

Mickey and Minnie Mix it Up at Fircrest Fun-Fest

Recreational Staff pulled out all the stops. A parade rich with bands, SeaFair Pirates, the Seahawks mascot and more wound through campus.

Beaming with enthusiasm residents joined the parade in Disney themed buses, vans and carts. The fun continued with field games, face painting, balloon artists, live music, treats and a huge BBQ.

A highlight was watching Superintendent Jeff Flesner splash in the water at the dunk tank. Thanks Jeff. Who will take the challenge next year?

Thanks to everyone who made this the best Fun-Fest in many years; Fircrest Staff who accompanied residents, volunteers who helped direct traffic and served a morning snack, Food Service staff who helped with the picnic food, grounds maintenance

staff, administration for their support and Dr. Rao for looking more like Peter Pan than Robin Hood, to our long time advocate, guardian and social worker, Alice Hardman, adorable with wings and tiara— who ever imagined that Tinkerbell would be carrying an AARP membership card? And, thanks to all who got into the magic of “Toons” and “Pixar’s”

A huge thanks to generous donors: *Firlands staff*, who donated food, and manned the grill and did the serving, *Mighty “O” Donuts* who provided bites of joy for the marchers, *Bill and Terri Anderson* who donated beverages, party favors and did lots of



Friends of Fircrest Hospitality Tent Volunteer, Sara Dexter, embraces special guests at this year's Annual Fun-Fest. Looks like she grew some mouse ears too!

shopping for snacks for the Friends of Fircrest Hospitality Tent. Thanks to the *musicians* who rocked on in the hot sun and who serenaded the upper campus “Y” building residents.

A grand time was had by all in spite of some *mice getting into our cheese!*

From our President

Dear Friends of Fircrest,

A bit about climate change. The political climate, like the earth's climate, changes slow enough that big changes occur before we are completely aware that things are different.

We who advocate for service and home choices that include Residential Habilitation Centers have been kicked around so much abuse feels natural and is expected. That was then, this is now.

Now we have political support from the governor, most legislators, and The Secretary of DSHS. I feel it in the atmosphere at Fircrest and Rain-

ier. Professional staff are smiling, care staff are cheerful, and this is good for residents.

We've been conditioned to expect bad news and opposition from off campus DSHS administration. We need to reassess that conditioning. RHCs surely still have detractors in the bureaucracy, but they no longer rule the roost.

Wasn't it just yesterday that the auditor refused to read the *Olmstead* case and simply adopted the Justice Dept. misinterpretation of it? Governor Inslee is a lawyer who can read a case and we are better off for it. DSHS Sec. Quigley can read a case as well, and we are better off.

It's time to regard our political

leadership as friends of people with severe disabilities who understand the importance of RHCs and the safety net they are. In this, we are all friends.

Kumbaya maybe, not nirvana. There are and there will continue to be problems, but the problem solving process is changed. It's the climate.

All human endeavors encounter problems and there will be differences of opinions, but we friends acknowledge a common goal and best efforts in serving, protecting, and enhancing lives of those with profound disabilities.

That's the word today.

J.R. Hardman J.D., CPG
President Friends of Fircrest

MEETING HIGHLIGHT OR OTHER BOARD BUSINESS. Minutes available by request; cbbraley@q.com

End of Summer Highlights

After a summer break from our regular board and membership meetings it's time to get back to business and address the issues that slid a bit during the months of July, and August.

June meeting notes:

- Our committee to update the FoF by-laws is working hard. We need this update because of changes in law and technology. We are focused on having new by-laws before Christmas. If you would like to participate, contact Launi Whedon at Ldwhed1@comcast.net. To request an electronic copy of the current by-laws contact Paul Strand at Paul@ActionDD.org.
- Meeting attendees approved going forth with the selected

- contractor to replace the Therapy Garden broker irrigation system. The work has been completed except for some electrical work to be done by the Fircrest electrician.
- Fun-Fest 2015 out did it's self. See more about Fun-Fest in this newsletter.
- Terri and Bill Anderson attended the annual June VOR convention in Washington DC. They are faithful to represent us, and all Washingtonians, to our congress in the other Washington. Terri is the Washington State representative to VOR.
- Funds were approved for a few raised bed needs. Treasurer requested that we do a better job of anticipating garden needs throughout the year. Perhaps by so doing we can save some money with bulk purchases.
- Chaplain Kristin reported that the Chapel floor repairs are yet to be

- addressed. More on this later.
- Parents and Guardians whose requests for access to Wi-Fi for their resident, in his/her home unit, have not been fulfilled need to contact our Campus Wi-Fi ad hoc committee; Launi at: Ldwhed12comcast.net, Saskia at: atddexchanges@gmail.com , or Cheryl at: cherylfelak@msn.com

Board Member Cynthia Willman Resigns

As of September 1st, Board member Willman resigned due to an increased work load at Fircrest School. Her devotion is most appreciated. We thank her and will miss her valuable contributions.

