



Eldridge Press

Message from the Executive Director

by Karen Faria

The only certainty in life is change or to phrase it differently, to transition to something slightly different or to go in a completely new direction. My change, as it has been for so many staff in the last two years, is to be completely different. It is going to be full retirement. I am so excited, yet at the same time, sad. It is sad because I won't be here for the next big change for Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC). Yes, SDC will close, whether it is December of 2018 or mid-2019, or whenever, SDC will never again be a large residential care developmental center. However, I don't believe that will be end of the history of SDC. I believe there will be some further transformation. I don't know what that will be, nor do I believe does anyone else... yet. So much discussion, so much debate, and so much planning are still to be done. What I do know is that the men and women who have long dedicated their work lives to this facility will transition right along with the men and women who live here into whatever is best for all concerned.



Karen Faria



Aleana Carreon

Transitions can be rough; they can be filled with uncertainty and feel chaotic. However, transitions can be made smoother if there is a belief that the outcome will be positive, if people hold an open mind to a variety of possibilities and if those involved participate actively in the change. For myself, the task of retiring and moving across country on the same day is daunting, but it is also filled with great anticipation. Similarly, anticipation of what SDC can be could also be exciting. Luckily, SDC has Aleana Carreon to provide the leadership necessary to help bring order into the inevitable change. Luckily, there are strong families and other stakeholders who are fully participating in creating the change. And lastly, it is lucky that there are all of you who will keep an open mind, all the while continuing to provide the excellent and personal services to our complex individuals. Good luck, SDC. This place, its people and its magical beauty, both physical and emotional, will always be a part of all of us.

Did You Know?: Historical

Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) is the oldest facility in California established specifically for serving the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. The facility opened its doors to 148 residents on November 24, 1891, culminating a ten-year project on the part of two prominent Northern California women who had children with developmental disabilities. In 1883, Julia Judah and Frances Bentley were responsible for forming the California Association for the Care and Training of Feeble Minded Children. Its aim was "to provide and maintain a school and asylum for the feeble-minded, in which they may be trained to usefulness."



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Staff, 1894

Did You Know?

Historical, continued from previous page

The first facility was opened in May 1884, at White Sulphur Springs near Vallejo. Beset by problems, the association petitioned the California legislature for assistance, and a bill was passed calling for the creation of the California Home for the Care and Training of the Feeble Minded. The new board chose a 51-acre site in the town of Santa Clara to handle twenty residents. When the Santa Clara home became inadequate a few years later, the legislature appointed a commission and appropriated \$170,000 to purchase land, construct facilities and handle commission expenses. The commission included Captain Oliver Eldridge, after whom the community of Eldridge is named. Following lengthy legislative battles over the proposed funding, the commission selected the present site:



Staff, 1895

(at the time) a 1640-acre parcel which featured an ample water supply, drainage, and two railroad lines that passed through the property.

The facility at Eldridge has undergone many significant changes, including four name changes. In 1909, the name was changed from the California Home for the Care and Training of the Feeble Minded to the Sonoma State Home. In 1953, Sonoma State Home became Sonoma State Hospital; and in 1986, the name was changed to Sonoma Developmental Center. Over the years, the facility has expanded several times, including two major expansions: A thirteen million dollar expansion program was



*Mr. Bailey, Farm Overseer
1911*

initiated in 1948, and another five million dollars was appropriated in 1956. The most recent renovation took place between 1979 and 1982, during which all the living units were renovated, primarily to improve safety, privacy and individualized care.

Many changes over the last 124 years include attitudes, philosophies, values, and beliefs in regard to the treatment of developmentally disabled people. There is one constant that ties the present and the future to every epoch of the Center's history: As

society's understanding of developmental disabilities has improved, SDC has consistently responded by improving services. SDC has always been and will always be committed to continuous improvement of its comprehensive array of therapeutic services.

Sonoma Developmental Center will be celebrating its 125-year anniversary on November 24, 2016. A committee has formed and has events planned throughout the year beginning in December of 2015 with the release of an 18-month calendar (beginning with January 2016), with pictures and information about Sonoma Developmental Center's history.

