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## LEAH LEAPS TO NEW HEIGHTS

On Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, the League for Educational Awareness of the Holocaust (LEAH) held its twelfth annual “Bridge Builder” Gala at the Boca Raton Hotel and Resort. The event was attended by a record setting 350 people, some from as far away as Texas and California. “The evening was truly a night to remember and I will cherish the memories forever. It is a pleasure and honor to be associated with LEAH” said Yvonne S. Boice, recipient of this years’ award. As testament to her belief in the mission of LEAH as well as the honor bestowed upon her, the honoree totally underwrote and personally coordinated the décor of the The Great Hall at the Hotel for the evening. The overwhelming comment of the guests, many of whom are frequently in the room, was that the room was breathtaking and truly spectacular. The International Celebration theme was apparent from the moment guests stepped off the red carpet into the entry hall adorned with a floor to ceiling mural of the Earth.

Festivities began with a magnificent silent auction and cocktail reception. The auction featured over 150 items with values from \$25 to \$4200 **plus** a mini shop of handcrafted Jewelry by Lisa, art by Hamilton Fine Arts, sports memorabilia by Palm Beach Autograph and a jewelry shop by Gregory’s. Fine Jewelry.

The comments were overwhelming when the guests entered the great Hall, welcomed by the music

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of Steve Chase and the incredible international décor.

Once the guests were seated, the next portion of the event was begun with the singing of the Star Spangled Banner by the Pine Crest School Choir, followed by the welcoming comments of Gala Chairs Elyssa and Barry Kupferberg. “We are extremely pleased at this amazing turnout and grateful for your support. LEAH’s efforts to educate our children can and will make a difference”, said Elyssa. Added Barry, “Children must learn to respect and accept diversity, not just tolerate but embrace differences.”

Following this welcome was a video explaining the inception, history and mission of LEAH, with a sampling of its accomplishments to date

The podium was then taken by LEAH President Robert Alrod, who added a warm welcome, acknowledged, the honoree Yvonne S. Boice, the Kupferbergs, Honorary Chair Suzanne Klein and extended thanks to event coordinators Connie Packman (President Emeritus) and Doreen Alrod as well as Executive Director Stephen Spiegel, Administrator Madeleine Malen, the many volunteers and LEAH founder Nancy Boyman. Alrod went on to emphasize “LEAH’s purpose is to ensure that our youth matures to adulthood rejecting bigotry, hatred and violence”. He then spoke of the partnership LEAH has with F.A.U. and the Shoah Institute Visual History Archives. At the conclusion of Alrod’s remarks, came what could rightly be described as the **the highlight of the evening**. Edna Meyer-Nelson of Houston, Texas approached the podium and asked to be heard. President Alrod turned the mic over to her. Edna announced the creation of the

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**“Friends of Suzanne Klein Visual History Archives Fund”**, at LEAH and her gift of \$50,000 to initiate the fund. This was followed by donations to the Fund from Connie and Stan Packman, Charles Joekel of Houston, Michelle Kirsch of Dallas, Bernard Golan of Boca Raton, Carolyn Faulk of Houston, Malcolm Dorman of Boynton Beach, and others, creating tremendous excitement. It is hoped that this fund will continue to grow to assure the availability of the VHA taped interviews to students and the community at large served by all the campuses of FAU.

The Pine Crest School Choir then presented vocal selections from around the world and in a number of languages.

Following dinner and dancing, President Emeritus Connie Packman presented the Bridge Builder Award to honoree Yvonne S. Boice. Yvonne spoke warmly and eloquently in acceptance of her award. “I am deeply honored to be the LEAH 2008 Bridge Builder Award recipient”, she said. At the conclusion of her remarks, Yvonne announced her gift to LEAH, a series of Public Service Video Announcements to be used by LEAH in order to promote public awareness of the organization and its mission.

The evening truly was electric and filled with energy and emotion. For further information about LEAH or to make a contribution, contact the office at 561-393-9717 or the website at [www.leahforkids.org](http://www.leahforkids.org)

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