

Winter 2017      Founded by parents and advocates. Incorporated in 1978      www.FriendsofFircrest.org

## This Issue Devoted to FOF Accomplishments

### DSHS Agrees to Provide WiFi

Friends of Fircrest sought bids on campus wide access to WiFi, successfully challenging the status quo that denied residents access to the internet so that residents now have access to WiFi for their tablet devices (many residents have access to tablets as part of a state-wide initiative to make technology available to DD clients with expressive or receptive needs – have you advocated for your family on this subject? These links may help:



<http://www.colemaninstitute.org/declaration-text>  
<http://informingfamilies.org/topic/get-tech/>

### Garden Beautification

Friends of Fircrest administers funds in memory of a former resident to ensure access to beautiful garden spaces where they can take a stroll; sit and watch bunnies, birds and butterflies; swing safely; work with plants (and the weeds that come with them...) and flowers throughout the seasons. This year the sprinklers were upgraded to an automated system (gentler on water use while ensuring plants thrive). Make sure you visit these areas in the spring!



### Bird Houses are Cropping Up All Over Campus

A day arts program gives wings to a craft project that has clients constructing and painting their own bird houses. Next time you're on campus you'll see them perched everywhere. This project was hatched by Ross Baarslag-Benson our on campus speech therapist.



## What Friends of Fircrest Accomplishes

*Friends of Fircrest advocates for a FULL continuum of care for all Washingtonians*

**Members participated in KING5 interviews**, highlighting the need for broad based access to a full continuum of care that promotes inclusive community models like Fircrest and other RHCs. You may have seen us on the evening news.

**Commissioned an important video** distributed to state and local representatives (and interested parties) with personal stories describing the need for and benefits of RHCs. You can view it on our website [www.FriendsofFircrest.org](http://www.FriendsofFircrest.org)

**Members actively write** to legislators, news media and

social media. Members maintain a presence on the internet at our website: <http://friendsoffircrest.org>

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Fircrestfriends](http://www.facebook.com/Fircrestfriends)

**Membership in:**

VOR: <http://www.vor.net>

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce:

<https://shorelinechamberofcommerce.wildapricot.org>

Action DD: [www.ActionDD.org](http://www.ActionDD.org)

Local DD advocate's blog: <https://becausewecare1.com>

No member of FOF receives any remuneration.

## Fircrest Appoints New Acting Medical Director

Dr. Don Milligan has accepted the role of Fircrest acting Medical Director. Dr. Milligan has extensive experience in pediatrics as a hospitalist and emergency department services. Dr. Milligan worked at Fircrest for three years as a full time physician. He gained a deep understanding of the clients, services and service delivery that are provided in both the NF and ICF environments. He will lead the medical department with the assistance of Dr. Christian Dahl. Yeta Ryu filled the vacancy for dentist at Fircrest. She

## New Dentist Hired

comes to us from Korea but is a University of Washington School of Dentistry graduate.

## More New Hires

Terri Zimmerman joins staff as acting assistant Superintendent. Many employee changes are in process and new people are being hired. Most of the new hires are HPAs. New hiring is a result of lifted hiring caps caused by recession budget restraints.

**Superintendent Megan DeSmet will attend our monthly meetings to answer your questions**

## Action DD to hold Legislative Reception

**WHEN:** Tuesday February 7, 2017.

**WHERE:** Washington room in the Pritchard building

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

This is an opportunity to meet and talk with your legislators in Olympia.

**Action DD is a 501(c)(4)** non-profit corporation licensed in the state of Washington. Members are concerned families, friends and professionals who work to preserve a full continuum of services for people with developmental disabilities. Paramount among these services are state operated RHCs (Residential Habilitation Centers like Fircrest) that provide specialized professional services for those in need of close care.

**Action DD volunteers give** their time and money so that our state legislature, the bureaucracy and care providers have a better understanding of the needs of people with developmental disabilities. Because of this, you have a lobbyist in Olympia. You are invited to attend Action DD's third annual legislative reception in Olympia. Our lobbyist, Rick Jensen reports that Action DD had a good year last year and we expect a better one this year Visit: [ActionDD.org](http://ActionDD.org)

**Join us at our meeting for snacks and conversation.**

### FRIENDS OF FIRCREST REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE 2017

All meetings, Board and 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.

#### Board/Membership Meeting Dates 2017

January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 6, June 10,  
September 9, October 14, November 11-Annual Meeting and elections  
No meeting in July, August or December

#### Home Unit Representatives:

Third Tuesday of the month at 1 PM  
Fircrest, Admin Bldg. Baker or Cascade Room.

#### Ad Hoc Meetings:

Called as needed. Locations vary  
Emergency/Conference meetings called by board member requests.

