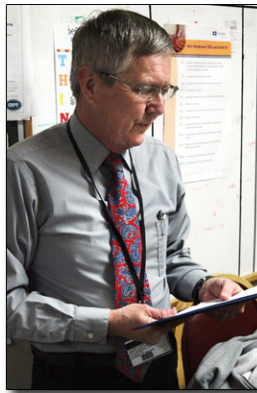




# Eldridge Press

## Message from the Interim Executive Director, Harold Pitchford *Light Wins*

**W**hy are kids afraid of the dark? I remember having a night-light that I checked every night to be sure it was still on before I went to bed. It was hardly noticeable in the light of the morning, but at night it seemed to push the dark, and all the fears that it spawns, away. I was reminded of the power of light during a recent power outage. One lit candle overwhelmed the dark; its glow brought comfort and empowered us to move on.



*Harold Pitchford*

I have had the privilege to share the journey that SDC is on for the last month and have been touched by the courage and the commitment, the hope and the heart of the people who breathe life into our community. We have a proud tradition of service that spans generations and has not only endured challenges, but has also learned from them, becoming stronger in the process.

There's no mystery or magic to how it happens. Someone decides to say, "Yes," to be a light. I've encountered lots of examples: the folks who moved from King and found a way to continue the service people are counting on; the team from Roadruck who went the extra mile to help one of the guys improve his vision; the Information Technology crew who went the extra mile because we were counting on them; the staff at Farrell who have enhanced the training and dining experience. I could give you a bunch more...each of you can probably think of a number.

We continue to face challenges. We're being asked to stretch, to sacrifice, to do "one more thing." Sometimes it feels like we've reached our limit, and there's still no end in sight...but we show up the next day because we made a promise to the folks we serve and they're counting on us. We show up because the guy we work with, or the person we serve, or her family is one of those lights that give us the vision and the courage to take the next step.

I appreciate your efforts, respect your skills, and am in awe of your endurance. It's been a privilege to work with you. I am pleased that Karen Faria will be here in April. She has the skill to guide SDC on this journey and the heart to do what's right. I know that the leadership team is committed to giving you the tools and the opportunity to make this day a good one for the people we serve.

### Take Pride Moments at SDC

- An Individual Program Coordinator (IPC) was unable to attend an Individual Program Plan on another residence, because her primary residence was on restriction. Linda Shelby and Julie Schaefer (IPCs) volunteered to step in at the last minute to cover.
- Brian Kabaker, Psych Tech from the Bentley residence, has had no unscheduled absences for the past year, ensuring consistency and reliability for those living and working on Bentley.
- Karen Koelle from Central Program Services made a custom jacket for a resident with pica concerns, ensuring he had coat to wear as needed.
- Jerry Curtemen, Unit Supervisor from the Bemis residence, improved services for the residents that have been noticed by



*continued next page*

# Did You Know?

*Take Pride Moments, continued from previous page*

those visiting.

- Deni Murphy, Psych Tech Assistant in the clinics, has recently agreed to take on multiple new assignments in areas that are short-staffed, and with projects, to enhance the services in her area. Deni's ability to help in other areas has greatly relieved the pressure and stress on other employees.
- Dan Phillips, Pharmacist, has created a program that allows the doctors to quickly and easily access lab results and history. He has improved care at SDC with this program.
- The Bemis residence kitchen and dining room needed a makeover. Food Service Supervisors, Food Service Technicians, General Services, Motor Pool and Plant Operations assisted in reorganizing the kitchen, dining room equipment and furniture, eliminating the clutter. The new layout improves access, visibility, provides a pleasant ambiance, and enhances the Bemis dining experience.
- One evening, a custodian contacted housekeeping and said there was a flood in the hallway of the Bemis residence and he needed help. Custodians from Lathrop, Malone and Cohen residences, as well as Supervisor Aishma Kennedy, stopped whatever they were doing and went to assist the custodian.
- Under the leadership of Katrina Phillips, Unit Supervisor on Smith, the staff redesigned the mealtime experience and use of residential space, to provide more opportunities for engagement and supervision.
- Program 2, which serves the most medically fragile individuals at SDC, was recognized for their concerted efforts to minimize the presence of influenza and other illnesses in the last few weeks.
- Central Program Services staff Greg Hiers and Deets Winslow were acknowledged for stepping up and looking at the dining programs at off-sites, with the outcome being more participation during mealtime by the residents.

