

Progress!

Parents & Friends Inc.

Fall 2018

Creatively Serving People with Developmental Disabilities Since 1955

Some People Dream, While Others Make Plans

by Kristy Tanguay

Like most people, I enjoy leaving the house for more reasons than just my job, grocery shopping, or medical appointments. I like going for walks about town with friends, making plans to try a new restaurant, going to the movies, showing up for book club, exploring new nature trails, window shopping, gallery hopping, enjoying warm inland weather and events, and so much more. Through these experiences, I make new friends, learn about new resources, and continue to thrive. I am a work in progress; I am not done growing into who I am. We can all learn new things by simply being present, whether it's somewhere or something new, or, even if it's familiar. As Yoda said, "Do or do not; there is no try." What this means is, that when you think you are trying something, the truth is that you are actually doing it.

Think about the last time you enjoyed a social or learning experience—maybe you went to a concert, the movies, out on a date, to the pub, a club, or to a sporting event. Was it easier because you invited a friend, brought some spending money, and made a plan? In most cases, the answer is yes. Enter the Places To Go program of Parent and Friends, which is designed to support individual goals to try new experiences of their choosing, make friends and develop natural supports in the community. The program

promotes independence, community integration, and self-advocacy by helping program participants turn their goals and ideas into plans of action.

As are many things that life has to offer, you must experience something to really know what it's all about. It takes determination, resources, and a plan to participate in community life. While these things are important, they are often

easy to take for granted. As an example, in our area the bus does not run at night; and, it's not easy to use a car service here either—there are only a limited number of drivers available for the entire coast and that comes with a price that not all can afford. Without transportation, could you go to the pop-up dance in Caspar? How about going bowling and shopping on a Sunday in Ukiah, or to a docent-led tour of the lighthouse? What if you wanted to spend some money but didn't know how to count money?

Places To Go grew quickly from 20 participants, and today serves 53 people who want to try new things and meet new people. If the activity is safe, legal, and the individual has the money to do it, program manager Leann Pill will find a way to make it happen. Leann says that her favorite aspect of the program is, "to help facilitate an activity that someone has never done before, and then have them come in with the biggest smile and tell me what an 'exciting time they had' and how they want to do it again." She explained, "The program averages about 60 hours of service each week. The support we provide depends on the needs of each individual participant. Sometimes only a couple of people want to share an activity, other times it might be twelve!"

Anna Marie De Angelo enjoys going out to events with friends with support from the program, where she is always sure to make a new friend—or many of them! This summer she attended Fort Bragg's Day in the Park and won the grand prize in the talent show for her dance skills!



Anna Marie shows her cash prize for her dance skills at the Day at the Park talent show.

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This writer inquired to find out what draws people to the program. Kevin Pearl explained, "I really love going with Places To Go. I usually like to go down to the Caspar Pop-Up Dance. I have made new friends because of it. This past Saturday at the dance, a girl knew me - and she was all over the dance floor with me. The music was so good that we could hardly talk! Maybe one of these times I could get together at a park with my friends and have a picnic. Leann can help me make a list of the things people should bring to the picnic." Lynnette Laccoarce responded with a smile, saying that, "So far going to Ukiah for bowling was my favorite. I have gone several times already! I am going to the circus with them soon, and, I have also gone Christmas Shopping in Ukiah with their help." Michael Barnes said, "The most fun thing I ever did with their help was going around town with my friends for First Friday in Fort Bragg. I want to go to miniature golf again; I have only gone there once before. I want to make new friends by going out."

"The winter weather doesn't stop us, except that there are fewer free or low cost (outdoor) We can still do a lot, including going to the movies, out to eat, pub night, pop up dance, Guild and Knights of Columbus Sunday breakfasts, and CV Starr for exercise. If the weather is not terrible we will still venture over the hill. We have gone as far north as Westport, south to Point Arena and Boonville, as well as inland to Ukiah. We are hoping to make a trip to Scandia this coming summer in Santa Rosa. It is totally up to the person on how much they want to participate. They can do very little or they can do a whole lot. They run the show...I am here to make it happen."

To learn more about the program, go to parentsandfriends.org/places-to-go or call Leann at 707-964-4940, ext. 111.



A View from the Moon

by Rick Moon

When I wore a younger man's clothes I found myself floating on a Naval Cruiser in the middle of the South Pacific. Wishing, but unable, to escape I would often lie on my back on the forward deck and contemplate the stars and universe until early morning, seeking through contemplation what I could not accomplish in reality, a way out.

