



Eldridge Press

Message from the Executive Director

by James E. Rogers

As most of you know, Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) has been engaged in developing a strategic plan that will communicate our values, mission, and the opportunities that we see, while setting forth our future as an organization. An important part of this process has been the gathering of input from our staff, clients, and other partners. After a lengthy phase of analysis and discussion, a total of five goal areas with twenty-five objective statements have been identified. Ten of these objective statements were selected to focus on initially, and implementation teams have been created for that purpose.

A formal written document has been drafted that is currently being prepared for printing and posting on the SDC Intranet. To coincide with the publication, a variety of forums will be used to facilitate discussion and provide an opportunity for staff, clients, and others to give their input and ideas to the teams.

On April 8, 2008, Director Terri Delgadillo, Chief Deputy Director Mark Hutchinson, and Deputy Director Deborah Meeker, of the Department of Developmental Services, were able to visit and tour our center. April and May are an extremely busy time for them due to the budget cycle and Legislative Hearings, so we were gratified that they were able to spend time here discussing our needs and issues, as well as tour and talk with clients and staff. This was Mark's first opportunity to visit SDC since joining the Department in July 2007. Just as we were going to print, we received good news that he was confirmed by the California State Senate in his position as Chief Deputy Director.

This spring a variety of facility wide events are available including a Fashion Show; Passover Seder; Arts Week that includes an Art Gallery and Talent Show; Recognition events for our Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents, Volunteers, and Donors; Cinco de Mayo Celebration; and much more. I hope you all will have an opportunity to enjoy one or more of these fabulous events in the coming weeks.



Jim Rogers

People First at Sonoma Developmental Center

by Betsy Stark, Advocacy Coordinator

One of the goal areas for Sonoma Developmental Center's (SDC) strategic plan is establishing a self-advocacy program. Since People First is the oldest and best known self-advocacy organization run *by* and *for* people with developmental disabilities, we decided they would be best in providing training on "What is People First?" and tools to provide us in developing a self-advocate program at SDC.

Joe Meadours, Executive Director of California People First, and Robin Rhoades provided training to Supervisors, Psychologists, Social Workers, Teachers, Rehabilitation Therapists, Psychiatric Technicians, Individual Program Coordinators, and other staff helpers on April 9 and 10, 2008. The staff helpers will assist in facilitating the future self-advocacy support groups.

Parts of the training were great reminders of principles we already embrace: our respect and dignity to clients. The discussions were thought provoking and challenged our values as a provider of care versus a supporter of self-advocacy and provided a new vision that ensures we support the clients in taking control over their lives.

I would like to share two quotes from California People First: *People First Feels*: If you see us as equal, but different, and do not include us in the decisions that affect our lives, you will see us as your disabled client. *People First Believes*: If you get out of our way and we have the opportunity to gather power and knowledge over *our* own lives, we will become strong and successful.

In May, we plan on starting two support groups in Programs Four and Six. California People First trainers will work closely with the helpers of both support groups to guide us in the "how to's."

Have You Heard?

Hooray for the ARO!

by Elizabeth Clary, North Bay Regional Center

The Advocacy Rights Opportunities (ARO) Center at Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) marks a new era in the partnership between SDC and its community. We at North Bay Regional Center (NBRC) are particularly pleased to be a part of this undertaking, as SDC is right in our own back yard. We are inspired by the work SDC has done to make this a reality and congratulate all involved on a job well done.

ARO is but one example of the exciting changes taking place at SDC. It represents a revitalization of the self-advocacy movement in Sonoma County. Supporting those with developmental disabilities—no matter where they live—to lead lives of their choosing is an important component to developmental services in California, and ARO demonstrates SDC's commitment to this.

System-wide collaboration is a key element in promoting self-advocacy. ARO will allow NBRC to be a more visible participant in planning teams at SDC. Though NBRC's liaisons to SDC will not be permanently based in ARO, the office space we will soon inhabit will make us more accessible to consumers, staff, and families. In addition, it will allow us to maintain closer contact with the Regional Resource Development Project, Area 4 Board, People First, and Parent Hospital Association.

