

MESSAGE FROM JIM HARDMAN, PRESIDENT OF FOF

Dear Friends of Fircrest

Election season is upon us. This is the very best season to **contact candidates** in your area and ask what they think about Fircrest and RHCs [residential habilitation centers] in general. If they are unfamiliar with such facilities refer them to web sites fircrestfriends.org and ActionDD.org. If they are running as democrats, refer them to the **Facebook Page** of the **Disabilities Issues Caucus** of the State Democratic Central Committee. Encourage them to **tour**. Tour information is on the web sites.

Let them know why Fircrest is important to your loved one and why it is important to **you**. Tell them **your** story. Tell them why you support Fircrest as a home and service provider. Cat got your tongue? Practice by telling a friend. Write it down. Go to the web sites, above, and review what others have determined are salient points.

We have some reason to be encouraged. There will be a lot of turnover in Olympia this year. Incumbents have had a rough time trying to be fair while coming up with a **budget** which has **grossly insufficient** monies for people with disabilities. And for education, and for virtually every state endeavor. That's **not** the encouraging part.

I am encouraged by what seems to be growing recognition of the **value** of RHCs. In my own 46th district recently appointed Representative Gerry Pollet has studied the RHC role in serving people with gross disabilities. He is familiar with non RHC care for people with developmental disabilities and has become familiar with Fircrest, commendably beginning many years ago. He makes his living as a public interest oriented lawyer, asks smart questions, and genuinely empathizes with residents and their families.

Another candidate running for the position of retiring Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez-Kenny, is Sarajane Siegfried. I had an opportunity to speak with her recently. She has had a long association with Parkview, a non profit vendor of residential services for people with DD. Four years ago she spoke against a Democratic Resolution Supporting RHCs.

She has since changed her thinking on the issue and genuinely supports Fircrest. She represents our **progress**.

Action DD organized a meeting with **Rob McKenna**, our Attorney General, now running for governor. He listened carefully and expressed heartfelt **support**. Contact his campaign and let him know RHCs are important to you and your family. He impresses as a smart and thoughtful man who empathizes.

As I write this we are two days short of meeting with **Jay Inslee**, gubernatorial candidate and former Congressman.

Some impregnable RHC foes, such as Rep. Marylou Dickerson are not seeking re- election. We cannot expect legislators to be familiar with the necessity of RHCs. Whether incumbent or newcomer we need to **educate** legislators about RHCs. **Encourage RHC tours** by those seeking your vote. **The more legislators know about RHCs the more they will support them..** Foes assume they know all about RHCs because ARC and related relics of once current thinking have influence. It is reasonable for someone to assume such a group would advocate accurately about facilities for people with disabilities. This is an unfortunate advantage RHC foes have. People assume they are knowledgeable and up to date. Dispelling this **myth** is up to us. You know better than ARC and DRW because their thinking on RHCs froze mid century. You are current because you live it now.

The RHCs Future Task Force was purposely weighted in favor of RHC foes by the Governor and the sponsor of the legislation that created it. It is revealing that those individuals felt it necessary to put their **thumbs on the scale** of this deliberation. Meritorious thought doesn't need a fixed forum.

But we do have some access to this Task Force and we **must use it**. Your thoughts and entreaties can reach Task Force members through Brittany Yunker whose email is Yunker@leg.wa.gov phone her at: 360 786 7407. The lone RHC representative on the Task Force is Bonnie Sullivan whose email is: Rosiebud1907@hotmail.com. Bonnie lives in, or near, Spokane. As if to discourage her participation in the Task Force, they meet in Olympia and refuse to subsidize travel for Bonnie. **The thumb presses on the scale**. Help Bonnie out by sharing your experiences with "community" living and writing to her about why you support Fircrest and RHCs and why the Task Force should too.

Have a good and productive summer, please spread the word.

