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## Spring 2005

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### In Style

#### Experience InStyle Magazine from the Inside-Out!

In Style magazine is taking its signature weekend-long event to Miami Beach, giving attendees an insider's look into the pages of In Style magazine, with proceeds from ticket sales benefitting the Junior League of Miami. "Inside In Style" is a two-day outdoor benefit event to be held at the Eden Roc Resort (4525 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach) on Saturday, April 2 and Sunday, April 3, 2005, from 11am to 5pm. Tickets will be sold to the public for \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Advance purchase tickets are available online at [www.instyle.com/insideinstyle](http://www.instyle.com/insideinstyle). Tickets may also be purchased by calling TicketWeb at 800-965-4827.

The April 2-3 "Inside In Style" event will transform the Eden Roc Resort into an outdoor oasis filled with French Riviera-style cabanas throughout the lush beachfront lawn. Guests will be invited to explore the cabanas, enjoying hair and beauty consultations, spa treatments, shopping, free giveaways and more, as runway fashion shows take place throughout the day on In Style's center stage.

Clothing, accessories and great must-haves will be on sale at the In Style boutique and also by some of Miami's hottest retailers including Kristine Michael, Margaux Interiors and Miss Trish of Capri. Guests will also be treated to automotive displays, sweepstakes prizes and the In Style café.

The Presenting Sponsor for 2005 is Redken. Principal Sponsors of "Inside In Style" include AK Anne Klein, Born Shoes, Cadbury Schweppes, Essie, HGTV, Jaguar, MasterCard, Michael Stars, Next by Athena, O Oscar, Spiegel, Steve Madden and Treasure Island. Supporting Sponsors to date include: Champagne Piper-Heidsieck, Dentyne Tango, Elisa Ilana,

Frito-Lay Light Snacks, IsaDora, available exclusively at Walgreens, and Nautica, with more to come.

This is the 4th annual “Inside In Style” event. For three previous years, the event took place in Chicago’s Lincoln Park. The Junior League of Miami is honored to have been chosen as the beneficiary in its first year in Miami and looks forward to a fabulous weekend.

IN STYLE, a celebrity, lifestyle and fashion magazine, was launched in June 1994 by Time Inc. and within 10 years has emerged as one of the most successful magazines on newsstands today. IN STYLE takes a uniquely fun and inviting attitude towards style in all its forms which include special issues, international editions, television programming, books, and Instyle.com which receives over 15 million monthly page views. On every page, IN STYLE presents a vibrant, exciting visual feast of fashion, beauty and lifestyle that bridges the gap between fantasy and reality. The magazine inspires readers to express their individual style and shows the personal side of celebrity!

Don’t miss this fun event...and help JLM at the same time!

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## **Amy Sussman**

### **From the President’s Corner**

We are in the final push of our League year and your adrenaline shows no sign of waning. I have LOVED being your President...it has completely exceeded all of my expectations. I am proud to have served and especially proud of the work we do.

I believe my year has been fantastic because of the extreme dedication of our 17-Woman Board of Directors. They have been tireless supporters of me and the League and strive to make us look at all times polished and professional. I feel very honored being in the company of such notable women, past and present included.

The Presidential year really is like a roller coaster ride, the part where you have butterflies in your stomach, for a majority of the time. Basically, you are in the center of a huge organization and all of the information filters to you and then through you to the appropriate people. About 95% of the time this results in great news, either from a League member with a terrific new idea for us to implement, word of a big Community Partner donation or just kind words from a Sustainer who is proud of us.

The 5% that isn’t great news is either simply good news or a bit of bad news that I try to turn in to great news as soon as possible. Again, your Board of Directors has magically smoothed any sign of troubled waters all year. The great news since our last Journal is enough to fill this page and I would like to share it with you all.

I have noticed a sea-change if you will, in the perception of our League. Not only did InStyle Magazine contact us to partner with them at our Spring Event on South Beach, but Robin Diaz (The City of Miami Mayor’s wife) asked us to help with the First Annual “National Woman’s Heart Day Health Fair.”

The University of Miami recently reached out to us to help promote Breast Cancer Awareness at the Womens’ UM Basketball Game and Susan Jordan would like to do a wine tasting to benefit our Foundation; showcasing her own internationally known Jordan Wines from Napa Valley.

The sea-change in perception is that while we are still knocking on doors to partner with other organizations to promote ourselves and help our community .....it seems that other organizations are finally knocking on our doors for an opportunity to partner with us.

Well, it’s about time! Great news like this only comes after many years of dedicated service to our community without fail. Just like we didn’t let Eleanor Roosevelt down in 1929 when we manned (change that to womanned) our Soup Kitchen, we haven’t let our community down today.

Peter Nordstrom said we were the most financially successful Nordstrom Gala opening ever. When we come together, there is no stopping us. We are dynamic movers and shakers. We get things done while having fun and women in the community are reaching out to join our ranks. Tell your friends, sisters, daughters and nieces about us...tell your neighbors...tell everyone you know about our wonderful JLM and how to join. We want every woman to play a part on our winning team.

## **Ken Sussman: In My Eyes**

When Amy and I moved to Miami in 1990, one of the first priorities she had was finding an organization and cause that she could relate to and “make a difference.” It took about 2 years but I knew the Junior League was it when she told me all about the wonderful women and issues they dealt with. I can remember back to projects such as Radio Lollipop; volunteering to help entertain needy children at Miami Children’s Hospital. Amy was the chair of the committee and asked me and Keith Landon to volunteer at one of the reach out opportunities with the children. It was against both Keith and my better judgment to be so hands on....it was a very emotional experience for us...but one I am glad to have done.

The first major event that Amy worked on was the inaugural year of The Golden Palm Gift Market. I remember how focused she was to help get the event off the ground and to achieve the goal set by the Board. I was pleased to lend my personal financial support to ensure its' success. As hard as she worked on the first year, that paled in comparison to the effort she expended when she became the Chairman of the event. I remember the constant effort and commitment to coordinate all of the committee's to make the event even better than prior years. Every day she would boast about which merchants signed on and how confident she was that they would exceed the fund raising goal. She obsessed over every detail and shared with me all the challenges that had to be resolved.

The weekend of the event was a constant update of how many attended the events and how close they were to the goal. It was that year when Amy showed me the leadership qualities she had and I knew she was ready to take on a greater challenge.

The night she received a call from the nominating committee is still vivid in my mind. I remember she was mentally prepared to go sustaining but the excitement in her voice when she told me about her opportunity revealed to me that this was her calling.

The year she spent as President-elect was terrific training and I know how grateful she was for the opportunity to assist Karen Cabrera during her very successful term in office. She learned a lot from Karen and was ready to assume control when the time came.

As a husband and father these 2 years have certainly been a sacrifice. It seems every week there are events that require her attendance. Also, the phone and email messages have been non-stop. Yet, I'm very happy she made the decision to serve. The Junior League is a wonderful organization and the good deeds and contributions they offer the community are very special. To be a President of The Junior league is to be a real leader in the community.

When I mention to people that she is the President, you can see the reaction and expressions that evokes on their faces. Yes, it's a lot of work. Yes, it's a sacrifice and yes, it's a commitment. But to reflect and remember all the accomplishments makes me very proud to say, "My wife was the President of The Junior League."

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## **Wading in the Shallow End**

*by Andria Hanley, President-Elect*

Remember when you were first learning to swim and spent a lot of time wading in the shallow end until you knew you were ready to jump in? That is a lot like the PE year in the League. You know you will dive in but want to be sure the lifeguard won't be jumping in after you! I can say with confidence having Amy Sussman as my swim coach this year has helped me in so many ways. I have received the proper training and endurance tests and continue to prepare for the coming year. I also receive a lot of encouragement from past Presidents, Sustainers, as well as Actives and Provisionals.

For the last couple of months though my heart has been racing. I finally asked Amy Sussman and Karen Cabrera if it was normal to wake up in the middle of the night and go to the computer to jot down thoughts about the coming League year. Karen responded, "totally normal" and Amy recommended I keep Tums nearby! That is not to say I could not sleep because of bad thoughts, it is because of my commitment to all of you that I want us to make a huge splash in our community next year. I want to watch our efforts in the community ripple to new places and make big waves of assistance to those we work for.

Whether I am drumming up fundraising ideas or thinking about the people we serve, I am excited to know I am surrounded by all of you. As we prepare for the final lap to the end of the year I am excited about all that we have done and all that we still have to do.

I have spent this year watching closely how it all works; at AJLI conferences, board meetings, Hurwit field trips, GAP and ITS parties. And at every event I have learned more about us and more about myself. That's the great thing about the Junior League, every year you have the opportunity to grow and in the coming year you can spread your wings a little more and try something new.