Minutes and Treasurer's reports are available by request . Contact Candy – cbbraley@q.com.

FRIENDS OF FIRCREST REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE 2015

<p>All meetings, Board & Membership, unless otherwise notified, are held on Saturdays at 1pm in the Staff Training room of the ATP (Adult Training Program) Building, # 88- N.E. corner Fircrest Campus.</p>	<p><u>Home Unit Representatives:</u> Third Tuesday of the month at 1 PM Fircrest, Admin Bldg. Baker or Cascade Rooms.</p> <p><u>Ad Hoc Meetings:</u> Called as needed. Locations vary</p>
<p><u>Next Board/ Membership Meetings</u> October 10, Board meeting November 14, Annual membership—elections No meeting in December. Full schedule on website, FriendsOfFircrest.org</p>	

Officers:

President: Jim Hardman, J.D., C.P.G
Vice President: Paul Strand
Secretary: Candace B. Braley
Treasurer: Candace B. Braley

Directors:

Terri Anderson
Betty Cantrell, RN, BSN
Saskia Davis, RN
Maureen Durkan, RN
Gordon Ellison-Oslin
Kristin Ellison-Oslin, M. Div. Rev.

Liz Patterson
Kent Questad, Ph.D.
Launi Whedon
Emeritus:
Dot Brenchley,
Jo Bousman,
Ruth Durkan,
Alice Hardman, MSW, C.P.G.

Jean Huntley,
Phil Scheier
Advisory:
Michael Johnson J.D.,C.P.G.
Maria Walsh,
Janet Way

LEGISLATIVE NEWS:Visit ActionDD.org for more information

Changes in Olympia. Several members of the House and Senate are leaving. Below are those we know about:

- ◆ Rep. Reuven Carlyle (D)-36 – Rumored to replace Sen.-Kohl Welles.
- ◆ Rep. Ross Hunter (D)-48 – Named new Director of Dept. of Early Learning; former chief budget negotiator.
- ◆ Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles (D)-36 – Running for King County Council Position 4.
- ◆ Sen. Pam Roach (R)-31 – Running for Pierce County Council.
- ◆ Sen. Brian Hatfield (D)-19 – Will join WA State Dept of Commerce working on Rural Economic Issues.

Changes at VOR

Hugo Dwyer of New York has been named Interim Advocacy Membership Manager, replacing Tamie Hopp. Hugo has been a long-time advocate for his brother and others with ID/DD in the New York and Connecticut areas. He and his wife, Christy, currently serve as State Coordinators for NY. Hugo will be supporting the Legislative and Government Affairs Committees as well as focusing on state and individual advocacy. For more information visit the VOR

Action DD is Now a Tax Exempt 501(c)(4) Non-profit Corporation

Action DD can now receive donations from corporations and benevolent organizations that have not previously donated. This is a big step forward in Action's ability to represent a full continuum of care for people with developmental disabilities such as our loved ones at Fircrest School.

Action DD's Summer meeting saw decisions to have just one general membership meeting a year and one legislative reception in Olympia. The reception will be February 2nd at 10 a.m. in room 221 of the Cherburg building.

With the increased use of email, Facebook and other social media, more can be done with fewer meetings and the day-long drives that go with them., but expect more board meetings as Action prepares for the coming legislative session.

Our lobbyist says, "Now is the time to contact your Senate and House of Representatives members to tell them how important the continuum of care for your loved one is and how the services that RHCs provide will be protected in Senate Bill 5243 and HB 1366." These bills can be viewed at

Actiondd.org/bills-2015.htm

There are no existing alternatives to RHCs available to address specialized long term, respite, or emergency care. Your elected officials need to hear from you. If you don't have the contact information for your Senator or House members we'll provide that for you. Your opinion matters.