During the next month, NBRC will be moving into our new office space. Please stop by and visit us in our new "digs"!

Tour of the Department of Developmental Services...and More

As you may know, Tamara Wheeler, Training Officer, and Cheryl Holden, Training Coordinator, from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) in Sacramento, coordinate tours to Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) yearly, starting in April and continuing through November.

On February 4, 2008, staff from SDC were invited to Sacramento to tour DDS and learn about the department. Tamara, Cheryl, and Bonnie Banks, retired annuitant and former Assistant Deputy Director of the Developmental Centers Division, greeted us. Bonnie talked about the DDS organizational chart and the many Offices, Divisions and Departments that are involved in day-to-day operations, and gave a brief overview about what occurs in each area. All of us on the tour were amazed and a bit surprised by how large DDS truly is and how many individuals are being served not only in Developmental Centers but in the community as well. We were given a walking tour of the

building and the various worksites, running into employees we had all seen during the DDS tours at SDC.

Following the tour of DDS we made our way to Southside Art Center; an Artistic Growth and Employment Program, Community Based Program, and PASSAGE Program.

The Artistic Growth and Employment Program offers choices in the visual and performing arts arena. Southside Art Center believes that challenging and experimental classes encourage consumers to have a new world-view toward independence and personal excellence resulting in a full and creative life. Public performances in drama and music classes offer consumers the opportunity to use techniques learned from theater games, skits, vocal coaching, make-up, costume, and prop production classes.

The Community Based Program serves to integrate consumers into their community through volunteerism. Some of the volunteer sites include American Red Cross, California Emergency Foodlink, and many others.

The PASSAGE Program provides person-centered planning and program services for individuals who need personalized goals and objectives addressing the areas of behavioral challenges, community integration, and vocational skills. Natural community settings are used for the training environment.

Southside Art Center prides itself in facilitating communication between peers rather than seeking confirmation from staff. As a matter of fact, we were greeted by two of the consumers who work at Southside Art Center and given a tour of the facility. It was obvious they were extremely proud of what they do and enjoyed talking about it.

We continued to the State Capitol Building and were given a history tour of California and the building itself, which included the Senate and Assembly rooms. We were allowed to enter one of the rooms occupied by former governors and on the wall there was a map of the State of California from 1904, with the town of Eldridge on it!

All in all, the tour was quite a learning experience and we hope to offer this opportunity to more employees in the future.



SDC staff touring the State Capitol

Sonoma Developmental Center: A Mecca for Tours?

Driving through on Arnold Drive, many visitors to the area mistake the grounds of Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) for a college campus. Others admit having no idea what the facility is. Well, the Office of Planning and Communications has been busy educating strangers about the Center and the people that live and work here.

Over the past year, several service providers and stakeholders, including several staff from Department of Developmental Services headquarters in Sacramento, have requested tours of the facility to get a “behind the scenes” look at Sonoma Developmental Center.

Recent tour groups have included three groups (totaling about 30 people) of social workers and care providers from Alta California Regional Center, a group from Regional Center of the East Bay, students from the Assistance Dog Institute, and a group of local business leaders from the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce. Past groups have also included Golden Gate and North Bay Regional Centers, and staff from Becoming Independent.

During each of the above tours, participants are guided through various areas of the Sonoma Developmental Center campus by the staff that know it best. They are given a brief history of the facility, and are often surprised to learn that SDC has its own zip code and is considered the town of Eldridge.

Frequent stops include REACH (Recreation, Exercise, Activities, Computer access, Holiday awareness), where Melodie, a Music Therapist, guides visitors from room to room explaining the variety of activities offered and the skills being practiced during each activity. She shares photo albums from the Performing Arts Company productions and describes the live theater experience that is offered each fall.