So if you loved your placement this year, share that excitement with those who will follow you. If you didn't love your placement, find something you know you are passionate about and take it to the next level. If your personal life allows it, submit your name for a leadership position. I promise you will get a lot out of the experience and get to know people you never expected you would be friends with.

So here I stand, at the edge of the pool, getting ready to show you my best cannon ball! I think May 17th is the perfect time to jump in. Saturday & Sunday, April 2 & 3 • Eden Roc, Miami Beach

***Congratulations to the 2005-06  
Leadership Slate!***

President-Elect - Susan Lerner  
VP Communications - Valerie Harvey  
VP Community - Michelle Ramirez  
VP Development - Lauren Harrison  
VP Membership - Bonita Whytehead  
VP Planning - Vicky Hucks  
Recording Secretary - Lori Tashman-Corrada  
Treasurer - Lorrie Martin

Planning Council Members at Large  
Sarita Courtney-Baigorri  
Samantha Schosberg  
Mary Prindle (to replace Susan Lerner)

#### **Nominating**

*1-2 years active:* Jill Ecklund, Austin Rivers, Kabrina Means, Catherine Grieve, Jennifer Kravetz

*3-5 years active:* Kelly Portuondo, Jen Green, Jamie Adams, Kelly Johnson, Gina Gardner

*6 or more years:* Christine Griffard, Alison O'Keefe, Stephanie Demos, Gail Scott, Keith Landon

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### ***President-Elect 2006***

#### **Questions and Answers with Susan Lerner**

##### ***Describe where you grew up.***

I grew up in the same place where I was born, in Hollywood Florida. I am the third of four children. I attended Little Flower Catholic School and spent my summers at Jefferson Park, the city park a few blocks from our house. I began playing tennis there when I was 12 and played each and every day for years after.

I switched from parochial school to public school in ninth grade where I attended South Broward High School. I played on the tennis team and was the editor of the school newspaper, "The Bulldog's Tale."

I attended the University of Florida undergraduate and law school and began my legal career as a law clerk for a state appellate judge in the Fifth District Court of Appeal where I met my husband Josh who was also a law clerk. We moved to Miami in 1986 and have lived here ever since.

When I first arrived in Miami, I joined Jim Blecke's appellate law practice. As we all know, Jim's wife, Berta is a very distinguished sustainer in our League. I remember back then that her husband was nearly always handling one pro bono legal proceeding or another for a worthy JLM cause. Jim influenced me to take on pro bono activities and in 1999, Jim and I each received the Dade County Bar Association Pro Bono award for Appeals.

For several years, I also practiced with the law firm of Kutner, Rubinoff, Bush and Lerner. In 2003, I moved to Josephs, Jack & Miranda in Coconut Grove where I now have the pleasure of working with fellow JLM member and attorney, Stephanie Demos, who is the vice president of Community this year.

##### ***Tell us a little about your family and interests.***

I have been married for 20 years to Josh who is a shareholder in the law firm of Rumberger, Kirk and Caldwell. We have two children Johanna and Benjamin and two dogs, Shilo (a Brittney Spaniel) and Jack (a Jack Russell puppy). Johanna is 14 and Benjamin is 12. Johanna is in 9th grade at Gulliver Prep and Benjamin is in 6th grade at Carver Middle School, a language magnet where he studies Spanish. Johanna loves horseback riding. She also plays on the school volleyball and softball teams. Benjamin plays on his school basketball team and on a traveling team. When he is not studying or playing basketball, Ben is watching sports, reading the sports page or analyzing sports statistics. Josh plays tennis regularly at Royal Palm Tennis Club in Pinecrest. His fantasy is to one day live down the street from the Club so he can step out his front door and walk to the courts.

My own interests are varied but mainly I enjoy playing and watching sports. In college, I retired the tennis racket and took up running. I have competed in two marathons spanning 20 years, the first in 1981 (Orange Bowl Marathon here in Miami) and then in the Disney Marathon in 2001. The long distances have taken a toll on my knees so I've cut back substantially and over the past three years have enjoyed competing in triathlons. The highlight of my week is early morning runs with sustainer Karen Nordt and a few other diehard women. We solve the world's problems, vent our own and are amazed as fellow JLM member Ashley Cusack comes flying by us in her speedy running group.

##### ***Who brought you to this organization and why did you join?***

I first learned about JLM through Jim Blecke but it wasn't until after I was well into my career and after having my two children that I seriously considered joining. My sister-in-law Emily was an active member then and I talked it over with her and a few other women who at that time were sustainers. I had been volunteering as a Girl Scout leader and in an emergency



shelter for children and decided that JLM offered a structured way to engage in community service so I joined. Back then, the League still did face-to-face interviews and mine was with Debbie Korge who eventually became president.

***What is your funniest memory of your work in the League?***

My funniest memory is a toss up between watching Maria Beguiristain, Tina Carlo, Sheri Shoup, Meredith Mills and Gretchen Kirtley operate glue guns during the assembly of the Miami Who Makes A Magic City invitations and sorting through Encore Shop donation bags with Bibi Cruz-Ledon, Kara Moss and Lorrie Martin.

***Assuming that this is your last placement in the League, is there a placement you wish you had before you became President?***

I always wanted to serve as the vice president of Community and even self submitted a few times for the spot. I also wish I had served on the Hurwit Crisis Nursery committee. The Nursery was one of the projects we chose the year I co-chaired Program Development with Linda Brown and I was able to go there on a few occasions and rock the babies. The need is so great and the children really do love and benefit from what we do for them there. I was fortunate enough though to spend three years on our flagship community project, Inn Transition North, serving as chair elect and then chair.

***What would you tell young members who are thinking of a leadership position?***

First, I would tell them what our former Vice President of Community Rubye Nell Johnson told me years ago – don't gather your marbles and go home when things don't go just the way you want in the League. I would also quote from our former president Karen Cabrera about the League, "Respect the history. Question the tradition."

I would also stress that you should say yes to whatever within reason is asked of you, provided you and your family can accommodate the request. If not, you miss opportunities that will help you in all facets of your life. JLM is in large part a training organization so consider roles and tasks out of your proverbial comfort zone. I learned this last year as vice president of development. I had never been involved in fundraising before and knew little about it. I learned so much during the year and then agreed to co-chair a fundraiser this year, Community Partners.

***You are a busy, successful lawyer, who influenced you to dedicate time to volunteer efforts?***

My parents were the greatest influence. My husband once said that I grew up in a family where giving to the community was a core value and a part of everyday life, not an extracurricular activity. We didn't have an abundance of material possessions yet my parents still stressed the need to give to others. They often delivered food to the needy in boxes wrapped like gifts so they would not be embarrassed by receiving handouts in public.

***What do you want most from your President over the next year?***

I want our incoming president Andria Hanley to take the lead in maintaining the integrity of our community projects, energizing our current members, and recruiting new members. I also want Andria to identify members who are not necessarily in the limelight but who are very dedicated to the League and then encourage them to take on a leadership role.

***What makes you happy?***

Watching my husband and children succeed, playing with my new puppy, hanging out with my running partners and JLM friends and reading a good book. I just finished *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* and am currently wondering who my five people will be, assuming for the sake of argument I make it there.

***For those who have never worked on a League project with you, what do you want them to know about you?***

I want each and every member to know that I do not take any one of them for granted. I encourage my committee members to innovate. I appreciate that we all lead busy lives and want to feel that the time we spend on JLM is worthwhile. I am also persistent about wanting to understand things. For instance, when the Finance Council presents at Board meetings, I ask a lot of questions so that I am clear about what is really going on. I am also on the frugal side (inherited from parents who lived through the Depression) so I focus on how we use our League resources.

***What is your philosophy about life?***

Make peace with yourself by making peace with your enemies, real and imagined. Then, you are free to live your life as you desire. •

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***GAP (Girls Advocacy Project)***

***Tis the Reason for Serving***

***By Jill Ecklund***

The That most wonderful time of the year beginning with the time for thankfulness, followed by the season to be jolly and concluding with the period of new beginnings couldn't have been more meaningful as evidenced by the experiences shared by the JLM GAP Committee and the young women serving time in the Miami-Dade Juvenile Detention Center.

The season got off to a grand start with a home-cooked Thanksgiving meal celebrating the freedoms for which the Pilgrims originally sought refuge. Thankful decorative turkeys were artfully crafted in a group project wherein all involved were

invited to look inside and recognize all of the positive things in life that all of us, even those facing very difficult challenges, should be grateful for. This emotional period of reflection was then followed by a soulful and inspiring performance by the Live Poets Society consisting of spoken word, music and dance.