President, Paul Strand announced that this would be his last year as president. He encourages others to step forward to lead this vital organization.



School-to-Work Program 10th Anniversary Celebration Disability Awareness Month

The evening will showcase student success, featuring prominent national and local speakers including King County Executive Dow Constantine. The past, present and future of our School-to-Work partnership will be celebrated.

Videos and stories of participants will include one of our own residents, Thomas, working at his job at Lowe's in North Seattle!

When: Monday, October 12, 2015

Time: 4-7 p.m.

Place: Double Tree Suites, Seattle, WA

CAMPUS NEWS PLUS

Where's the WiFi?

The problem is being worked on by Fircrest tech staff who have run into Century Link's inability to accommodate a hook up within our parameters. We are something new to their way of operating. Be patient, stayed tuned.

Personnel changes

- Psychologist Katia Ramirez took a new assignment at Rainier School
- Rebecca Foglietti took over Katia's caseload in Pat A.
- Christian Bringolf, psych. Assoc. recently left.



- "Dolf" van den Heuvel is the psychologist replacing Christian.
- Lura Dunn, QA Director, retires September, 30. She supervises quality assurance, duty office, custodial and housekeeping services, the return-to-work program, Chaplin, beautician and safety department.
- Trisha Flick will assume Dunn's responsibilities
- Jeff Flesner, Acting Superintendent, must compete to fill his job permanently. A job posting is open through October 8, 2015
- Currently one opening for a psychologist on Pat N.
- Posting for a new Medical Director is in the

Shoreline Summer Neighborhood Leaders Picnic at Fircrest

By Rebecca Sargent, Ridgecrest Neighborhood Association



To build community across Shoreline neighborhoods the Council of Neighborhoods representatives, neighborhood association board members and key neighborhood leaders visited Fircrest in July. The social gathering included a picnic, and introduction to Fircrest. Jeff Flesner, Acting Superintendent, explained Fircrest programs and the campus with a short tour.

The tour started next to the activities building, looped passed the chapel and then back to the activities building. Flesner explained in depth the vital services that Fircrest provides. Many had never been to Fircrest and were impressed with our Shoreline Treasure.

I was able to mention that my son Forrest is a resident of Fircrest and how Fircrest saved my families life.

The Council of Neighborhoods (CON) consists of two representatives from each of the 14 neighborhood associations within Shoreline. The Council of Neighborhoods meets monthly to network, learn about other neighborhood happenings and meet with City representatives. This two-way communication allows neighborhood associations to provide community input and the City to present information on programs and projects.

PDF neighborhood map: <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=1777>

PDF Neighborhood information: <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=19797>

Simpler Guardianship Sought

Many of us have seen invitations to WINGS (Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders) a group organized to look at perceived problems with Washington's guardianship process.

In August, stakeholders gathered in Wenatchee to evaluate, and comment on Washington's guardianship process. Our Chief Justice is grateful to have concerned citizens tackling this challenge.

Launi Whedon, Friends of Fircrest board member attended and shares her impressions. "As far as I can tell

three factors have come together recently creating the response that is WINGS."

- An aging population of unprecedented size
- A substantial increase in the number of aging individuals facing impairment issues, from mild cognitive decline, to dementia, and beyond
- A court system overwhelmed by applications for guardianship or other legal means of controlling the health and financial choices (and resources) of those aging individuals.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Animal Assisted Activities and Animal Assisted Therapy

By Laurie Hardman

Many of you may have seen big, loveable Obi, Shan Wilson's labradoodle, on campus, visiting residents. If you have been around a while, you may also remember our Portuguese Water Dogs; Kitty (who has crossed the Rainbow Bridge), her daughter Pickles, and granddaughter Billie who visited whenever their busy therapy schedules allowed. Kitty's great-great-great-grandson, "Fido", aka "Maratime Do Gato's Fidus Aquaticus". Jim has been saving that name for a boy dog for probably about 15 years.

What are Animal Assisted Activities and Animal Assisted Therapy, or now referred to as Animal Assisted Interventions?

Animal Assisted Activities (AAA) are usually considered as being beneficial visits that do not necessarily have a specific goal/outcome in mind, and do not necessarily work with or under the direct supervision of professional staff.

Animal Assisted Therapy/Animal Assisted Interventions (AAT/AAI) are visits that are conducted with professional staff, such as physical or occupational therapists, etc. There is a specific goal in mind, and outcomes are documented.