J.R. Hardman J.D., CPG Pres. FOF

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

May 6 Board & Membership Meeting Highlights

Treasurer, Maria Walsh, reported that our new bank arrangements are in progress. After discussion, Board approved motion to amend our by-laws to read that signers on all FoF bank accounts be three members of the executive committee: The president, Treasurer & Secretary. Copy of this resolution will be added to the Board Source Book.

Web Site Manager, Paul Strand, reviewed the terms of the contract [with him] to design and manage our web site. Board moved to approve and witnessed the signing. Paul requested all members review the site for needed updates. All changes need to be funneled to Maria and not directly to Paul. Paul's work is pro bono.

HUR & Garden committee reports are on page 4

Community Outreach. Board advisory member, Janet Way, Shoreline Activist, reported that the community is actively seeking land for developing urban vegetable gardens and that the excess land on Fircrest Campus would be ideal for organizations such as Tilt & Digging Shoreline to engage community and Fircrest residents gardening. FoF board voted, at the March 11th '12 meeting, to **not** sponsor the program, but welcomes entities involved to pursue the program with Campus Administration and DSHS.

Meeting Adjourned to welcome guest speakers, Dr. Asha Singh, Fircrest Superintendent, and Senator Maralyn Chase (D-32).

Legal advisor, Michael Johnson gave board and members an overview of the family council processes explaining parent/guardian rights to communicate grievances, including individual and policy complaints, which must, by law, receive a timely response. Additional information on page 4.

Legislative committee chair, Terri Anderson, reported that she and Action DD chairs are coordinating meetings with gubernatorial and other candidates.

June 10 Board Meeting Highlights

Guest speakers Cheryl Felak and Rep. Gerry Pollet(D-46). Were welcomed by the board. Cheryl reviewed projects she has been working on with various community groups to expand campus usage and programs. Gerry shared his support for maintaining Fircrest. We educated him on several issues which he offered to look into.

Communications: FoF member Hank Voderberg, who graciously volunteered to assist us with organizing our electronic mailing and contact lists, gave us an outline of his recommendations. We are extremely grateful for his help and patience with our 20th century brains.

Autism Day Aug. 11. Board approved Cheryl's request for funds to cover expense of having our literature put in 'hand out' bags for the event.

Treasurer's report and Minutes are available by request.

FOF 2012 REGULAR MEETINGS SCHEDULES

<u>Membership Meetings</u> July 8, Sept. 9, Nov.11-Annual meeting	<u>Board Working Meetings</u> Aug. 12, Oct.14, Dec. 9 (Annual Planning)	<u>Home Unit Representatives</u> Third Tuesday of the month at 1 PM Fircrest, Admin Bldg. <u>Ad Hoc Meetings</u> Called as needed
<p>All meetings, Board and Membership, unless otherwise notified, are held in the Staff Training room of the ATP (Adult Training Program) Building, northeast corner Fircrest Campus. All are welcome to any FoF meeting.</p>		

2012 FRIENDS OF FIRCREST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:	Directors:	Emeritus: Dot Brenchley,
President: Jim Hardman, J.D., C.P.G	Terri Anderson	Ruth Durkan, Jean Huntley,
*Vice President: Paul Strand	Jo Bousman	Phil Scheier
Secretary: Candace Braley, (temp)	Betty Cantrell, RN, BSN	Advisory: David Baker, Ph. D.
Treasurer: Maria Walsh	Saskia Davis	Maureen Durkan, Bonny Oborn,
	Kristin Ellison-Oslin, Rev. Min. Div.	Michael Johnson J.D., C.P.G.
		Emilio Gambacorta
		Alice Hardman, MSW, CPG
		Liz Patterson
		Cynthia Willman, O.T.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT**LOCAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES****VOR ANNUAL MEETING & WASHINGTON INITIATIVE June 9 thru 13, 2012 Washington, DC**

The annual meeting for VOR commenced with Reports of the States. Every state reporting (with the exception of Arkansas) talked about the cuts in Budget & Services within the state facilities & community programs. Arkansas currently "has more than enough money" due to their recent victory over the DOJ in regard to Conway Developmental Center. Community Services around the country are experiencing cuts similar to WA state.

