

Patt Diroll: On the town for Oct. 21, 2010

O'Rourkes honored

It was a busy weekend. On Sunday, Oct. 9, the annual Butterfly Garden Party, sponsored by the Coalition for Pulmonary Fibrosis (CPF), honored Pasadena's Sandy and Bob O'Rourke with the 2010 Frank Cabral Humanitarian Award.

More than 100 supporters joined hosts Deirdre Roney and John Cadarette at their Malibu home for the afternoon event that raised more than \$70,000 for patient outreach and research.

Since being diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis in 2006, O'Rourke, Caltech's vice president emeritus for public relations, and his wife have devoted themselves to raising public awareness of the disease, which robs its victims of their ability to breathe.

An estimated 48,000 new cases are diagnosed each year, and currently there is no known cause or cure.

"Before I take my last breath, I want to make 'PF' a household word," O'Rourke said upon receiving the award. "Recognition and awareness are key drivers in finding treatments and a cure. It has worked well for breast cancer and AIDS, and it can work here. We just have to keep on fighting."

In praising the O'Rourkes' unrelenting dedication, Coalition CEO Mishka Michon said, "Sandy and Bob are shining as beacons of hope and inspiration to all those who are suffering from the disease. Their willingness to say the hard truths, so the public can understand the cold reality of PF, is of inestimable value."

Attendees included Ken Silverman of Pasadena, Colin Hurren of La Canada Flintridge, and Glendale's Richard Lieboff, who lost his partner to PF.