At Adaptive Engineering, Emmet, Gregg, or one of the other Assistive Technology Specialists, give an overview of the process for creating custom seating systems for an individual; and Sue, a Teacher, explains the variety of communication and access devices available through the Adaptive Technology Resource Services Department. At the Shoe Shop, Karin or Lisa, also ATSS, explain the variety of reasons a person might need a custom shoe, and the process they follow to create a pair of shoes.

During tours of the Outpatient Clinics, Janet, a Senior Psychiatric Technician, guides guests through the rooms

where a variety of medical clinics are held, and explains what types of services are performed in the “special procedures” room where experts perform medical procedures with sedation.

Residence Managers like Arlene, Bill, and others often greet a group curious about the residential environments at Sonoma Developmental Center, and are proud to show off dining areas, bedrooms, living rooms, and courtyard areas. As they guide visitors through the residence they explain daily routines, and talk enthusiastically about the personalities that live there. Their warm and friendly manner is evidence of their affection for the people they serve.

Dave teaches a computer class. When a tour group comes to his class he introduces the individuals that attend the class and describes the tasks they are working on. He includes everyone in the conversation and guests are often impressed with the technology in use there.

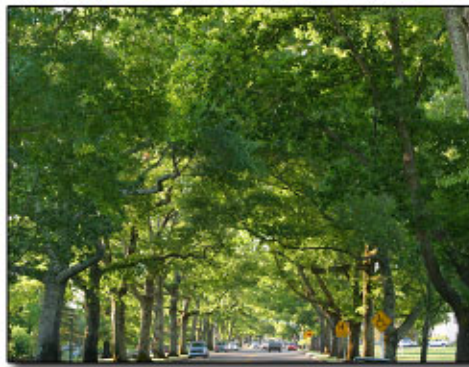
Throughout the tours, the Sunrise Industries recycling crew is often seen at work as they travel about campus, collecting the materials they will bale at Sunrise Building 6.

Much of the campus is seen from the van as tour groups wind their way around the expansive campus. Visitors are surprised to see there is a swimming pool that can be used year-round, or that there is a riding arena near the farm. Many are pleased to hear the farm is open to the public and they often speak of returning with their own families to visit the animals there.

Tour groups that work in the field of developmental disabilities express their excitement when learning about the ARO center at the King building. Visitors are surprised to hear that staff often have careers of 20 or 30+ years working at SDC. They frequently comment that they “had no idea” that SDC was so expansive, served so many people, employed so many people, etc.

Though tours of the facility may not make Eldridge the new vacation hot spot, it is a mecca for learning about services provided for people with developmental disabilities; one that aims to bridge the gaps between service providers, service recipients, and a variety of stakeholders.

To request a tour for your group, contact the Public Information Officer at (707) 938-6703.



Driving through SDC

Have You Heard?

Karen Larson Is Retiring

by Sandy Gonzalez, Fairview Developmental Center

Karen Larson, Executive Director of Fairview Developmental Center (FDC), is retiring after 39 years. Karen has been the Executive Director of Fairview Developmental Center since July 2004. Prior to that, she was the Acting Executive Director at Lanterman Developmental Center for approximately six months and brought leadership through a difficult period. Karen has served individuals with developmental disabilities since 1969 when she volunteered at FDC. Her official employment with the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS) began in 1971 when she was hired at Fairview as a Student Professional Assistant. During her tenure, she also held the following positions at FDC: Graduate Student Assistant, Teaching Assistant, Teacher, Assistant Chief Central Program Services, Chief Central Program Services, Director of Quality Assurance, Program Director, and Clinical Director.



Karen Larson
[photo by
Sandy Gonzalez]

What Karen loved most about her job was the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with the people we support at FDC along with their friends, family, and advocates. One of her most memorable moments was Fairview's original People First Spirit Day, which celebrated the facility's advocacy efforts. Upon retirement, Karen will miss the day-to-day interaction with the people who stop by to share their successes and meeting their personal objectives. She will also miss the opportunity to help resolve the daily problems faced by an Executive Director.

