

Community Voices JUNE 10, 2015

Friends and Neighbors: Murder Mystery Dinner Party benefits Child Advocacy Project



Law firm Ratzan & Faccidomo hosted a Murder Mystery Dinner to raise money for Dade Legal Aid's children's legal services. The winning team that solved the mystery are, back row from left: Paul J. Scanziani, Karen Ladis, Jody Vining, Jaime Vining, Alison Harke, Lance Harke, and Melody Montero and Jesus Montero. In front, from left, are Denise Martinez-Scanziani, Alex Quinn and Josh Holt.

BY CHRISTINA MAYO
Special to the Miami Herald

Having fun and raising funds for kids in foster care was the perfect combination for a successful first annual Murder Mystery Dinner Party to benefit Dade Legal Aid's Child Advocacy Project.

The event, held at The Biltmore hotel in Coral Gables, brought out Miami criminal defense lawyers, judges and dignitaries.

“When you can have a good time and support a good cause – it’s a great night,” said Jude M. Faccidomo, one of the organizers of the event, in a release.

Faccidomo and co-organizer Mycki Ratzan of Ratzan & Faccidomo are champions of Legal Aid, Executive Director Karen Ladis said.

Huge funding cuts across Florida Legal Aid programs have left little legal support for older children in foster care, she said.

“Many of these youth were abandoned at birth, have lived in 20 different foster homes since birth, are behind in school and face uncertainty and fear about aging out of the foster system with no safety net,” Ladis said.

“Our attorneys serve as their advocates guiding them through the foster system, advocating for more stability in these children’s placements, educational plans and future. Our child advocacy attorneys truly make a difference.”

To find out how you can be a champion to a child in need, call 305-579-5733 ext. 2240.

Miami Celebrity Domino Night

Another way you can help children is at the upcoming 2015 Miami Celebrity Domino Night hosted by Amigos For Kids. This fun event has become one of Miami’s most popular fundraisers. This year it will be held at 8 p.m., June 20, at Jungle Island.

Nearly 1,800 supporters are expected to enjoy a night of raising funds and creating awareness about child abuse and neglect. There will be a celebrity red carpet event, celeb domino players, a bar courtesy of presenting sponsor Bacardí U.S.A., a silent auction, live entertainment, the Lincoln Motor Co. Lounge with two of its latest vehicles, and South Florida culinary treats.

This year’s confirmed Celebrity Chairs include Venezuelan actor, singer and Telemundo Top Chef Estrellas Champion Gabriel Coronel; Univision network anchor Maria Elena Salinas; and local television news anchors NBC 6’s Jackie Nespral and Univision 23’s Alina Mayo Azze.

“We are honored by the commitment our corporate sponsors have pledged in order to help us continue our mission to prevent child abuse and neglect,” said Rosa Maria Plasencia, Amigos For Kids President & CEO in a release. “With the support of all our sponsors, celebrities and our community, we look forward to another successful Domino Night to help us meet annual fundraising goals for all our programs and create awareness that There’s NO Excuse for Child Abuse!”

Tickets are \$150 per person in advance, \$175 at the door, and reserved domino tables of four are available for \$1,000 each, in addition to sponsorship opportunities, with all proceeds benefiting Amigos For Kids.

For tickets and reservations, contact Amigos For Kids at 305-279-1155, or visit at <http://amigosforkids.org/>

Miami Man Triathlon

Some of the toughest men and women in town participated in the recent “Mack Cycle Miami Man Triathlon Presented by Florastor” held at Homestead-Miami Speedway. About 300 participants tested their endurance in three different events.

The day included a Half-Iron Triathlon (1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run) and an International Triathlon (.6-mile swim, 29-mile bike, 6.6-mile run), in addition to a Half-Iron Duathlon (1-mile run, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run).

The event was hosted by MultiRace of Davie, which organizes more than 30 endurance races throughout Florida every year.

Yunior Rosete Torres of Miami took home the title in the men’s Half-Iron Triathlon with a time of 4:01:34. Adriana Rendon Ventura of Key Biscayne was the top finisher in the women’s division of the Half-Iron Triathlon with a time of 5:19:04.

Check out <http://www.multirace.us/> to register for upcoming events. Complete results and stats of participants in the Mack Cycle event at Homestead-Miami Speedway are available on the site as well. Congratulations to all.

Strike Out Strokes

Kudos to the Coral Gables Fire Department, the Fire Officers Association of Miami-Dade (FOAMD) and the Miami Marlins for hosting the recent awareness event, “Strike Out Stroke Night” at Marlins Park.

Stroke survivors who were treated and transported by fire rescue were present at the event. A portion of ticket sale proceeds went to the Retreat & Refresh Stroke Camp. More about this is at <http://www.strokecamp.org/>

Stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain becomes blocked or bursts. When this happens, the brain cannot get what it needs and it starts to die. Statistics show that each year about 795,000 people suffer a stroke in the U.S. It is the third leading cause of death in the country.

To get help understanding stroke risks and more about resources, visit <http://www.strokecenter.org/> and www.heart.org.

‘Being Mortal’

Learn about support and solutions for aging members of your family at a talk by Elena P Baba. The event is free and open to the public. Baba, who works in geriatric care management in South Florida, will discuss long-term choices, decision support, and family solutions.

Hosted by the Miami chapter of Compassion and Choices, the talk begins 7 p.m., June 16 at the Coral Gables Congregational Church, 3010 Desoto Blvd. in the chapel.

For more on the “Being Mortal” event, write to miamicompassionandchoices@gmail.com or visit <https://www.compassionandchoices.org/>

If you have news for this column, please send it to Christina Mayo at christinammayo@gmail.com.



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