The GAP Committee then continued through the season by hosting a holiday party, replete with a barbeque feast, celebrating and recognizing all faiths and cultures. No holiday party would have been complete without the spirit of sharing, so gifts for the GAP girls were purchased with the generous donations of JLM members and friends of the JLM. Special gifts were crafted by the kindergarten class of Mrs. Alfonso of Riviera Day School, which made for a touching bridge between differing groups of youth in our community. We extend our heartfelt thanks to such a wonderful teacher for bridging that gap.

The season culminated in the New Year with a powerful session led by our guest speaker Tracy Mourning, founder of the Honeyshine Foundation and an active leader and supporter of many community endeavors. There was no better way to begin a new year than by taking responsibility for those actions in our past which have lead us to the places that we are in our lives today. We learned that only from this position of responsibility could we then learn to embrace self-respect and self-love. The affirmations of the GAP girls during this session were truly amazing and have reinforced the GAP Committee's strong belief in its ability to impact positive change in the community by serving these young women.

The holiday season in our committee's case highlighted the reason for our commitment to this project. Through mentoring we have been able to help these girls realize that they have things in life to be thankful for, have reasons to celebrate and are worthy of receiving gifts of love. Most importantly, we have helped these girls see that they have choices, despite the difficulty of their backgrounds or their present circumstances. For that we are jolly.

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## **Foster Care Review Committee**

*By Dana Martorella, Chair*

This year, volunteers on this Committee provided (as a group) 32 hours of community service to Foster Care Review. Under Florida Law, all children in the State's foster care system are entitled to a judicial review/citizen panel review every five to six months. The purpose of these reviews is to assess the foster child's progress and possible problems in their foster home, as well as to ensure that efforts are being made to place the child in a permanent home. Foster Care Review, Inc. is the organization that has been approved by the court to administer the citizen review panel.

After necessary training and an opportunity for court observation, our volunteer work began. JLM volunteers assisted FCR by compiling information and data necessary for each child's review through phone surveys with the foster parents.

This year, in addition to conducting phone surveys, JLM volunteers will also assist in amending the current surveys and conducting focus groups with foster parents to assess their continually evolving needs.

While we are grateful for the rewarding experience Foster Care Review has provided for the past two years, this community project will not be renewed next year. With great anticipation and excitement we look forward to the exciting Foster Care-related projects planned for next year.

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## **Inn Transition South**

The 2004-2005 year has been spectacular to date for the residents at Inn Transition South. Despite the beginning of our year getting off to a bit of a slow start due to hurricanes mandating date changes, we kicked the year off with a great Fall carnival including clown shows, pony rides and Halloween crafts. The week prior to Thanksgiving, with help from some friends in the community along with ourselves, we were able to ensure each family received a food basket of fixings along with a Publix gift certificate. With the holidays following right on those heels, early in December we hosted a Holiday Party/Brunch for all the residents (approx. 135 children and 55 moms) with plenty of festivities for all ages, including decorating their own tabletop Christmas Tree. To our surprise, some of the young residents, with the help of a very special tutor friend who volunteers his time at the facility, decided to demonstrate their appreciation with a marvelous holiday concert. During an evening wrapping party, our committee compiled holiday gift baskets for every family, including individual gifts for everyone and plenty of treats for all members of the family, delivered the week of Christmas. Many of the items had been donated by other junior leaguers, friends and family.

Our establishment of volunteers throughout the community have been extremely beneficial. We received approximately \$500 in donation money toward our holiday baskets, both Thanksgiving and Christmas, from our supporters at Temple Beth Am. Friends at Pan Am Horizons Federal Credit Union contributed approximately 20 Thanksgiving baskets toward our total number. At every event we have held to date, we have had the pleasure to be joined by a handful of volunteers through our contact at Killian High School. Additionally, volunteers from Twenty Little Working Girls have been on hand at our events, by taking 30+ children to the Miami Children's Museum, and hosting a lovely Valentine's Party of crafts and games for the

children.

We would like to pass on our thanks to our Sustainer group as well. Margaret Nee helped coordinate a book drive with the group in the Fall. We received a tremendous amount of wonderful books to complement the facility's library, which was originally created by a provisional group a couple of years ago.

The educational series continues on average once a month for the mothers at the facility. We have been fortunate to welcome a variety of great speakers including topics on pediatrics, self-esteem, and planned parenthood. During the months of January, February and now into March, we have been fortunate to have our peers, junior leaguers from the Family Literacy committee, conduct fantastic training events for the mothers and children, where every child leaves the session with their own book.

These are exciting days at Inn Transition South and we look forward to our continued success during the Spring with a Sneaker Drive conducted by one of the Provisional Groups as their project, a Field Day joined by volunteers from Miami's Non-Violence Project, sending residents to the Youth Fair and a couple of sporting events, and finishing off the year with a Mother's Day Brunch. No one likes waiting in line. Now imagine how you would feel if that queue had 750 other people.

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## **Project Reaching Those Waiting in Line**

Those are the odds for the children who are waitlisted with Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) in Dade county. And that is exactly where Project Reach comes in, JLM's partnership with BBBS, which is now in its fourth year. Two to three times a month our committee hosts recreational, educational and cultural events for about fourteen children waiting to be placed with a "Big."

The outings typically take place on Saturday afternoons. We've shed the heat of the tropics to ice skate, fed Macaws at Parrot Jungle, gotten soaked by Shamu at Seaquarium, marveled at The Nutcracker Suite and cheered each other on as we bowled. The joy and excitement bursts from the children's faces, whether they're showing us their latest dance moves, telling us about school or high-fiving after racing cars at Gameworks.

Sabrina Gardner, our liaison with BBBS, continually tells the committee that the children love spending time with "the ladies" and the barrage of calls she gets from mothers and grandmothers following our events is incredible. Perhaps that was one of the reasons BBBS awarded JLM their Partner of The Year Award for 2004-2005 during their Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon a few weeks ago.

Our committee would surely agree though, that we don't need a plaque. What we get in return is inestimable – the instant gratification of a hug and a smile and the realization that we made a child's life a little bit brighter.

If you would like to learn more about Project Reach, please contact co-chairs Kristin Wherry or Christina Sherry. We hope to be able to continue the good work another year for this truly successful community project.

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## **Done in a Day**

*By Vicki Lopez Lukis*

[See Race Photo Gallery](#)

Done in a Day started off the league year by helping with the Race for the Cure, an annual event held to benefit the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Since that great start, we have participated in two domestic violence forums and helped out at a film screening on domestic violence held at Miami Dade College.

Done in a Day also partnered with Project Reach to help with one of its outings to Metro Zoo with the children from Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Most recently, we attended an incredibly moving event, also to benefit the Susan G. Komen Foundation, held at the University of Miami Women's Basketball Game on February 17th, 2005. We are looking forward to several more exciting events before the end of the year. If you have any questions or would like information or meeting credit, please email me: Klandsea@aol.com

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## **Hurwit Happenings**

*By Gina Gardner*

The Hurwit Crisis Nursery is a home for children from birth to twelve years old who are between foster homes. Junior League volunteers do two different activities with the children. We take the 5-12 year olds on a field trip and stay at the nursery with the 0-4 year olds doing age appropriate activities one Saturday each month. The field trips provide an opportunity for the children to experience something they may not have otherwise.

This year we have had lots of fun with the kids. We have gone to Metro Zoo, taken a tour of Cape Florida Lighthouse followed by a lunch on the beach and have gone bowling. We also had a Holiday Bash for the children at the Nursery. There were lots of activities planned for the children including a visit from Santa who brought each of the children a gift from their list. DJ Jazz had everyone dancing, Dipsy the clown kept everyone laughing and the farm animals kept everyone very busy!!!!

We have more fun field trips planned this year. If anyone is interested in joining us, you should look on the JLM website's calendar.

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## **JLM at Heart Day**

On February 18th women gathered in 12 cities across the country for a free heart screening. The event was put on by the Sister to Sister – Everyone Has a Heart Foundation, Inc. Sister to Sister is the only national organization that focuses solely on women's heart disease screening and prevention. Because heart disease is the number one killer of women in the U.S., Irene Pollin founded the organization in 2000 and sponsored the first Women's Heart Day in 2001 in Washington, D.C. to help change this fact.

This year in Miami 1,500 women attended the fair and over 700 were screened. The heart screens included tests for total cholesterol, HDL, blood glucose, blood pressure and body mass index (BMI). Nurses and doctors in the community volunteered their time to administer the tests and interpret the results to women. The site at the James L. Knight center was filled with 38 exhibitors whose services were of interest to women. Paella was served all day by Olive Oil from Andalusia, Spain. There were speakers on stress management, nutrition, eating and fitness, diabetes, smoking, heart disease and obesity. Fitness demonstrations by Zumba, the Downtown Athletic Club and the Mid Eastern Dance exchange encouraged onlookers.

