



Eldridge Press

Message from the Executive Director

by James E. Rogers

Many of us feel that we have an extra heap of things to worry about these days. With more uncertainty, we may feel less control in planning for our own future. It certainly brings home the values for a preferred future and goals for the people we support while they live at Sonoma Developmental Center (Sonoma).

Despite it all, I continue to draw strength and energy from being able to see dreams come true for the people we serve, and pleasure at having the unique opportunity to be a positive influence in their lives while they live at Sonoma Developmental Center and beyond. The Sonoma Developmental Center Advocacy Rights Opportunities (ARO) Newsletter regularly shares personal success stories along with information on our evolving self-advocacy programs throughout Sonoma.

Leadership is the shorthand term for one of our four key values at Sonoma Developmental Center. Members of the Sonoma team that are highlighted in this publication, exemplify leadership and many other qualities that define the Sonoma team.



Untitled artwork by Richard.

Psychiatric Technician Graduations

Employees from Sonoma Developmental Center (Sonoma) graduated from the Napa Valley College Psychiatric Technician Program on December 15, 2009 and the Santa Rosa Junior College on December 18, 2009.

On Tuesday, December 15 2009, 23 of students, six of whom were employees sponsored by Sonoma, graduated from the Napa Valley College Psychiatric Technician Program during an evening ceremony held in the Little Theatre at the College. A catered reception followed the ceremony in the cafeteria.



Napa Valley College Psychiatric Technician graduates

Dominguez, Jaseph Hiteroza, Junie R. Kangleon, and Evelia O. Zaporteza.

On Friday, December 18, 2009, during a ceremony held in the gymnasium at Sonoma, 14 students, three of whom were employees sponsored by Sonoma, graduated from the Santa Rosa Junior College Psychiatric Technician Program.

Sonoma Developmental Center would like to acknowledge employees Iva Remae de Jesus, Celia Dominguez, and Adrienne Thomas for their accomplishment.



Santa Rosa Junior College Psychiatric Technician graduates

Have You Heard?

Judy D'Amico Retires

Judy D'Amico, Acting Program Director for Central Program Services, retired from Sonoma in December 2009. Ms D'Amico had over 30 years of state service and over 40 years of experience working in the field of developmental disabilities.

Judy started her career at Sonoma in 1977 as a Graduate Student Assistant. During her 30 plus years at Sonoma, she worked in a variety of jobs including, Social Work Associate, Individual Program Coordinator, Clinical Support Team, Assistant to the Clinical Director and Program Assistant, as well as working on Special Assignments throughout her career.

When looking back on her career in the field of developmental disabilities, Ms D'Amico said, "When I reflect back upon my almost 40 years of working in the field of developmental disabilities, what continues to resonate for me is the many opportunities to positively impact others' lives as well as our own local community. Meaningful work and serving others has always been my passionate path, I feel so very fortunate to have worked at Sonoma and been afforded the opportunity to be a part of a caring, compassionate, and creative community. I have been blessed with the opportunity to participate in an number of transforming times here at Sonoma."

Ms D'Amico went on to say, "My future plans post retirement are to become more involved in my community and to give back after having received so much. I'm looking forward to expanding my role as a board member of the Valley of the Moon Teen Center—assisting with program development. Additionally, I have been called to serve at The Pathway Home, the California Transition Center for Combat Veterans, which provide services for service warriors returning from Iraq and the Middle East. You may still see me working at the Eldridge Farm and running the make-up services for Sonoma's Performing Arts Company." Congratulations on your retirement!



Judy D'Amico

Joanne Bender Retires

Joanne Bender, Fiscal Officer, retired in December 2009 after 26 years of state service. Joanne was the Fiscal Officer for 4 years and 4 months. Prior to this, Joanne held various positions including Office Assistant II, Office Technician, Personnel Specialist I, Staff Services Analyst and Associate Government Program Analyst. In 2002, she transferred to Senior Accounting Officer Supervisor, eventually promoting to Fiscal Officer.

When asked about her job and what she did, Joanne

said, "I managed a \$155+ million annual budget and prepared monthly Budget Projection Reports for Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) Management and the Department of Developmental Services. The managing and supervision of 17+ staff in the Trust, Accounting, Procurement, Contracts and Services offices was fairly an easy job, since I was fortunate to have competent and knowledgeable staff that could work as a team or independently."