Immediately when Fido came home, at 8 weeks, he began doing



therapy visits. His visits include North-West Hospital Gero-Psych; Shorewood HS 2 visits a week, and 2-3 visits per week with College Dogs, the program I created on college and university cam-

pus.

Many of the dogs I work with (teaching, testing, and visiting with) start as older dogs. With the right dog, you can start at any age.

For some terminology and definitions, the dogs that make these visits are *Therapy Dogs* as opposed to *Service Dogs* (i.e. Guide Dogs, Seizure Alert). Technically speaking, Therapy Dogs have no legal access (i.e. riding in the cabin of airplanes; going into restaurants, etc.). There are sometimes "mixed messages" e.g. restaurants that offer outdoor dining, and allow pets to accompany their owners.

Therapy Dogs often go through training in order to pass a specific organization's test, enabling them to be covered by that organization's insurance. A couple of the larger organizations are, Alliance of Therapy Dogs (formerly Therapy Dogs Inc. of which I am a Tester/Observer for ATD.) Others include Pet Partners (their team are considered 'registered' as opposed to certified') and Therapy Dogs International. For my own *Sirius Healing*, I am able to certify puppies (other organizations require 1 year of age minimum).

What kind of dog does it take to be a good therapy dog? A friendly, relatively calm dog. Dogs that are sociable and love people are the foundations of great therapy dogs. Having Obedience skills, such as sit, down, and stay are minimally required parts of each organization's test.

With ATD, each team is also required to do three shadow visits with their canine partner. For teams I test, I utilize the Skilled Nursing units at Fircrest. The shadow visits are an excellent way to see how a team works together when encountering individuals with different health and other problems. I have found the population at Fircrest to be extremely rewarding to visit, and an excellent place to both test and do the shadow visits – I am always recruiting for teams to

visit at Fircrest. More teams are needed.

My dogs visit 2-3 days per week. People may think that being "petted all day long" isn't hard on a dog. It is. It's a constant stimulation that actually does tire them out. One of the most important things I teach people is how to understand their dogs' signs of stress, and how to deal with it in order to ensure their canine teammate will want to continue to do therapy visits. Pickles, our 12 year old, has been doing visits since she was 8 weeks old; Billie has done the same since age 8.

Many years ago, a 3 ½ year old



Portuguese Water Dog came to us when his owner was dying. "Rio" became an outstanding therapy dog for virtually the next 10+ years. Another factor we always have to consider is heat: with the heat wave in Seattle I had to cancel visits for 2 weeks. 90 degree weather is too hot for the dogs to visit.

The dogs and I are hoping to work both the Skilled Nursing Units and Senior Day program back into our rounds. Summer might be easier since colleges and universities are on break, but we are recruiting.

Do YOU have a happy, sociable, caring dog you might like to do therapy visits with? If so, please contact me at aguak9@aol.com.

...Laurie Hardman, Creator/Director, College Dogs :www.collegedogs.org Sirius Healing :www.siriushealing.com

AROUND CAMPUS and BEYOND

Chapel Gets Repairs

Fircrest's historic and beautiful chapel is scheduled to have its aging floors repaired. Pastor Kristin Ellison-Oslin said, "There's a hole in the floor big enough to step through. We've been asking for repairs for a long time."

Superintendent Jeff Flesner said, "The building is otherwise structurally sound. The project is small enough to do with Fircrest staff."

No completion date was given. At the same time, an ADA approved restroom will be installed.

Last summer a new piano was donated.

Service are Sunday at 10:00 a.m. You are welcome to attend.



Residents Go bowling

Fircrest's residents are bowling with the Special Olympics. This program is a welcome adjunct to the activities and opportunities residents enjoy in our broader community.



Alice Hardman Honored

Alice was honored Saturday, September 12th at a meeting of the Friends of Fircrest in the campus coffee shop.

Alice has for the past 47 years dedicated herself to the residents of Fircrest first as a social worker and then as a guardian for those residents who had no one else to represent them. She still does this.



The Friends of Fircrest President's Award was presented to her by her son Jim who outlined events of her career and life.

The presentation was followed by her 90th birthday celebration. Many family members and friends were on hand to wish her well. A beautiful cake and great food were served and the SeaSharp barbershop quartet entertained including singing especially to Alice.