The event came to Miami for the first time this year and the Junior League was proud to play a role. The Sister to Sister Miami Community Council led by US Congresswoman Carrie Meek, Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners Barbara Carey-Shuler, Ed.D., and City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz and Robin Diaz, asked the League for its involvement.

The League's support was threefold. In the months leading up to the event, our membership was made aware of the new event through our all member emails. The day of the event we participated as an exhibitor with a membership outreach booth. It was a great opportunity to showcase the League to over 1,500 women. Jennifer Pflieger's committee provided information on the League to 57 women. Also on the day of the event the League, in conjunction with the YWCA, provided childcare for women who attended the fair with their children. We cared for 20 little ones throughout the day, playing with puzzles and board games, coloring, and watching movies.

The League was proud to be a part of this critical outreach to help increase awareness of heart disease and to encourage healthy lifestyles among women of all ages, races and socioeconomic backgrounds.

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## **SPAC's Spring Forum**

### **Delivering messages of unity to Florida's House and Senate- A voice 24,000 Junior League Members Strong**

*By Carol Bryant, PAC Committee Member*

With a vision of 'Changing Florida through Volunteerism and Advocacy,' the State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) held its annual Spring conference in Tallahassee on the 22nd and 23rd of February, 2005. For this year's 2005 legislation session, a coalition of SPAC member leagues mobilized from all corners of the state to lobby for children and women's issues jointly adopted during a conference hosted by Miami's PAC committee this past October. Uniform in scope before Florida's legislature, SPAC set forth its platform of interests pertaining to Guardian Ad Litem, Gender Specific Programming for Female Juvenile Offenders, Anti-Bullying/Harassing in Schools, and Booster Seats. JLM members Andria Hanley, President-Elect, and Carol Bryant of the PAC Committee, were in attendance.

SPAC Chair, Julia Irvin (South Brevard) and SPAC-Chair Elect, Laura Jacobs (Tampa) organized an exciting, thought provoking, and interactive line-up of events. To start, Speaker Allan G. Bense, who presides over 120 members of the House, extended a warm and personable welcome to SPAC delegates. He spoke about his experiences in the political arena and elaborated on the House's role in policy making. He additionally imparted an 'inside scoop' as to Governor Bush's position regarding SPAC's anchor issues. While Governor Bush is not in favor of Booster Seat legislation, he does support the



additional funding and expansion of the Guardian Ad Litem's program serving children in Florida's court system.

At the hub of Tallahassee's historic downtown, the Governor's Club served as backdrop for SPAC's luncheon. Guest speaker, Lucy Hadi, Secretary of the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), briefly spoke about the transition of foster care review from the hands of state jurisdiction to the custodial care of private, community based, volunteer networks. Ms. Hadi cited a few success stories, reporting on how Sheriff's in small Florida towns were appointed to investigate reports of child abuse as needed. Since police officials are trained to handle criminal investigations, it presents a logical fit, whereas, the strengths of caseworkers lay in civil procedures. She also stated Miami-Dade Citizens' Review Panel set a precedent, with individuals doing their part in navigating children through local foster care systems. Ms. Hadi then ended her talk on a note of emotional appeal to all Florida residents in saying that as these types of initiatives and services continue, the benefits of activism would likely translate to "No more Rilya Wilson's."

Delegates met with Senator's and Representatives from their home districts, alerting key legislators on ideas and issues that matter most to our leagues. SPAC members then reconvened in the Senate and House chambers for private tours conducted by Senator Mike Bennett and Representative Adam Hasner. And a special thanks goes to Laura Jacobs, SPAC Chair-Elect, who was integral in making these visits happen.

Delegates attended a dinner meeting at the Silver Slipper, a Tallahassee institution where colorful personalities and shrewd political minds have influenced Florida's politics for decades. During dinner, Representative Dan Gelber, gave impassioned testimony about his support for Booster Seat legislation, and candidly discussed the challenges in winning over Governor Bush's approval. He cautioned SPAC to take a low-key approach to lobbying efforts this year, and described the best 'road map' for pushing the bill next year. He suggested we obtain endorsements from car rental agencies/automobile insurance companies, find case law wherein children between the ages of 4 – 8 years of age died in auto accidents, and further advised we source examples/statistics wherein booster seats are effective in other states.

Wednesday was our breakfast meeting where attendees addressed a pressing need to hire a full time lobbyist to give an even stronger voice to SPAC's advocacy efforts; finally, the Spring Conference came to an end with a mix of sad farewells and words of congratulations with the passing of the leadership torch from Julia Irvin, long-time Chair, to Laura Jacobs, our new fearless leader.

Julia Irvin, who made numerous and invaluable contributions to SPAC over the past four years, will be missed so very much. As newly elected Junior League President of South Brevard, there's no doubt she will continue to further the interests of children and women of her community.

As the Delta flight lifted off and headed south toward home, I closed my eyes and thought about all we had learned, and all we have to learn. But rest assured, we are in good hands and on the right track, we are the voices for those in our community who have none.

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## **Another Great Year for Chili!**

### **[See Chili Photo Gallery](#)**

On Saturday, February 12th, the Junior League of Miami and the Village of Pinecrest held the 4th Annual "Chili in the Village" at Pinecrest Gardens. It was an all-day affair of chili tasting, music, vendors, crafts, children's entertainment and more. Everyone who attended had a grand time!

Crowds gathered to buy tickets to this event which featured all-you-care-to-try chili at fabulously decorated booths set up by some of our favorite local restaurants and caterers. In attendance and competing for "Best Chili in Town," were Hooligan's, JoAnna's Marketplace, Sara Sharpe Catering, Macabi, Gordon Biersch, Phoenix Restaurants, Wagon's West, Burger Bob's, the Kitchen at Billy's Pub Too, Gusto's Bar & Grill, Girl Scout Troop #940 and even some of our own Junior League members featuring celeb chef Kathleen Duran!

The children who attended were in heaven this year with all the non-stop fun in the Kid's Zone! The Pinecrest Garden playground, petting zoo, and brand new Splash n' Play water park were a hit! In addition, the kids gobbled up hot dogs, french fries, lemonade and punch. A special thank you to Red Nose Productions who put on a great show. The children enjoyed Maria the clown's fabulous face painting, balloon animals, magic and music.

The VIP Sponsors were seated overlooking the lake. Their royal treatment included delicious baked treats (made by our very own Junior League Provisionals), as well as free beer, 10 Event tickets, 10 Raffle tickets, and a fabulous orchid arrangement donated by Orchids by Jamie!

A huge thank you to this year's VIP sponsors: Morrison, Brown, Argiz & Farra; KPMG, LLP; US Century Bank; Ver Ploeg & Lumpkin; Kirkpatrick & Lockhart; Kahn-Carlin Insurance Company; The Cicala Family with the Coots Family; and the Hanley Family. Thanks for your support everyone!

Our winners were "on fire" when they caught sight of this year's awards provided by Burdine's/Macy's. This year, they gave

out salt and pepper shakers in the shape of chili peppers! A special thank you goes out to Burdine's/Macy's, led by DJ Sticht and Ann Chassen, for graciously organizing the judging for our event four years running. Another round of applause goes to our most distinguished judges including Amy Sussman, Hunter & Donna Reno, Jeanette and Mayor Don Slesnick, Dick Overmeyer, Burdines - Macy's, Loren Matthews, Village of Pinecrest Parks and Recreation Director Lorie Winer, as well as Shear Construction Jack Wolf, Shear Construction

Winning the coveted title this year was Phoenix Restaurants! Second place went to Sara Sharpe Catering; and Third Place went to Macabi of South Miami! Our Novice Award this year went to Wagon's West restaurant. Finally, our special service recognition award was given to the Girls Scouts of Troop #940! Great job everyone!

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to come out and support the event. It was a beautiful day and loads of fun! We were so fortunate to be able to partner this year with the International Chili Society and their Chili guru, Domino Ireland! The ICS participants are all chili professionals and helped to make the event the success that it was. We would also like to thank Alex Buelvas of Micro Printing Inc., Bacio, Heineken, Zephyrhill's, Twenty Little Working Girls, South Florida Firefighters, the UM Cheerleaders and Sebastian!

Finally, thank you to the "Chili in the Village" committee for your hard work and countless hours putting this event together. Let's give a cheer to Committee Chairs- Tate Cicala, Lisa Coots and Jamie Adams, Treasurer-Sara Dargham, and Committee Members: Tania Bredemeier, Kaia Calbeck, Lisa Clements, Diane Doolan, Kathleen Duran, Yvette Garcia, Shakira Humble, Liz Latta, Carol Lumpkin, Veroushka MacLean, Debbie Puga, Gretchen Rust, and Teresa Thornberg, You all are the best!

