

OSH Recovery Times

Volume 1, Issue 5



Dec. 2005

Where Have You Been, My Blue Eyed Son?

By *Marvin D. Fickle, MD*

I suppose it is the time of year – with friends and family gathering ‘round for the holidays, it seems appropriate to recall the high points of the past several months, and reflect on where we hope to be this time next year. Many an exercise of this sort turns to the maudlin, but for me it is important to avoid such sentimentality as we struggle to confront the realities of our new year.

The hospital has in many ways been a “blue-eyed son” over the past year, nearly impervious to complaint, given the tremendous struggles to adjust to changing patient populations, expectations, and hopes for the future. There have been exultant moments of recognition, and depressive segues as we recognize the severe limitations on rapid progress under which we labor. I prefer a smooth transition, but reality remains a chaotic and unpredictable determinant of change.

It is indeed a time to give thanks, for the many opportunities that have arisen, and for the hard work performed by so many employees, volunteers, and contractors. I will undoubtedly fail to acknowledge many deserving folks in this, and in succeeding columns, and readily concede the limitations of my memory. If I do fail to recognize your contribution, please do not hesitate to remind me (albeit, gently), so that I might correct my oversight.

If you are a new employee reading this, wondering how it could be of any interest or usefulness, please understand that the cultural rituals of appreciation are essential for any organization, let alone a state hospital that must struggle for its own existence. It is hopefully in that moment of self-awareness, and fleeting confirmation of the social importance of one’s labors, that one achieves a semblance of immortality.

Our recent social extravaganza, the “30th Anniversary of One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest,” was by all accounts a rousing success, and it is only fitting that we begin in our thanks with

the individuals that made the evening a possibility.

The Oregon State Hospital Foundation, and its current president, **Dorothy Haun**, rose to the challenge in a way even they thought unlikely. Our own **Jessica Loewen**, again on point for the hospital, worked closely with the “DHS Tres Caballeros” of **Trish Neiworth**, **Cindy Becker**, and **Nadine Jelsing** to produce a fantastic evening. **Barbara Adams** (VSD) and **Sue Wimmer** (RSD) and their staffs coordinated many of the patient activities

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OSH Recovery Times is edited by Jessica Loewen. Contact her at 503-945-2892 with questions, comments or suggestions.

Ward 35A Adopts Family for the Holidays

By Terre Banks, MHSRN 35A

The staff on Ward 35A have adopted a family for the holidays and we are all very excited about it! Phyllis Woellmer, MHT2, did all of the investigative work and found us a family through National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

We got their names and “wish lists,” and will all be contributing gifts or grocery money to try and help make their lives a little better this holiday season. We will be wrapping gifts at our annual unit holiday potluck, and then we’ll be off to make our delivery on the 14th of December.

I am SO proud of my staff, not only for the excellent work they do every day with our patients, but also for the care and generosity they show in their daily lives as well.

Your Help Is Needed

By Jessica Loewen

Coordinating thousands of dollars in donations and tracking patients’ wishes as they are newly admitted to OSH and moved from ward to ward is an immense task, but the end result is more than worthwhile. The Caring Tree Project ensures that each patient at the Oregon State Hospital will receive a gift for the holidays. For many patients here at the hospital, it will be the only gift they receive this year. For all of them it will be a reminder that people in the community have taken the time to think of them, even during the busy holiday season.

It is not too late to help with this project. During the month of December approximately 700 presents will be donated to the Oregon State Hospital for each of the patients as part of the Caring Tree Project. I need help to get them all wrapped in time. You do not have to be an OSH staff person to participate.

The Wrapping Room, now located in the 40 Building, is scheduled to be open Friday, Dec. 16, Monday, Dec. 19, Tuesday, Dec. 20, and Wednesday, Dec. 21 from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm each day. All wrapping supplies will be provided. Any amount of time that you could provide would be a great help to this project and ensure a wonderful holiday for the patients here at the hospital. If you have any questions, please call Jessica Loewen at (503) 945-2892.