What she loved most about her job was, "*Numbers!* I enjoyed the daily challenges of managing a large budget and providing spreadsheets, tracking systems and balancing *in the black* at year-end. I enjoyed mentoring and encouraging staff and watching them pursue career opportunities, achieve their goals and promote."

She listed many memorable moments at Sonoma, including the Annual Halloween Parade, assisting clients to the annual Sonoma County Fair, Admin's Annual Holiday Breakfast, SDC's Annual Golf Tournaments, and the Annual Staff Awards Play and Luncheon.

Joanne is back as SDC as a retired annuitant, but she says, "I do plan on doing more traveling, gardening, exercise, projects around the house, and spending more time with my five grandchildren. Just enjoying every day and the rewards of retirement!" She goes on to say, "Thank you SDC. It has been quite a ride!"



Joanne Bender

About Employee Recognition

The Employee Recognition Program was developed to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of employees of the facility and includes a variety of activities throughout the year. The program is administered by the Employee Recognition Committee, which is comprised of staff from throughout the facility who raise funds for the program through an annual golf tournament held each summer. The program is also supported by the Parent Hospital Association through donations to the Employee of the Month program. Employees who are exemplary in their field are recognized for their demonstration of commitment to the mission, values, and goals of Sonoma Developmental Center through the following recognition programs:

- Twenty-Five Years of Service Recognition
- Thirty-Plus Years of Service Recognition
- Employee of the Month Award

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Have You Heard?

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- Employee of the Year Award
- Supervisor of Excellence Award
- Service Group of Excellence Award
- Sustained Superior Achievement Awards
- Superior Accomplishment Award
- Centennial Award
- Governor's Safety Award

Anyone can nominate an employee for recognition via the SDC Intranet, by completing and submitting an Employee of the Month nomination form (flyers available throughout the campus), or by e-mailing committee chairperson Charlotte Jones, at Charlotte.Jones@sonoma.dds.ca.gov.

October Employee of the Month

The October Employee of the Month is Marian Bergonia, Psychiatric Technician Assistant from Poppe. Her nominator said, "Marian has always embraced the facility's mission and values by engaging her clients in active treatment that is meaningful to them." She is described as someone with a positive attitude and lots of energy no matter how many hours she has worked in a day. She is often observed interacting in a positive way with the clients, and implementing the "three-on and three-off" technique. Her nominator went on to say, "Marion strives to meet



Marian Bergonia

the facility's expectations. She is an upbeat and positive member of the Poppe team who is respectful to all. She is a joy to work with." Way to go, Marian!

November Employee of the Month

The Employee of the Month for November is Jeff Patterson, Office Technician for the Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Program. His nominator states, "I have observed firsthand how Jeff, in his low key fashion, leads and resolves complex issues that arise in this large program. He deeply cares about the well being of each volunteer and their assigned clients." He demonstrates the Sonoma values of service to others, respectful communication, and effective leadership. Congratulations on your award, Jeff!



Jeff Patterson

December Employee of the Month

Kerry Juri, Office Technician from the Trust office, is the Employee of the Month for December. Kerry's nominator explained, "Kerry came to Sonoma a few years ago and has displayed exceptional leadership skills and has most recently been in an out-of class assignment as Patient Benefit Insurance Officer." She is described as a kind person that always has a positive outlook and goes out of her way to help others. "Kerry's positive attitude in meeting daily challenges and her eagerness to get the work done is appreciated. Kerry is always willing to assist her co-workers and come up with solutions to barriers. It is a pleasure to have Kerry working in our Trust Office." Nice job, Kerry!



Kerry Juri

2009 Employee of the Year

Sonoma Developmental Center's (Sonoma) Employee Recognition Committee selects an employee from among the prior twelve employees of the month to receive the honor and recognition of the Employee of the Year award. This employee is generally a standout among the nominees as someone who exemplifies the values of the facility on a regular basis in the performance of his or her duties.



Jodi Duffy

The Employee of the Year for 2009 is Jodi Duffy, Psychiatric Technician from Central Program Services. She was instrumental in developing exercise programs for the clients as well as the mobile store at Sifford. "These programs have fostered self worth and independence in the people we serve, as they enjoy coming to work and take pride in their job and successes."

