

The Miami Herald

{ Tropical Life }

May 8, 2011

JESSICA JUNE FOUNDATION: FIGHTING CHILDHOOD CANCER

Applause, noisemakers, floating bubbles and cheers greeted three special kids and their families as they climbed out of a Hummer stretch limo at the Wasie Villa in Fort Lauderdale. The occasion: the Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation STAR party, which this year honored **Lourain Cahow**, a 7-year-old with leukemia; 7-year-old **Apryl Padilla**, who is fighting brain cancer; and **Elijah Barrios**, an 11-year-old battling both eye and bone cancer. The festivities also recognized those who help the non-profit provide temporary financial assistance for needy children fighting cancer in South Florida, including volunteers, donors, physicians, and social workers.

Apryl's third birthday, and Lourain's seventh, happened to fall on the same day as the STAR party, making the day even more special. The three children and their families were surprised with a dream vacation to Orlando that includes a four-night stay at the

Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Resort and park passes to Disney World, Universal Studios, and Sea World. In addition, they will have a STAR date sometime during May that features a stretch limo pickup; a visit to the Museum of Discovery & Science in Fort Lauderdale; a VIP kiddie cocktail party at Blue Martini at the Galleria Mall; stops at Dillard's, Neiman Marcus and Godiva, also at the Galleria; and dinner and a show at the Mai Kai restaurant.

Sandra Muvdi, whose daughter, **Jessica June**, lost her battle with a rare form of leukemia in 2003, received a portrait that will hang permanently at the Wasie Villa. **Jen Klaassens**, vice president of programs for the Wasie Foundation, announced that the \$70,000 contribution she raised as a Woman of the Year nominee for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society would be named for Jessica June. The STAR event raised more than \$20,000.



Mary Helen Olejnik, Nick Scalzo, Mark Budwig and Margarethe Sorensen at the Jessica June party.



Patrik Garde, Phillip Biber, James DeAnda and Mike Snowden at the Jessica June party.



Margarethe Sorensen, Carola Seminario, Josh Bolton and Antonio seminario at the Jessica June STAR party.



Fiammetta Romano, Gregg Sjoquist, Valerie Alzamendi and Mercedes Raffo at the Jessica June party.