Virginia reported on their progress in light of the Settlement & Notice of Lawsuit (in that order) that became public in January 2012. An agreement to close 4 of the 5 Training Centers, increase Home & Community Based Waiver placements by 4,100+ slots and move individuals into the community was reached without any input from Parents & Guardians.

The Parents & Guardians groups of the Training Centers joined forces and went to court to be recognized as participants in this action. A hearing was held on June 8th. Judge John Gibney ruled Parents & Guardians were indeed a necessary part of the decision making process. Look for a VOR Weekly Update coming soon for details.

The presenters at the Sunday session included: Sam Brock, CBS Anchor/Reporter at CBS 6 in Richmond, VA. Sam aired an in-depth look at the programs & people who need the supports of facilities, like Northern Virginia Training Center.

Katrina Owens, Constituent Representative for Rep. Donna Edwards of Maryland, lent her voice to how grassroots advocacy can be effective.

Dr. Terry Kopansky, Executive Director, Mur-Ci Homes (an ICF/MR in Antioch, Tennessee) spoke on the supports & services that are not always available in a community setting.

Monday thru Wednesday was our turn on The Hill. There were fewer attendees at the conference. A tough economy has hit us all. Bill & I delivered VOR folders to the Oregon, Alaska & New Mexico delegations. Since the 1st District of WA State has no Representative (Jay Inslee resigned in order to run for Governor), that office operates as an Archive. We met with staffers & explained VOR's position on Cosponsorship & Support for HR 2032 (federal legislation to protect the rights of people with profound intellectual disabilities) and Reform and Reauthorization of the Developmental Disabilities Act. Reform would include an examination of whether the DD programs established under the bill are meeting their intended goals. Institutional Closures were not the intention of the bill writers.

We met with the offices of Rick Larsen (2nd), Jaimie Herrera Buetler (3rd), Cathy McMorris Rodgers (5th), Jim McDermott (7th), Dave Reichert (8th), Adam Smith (9th), and Senator Maria Cantwell. We played phone tag with Senator Murray's office, resulting in a packet drop off. Norm Dick's office (6th) meeting was cancelled due to a scheduling change. Doc Hastings' office (4th) was unavailable.

Overall, it was a gratifying visit. However, there is still a great deal of work to be done in order to get HR 2032 passed and the DD Act reformed and reauthorized.

Thank you to all who have supported us in our DC efforts.

Terri Anderson, WA State Coordinator VOR WinchesterWillie@comcast.net 425.788.4529

LOCAL LEGISLATIVE NEWS

No Meeting date has been set for the Developmental Disabilities Service System Task Force. When a date & location is set, you will be notified.

REMEMBER: Vote, Sign & Return your ballots for the August 7th election. Be sure to follow your local districts to see who is running. **All candidates** should be invited to tour an RHC. Our futures may be relying on these individuals. Let them know what an important part of the "Safety Net" our RHCs really are.

KEEP UP TO DATE, VISIT: fircrestfriends.org and ACTIONDD.org and check links for related news.

Sign up for a new information source started by Fircrest parent Cheryl Felak
<http://groups.google.com/group/fircrestfamily> or e-mail fircrestfamily@googlegroups.com

CAMPUS NEWS

Home Unit Representatives HUR Meetings

Betty Cantrell, Chair

May 15th meeting welcomed guests Shirley Pilkey, Administrator PAT N, and Jessica Zinda, Director, PAT A. HUR reps have been concerned about low participation of residents at sponsored and regular campus activities including Chapel services. Inadequate staffing was implied. We requested protocols for getting volunteers to assist with transporting residents to events in light of staffing shortages. Volunteer coordinator position, cut a few years ago, has been recently reinstated on a part time basis. Hopefully this will help define the needs and requirements for volunteers and help us coordinate events with available volunteers.

The group also worked on the Parent /Guardian Handbook (work in progress), discussed garden usage issues and rules, and legislative news.