#### **Officers:**

President: Jim Hardman,  
J.D., C.P.G  
Vice President: Paul Strand  
Secretary: Kristin Ellison-  
Oslin, M. Div. Rev.  
Treasurer: Tom Norton

#### **Directors:**

Terri Anderson  
Candace B. Braley  
Betty Cantrell, RN, BSN  
Saskia Davis, RN  
Maureen Durkan, RN  
Gordon Ellison-Oslin  
Leone McMullin

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

## Seventeen Years of the Olmstead Decision

*Condensed from VOR.net* — Recently, the Department of Justice (DOJ), and the Administration for Community Living (ACL) issued press releases celebrating the 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Olmstead decision.

There is much to celebrate in opening doors to community living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who can and want to take advantage of its opportunities. Unfortunately, ideological preoccupations with Olmstead's community integration clause, is at odds with that of other choices. The inaccurate application of the plain language of Olmstead has reduced options for all people with I/DD.

By insisting that all people with I/DD live and work in the community, the DOJ and ACL are treating people with I/DD as a monolithic group, not as the individuals they are.

DOJ and ACL are substituting the wishes of the government for that of the person with I/DD or their legal guardian.

While DOJ and ACL policies have opened doors for the less severely disabled, they closed important doors for the more severely disabled. Many of these individuals have lifelong needs that require a very high level of care, the kind often found only in public and private Intermediate Care Facilities, sheltered workshops, and facility-based day programs.

DOJ and ACL are pursuing this agenda in the name of the ADA and Olmstead, *but that is not what the ADA and Olmstead call for*. Both the statute and the Supreme Court case embody the best values of American society — nondiscrimination *and* choice. Civil rights laws do not tell people where they must live or work. They guarantee individuals are not denied opportunities based on a particular factor, and they expand choices for individuals who have suffered discrimination. In sharp contrast, DOJ and ACL are using federal dollars to bring lawsuits and promote policies that needlessly and dangerously eliminate important options.

In pursuing its one-size-fits-all ideology, DOJ and ACL are ignoring the vital rights of choice embodied in the ADA itself. Here is what the Court says in Olmstead: "We emphasize that nothing in the ADA or its implementing regulations condones termination of institutional settings for persons unable to handle or benefit from community settings ... Nor is there any federal requirement that community-based treatment be imposed on patients who do

not desire it." Olmstead v. L.C., 527 U.S. 581, 601-602 (1999).

In fact, the Court specifically incorporated the right of choice: "(b) the transfer from institutional care to a less restrictive setting is not opposed by the affected individual," Olmstead, at 587.

Even the DOJ and ACL concept of what constitutes the most integrated setting contradicts the view of Justice Ginsburg:, who wrote: "For some individuals, no placement outside the institution may ever be appropriate. ... Each disabled person is entitled to treatment in the most integrated setting possible for that person – recognizing on a case-by-case basis, that setting may be an institution." Olmstead, at 605.

Not only are DOJ and ACL ignoring the plain language of governing law and decision, they are ignoring the harmful effects of their own policies. Journalists have time and again documented the high rates of abuse and mortality for our most disabled citizens who have been forced out of congregate care facilities into unprepared communities. Federal agencies should stop dictating the lives of the severely disabled, and instead, join hands with the community of individuals with I/DD to ensure that all people with I/DD receive quality services and supports wherever they choose to reside and work.

## Friends of Fircrest Must Be Politically Involved

It's only because of the Washington State Legislature that Fircrest and the rest of our RHCs remain open. Just last year King 5 news aired episodes of anti RHC reporting. Several advocacy groups perpetually ask for our closure.

The Yakima Valley School is already scheduled to close. The Morgan Center and Overlake have already closed. These slow dominoes of closure can topple Fircrest and the rest of our RHCs unless we remain active to stop it. The only reason we have Fircrest today is because some legislators understand the need for RHCs.

**What can one person do?** We can contact our legislators and tell them why we need Fircrest. This personal contact is most important because legislators want to do what their constituency is interested in — that's you. One can also give financial and membership support to Action DD and attend their annual Legislative reception in Olympia. Many Members of Friends of Fircrest are members of Action DD and of The national level advocacy group, VOR. To learn more visit: [www.actiondd.org](http://www.actiondd.org) and: [www.vor.net](http://www.vor.net)

## Message From Our President

Dear Friends of Fircrest,

As we advocate for people with developmental disabilities our most important asset is the truth of what we claim to be true. This is why facility tours at Fircrest were so valuable in convincing legislators to keep it open. Seeing is believing and the tours discredited closure advocate claims and revealed our truth.

