



PARENT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION SONOMA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

THE ELDRIDGE GAZETTE

Embracing a future of possibilities



APRIL 2018 ISSUE

P.O. BOX 237, ELDRIDGE, CA 95431
www.parenthospitalassociation.org

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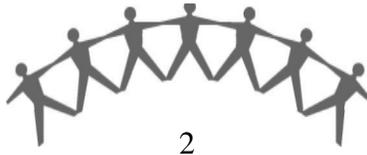
CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

From Kathleen Miller, PHA Co-President

A Sad Farewell

Sonoma Developmental Center, the place we all counted on to take care of our disabled family members and where we took them on walks and celebrated holidays and got to know the staff and think of some of them as part of our own extended family, is no more. Already we are saying goodbyes to beloved staff and the long time peers of our own family members who are leaving or have already left. Some have found a safe place for their family members to land. Some of us are still searching for that safe place.

We have had some help from many along the way, including but not limited to, the folks who we have honored here today. We have needed their help. We have needed that help because not only are we facing an uncertain future for our own



beloved family members, but we are facing an uncertain future for the entire system of care for the disabled community. We understand that without the developmental centers to fall back on, it is the most disabled, the very medical and those with the challenging behaviors who are most at risk.

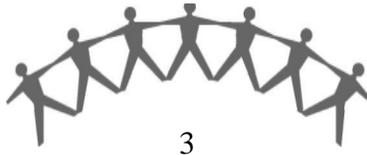
We have needed help because not only are we trying to help families learn to speak out and advocate for their loved ones leaving the center, but we are trying to make sure the center remains safe throughout the closure process as the norms and safety nets that have been in place for years begin to fray.

Mostly however, we have needed help with a community system that may not prove ready for all those who now must rely on the models of community care and existing health care systems to do the job the developmental centers did for so long.

That is why we found the support of our friends here today so important. That is why having their continued support remains so important. This is why we have gathered here today to thank them but also to cement relationships and friendships that have proven critical in securing homes and supports for our family members.

Today will be our last meeting at Sonoma Developmental Center. It is fitting that we share it with our friends and allies. It is fitting that we share it with all of you who have been with us throughout. But it is not our last meeting. We will meet again on the second Saturday in May as we always do to go forward in the work we must continue. On that day together we will plan the future of PHA. Our new home will be the Hanna Boys Center where they have agreed to let us use their beautiful facility to hold our future meetings. It is right down the road -simply travel through SDC towards the town of Sonoma and make a right at the traffic circle. I hope to see you all there on the second Saturday in May.

Make no mistake, the work of PHA is not done. While there have been small improvements in the community system there is need for more. While we have a strong health care support in Sonoma county-thanks in large part to those who we honor here today- there are other counties where health care is not as focused and finding the right medical home remains a challenge and finding dental care nearly impossible.

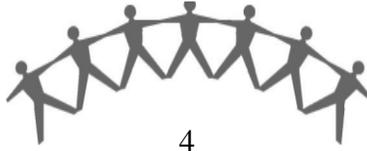


The backup system for behavior clients who are in crises does not appear to be a system that is in any way up to the task. Transparency in the DDS system needs to continue to improve if we are able to understand what is happening statewide or in our own backyard. Only with transparency will we be able to identify and focus on the areas of greatest need.

But it is in the area of individual advocacy where we are most needed. It is for that young family with the autistic son who needs help figuring out the next step or the senior who can no longer advocate for their child that we need to be there. Many of you do not realize how many calls for help we have gotten over the years and just how many have reached out for help.

The DDS system is complex and at times of crises can be confusing and overwhelming. Some families have struggled against it and never received the help needed for their loved one. No one was there for them.

This is not about blame. Because we may need to advocate for that missing piece it does not mean we fail to recognize that hard work and dedication of so many in the DDS system. Because we may be critical and advocate for changes to the system it does not mean we fail to understand or appreciate the progress that has been made. But the fact remains there is more to be done and any system benefits from strong outside oversight. But it is that desperate single mom with a severely disabled child or the old couple that kept their kid at home but can no longer that may need our support the most. It is my hope that we might be there for them -or you or me if our time of crises should come. For those of you who might say why me-why us? I say to you if not us-then who?