A parent expressed concerns about home unit staffing and care issues, especially on weekends. HUR offered support and directed parent to appropriate staff for addressing these issues. This is what HUR is for.

June 19, Meeting opened with guest Denise Guisasola, Fircrest Volunteer/Stay@Work Program Coordinator. She enlightened us about the rules, some from DOJ some from DSHS and some local, that govern all volunteers who would be in direct contact with residents (to help with transport to and with activities, for example). The guidelines have become stricter in recent years. Even with the required background check and TB shots, no one can be hands on with a resident unless they are directly supervised by a staff member, or if you are his/her guardian. This applies to both PAT A and PAT N.

Bob Colley, Fircrest Recreation Specialist dropped in to discuss plans for FunFest (see back page) as well as the Summer Camp program. Contact Bob for details at 206 361 3658.

Parents and guardians raised concerns regarding weekend staffing, pulled staffing and that parents are not notified of unit staff changes. Also aired were opposition to the plans to move laundry (washers & dryers) from home units to the main laundry facility requiring already limited staff to be off unit to handle clients' laundry. (See Family Council, this pg.)

Garden committee reported that raised beds have been filled with soil. Sand needs to be added. The committee also asks that anything individuals may wish to add the garden (ornaments, plants, reflectors, bird baths, feeders or bee houses etc.) be cleared with the committee. This is about safety. Residents have many behavioral and health issues which could be compromised if we aren't mindful of their idiosyncrasies.

Parent hand book outline will be available at next meeting for further work.

All parents & guardians are welcome at our meetings and discussions. This is your time to help all residents by voicing concerns or identifying problems that you see on your resident's home unit . Your participation is needed.

Next Meeting is Tuesday, July 17, 1pm Admin. Building. (Article written by C. Beach Braley)

Garden Committee Report

May 15th meeting approved the purchase of a gazebo and 'Vegtrug' for Home unit 303/304. Committee clarified the Therapy garden (Jackie's garden) boundaries, need for planting soil as well as repairs needed for the shed and replacement of stolen Healing Garden Metal Chimes.

Garden Committee; Betty Cantrell, Terri Anderson, Cynthia Willman, Jim Hardman, Maria Walsh & Fircrest Plant Management staff.

Family Council: *'A resident's or family group' is defined as a group that meets regularly to:*

Discuss and offer suggestions about facility policies and procedures affecting residents' care, treatment, and quality of life; Support each other; Plan resident and family activities; Participate in educational activities; or For any other purpose. [See page 4 of the May /June Newsletter for Michael Johnson's article on our rights.]

This is a right with teeth to it. It is enforced by the Center of Medicaid and Medicare Services. Friends of Fircrest and the HURs **are** Fircrest's Family Council. The facility must "listen and act upon the grievances and recommendations of the residents and families".

FoF has appointed Board members listed below to be contacts for parents/guardians to register complaints or suggestions. These members will follow up with parent/guardian and with them decide on a plan of action. Parents/guardians may act on their own, but we recommend vetting problems with the Family Council contacts first.

Jim Hardman:206 367 6116, Maria Walsh:206 718 1761, Terri Anderson:425 788 4529 and Chaplain Kristen Ellison-Oslin:206 7844 2942

OUTREACH

Protect the Safety-Nets, Common Causes & Coalition Building

It has taken perseverance, dedication and patience to have lived through the years of anti RHC biases at DSHS/DDD ARC of Washington. We have survived many cuts. Some mere flesh wounds and some severe gashes. The goal is to keep on the never ending task of educating our officials, legislature and communities as well as be ever alert to snakes in the grass. We know who they are. On that note we ask our members to help build a power base of support for our RHCs.

As Senator Chase told us at our May 6th meeting, we aren't the only organization who has seen serious cuts to safety nets for vulnerable folk. She was emphatic that we circle our wagons and get community groups and service groups involved.

We have a plan but need many wagon drivers. If you are a member of a church, have business or social club connections we need you to send us a contact information. We will organize presentations for their meetings....with your assistance. Our plan is to get the wagons rolling beginning this July and continue with monthly informative events to many groups.

