

JANET DUCA NORTON

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Kara's Summer Celebration

"Kara's Summer Celebration," the annual fundraiser for the Palo Alto-based volunteer grief-support organization, was a celebration of community. For more than 30 years, Kara's mission has been to "empower children, teens and adults to find their way through grief, so that they can rebuild their lives with renewed hope and meaning."

"It's a safe place; a whole group of people care about you and your child," a recent widower said in a video that showcased Kara's youth program. I feel more secure." Parents (in the video) said they developed a feeling of capability.

About 280 friends, volunteers and guests turned out for the July 25 beach-themed benefit, which raised almost \$160,000 for counseling, support groups and educational programs. The event took place at the Sofitel San Francisco Bay.

Kara is from the Greek root of the word "care." Last year more than 100 volunteers provided help to more than 3,500 individuals and many organizations.

The evening featured a cocktail reception that had not only a silent auction but also games and prizes, along with a steel-band serenade, a live auction and the debut of the youth counseling video.

The highlight of the evening was honoring Shirley and Leonard Ely for their philanthropy and leadership roles. They have sup-



Janet Duca Norton / For The Daily News

The Ely family at "Kara's Summer Celebration" includes Shirley and Leonard Ely with grandson Will Pringle, left, and daughter Maggie Pringle.

ported Kara from its beginning, and Leonard has served on the Advisory Council.

"They never forget to give back to our community," emcee Steve Player said. They led the way that night by pledging a matching grant of \$20,000 for donations of \$1,000.

They also are celebrating their 62nd anniversary this year. Sharing their special night were their daughter Maggie Pringle and grandson Will Pringle.

Guests included Janet Larson, Jeanne and Leo Ware, Steve and Nancy Player, Bob and Susan Finocchio, Margaret Rotzin, Cathy and Mike Foster, Elyce Melmon, President/CEO of Packard Children's Hospital Christopher Dawes, Margie Kriebel, Daniel and Patricia O'Brien, Shelley Doran and Woody DeMayo Executive Director Cyndy Ainsworth, and Board President Christina and Dennis Moser.

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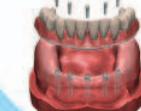
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