## New Hires

In the last issue of the Eldridge Press, 42% of the items submitted in the suggestion boxes were regarding the hiring of staff. Sonoma Developmental Center would like to welcome its newest employees through March 18, 2013:

Xiaoxia Zhu, Registered Nurse

Scott Kohlman, Office Technician  
Melissa Dinger, Registered Nurse  
Angel Figueras, Registered Nurse  
Valery Shichkov, Registered Nurse  
Harvin Ferrer, Registered Nurse  
Johanna Pascua, Registered Nurse  
Ronald Klinger, Registered Nurse  
Elenita Torga, Psychiatric Technician  
Rachel Williams, Psychiatric Technician  
April Hersh, Registered Nurse  
Carlo Vera, Registered Nurse  
Irene Yuan, Psychiatric Technician  
Tara Hoang, Registered Nurse  
Cherie Meneely, Registered Nurse  
Alison Cuthbert, Registered Nurse  
Erika Teply, Registered Nurse  
Rodelyn Arevalo, Registered Nurse  
Carolyn Callahan, Registered Nurse  
April Patee, Registered Nurse  
Candace Beveridge, Community Program Specialist I  
Jesse Jose, Psychiatric Technician Assistant  
Shanta Baron, Registered Nurse  
Lilibeth Pawar, Registered Nurse  
Jason Richardson, Registered Nurse  
Caleb Saavedra, Psychiatric Technician  
Alma Arguel, Registered Nurse  
Norman Cummings, Custodian  
Magdalena Devera, Registered Nurse  
Sandeep Dhillon, Registered Nurse  
Maryanne Johnson, Registered Nurse  
Jenifer McLellen, Psychiatric Technician  
Steven Proell, Automotive Equipment Operator I  
Amiee McGinnis, Psychiatric Technician  
Shubhechha Neupane, Registered Nurse  
Josephine Turner, Registered Nurse  
Jeanette Llaban, Health Services Specialist  
Danielle Colombo, Psychiatric Technician  
Kristine Dickerson, Psychiatric Technician  
Rosemarie Lindogan, Registered Nurse  
Lolita Santos, Registered Nurse  
Judy Ortiz, Psychiatric Technician  
Taruli Sianturi, Psychiatric Technician  
Steve Uly, Psychiatric Technician  
Linda Lucey, Registered Nurse  
Gail Mouille, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Bryan Simon, Psychiatric Technician  
Wilfred Benitez, Psychiatric Technician  
Christina Boateng, Psychiatric Technician  
Lenijane Fong, Individual Program Coordinator

*continued next page*

# Did You Know?

*New Hires, continued from previous page*  
Janet Leyva, Psychiatric Technician  
Michael Nwadiaru, Psychiatric Technician

## Did You Know?

### Medical:

- Effective March 4, 2013, Dr. Wymore will be the Acting Medical Director, while Dr. Pecha is away on long-term military orders.

### Psychology Services:

- The Psychology Department welcomes Max, our fifth service dog for animal assisted therapy. Max will help provide psychological services and training to Nelson clients.
- Restraints used for clients at the dental clinic must be reviewed at the clients' Individual Program Plan meetings to discuss what is required, whether this is the least restrictive measure, and whether the client could benefit from desensitization or other supports to decrease the need for restraints.

### Administrative Services:

- The trust office has new hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Wednesdays, 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM and Saturdays, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.
- James Dofelmire is now the Warehouse Manager.
- Karrie Hubbenette is now the Hospital General Services Administrator II.

### Clinical:

- Fundamentals and the Donation Center have moved from Walnut to Oak Valley School.
- Tori Mathis has become the Program Director for Program 6.
- Liz Stoddard is now the Program Director for Central Program Services.
- Becky Zyskowski has become the Acting Program Assistant for Central Program Services.
- Judy Curme has become the Acting Program Assistant for Program 3.
- Amelia Baio is now the Unit Supervisor for Cohen Residence.
- Desiree Northrup is now the Unit Supervisor for Johnson B Residence.
- Stacy Dunham has become the Supervising Registered Nurse for Johnson C Residence.
- Christina The is now the Unit Supervisor for Poppe Residence.
- Carmen Bidad has become the Unit Supervisor for Malone Residence.

- Suzanne Howard is now the Unit Supervisor for Corcoran Residence.
- Rachel Cronk is now the Unit Supervisor for Central Program Services.

### Central Nursing Services Department:

- The Acute Unit Medical and Nursing team will be moving to Nelson C on April 2<sup>nd</sup> for 4–6 weeks during the fire alarm/sprinkler installation. During this time Nelson C will operate as a step-down style skilled nursing facility unit.

### Quality Assurance:

- Janine Dowsett is assisting Dr. Wymore during Marni Sager's absence. Please divert any questions regarding Quality Assurance to Patti Bullington or Mary Antone.
- Angela Elliott is now a Standards Compliance Coordinator for Quality Assurance.

## Public Health Corner

*by Barbara Simbulan, RN/BSN, PHN*

**S**DC Public Health's mission is to optimize the health and well-being of the individuals that live and work at Sonoma Developmental Center.

