

FRIENDS of FIRCREST

www.fircrestfriends.org

Tel. 206-729-3600

FRIENDS OF FIRCREST IS A VOLUNTEER 501(C)(3), NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHT TO QUALITY LIVING CHOICES FOR ALL CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

MESSAGE FROM JIM HARDMAN, FOF PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Another legislative session has ended and Fircrest is still in business. We continue to grow legislative friends as understanding of RHCs [Residential Habilitation Centers] and those they serve grows. We still have adversaries aplenty and at least two of them run the administrations that directly control RHCs. Those, as you know, are the Aging and Disability Services Administration [ADSA] and it's Division of Developmental Disabilities [DDD].

The ADSA is responsible for many thousands of people in its system. A minority portion are those under the purview of DDD. And even DDD's RHC residents constitute a small percentage of those DDD serves. Most residents at Fircrest fall into the severely or profoundly range of mental retardation. These two groups are only about 3% of the people who are intellectually disabled [mentally retarded]. It is therefore unrealistic to expect the ADSA and DDD leaders to have genuine expertise in such a small minority sub group of people they are charged with serving.

Linda Rolfe, director of DDD, testified last November that 99.9% of residents discharged from RHCs to private care benefit and are not harmed by the change. This was her opinion and she cited no evidence. To be fair, many such moves have been successful and DDD has avoided compiling evidence that may not conform to their ideology. DDD has not sought such evidence and has no plans to do so. She must have missed the compelling testimony by several dozen family members and guardians in July 2004. This testimony was "public comment" relative to making the Christmas Eve "emergency" Washington Administrative Code [WAC] rules permanent. This Christmas Eve "emergency" curtailed the rights of residents to contest their evictions from Fircrest. It was despicable and cynical. Despicable to do this at all and cynical to do it Christmas Eve and without notice to known groups with direct interests. Some families and guardians "chose" private placements when told their option was an RHC remote from the family.

The testimony Ms Rolfe missed was tear inducing reporting about the devastating impact of those relocations on profoundly disabled people. Some of you no doubt recall. ADSA and DDD leaders did not intend to cause harm. They were simply indifferent and so caught up in their anti RHC ideology that they convinced themselves of their righteousness. Even today they refuse to face up to the harm they inflicted. They claimed the legislature made them evict people. Two court cases found that assertion wrong. The first, Parsons vs. DSHS, is printed in a Court of Appeals volume anyone can read. Still they cling to that false mantra blaming the legislature. [The legislature directed them to plan for and report the plan for closures, no legislative directive for closures ever came]

But what to do? Is it wise to replace leaders who may perform very well for the vast majority of people they serve? Maybe, maybe not. It would seem wise to have RHCs supervised by people who truly know about the people they serve. And the State Constitution says, in Article 13, that the state has the duty to "support" and to "foster" institutions [RHCs] for people with developmental disabilities. RHCs need to be taken out of ADSA and DDD. The head of RHC administration should report directly to the Secretary of DSHS. ADSA and DDD might then focus on what they do best. What they do best does not include RHC administration.

Talk to your elected officials. Such an administrative change is a big deal and agencies are loathe to give up control of anything, even things they hate.

Please spread the word.

J.R. Hardman J.D., C.P.G., President FOF

MARCH 9 GENERAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Dr. Singh updated us on many Fircrest issues. See summary page7.
- Treasurer’s report included proposed ‘08 budget. Membership approved the proposed budget. Board agreed to modify certain expense and income categories to make statements easier to follow.
- Fundraising needs were identified and will be discussed at committee ad hoc meetings.
- Proposal to terminate the Boland Associates contract (Our Power Point Presentation professionals) was agreed to. Committee has been formed to negotiate the final fee.
- Resolutions to support RHCs are to be prepared for delegates attending the April 5th Legislative District Caucuses.

FOF welcomed new resident parent Don Richardson. We encourage new families to come to any of our meetings.

APRIL13 BOARD MEETING NOTES

- ACTIONDD lobbyist, Rick Jensen filled us in on results of their legislative activities. (See report pg.3)
- Rep. Maralyn Chase, D 32, Shoreline, brought us up to date on issues at the state and local levels that impact the master planning process for the Fircrest Campus. It was suggested that we form a stake holder/task force to look into issues surrounding the expansion of the Health Lab.
- The need for an additional task force was identified to look into the impact of recent Fircrest admissions on the long term residents and the ensuing cost overruns to provide for their intensive care needs.
- It’s important to thank legislators who worked with us this session. A list of those representatives will be available at the meeting May 4 or call Maureen Durkan at 206 399 6206.

