about its mission to provide safe transitional housing and support services for women in need, I felt its quiet peace amidst chaos. As someone seeking a full-time job, I can better appreciate the residents' struggle to earn a paycheck, stabilize their lives, and the vague sense of being left behind as the world turns.

Our second to last stop was at Riverside Elementary School, where we learned about the All Aboard Family Literacy project in which members read to children and provide nutritious meals for them and their parents, some with limited English. While my parents always read to me growing up, I somehow lost the pastime reading habit in high school amidst my quiet adolescent angst and didn't recover it until attending the University of Virginia. So I was ready to sign up to foster a love of reading in children.

While I'm still discerning my place in the Junior League of Miami, the bus tour has been my favorite event as it grounded me in the pith of its community work to uplift women and children. ☺

# Member Training *Recap from JLM Delegates*

*Organizational Development Institute (ODI) is a series of educational training meetings hosted by the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI). JLM encourages current and future leaders to participate in these training courses to learn more about their focus area, and bring best practices back to our League. In addition to general sessions for all participants, ODI offers specialized "tracks". This year, tracks include: Achieving Community Impact: Identifying and Building Powerful Community Projects; Membership Development: Creating Tomorrow's Community Leaders; Diversified Fund Development: From Fundraising to Comprehensive Funding; and Building Internal Capacity: Strengthening Your League's Operating Infrastructure; and Electing Leaders for Tomorrow's League: New Strategies and Tools for Nominating.*

## **By Elizabeth Vargas, Chair, Fund Development**

This October, I was fortunate enough to be one of the few JLM members that attended the educational course in Orlando, FL. As Chair of Fund Development/Community Partners, I chose the Fund Development Track. Along with 50 other women from leagues across the country and even abroad, we learned how to approach traditional funding sources, and how to maximize the potential of new, cutting-edge fund development approaches.

Carol Scott, the facilitator, often spoke of "Mission Based Fundraising". What does this mean? The mission of the Junior League of Miami is to "promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women and improve communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers." It is important that we always look to the mission of the league when developing fundraisers for our organization and to never lose sight of the reasons why we are hosting these events. It is the means to provide for the end, which is programs and funding for women and children in need within our community.

Event fundraisers are not the only way to raise funds for our projects. So, how do we bridge the organizational change from event-based fundraising to a broader Fund Development orientation?

This is the question that the Fund Development/Community Partners Committee is focusing on this year. With the help of the new donor database that is housed in the finance office at Headquarters, the Fund Development and Community Partners Committee will be identifying companies and inviting them to learn more about the Junior League of Miami.

So, how can you help the League maintain a diversified funding base? The Fundraiser Proposal Application will be posted online within the next few weeks. The Application gives our members the opportunity to submit a fundraising idea to the League. Please consider taking part in this very important process. Applications are due January 13. Another way that members can help is by identifying companies that will make a good fit as a Community Partner with the Junior League. Maybe it's your employer, a colleague, a friend. Our League leaders are ready to make a presentation about JLM to your prospective donor.

By understanding our past and educating our members on our vision, we can follow the path for the future ensuring a strong, mission-driven League with a diversified funding base. ☺

## **By Jennifer Herskowitz, Recording Secretary**

I was very impressed with how well run the ODI program was when I attended in Orlando. Everyone took it seriously, and it was great to meet so many women with the same passion for their Leagues as I have for mine!

I attended the Membership Development track. One of my favorite parts was when the lecturer divided us up by League size, so everyone at my table was from a fairly large League. We then participated in an exercise on ways to recruit and/or retain members. The smaller Leagues (some with fewer than 50 members!) were more concerned with membership recruiting, and the larger Leagues seemed more concerned with retention. We collectively discussed creative ways some of us had dealt with these issues, and it was a source of great ideas for me to take back to the JLM.

I really enjoyed the diversity discussion both in the plenary session and in the membership track because it gave me motivation to go back to my friends in Miami who aren't members of JLM and encourage them to join.

Aside from the educational part of attending ODI, it was also a great way for me to meet other women with similar goals and philosophies and spend quality time with my fellow JLM members. This experience has made me feel connected to JLM and its mission more than ever before! ☺



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# Images from JLM Past Presidents' Reception

Each year, the Immediate Past President hosts a reception for all Past Presidents of the Junior League of Miami, as well as the current Board of Directors, and the Boards of Headquarters, Inn Transition North, and the Junior League of Miami Foundation. They are informed of the projects and events of the League year, while socializing with friends who have served throughout the eight decades of the League. 🍷



Past President Karen Cabrera, President Michelle Ramirez-Patricios, and Past President Julia Bianchi



Above: JLM Foundation President Linda Johnson and Past President Nancy Leslie



Right: Past President Susan Jones



Board member Dana Martorella, Immediate Past President Lauren Harrison Genovese, and Board member Lori Tashman-Corrada



Up-and-comer Anita Uppalari, Board Member Vicky Hucks, and Past President Mary Lynch

## JLM In the News

The Public Relations Committee under the leadership of Maureen Haley has been hard at work gaining JLM airtime and ink this past fall. In case you missed...