Our health is one of the things we still have control over in our lives. We are always told to eat right and exercise. Well, add consistent hand hygiene practice to that list. Hand hygiene is often overlooked and taken for granted. It is still the single most effective way of preventing the spread of infection. Just because the flu season is almost ending does not mean we can relax about our hand hygiene practice.

As healthcare providers, we have a responsibility to keep a safe environment for our clients. That includes infections. We did really well this flu season and continue to do well compared to flu seasons in the past. We had some units on restriction, but overall a lot less sick clients and staff. That is kudos to the Level of Care staff and Custodial Department and partnerships between Health and Safety, Medical Department and Coordinator of Nursing Services Department! It truly takes a village!



*Barbara Simbulan*

### Note:

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

# Did You Know?

## Employee of the Month: January

The Employee of the Month for January is Xiaogiang Peng, Psychiatric Technician, who works the over-night (NOC) shift on the Bentley residence. He is described as someone who is “always willing to step up and do what is needed.” Mr. Peng’s work ethic supports the SDC values of managing resources, respectful relationships, service to others and effective leadership. His nominator goes on to say, “You came to Bentley in a time of need and rose to the occasion by creating systems that support the running of the unit. I appreciate your work on NOC shift, your commitment to excellence in your job, and for the clients.” Way to go, Xiaogiang!



Xiaogiang Peng

## Employee of the Month: February

The February Employee of the Month is Stephanie Brusnahan, Food Service Technician II, who works at the main kitchen. Her nominator says, “Stephanie exemplifies the values of SDC, and has done this unwaveringly since she has worked at SDC.” Ms. Brusnahan is described as someone who has “very good communication and relationships with everyone on her team, and everyone who works in the main kitchen. She is dedicated, reliable and dependable.” She is someone with a can-do attitude and has made numerous suggestions for improving services and maximizing resources at the main kitchen. Congratulations, Stephanie!



Stephanie Brusnahan

## Sonoma Valley Footrace & Festival

The Seventh Annual Sonoma Valley Footrace and Festival will be held on the grounds of Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) on Saturday, May 18, 2013.

The Footrace will start at 9:00 AM with a 5k run/walk and an advanced 10k run. The 5k run/walk course runs throughout the beautiful streets of SDC, with the advanced 10k continuing on through the campus and surrounding

hill sides. There will also be a kids’ fun run during the festival.

Advance registration fees for the Footrace are \$30 for adults and \$20 for children 18 and under. On the day of the race, registration will be \$35 for adults and \$25 for children. All race participants will receive a commemorative t-shirt and goodie bag. In addition, adults will receive a souvenir glass and two drink tickets.

The Festival will be open from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, featuring events and activities to entertain people of all ages. There will be a car show, beer and wine tasting, food vendors, a raffle, carnival games and attractions, and music all day by Harvey and the Wallbangers. Sorry, no pets are allowed.

For more information regarding the footrace or the festival, or to get involved at the event, contact Becky Zyskowski at (707) 938-6713 or check the website at [www.dds.ca.gov/svff](http://www.dds.ca.gov/svff). To register for the footrace, go to <http://www.active.com/running/eldridge-ca/sonoma-valley-footrace-and-festival-2013>



Last year’s Sonoma Valley Footrace & Festival  
Above: the festival  
Right: the 10K run



## Regional Advocacy Meeting

Residents from Sonoma Developmental Center attended the Regional Self Advocacy Meeting in Napa on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The quarterly meeting focused on jobs. The guest speakers talked about their jobs, how to start your own business and how to get a business loan. The guest speakers included:

- Daniel Meadows from Disability Rights California, who talked about services and supports to get jobs.
- Private business owners, including a shredding business, landscaping business and recycling business, discussed how they started their own businesses.
- Representatives from Lending Works, which provide business loans with zero interest to help people with disabilities start their businesses.

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# Advocacy News

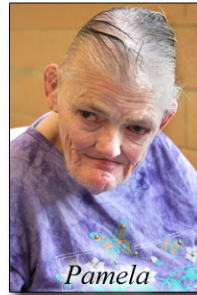
*Advocacy, continued from previous page*

I decided to ask some of the residents of Eldridge, “What do you do for work?” and “What do you love most about your job?”