New Hires

May 2015

Tammy Bragg, Food Service Technician I
Jonathan Caouette, Food Service Technician I
Derrick Chaney, Custodian
Benedicto Della, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Wilson Gasmin, Registered Nurse (Retired Annuitant)
Theresa Haight, Registered Nurse
Maryanne Johnson, Registered Nurse
Ray Juarez, Warehouse Worker
Andrea Morse, Registered Nurse
Amanda Neep, Psychiatric Technician
Wilfredo Rivera, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Faye Sigred Seneca, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Ciara Turner, Individual Program Coordinator
Alfredo Zamora, Registered Nurse

June 2015

Verona Callejas,
Registered Nurse
Leonard Hofilena,
Custodian
Stephen Mayfield,
Plumber I (Retired Annuitant)
Kathleen Salvas,
Psychiatric Technician
Nidelvía Sansores De Campos, MSOT (Custodian)
Arnold Tretasco, Custodian
Jose Velono Jr., MSOT (Custodian)



July 2015

Irene Andrade, Registered Nurse
Evelyn Arcibal, Food Service Technician I
Selene Barrera, Food Service Technician I
Rodrigo Catagan, MSOT (Custodian)

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Did You Know?

New Hires, continued from previous page

Ravada Clarkson, MSOT (Custodian)
Edgardo Dizon, MSOT (Custodian)
Susan Grafton, Registered Nurse
Kathleen Mason, Psychiatric Technician
(Retired Annuitant)
Kimberly Michael, MSOT (Custodian)
Matthew Parkhurst, Support Services Assistant-Interpreter
Pepito Reyes, MSOT (Custodian)
Brian Oandasan, Psychiatric Technician
Vivianne Serrano, Registered Nurse

August 2015

Alvaro Aucina, MSOT (Custodian)
Angela Briles, Staff Services Manager II (HR Director)
Byron Brown, Psychiatric Technician
Cindy Compton, Licensed Vocational Nurse
William Seehuber, Supervising Cook I (Retired Annuitant)
Theresa Serna-Moreno, Property Controller II
Marysel Velasco, Food Service Technician I

September 2015

Mignon Angcaco, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Araceli Bito, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Michelle Calimquim, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Kenneth Carlucci, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Judith Cohn, Health Records Technician II
(Retired Annuitant)
James Gjertson, Materials & Stores Specialist
Teri Hayes, Psychiatric Technician (Retired Annuitant)
Marcus Nelson, Auto Equipment Operator I
Elma Reber, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Donna Reyes, Licensed Vocational Nurse
Mark Silva, Building Maintenance Worker
Kimberly Snow, Registered Nurse

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

The Disabilities Advisory Committee is proud to support National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Held each October, NDEAM aims to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. Throughout the month, we'll be engaging in a variety of activities to educate our employees on disability employment issues and the role they play in fostering a disability-friendly work culture.

Led by the Office of Disability Employment Policy, NDEAM is a national campaign intended to raise awareness about disability in the workplace and to celebrate the

contributions of America's disabled workers. First enacted in 1945, the first week in October was declared "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week."

In 1988, Congress changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month," expanding the first week of October to the entire month. ODEP was established in 2001, assumed responsibility for NDEAM, and has worked to expand its exposure since that time.

As we head into the month of October, employers and employees alike are encouraged to recognize the importance of incorporating disability awareness into their lives and work setting. Come by or reach out to your DAC representative to inquire about how you can assist at your work location. SDC's representative is: Kerri Lynn Gavin LCSW and can be reached at (707) 938-6477 or kerri.gavin@sonoma.dds.ca.gov. For additional information go to: <http://oasis.dds.ca.gov/index.cfm/disabilities-advisory-committee/>



Kerri Gavin

May Employee of the Month

The Employee of the Month for May 2015 is Marianne Kramer, MD, from Medical Services. Her nominators state, "She is very hardworking, considerate, patient and nice to all the residents and employees. She has professional interactions with family members and is a role model who exemplifies what SDC stands for when it comes to the concern and respect for the persons we serve on a daily basis." They go on to say, "We love to watch her with the clients because it is so warm and personal. We feel lucky to work with such an inspirational woman on a daily basis." Way to go, Dr. Kramer!



Marianne Kramer, MD



Recognition

June Employee of the Month

The June 2015 Employee of the Month is Stacey Thomsen, Materials and Stores Specialist from Impressions Clothing Store. Her nominators describe her as “Committed to her job from day one. She never complains and does whatever she is asked with a smile. She has a sense of pride and loyalty that comes from her heart. She is always willing to help her co-workers and doesn’t think twice about going that extra mile. She takes great pride in assisting the men and women who live here to look their best! She is always behind the scenes doing extra work to make everyone successful.” Congratulations, Stacey!