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| <p>May 4th Meeting Agenda</p> <p>Board meets at 12:30 to 1:15 pm</p> <p>Honored Guests Arrive 1:30pm</p> <p>Presentation 2:00pm</p> <p>FOF membership meet- ing 2:30 to 3:30</p> | <p><u>FOF Meetings:</u></p> <p>Sundays: May 4, July 13, September 14, November 9, (Annual)</p> <p><u>Board meetings:</u></p> <p>Above dates and Sundays: June 8, August 10, October 12, December 14</p> <p>Board meets at 1pm, Membership at 2pm</p> | <p><u>Ad Hoc Meetings:</u></p> <p>(Committee work & discussion sessions)</p> <p>Second and fourth Fridays of each month 9:30 am Fircrest cafeteria</p> <p><u>Home Unit Reps (HURs) Meetings</u></p> <p>Third Tuesday of the month at 1pm, Fir- crest Coffee Shop</p> <p>(No June Meeting)</p> |
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2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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| <p>Officers:</p> <p><i>Jim Hardman, J.D., C.P.D. President</i></p> <p><i>Candace Braley, V. P.</i></p> <p><i>Kristin Ellison-Oslin, Secretary</i></p> <p><i>Maria Walsh, Treasurer</i></p> | <p>Directors:</p> <p><i>Terri Anderson</i></p> <p><i>David Baker, Ph.D.</i></p> <p><i>Jo Bousman</i></p> <p><i>Betty Cantrell, RN</i></p> <p><i>Saskia Davis, RN</i></p> | <p><i>Mo Durkan, RN</i></p> <p><i>Alice Hardman, MSW, C.P.G.</i></p> <p><i>Bonny Oborn</i></p> <p>Emeritus:</p> <p><i>Dot Brenchley</i></p> <p><i>Ruth Durkan</i></p> | <p><i>Jean Huntley</i></p> <p><i>Phil Scheier</i></p> <p>Advisory:</p> <p><i>Michael Johnson J.D., C.P.G.</i></p> |
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LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP**ACTION DD GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS REPORT FROM OLYMPIA – April 2008:**

The big news for ACTION was the passage of authority for the University of Washington Medical School to provide incentive grants to medical school students that seek training to improve health-care services to people with developmental disabilities. Fifty Thousand dollars has been included in the Supplemental Operating Budget to fund the first round of grants. The UW Medical School has already been in contact with ACTION and the program is getting underway.

A good offense is only as good as the defense and we had to employ the ACTION defense when two bills popped up that directed the sale of surplus RHC properties. The first one, House Bill 3197, sponsored by House member Liz Loomis was quickly withdrawn when Representative Loomis and House Capitol Budget Committee Chair Bill Fromhold found out this measure was going to be controversial. Once Representative Loomis was made aware of ACTION opposition she asked the chair not to hear the bill.

Senate version, SB 6760, sponsored by Senators Debbie Regala and Joe Zarelli, provided for surplus property sale authority to DSHS and adding Fircrest, Frances Haddon Morgan Center and Yakima School to the existing statute pertaining to surplus land use management on Rainier School and Lakeland Village properties. The proceeds from the sale of surplus property would be deposited in the DD Trust. The Senate Ways & Means Committee hearing was crowded with the proponents of the bill and was quickly reported out of committee. With the help of many ACTION members who contacted their legislators and some important assistance from the Senate Capitol Budget subcommittee chair Karen Fraser and others, the bill was amended on the Senate floor to prohibit the sale of surplus property.

We argued that surplus property should not be sold but rather kept and used as revenue producing property. In addition, we felt a change in the statute at this point would conflict with the ongoing Fircrest Master Plan. In the end the bill passed adding FHMC and the Yakima school to the existing land use statute, and Fircrest was removed from the bill pending the completion of the Master Plan.

Speaking of the Fircrest Master Plan, funding for Phase 2 was provided in the Supplemental Capitol Budget recommending the study focus on joint local and state utilization of the property. Something that Speaker Chopp was very interested in and used his influence to insure that Master Plan continued. Other Supplemental Budget items included money for contracts with the school districts to provide transportation, building space and other support services necessary to support educational programs of students living at FHMC and Fircrest (\$1.4 million).

