

Progress!

Parents & Friends Inc.

April 2013

Creatively Serving People with Developmental Disabilities Since 1955

L.I.F.E. on the Coast

Learning Independence from Experience

Submitted by Kristy Tanguay, Manager, L.I.F.E. on the Coast



Justin Slunaker built a motorized car in the Craft and Science Lab.

The L.I.F.E. on the Coast program at Parents and Friends was started in 2008. It offers learning experiences that allow for greater independence for individuals. Whether we are living with family, roommates, or on our own, we all crave independence. For me, personally, independence means having the ability to make my own choices, and act on them accordingly. Sometimes I must enlist the help of others to help make my desires a reality and other times the plan involves just me.

To date, we have 23 individuals enrolled in the L.I.F.E. program. We oper-

ate Monday-Friday from 8:30-5:00 p.m. in order to serve the needs of our clients throughout the week. Upon entering the L.I.F.E. program, an individual meets with their circle of support and together design a customized plan that encompasses their unique goals and dreams. As an example, an individual's goals might include education, independent living skills, employment, self improvement, interpersonal relationships, hobbies, sports, volunteering and more.

Throughout the week, we learn from one another as well as from our peers in the community. Sometimes we want to



Chris Bryant volunteers at the Hospice Thrift Shop.

experience something new that may not exist in our community. As a result, we may design activities that help folks in the L.I.F.E. program meet their goals. In addition to what is offered in our community such as swimming, Zumba, and college-level courses, we have designed and offer a twice-weekly Craft & Science Lab, weekly Music & Dance groups, a weekly Anime Book Club, Ladies' Lunch, Coffee Talk Groups, as well as customized sessions that teach Money Matters as well as the importance of having Empathy toward others.

One of the things I myself have enjoyed so much in my first six months on the job is experiencing just how wonderfully supportive and inclusive our community is. From the local businesses that employ our work crews, offer donations, as well as opportunities to learn and give back to other local service organizations and non-profits that allow our groups to help them to give back and provide services.

Did you know that our clients not only work in the community, but also volunteer each week doing so many different things that make our coast a special place to live?



A View from the Moon

by Rick Moon

Who gets to decide?

Everyone knows that history is written by the victors. What if the South had won? What if the Axis had won? Who then would be the villains and who the heroes? Is this also true of other societal norms?

I am not disabled. Why am I not disabled? Because I am generally like the majority of people and therefore we, the majority, get to define disabled as being different from our norm. We even set the parameters of how to *scientifically* test whether a person meets those norms, and if not, what the prescribed remedy for this affliction will be — this affliction of not being more like us. The degree and severity of these remedies has changed over the years as our perception of normalcy has changed, but what has not changed is our insistence on creating this subset of society because of our own narcissistic obsession with conformity, even if that conformity tends to isolate and thereby punish and tor-

ment those we have identified as abnormal or *disabled*.

Kahlil Gibran wrote a parable in which there was a good, kindly King whose people were so happy and prosperous that the neighboring Kingdom became jealous. One night the jealous Kingdom snuck over and poisoned the good Kingdom's well. The next day everyone but the King drank from the well and went mad. The people rebelled against the good King and stormed the Castle until the King emerged and also drank from the well. They then lived happily ever after.

Where are we as a society on this time line now? We seem to be past the poisoning of the well. Perhaps all we need is for everyone to calm down and all have a cool drink from the well and stop being so judgmental of our peers and isolationist in our mediocrity that we call "normal".

Last week one client was very excited because they were arranging to go to

Disney World in Florida this summer and another was looking forward to Camp. It was a fun discussion. The joy and enthusiasm was contagious.

Aldous Huxley said, "A child-like man is not a man whose development has been arrested; on the contrary, he is a man who has given himself a chance of continuing to develop long after most adults have muffled themselves in the cocoon of middle-aged habit and convention."

Kahlil Gibran, besides the parable I alluded to earlier, also said, "Keep me away from the wisdom which does not cry, the philosophy which does not laugh and the greatness which does not bow before children."

Jimi Hendrix warned "I'm gonna put a curse on you and all your kids will be born completely naked."

I threw Jimi in just for fun. Heh, it's Springtime!

📖 L.I.F.E. continued from Page 1

They do landscaping and gardening for other non-profits, providing love and attention to Humane Society animals, tidy up at MacKerricher State Park and work at the Fort Bragg, Food Bank

Whether we are at school, volunteering, working, making art or getting exercise, our collective experiences are shared which enriches the learning process. When you see us out and about, participating in our community, we hope you'll share your smile with us. It helps us to remember and enjoy the fact that we are valued in our community.