Stacey Thomsen

July Employee of the Month

Hoang Cao, Clinical Registered Nurse from Nursing Services was selected as Employee of the Month for July 2015. His nominators say, “He performs his clinical duties in an exemplary, empathic, highly professional manner, demonstrating superior performance and attention to detail. He exhibits the skill, temperament, compassion and reliability of a true professional. He is hard working and makes positive things happen for both the residents and his colleagues.” They go on to say, “He is a team player, excellent nurse and an asset to both the CNS department and to SDC.” Nice work, Hoang!



Hoang Cao

August Employee of the Month

The Employee of the Month for August 2015 is Maureen Hayes, Psychiatric Technician from the Bemis home. Maureen is described as “The ultimate team player. She is dedicated to the care and treatment of the residents in Bemis. She treats everyone with respect. Maureen never complains about anything and goes above and beyond to make sure the residents get the best care. She exemplifies the SDC values of service to others, respectful relationships and effective leadership.”



Maureen Hayes

One nominator goes on to say, “She is one of those quiet leaders that everyone respects because of who she is.” Great job, Maureen!

Supervisor of Excellence

Maria Crossland, Food Service Supervisor I from Nutrition Services, has been selected as Supervisor of Excellence for August 2015. Her nominators say, “She has always demonstrated strong and consistent leadership skills, high quality client care, conscientiousness, warmth and dedication to her clients and peers. Maria is always a team player, quickly and thoroughly helping with every project assigned. Her upbeat attitude and warmth during difficult times are noticeable and appreciated by many. She is always willing to take on work for coworkers who cannot, and always avails herself to staff to hear their concerns.” Nice work, Maria!



Maria Crossland

Employee of the Year—2014

The Employee of the Year for 2014 is Stacy Hyma, Rehabilitation Therapist from Central Program Services. The Employee of the Year is selected from the twelve Employees of the Month from the previous year.



Stacy Hyma

Her nominators say “Stacy is a wonderful RT and is always great to work with. She is always positive and has an upbeat attitude. Stacy has worked on various residences and no matter where she is working she gets to know all the residents, will offer them choices of preferred activities, and empowers them in all of the activities. Stacy embraces the SDC values of values of service to others, effective communication and leadership, by modeling them throughout the day. Since Stacy has come to REACH she has turned the place around!!! She has offered more activities as well as a bigger variety for the individuals that reside at SDC. She is a great asset for all of the residents and employees of SDC.” Way to go, Stacy!



Recognition

Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Recognition

The 43rd Annual Foster Grandparent and 37th Annual Senior Companion Recognition Day occurred on May 19 at the Wagner Building. Wendy Reid, Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Coordinator, served as master of ceremonies and presented the President's Volunteer Service Awards to over 40 individuals who volunteer their time with the men and women who reside at the center. Members of the Executive Team, as well as other managers and supervisors attended the special event. The volunteers were treated to a catered luncheon and Tai Chi demonstrations. What distinguishes a Foster Grandparent from a Senior Companion is that a Foster Grandparent works with children and/or adolescents with developmental disabilities and a Senior Companion works with adults with developmental disabilities. Besides building a beautiful friendship with someone, a Senior Companion/Foster Grandparent also receives a tax-exempt stipend, a meal, and an annual health appraisal; you must be age 55 or older to apply for the program. If interested in learning more about the program, contact the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Coordinator at (707) 938-6201.



Foster Grandparents & Senior Companions

25-Years of Service Recognition

On July 21 twenty employees were recognized for their state service at a tea party on the Sonoma House lawn. The 25-Years of Service Award program was established by the Legislature to recognize state employees who have completed 25 years or more of state service. The employees received a gift and a certificate signed by the Governor. Karen Faria, Executive Director, addressed the group, "It is an honor to be a part of your accomplishments. Thank you all for coming to the 25-Year Tea Party Celebration to honor those employees reaching 25 years of state service in 2014. We're here to honor you and all your years of committed state service to the men and women at SDC." Certificates and gifts were handed out to the recipients by Governing Body members, which

includes the Executive Director, Clinical Director, Medical Director and Administrative Services Director.



25-years of service honorees and management

Advocacy Corner: Posters



May 2015



June 2015



July 2015



August 2015

Advocacy Corner/Community Events

Opportunity Fair

On June 9 SDC and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities co-hosted an Opportunity Fair at the Gazebo, next to the Butler Pool. The Opportunity Fair featured several vendors that provide services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities and showcases a wide spectrum of work, leisure, and living opportunities within the Center as well as out in the greater community. The event was well attended by residents, their loved ones and employees inter-



At the Opportunity Fair

ested in learning about the type of services provided to people with developmental disabilities. New this year was a Community State Staff booth, with pamphlets with information about the program. The Tri-Tip Trolley food truck was also on hand to

provide a variety of lunch choices at the venue. The event has grown in popularity with the addition of a winter Opportunity Fair coming soon!