One of her nominators said, "Jodi continues to promote the Sonoma values of respectful communications by fostering friendships and connections between people who live and work at Sonoma, as well as serving others through her commitment to service, by making life better for the clients she serves."

Jodi continues to be a stellar example of an employee who believes and supports client-centered services. "Her positive attitude and natural ability to bring out the best in everyone certainly supports her nomination for Sonoma's Employee of the Year." Congratulations, Jodi!

Sustained Superior Achievement Awards...

Sonoma Developmental Center recognized exemplary employees at the Annual Sustained Superior Achievement Awards, including the Centennial Award, which is Sonoma's most prestigious award, on Thursday, October 22, 2009. The awards are given to staff that have shown dedication and outstanding commitment to the values of the facility over at least a two-year period. Employees were recognized from all areas of Sonoma including Administrative, Clinical, Medical and Centralized Nursing Services. Fellow employees treated the honorees to a luncheon and a theatrical performance.



Roy Johnson and Teresa Murphy

In addition to presenting the awards and a gourmet luncheon under the trees in front of Sonoma House, honorees were treated to a hilarious musical comedy written by Assistant Administrative Services Director Teresa Murphy, entitled *JAWS (Justice As White Shark)*. Ms Murphy invented a very funny story with references to



The cast of *JAWS*, L to R: Back: Becky Zyskowski, Jana Bauerson, Jim Tallent, Anne Sojourner Wendell, Ed Fauble. Front: Chris Zombres, Joanne Bender, Karen Litzenberg, and Jason Moore.

James Bond, Moby Dick, and—of course—Jaws. In addition to writing a very funny plotline, Ms Murphy wrote new lyrics to well-known songs, which gave us the opportunity to enjoy the fine singing voices of some of our staff, most notably Christopher Zombres, Jana Bauerson and Jim Tallent. We were also entertained by cast members Joanne Bender, Karen Litzenberg, Becky Zyskowski, Anne Sojourner Wendell, Ed Fauble, and Jason Moore.

The play's sets were scenes skillfully painted on old sheets by Mike Doyel, Assistive Technology Specialist.

GROUP AWARD TO THE RESTORATIVE AIDES: The Restorative Aides are EDDIE BARRIENTOS, ARSHAD ALI and MARY NEVILLE, all Psychiatric Technician Assistants. This group has demonstrated commitment to serving clients at the highest level, as evidenced by their independently shifting therapy and treatment schedules to assure timely services to clients. They have developed a system of reviewing the daily staff deployment and client treatments schedule and they independently make adjustments in order to imple-

ment mobility and dining programs. The Restorative Aides take their responsibilities quite seriously and are known for going back to the same units many times within the same week to assure clients receive prescribed mobility and dining training. In addition, this group is often seen filling in, serving the clients in other areas of Central Program Services and have an important role in backing up areas in a pinch!



Eddie Barrientos, Mary Neville & Arshad Ali

FISCAL AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS received this award as a joint departmental team. SUZEE BUHN, Associate Government Programs Analyst; RHEA ANN CERUDA, Management



Rhea Ann Ceruda, Lynn Grundman & Eric Fu (not pictured: Suzee Buhn & Jennifer Giles)

Services Technician; LYN GRUNDMAN, Management Services Technician; and ERIC FU, Assistant Information Systems Analyst. Absent is JENNIFER GILES, who has left for different shores, but was also part of the team. This team worked diligently to

provide valuable information to Sonoma Developmental Center via the Intranet, with over 16 different subjects that can help purchasers make better decisions and save time. This team also developed a database to provide in-house expense tracking for the Fiscal Officer. This is a valuable team and Administrative Services is proud of them!

DR. KENNETH CHRISTENSEN. Dr. Christensen exemplifies the values of Sonoma Developmental Center by using his leadership skills in the electronic record implementation. He is the medical department expert in testing and training in ER2000 (our electronic records database). Dr. Christensen is a valued member of numerous committees including Organized Medical Staff (physicians and psychologists) and is considered an excellent physician.

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JODI DUFFY has been a part of Supported Employment of Sunrise Industries for 15 years. She has been a key person in developing community-based programs that allow her employees to experiences expanded opportunities in

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...Sustained Superior Achievement Awards

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banking, shopping, and dining out. She worked with a local lending institution to set up a system that allowed 50 individuals working at Sunrise to be involved in personal banking. Without hesitation she volunteered to be the test program for the Palm Pilots that resulted in more efficient data collection for client employment and payroll. Congratulations, Jodi, for your many years of excellence.



