

MESSAGE FROM JIM HARDMAN, PRESIDENT , FoF

Dear Friends of Fircrest,

The 2013 Legislature is in session. Watch your wallets and liberty! [paraphrasing something of ten attributed to Ben Franklin].

Yes, there is **need for vigilance**. Senate Bill **5371** is introduced. This proposed piece of legislation would remove our Residential Habilitation Centers [RHCs] from the Revised Code of Washington [RCW]. **Currently** four RHCs are named in the RCW as "**permanently established**". The Senate bill would do away with this.

The question is **why** ? The developmental disabilities services Task Force made the recommendation, but **why**? The co chair of the Task Force explained this removal was her central goal even prior to the first Task Force meeting. The Task Force met about six times over the course of two years. The subject of removing RHC names was saved until the last half hour of the last meeting. It got about ten minutes of discussion before the last public meeting ended. Continuum of care advocates got steamrolled by political experts. Continuum of care advocates are the ones who see RHCs as integral to current service needs.

What was **not explained** was how removing the names of the "permanently established" RHCs would improve the lives for, or services to, people with developmental disabilities. Not explained was how having named RHCs created a problem or what that problem might be.

Those who favored this provision were those who have historically [hysterically] opposed RHCs on philosophic or ideological grounds.

Never explained is the **benefit** or **purpose** of removing RHC names from the law as "permanently established" facilities.

"Permanently established" has not been a bar to closing RHCs. Interlake was closed by DSHS even as it remained in law as "permanently established". When a lawsuit was brought, the legislature then amended the statute to remove Interlake from the 'permanent' list. That finished the litigation. The Morgan Center was removed from the "permanently established" list by another legislative amendment and closed. So having the list of names in statute does not guarantee permanency of an RHC. So **why** remove all the names with no closure of any RHC proposed?

Good question, if I do say so myself.

The Task Force co chair, Rep.Tami Green, represented that any closure would still require legislative approval. But would that approval come in a budget provision? Would there be public testimony? Would it be stand alone legislation or would it be buried in the budget or other legislation. And **why** do it differently than the current process?

The same bill also caps enrollment at RHCs. Again, **why**? Shouldn't admissions be based on **need** and **choice** ? Federal rules have precluded state waiting lists for RHC services. If need and choice would exceed a cap then the state would violate federal standards. Federal standards are already violated by refusing admission to juveniles.

When proposed legislation has **no apparent purpose** we should be **suspicious**. When such legislation is put forth by people historically [hysterically] opposed to RHCs the **suspicion grows**.

Ask your state senator **how** the SB 5371 provision removing names of RHCs **benefits people with disabilities** and what necessitates it. How does this fit with the constitutional mandate to support and foster RHCs [Article 13]? These are questions which need answers, the health and **lives of our most vulnerable depend on it**.

Please spread the word ask the question[s] and share the answers. **J.R. Hardman J.D., CPG**.

RECENT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Minutes available by request; cbbraley@q.com

November 11, 2012 Annual Membership Meeting

Letter from FoF to legislators attending the November 9, King County Legislative Forum was approved by board. This year FoF was not included on the program in spite of our request to make a brief presentation.

Membership approved the slate of officers to serve for a one year term and the board of directors whose terms expired end of '12. All agreed to serve another three year term except for Alice Hardman who requested to retire from the board. She was approved as emeritus member. New member, Karen McNerney was welcomed and we also welcomed back former board member Maureen Durkan. (Entire Board listed Below).

Annual Service award was presented to Jo Bousman, a diligent activist and advocate whose son has been a Fircrest resident since shortly after it opened. FoF members along with Jo's family enjoyed wonderful refreshments and shared stories of working with Jo for nearly 3 decades..

December 9 2012 Board Working Meeting

This year end meeting the board met to review budget proposal for '13, to identify and clarify FoF operational needs, to plan our strategy and needs for the '13 legislative session.

Budget proposal was approved for presentation to membership at next mtg.

Board updated both active and standing committee lists with the role of each.

A project proposal submission form was approved and adopted for use by members proposing events, projects or requests to make purchases that serve our mission.

Newsletter schedule was discussed. Motion approved a change to four seasonal newsletters with bulletins as needed.

Mailing list management revisions were proposed for committee work.

Legislative chair presented plans for a series of folders to be delivered to Olympia throughout the session covering pertinent topics. Plan was approved.