Welcome

*Welcome to all those hired
or promoted in October*

Debra Augustus

Mental Health Registered Nurse

Andrew Axer

Principal Executive Manager G

Sibyl Ballard

Mental Health Therapist 1

Karen Cannon

Mental Health Therapist 2

Laura Evenbus

Mental Health Therapy Tech

Harvey Ezekias

Mental Health Therapy Tech

Andrea Gentry

Food Service Worker 2

Michelle Glass

Mental Health Therapy Tech

Lavern Mueske

Mental Health Therapist 1

Richard Ott

Mental Health Specialist

Luvy Ruiz-Martinez

Physician Specialist

Chrystal Wilbur

Mental Health Therapt Tech



“Normal” People Worry Me!

By Brenda Nelson

My name is Brenda and I have a Psychiatric Service Dog. She is a 3-year-old standard poodle named Freedom. This is a true story.

Freedom and I went through the drive-thru of a well-known fast food chain. I put my order in, drove to the first window to pay for my order. I called Freedom to the front seat to get my money out of her cape pocket. (Yes, she carries my money and ID. I figure, who's going to think to rob the dog.) The kid at the window says, “Your dog carries your money? I told him “Yes.” He said, “Aren't you afraid she will run away?” I told him, “No, she is a well trained service dog.” Then he says “What's a service dog?”

I'm thinking, oh boy, here we go again and I'm not in the mood to play 20 questions with this kid. I told him Freedom was a working dog that helped me. Then he asks me, “What does she do?” I was ready for him. With a straight face I told him (now remember I'm driving my car) that I don't see well enough to drive and Freedom has been taught to bark once for a right turn, twice for a left turn, and three times for me to hit the brakes. He says, “That's really cool!” I could hardly keep from laughing in his face.

By the time I get to the next window to pick up my order I'm dying with laughter. It just happened to be the manager passing out the orders. She wanted to know what was so funny. So I told her. She just shook her head. I told her, “I know you don't have to be a rocket scientist to work here, but you might want to go clue the kid in.”

I swear this is a true story and that's why I say, “normal” people worry me! (I work with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and run my own Psychiatric Service Dog Program called Mighty Paws.)

Charitable Fund Drive a Success

By Deborah Howard

I just wanted to again thank everyone at OSH for participating in the Charitable Fund Drive. This year we raised \$15,534.65, which was a 62% increase from last year's donation of \$9,569. Employees of OSH donate annually to the Food Drive, Charitable Fund Drive, OSH Foundation and various other worthy causes and charities outside of these major drives. Thank you all for your contributions.

December Calendar

2: Weight Watchers Meeting

12:00

Brooks Conference Room

Contact Linda Marshall:

(503) 945-9838

15: Wellness Walk

11:00-1:00

Sign up in front of the Com Center, rain or shine

Contact Sue Wimmer:

(503) 945-2886

16: Wellness Committee

8:15

Callan Room

Contact Sue Wimmer:

(503) 945-2886

16, 19-21: Caring Tree Wrapping Room Open

9:00-6:00

40B (South end of building)

Contact Jessica Loewen:

(503) 945-2892

21: Diversity Committee

1:30

Callan Room

Contact George Bachik:

(503) 945-2860

28: General Staff Meeting

2:30

30 Building Gym

Contact Pam Dickenson:

(503) 945-2852

Dec. 26:
Holiday

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displays. Special thanks are due to **Dr. Ulista Brooks**, Dean's daughter, who helped her father's attendance to be an especially delightful one.

Maynard Hammer and his Physical Plant crew (especially **Brian King** and **Ken Hampton**) once again showed their strength under duress, organizing the delivery of tables, equipment and supplies.

Ultimately, the evening was dedicated to our current and former patients, many of whom were able to make an appearance, including those who had fished Detroit Lake earlier in the day. My apologies to those who had expected the superintendent to organize the Depoe Bay fishing trip.