Cinco de Mayo

This year Sonoma Developmental Center celebrated Cinco de Mayo on May 5. Like many communities, the town of Eldridge has been celebrating the event in grand style. The festivities kicked off in the morning and continued through mid-afternoon. The venue was decorated in red, white, and green with a mariachi band up front and center. There were photo opportunities with the Eldridge Farm donkeys, Sunny and Mijo. There was also an arts and crafts booth, a temporary tattoo booth and many game booths with prizes. The



Cinco de Mayo

celebration continued in the afternoon with the addition of a musical band, fruit and a variety of refreshments.



Cinco de Mayo

Horse Show

The Annual Horse Show occurred on Saturday May 30 at the outdoor equestrian arena next to the Eldridge Farm. There were approximately 50 people from the center who participated in the equestrian sporting event. Ribbons were handed out to all the riders, with their families and friends cheering them on. The individuals were judged on how they mounted the horse as well as equitation (the practice of riding a horse). However, the judge does take into consideration the abilities of each rider. SDC's Equestrian Program has been in existence since the early 1980s. The Equestrian Program Coordinator, Nancy Sessi-Tallent, has provided the individuals who reside here with skills that increase the student's confidence and pride, as well as instilling a sense of accomplishment. The program also teaches discipline, respect for oneself, kindness towards animals and consideration for others.



An equestrian student controls the horse with voice and gestures



Rider at the Horse Show



Riders mount and dismount at the Horse Show

Community Events

Beach Party

On June 10 the residents in the town of Eldridge were treated to a Beach Party at the Butler Pool. Shaved ice treats were served at the Gazebo next to the pool. Many individuals took advantage of the warm weather by enjoying a dip in the refreshing pool. There are two pools available for use in the town of Eldridge, the outdoor pool known as the Butler Pool and an indoor pool known as the Nelson Therapy Pool. The outdoor pool is heated to a comfortable temperature all year round and is covered with a dome during the winter months for cool weather use, and can be entered either by stairs or a ramp with railings. The indoor therapy pool is heated to enhance the therapeutic effects of the water. Both pools are equipped with lifts to safely help non-ambulatory and fragile-ambulatory people into the pool and range up to approximately 4½ feet deep.



Dancing at the Beach Party



Selecting a flavor for a slushy at the Beach Party



Swimming at the Beach Party

4th of July Celebration

Like many communities, the town of Eldridge celebrated its annual Fourth of July festivities with live music during the day and a fireworks show at dusk. During the day, a centralized event occurred and was decorated in red, white and blue. During the day's event the Dixieland Band and Sonoma Mountain Band performed, and during the fireworks show the Smiling Iguanas performed to the delight of all! There were photo booths with Fourth of July-themed backgrounds, a temporary tattoo booth, and visits by the Eldridge Farm animals. There were

also many game booths (with prizes), including the pendulum firecracker bowl and firecracker bowling.



Above: One of the daytime bands



Left: refreshments being served

Below right: Firecracker bowling



Above and right: SDC fireworks



Community Happenings...

Transcendence Theatre Company Comes to Eldridge

Sonoma Developmental Center was selected by Transcendence Theatre Company as one of their “Transcendence Connects” projects for their 2015 season. The men and women living and working in the town of Eldridge were treated to multiple shows on August 13 at the outdoor amphitheater. There were skits, live dance scenes, musical performances and much more. Participation by audience members was highly encouraged. The amphitheater was packed with standing room only as word spread quickly of the live performance by the Broadway Stars. It was clear this was the place to be in the town of Eldridge!



The Transcendence Theatre Company performing at Eldridge

Note:

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

Ice Cream Hoe Down

The Ice Cream Hoe Down was held on the evening of August 18 at the Carousel. Many residents and employees attended the yearly event. There was live country music, ice cream and all the rides one would want to take on the Merry-Go-Round. A grand time was had by all who attended the event. The carousel at Sonoma Developmental Center was built in 1918 by a Texas firm, and for approximately 50 years was operated at Clearlake Highlands. From 1968 to 1971, it was part of a traveling carnival. In 1971, it was purchased by SDC's Women's Auxiliary, and with the assistance of the Show Folks of America (a group of retired carnival employees), the carousel was installed in the town of Eldridge.



At the Hoe Down:

Upper right: live music

Above:

Getting some ice cream

Right: Riding the carousel



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, December 15 is the deadline for the January 2016 issue).

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