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Delaney's first haircut caps 'cut-a-thon' event's success

BY GARY ALAN RUSE

The "cut-a-thon" on Sunday, Apr. 22, hosted by Joseph's Salon of Palmetto Bay not only served as a way to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, it also provided an opportunity to give the young girl who inspired the event her very first haircut.

Delaney Binker, a bright and personable 18-month-old afflicted with the illness, was brought to the attention of the salon's operators John Valentine and Joseph Alves by Delaney's grandmother, Bonnee Binker, which prompted them to learn more about Cystic Fibrosis and host the fundraiser.

Valentine was pleased with the response from the public.

"The weather, even though it was bad, did not stop the people from coming in for the event," Valentine said the week after the cut-a-thon. "We really had a great turnout. The stylists were kept busy from beginning to end and we even had our nail tech, Zadia Pino, stay until 5 p.m. to finish up all the clients she had. It was a great success."

Valentine said he felt that a big part of the success was just getting the message out about Cystic Fibrosis, an illness that they had known little about in the beginning.

"I learned so much about it and how it affects those who have it," Valentine said. "It really makes one think, for those who have Cystic Fibrosis have a 50 percent chance to make it to their 37th birthday. By doing this event we not only learned about Cystic Fibrosis ourselves but all the clients we have and those that attended the event learned about it as well."

Valentine said that although the cut-a-thon was a one-day event, they will continue their efforts to get the word out. They are keeping a story book about Delaney in the waiting area at the front of their salon, since seeing the faces of children that are born with the



Joseph Alves of Joseph's Salon cuts Delaney Binker's hair during the fundraiser.

disease makes it real and encourages everyone to want to do more to help find a cure.

"Joseph's Salon will continue to accept donations made out to Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and we are also helping them out by selling raffle tickets to win a Ford Focus Titanium," Valentine said. "We encourage everyone that did not have a chance to make it to the event to stop by the salon, read Delaney's story and make a donation or buy some raffle tickets to help cure Cystic Fibrosis."

Alves said the highlight of the day was

when little Delaney got in the chair herself.

"It was such an honor to be the first to cut Delaney's hair. I'm looking forward to her returning as a client for many years to come."

Bonnee Binker, Delaney's grandmother, said, "It is events such as this that count, and it helps to get the word out there what Cystic Fibrosis is and how bad it is."

Joseph's Salon is located at 14973 S. Dixie Hwy. in Palmetto Bay. For information call 305-233-5291 or visit online at <www.josephs-salon.com> or <www.cff.org/great_strides/bonneebinker>.