

Palisadian-Post

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PAGE 20

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2017 ♦ PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA

\$1.50

Dollies Delivered to Malibu

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Dollies Making A Difference, a Pacific Palisades-based nonprofit, has delivered stuffed Dollies and Teddy Bears all around the world, as far as Nepal, Mexico and even North Korea.

Their latest stop was a bit more local: Malibu.

For two weekends every summer, OUR HOUSE Grief Support Center hosts Camp Erin-Los Angeles for children ages 6 to 17 who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling or guardian within the past three years. The weekend is held at Camp Bloomfield in Malibu and is free of charge for each child.

This year, for the first time ever, DMAD delivered over 100 stuffed toys to children participating in the camp. The nonprofit was founded by Huntington resident Cindy Simon and Dorothy Miyake in spring of 2010 to make Dollies and Teddy Bears for the children of Haiti who lost their homes and families to an earthquake.

Camp Erin aims to help children heal while having an exciting camp experience. The weekend's schedule includes traditional camp activities, along with grief support, remembrance projects and education. Campers are invited to rock climb, do arts and crafts, and swim. They also participate in campfires used to facilitate expression of feelings, memorialize loved ones who have passed and contribute to healing. Grief specialists and trained volunteers guide campers through grief-related activities.

Friday's Luminary Ceremony is among the weekend's most powerful activities. Children and teens say goodbye to their loved one by writing or drawing on a lit lantern that is left to float across the pool. Activities like the Luminary Ceremony give children a support system and a safe place to talk about their grief with children who are able to more fully under-



A special Dollie and Teddy Bear delivery

Photos courtesy of OUR HOUSE

stand their feelings.

Camp Erin is a project created and supported by the The Moyer Project in Seattle, Washington, the nonprofit of Major League All-Star Pitcher Jamie Moyer and his wife, Karen. The Moyers were inspired to name the camp after a close friend, Erin Metcalf, who died from cancer at the age of 17.

The camp fulfills Metcalf's wish:

to help children navigate through their grief. Camp Erin was displayed in the Emmy-Winning documentary, "One Last Hug: Three Days at Grief Camp," a film set at the camp that details the power of friendship and support in healing the effects of death and grief in children.

Camp Erin-LA is held this summer during the weekends of June 23-25 and August 18-20.