New Paint

Have you noticed? Several of the campus buildings are getting a fresh coat of paint. Superintendent Flesner said the wood was so dry it soaked up more paint than was expected. Not everyone agrees on the color, but everyone does agree that new paint is needed. See what you think.

iPads as Art Therapy

A group of developmentally disabled adults in Hamilton Ontario is the first to prove that a new form of art therapy works.

The group from a Salvation Army Ministry has been painting, drawing and making puzzles with laptops and tablets.

Their artwork is being published in the Journal on Developmental Disabilities as part of a study led by Waterloo Lutheran Seminary of Wilfrid Laurier University, suggesting digital technology should be incorporated into adult art therapy programs.



"The key overall is providing a variety of mediums," said lead researcher and art therapist Olena Darewych. "Let them explore as many as you can. This is a new medium so let's integrate it."

The study came about by accident. At the Salvation Army's Paparella Innovative Community Art Program, Darewych watched a speech language therapist take a photo of an autistic artist's painting and turn it into a puzzle on an iPad.

"We started to explore digital applications and the possibility of digital art. I knew they existed but digital art is not my specialty," said Darewych.

She soon discovered no research has been done on digital technology for adults with developmental disabilities. The only published studies so far have involved children.

FROM OUR TREASURER

Dear Friends of Fircrest,

Your response to our late spring newsletter has been gratifying. Thank you for your membership renewals as well as your donations. Funds you provide support public awareness and client programs.

Our coffers this year will not be any where near what we had in 2014 when we were blessed with a generous Grant from the Gertrude and Eldon Sallee Foundation. The \$42,500 went to recreational, therapeutic/communication programs and equipment for Fircrest residents and respite clients. It also supported a scholarship fund for Friendship Adventures, a non profit private organization providing activities and socialization programs for DD citizens

in King County, including Fircrest residents. The Grant Committee is working on a application for further Grant funds.

We work from our operational budget for the day to day cost of mailings, outreach and to support music entertainment art/garden and recreation programs for residents. We will be able to continue doing so on a limited basis thru the end of the year.

Our money market account is earmarked for care and maintenance of the Therapy Garden, as stipulated by the Grantor of that fund. Our business savings account is held as a contingency for operating and client support costs if our operating account falls short. Our investment account is our safety net if, God forbid, we need

to hire legal and PR pros in the event Fircrest is threatened...and the amount in that account becomes but a retainer.

So Friends, there you have it. Our small organization has a lot at stake and thrives through your continued support. By the way, of the approximately 340 members on our mailing list, fewer than 10% pay dues. Those who *re-up* annually and send additional funds are indeed our *angels!* Even if one is unable to support with dues or donations, we are thankful for your interest and your *voices* which speak up on behalf of our loved ones at RHCs-*you are our troopers!*

Please send us names of folks you feel would be interested in our mission.

CBB

Friends of Fircrest 2015 Membership and Donation Form

NAME: _____ LEGISLATIVE DIST: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TEL: _____ E-MAIL: _____ CELL: _____

PLEASE SIGN ME UP TO GET FoF Newsletters, Bulletins and Announcements

ANNUAL DUES: \$25.00 FAMILY _____ \$15.00 INDIVIDUAL _____ ADDITIONAL DONATION \$ _____

Check Total: \$ _____

Please make check to Friends of Fircrest

Kindly indicate on your check how much you are dedicating for membership if additional donation is included with a single check. Your donations are tax deductible. Be sure to keep a record. Questions?

Contact Candace at 206 527 1125 or cbbraley@q.com

Thank you for mailing this form with your dues /donations and comments to:

Friends of Fircrest , c/o Fircrest School RHC, 15230 15th Avenue NE, Shoreline, WA 98155

Comments:

Friends of Fircrest

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

Friends of Fircrest Mission Statement

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 developmental disabilities (ID/DD)

Fircrest Residents, in the Adult Training Program, earn wages for preparing this newsletter for mailing.

Friends of Fircrest Newsletter

Fall Issue

Save the Date:

- October 10, Board meeting.
- November 14, Annual membership—elections.
- No meeting in December. Full schedule on website, FriendsofFircrest.org.
- Tuesday, October 20th, 1 pm Home Unit Representatives Meeting in Cascade or Baker Room. Admin Building.



Reminder: *All FoF meetings are now to be combined Board and Membership meetings monthly as scheduled.*