PHA GENERAL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 10, 2018

This meeting was to honor some people in the community who have been especially helpful in PHA efforts in the past several years. Each of the six persons recognized received a plaque from PHA.

Those being recognized were the following: John McCaull, Sonoma Land Trust, Richard Dale, Sonoma Ecology Center, Naomi Fuchs, Santa Rosa Community Health, Supervisor Susan Gorin, Senator Bill Dodd, and Senator Mike McGuire.

The meeting was called to order at 10:12. Karen Moen, co-president, gave a welcome message. A moment of silence was given to remember those affected by the tragedy at the Yountville Veterans' Home yesterday.

The program for today is one of celebration and thanks to those who have helped PHA. Karen gave thanks to SDC staff and those in the community who tried to keep SDC open and then to support the oversight of getting appropriate care for those moving from SDC as it closes.

Naelani Scheckler-Smith, the Catholic chaplain at SDC, gave a blessing.

Father Chesterman introduced musician Aki Starr who sang for the group.

Karen then introduced Kathleen Miller to present some of the awards.

Kathleen did an introduction for Richard Dale. Kathleen met Richard several years ago and someone from Sonoma Land Trust. The Sonoma Coalition was formed. Richard gave a short talk. He learned about SDC residents from Kathleen and also learned how much care was being given to the residents.

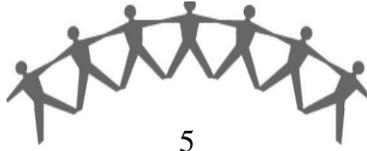
Kathleen also introduced John McCaull. John said he has lived in the Sonoma area for several years before he started working with the Sonoma Land Trust. He said the award would help him to continue working for the goals of the Coalition.

Brien Farrell presented the next award. Brien's sister has lived at SDC since 1958. SDC was dedicated in 1891. Nature is vital to everyone, but even more so for people like those who are and have been residents of SDC. Careful planning and collaboration is needed for this land in the future.

Brien acknowledged the SDC staff and thanked them for all they have been doing. The health hub was started in Santa Rosa with Naomi Fuchs as director. She is now overseeing 10 clinics with 500 employees in the Santa Rosa area. Brien said he hopes to spread these same services to other areas of California. Dr. French, who was at SDC, is now at the clinic.

Naomi Fuchs said she knows there is some sadness in saying goodbye to SDC. She hopes to earn the love and respect of those she is serving. Health care is a right that should be shared by all people. The Duden clinic (in Santa Rosa) was opened on Monday. They have a specialized team to serve the developmentally delayed. There are dental services, psychiatry, and other services at the clinic.

Kathleen presented the award to Supervisor Susan Gorin. Supervisor Gorin started as a member of the local school board and later became mayor. In 2012 she became a supervisor. She became involved with PHA when the Sonoma Coalition was formed. She committed a lot of time to the coalition. The vision has proved elusive. The medical hub to serve disabled was established, but in Santa Rosa instead of Sonoma. North Star crisis center was opened at SDC



but will not be at SDC after SDC closes. Supervisor was one of those instrumental in getting the establishment of a treatment center.

Supervisor Gorin said she was committed to the model at SDC and thought it was best. The coalition started out about the land at SDC, but then included the future of the residents of SDC. She is still working to get a crisis stabilization center. The coalition met yesterday and is continuing work.

Brien Farrell introduced Senator Bill Dodd. Senator Dodd was a business man in Napa and got into government and now is a California senator representing parts of 6 different counties. Senator Dodd has set aside time to help PHA over the last few years. He asked for some big ticket items in Sacramento.

Senator Dodd said that when he first came to a PHA meeting, it sold him that he needed to work with PHA and their loved ones living at SDC. He knew the staff at SDC was important. He visited Dixon fairgrounds when SDC was evacuated because of the fires last fall. He thanked the SDC staff for all the work they are doing. He said he was committed to continuing to work with PHA. Land is important, but local control and local interests should prevail.

