

Progress!

Parents & Friends Inc.

Spring 2015

Creatively Serving People with Developmental Disabilities Since 1955



Adam, Kevin, John and Patty making oatmeal in the new kitchen.

PFI Learning Garden and Chestnut Street Centers now open!

by Kristy Tanguay

In February, the L.I.F.E. on the Coast program relocated its Cooking, Laundry, Self-Advocacy and Communications classes to our new facility, located at 521 E. Chestnut Street. After 8 months of refurbishing the building, including the installation of a residential learning kitchen and laundry center, we are pleased to upgrade our client experiences.

The Kitchen & Laundry Center is overseen by L.I.F.E. program assistant Adam Ashford. Adam has a wealth of experience in food preparation and

kitchen safety. He has developed and implemented a curriculum designed to be inclusive, informative, safe and nutritious for all of our participants. Clients are now given the experience to learn nutritious meal planning, grocery shopping, recipe following and basic kitchen skills, including food safety. With the recent planting of our food and flower gardens at the PFI Learning Garden at Cypress Street Center, clients will learn to grow, harvest and prepare fresh organic produce come spring. Gowan Batist, PFI Learning Garden Manager,

has developed a safe, productive, adaptive and informative gardening program with an emphasis on growing the most nutrient dense foods to include in our cooking program. With the use of specially designed adaptive gardening tools and a multitude of gardening environments including our Hot House, Hoop House, raised beds, in-ground production rows, indoor seed sorting, and so forth. There is a gardening experience available to each of our clients who choose to participate.

Gowan states that our clients have been doing an amazing job in the garden and some have taken a leadership role in the raised beds.

They have planted flower bulbs, carrots, beets, radishes and peas and take care of them every week. They've been having a great time and have been a source of a lot of enthusiasm and encouragement for other clients as well. An exciting development within the gardening program is that we will be bringing our organic and locally grown produce and flowers to the community by participating in the weekly Fort Bragg Farmers Market. The monies generated from the Farmers market will help to sustain our learning kitchen and nutrition program.

These program upgrades have already resulted in increased client participation, and enthusiasm!





A View from the Moon

by Rick Moon

The evolution of services offered by Parents and Friends since its inception in 1955 has been dramatic. However, it is, perhaps, predictable. In 1955 the issues involved not sending children to live permanently in a State institution and providing them with a local education, which was withheld in those times, so they could participate equally in the community. To address this parents got creative and started their own school and lobbied and worked for Title 17. Later came the drive to create jobs in the community for the disabled, supported living services so they could live independently in the community, and promoting self-advocacy so they could learn and demand their rights and self-respect. Behind all this was a sense of what was right, what was needed and the creativity to find solutions which were able to bridge the gap between theory and execution.

Times have changed. Technology has changed. Issues have changed. Now we have Title 17, now we have access to the public school system and now we have rights for disabled Americans. So what are our needs now? Over the last few years we have focused on five areas of

need ... some new, some recurring. These needs, not in order of importance, are: employment, self-advocacy, domestic/independent living, health and well-being and community integration. Each of these five areas deserves a paper onto itself, but as an overview, here are some of the things we have recently implemented or are actively working on.

Health and well-being has been an area which has not been focused on enough in the past. Recently we have developed relationships with the providers at Mendocino Coast Clinics and Mendocino Coast Pharmacy to work with and track medical issues and drug efficacy as they relate to clients well-being. We have assigned specific staff to assist clients to collect and report data to medical providers and follow through on prescribed remedies and life-style adjustments. We have also developed a certified Pro-Act trainer on staff to teach Pro-Act techniques in diffusing volatile situations and teach appropriateness in the community. We are also scheduled to have an on staff certified dementia and aging practitioner for our aging clients (early dementia and Alzheimer's is a medical complication for

many of our clients). Also scheduled is an on staff certified disability technologist to help clients to have access to the latest technology to help them to participate fully in the community and their workplace.

We have also invested in providing the means for clients to practice good health and a healthy lifestyle. All clients in L.I.F.E. on the Coast and The Community Connection have a PFI provided membership to the C.V. Starr center where they swim, exercise, do Zumba and more. We have also purchased a building on Chestnut Street where a new home kitchen has been installed as well as a full laundry area where clients learn domestic skills including kitchen skills, cooking, nutrition, shopping skills, budgeting and laundry skills. We have also started an organic community garden at the old Farm House on Cypress Street where clients learn gardening skills, nutrition, vegetable recognition, use and benefits and participate in the community Farmer's Market weekly.

There's lots more, but I'm running out of space. Suffice to say, looking back to 1955, as Yogi Berra said, it feels like déjà vu all over again, and it feels good! Spring is almost here too, and that feels good too!



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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.