Karen is looking forward to spending quality time with family and friends and hopes to visit several national parks that she has yet to see.

When asked about her visits to Sonoma Developmental Center, Karen said she loves it. "The staff work in unique ways to support the people who live there. They maximize the beautiful environment surrounding them in order to improve the lives of the residents and staff alike."

Karen's retirement was celebrated at a reception held in her honor at the Fairview Auditorium on March 27, 2008. The event was attended by many clients and their family members, current and former FDC staff, community partners, and Karen's family. Jim Rogers, Executive Director of Sonoma Developmental Center, attended on behalf of the Department of Developmental Services.

We wish her a fond farewell and a happy new beginning!

Ron Cohn Retires!

by Renee Bliss and Ron Cohn

Ron Cohn is retiring in May 2008 after 36 years of service at Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC). Ron came to SDC after obtaining his bachelors degree in Psychology at San Jose State University, and a few years later got his Psychiatric Technician license from Santa Rosa Junior College. In the early 1970s Ron attended Psychiatric Technician classes in the old brick building. During his career, Ron had many wonderful and challenging experiences. As a Senior Psychiatric Technician, he was chosen to create the Palomino House in Santa Rosa, a joint venture with North Bay Regional Center for six very social SDC clients who would benefit from community life.

As a Residence Manager, there were many great memories. Ron was one of the first managers selected to start the vocational and adult day programs, (then Programs 8 and 9, later dubbed Program 7). It was exciting for him to be selected to open the Sunrise Outlet in Boyes Hot Springs and create a community-based workshop for 50 clients, and to also develop a thrift store from which clients and people from the surrounding community could jointly benefit. It was a great learning experience for everyone involved.

Ron then worked in Central Program Services supervising many diverse departments and during that time, helped start the Senior Services program. Ron was promoted to Nursing Coordinator in Program 1 where he learned the intricacies of our staffing system, then became a Program Assistant in Program 7. For the last 2+ years, Ron has been the Program Director in Program 3. While in the residential programs, Ron worked closely with his clients' parents and has really appreciated the support from the Parent Hospital Association.

Ron has been involved in SDC's special events for many years, such as the annual Golf Tournament fundraiser, which benefits our employee recognition program. He was also involved in staying up overnight to cook the pigs and turkeys for the Celebrate Sonoma event—we'd all love to hear the stories from that experience!

Ron always had a smile, a sense of humor and would take time to listen to clients and staff. He plans on traveling with Kay, his high school sweetheart and wife of 30 years, playing lots of golf, hiking, gardening, taking



Ron Cohn

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photographs, and enjoying all the new opportunities that will unfold during this next phase of his life.

Ron really enjoyed his time here learning a lot from staff and clients. As most of you know, there is a very strong support group of friends and family at SDC. And Ron says, "Best of luck and good wishes to everyone—stay in touch!"

February Employee of the Month

The Employee of the Month for February 2008 is Sheila Rafols, Registered Nurse from General Acute Care (GAC). The GAC staff nominated her because, "Sheila represents the ultimate nurse; she is an awesome leader and a very caring coworker." Her peers describe her as hardworking and responsible. "She is very knowledgeable and we would be remiss if we did not commend her for all her talents." They go on to say, "Sheila is one of the most formidable GAC nurses one could ever meet and we appreciate her as a co-worker and leader." Congratulations on your award Sheila!



Sheila Rafols

March Employee of the Month

Jane Dalusung, Psychiatric Technician Assistant from Ordahl A, has been selected as the Employee of the Month for March 2008. One of her nominators states, "Jane is hard working, responsible, and very knowledgeable and should be commended for all her talents and contributions to the clients and staff on Ordahl A." Jane often completes extra tasks on the unit without being asked. "If there is something to be done, Jane independently recognizes the need and completes the tasks. She exemplifies the value of serving others and should be recognized for her continued contribution." Way to go Jane!