New project was proposed to get FoF some visibility on campus.

January 13, 2013 Membership Meeting

Treasurer reported that we had pretty good response to our year end appeal for tax deductible donations. She added that we still will need to fundraise to cover costs of our activities.

Legislative committee gave a run down of Senate and House bills that have been proposed and have an impact on RHCs.

Guest Speaker Brad Benoit , PAT A Director, was welcomed. Excerpts from his report are on page 6. (CBB Secretary)

FRIENDS OF FIRCREST REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings, Board & Membership, unless otherwise notified, are held in the Staff Training room #88 of the ATP (Adult Training Program) Building, N.E. corner Fircrest Campus. All are welcome to any FoF meeting.

Home Unit Representatives

Third Tuesday of the month at 1 PM

Fircrest, Admin Bldg.

Ad Hoc Meetings:

Called as needed , locations vary

Next Membership Meetings

Mar 10, May 5, July 14, Sept. 8,

Nov. 10, Annual Membership Mtg. Service Awards & Board officer election

Next Board Working Meetings

April 14, June 9, August 11, Oct. 13,

Dec. 8, Year end review and new year Planning

Officers:

President: Jim Hardman, J.D., C.P.G

Vice President: Paul Strand

Secretary: Candace Braley

Treasurer: Maria Walsh

Directors:

Terri Anderson

Jo Bousman

Betty Cantrell, RN, BSN

Saskia Davis, RN

Maureen Durkan, RN

Kristin Ellison-Oslin, M .Div. Rev.

Emilio Gambacorta

Liz Patterson

Karen McNerney

Cynthia Willman, O.T.

Emeritus: Dot Brenchley,

Ruth Durkan,

Alice Hardman, MSW, C.P.G.

Jean Huntley, Phil Scheier

Advisory: David Baker, Ph. D.

Michael Johnson J.D., C.P.G.

Janet Way

REPORT FROM OUR LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Keeping up with Legislative Maneuverings

2013 Legislative Session began on January 14th. This Session will spend a great deal of its time tackling the problems of properly funding education in the state of WA. However, the Senate Health Committee, chaired by Sen. Randi Becker (R-2nd) held a hearing on the Report to the Legislature filed by Rep Tamie Green and Sen. Curtis King, regarding the Recommendations of the Developmental Disability Service System Task Force.

Briefly, the Recommendations ranged from re-opening admissions to the RHCs (for respite care services); capping the number of RHC residents at 900; **removing the names of the RHCs from statute**; continuing to develop respite care in the community; assess those on no paid services; modify the Dan Thompson Trust to allow proceeds from **sale of RHC property**, including France Haddon Morgan Center; ensuring transitioning to the community includes a level of care meeting the individual's assessed needs; establishing a **right of return to an RHC**; establishing an authority to investigate all allegations of abuse & neglect in a timely, transparent and thorough manner to requesting the legislature to allow the Task Force to continue to work on developing a system of services.

The House committees have yet to discuss the Task Force recommendations.

It is vital that you establish a relationship with your state legislators. Call, send them a letter or email telling about the need to keep the RHCs as an essential part of the safety net for the most vulnerable. Don't know your legislator - call me at 425-788-4529. I'll help get you on the right path.

Email address for **ALL LEGISLATORS**: First name. Last [name@leg.wa.gov](mailto:leg@leg.wa.gov) (sample: Randi.Becker@leg.wa.gov)

Terri Anderson, Legislative Committee winchesterwillie@comcast.net

Educating our representatives.....

The statement below is the most recent of a series of folders our legislative committee and Action DD have crafted for our legislators in Olympia. Some have been dispersed and others are being prepared. The series covers the real costs of closing FHMC, a response to the Task Force proposals, quality assurance critique of the recent DRW executive summary and issues regarding RHC properties. A huge thanks to Terri & Bill Anderson and all who have worked on these informative pieces. Folders are being distributed by Action DD.

'Senate Bill 5371 would remove the names of Residential Habilitation Centers from the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). Currently the remaining four (4) RHCs are named in statute as "permanently established".'

Although there is a Developmental Disability Service System Task Force (DDSSTF) Recommendation to remove the RHC names from statute, the recommendation was made without complete comprehension by all Task Force Members as to its implications. Removal of the names from statute would provide the Departments of Social & Health Services (DSHS) license to close RHCs without the benefit of normal legislative process. This procedure would disenfranchise the Public as well as the Legislators'.