Jodi Duffy

MARK HECKER, Psychiatric Technician, came to Stoneman in 2005 as a student. He always volunteers to pitch in for difficult assignments such as ER2000 (our electronic record database) staff training, the active treatment committee, and sensory integration project. Mark is willing to volunteer for field trips in a positive manner. Unit Supervisor Liz Hammill notes that his loyalty, commitment, and dedication to the Stoneman clients is a model.



Mark Hecker



Ken Edwards

KEN EDWARDS, Unit Supervisor, has a genuine commitment to the clients that keeps him arriving at sunrise and leaving at sunset. He was proactive during the first cases of H1N1 influenza and developed a staffing pool of employees to serve the Cromwell clients during a period of restriction. His leadership meant willing staff would be the caretakers during a challenging time of illness. He is calm and he is unflappable according to

Program Director Mary Antone, and we appreciate you, Ken!

THOMAS GEIGER, Stationary Engineer. Stationary engineers are cool guys in the summer and they warm your heart in the winter. It is this job class that manages the heating and cooling system in this aging infrastructure. Tom is a self-starter who has striven to be intimately knowledgeable of our chillers and steam boilers, keeping us comfortable all year.

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MARK HARRISON, Associate Government Program Analyst of Health and Safety, is known around Sonoma Developmental Center as “the great communicator.” He has been an efficient manager of worker’s compensation claims for five years. He has made an art of assisting injured employees in their return to work and makes the process a positive experience. In the most difficult times, Mark guides employees in making choices when a new career may be the best option. Thanks for taking such good care of Sonoma staff.



Mark Harrison



Susan Jones

SUSAN JONES, Senior Accounting Officer of the Fiscal Office. Susan’s enthusiasm and energy bring a fresh approach to the Fiscal Office. She is an innovator of policies and procedures to assure compliance with the great State Controller. Susan is the lead staff in the CalATERS* project, which is complex and new to Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) and is in the process of training hundreds of SDC staff in the implementation. She is the co-chair of the SDC Health and Safety Standing Committee and a member of the volunteer mounted posse. They say if you need help, ask a busy person and that person is Susan Jones.

* CalATERS is a new, more efficient method for staff to be reimbursed for travel expenses.

PHILLIP LEWIS, Psychiatric Technician. According to Program Director Teri Sievers, Phillip Lewis has influenced the “happy factor” wherever he has been assigned in Program 6. He represents the four values of Sonoma Developmental Center by keeping informed, modeling good behavior, taking on additional duties, and effectively making positive changes in the clients’ lives. Recently he took the opportunity to go to the Cohn PM shift and his presence on that residence was a notably positive influence. Thanks for the great work!

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HEATHER MCDAVID, Psychiatric Technician. According to Program Director Teri Sievers, there is a theory that “you get what you give” and if that is true, then Heather McDavid will know much honor and compassion in her life. After many years in Program 2, Ms McDavid joined

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Sustained Superior Achievement Awards...

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Heather McDavid

the Cohen staff in 2006 and immediately and intuitively introduced wonderful new projects such as making bruschetta, carving pumpkins, and introducing a gardening project. In her unassuming way, Heather can take the role of a leader or team player, but either way she is consistent in her unwavering commitment to service.

CARI PAGANINI, Position Control Coordinator. Cari has a binder she calls the Magic Book. It holds pages and pages of tables, graphs, and charts. The book may be her magic, but Cari is the magic that conjures the correct numbers for foreign-sounding requirements like “Section 8 reports.” The tracking of positions and dollars may look like magic but it is tremendously difficult, tedious, and exacting work that is extremely critical for the Sonoma Developmental Center budget. She has been known to be given a deadline from headquarters for a task that normally takes eight weeks and condense it down in to three weeks of long days and work-filled weekends. She has earned the respect of her co-workers and her supervisors alike for quality, quality, and more quality.