Jane Dalusung

Kudos

● Kudos to Elizabeth Cook, Psychiatric Technician on Johnson B and Paul Peterson Psychiatric Technician on Emparan A, who took charge while floating to Emparan B recently when the residence was facing a challenging time. Together they effectively met the needs of all the clients and the other needs of the residence. Their positive attitude and willingness to

help out another residence in need demonstrated two of SDC's values: service to others and effective leadership.

- Kudos to Jocelyn Hiteroza, Psychiatric Technician Assistant from Nelson B, who created a technique for transferring a client safely in order to prevent potential injury and now all staff are utilizing this method. Her conscientious, caring, and creative approach demonstrated three of SDC's values: service to others, respectful communications, and effective leadership.
- Kudos to Billy Mack, Service Assistant–Warehouse and Stores, from First Impressions clothing department, who provided an informative tour to the Napa Psychiatric Technician students. He was thorough in talking about options and choices for the clients, using the least stigmatizing fashions, and for mentioning confidentiality and the importance of privacy and dignity. His hard work and dedication demonstrated three of SDC's values: service to others, respectful communications, and effective leadership.
- Kudos to all the staff from the regional centers that have taken time out of their busy schedules to tour and learn about SDC. Their commitment to familiarizing themselves with the consumers, employees, and the services we provide demonstrated three of SDC's values; service to others, respectful communications, and effective leadership.
- Kudos to Dierdre Egan, Recreational Therapist on Nelson B, who brought an international touring musician/recording artist to perform for the clients in Program Three at their Valentines Day Party. Her eagerness to find a professional artist to entertain the residents at an inexpensive cost demonstrated two of SDC's values: service to others and responsible resource management.

Note:

If you would like to receive the *Eldridge Press* electronically, please e-mail your request to Karen.Litzenberg@sonoma.dds.ca.gov.

Community Happenings

Therapeutic Riding Program Update

by John Litzenberg, Physical Therapist

If you happen to be passing by the outdoor horse arena at the Eldridge Farm on a Thursday morning, you may notice a single horse and rider surrounded by a group of staff members. This would be the Hippotherapy Team, a special collection of individuals performing treatments with a horse to help teach clients to sit and/or walk. The term for this unique type of therapy comes from the Latin for horse, "Hippo." At Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) we call it Therapeutic Riding. The team currently is made up of a Physical Therapist (me); three Restorative Aides: Arshad Ali, Eddie Barrientos, and Mary Neville; and a horse expert: the farm's own Kelly Woodle.



Kim on Sizzle, with staff (L to R): John Litzenberg, Mary Neville, Eddie Barrientos & Kelly Woodle

the tools of Physical Therapy, and to utilize the resources we have at SDC. The premise behind therapeutic riding is that movement of the horse moves the pelvis of the rider similarly to the pelvic motion while walking. Thus, riding helps teach the person the way the hips are supposed to move when walking. Also, riding challenges the trunk and leg muscles as the client works to stay upright, and subsequently trunk balance/strength and leg strength are improved. What makes therapeutic riding most distinctive is the connection between horse and rider. The bond between the two often helps make treatments more worthwhile, rewarding, and enjoyable versus more traditional treatment methods.

Therapeutic riding sessions are implemented with each of the team members playing vital roles. The therapist communicates with the client and dictates the speed and direction of movement of the horse. The two side walkers stand on either side of the horse and help keep the rider balanced. Finally, the horse expert handles and guides the horse throughout the treatment. Currently, the program serves two clients at the facility: Sean from Bentley and Kim from Thompson. Over the last few years, Sean and Kim have made steady progress in their mobility skills, with the help of some well-mannered horses, and they've had lots of fun along the way.

Kim has been riding Sizzle for the last three years, with a focus not only on sitting balance and walking skills, but on using her arms for balance, as she usually has her hands near her face. Over time, Kim has begun to put her hands down with less assistance, and will now hold onto the "Circingle" belt around the horse to balance herself while riding. Her walking has improved from prior to being in the riding program, as she is able to propel her walker more effectively and needs less help for balance when walking with hand-held assistance. One of the most exciting things has been to see Kim reach out and pet the horse from her wheelchair after a treatment session.