Help us host informative events and build our coalition. Submit contact info to Outreach Chair: Maria Walsh or to any board member.

EVENT HELP NEEDED FOR CAMPUS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS !!!!!

Here's several volunteer opportunities to make our outreach programs successful. Commit a.s.a.p. to prevent cancellation of outreach plans.

- Sign up to help set up or clean up or take turns (one or two hours) to host our Funfest Hospitality Tent. *
- Sign up to help set up or clean up our Booth at the Shoreline Festival and or to be a parade marcher with the Fircrest team.
- Sign up to help with short community presentations on the need for Fircrest. (See above article)
- Volunteer to assist committee chairs with their projects/duties. A great way to prepare for stepping into a Board position.

Contact Candy; cbbraley@Q.com Maria; Mwalsh1240@earthlink.net or Terri; winchesterwillie@comcast.net

Do you need Fircrest?

If your answer is yes, it's your turn to serve

FoF Board has ten directors whose terms will expire the end of this year. Many of those ten have served **multiple terms and on multiple committees**.

Some of the board have been at it for **more than 30 years**. We hope those whose terms are up will *re-up, but only if they truly have the commitment to stay active & work on committees*.

Executive and key committee spots will need **relief and /or support** within the next year.

Direct questions about the nature and scope of the board /committee jobs to:

Maria Walsh:
Mwalsh1240@earthlink.net or Candace Braley: cbbraley@Q.com

Freshwater & new horses, please!

Board Member Basic Responsibilities

1. Meetings: Preparation, attendance and participation in regular meetings.
2. Fiscal overview: Input into our annual budget /financial process and decisions as well as safe guarding internal controls.
3. Mission: Carry out our mission through participation in the defining and reviews of our purpose, programs, strategy plans, fund-raising goals and needs.
4. Fundraising: Participate in giving, personally, as well as in the fundraising activities of the organization and making available your network of contacts who may contribute. *Add to our list of donors.*
5. Advocacy: Be well versed in our messages and mission in order to educate your legislators, community, personal colleagues and other groups and individuals of the importance of Fircrest and of the need for RHCs to remain open. *Add to our membership and mailing list of supporters.*
6. Service: Chair or serve on at least one committee and volunteer for ad hoc or task force jobs as they arise.
7. Building and maintaining an effective board: Have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the overall organization and of its goals in order to be present for evaluations and recommendations to keep the board thriving. This includes recommending new board candidates.
8. Work together as a team. Keep in communication with your board members.

Friends of Fircrest ♡

c/o Fircrest School, RHC
15230 15th. Ave. N. E.
Shoreline, WA 98155

Save these Dates:

July 8:

1pm Board & 2pm FoF membership meetings - ATP Bldg.

July 17:

1pm Home Unit Reps Meeting-Admin bldg.

July 26:

10am-2pm Fircrest FunFest

August 11:

Autism Day, Jubilee Farm, Carnation WA

Visit www.autismdaywa.org for info

August 18:

11am-4pm Shoreline Parade and Fair

FRIENDS OF FIRCREST IS A VOLUNTEER 501(C) (3), NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHT TO QUALITY LIVING CHOICES FOR ALL CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.



Fircrest FunFest "happening" Thursday, July 26,' 2012

'Summer of Love'

Drop in, chill out, lay back. Dig the big groovy parade!

The activities will blow your mind; Rockin' music, tie dying, spin art, cotton candy, FoF hippy hospitality hang out with cool snacks & trippy treats .

You know the gig, beads, bellbottoms goofy sun glasses and fringy stuff. Get it on ! Go with the flow!

Bring your clan, bring a picnic. Bring good vibes!

Make it a carefree & spirited day for our Fircrest loved ones, families and friends.

Parade at 10am. Activities at Noon

Be there or be square.Wear flowers in your hair....Love & Peace all around !

For more info contact Bob Colley, Recreational Specialist, dude 206 361 3658



TREASURERS' NOTE'S