

SOCIAL STUDIES



Drowning prevention advocates honored at fourth annual Live Like Jake 'Be the Light' gala

Saturday, Oct. 9 – Lady Jean Ranch, Jupiter

By Krystian von Speidel
Notables Editor

Committed to honoring the life Jake Roarke Morrison, who died in a drowning accident at the age of 2, the Live Like Jake Foundation's mission is to raise awareness for drowning prevention. Childhood drowning is the No. 1 cause of accidental death in children ages 1 to 4.

Founded by Jake's parents, Keri and Roarke Morrison, in 2014, the organization recently held its fourth annual "Be the Light" gala at the Lady Jean Ranch in Jupiter, with more than 160 guests and sponsors coming together during the diamonds and denim-themed night to raise more than \$100,000. The proceeds will be used to provide scholarships for Infant Self Rescue (ISR) swim lessons and ISR instructor training grants, as well as critical funds for families who have lost a child or have a child with critical care needs.

The evening included the presentation of the Live Like Jake Foundation annual Be the Light Award, which was given to Jenna and Skyler Edwards, whose child was involved in a

non-fatal drowning incident. That moment led Jenna to becoming an ISR instructor. Each year, the Edwards family raises record numbers of funds for Live Like Jake's mission during the annual Watermelons for Water Safety campaign.

Keynote speakers for the evening included Tunishia Wardally and Chrystal Copenhaver, whose own experiences with the drowning accidents of their children have led to their advocacy for water safety. Both Wardally and Copenhaver have been chosen to receive Live Like Jake's ISR instructor training grants.

This year, Life Saver Pool Fence awarded their Live Saver Award to Richard Specht, whose son Richard Edwin Ehmer Specht (Rees) drowned at 22 months old. Rich and his wife Samantha created the Rees Specht Foundation, which has provided 85,000 Long Island students with free water safety assemblies through its "Rees Specht Water" program.

For information about the Live Like Jake Foundation, visit livelikejake.com or call 561-441-7611.



Stephanie and Sean Gardiner
[JENN SCOTT PHOTOGRAPHY]



Keri and Roarke Morrison



Jenna and Skyler Edwards



Tunishia and Justin Wardally



Kate Mattram, Eric Lupton



Jo Locker, Heather Atkins, Sue Eusepi-Green



Michael Loughran, Mary Mergens-Loughran, John Loughran



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WAYNE THIEBAUD, *Pie Slice*, 1978

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