Likewise, Sean has been riding Tonka for the last three years, with the focus on his trunk strength and walking skills. While riding, Sean works on reaching for objects, such as plastic rings or horseshoes, and then dropping or passing them. This activity assists Sean with his offsite job, at which he is now able to sit in a regular chair to complete tasks. Over the years, Sean has steadily improved in his walking skills, going from needing trunk, seat, and arm support in a Rifton Walker, to just having arm support in a Platform Walker. He has also improved in his ability to keep his head and neck still, which helps with overall trunk stability. These improvements have come, at least in part, with the help of the Therapeutic Riding Program. Sean almost always has a smile on his face during riding sessions, and is often referred to as "Sean Wayne" during treatments because of his riding skills.



Sean on Tonka with staff (L to R): Eddie Barrientos, Kelly Woodle, Arshad Ali (behind Kelly) & John Litzenberg

Therapeutic Riding continues as an adjunct to other Physical Therapy treatment procedures; individuals are screened by the Physical Therapist and the Orthopedic MD for the appropriateness, both medically and emotionally, for this type of treatment. Currently, the program is limited to just a few clients; of course, the team would welcome and appreciate greatly any volunteers desiring to help the program. If interested, please contact Volunteer Services at (707) 938-6213.

Community Happenings

Mardi Gras

On February 20, 2008, the residents and staff at Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) were treated to a Mardi Gras dance reminiscent of Bourbon Street in New Orleans. The gymnasium was decorated with colorful flags and oversized masks, with an abundance of bright glittery draping materials in green, yellow and purple. The bartenders were on hand—ready to take that special order. There were masks and beads available for all to wear. There was the ever-popular photo booth, which was lavishly decorated with bright colors and with many costume items, including decorative hats, beads, and masks. Once the band started playing, there was no holding back. From the colorful drinks, to the festive décor, the SDC gymnasium was the place to be on this cold winter night.



Program Director Tony Schapero photographs a reveler at Mardi Gras

Train Day

The annual Easter Train Rides occurred on Saturday March 22, 2008. Organized by Nancy Sessi-Tallent, the American Legion from Solano and Sonoma counties offered half hour “train” rides around the beautiful grounds of Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC). Although the “trains” are constructed on truck bodies, they have been lovingly rebuilt to look like actual trains by an elite group within the American Legion called “La Société des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux” (the Society of 40 Men and 8 Horses), which honors the French troop trains of World War I.

Participants included those living on Brent, Corcoran, James, Judah, Lux, Malone, Nelson A, Roadruck, Sequoia, and Smith.

These dedicated military men from Voiture #395 (Solano County) and Voiture #338 (Sonoma County) arrived at the pre-scheduled residential units and assisted the unit staff in getting as many clients who wanted to go for a ride into the colorful vehicles. They made their way up around the Eldridge Farm and back around the back soccer fields. They rode around the Butler Pool, the Farrell, Turner, and Van Horn buildings,



Voiture 395 from Solano County

around Judah and Powers and back down towards the other side of campus, all the time blowing the train horns and whistles.

They drove towards the baseball field and up behind the Administration Building, exiting out by the Firehouse. They continued on around Slater and Walnut and made their way over towards Nelson Treatment Center and behind the Emparans and Regameys and back home to the residential unit.

Sock Hop

The Sock Hop dance was held on the evening of March 26, 2008, a cool spring evening. The gymnasium was transformed into a 1950s high school gym with decorative oversized records, music notes and hula-hoops; sitting areas were decorated with black and white tablecloths.

The staff working the event and some of the people attending came dressed in swinging 50s attire. There were butcher paper and poster paint signs and also a large rack of 1950s-style garments, sunglasses, and wigs for those who did not come already dressed in 1950s attire to wear while having their photo taken. The photo booth was decorated with life-sized cutout figures of Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, and Elvis Presley.