As the stars seemed to explode around me, just out of reach, my mind wandered aimlessly and I found that I shunned some thoughts I didn't want to surface. Eventually I let these thoughts come through and, on examination, discovered that they were mostly old embarrassments or painful events from the past, even back to grammar school, that I had hid from and then carried with me unresolved. Once exposed, it was clear that they were not really terrible or embarrassing at all, just the normal things people go through as they grow and change with time and experience. They were no longer relevant, and in some cases seemed silly. I felt a burden lifted and felt lighter in both spirit and body.

As I continued to sojourn with the stars in the evenings I began to understand the ancients' fascination with the night sky and how it influenced their view of the meaning of life and their approach to how they chose to live that life.

To me, with a rudimentary introduction to the sciences, which they lacked, I became acutely aware of the vastness of the Universe and my place in it. I concluded that even the Milky Way galaxy was a rather insignificant galaxy on the rim of the known universe, and our solar system was an insignificant little yellow star

with a green and blue planet caught and orbiting in third place around this small sun. I realized at this point that our galaxy, with our solar system, could disappear and it would not cause a significant disruption in the universe. Planets and systems disappear daily throughout the universe, and all goes on as before. My place in the entire scenario, therefore, is even less consequential.

I explained this theory to friends at the time and some found it too depressing to contemplate, but I found it exhilarating. I felt like I'd achieved freedom. Whatever I did didn't really matter. That meant I could do anything I wanted. I didn't have to live up to other people's expectations, I didn't have to worry about what other people thought of me and I didn't have to do things because everyone else was. I could do what made me feel good with a good conscience, and move along.

I feel better when I love than when I hate, so I don't hate. I feel better when I'm loved rather than hated, so I try not to do things that could make people hate me. I try to make decisions by thinking of what the best and worst consequences of a specific decision could be. If I like the best that can happen and can live with the worst if it doesn't work out, I go for it, never looking back or having regrets. It's simple, I can understand it, I like it.

In conclusion, Abraham Lincoln probably said it best in Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure, "Be Excellent to each other! And ... Party down dudes!"

The reference to a younger man's clothes is from Billy Joel's "The Piano Man".



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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

Thanks to our recent donors!

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Special Thanks to **Joe Ayres** for his encouragement and support in developing our new remittance envelopes which will now accompany our newsletter mailings; they look great! Also, much gratitude to **Gary and friends at The Mendocino Coast Pharmacy** for generously volunteering to pay our water bill at Cypress Street to keep our garden growing!

Greg Roden and Carl Roden Each Celebrate Retirement!



All the best and many congrats to **Greg Roden**, who celebrated his last day at work at Thanksgiving Coffee on July 24th. Greg began working there in 1992, 26 years ago. We are grateful to the management team at Thanksgiving Coffee for helping to develop natural supports with peer staff throughout Greg's career.

Congratulations also in order for **Carl Roden**, who retired from valued community employment partner,

Safeway, this fall after 27 years of service. His coworkers and job coaches celebrated his achievement by throwing him a retirement party - with cake!



Enjoy this next chapter of your lives, Greg and Carl!

Thank You for Supporting PFI's 6th Annual Beer, Bison, and Bluegrass BBQ & Concert Fundraiser!

Parents & Friends, Inc. would like to thank the Mendocino Coast community for the success of our 6th annual Beer, Bison, & Bluegrass fundraiser, which was held on September 1st in Fort Bragg at Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall and raised important funds for the organization. We could not have done it without the support of our generous volunteers, donors, and community sponsors, especially Kate & friends at KOZT The Coast Radio, North Coast Brewing Company and Tap Room, featuring Jazz at The Sequoia Room! We would also like to thank Roundman's Smokehouse, J-Bar-S Ranch, Overtime Brewing, Anderson Valley Brewing, Lost Coast Brewing, Lagunitas Brewing, Mad River Brewing, Humboldt Cider Company, Beachcomber Motels, Fort Bragg Realty, Inc., Northwest Insurance, Redwood Investments, Savings Bank, Sea Pal, North Coast Brewing Company, Harvest Market, Corners of the Mouth, Thanksgiving Coffee, Cowlick's Ice Cream, Purity Supermarket, Safeway, CAITO fisheries, Fort Bragg Village Florist & Gifts, Braggadoon Signs &



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Gratitude for Grant Awards

Parents and Friends is pleased to announce that we are the recipient of three very important grant awards which will benefit individuals who have developmental challenges and similar needs for years to come.