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## **A Day to Remember**

### **A Sold-Out Success Aboard RCL's Navigator of the Seas**

The Junior League of Miami was ecstatic with the Fourth Annual Women Who Make a Difference Luncheon Awards event on Saturday, March 5, 2005, aboard premium cruise line Royal Caribbean International's Navigator of the Seas. The ceremony presented the awards in recognition of remarkable women in our community who have made a significant impact through their volunteer efforts in improving the lives of at-risk women and children.

This year, awards were presented to five incredible women: Georgie Angones, of the Florida Bar Foundation and Miami Children's Hospital; Paula Brockway Volunteer and Philanthropist; Karen Fryd, of the South Florida Foundation; Sharon Langer of Legal Aid and Clara Pascal of Universal Aid for Children.

Co-chaired by Alise Johnson and Michelle Ramirez-Patricios, the event featured a champagne reception, hors d'oeuvres, a seated lunch and a fabulous ice skating show. Monica Jewelers sponsored their exciting Champagne and Diamond drawing again this year. Committee members were: Christina Urena, J.J. Snow, Sara Conde, Melisa Mendez Chantres, Rachel Denis, Karen Katz, Sheryl Shoup, Kara Wells, Lori Tashman-Corrada, Melanie Gutierrez, Linda Salup-Schmidt, Bonnie Young, Meredith Olavarria, Teresa Ebbs.

Sponsors of the event included: Royal Caribbean International, Zumpano Patricios & Winker, P.A., Monica Jewelry and Orchids by Jamie.

Silent auction items included were amazing diamond earrings from Snow Jewelers, a four-night stay at the Wyndham Aruba, dinner for two at Cioppino Restaurant at the Ritz Carlton on Key Biscayne, wine tasting for six at Wolf's wine shop, a Trinity collection large satchel handbag from Cole Haan and a three-night stay at the Ritz Carlton Amelia Island.

An incredible 7-night cruise aboard a Royal Caribbean International ship was raffled to one lucky guest!

"Overall we are so excited about how the event turned out and how much money we were able to raise for The Junior League with the help of Royal Caribbean," said co-chairs Michelle Ramirez-Patricios and Alise Johnson.

See the JLM [Gallery](#) for a visual report.

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## **The Junior League Foundation- Let's Celebrate!**

The Junior League of Miami has some good news to celebrate! At the end of January 2005, the Junior League of Miami Foundation's assets were over \$620,000!

We credit this great increase due to market investing, donations to the Foundation from the League (mostly due to the closing of the Encore Shop) and the generous support of over 20 individuals who have given so generously and have joined the 1926 Society.

### ***Save the Date-April 7, 2005***

The Junior League of Miami and the Junior League of Miami Foundation will salute our 1926 Society Members at our first annual Hats Off To You luncheon. This special event will take place at the home of Amy Sussman and will prove to be a memorable day! It is not too late to become a member for this year. For information regarding the 1926 Society Membership, please contact Elaine Tatum.

[Click Here for JLM Foundation Donors](#)

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## **Community Partners**

### **Making a Difference One Donor at a Time**

*By Aniella Gonzalez*

Each year, a small group of League volunteers gather to identify those businesses and philanthropists in our area who support the League's community projects and volunteer efforts on a yearly basis. Without the fanfare of our traditional fundraisers, our direct solicitations for donations serve to strengthen JLM's community projects, and provide us with a valuable marketing tool for the League. Our donors appreciate and applaud JLM's incredible volunteers and the difference they make in this county each day.

When faced with other compelling requests for donations at home and worldwide, we are grateful that we have been able to count on our Community Partners. Once again we appreciate their steadfast support of the League's mission to help the women and children of Miami-Dade county.

Special thanks to Community Partners who have answered our call this year:

Publix Super Market Charities; Bill Usery Motors, Inc.; Esslinger Wooten & Maxwell; Northern Trust Bank; Gretchen and Todd Kirtley; Doug & Peggy Hudson; Allen & Diane DeOlazarra; The Arriola Family; Albert & Andria Hanley; North Dade Medical Foundation; Jeannett Slesnick; Keen Battle Mead & Co.; David & Julia Bianchi; Ann Kashmer; Fannie Mae Foundation; Elizabeth Johnson; Meredith Mills; The Corbishley Family; Frank & Mary Young; Angones, McClure & Garcia, P.A.; Kozyak, Tropin & Throckmorton, P.A.; Rumberger, Kirk & Caldwell, P.A.; Ian Osur, P.A.; Lauri Waldman Ross, P.A.; Barbara Green, P.A.; Kutner, Rubinoff & Bush, P.A.; L. Gabriel Bach, P.A.; Woodard & North, P.A.; Kubicki Draper, Josephs, Jack & Miranda, P.A.; Rodriguez & Aronson, P.A.; Stanley & Susan Rosenblatt Family Foundation; Yanowitch Law Center; Bob Alan Biederman in honor of Amy Sussman; RTK Personal Services, Inc.; John/Dianne Scrivani; Law Offices of Marilyn Cesarano; The Agatston Family; Jerome Wolfson, P.A.; Keith Chasin, P.A.; T.M. Acosta; and Cavanaugh's.

We need your help expanding our network of Community Partners this year. Please take a moment to ask yourself the following questions: Do you know a prospective Community Partner? Does your company or organization offer a matching gift program? Did you consider the Junior League as your donor designation for the United Way campaign? Would you like to make a multi-year pledge?

Please contact Community Partners Co-Chairs, Susan Lerner at [ssl@florida-attorneys.com](mailto:ssl@florida-attorneys.com), Katie Lane-Arriola at [katielane-arriola@hotmail.com](mailto:katielane-arriola@hotmail.com), or Aniella Gonzalez at [aniella93@aol.com](mailto:aniella93@aol.com) if you have any questions about becoming a Community Partner. The deadline for new Partners is May 31, 2005.

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## The 2005 “League Events” are in Full Swing!

*By Jennifer Wilson, Training Chair 04-05*

February was a busy month for the Training Committee! La Bella Salon at 2604 Ponce De Leon Blvd in Coral Gables was so generous in donating a Make-Over Event at the salon. Four lucky League members (a provisional, two actives and a sustainer) enjoyed a make-over hair cut and style, while the rest of the attendees enjoyed beauty and relaxation tips from the Aveda expert. Many thanks to Leana Marks who donated the wine and delicious appetizers we enjoyed while being pampered and massaged. One lucky active took home a gigantic basket of Aveda products as a door prize, courtesy of La Bella Salon!

Thanks to Dr. Tom Maurno who taught interested Leaguers all about Women’s Spinal Health. Dr. Maurno gave us a 30-second anatomy class then walked us through a “healthy” day according to a chiropractor. It was a lesson for all of us! Dr. Maurno even raffled off a free 1-hour massage to one lucky Leaguer who attended the event! All these great events couldn’t have been possible without Sandy Nojaim, Lynne Menke, Sharon Maurno, Tricia Admire, Vanessa Chartouni, Ashley Cueto and Kirsten Erdmann. Thank you all so much!

When you attend a “League Event”, you will receive meeting credit and the chance to win a great door prize! Please contact [JenniferWilson@bellsouth.net](mailto:JenniferWilson@bellsouth.net) to reserve your spot!

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## JLM Annual Awards Nomination Form 2004-05

Every year, JLM has a task force which meets in April to determine the recipients for our Annual Awards to be presented at our Annual Meeting in May. We need your help! These awards are described below and are open to the entire membership of the Junior League of Miami. All submissions are due by April 4, 2005 and are completely CONFIDENTIAL!

**Volunteer of the Year Award** – This award is presented annually to an active member whose contribution to the Junior League of Miami, Inc. has been extraordinary in this League year.

**Sustainer of the Year Award**– This award is presented annually to the sustaining member whose contribution to the Junior League of Miami, Inc. is outstanding.

**Rebecca Herndon Bush Community Service Award**– This award is presented annually to an active member of the Junior League of Miami, Inc. The purpose of this award is to recognize an active member who has given of her time and efforts to better the quality of life in our community, through her efforts both in JLM and outside involvements.

In addition, there may be discretionary special recognition awards presented.

To nominate someone, please supply:

- Candidate Name
- Length of Service in JLM
- Placement for 2004-2005
- Briefly explain the reasons this candidate has gone above and beyond her commitment to her placement this League year.
- Has this person ever been recognized in the League during this year (i.e. Superleaguer or Leadership award) or previously with an Annual award?
- For Rebecca Herndon Bush award nominees only: Does this member volunteer in other areas in the community? If so, in what capacity?