Ordering refreshments at the Sock Hop

In addition, there was a refreshment stand featuring staff dressed as soda jerks, serving root beer floats and fifty-fifties (vanilla ice cream and orange soda).

The band played 50s rock and roll standards and once the music started playing, everyone cut loose to bebop on the dance floor. Everyone seemed to be having a lot of fun.

February New Hires

Charla Apisai, Senior Psychiatric Technician
Kelly Arent, Psychiatric Technician
Eric Jones, Assistant Coordinator of Nursing Services
James Khan, Stationary Engineer
Joshua Mwiti, Licensed Vocational Nurse
James Pena, Psychiatric Technician
Rachel Weaver, Student Assistant
Kris White, Psychiatric Technician
Natacha Wiebusch, Psychiatric Technician
Christina Witkowski, Clinical Social Worker

Community Happenings

March New Hires

Amelia Baio, Psychiatric Technician Trainee
Charles Darnell, Plumber I
Jonathan Defiesta, Psychiatric Technician Trainee
Susan Greene, Psychiatric Technician Trainee
Dale Heizer, Stationary Engineer
Ayana Johnson, Psychiatric Technician
Laura Johnson, Office Technician
Heidi Ramsier, Psychiatric Technician Trainee

April is National Occupational Therapy Month

by Judy Curme, Occupational Therapist II

The Occupational Therapy Department is committed to providing services that promote health, safety, independence, access, and active participation to all the people we serve at Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC).

Occupational Therapy is a health and rehabilitation profession. Occupational Therapists work with people of all ages who, because of physical, developmental, social or emotional deficits, need specialized assistance or strategies to lead independent, productive, and satisfying lives.

At SDC you will see Occupational Therapy practitioners providing services and assessments that support individuals in maintaining their health and participating in their lives to the fullest of their abilities. Occupational Therapists assess for and design customized seating systems, specialized positioning devices, and splints that support people in a functional position to do self-care, work, and leisure activities. Occupational Therapists assess for and provide adaptive dining equipment and safe dining strategies that enable people to eat more independently and maintain their health. Occupational Therapists are members of the Interdisciplinary Teams and participate in joint problem solving with teams on issues such as client protection, care planning, and skill development.

All of us in Occupational Therapy would like to thank the staff at SDC for their professionalism, support, and assistance. This enables us to do our part to help our clients lead healthy, independent, productive, and satisfying lives. Happy OT Month!

The Wizard of Oz

Sonoma Developmental Center's Performing Arts Company is proud to announce this year's performance of "The Wizard of Oz" which will be performed live, September and October 2008. The Performing Arts Company, a committee made up of SDC employees and cast members who live at the facility, was founded in 2005 as a way to involve the individuals who live at the center in a meaningful theatrical experience.

Anyone living at the facility is welcome to audition and is guaranteed a part in the play.

Open auditions for this year's play were held in mid-March, with rehearsals starting in May and occurring throughout the summer months. Live performances are scheduled for September 24 and 25 and October 1 and 2.

The cast is comprised of approximately 40 singers, dancers, actors, and musicians.

Volunteers are needed for this year's performance of *The Wizard of Oz*, to assist backstage, with rehearsals, props, costumes, and more. For information about volunteering at this year's production, please contact the volunteer office at (707) 938-6213.



Recreation Therapist Joy Schoffer (left) and Dance & Movement Therapist Laura Farwell-Buricelli (center) lead a dancer at the Wizard of Oz auditions

Submitting articles to the Eldridge Press:

The *Eldridge Press* gladly accepts submissions of articles about events at SDC, news about SDC's departments and programs, employee recognition, and other information of interest to SDC's employees, consumers and other stakeholders. Articles may be edited for grammar, punctuation, and clarity. To submit your article, send it to the Office of Planning and Communications, Room 102, Sonoma Developmental Center, P.O. Box 1493, Eldridge, CA 95431. Deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to the publication date (for instance, May 15 is the deadline for the June/July issue).

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