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Night Golf Event For A Good Cause

By JOYCE McKENZIE

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A typical golf tournament is one in which adult foursomes pay a hefty fee to gather on the links, take in some sunshine, attempt to score well and look forward to imbibing in plenty of eats and drinks afterward.

That will not be the case with the tournament planned for March 13 at the Temple Terrace Golf & Country Club. Golfers will be playing for free amid a unique setting and aiming to win for an entirely different purpose.

Eighteen two-person adult-child teams will join forces on the first tee, where each player will be equipped with a flashlight and glow-in-the-dark golf balls in preparation for the nine-hole scramble, set to begin at 7:30 p.m.

In lieu of an entry fee, golfers are made to focus on raising donations to benefit the Clouds of Hope, a nonprofit organization that provides support for families of children with life-altering illnesses.

It was founded by Renee Blain, a Temple Terrace mother whose 5-year-old daughter, Allie, has an immune disorder called idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura, a condition in which her spleen attacks her body's platelets, the blood-clotting agents that protect her from the life-threatening risk of severe hemorrhaging.

Golfers' contributions will be used toward building two adaptable playgrounds in Temple Terrace, one at the Omar K. Lightfoot Recreation Center and another at Riverhills Elementary School. They will be constructed in compliance with American Disabilities Act regulations and be equipped with cushioned rubber ground coverings and with apparatuses compatible for children with physical disabilities.

"We don't want people to think they are special-needs playgrounds. We want them to be for all kids so they can play together," Blain said.

City officials, she noted, support the idea and have offered to provide partial funding.

"Without the city this dream would not be a possibility," Blain said.

Golfing, however, is just part of the agenda in an event that is being billed as the Glow-in-the Dark Golf and Family Fun Night.

The carnival-style family-fun portion begins at 6 p.m. and includes various games, activities and snacks for nongolfers and "kids" of all ages.

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The purchase of a \$5 armband allows users to enjoy unlimited games and includes three tickets for popcorn, snow cones and cotton candy. Additional tickets priced at \$1 each or 6 for \$5 will serve as donations toward opportunities to win a variety of donated items.

The dinner, compliments of Pipo's Latin Cafe in Tampa, will be served at 6:30 p.m., followed by a movie on the lawn prior to the golfers' return to the club house.

"Most golfing events alienate nongolfers, but we'll have something fun for everyone," said Temple Terrace resident Frank Cagnina, the golfing coordinator. "It's an event that is totally family oriented."

"It's going to be such a great night, and I just think it's for such a good cause," said Cyndi Keding, who is assisting with the evening's preparations. "What city wouldn't want to have an adaptive park where all children can play together?"

To inquire about sponsorship opportunities, call Wally Blain at (813) 382-0477 or e-mail cloudsofhope@verizon.net.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: Glow-in-the Dark Golf and Family Fun Night

WHERE: Temple Terrace Golf & Country Club, 200 Inverness Ave., Temple Terrace

WHEN: March 13. The family fun events start at 6 p.m., with the tournament scheduled for 7:30.

INFORMATION: Frank Cagnina, (813) 300-0114, or Cyndi Keding, (813) 210-5865