Please note that all submissions remain entirely confidential! Make nomination online or send information described above to Karen Cabrera by mail or email, [kkc11@aol.com](mailto:kkc11@aol.com).

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## Membership Outreach Seeks New Members

The Membership Outreach Committee is off to a busy start this year. We are currently seeking Prospective Members for the Fall 2005 Provisional Class. Our committee is excited and committed to finding enthusiastic volunteers to join our membership.

We held our first 2005 Open House on January 26th at JLM Headquarters. It was wonderful to see new faces. The women were eager to hear more about our projects and impact in the community. Many had just moved to Miami recently and were excited about making a difference and meeting new friends.

In addition, our committee staffed an informational/outreach table at “Chili in the Village” and the “National Women’s



Health Heart Fair". This was a great way to publicize what JLM does and meet women who were interested in becoming volunteers. We also had a chance to promote upcoming events such as the "Women Who Make a Difference Luncheon" and the "In Style Fashion Weekend".

We will be holding one more Open House this Spring. We welcome JLM members to attend with the women they are sponsoring. The Open House date is:

- Thursday, April 21 at JLM Headquarters. 6:30 p.m. Social 7:00 p.m. Meeting\*

If you know someone who would be a great addition to JLM, please contact Jennifer Pflieger, Membership Chair, at [jmphins@aol.com](mailto:jmphins@aol.com).

\*Important Note: All candidates must attend an Open House & complete the online application by May 17th. The online application can be found on the JLM website at [www.juniorleagueofmiami.com](http://www.juniorleagueofmiami.com)

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## **Planning Member-at-Large/SPAC Delegate News**

*By Vicki Lopez Lukis*

A common question often asked by the members is: "What is the role of the Planning Member-at-Large?"

A Planning Member-at-Large sits on the Planning Council and is given the opportunity to select and develop a project that will have a future impact on the League. For me, the choice was an easy and obvious one. My most recent placements just prior to my new role as Planning Member-at-Large had been as a Chair-Elect and Chair for the GAP Committee. My passion for working with girls in detention was a natural transition into my new role and helped define the work that I am doing this year.

Many of the GAP girls do not have healthy family relationships with their parents and many of them are involved in the foster care system. My years of working with them highlighted the unmet needs of the amazing girls once they returned to their lives on the "outside" – environments that ran contrary to what they had learned while in detention. My original thought was to help build a group home for young GAP girls which would provide a loving and nurturing setting upon their release. It was my desire to continue the support demonstrated by the GAP Committee in an after care continuum that would make success a little easier. But a new and more important mission began to unfold which would change the face of my work and position our League to take a leadership role statewide.

Early in the year I was also blessed to be named the State Public Affairs Committee Chair, an important placement in our League which provides the opportunity to meet with representatives of Junior Leagues throughout our state to discuss public policy issues. Unbeknownst to me, this unexpected assignment would be the catalyst that would propel my Planning Member-at-Large agenda into a far-reaching arena.

Prior to the first summer task force meeting, SPAC sent each league a Focus Issue Application that would allow us to present a public policy issue. It was a perfect opportunity for us to showcase our knowledge base and experience with dealing with girls in detention. No other Junior League in our state was serving this population yet statistics urged attention as more and more girls were being arrested for more violent crimes. In Florida, one out of every four juvenile offenders is a girl. There has been a 67% increase in girls referred for delinquency while boys only rose 25%. In short, we were reaching a crisis that required immediate intervention. In June 2004, I attended my first task force meeting and presented our well researched focus issue. It was immediately embraced by the Child, Family and Crime Prevention Committee and was placed on the agenda for a full vote of the SPAC delegates at the August Task Force meeting.

In addition, SPAC was looking for its next location to host its SPAC Fall Conference. JLM had not hosted a conference in many years and so we decided to apply with the hopes of providing the forum for the SPAC delegates to experience the GAP firsthand. Needless to say, there was much excitement at the SPAC level about the possibility of Miami as the host site.

In August, the SPAC delegates unanimously voted to adopt our position statement and public stand as it related to gender specific services for girls in the juvenile justice system. They also announced their decision to award the Fall Conference to the Junior League of Miami. We immediately began planning for their arrival in October and developed an extensive program covering issues of bullying in schools, foster care, domestic violence and of course, an introduction to GAP, which included a focus group with GAP girls.

The focus group was the pivotal point in the conference. No delegate left the detention center unaffected by what they had seen and heard. The SPAC Board contributed \$500 towards a library for GAP girls, which has since been matched by the GAP Committee by earmarking their GAP funds for the purpose of building appropriate reading materials for the girls. But more importantly, the SPAC delegates unanimously voted to take our GAP community project back to their Leagues as a potential project in their communities.

What has happened since is short of a miracle. The first League to inquire was JL Sarasota who contacted me in December for more details about our program. Shortly thereafter, I heard from JL Fort Myers, followed by JL Greater Orlando, JL Palm

Beach and JL Clearwater Dunedin and JL Fort Lauderdale. I prepared a small summary of our programming and offered to help in their program development process. They were eager to take me up on my offer because they knew the benefits of developing a project with guidance from those who had already succeeded.

But more importantly, I believed that it was our ethical and moral responsibility to share our institutional memory to help kick start other projects with the objective of bringing our collective services to other girls who found themselves in detention throughout our state. Over the years, JLM's GAP Committees prided themselves in earning the respect of our partners and developing a high level of standards for our programming that was delivered in a professional and caring manner. It had taken us four years of hard work and commitment and I knew that it was important to utilize our proven track record with GAP and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to assist our sister leagues. In addition, I knew that we would be instrumental in opening similar doors with other juvenile detention centers that, unfortunately, did not have a GAP program in place. It would be up to the Junior Leagues to forge new alliances without the help of a strong community partner. This would be a new challenge.

Thus began my statewide work to make this all a reality. In mid-January, I arranged a meeting with the Superintendents of the Collier and SW Florida Regional Juvenile Detention Centers in Fort Myers and was accompanied by the JL Fort Myers President, President-Elect and CRPD Chair (our Program Development Chair equivalent). We were also given a tour of the SW Florida facility.

As with all secured facilities, community volunteers are cautiously approached and carefully screened. I introduced our GAP Committee programming and the success we have experienced here in Miami. I gave them my commitment that I would be involved in helping JL Fort Myers in the developing of their programming, the training of their volunteers as well as acting as their overall liaison with DJJ. I also offered to train DJJ staff that has direct contact with girls on gender specific awareness issues that would improve their relationships with girls and thus make it easier for JL Fort Myers to deliver services in a more gender sensitive setting.

In late January, I traveled to Orlando where I had arranged a meeting with the Superintendent of the Orlando Regional Juvenile Detention Center. Again, I was accompanied by the JL Greater Orlando President, President-Elect, CRPD Chair and Co-Chair. I made the same offer and again, the response from the Superintendent was the same. I had the opportunity to speak to the 30 girls in detention that afternoon and after a 10 minute exchange, my JL colleagues and I found ourselves in tears and overwhelmed with emotion. It confirmed for me that no one can meet these children and not be affected by their situations. It was an eye opener for my JL friends and demonstrated to them the immense need in their community to serve these young women. The Superintendent later wrote me these words:

"It was quite evident during your interaction with the girls that you made an impact in a very short period of time. There is a very great need in our facility for additional counseling services. I look forward to working with the Junior League of Greater Orlando to enhance the programming for girls."

That evening I was asked to speak at their general membership meeting attended by 300 active members. I briefly spoke of my passion about this work and the great success that JLM had experienced. I challenged their membership to take a leap of faith and embrace this project that would soon be placed before them for a vote. Below are reflections from members of the Junior League of Orlando from that evening: "I am still recovering from our visit to the detention center Tuesday. Thank you so much for making the trip to Orlando, speaking to our membership, and all that you do on behalf of our wayward teens! They are so blessed to have you as an advocate and a voice.

I just wanted to share some feed back on last nights presentation... First, I was incredibly moved by Vicki's presentation last night and it was a strong reminder of why we are in the league and what we do. Great insight from an amazing woman. Second, I really loved the GAP concept and it is the first community program that has really peaked my interest. In my five years active, I've never done a community placement but if we do indeed implement GAP, it is something I would advocate and support wholeheartedly.