Many were pleasantly surprised to see **Governor Kulongoski** make an appearance. **Senator Peter Courtney** deserves special thanks for his unflagging support of mental health causes, and **Bryan Johnston**, the former interim director of DHS, played a special role as Master of Ceremonies of the evening. **Dr. Bruce Goldberg**, the incoming director of DHS, shared his upbeat view of the future.

Faye Kesey's appearance was an especially gratifying one, given the discordant history of the book's author and the movie. **Bob**

Nikkel's recognition of many significant players in the history of state mental health program lent an especially poignant tone for the evening.

Our media supporters, including **Alan Gustafson** (Salem Statesman-Journal) and **KBOO Radio**, were on hand for the event. My personal thanks go out to the many current, former and retired employees who joined the festivities.

Over the past year, we've had many opportunities to make known the conditions of the hospital, and to alert the public to the needs of the state mental health system.

We've been most fortunate to have journalists of the caliber of **Rick Attig** of the Oregonian. Photographers will continue to play an essential role in the process; **David Maisel**, **Christopher Payne** and **Bill Diodato** have participated in the historical documentation of the condition of the hospital. Stay tuned for a barrage of images.

Ultimately, it is the workers who make an organization function. My predilection for organized labor is obvious; what a superintendent needs is strong union partners; **Joe Thurman**, **Dr. Lori Skatch**, **Lew Cronenberg**, **Jackie Pierce**, and

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Employee Recognition

Congratulations to all OSH employees reaching October milestones.

•Retirements•

Jeanette Haas, Prin. Exec. Mgr C
Stanley Hahn, Psych Social Worker

•30 Years of Service•

Christie Gallegos, 48B

•20 Years of Service•

Hattie Anderson, Food Services

Sang Nguyen, 35A

Teresa Patton, 35C

Jimmie Ransier, Warehouse

•15 Years of Service•

Samuel Kanamu, 41B

Sharon Perry, 50F

Maria Quezada, 35B

Diane Raines, 50G

•10 Years of Service•

Regina Lathrop, Business Office

•5 Years of Service•

John Bowen, Qual. Improvement

Richard Knowles, 35B

Eunice Mastrangelo, P5A

Jon Sears, 50I



AS400 Users, How Can We Help You?

By the AS400 Project Team

The AS400 Project Team would like to let you know that we're working on moving you from your existing AS400 system to a newer, more reliable system. We are aware that many of you are concerned about how you will be able to do the work you do without this tool. It is our hope that this change will be for the better.

Like with your old car, you can upgrade to a bigger engine, and perhaps a CD player, but eventually a major overhaul is needed. Now it's time for a computer system change. To do that effectively, we need the assistance of all OSH staff.

First, let us introduce ourselves. "We" are the *Project Team* put together to help migrate from the existing system to something more current. The team consists of Jim Freeman, Project Manager; Joan Riley, Deputy Project Manager; Nancy Coddington, Business Analyst; and May Ellen Altree, Project Management Coordinator. You can contact us at *Project-Team, AS400*, or individually via GroupWise.

Connections to the AS400 are becoming less and less reliable, and many parts are no longer replaceable. The AS400 Project Team is in the process of surveying staff currently using the AS400. We want to know what the AS400 is being used for, and only you can tell us that.

We've designed a survey to help us help you. Many thanks to EDD, 41C, 34C, and Medical Records who helped pilot the survey. With their input, the survey was revised to the version all OSH staff are now being asked to fill out. When your access to the AS400 goes away, we want to ensure that everything you need to do your work is still available to you. All of your jobs are important, and one of our goals is to get through this transition without any break in service for you or your customers.

Survey findings and additional information will appear in future issues of this newsletter, so stay tuned. To complete your survey, go to:

<http://dhssurveys.hr.state.or.us/inquisite/data/as400usersurcrnread/as400usersurv2005scrnread.html>

Medical Records completed their survey with 100% participation in four days. Can any other department do better? We wonder...