ACTION supported the Federation of State Employees successful initiative that strengthens the employee protections in the Whistle Blower laws. This measure is a good step towards protection employees from retaliation for voicing their professional opinions.

Rick Jensen ACTIONDD Governmental Affairs

ACTIONDD needs your Donations:

ACTIONDD is the only lobbying organization in Olympia that strongly advocates for RHC care. Friends of Fircrest has a 501c3 (non profit) status which means they are very limited in the amount of lobbying they can do. In other words, FOF as an organization, cannot financially support ACTION DD, however individual citizens are encouraged to do so. The governor and others have indicated that the reason we still have five RHCs in Washington State is directly related to ACTIONDD's presence in Olympia.

Please support ACTION DD and send your donations to: Gary Hill, ACTIONDD Treasurer, P.O. Box 3110, Seattle WA 98103. Thank you!

Maureen Durkan, Chair ACTIONDD

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**By Saskia Davis**

We owe great thanks to Representative Maralyn Chase and Speaker Frank Chopp! Without their standing up for Fircrest School, it would be closed by now!. Instead, not only has Fircrest School survived, but, today, its doors are open and in addition to its traditional role as a therapeutic residential community, it provides a range of hard-to-find outpatient services and critical crisis services for community residents.

In 2003, when the 32nd district Senator introduced legislation to close Fircrest for the sake of selling the property, and the initial legislative response was to believe the inaccurate story that was told them to make it OK, Maralyn Chase, then a freshman Representative, listened carefully to Friends of Fircrest and Action for RHCs. After careful research and analysis to assure herself of the facts, with great heart, she took up the banner on behalf of Fircrest residents in the legislature. Against strong, initial opposition in the Democratic Caucus and House of Representatives, she steadfastly championed the cause of keeping Fircrest open. We learned that she took a good deal of abuse from other legislators for the stand that she took, but she did not back down. Gradually, while Friends of Fircrest, Action for RHCs, and both labor unions were educating the public and the legislature about the value of Fircrest's contribution in the spectrum of care for people with developmental disabilities, Maralyn was working to increase Fircrest's support among her colleagues. As we all know, throughout the ensuing years, the 32nd district Senator, DSHS, and other well organized, well funded RHC opponents continued efforts to close/downsize Fircrest. And Maralyn just never stopped acting in defense of Fircrest, and never stopped helping us win the support of ever greater numbers of legislators.

We also have Rep. Maralyn Chase to thank for much of the initial awareness and support offered to us in the City of Shoreline.

The 42nd district's Representative Frank Chopp, Speaker of the House, has also played a pivotal role in protecting Fircrest's survival and ability to provide critically needed services to community residents with DD. Acknowledging Fircrest as a valuable public resource, and appreciating the essential services provided to its profoundly retarded and physically disabled residents as well as community outpatients, Speaker Chopp has consistently supported Fircrest in the legislature. Expressing great wisdom and vision, he also has strongly supported out-reach efforts by Friends of Fircrest and ACTION DD, (formerly Action for RHCs) to make common cause with community advocates.

This year Fircrest is in the middle of a Master Plan process for the use of excess property. It is intended that the outcome will help assure the future of Fircrest School. At the end of the legislative session, Rep. Maralyn Chase and Speaker Frank Chopp succeeded in keeping our options open for the second phase of the Master Plan process by **convincing** legislators to exclude Fircrest from a bill which would have devoted potential income from the uses of Fircrest excess property to a DD trust fund which disallowed use of the funds by RHC residents. (Actually, by some standards, this last effort to **convince** the legislature to remove Fircrest from the DD trust is a gross understatement: One person described them as having defended Fircrest in a "real dogfight!"

On May 4, please join us in thanking Representative Maralyn Chase & Speaker Frank Chopp in person.

Time: 1 :30 Place: Health Lab, Fircrest Campus (enter from NE 150th St.).

IMPORTANT MESSAGES**ECONOMIC STIMULUS PAYMENTS FOR RESIDENTS by Saskia Davis**

As my sister, Kathy's representative payee, I received instructions from the IRS for filing a simplified return for the Economic Stimulus Payment (\$300) for her. Concerned that it might be a mistake, I called the IRS to confirm her eligibility. The rep assured me that if she had \$3000, or more, in qualifying income, she would be eligible.