As a member of the 2004-2005 Provisional Class, the January GMM is the first GMM I have attended with the JLGO and I was impressed with the format of the meeting and the caliber of the presentations. Furthermore, I felt fortunate to have been in attendance to witness Vicki Lukis' courage in sharing her story in an effort to motivate others to make a difference. I was truly moved and inspired by her presentation on the Girls Advocacy Program. The presentation provided a swift and brief education on the need to embrace GAP and support these young girls during such a crucial and devastating time in their lives. The GAP program certainly seems to fall in line with the JLGO's focus on child well-being and domestic violence. Moreover, I think it would be worthwhile to consider GAP as a viable community program for the JLGO to support."

I am scheduled to travel to visit other leagues in the next couple of months in hopes of providing the support and assistance required to help other leagues develop their own unique "GAP" like programs. It has been an amazing process to watch our League take this issue to the next level and use our expertise to assure that even more young lives are impacted in a positive way! .

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**Welcome Transfers**

The Junior League of Miami would like to welcome its latest transfer, Georgina Lavalée. Georgina comes to us from San Antonio, Texas. She transferred from Texas to Miami this winter and must be enjoying our warm winters. Welcome, Georgina.

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## **In Sympathy**

### **Muriel Rice Lynch Rizzo, President, 1954-1955**

As president of the Junior League of Miami in 1954, Muriel's main fundraisers were a Charity Fashion Ball with Burdines that was featured in Town and Country Magazine and the Thrift Shop. In addition, there was a horse show that also raised funds for the Junior League. The main community project, at this time, was the Junior Museum (now Museum of Science). In 1954, the National AJL conference was held in Palm Beach. Since there was not a Palm Beach league, the Miami Junior League was the host and organizer of the conference. Muriel was a great lady with so much elegance and charm. She was an accomplished chef, an avid reader, and tri-lingual as well. The Herald twice named her one of Miami's "Best Dressed," while she, as a young married woman, sewed many of her own clothes. Her intelligence, combined with her passion for helping others, made her a dynamic leader and a good friend. She will be missed by all who knew her.

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## **SPOTLIGHTS**

### **CAB Member: Dave Lawrence**

Dave Lawrence, a Community Advisory Board member and longtime supporter of Junior League of Miami, wants the world to know that JLM's gloves are off!

Lawrence has worn many hats since coming to Miami over 15 years ago. Educated and honored as a journalist, he made his mark as publisher of The Miami Herald for over 10 years, in which time the paper won five Pulitzer Prizes. Throughout, he has volunteered his heart, mind and voice to improve our community, most recently focusing on early childhood education and development. He is president of The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation, which JLM volunteers actively support. Like the Foundation, JLM views family literacy as a major parent skills-building and family empowerment vehicle. JLM volunteers participate in the Literacy Coalition Advisory Group to advance family literacy and parents and children reading together.

Lawrence notes: "Maybe some folks still think of Junior League as the stereotype of white gloves and party manners, and maybe some of that once fit. It doesn't any more and hasn't for a very long time. The Junior League I've known in Miami these past 15 years gets down to the toughest, most important issues – substance abuse, domestic violence, neglected children, the homeless, and so forth.... I've been so encouraged by Junior League members' appetite for this issue [of early childhood development]. They know how important it is to invest in the high-quality basics in the early years. They care deeply about parent skill-building and parent involvement, and have been directly involved in those opportunities with us."

Lawrence is fully engaged in this cause. In addition to presiding over the Foundation, he serves as "University Scholar for Early Childhood Development and Readiness" at the University of Florida (his alma mater), and is a board member and former chair of the Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition. Named by Governor Jeb Bush to the Florida Partnership for School Readiness, he chaired that oversight board for two terms. In 2002, he was a key figure in the passage of a statewide constitutional amendment to provide high-quality pre-K availability for all four-year-olds beginning in the 2005 school year, and has since served as the Governor's special assistant to help get a high-quality program established in Florida. Also in 2002, he led the successful campaign for The Children's Trust, a dedicated source of early intervention and prevention funding for children in Miami-Dade; he now is its chair.

JLM member Susan Bonner, who worked with Lawrence to establish the League's relationship with The Children's Trust, recalls Lawrence's instrumental role in establishing that critical funding: "Dave has articulated a vision for family literacy in our community that others can see and feel. After meeting him you think to yourself, of course, 'Why aren't we fixing that? Let's go fix that.' Nothing is impossible."

JLM is grateful to have Lawrence as a member of its Community Advisory Board, and likewise Lawrence notes of JLM, "We couldn't ask for a better partner."

For more information about our other Community Advisory Board members, log onto our website and click on the link from the "[Leaders](#)" section.

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### **Provisional Spotlight: Brigid Cech**

*How long have you lived in this area?*

I moved to Miami from Chicago in December of 2003.

***Where do you work?***

I am an associate attorney at Ruden McClosky Smith Schuster & Russell, P.A. At Ruden, I am a member of the litigation group, focusing on civil appellate law.

***What was your first impression of JLM?***

When I attended the interest meeting in Miami last Spring, I was amazed at the level of involvement in so many community projects. Plus, I liked the fact that the League continually reviews the success and strength of each project in order to ensure that its members are working on the most beneficial projects for the community and those in need of assistance.

***Does it still hold true?***

Definitely. Each active member I have met has a pride in the project which they work on and the projects which the League sponsors. Plus, because of the variety of projects the League is involved in, there is a project of interest for every member.

***What has been the highlight of your provisional year and why?***

I have had such a great provisional year. I really enjoyed participating at the Inn Transition South Holiday Party because it reminded me that no matter what turmoil or struggle a family is enduring, the joyous times they share together will help them through those difficult days.

Also, I have been lucky enough to spend a number of Thursday evenings with the GAP committee at the Gap program. The detained young ladies who participate in GAP are some of the strongest people I have ever met. They live with the consequences of their crimes, but know that they will achieve a better future if they work hard and believe in themselves. It is truly an amazing experience to talk one on one with a 13 year old girl who has endured more trauma and pain in her short life than most people do in their whole life.

***What was your favorite JLM event/meeting/gathering and why?***

My favorite JLM event was the Nordstrom Gala. For those who missed it, they missed out because it was a really fun time. Since it was at the beginning of the year I did not know many people in JL, but I ended up meeting numerous other provisionals and actives. Also, the food, drinks, and fashion show were really spectacular.

***If you've lived here a long time, have you learned things about South Florida that you never knew despite living here for 1+years?***

Since I have only lived here 16 months, my opinion of South Florida evolves every day, though I am more aware of the potential of Miami as a community due to the JLM.

***What placements (committees) are you interested in for next year and why?***

I am interested in Inn Transition North and GAP. I have three years of working one on one with the St. Louis Domestic Violence Response Team and the St. Louis City court system in handling Orders of Protection, shelter relocations, and other related areas for victims of domestic violence. Although not every victim I worked with ended the cycle of violence, many did leave their abuser for good, which makes you want to work that much harder to help the rest.

As for GAP, at Super Saturday, Vicki Lukis spoke about how she has used her difficult experience to better the lives of juvenile offenders and women incarcerated. Her insight into the needs of society's imprisoned inspired me to begin working with her on a project called "Bridging the Gap" which brings together the writings of incarcerated women with the youth offenders the GAP committee works with every other Thursday night. Since I became involved with Bridging the Gap, I have been allowed to attend GAP committee visits to the Juvenile Detention Center, which have been an intense, yet rewarding, experience.

***What was/is your mentor group project and what did you do to help with it?***

We are building a library at Inn Transition North. Each member of my group has done such a great job taking on individual responsibilities to ensure this project is done in an exceptional manner. I have been in charge of initial collection of the books and holding the books until the library is complete. In addition, I have assisted with the cataloging of the books, painting of the Inn Transition North Library and completing the decorating touches in order to ensure that the residents of ITN have a comfortable place to read with their children.

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## **Sustainer Spotlight: Mary Lynch**

***What placements did you have while a JLM active?***

I was active in the League for nearly 16 years so it is difficult to remember all of my placements. I was on the Board for most of those years. (You will have to remember that the Board was much larger in those days.) I was transfer chairman twice, corresponding secretary twice. I mostly had administrative jobs, "In-League" placements as we called them. I volunteered in the community on my own and not connected with the League.

***Of those, which was your favorite? Why?***



My favorite was president. I had actually gone sustaining the year before I became President but reactivated to take over the corresponding secretary's job. The President announced that she was moving to LA right after she was elected. The then President-elect, Cris Mendoza, was unable to step up that year due to her work load. I was asked to step in. It was the biggest challenge since I did not have a president elect year. It was quite a learning curve and a very interesting two years.

***What was your favorite fundraiser during your years as a JLM active?***

Miami Magic was my all-time favorite fundraiser. Now that I think about it, it was almost like the Christo Gates in NYC. The energy and excitement we created downtown was fabulous.