Empowerment Center Open to All

By Amy Sackett

The Recovering Consumer Action Group invites you to take advantage of the variety of services offered at its Empowerment Center, which is located at 2620 Greenway Drive on the OSH Salem campus.

The Recovering Consumer Action Group is a grassroots project that was started in 2004 when a group of mental health consumers got together to form a safety net to catch the people falling through the cracks of the system after the latest major budget cuts.

We've given fellow consumers, family members, and even professionals a safe place to come to deal with mental health issues. Contrary to popular belief, the Empowerment Center is open to all OSH patients with on-grounds privileges as well.

Our goal is to empower consumers to become their own advocates and to be proactive in working toward self-sufficiency. We use evidence-based practices and work with NAMI, county and state agencies, and other community partners to help consumers achieve this goal.

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The Empowerment Center is open Monday through Friday from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

We have a number of consumer-run groups such as Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, scrapbooking, and a weight control/loss group.

We are looking to add classes as volunteer leaders become available. All classes and groups are free of charge.

We are also working to turn our garage into an exercise room. We’ve found most consumers cannot afford a gym and/or will not go to one by themselves.

We have room for about 10 pieces of exercise equipment. If you have any at home being used as a clothes rack, please consider donating it.

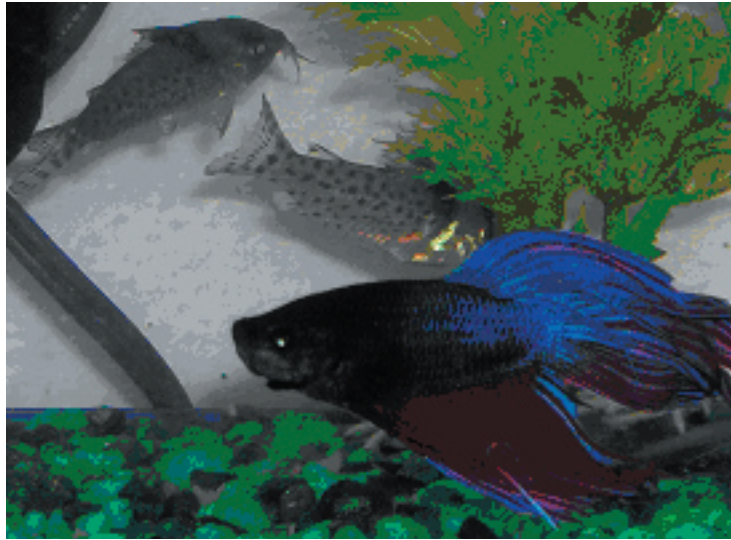
In addition, we have a lending book library, a brochure library, and a large number of games on hand for anyone to use.

Please stop in, have a cup of coffee, and check us out. For more information or to donate exercise equipment, contact Amy Sackett at (503) 370-7774.



No Name News Lives On

By May Ellen Atree



When the fish moved into the AS400 Project Team’s deputy’s office, the big question from everyone was “have you named them yet?” After several suggestions,

the ones that seemed to fit the best were “No,” “Name,” and “News.” “No” and “Name” are the two Cory Catfish who like to hang out in the background, and “News” (also known as Newsie) likes to know what is going on, so he comes out to look at those hanging around the aquarium.

So, if you are coming to the basement of Building 33, please stop by and visit “No,” “Name,” and “News.” We are located in room 9, right next door to Volunteer Services and down the hall from Medical Records. All are welcome.

“Thanks” continued from page 4

Jim Walker have all been there this year for me. As so many have commented, **Cheryl Miller**, HR manager, continues to be a breath of fresh air for OSH.

Any commentary about the success of the state hospital would be incomplete without mention of **Pam Dickinson** and **Marilyn Nichols**, the last of the “old timers.”

“Superintendents come and superintendents go” was a comment I heard some time back, but the people who do the real work are the backbone of the organization. For those of you in the trenches out on the units: You know who you are – my heartfelt thanks go out to you.