The Fort Bragg Knights of Columbus #4025 donates over \$3,000 to Parents and Friends

by Meadow Fish

The Knights of Columbus once again showed their support and devotion to Parent and Friends with a generous donation presented at their annual Crab Feed.

Thanks to complimentary tickets, Mark Jepson, Marvin Wilrodt, Joan Gazzano and Meadow Fish of Coastal Support services attended the Crab Feed on Saturday evening, January 17th, at St. Anthony's Hall in Fort Bragg. The hall was wall-to-wall tables filled with an excited crowd of friends and neighbors.

There were wonderful raffle prizes donated by community members and businesses. There was an array of beverages, carafes of wine, garlic bread, a delicious salad and lots of fresh crab.

Mark and Marvin accepted the check on behalf of Parents and Friends. The funds were raised through the annual Tootsie Roll drive with volunteers setting up their tables outside Harvest Market and Safeway.

Many thanks to Knights of Columbus #4025 for their generosity.



Mark Jepson and Meadow Fish enjoy the fresh crab.

The support we receive from organizations and individuals such as these are so vital to helping Parents and Friends continue to serve.

Thank you to our recent donors!

Larry and Shirley Gurnett

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Thomas and Nancy Riley

Presbyterian Women

Photo by Nancy Joan Gazzano

Employees are the heart and soul of everything PFI does !

by Kristy Tanguay

Parents and Friends would like to congratulate each of the following employees of the quarter for the year 2014. Their dedication, dependability and drive to creatively serve our clients helps us to achieve and improve our outcomes and the quality of services we provide to our clients.



Roshan Nance

Roshan has recently been promoted to the Interim Manager for the L.I.F.E. on the Coast program. Roshan was raised in Fort Bragg and went to school with many of the clients whom we serve. She is cheerful, respectful and flexible in her work. In her spare time she enjoys baking, quilting, working out, and spending time with pets and family.



Brenda Ulbrich

Brenda is the Medications Coordinator for Supported Living Services at Parents & Friends. Brenda holds a lifelong interest in wellness and appreciates all of the resources available here on the coast. In addition to ensuring that the right medications are administered and recorded at the right times for coastal support clients, Brenda works with individual care providers using whole person centered care to create proactive, individualized wellness plans for those clients as well.



Kathy Bennett

Kathy is a house manager for our Supported Living Services and provides a variety of services to ensure that the needs of our clients who live independently in their homes are met. Kathy has lived on the coast for over 20 years and enjoys spending time with family & friends and taking in the beauty that surrounds us here on the Mendocino coast



Adam Ashford

Adam Ashford is our most recently honored employee. Adam is a curriculum leader with L.I.F.E. on the Coast, leading our efforts in Kitchen and Laundry skills for the clients we serve; he also represents L.I.F.E. on the Parents & Friends safety committee and he maintains our fleet of vans and performs facility maintenance. When Adam is not working he enjoys fishing, music, cooking and spending time with his family. His willingness to make a difference in people's lives comes naturally, and we are grateful to have him on our team.

Would you like to work for PFI?

Parents and Friends is one of the largest employers on the coast. Much of the work is one to one with a client. Many find the work enriching and satisfying. Many of our positions are full time and include generous benefits including fully paid medical, dental, vision, and life insurance.

Other positions are part-time and offer very flexible situations. There are shifts scheduled every day of the week throughout the day and even overnight.

Our Supported Living Service, called Coastal Support Services, has been growing a lot recently and there are positions available to be filled. Through this program, PFI offers various degrees of support for clients living on their own in the community. As an employee of Parents and Friends, you might take a client to the bank and help with budgeting or make a trip to the super market and help with shopping. Employees also help with cooking and doing laundry and various other household tasks. Some positions are for sleep over shifts at client's homes in order to provide support to those clients who are not able to be home alone.

There are also some positions available to be filled in our day programs, L.I.F.E. on the Coast, and The Community Connection. Through these programs, staff provide daytime support for clients helping them to participate in community activities.

No experience is required to start; if you are a person who is thoughtful, caring, patient, and fun, you enjoy helping people, and you want to make a difference in your community this may be the job for you. Clean driving record and background check required. Come fill out an application at 306 E. Redwood Ave. Monday through Friday 9:00-5:00.



Meadow Fish works with Kyle White

Popcorn Friday!



Program assistant Ui Wesley works with Buddy Peterson and Allen Watters during “Popcorn Friday” at Dana Gray Elementary School. Each Friday morning, we make and sell popcorn during morning recess for 25 cents each. Proceeds go to the Parents Club to provide programs and services in the classroom. Not only is it a homecoming of sorts for our volunteer participants, it is a downright fun teamwork experience in the community and it’s been well received by all.

The 3rd Annual

Beer, Bison & Bluegrass

Saturday, October 3

SAVE THE DATE!



*Creatively Serving People
With Developmental Disabilities for 50 Years*
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