In a conversation with Gail Dochow, Fircrest Resident accounts, I learned that all residents who received qualifying support from Social Security and/or VA payments are eligible for the \$300 payments. According to the IRS letter, certain Railroad Retirement benefits also meet the qualifying standard. The payment is not available to residents whose only support is from SSI.

Guardians who have guardianship of funds, who are designated "Representative Payees," should have received a similar notice from the IRS and are encouraged to file if their ward(s) have qualifying income.

Gail has said that Fircrest is doing the filing for all qualified residents whose guardians are not Representative Payees. Although the filing would not be late until after October 15, Fircrest will have filed for Fircrest Residents by April 15.

Once the payment has been received, the money should be spent within 2 months in order to avoid having it become a payment to Financial Recovery. Please verify this with Gail, Client Accounts (361 3011), as this may be subject to how much is in resident's account.

As it is not known exactly when the payments will be received for each resident, as soon as possible, non- Representative Payee Guardians will want to express to their ACM or HPA, their preference for how the \$300 should be spent. Questions? Call me at 364 7762 or 206 427 3526.

SAVE THESE DATES

- ***Mobility/Therapy Garden Groundbreaking Ceremony April 30, 1pm***

Garden Site behind Cottages 301/2

- ***Friends of Fircrest Membership Meeting May 4th, 2pm***

Health lab, Fircrest

Welcome Rep. Frank Chopp, Speaker of the House and Rep. Maralyn Chase D32

- ***ACTIONDD Meeting May 25th 10am-2pm***

Days Inn, Ellensburg (election meeting). Call Maureen Durken for info: 206 399 6206

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ***VOR Annual Meeting & Washington Initiative, June 13-17, Washington DC***

FOF will have delegates attending. For info contact Terri Anderson 425 788 4529

- ***FOF "T" shirts for sale: We all need one for upcoming events. \$10.00 Available at meeting.***

- ***Contact Julian Wheeler if you need info on upcoming Precinct, County, State Party Caucuses 206 522 9495 or 206 972 6018***

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer's Report Update for first quarter 2008

Thanks to the generosity of our Friends of Fircrest members, financial stability has been reached. This has allowed us to keep fundraising to a focused goal. In the past year our goal was to increase our contribution to the cottages and "Y" buildings. We hoped to provide some funds that would allow managers and staff an opportunity to enhance the livability of the units. Some purchased hanging baskets and container plants others expanded their decorations for holidays or used funds for outings.

Our annual gift will be disbursed to the Home Units in May. This year we are contributing to the client welfare fund to provide support for those clients who have little or no resources for basic necessities like shoes, underwear or PJ's.

We are grateful for the support our members have shown for the development of the mobility therapy garden sited behind cottages 301-02 and 303-04. (See Campus News pg.7). We continue to need your support funding the garden in order to provide amenities that are not covered by phase one of the installation.

We hope to accomplish these goals for 2008 and we ask for your continued support.

The Treasure's reports are available at general meetings or you may call 206 718 1761 and a copy will be mailed to you. Thank you.

Maria Walsh, Treasurer

Community outreach

Friends of Fircrest has made every effort to become involved in Shoreline community events and activities. One or two members attend the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce luncheons. This provides us with exposure and the opportunity to speak about Fircrest to the business groups of Shoreline. We also try to have a member attend the Shoreline City Council meetings and if appropriate to speak about current issues regarding Fircrest and to invite Council members and attendees to tour Fircrest.

This summer Friends of Fircrest will again participate in the Shoreline Community parade and the following festival at Ridgecrest Elementary School.

All these activities take time and preparation. The results have been very positive. Public awareness has increased to the point that folks recognize us and give us a thumbs up. The city council members and the members of the planning commission toured Fircrest last year. New council members and new planning commissioners need to take the tour. Our job is on going.

My drumbeat for all our membership is to encourage, even urge you to participate with our efforts on broader scale and support our more active members. We need siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews to take up the banner for keeping Fircrest available for our family members and for those who can benefit from the services Fircrest provides.

Can you spare some of your time to help out? We can use you at the Funfest celebration with our "Healing Garden" hospitality tent on the upper campus. We need your new ideas for the Shoreline parade and your assistance *with* the parade and at our booth during the Festival following the parade. It is a lot of fun, but some of us are getting worn out. Step up and lend a hand.

