

## **Opportunity Inc. marks 70 years with Beach Club luncheon, St. John fashion show**

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Palm Beach's oldest charity is celebrating its 70th birthday — and looking pretty dang good, at that.

The Opportunity Inc. early childhood education center marked the occasion with a luncheon and St. John fashion show on Jan. 21 at the Beach Club.

The afternoon began in the Garden Room with a reception and shopping at vendor booths offering art, clothing, home decor and jewelry.

From there, the sold-out crowd moved to the Ocean Room for a welcome from Frazier Wellmeier, husband of luncheon chairwoman Susan O'Hara Wellmeier.

Wellmeier pointed out that the organization was born in hard economic times, and continues to fulfill its mission in a time of similar economic woes.

The children's chorus from Opportunity Inc. provided the "awwwwww" moment with a sweet, shy rendition of Happy Birthday.

The afternoon continued with lunch, a fashion show of the St. John cruise/resort collection, a raffle and a vanilla cream birthday cake with caramel icing.

Hey — if you were 70 years old and still taking care of a bunch of kids, you'd want some cake, too.

Committee members included Caron Avery, Susie Ballentine, Rebecca Blind, Kristen Cashel, Betty Christensen, Helen Cluett, Kim Coleman, Edna Cowan, Natalie Dejoux, Peggy Dimm, Pamela Dunston, Sherry Frankel, Rosemary Fritz, Alison Haft, Hayden Hosford, Eileen Judell, Katie McDonald, Bobo McKinney, Heather McNulty, Karen Melton Fox, Pamela Miller, Nancy Mizelle, Karen Morrish, Naomi Rosenberg, Waverly Shirreffs, Marty Straton, Terri Swift, Penny Townsend, Lucy Webster and Laura Zung.

More than 240 people attended the event, which benefited the early childhood education and day-care programs of the Mary Alice Fortin Center at Opportunity Inc.

The mission of Opportunity Inc. is to break the cycles of poverty and illiteracy by providing high-quality child care, preschool education and parenting/life skills training for low-income and at-risk families.



Daily News Photo by Lee Hershfield

Carole Lembo, Joyce Coffin and Jennifer Bailey