Rachelle Richey and Chris Bryant set up for our Christmas party wearing their Santa Hats.



Michael Barnes does cleaning at St. Michaels church.

Progress!

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*Creatively Serving People
With Developmental Disabilities Since 1955*

Post Office Box 656

Fort Bragg, CA 95437

707-964-4940

www.parentsandfriends.org

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L.I.F.E. on the Coast

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OUR MISSION

The mission of Parents & Friends, Inc. is to provide opportunities for persons with developmental challenges and similar needs to participate fully in our community.

Knights of Columbus donate to PFI



David Swensen presents check for \$2877.38 to PFI. Left to right: Bob Gastoni, Lynnette Laccoarce, Darla Lanotti, David Swensen (Fort Bragg Council of Knights of Columbus), April Ybarra.

The Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities, also known as the Tootsie Roll Drive, is probably the Knights of Columbus' best-known national fund-raiser. This year the Fort Bragg Council of the Knights of Columbus raised \$2877.38 that they donated to Parents and Friends. Earlier, the Mendocino Council donated the \$627 that they raised and Point Arena Council \$308.49. Thank you Knights of Columbus.

Coastal Support Services is now managed by Susan Stever

Sue Stever is now the manager of SPFI's Coastal Support Services and says that she is so happy to have found her niche....she loves working with the people PFI serves. Sue has worked for PFI for about a year. Before becoming manager she worked as a direct service provider.

Sue's work history has the theme of providing care and assistance. Prior to her work with PFI, Sue was employed by Fort Bragg High School as a teacher's assistant for 17 years. She mainly worked with Seniors helping them to complete graduation requirements. She is also a trained crisis counselor who volunteered with Project Sanctuary. She worked with True to Life Children's Services an organization that advocates for children in need of foster care.

On a more personal note, Sue has lived in Fort Bragg for 19 years. She is the mother of 3, the grandmother of 7 and the great-grandmother of 3.

We're happy Sue is with Parents and Friends, Inc.



BEER, BISON & BLUEGRASS

Beer tasting, bison BBQ and live music



SAVE THIS DATE!

Saturday, October 12th
12 Noon to 4:00 pm
Caspar Community Center

A Benefit for
Parents & Friends Inc.

Save the date October 12 for Beer, Bison & Bluegrass

On Saturday, October 12, 2013, Parents and Friends will host our premier Beer, Bison and Bluegrass event from 12 noon to 4:00 pm. The event will include beer tasting featuring regional breweries, an organic bison burger BBQ with all the accoutrements and a Bluegrass Music Concert. Outside, there will be activities for children and food to suit their tastes. Vegetarian/vegan options will also be served. The event will take place at the Caspar Community Center. Save that date for an afternoon of fun.

*Thanks so much to
our recent donors!*

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Curtis Bunheirao is the Employee of the Quarter



Curtis Bunheirao was recently presented with an award as PFI Employee of the Quarter. He has worked for Parents and Friends in various positions over a period of nine years.

Currently, Curtis works with our 24/7 program. He's part of a team that provides around the clock care and supervision for several PFI clients.

Leann Pill, who manages the program, says that Curtis is a very good worker and is always willing to fill in and help out. She recently promoted him to supervisor of staff for 2 of our 7/24 clients and he is learning to schedule and take on other responsibilities.

Congratulations to Curtis Bunheirao.

The Hoity Toity Fashion Show and Tea



The Thirteenth Annual Benefit presented by
The Paul Bunyan Thrift Shop

Eagles Hall
Saturday, May 4
12:30 PM

**FASHION SHOW
TEA & LUNCHEON
NO HOST CHAMPAGNE
BOUTIQUE • RAFFLE • AUCTION**

Tickets are available at the
Paul Bunyan Thrift Shop - \$20
At the door-\$25

Jackie Bazor-964-4962

A Benefit for
Parents & Friends Inc.
Creatively Serving People with Developmental Disabilities for 50 yrs



Presenting Jenalyn Fara Dickey

PFI employees Jessica and Josh Dickey welcomed their first child, Jenalyn Fara Dickey on February 26th. She checked in at 6 lbs.13 oz., 18 inches.

*Creatively Serving People
With Developmental Disabilities for 50 Years*
Parents & Friends Inc.
Post Office Box 656 Fort Bragg, CA 95437

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