Kathleen introduced Senator Mike McGuire. His family farmed in Alexander Valley. He became Healdsburg's youngest mayor. He has had a long career in government. He has been a tireless and strong advocate for the environment. He has attended meetings with DDS and worked with members of the Sonoma Coalition. He sponsored and was able to pass a bill to have a longitudinal study of people moving from SDC.

Senator McGuire often appears in the Press Democrat and it makes the time he has had spent with helping PHA even more remarkable.

Senator McGuire said the number 1 priority is the welfare of the residents of SDC and their future. He thanked the SDC team. He said SDC would not close until all residents have a transition plan and are placed in appropriate homes in the community.

The medical hub just opened in Santa Rosa. There will be a PHA day there in the near future.

Some discussions with DDS (Department of Developmental Services) about having chaplain services in the community have been occurring recently and some progress has been made.

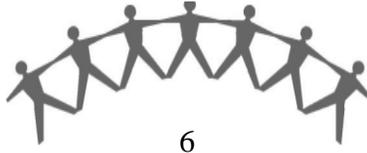
SDC will be going into warm closure.

In the long term the plans for the land at SDC need to be transparent, fair and equitable. There needs to be a community process. The Department of General Services has been doing a study of this land. The process is not going to be fast.

Kathleen made some closing remarks. We are already saying goodbye to some staff. Some family members of those living at SDC are still searching for homes for their loved ones living at SDC. The entire system of care for the disabled has an uncertain future.

We want to make sure that SDC stays safe as the closure process continues. Having continued support is important.

The next meeting of PHA will be the second Saturday in May and we will be planning for the future of PHA. We will be meeting at Hanna Boy's Center in May.



There is a need for improvements in the health care system. A back-up system for behavior clients is not in place. Data needs to be transparent. The DDS system is complex and some families in the community have not been able to get the help they need. PHA can help people in the community who have loved ones who are disabled.

Tom Chesterman said that he found out yesterday that the home his son was supposed to move to was not going to be available. He is quite concerned about this. Society is to be judged by how it treats the most vulnerable. He is working on getting spiritual comfort in the community for those moving from here.

There was a musical performance by Aki Starr to close the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am.

Save the Date

The next PHA meeting:

WHEN: May 12, 2018 at 10:00AM

WHERE: This will be the first PHA meeting held at our new site down the road at the **Hanna Boys Center, 17000 Arnold Dr, Sonoma, CA 95476.**

Once you turn in signs will direct you to the large conference room where the PHA meeting will be held

WHAT: This meeting we will work together to craft the vision for PHA going forward
We need you all there!

Other dates:

May 11- Town Hall on the future of SDC- state plans- contact Senator McGuire for details

[June 6-Summerfest at SDC- SDC staff reunion and PHA members are invited to attend](#)



Parent Hospital Association
Sonoma Developmental Center

MEMBERSHIP FORM

For membership for January 1, 2018 –December 31, 2018

PLEASE CLEARLY PRINT INFORMATION

Make checks out to “parent hospital association” or PHA

MAIL DUES AND DONATIONS TO:

Beverly Austin

Parent Hospital Association

2683-17th Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94116

Check which type of membership below.

MEMBERSHIP DUES: _____ **\$25.00 Individual**

_____ **\$30.00 Family (at same address)**

If you are also including a donation, please put the amount here: _____

For family membership, please give names of the additional family members living at the same address on the bottom of this form.

PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR PHA FILES.

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Phone No. _____ Email: _____

Would you consider being on the PHA Board: Yes: __ No: __

Would you consider being on a PHA Committee: Yes: __ No: __

Please check which applies:

Family or conservator of a current resident of SDC _____

Family of a former resident of SDC _____

Friend of SDC (no family members at SDC) _____

If you have a family currently at SDC, please fill in the information below.

Your Family Member’s Name at SDC: _____

Unit at SDC where your family member lives _____

Relationship to Family Member: ()Parent ()Sister ()Brother ()Conservator

()Relative ()Friend ()Other

If you are joining as a family membership, please list any additional family members at the same address not already listed in the above address information.



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