Anything less than full, normal legislative process is unacceptable.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS: Bills and Hearings

Olympia Hearings concerning DD Services and Safety

Public Hearings: February 12, '13 (Health Care Committee)

[SB 5358](#) - Concerning people with disabilities who receive no paid services from the department of social and health services' division of developmental disabilities.

[SB 5370](#) - Implementing the recommendation of the developmental disabilities service system task force relating to community living safeguards.

[SB 5371](#) - Implementing the recommendations of the developmental disability service system task force.

[SB 5470](#) - Recognizing the need for facility-based vocational services for persons with developmental disabilities.

[SB 5509](#) - Concerning electronic timekeeping for in-home personal care or respite services.

[SB 5630](#) - Implementing recommendations of the adult family home quality assurance panel.

****SB 5371 is the DD Task Force bill: This bill proposes to remove the names of the four remaining RHCs from statute. Our position is: ActionDD strongly opposes the removal of the names from statute as stated in SB5371.***

Public Hearing: Feb. 12,'13 (House Judiciary Committee)

[HB 1508](#) - This bill puts some protections in place for small estate guardians.

Public Hearing: February 14, 13 (Early Learning & Human Services Committee)

[HB 1527](#)— Action DDs Safety Net Bill (These are the safety net sections that Governor Gregoire vetoed from SB 5459, a couple of years ago. We want them reinstated and we would like the right to return to an RHC have no time limit.)

“Some of these bills came out of the Developmental Disabilities Service System Task Force. Most important among them is SB 5371. In testimony last Tuesday, (Feb. 12) Friends of Fircrest and several other advocates were vehement that the RHCs, including Fircrest School, must stay in statute. Removal of RHC names is widely believed to be a prelude to RHC closure”. **Paul Strand, VP FoF**

FEDERAL ORGANIZATION MOVES TO ELIMINATE 'INSTITUTIONAL CARE'

National Council on Disability (NCD), a federally funded organization, supports a deinstitutionalization policy, providing a “Toolkit “ for pro-community advocates to follow in the elimination of Institutional Care. We need to contact the NCD and send copies of our letters to President Obama, as well as to our Senators and Representatives in Washington, DC. The letters should include your personal story as to how services and supports are not readily available in a community setting. If a community placement has failed to provide the necessary, adequate services for your loved one, include that information. Raise the questions: How can an organization call for a closure without visiting the facility? How can judgments be made based on supposition? How can an organization make decisions regarding the care & well being of an individual they have never met?

NCD can be reached at: NCD.gov or send your letters to NCD, 1331 F Street NW, Suite 850, Washington DC 20004 along with President Barack Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington DC 20500 or comments@whitehouse.gov

Terri Anderson, WA.STATE VOR REPRESENTATIVE 425-788-4529 WinchesterWillie@comcast.net

TOO LITTLE TOO LATE Disability Rights Washington Report on DSHS

The following summary from the DRW/Columbia Legal Services report identifies the problems DSHS has with community living programs. This overview along with talking points addressing the Task Force recommendation to take RHCs out of the state statute are available for you to use when addressing your legislators who need this information before making decisions about RHCs. Copy and send to your representatives.

Thanks to Dwane Huffaker, Lakeland Village Associates for making this accessible for our members. Additional talking points are available at ACTION DD.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

Individuals with developmental disabilities face unacceptable risks of repeated physical harm, psychological trauma, sexual assault and even death because the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) does not adequately investigate and effectively respond to abuse and neglect allegations in Washington's Medicaid-funded Supported Living program.

This report documents the observations of Disability Rights Washington, Columbia Legal Services, and two nationally-recognized abuse and neglect response experts. As detailed in this report:

□ DSHS rarely responds with timely investigations and often entirely fails to investigate when Supported Living clients are reportedly assaulted, sexually assaulted, or otherwise denied the dignity and care they need and deserve.

□ DSHS seldom holds abusive or neglectful Supported Living employees accountable or prevents them from having future contact with vulnerable adults.

□ DSHS does not critically review or investigate most unexpected client deaths to determine whether abuse or neglect may have been a contributing factor.

