

A Family's Crusade against Prader-Willi Syndrome

"I must do something" always solves more problems than "Something must be done."

— Author Unknown

Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) is a lifelong condition affecting appetite, growth, metabolism, cognitive function and behavior. Palm Beach Gardens residents, Ronnie and Ira Levine unfortunately know it all too well. Their granddaughter, 10-year old Josilyn Faith, was born with PWS. People with this disease share one painful trait, an intense, insatiable craving for food – and will do almost anything to get it – however never feel full. This can result in uncontrollable obesity and even death, while bringing heartache to family members who must deny their pleas. The most commonly known, non-inherited and life-threatening genetic disorder, approximately one per 10,000-25,000 people suffer from PWS.

Growing frustrated that there is currently no treatments or cure, the Levines stepped forward.

"We had to do something for Josilyn and the many other families who suffer this burden," said Ira Levine.

Ronnie Levine knows that many her age are involved with different charities, but states, "my charity work is being proactive in my grandchild's life ... to help raise money for research so that Josilyn, along with thousands of others like her, can live a normal life without pain."

Thus the Levines launched the LPGA Pro-Am golf tournament ... The Prader-Willi Classic at PGA National Resort & Spa. What started out nine years ago raising \$12,000 has now turned into one of the most anticipated charity golf tournaments in Palm Beach County. LPGA star and tournament director Leta Lindley has been actively involved for the last five years and invites many current LPGA golf pros to the tournament because she believes in this cause so deeply. This year in support of Lindley, over 23 LPGA stars will play along with foursomes "from tee-to-green" – a real thrill to all who participate.

Ronnie and Ira Levine are excited to announce that the upcoming tournament proceeds will benefit The Prader-Willi Research Fellowship at The Scripps Research Institute, Florida in honor of Josilyn Faith Levine and



Photo by LILA PHOTO

LPGA pro golfers Jackie Gallagher-Smith, Leta Lindley and Michelle McGann will play in the 2013 Prader-Willi Classic.

Harold Wilkinson IV. The Prader-Willi Research Fellowship, under the direction of Professor Roy Smith, Ph.D., Founding Chairman of Scripps' Department of Metabolism and Aging, will focus on development of a therapeutic intervention as a potential treatment of PWS.

"We are honored to be the recipient of this research grant, said Dr. Smith. "We pledge to work tirelessly on behalf of all the PW families and generous supporters."

"With more people aware and educated about PWS, the more lives are saved...and with more money raised for research, the closer we'll be to finding treatments and a cure," said Ira. "We are extremely grateful for all our family, friends, and supporters in the community who have helped us on our crusade."

This year the 9th Annual Leta Lindley Prader-Willi Classic will begin with a dinner gala and auction on Friday, January 18th featuring special guest speaker LPGA legend, Kathy Whitworth. The 9th Annual Pro-Am Tournament begins on the 19th with a 8:30 a.m. breakfast and 10 a.m. shotgun start. For tickets or more information please call (856) 577-5484 or (561) 762-2370, or visit www.pwclassic.com.

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