- Marcia Dinkelspiel: “I do rivets and washer assembly.\* I also like to do shredding when I have completed my other job. I am a fast worker. I love my job and I work very hard. I like getting a paycheck and spending my money at the store.”
- Kalyn Wilson: “I work at Impressions Clothing store on Wednesday’s. I get to fold clothes and put them on hangers. I help with sorting the socks. I love putting up the new clothes for people to wear and making it look nice. I like having tea or cocoa with my co-workers during my break time.”
- Donna Shields: “I fold laundry including washcloths and table linen. I also do collating work, which is preparing me for my job at the mailroom at SDC. What I love most about my job is working and socializing with my friends.”
- Harry Cohen: “I do rivets and washer assembly. What I love most about my job is getting my paycheck and spending my money at the Eldridge Store. I go up every day after work and buy coffee and a snack.”
- Ricky Saylor: “I also do rivets and washer assembly. I like going to the Eldridge Store after work and buying a snack. I get coffee—it is good. I like earning my own money.”
- Pamela Zavas: “I sort paper and work on rivets and washer assembly. I like to sort paper the most. What I love about my job is getting a paycheck and spending it at the store. I like having lunch at the Eldridge Store”
- Savaing Sok: “I work at the Eldridge Farm and help clean the stalls and make the farm look nice for visitors. I gave a tour to Terri (Delgadillo) and her friend Mark (Hutchinson) when they visited the other day. I love spending time with the animals. When I call their names, they come running over to me. They are happy to see me.”



Marcia



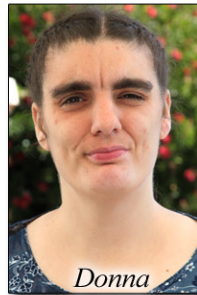
Pamela



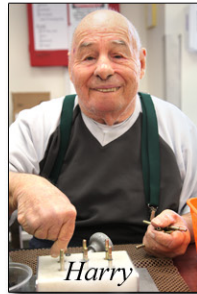
Kalyn



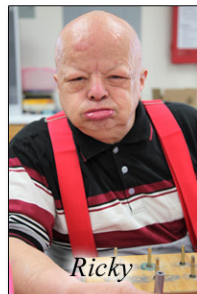
Savaing



Donna



Harry



Ricky

\*This a contracted job with the city of Sonoma, California. The rivets and washers are assembled together and are eventually placed in buses.

## People 1st Board Meeting

Savaing attended the People First of California Board Meeting March 15–17, 2013 in Sacramento. On the agenda was planning for the People First of California Statewide Gathering in San Jose on June 28–30, 2013. Elections were also held. The Board was electing a President, Vice President and on a Representative for Region 8.

The results of the election included: President: Roy, Vice President: Kim and Glen as Representative for Region 8. Due to Kim being elected as Vice President, the position of Sergeant-at-Arms

was vacated. Savaing decided to run for this position and was elected by his peers. His duties include: Keeping the meeting in order and escorting people from the meeting who are causing trouble. He is now a part of the Executive Committee of People First and will start participating in conference calls as well as other meetings if requested.

Savaing is very excited to be a part of such an important organization, and is busy helping make the Annual Gathering in San Jose a huge success.

## Disability Rights California

Disability Rights California members Marinda Reed, Senior Peer/Self Advocacy Coordinator and Daniel Meadows, Peer/Self Advocacy Coordinator, came to Sonoma Developmental Center and did a presentation on Abuse Prevention at one of the Advocacy Groups.

The presentation was well received by the members and now Ms Reed and Mr. Meadows, with the assistance of Central Program Services staff, have been coming to the facility monthly. They have been presenting on the subject matter at the worksites and day programs. Eventually they hope to start presenting on a variety of other topics, including Individual Program Plan meetings and other advocacy-related subjects.



Miranda



Daniel

# Community Happenings...

## The Black & White Ball

The Black and White Ball was held on January 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> in the gymnasium. What an amazing transformation! As the guests arrived, a valet was on hand to escort the individuals from their vehicles. Upon entering the gala, the guests were greeted by the concierge. Next, they were directed to the coat checker, and then escorted to their seats by an usher. From the twinkling white lights dangling from the ceiling and all around, to the classy black table cloths with a white candle display as a center piece, Eldridge was the place to be on these cold winter nights.



*At the Black & White Ball*

There was a photo booth ready to take that perfect shot. 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 began. It was an amazing feeling to observe the individuals who live here all dressed up in their formal attire and witness the excitement on their faces, as the night progressed.

## Mardi Gras

On February 20, 2013, 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 the colors of 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-so-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.



*The Mardi Gras Dance*

## The Sock Hop

The Sock Hop dance was held on the evening of March 13, 2013. The gymnasium was transformed into a 1950s high school dance in the gym with decorative oversized records, music notes and hula-hoops, as well as tables to sit at, covered with black and white tablecloths.



*Refreshments at the Sock Hop*

There was a refreshment stand set up with staff serving root beer floats and ice cream sundaes. Some of the staff (including those working the event) and residents came dressed in 50s attire. Once the music started playing, everyone cut loose on the dance floor and started swinging.

## 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, April 15 is the deadline for the May 2013 issue).

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