Reputation for credibility takes time and effort to establish and can be easily damaged with false reporting. Restoring a reputation is far more difficult than harming it, so it is vital that we do our very best to ensure the accuracy of our claims. We can fairly draw different conclusions or opinions from facts, but facts are facts whether or not convenient to support our opinions.

We can expect adversaries to have different opinions and even to dispute factual matters. Our internal discussions should be lively, truth searching, and focused on furthering our mission. But what about our friends? To paraphrase Warren G. Harding: "I have no trouble with my enemies. But my damn friends, they're the ones who keep me walking the floor nights."

While we, as advocates, may be annoyed by false accusations in the moment, the real harm devolves upon those we work to protect. In our world the victims of advocate in-fighting are vulnerable people with developmental disabilities. If advocates lose credibility the cause they champion is hurt. This is not to say that we can't disagree amongst ourselves. But we should be circumspect about public pronouncements and be especially careful that our public commentary has solid factual bases.

This issue came to mind when I read a blog that claimed Friends of Fircrest [identified but not named] "didn't care" [paraphrasing] about "any standards" [actual quote] at Fircrest. I found this claim surprising not only because it is not true but also because I was identified as the source of the claim. The writer is entitled to her own opinion but not her own "facts." I assume this was meant to annoy me and/or Friends of Fircrest. And, yes it's annoying. And I'll get over it personally. But the real harm inures those whom the blogger wants to help as well.

I've found members of FoF to be extraordinary people with a deep sense of dedication to others who are most

vulnerable. I've found FoF to be an extraordinary just and selfless group, dedicated to fair play. For nearly twenty years I have been heartened by the scrupulous dedication to truth among RHC advocates. I find it most unfortunate that a friend would so easily and carelessly [and falsely] disparage this remarkable group of dedicated souls.

So with a bit of empathy for former president Warren G. Harding and total dedication to the truth, let's keep the faith and advocate on...

*J.R. Hardman J.D. CPG  
Pres. Friends of Fircrest*

## Friends of Fircrest Founder Sophie Scheier Passes

SCHIEER, Sophie (Bernstein) Lovingly Remembered Beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away at age 93 on Jan. 9, 2017, in Des Moines, WA.



Sophie, who was born in Chelsea, Mass., on Sept. 16, 1923, was a graduate of Chelsea High School and Burdett Secretarial College. Her career included working for the War Department in World War II, chief secretary in the Physics Department at Brandeis University in Waltham, and administrative assistant at the Seattle Housing Authority. She and her husband Phil lived in Waltham until moving to the Seattle area in 1975.

Sophie is survived by her husband of 68 years, Philip R. Scheier of Federal Way, WA; children Mary (Jim) of Tumwater, WA; Bob (Mary- Lou) of Swampscott, MA; grandchildren Josh (Sharon) of Kent, WA; Judah (Sarah) of West Seattle; Jon (Bronwyn) of Tumwater; Julia (Emily) of New Hampshire; great-grandchildren Fiona and Molly of Kent, and Leo of West Seattle; her sister, Pearl, of Framingham, MA, and many beloved nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her son Lawrence, by her brother Mike, and by her sisters Selma and Helen.

Sophie asked that donations be made to the Homeless 2 Renter program at Temple Beth Am, Seattle, 2632 NE 80th St SE, Seattle WA 98115.

## Staff Constructs iPad holder



**The device pictured above holds and protects an iPad.** Speech therapist, Ross Baarslag-Benson, built this and other devices to help his clients use iPads. His creative genius will go a long way toward using the internet for therapeutic and recreational applications.

## Sensory Room Available

Friends of Fircrest funded improvements to the sensory room on campus, providing access to fiber optic light displays, sensory friendly sounds, tactile surfaces and materials – all to promote sensory integration and growth. Contact Cynthia Willman for information regarding this program ([willmcr@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:willmcr@dshs.wa.gov)). See link for more: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sensory\\_room](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sensory_room)

## Friends of Fircrest Membership

Your membership in Friends of Fircrest is essential. Thank you for joining, renewing, or donating to FOF, a 501(c)(3) tax deductible organization. Your support provides what this issue highlights and much more. Your membership advances FOF's advocacy for high quality care and human rights for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**Please ask others** in your family and among your friends and associates to join or donate. It's easy and so necessary.

### Friends of Fircrest 2017 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](mailto: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

Winter 2017 Issue

## Save the Date: .

- January 14 - Board meeting
- February 7 - Action DD legislative reception, Pritchard bldg, Capital Campus. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- February 11 - Membership meeting
- March 11 - Board meeting
- April 8 - Board meeting
- May 6 - Membership meeting

*See full meeting schedule at [FriendsofFircrest.org](http://FriendsofFircrest.org)*

**Reminder:** All FOF meetings are now combined Board and Membership meetings monthly as scheduled.