***What was your favorite project during your years at JLM active?***

It is hard to determine my favorite since there are so many projects that the League started and that I am proud of. They run the gamut from CHARLEE, Miami the Magic City movie, Historic tour books and, of course, the beginning of Inn Transition North.

***Do you remain friends with women you met through JLM?***

Of course, they are the core group of women that I consider true friends. I actually live right next door to Cris Mendoza, my president-elect. The past presidents are an amazing group of women. I know that if I need any thing in the community, this is a group I can go to for help.

***What is your fondest JLM memory?***

The friends I made and finally the league having enough money to start a signature project. I turned to Claudia Kitchens to find what the community really needed that fit our mission. Inn Transition North was born two years later.

***Any thoughts or advice for ladies going sustaining this year?***

Stay involved with the League in some capacity. If you need a year off, participate in the social things the sustainers do. I think it is important to support the League fundraisers because it keeps you connected to the League.

***Have things changed much over the years? If so, how?***

Wow, that's a tough question. When I joined the League there were very few women who worked outside the home. Now the majority do. The projects had to change to meet the needs of the members and still make an impact on the community. I am amazed at the dedication of the members balancing family, work and League.

***For the provisional...***

***How long have you lived in this area?***

A very long time...I was born here.

***What was your first impression of JLM?***

At that time, it was still pretty "white glove." However, I was so impressed with the dedication of the members and the leadership. If you look back at the projects the League has started and are still a thriving concern today it is extraordinary. The one that always comes to mind is the Museum of Science which was known at the Junior Museum when we started it.

***Does it still hold true?***

Certainly the "white glove" impression is no longer with us (thank heavens) but the dedication to the community and the leadership that comes from the League is so valuable to Miami.

***What was the highlight of your provisional year?***

I mostly remember the tours of the city. I was born here so I thought I had seen almost everything. But the extensive provisional year took us places, brought us speakers and trained us in organizational structure that remain with me today. If you could have seen a group of JL provisions all dressed up touring the jail downtown with a rose in our hands that someone had given us. It as a sight to be seen.

***What are your plans for next year?***

I have been asked to sit on the JLM Foundation Board. I was on the Foundation when it was formed but had to resign when I became sustaining advisor to the JLM Board. I also have several other community projects that I am working on. It feels great to be back involved in the League.

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## **Sustainer News & Events**

Thanks to the wonderful efforts of the Sustainer Committee the first half of the League year has been filled with many fun-filled events and activities. These photos of lots of smiles and lots of fun will give you an insight into why our events have been filled to capacity! Afterall, what could be better than spending some time with fellow League members, making new and seeing longstanding friends and having fun? Some of our recent activities included a lovely holiday party, a lesson on flower and greenery arranging, a tour of the Babcock Ranch, an evening with the Book Club and a stroll through Chili In The Village. Please take a look at the calendar of events for the remainder of this League year and see if you are able to join

## Sustainer Events

### March 31: Aida Theatre Party

6:00 pm - Cocktails & hors d'oeuvres at the home of Jeannett & Don Slesnick, 827 N. Greenway Drive, Coral Gables, 33134. 8:00 pm, Aida at the Miracle Theatre, \$38 per person. Your check is your reservation. Make check payable to JLM. Mail to Jeannett Slesnick at address above.  
\*\*Cocktails only \$19 per person.

### April 2: Small Dinner Parties

Hosts needed. Italian theme. Casual, fun-filled evening. Contact: Becky Guilford: 305-661-2080. Mari Kimsey: 305-666-8994. Elise Wood: 305-661-8748.

### April 9: Spring Cocktail Party

At Christy and Earl Powell's home, 80 Leucadendra Drive, Gables Estates. Invitations will be mailed.

### April 18: Cooking Lesson on "Party Fare" by Carole Cookson

9:30 am, at the home of Carole Cookson, 645 Sierra Circle, Coral Gables, \$15 per person. Your check is your reservation. Make check payable to JLM. Mail to JLM HQ, Attn: A. Ehlert

### May 4: Wine Tasting & Hors d'oeuvres at Portobello Restaurant

6:00 pm, \$35 per person, 2841 Coral Way, Your check is your reservation. Send check made payable to JLM c/o Susan McGrath 13425 SW 66 Ave., Pinecrest, FL 33156

### May 11-13: JL Philadelphia Flower Show

Three-day package available through JL Philadelphia. Contact Susan Mease: 215-314-0836

### May 13: Afternoon Tea at the Biltmore

4:30 pm. \$22 per person. Space is limited to 30. Make check payable to JLM. Mail to JLM HQ, Attn: A. Ehlert

### May 18: Book Club Meeting – Open to All

7:30 pm, I am Charlotte Simmons by Tom Wolfe will be discussed. Jennifer Quezada's home, 11450 SW 105 Terrace, Miami. RSVP Jennifer: 305-279-3706. At this meeting the group will decide on next year's book selections.

### May 20, 21 or 22: Canoe/Kayak Trip, Biscayne Nature Center

Trip will include a picnic or wine/cheese. Full moon trip. Date to be confirmed. Contact Theo Long: 305-643-1207

Some activities still in the works....

Beginners Bridge Lessons and/or Card Club

If you are interested please contact Anna Ehlert: 305-667-6300. Mornings and evenings will be scheduled if there is enough interest.

#### **Best Sellers Book Club**

If there is enough interest Anna Ehlert will arrange a group. Please call Anna with comments/questions or to join: 305-667-6300.

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## **Provisionals**

### **2004-2005 Class Gets Busy!**

By *Jackie Crabill and Alison Simon*

The 2004-2 •005 Provisional Class has been very busy learning about the Junior League of Miami and the important community projects it supports. The class has attended Community Awareness Training Meetings and General Membership Meetings. Community Awareness Training Meeting topics have included domestic violence, homelessness, child abuse, early childhood education and women's health issues. They have also observed council meetings and been valuable volunteers at League events and projects.

As part of their training, Provisionals have visited JLM projects and learned about the issues from guest speakers. Provisionals have toured Inn Transition North, Sylvester Cancer Center and the Gladstone Center for Girls. Speakers have included; our very own Andria Hanley who told of her personal battle with Breast Cancer, a current resident of Inn Transition North and Community Advisory Board members Judge Cindy Lederman, Judge Deborah White-Labora. David Lawrence and the always popular Jose Pedro Greer. Touring each site and meeting people who are beneficiaries of the projects has given the provisionals insight into the lives of those the League is committed to helping. The class has come away from each of these meetings especially moved and motivated to get more involved.

The Provisionals have participated in all four fundraisers this year by stuffing envelopes, manning check-in tables, selling raffle tickets, baking goodies for Chili in the Village, procuring auction items for the Women Who Make a Difference Luncheon and much more. They have truly contributed to making our fundraisers a success. The Chairs of the fundraiser committees have remarked that the Provisionals this year are especially terrific! Tate Cicala, Chair of Chili in the Village, remarked "All the girls were fabulous! Such a BIG help, I can't tell you! Everyone was happy and eager to help, full of ideas and accepting of direction, PERFECT! The baked goods were DELICIOUS!!"

Provisionals have been extra helping hands at the League's many community projects, including the GAP Thanksgiving Party, the Inn Transition South Holiday Party and the Hurwitt Crisis Nursery Holiday Party. The Provisionals' involvement in these events has been a great help to the committees and enabled the women to see a League community project first hand. Provisional feedback about these events has been phenomenal, with many of them saying that they found their placement for their first active year!

New this year is the requirement that provisionals sit in on a council meeting in preparation for the customary "JLM 101" meeting. The purpose of this new requirement is to provide Provisionals a clear understanding of the League infrastructure and help them piece together the puzzle that is JLM Leadership (always a subject that eludes Provisionals each year, as well as most actives!)

Members of the Provisional Committee are particularly impressed with this outstanding group of women. This has been an especially rigorous year, but a very rewarding one as well. The women have always done more than what has been required of them. The hard work of this class will be celebrated at their Commencement April 19.

#### **Provisional Holiday Party**

The Provisional Class celebrated the holidays at a party at Mundo at Merrick Park. They enjoyed mojitos and passed hors d'oeuvres, all arranged with the assistance of fellow provisional Roxana Garciga, Events Manager at Norman's Restaurant. As usual, the traditional White Elephant gift exchange was a hit and helped the class get to know each other a little better. The party was a huge success and a well deserved break for our dedicated and hardworking provisionals!

[See JLM Web Gallery of Photos!](#)

***Provisionals Alert!***

**April 19, 2005: Provisional**

### Commencement at Miami City Club

Drinks start at 6:00 p.m. Meeting begins at 6:30 p.m.

Parking is \$6 :30 pm.

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