Cari Paganini

Food Service Technician II, MICHAEL POSHEPNEY. The Nelson B kitchen has a treasure working behind the scenes and sometimes behind a Santa suit. Then again, he may be the number one person to volunteer for Seder. This is service with a smile. In addition, Michael has demonstrated resource management by auditing equipment to assure everyone has a coffee mug and that there are ample staples. He invented a special high-calorie pudding for a person with PKU* and has been awarded Employee of the Month in Nutrition Services. His interactions are excellent and enthusiastic with a capital “E”!



Michael Poshepney

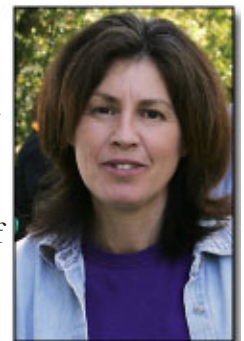
*Phenylketonuria is a rare condition in which a person is born without the ability to properly break down an essential amino acid called phenylalanine, which is found in foods that contain protein.



Arlene Salle-Maximov

ARLENE SALLE-MAXIMOV. The demands of a 24-hour job require patience, organization, and a genuine commitment to the job. If you add the element of serving human beings, a respect for humanity is also important. Arlene Salle-Maximov exemplifies the true spirit needed to be in a leadership role and excels daily. She is a staunch advocate and fosters independence for the Bentley clients. Great work!

ROSIE TALAMO, Psychiatric Technician. During the past two years, Rosie has supervised and coached Program 4 clients at their off-site at Grove House. During the transition from Grove House to Farrell, Rosie re-customized her wonderful classroom, illustrating her intimate knowledge of the needs of a complex group of people. Her classroom is calm, quiet, and inviting, which fosters learning. She is a good listener and she uses her knowledge to advance independence for those she supervises. She is a true asset to Program 7.



Rosanna Talamo

RODNEY THOMPSON, Motor Pool Manager. It is not uncommon to catch Rodney running to complete his next challenge. He is a “can-do” man who will often be seen going out with his drivers to give a helping hand. He has managed incredible amounts of reports without office support and kept an aging fleet limping along. I have heard Rodney say many times, “I will just make it happen.” Recently he revamped his staffing to improve evening and weekend transportation. He’s always in overdrive and we benefit from this!



Rodney Thompson

Note:

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

...More Awards

STACEY THOMSEN, Stock Clerk of Impressions. Stacey is a behind-the-scenes person who has willingly taken challenges and been successful in her endeavors. She has been involved in projects such as purchasing 22 outfits for the Bell Choir during the holiday rush, fitting models for the Eldridge Fashion show, backing up Environmental Enhancement for several months, and tracking surplus equipment from other facilities. She helps wishes come true when a client is seeking that perfect wardrobe or accessory and does so with a smile. She is the Super Stock Clerk of Sonoma Developmental Center!



Stacey Thomsen

RICHARD WELKER, Psychologist. Richard is respected for his dedicated approach to functional analysis when designing a program for an individual on the Bemis unit. Because of this, he has earned the respect of level-of-care staff, and a by-product of this is successful outcomes for the clients. An example of his work is the slow and successful withdrawal of a helmet for a person. He is often consulted by other staff because of his knowledge and ability. Thanks for the great work, Dr. Welker!

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HARRY WILEY, Food Service Supervisor I. Mr. Wiley has been acting supervisor in the Main Kitchen, which has been his assignment for three years. He has jumped in to learn everything he can about the kitchen including the AS400 computer system and helped update inventories. He checks and double-checks stock and knows where every item is stored in his domain. He has helped reduce injuries by implementing safety programs. Even though he was not assigned to do so, he went through all 26 written menus to assure a reduction of waste and expand client favorites. He is known to bring tempting snacks that he has cooked for his staff—a delicious way to improve morale.



Harry Wiley

Centennial Award

The Centennial Award is Sonoma Developmental Center's (SDC) most prestigious award. This year it was given to Judith D'Amico, Acting Program Director of Central Program Services.

Judy began work at SDC in 1977 as a Graduate Student Assistant. She was hired as a Social Work Associ-

ate in 1978 and since then she has worked a variety of jobs, including Individual Program Coordinator, Clinical Support Team, Assistant to the Clinical Director, and Program Assistant in Central Program Services (CPS) in 2005. Since May 2009, she has been Acting Program Director of CPS. Being a manager for Judy did not mean that she stayed behind her desk.



