

Progress!

Parents & Friends Inc.

December 2012 Creatively Serving People with Developmental Disabilities Since 1955

Paul Bunyan Thrift Store Moves Uptown!



Chamber of Commerce members Donna Sinclair and Ray Alarcon hold the ribbon while Rick Moon, Marian Roden and Jackie Bazor of Parents and Friends, Inc. do the cutting honors at the official grand opening.

The Paul Bunyan Thrift Store and Furniture Annex have moved from their longtime McPherson Street and Cypress St. locations to the renovated ACME Auto Parts building at 350 Main Street. A gala grand opening celebration was held Saturday, October 6 complete with ribbon cutting, free hot dogs and a live band!

"It has been a stunning transformation of the building and a perfect venue for what we and our clients do," said Rick Moon, Executive Director of Parents and Friends. "It so happens that the Paul Bunyan Thrift Store is also celebrating

50 years of serving the developmentally disabled and the community as a whole through the store".

Many hours of both volunteer and employee work went into making the move possible. A big thank you to all who helped. A special thank you to licensed painting contractor John Darcy who volunteered his time and expertise to paint the interior of the new store!

In 1955 Parents and Friends was incorporated to provide schooling for a group of local developmentally disabled children — then called retarded. Their parents refused to institutionalize them, as



was the common practice then, and the schools refused to educate them, deeming them "unable to learn." Parents and Friends started their own school, the Paul Bunyan School, and set up classes in a donated room in a local church. They then began to teach them to read, write and do math among other things and started doing yard sale and bake sale fund raisers on the weekends to support the school. Those yard sales evolved into the Paul Bunyan Thrift Store fifty years ago, which is now newly relocated to Main Street. Those students now live in the community, volunteer their time to non-profits like the food bank, and work at Safeway, Harvest, Rossi's, Dirt Cheap, McDonalds, and many more businesses in the community. Some are beginning to reach retirement age.

Parents and Friends has also evolved as an organization. It now serves primarily adults with developmental and other disabilities in independent living, job development and support them in participating fully in our community. Parents and Friends now employ over 85 coastal community members with steady, non-seasonal employment in its various programs, including almost 30 disabled employees.

For information call Amanda Venett at 707.964.4471 (shop) or 964.8542 (office).



Mike Hall, Jackie Bazor and Dave Gross served hot dogs, and popcorn to opening day celebrants.



A View from the Moon by Rick Moon

As I write this, Thanksgiving is upon us and Christmas is looming ahead. With the changing of the seasons other things thought to be immovable are changing as well. Black Friday is creeping into *Gray* Thursday as retailers graciously invade our Thanksgiving Day to hawk the Christmas wares they put on their shelves last August. The election is over and the recrimination about who said what to whom when events too classified to talk about is being fought out in public. The Arab Spring seems to have sprung, the world is a dangerous place and a fiscal cliff looms just around the corner. Bipartisanism is the only solution but the other side stubbornly refuses to do it our way. It's a mess.

But not here!

Here a ray of sun has broken through the clouds. Here we have opened a new fifty year old Paul Bunyan Thrift Store on Main Street. Here we employ eighty-five community members, including thirty

disabled individuals. Here we provide low cost re-cycled goods to the coastal community, with new merchandise arriving daily. Here we had friends and neighbors standing in the parking lot on Monday, October 1, waiting to come in on the first day of opening. They were waving through the windows at staff inside and as the doors opened and they streamed in they let out a spontaneous cheer and staff joined in.

On October 6 we had a grand opening party with free hot dogs, popcorn and a band. People came from all over and helped us cut ribbons and celebrate. Dave Gross manned the hot dog grill for hours along with Mike Hall, doing a great job. People invariably asked "how much are the hot dogs?" and Dave always answered "Fifty Dollars." Then he'd look up with a wink and say, "Or Free." The look of shock on the person's face invariably turned to a grin. Dave was great in the hot dog stand, although

I do have to say he's a lousy hot dog salesman. He sold nothing all day.

The Furniture Annex has now moved in with the Thrift Store on Main Street. The Dolores Scott building, which housed the old Furniture Annex, has been leased to Mendocino Pharmacy and is now getting another face lift. The Pharmacy is scheduled to open January 1, 2013 and will be a welcome addition to the Cypress Street complex.

More program and agency plans are underway to enhance services to our clients, our employees and the community. I look forward to the months ahead as being positive and productive.

Anton Chekhov said "People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy."

This winter will be fun. Come see us when you can!

Rick Bondor honored as Employee of the Quarter



Rick has worked in PFI's L.I.F.E. program as a direct service provider for almost a year. He works with clients at a time supporting them in their activities throughout the day

His favorite things to do with clients are going to the C.V. Starr Center, leading the work crews at Cypress St. and the crew that does volunteer work at McKerricher State Park and having lunchtime conversations when they go out to lunch as a group. In his spare time he likes gardening, and also does some music including playing the flute. He's

also involved with St. Michael and All Angels Church. Tim Peterson says that Rick is "a very good man and a hard worker and is his favorite staff person".

When the L.I.F.E manager left this past summer, Rick went above and beyond to serve as interim manager until Kristy Tanguay was hired in September.

Rick helped with all the scheduling and paper work which is no small task.

PFI thanks Rick for his hard work and dedication.

Many thanks to all of our recent donors...

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With Developmental Disabilities Since 1955*

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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.



Printha Worthen brings valuable experience to the Job Connection

Printha Worthen has been selected to manage the Job Connection, PFI's employment program.

Printha has lived in Fort Bragg for over 30 years. For 24 of those years she worked in Little River at the Inn. When she retired she was their general manager.

After her retirement this spring, Printha wanted to find a job that would allow her to become better acquainted with her own Fort Bragg community and to be helpful. She had known about PFI for many years, attending fund raising events, shopping regularly at the Paul Bunyan Thrift Shop and working with the Job Connection staff to employ a person in the Little River Inn's housekeeping department.

Her new job is a perfect fit! She comments, "Serving as Program Manager of The Job Connection gets me out and about in my home town, challenges me to apply my managerial skills in different work places with different employees, yet still work directly with and help people. I have been introduced to a wonderful group of people who have already taught me so much about living! I hope to develop the reach of TJC so that even more talented people can work within our community."



Kristy Tanguay is new manager of L.I.F.E. on the Coast

Kristy brings management and organizational skills to her new position heading the L.I.F.E. program.

Kristy moved to the coast in 2001 and is happy to be raising her 8 year old daughter here.

In her new role Kristy schedules and organizes the daily activities of 20 adults with various degrees and types of disabilities and the 8 service providers that support them... In a typical month, Kristy schedules over 300 individual days of activities.

Clients in the L.I.F.E. program do learn independence from experience. Staff supports clients to work toward goals they set for themselves. Goals include working, taking college classes, learning to cook, learning to manage their personal finances or developing a social life.

Currently, L.I.F.E. clients participate in a wide variety of activities including swimming, mushroom identification, math skills group, a language skills group, art, in a landscape crew, volunteering at the Noyo Food Forest and the Hospice thrift shop, Zumba, dexterity practice, a science and craft lab, an anime book club, a music group and a social "lunch bunch."

Kristy enjoys having a job where she is truly helping people every day.

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A crowd gathered on opening day!



The staff is happy with the new store. Pictured here are (back row) Kevin, Billy, Shirley, Nils, Josh, Marvin and John. (middle row) Michelle, Noreen, Antony, Richard, Joni, and Amanda. (front row) Allen, Julie, Tim, Pati, Loreen and Staci.