Get in touch. Call Candy Braley 206 527 1125, Maria Walsh 425 774 7497 or talk to any board member. *Help us out! You'll have fun.* *Thanks, Maria*

CAMPUS NEWS

Highlights of Dr. Asha Singh's Report to FOF March 9

- Staff changes: Lura Dunn is temporarily replacing Bill Riddle (Dir. Quality Improvement), Dave Davis has been hired to do incident investigation.
- Sprinkling systems and renovations are complete on Cherry Hall Pat N. Residents will have moved back in as of this newsletter as will residents of Pat A units 307/8, 9&10 as fire sprinklers and other repair work has been done. The last of the cottage sprinkler /renovations are underway. Air Conditioning needs on "Y" buildings is under consideration which will require electrical upgrades.
- Short term admissions are coordinated by Jessica Zinda via Mary Beth Poch, Region 4. As of March 9, there are some vacancies.
- Last year's budget called for one house closure. This could be accommodated as one house is all temporary staff. However, new referrals could change this in the next biennium.
- Dirt fill is still settling where the Madrona buildings once stood. This would be an ideal area for an Olympic track to fit in with the wellness programs for residents and staff.

Home Unit Reps Report

Adrienne Monillas, Fircrest ATP (Adult Training Program) Supervisor, met with the HURs at our March 18th meeting. She explained the recent ATP staff changes that rotated job tasks. Change is hard, but it is a way to take a fresh look at ways we operate and to find opportunities for improvement. Contract services has also been refreshed to provide workers with more meaningful work based on their abilities. The changes also offer better wages for the workers. Clients are assessed to find the best fit for a job be it contract piece work, ongoing document shredding, campus crew work plus other job opportunities. There are 25 staff in ATP. Occupational, Physical and Speech therapy support is an important need in ATP.

The ATP building, we were reminded is at max capacity. Finding space for staff and client activities is a challenge.

We discussed the need for a visitor sign in book in the ATP main Lobby. Documentation of visitors is important and in some cases a CMS requirement. HURs will support getting "sign in" protocols in place any way we can.

HUR meetings are a grass roots way for all of us to identify needs and make suggestions to help make life better for residents, staff and administrators. Next meeting May 20, 1pm Fircrest cafeteria. We learn a lot at each meeting...please join us. (No June Meeting)

FIRCREST MOBILITY THERAPY GARDEN FUND: Please see article outside back page

Contact Betty Cantrell for more information 206 632 7754

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
 PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____
 ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK PAYABLE TO: FOF Therapy Garden Fund
 FOR A DONATION OF: \$ _____

BILL MY: VISA ___ MASTERCARD ___
 FOR \$ _____
 CARD # _____
 EXPIRATION DATE: _____
 SIGNATURE: _____

Send this form to: Maria Walsh, FOF Treasurer,
 c/o Fircrest RHC, 15230 15th Ave. NE, Shoreline, WA 98155

All donations are tax deductible.
 FOF Federal Tax ID # 91-1340061

FRIENDS of FIRCREST
c/o Fircrest School, RHC
15230 15th. Ave. N. E.
Shoreline, WA 98155-7196

Attention FOF:

The May 4th meeting will start at 1:30 (Post card you were mailed said 2pm). We will be honoring special legislators at 2pm. Meeting will follow the presentation. Do come *when-ever* you can!

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MobilityTherapy Garden:a design for exercise, stimulation, work & play

Had time allowed for us to reproduce, transmit and send to you all the amazing designs for the Fircrest Mobility /therapy garden produced by the students of UW Landscape architecture Professor Daniel Winterbottom, you would have had a hard time making a selection of the best of the best. The April 11th display of designs complete with special activity equipment, structures, plantings, paths and activity areas was made more impressive by the knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism of the students presenting the designs they came up with in a very short time.

A dream of staff therapists at Fircrest, the list of needs to provide a venue for physical, emotional and occupational therapy is now a work in progress. The composite of all designs, scheduled for final review April 18th, will set in motion the groundbreaking Ceremony April 30th, 1pm at the garden site behind Cottage 301/2. We hope you will attend.

The garden funding for phase one is in place: the bones of the garden are to be installed by the student designers by the end of spring quarter. To provide for amenities such as benches, special equipment and tools for residents to use in their garden, think about a donation. *See form pg 7.* Thank you for your support.!