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Pizarro: Stars shine at Alzheimer's Association's amazing gala in Menlo Park

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The Alzheimer's Association put together an amazing event for its second Part the Cloud gala Saturday night at the Rosewood Sand Hill in Menlo Park.

"Amazing" is the only word for an event that had actresses Brooke Shields and Virginia Madsen as impromptu auctioneers, sharing a kiss onstage in hopes of bringing in \$1,000-per-table donations (it worked).

That was followed up by singer Chris Isaak, who put on an energizing performance for the fashionably attired crowd of more than 330 people who partied in a tent on the resort grounds.

The guest list included celebrities from Hollywood and pro football as well as A-listers in the medical and research fields who are fighting the battle against the debilitating disease that seemed to have touched the lives of everyone there.

Event founder and chair Michaela "Mikey" Hoag said Part the Cloud has raised more than \$2 million for Alzheimer's research, providing grant funding for six projects. And clearly, the goal is to tap into the entrepreneurial spirit of Silicon Valley, when it comes to both funding and research.

"We did what we could do with Silicon Valley roots," said Hoag, who was accompanied by her husband, Technology Crossover Ventures cofounder Jay Hoag. "We took chances and tried innovative approaches."

Shields and Madsen did a great job helping to fill in for the expected emcee, Mark Shriver, a Democratic politician and senior vice president for Save the Children (and brother of former California first lady Maria Shriver). He was there but was sidelined from the stage by kidney stones. Other attendees included Alzheimer's Association CEO Harry Johns, former NFL stars Ronnie Lott and Harris Barton, movie director and producer Chris Columbus, Canary Foundation founder Don Listwin, Stephen Silver of Stephen Silver Fine Jewelry and Schmidt Family Foundation President Wendy Schmidt.