In response to the changing Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) rules, The Department of Development Services (DDS) chose both of the projects that PFI proposed in order to boost client employment rates and satisfaction, and a plan to make these services sustainable following the grant activity period. As a result of these grant awards, we have created a new service, the Community Integrated Employment Services (CIES) department, which will provide community integrated job development and placement services by identifying and coordinating placements for PFI day program participants as defined by their individual goals as matched with Community Employer needs, and initiating referrals for post-placement job supports. By segmenting job development activities from on the job support activities, we can provide a more dynamic employment service for those we serve. We now have a job developer, Jaimi Parsons, who is the primary point of contact for our community employers, and has already facilitated

3 job placements in a short amount of time. Printha Worthen is now PFI's employment specialist; she will be delivering The Job Club training curriculum to those individuals who are interested in exploring the possibility of employment. The Job Club will support program participants to develop their individual employment profile, including a resume and employment goals that will allow the job developer to match their skills and desires with employer needs. The Redwood Coast Regional Center provided much support and guidance as we pursued this grant opportunity and we can't thank them enough.

The second approved project allows us to develop (2) certified in-house trainers in Person-Centered Thinking, which will provide the tools and skills necessary to accurately discover and document the needs of the individuals we serve. By learning to differentiate between what is "important to" versus "important for" each individual, we expect to increase the life satisfaction that those we serve may experience as a result of their individual goals and support for personal choice.

We jumped for joy when The City of Fort Bragg announced in July that they have been awarded a large Community Development

Block Grant, which will support PFI's public facility project to redevelop our 350 Cypress Street location into (3) 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs). This CDBG award drives an extensive undertaking, and will provide 24/7 care for up to 12 adults with who also have an age-related condition such as Alzheimer's or Dementia. Coupled with our first RCFE, Azalea House, which is due to open this winter, we are building the capacity to serve up to 16 individuals who will be referred by the Regional Center. In addition, 350 Cypress Street will provide new full and part time jobs for our community members, including a counterpart to our current RCFE Administrator, Robert Salinas. Thank you, City of Fort Bragg.

The George and Ruth Bradford Foundation, out of Ukiah, provided PFI with a grant award in the amount of \$2000.00 to support our programs and operations. The Knights of Columbus Council 8187, out of Mendocino, raised funds at their annual Crab Feed resulting in a \$500.00 donation to Parents & Friends!

We can't say enough just how grateful we are for the support we have received.

Amazing People Work at PFI!

PFI seeks to recognize employees who stand out in their effort to provide excellent service, innovative solutions, and an exemplary work ethic and attitude. In this issue, we are pleased to recognize three stellar members of the PFI team.



Carolyn Seale

Congratulations to Carolyn Seale, who has been a longtime friend and supporter of PFI's mission; "I love what PFI does," stated Carolyn. She has volunteered her time processing jewelry at PBTS for 12 years before becoming an on-staff cashier with us in 2017. Carolyn's interests include estate, antique and costume Jewelry; she has bought and sold Jewelry as a vendor at the local flea market for 12 years. She enjoys her family and is proud to celebrate 53 years of marriage, 5 Children, 8 grandchildren, and 4 grand dogs! Way to go, Carolyn. Thank you for all that you do.



Sandy Bradford

Sandy has been with PFI for one year and has worked with The Community Connection, and also took on the role of event assistant for our annual BBB fundraiser this year. Sandy is energetic, helpful, creative, and she is also handy with tools! She is a proud mom to three sons, ages 27, 20, and 17. When Sandy is not at PFI or spending time with her loved ones, she enjoys paper crafting, sewing, making jewelry and rubberstamping. Thanks for your hard work, Sandy!



Jenny Armstrong

Congrats to PFI's Employee of the Quarter, Jenny Armstrong! Jenny works primarily with The Community Connection day program, however, you will also find her helping people to achieve their personal goals through our Supported Living Services and Places To Go programs, including assisting Jerry with his business, Turner Recycling. Jenny is a clear communicator who stays extra cool under pressure, thinks on her feet, collaborates well with others, stays safe, and has healthy boundaries and expectations; she is always modeling appropriateness. Thank you, Jenny. We appreciate you!

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Halloween Fun At PFI!