Recommendations

Washington must stop ignoring the safety of the vulnerable citizens participating in the state's Supporting Living program. This report explains why Washington should commit to the following reforms:

1. Mandate prompt investigations of abuse and neglect.
2. Allocate sufficient investigators to ensure timely and thorough investigations.
3. Make Supported Living provider requirements more specific.
4. Enhance state regulatory authority to enforce provider certification requirements.
5. Establish an interdisciplinary committee of clinicians, state officials, and stakeholders to review unexpected, suspicious, or potentially preventable client deaths.

PERSONNEL CHANGES AT DSHS

In the news, is the retirement of long time DDD administrator, Linda Rolfes. The governor made some personnel changes and named current ADSA Assistant Secretary Jane Beyer to lead the new Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration as Assistant Secretary. Kathy Leitch, a former ADSA Assistant Secretary, will lead the new Developmental Disabilities Services Administration as Acting Assistant Secretary. Bill Moss, the current ADSA Deputy Assistant Secretary, will lead the new Aging and Long-term Support Administration as acting Assistant Secretary. We learned Thursday(2/14/13) that Leitch will only stay in the acting Assistant Secretary job until April. **Paul Strand, VP FoF**

CAMPUS NEWSFor Campus Monthly Activity Schedules and news go to fircrestfriends.org**OUTREACH & CAMPUS ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY FoF IN 2012**

Looking back it seems we did a lot of campus activities. A major focus was on the gardens. Not only was Jackie's Therapy garden pruned weeded and spruced up, thanks to the MacRae family's garden funding, the Access Healing Garden was given some much needed attention and some new plantings as well. The **Just Garden Project** (view on our website) brought volunteer builders from Microsoft and Seattle Tilth who installed new planting beds closer to several PAT A resident home units who are farther from the original therapy garden raised beds. It was a successful joint effort coordinated by Cheryl Felak, FoF member. Additional raised beds were installed at PAT N home unit (Hickory) for wheel chair residents. FoF provided funds for the PAT N gardens and **Lowe's** Home Improvement Store donated materials to the lower campus program. We plan to continue the garden programs.

As usual FoF helped the annual FunFest activities with our refreshment tent and fun "Summer of Love" trinkets, food for the cook out on the lower campus, food boxes to PAT A residents and live music after the parade. Once again we donated Halloween pumpkins for all home units. Our support of the Chapel is ongoing.

Community outreach included our participation & booth at the Shoreline Festival. We didn't sign up for the parade this year as we didn't have adequate member volunteers. We continue to periodically attend Shoreline Chamber of Commerce lunch meetings and Shoreline City Council meetings as necessary to keep on top of issues that may impact Fircrest.

This year we saw the redo of our website. It is a beautiful & wonderful source of information, news and links. Please share the site address it is an important part of our community outreach. Thanks to Paul Strand, our web master. And thanks to all members who have enhanced the lives of all Fircrest families last year. Let's keep up the momentum. **Maria Walsh, Outreach Activities**

Highlights of PAT A Director's report to FoF membership Meeting January 13

It is always a pleasure to have Fircrest Administration address our meetings. We were delighted to introduce Brad Benoit to our group, some of whom had not met this relatively new [to Fircrest] and very experienced PAT A Director (and Asst. Superintendent). Below are some of the items he shared with us.

- Since approval of a hiring plan, additional HPAs are being sought to help realign the case loads which are currently heavy. In addition half of a position would be in charge of all admissions and discharges, to keep all protocols in one control point. Hiring of another recreation specialist is also in the works.
- Brad fielded our questions concerning home unit staff getting residents to attend campus activities. (FoF members have noticed little participation on multiple occasions). Brad suggested that AC3's need more information about events and need to be held accountable. He said he'd address this at the Wednesday meetings with all managers.
- A new TV is being purchased for the senior program and a large furniture order has been made.
- Fircrest administration is in the early stages of adopting *Lean Process* a state wide management efficiency program.

We had the opportunity to share with Brad some of our activities and ideas. It was a good session. Looking forward to seeing him at future meetings.

Reminder for all parents and guardians: Inherent to our mission as a parent/guardian organization is the right to be heard if we have concerns or complaints about the care, safety or other issues effecting our wards. And we have the right to expect response to those concerns from the Fircrest Administration.