9/18/08 – NBC 6, South Florida Today  
Step Up to the Plate, Cooking Segment – Family Day 2008

9/19/08 – NBC 6, South Florida Today  
Shopping Card for a Cause

9/22/08 – CBS 4/My33, Jim & Jade  
Step Up to the Plate, Family Day 2008

9/30/08 – Socialmiami.com  
JLM Golf Tournament

10/15/08 – CBS 4/My33, Jim & Jade  
Shopping Card for a Cause

10/23/08 – WSVN Channel 7  
Shopping Card for a Cause, Kick-Off Party at Tory Burch

11/6/08 (English) & 11/12/08 (Spanish) – UMTV Newsvision  
Therapy Dogs

And, to come....

WSVN Channel 7, Parent to Parent on JLM Family/Nutrition  
Eating Initiatives – Step Up to the Plate

HOME Miami Magazine  
Feature on renovation of Headquarters

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# Winter 2008 Calendar

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Literacy Play Day and Holiday Book Drive	2 Board of Dir. Mtg. Holiday Market-Shop@HQ ITN Holiday Party	3 All Aboard Story Hour @ Riverside Elementary	4	5 Done in a Day -Junior Junior League Peace Tree @ HQ	6 Step up to the Plate - Food is Culture Event JLM Therapy Dogs Hurwit Teen Moms
7	8	9 Provisional Holiday Party	10	11	12 Shop today – All Gift Drive items are due tomorrow 12/13	13 Done in a Day - Holiday Cookie Bake  ITS Holiday Party
14	15 Finance & Community Council Mtgs.	16 Development & Membership Council Mtgs.	17	18	19	20 JLM Therapy Dogs – Paws 2 Read
21 Hanukkah begins	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Noche Buena	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa begins	27
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day <b>JANUARY</b>	2	3

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4	5	6 Board of Directors Mtg.	7 All Aboard Story Hour Read-In	8	9	10 ITS—Employ. Opps. & Youth Activity Day Step Up to the Plate – Food is Consumption
11	12 Fund Development Applications due tomorrow, 1/13	13 General Membership Mtg AM & PM (Slate to be Announced)	14	15	16	17 Leadership Initiative - Speaker Vicki Clarke
18	19 Finance Council Mtg. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	20 Planning, Development & Membership Council Mtgs.	21 Lunchin' with the League	22	23	24 Provision. Training – Domestic Violence Step Up to the Plate – Food is Necessity
Food Stamp Challenge – JLM Challenges You to Stick to a Food Budget (see article on page 16 for more info.)						
25	26 Chinese New Year Community Council Mtg.	27	28	29	30	31

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Groundhog Day	3 Board of Directors Mtg.	4 Fund Development / Community Partners Committee Mtg.	5	6	7 Membership Outreach Open House
8 Women Who Make a Difference Awards Event	9	10 General Membership Mtg. Voting Meeting--PM only	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day
15 Deadline to submit articles for the March Journal!	16 Presidents' Day Finance Council Mtg.	17 Planning, Development & Membership Council Mtgs.	18	19	20	21 ITS – Interview Preparation & Youth Activity – Soccer
22	23 Community Council Mtg.	24	25 Ash Wednesday	26 Provisional Training – JLM 201	27	28
1 MARCH	2	3 Board of Directors Mtg.	4	5 Sustainer Event: Book signing— The Kennedy Family Album Membership Open House	6	7

For more details: [www.jlmiami.org/calendar.php](http://www.jlmiami.org/calendar.php)

# SLESNICK PRESENTS . . .



**709 Aledo Avenue \$775,000**

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**814 Sevilla Avenue \$998,000**

New Listing four blocks south of Coral Way in a lovely area near Venetian Pool.. 4 bdrms/2 baths/2-car garage on huge lot. Needs updating but is very liveable as it is. Easy to show.



**1431 Ancona Avenue \$560,000**

Best priced home for the area. Near UM. Estate sale in need of some updating but quality space is here. 3 bdrms/2 baths/2-car garage. Brick terrace and lushly landscaped back yard..

Mark your calendar

## Women Who Make A Difference Awards 2009

Sunday, February 8, 2009  
Mandarin Oriental Miami



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