Judy D'Amico

In addition, over the years Judy has served on a number of important committees, including the Human Sexuality Committee, Human Rights Committee, Employee Recognition Committee, Women's

Committee, Behavior Management Committee, Bio Ethics Committee and served as Coordinator of the Youth Aide Program.

Judy has also provided flower arrangements for special events, and worked on stage sets, make-up and costumes for both the annual awards luncheon plays and the annual Sonoma Developmental Center Performing Arts Company productions.

Executive Director Jim Rogers states, "With well over 30 years of state service Judy was commended for her continued commitment to providing outstanding services to both the clients and staff she serves."



Judy D'Amico (with her award) stands with Executive Director Jim Rogers

Musical Time Travel

The Performing Arts Company at Sonoma Developmental Center (Sonoma) was pleased to present another successful run with this year's production of *Musical Time Travel*, an original script developed by the Company specifically for Sonoma's annual theatrical production.

This year's performance was the first to use an entirely original script. *Musical Time Travel* featured a cast of approximately 40 singers, dancers, actors and musicians in a four-act play that took the audience on a journey through time to experience different locales and time periods through song. The show's finale, a medley of "Hair,"

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Community Happenings...

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“Aquarius,” and “Let the Sun Shine In,” featured the entire cast on stage in a colorful display of tie-dye shirts and left audiences rocking in their seats.

Open auditions for the play began in early spring.

Rehearsals were held throughout the summer months, and live performances were presented to a packed house of Sonoma clients, their families, and others, including Patricia Flannery, Deputy Director for the Department of Developmental Services, for the shows on September 23, 24, 30 and October 1.



“There is Nothing Like a Dame” from Musical Time Travel

Two new actors joined the cast this year with minor roles; the facility’s Executive Director, Jim Rogers, and Dawn Percy, Clinical Director. Jim Tallent, chairperson of the committee and director of the play said, “I just hope everyone enjoyed the performances as much as I did the journey to get there.”



“Oklahoma” from Musical Time Travel

Halloween Spook Hall

Sonoma Developmental Center (Sonoma) began Halloween festivities on Monday, October 19, 2009, with the opening of the Eldridge Community Spook Hall, located at the facility gymnasium. The spook hall was open to the residents of Sonoma and members of the general public through October 31.



A room in the Spook Hall

Just after the close of the SDC Performing Arts Company production each year, under the leadership of Rehabilitation Therapist Paul Nieuwenhuijs, the stage and sets are torn down and the gymnasium is transformed into an interactive maze of adventure characteristic of a typical haunted house. The maze is comprised of several themed “rooms” with attractions that are activated by switch, sounds (hand clapping), or motion. In the past, sets from the annual play have been “resurrected” to create hauntingly familiar yet new scenes in sections of the Spook Hall.

This annual holiday attraction has become so popular that a variety of staff from several departments throughout the Center asked to take part in the planning and decorating of the Spook Hall this year. In appreciation of the group effort, Nieuwenhuijs renamed it the Eldridge Community Spook Hall.

Halloween Parade & Carnival

Sonoma Developmental Center (Sonoma) held its annual Halloween Parade on Thursday, October 29, 2009.

The parade, which is open to the public and suitable for all ages, has been a tradition at Sonoma for nearly 45 years. This year’s parade route began near the Butler Pool and wound its way through the residential areas before crossing Arnold Drive to finish near the judges’ tent at the Harney Circle in front of the Frederickson building.

The parade starts at 10:00 AM each year and features decorated floats and walking entries. Several years ago, stationary entries were added. They consist of themed groups gathered outside their residences, where the group can watch the parade and judges come to them to admire their costumes. Parade entry is open to all who live or work at the center, and the residences generally enter as themed groups. With staff assistance, all the individuals living at Sonoma participate in the fun. All entries are judged in various categories and awards are given during the carnival later that day.