Currently, the **Friends of Fircrest Family Council** is a standing committee made up of your Board officers. If you have a problem that hasn't been addressed, after making requests to your care staff or others involved, you may contact any FoF officer and /or Kristin Ellison Oslin, Fircrest Chaplin. We will act together, when called upon, to assist and support you in obtaining a response or resolution or direct you to proper authorities.

FoF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL & APPEAL FOR PARTICIPATION

Your on going financial participation has provided support for many activities for our Fircrest residents and kept our advocacy and outreach mission going. *Thank you for your generosity.*

In person participation by our membership has, however, steadily declined. Part of the decline is that many of us are getting older. But the battle to keep RHCs vital and secure is as old and older than many of our members who have taken over the watch from their parents.

Our current board members are concerned that they will be serving, without relief, further into their dotage. The board is becoming bored of talking to itself and asks for your presence.

We need and want your voice, your suggestions, your talents and *action* to keep our mission moving forward before we collapse of battle fatigue. Please get involved. Recruit family and friends.

To all the persons who are able, who have an interest in active participation I hope that you will not only renew your membership by sending in your dues, but that you will attend as many meetings as possible and help as much as you can on our many committees. *Let's see you soon!*

Maria Walsh, FOF *Treasurer since 2000!*

Friends of Fircrest 2013 Membership Renewal

NAME: _____ LEGISLATIVE DIST: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
 TEL: _____ E-MAIL*: _____ CELL: _____

*Please check Yes ___ or No ___ to receive newsletters and other notices by e-mail.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FRIENDS OF FIRCREST

ANNUAL DONATION \$ _____ TRIBUTE DONATION \$ _____ (info requested below)

TRIBUTE / MEMORIAL DONATIONS: *Please provide the following information.*

In Memory of ___ Honor of ___ Anniversary ___ Birthday ___ Congratulatory ___ Get Well ___ Other _____

Name of honoree: _____ Send Acknowledgements to: (attach list with name and address)

May Friends of Fircrest announce, in our newsletter, your memorial /tribute donation in name only? Yes ___ No ___

Thank you for mailing this form with your correspondence to Friends of Fircrest

Attn. Maria Walsh, Treasurer, c/o Fircrest School RHC, 15230 15th Avenue NE, Shoreline, WA 98155

Your donations are tax deductible. Be sure to keep a record. Direct questions to Maria at 206 718 1761

We welcome comments and suggestions:

Would another meeting time be better? Please suggest days and times.

Friends of Fircrest

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

**Remember that we have *ActionDD* in Olympia representing us.
Go to actiondd.org Get the latest legislative info & more.....**

FRIENDS OF FIRCREST IS A VOLUNTEER 501(C) (3), NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHT TO QUALITY LIVING AND CARE CHOICES FOR ALL CITIZENS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (ID/DD)

MAKE A STATEMENT!

Start a conversation about Fircrest by wearing the new **FoF Polo Shirt**. In a deep teal with the FoF logo discreetly embroidered in white it is tastefully sporty. Appropriate on the golf course, casual Friday at the office or for weekend socializing and always appropriate to wear to Olympia when calling on legislators.

Quality cotton. Easy care. Great Gift.

Both men's and women's sizes. \$30.

Available at our next meeting. Call or e-mail to arrange transaction.

mwalsh1240@earthlink.net 206 718 1761

cbbraley@q.com 206 527 1125



To learn more about this play-ground project for special needs people contact Cheryl Felak

cherylfelak@msn.com

SAVE THE DATE!

- ◆ Home unit Reps meet Feb.19, 1pm admin bldg.
- ◆ Open House for local advocacy Organizations: Sat. Feb. 23, 1-3:30 pm Fircrest Coffee Shop. Contact Cheryl Felak for information
- ◆ March 10, FoF Membership Meeting, 2pm ATP Building. Board meets a 1pm

Sign up to get the FoF Newsletter on line ..saves postage and handling costs. See pg. 7

Visit www.fircrestfriends for news & links

**Register with eScrip and help raise funds for Specialized Kinetic Play Equipment for the Fircrest Campus
Merchants donate a percentage of your purchases to our bank for this project.**

Register your Safeway Club Card or go on line to find many participating merchants.

Probably ones you regularly patronize.

It's' easy and we need more of you to get with the program.

www.escrip.com Fircrest School-Friends of Fircrest eScrip Group ID – 500029884