Awards for 2009 were as follows:

Grand Prize: “Super Heroes,” MOVE



Bemis won Best Float for their “Haunted Mansion”

Continued next page

...Community Happenings

Halloween parade, continued from previous page

Best Participation

1st Place: "H1N1 Pandemic," Roadruck

2nd Place: "Verizon," Malone

Best Float

1st Place: "Haunted Mansion," Bemis

2nd Place: "Program 6 Goes to the Movies," Program 6

Most Humorous

1st Place: "Tourists," Ordahl

2nd Place: "Go Green," Johnson

Best Decorated

1st Place: "Here Comes Christmas," Nelson A

2nd Place: "Program 6 Goes to the Movies," Program 6

Best Stationary Entry

1st Place: "Hippie Pumpkins," Regamey

2nd Place: "Walk of Fame," Nelson D

Best Participation

1st Place: "Village People," Program 1

2nd Place: "U.S.S. Judah," Judah

Most Monstrous

1st Place: "Zombies," Corcoran

Best Marching

1st Place: "Flappers and Gangsters," Empanan A

2nd Place: "Girls Just Want to have Fun," Acorn School

Special Awards

1. SDC Fire Department
2. Norma Lou Peeples, Senior Companion
3. Princess Kayley
4. Art from Clover/Stornetta

The annual Halloween Carnival was held that afternoon on the lawn outside the gymnasium, for those who reside at the center. The carnival featured games, contests, refreshments, and a live band—in addition to presenting the Halloween parade awards.



At the Halloween Carnival



MOVE won the Grand Prize for their "Super Heroes"

Holiday Craft Fair

Sonoma Developmental Center held its annual Holiday Craft Fair on December 1 and 2, 2009 at the facility's

Gymnasium. The Center has held a Craft Fair for approximately 20 years, to raise funds for client activities.

More than 25

vendors were

present and items

available for purchase included quilts, pottery, handmade jewelry, baked goods, handmade toys, potholders, body lotions, candles, ceramics, one of a kind gifts, and more.



At the Holiday Craft Fair

Tree Lighting Ceremony

Under the leadership of Clinical Director Dawn Percy, Sonoma Developmental Center (Sonoma) held its first annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 8, 2009. Several holiday trees were placed on the lawn outside the gymnasium where a large evergreen tree served as the focal point for the event. Clinical programs and administrative departments each decorated one of the smaller trees, and many had specific themes. The large tree was strewn with rope lights and decorated with large ornaments, some handmade by the residents of Eldridge, that could be seen from far away.

The surrounding lawn was also a temporary home for several plywood reindeer, making the grounds feel very reminiscent of the North Pole.

The Harney Circle was closed to vehicle traffic for a street party where the festivities began with Dickens carolers singing traditional holiday songs as they strolled



At the tree lighting ceremony



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More Community Happenings...

Tree Lighting Ceremony, continued from previous page

through the crowds of excited participants. The Nutrition Department set up a booth to serve hot cocoa, apple cider, and cookies, while a nearby booth included photo opportunities with Santa. Shortly after sunset, the excitement culminated with Executive Director Jim Rogers leading a countdown for Santa to throw the switch that lit the tree. Despite record-breaking cold temperatures, warm smiles decorated many faces as they ooh-ed and ahh-ed at the lit tree. Dawn Percy said, "It was great to see so many disciplines come together to provide this wonderful experience for the individuals that live at Sonoma."



Clinical Director Dawn Percy offers a holiday hat to a reveler

classy black table cloths with white candles displayed as centerpieces, Eldridge was the place to be on these cold winter nights. The photo booth was ready to take that perfect shot, which was then placed in a photo holder for the guests to take with them. Waiters were on hand to take orders and the food servers were ready to serve up the requests. The awesome band started playing and the dancing commenced. It was a wonderful feeling to observe the individuals who live at Sonoma Developmental Center all dressed up in formal attire, and witness the excitement on their faces as the night progressed.



Serving refreshments at the Black & White Ball

Black & White Ball

The annual Black and White Ball was held on December 9th and 10th in the gymnasium. As the guests arrived, the valet was on hand to assist in escorting them out of their vehicles. Upon entering the gala, a concierge greeted the guests and directed them to the coat checker; an usher then escorted them to their seats. From the twinkling white lights dangling from the ceiling and all around, to the shimmering silver stars and ornaments, to the



Dancers get their photo taken at the Black & White Ball



The crowd at the Black & White Ball



Submitting articles to the Eldridge Press:

The *Eldridge Press* gladly accepts submissions of articles about events at Sonoma Developmental Center, news about the Center's departments and programs, employee recognition, and other information of interest to the Center'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, March 15 is the deadline for the 2nd Quarter 2010 issue).

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