

Marie Mills Center, Inc.



1800 Front Street, Tillamook, OR 97141

Fall 2012

The Ireton Family - Giving Hearts

Pat and Pearl Ireton of Pacific City have a unique family. They have 9 children, **6 came to them from foster care or through adoption.** All of their additional children are developmentally disabled and many also have life threatening medical conditions. Pearl was inspired to care for these special needs children by her mom. Her mom worked in a classroom for disabled kids in the California public school system in 1972 and later started providing foster care for needy disabled children. A few years later Pearl met her future husband Pat and started a family. Pat and Pearl also chose to provide foster care for disabled children in need. This unique family once took a 30 day camping trip from San Diego to Canada with their

3 children, Pearl's mom, 93 year old grandmother, 3 severely autistic children, and 2 dogs. Shortly after returning home **they were approached by the State of California to open a foster home for medically needy special needs children.** While living in California, the state emphasized lifesaving medical care for special needs kids. Many of these kids were without families. The Ireton's were instrumental in the set up of the Medical Fragile Care Foster System in that state.

After a while, **the family needed a change**, so they set their sights on either Hawaii or Oregon. After visiting both, **the family fell in love with the Oregon Coast.** Surprisingly, their deciding factor for choosing Oregon in 1990 was the weather. Once here, **there were many challenges.** One challenge was the South County Special Education system adapting to a large and sudden influx of

special need students.

Pat and Pearl take pride in the fact that their family has been able to open up their arms to disabled kids whom no one thought would live long, but grew up and became contributing members of their community. They point out, as an example, their first disabled foster

child. After having a flat line EEG at birth, the doctors said that this child would not live long. The Ireton's are happy to say that, many years later, this child is in college and doing well.

This family loves to travel. They do not let "disabilities" hold them back. The whole family enjoys going to Hawaii and Arizona on a regular basis.

They have also visited Germany. Pat and Pearl

feel that Oregon is a wonderful place to raise a family, especially ones with severe disabilities. **They love living in their small town of Pacific City,** where everyone knows each other.

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Pat & Pearl (center) with their adopted/foster family

May We Help You?

Marie Mills Center has a willing and able work force ready to help you out! We provide janitorial services, subcontract labor, confidential record destruction, individual job placements; the list goes on and on.

If you have a job that needs done or need good help, give us a call and we can discuss how Marie Mills Center can help you meet that need. **For further information contact Cindy Green at 503-842-2539 x 14 or for Janitorial Services, Jodi Bradley at 503-842-2539 x 15.**

The Ireton Family - Continued

They feel their community is a safe place for kids of all abilities. **Many of Pat and Pearl's "children" now of adult age are involved in the Marie Mills Center's Vocational Program.**

Of Pat and Pearl's biological children, their daughter Arwyn, follows in their footsteps doing respite care for

the disabled population. Daughter Angela is a CASA volunteer for foster children and daughter Amanda has written short stories about her life growing up with medically involved "siblings".

Thank you Pat and Pearl for all that you do. The world needs more people like you!

Annual Picnic

Again, for this year's **annual picnic** we all gathered at the Kilchis Park on Aug. 25th. The weather was perfect and everyone enjoyed the games and good food. **Much thanks goes to Gene Widmer** for the use of the BBQ and for cooking. **George Widmer**, outgoing Foundation Board Member, for cooking, **Ron & Linda Kay** for keeping Gene and George company at the grill, and a **special thanks to all the staff who help plan this event** to assure that everyone had a great time.



Marie Mills Foundation Update

The Foundation continues activities to assure the future of the Marie Mills Center and its services to those with developmental disabilities. The Foundation would like to **thank outgoing Board Member, George Widmer**, for his time served and would like to **welcome incoming Board Member Kenny Bell**.

The Foundation wishes to thank the following individuals who have contributed recently: *Tillamook County Farm Bureau Association Foundation; Nehalem Bay United Methodist Women; Helen Benscheidt in Memory of Jean Naegeli; Justin & Darby Lasley in Honor of Kelsey Croston; William Mah, Robert Wright in Memory of Russell Wright; Rip's Mixer Shop; Evelyn Milner, Gladys Jacobsen in Memory of Pete Jones; Tammy King Crossley; Patricia Keser; Cecilia Dwigans; Coast Printing; Mario and Alma Pastega Family Foundation; William & Virgie Lorenz in Memory of Marie Mills;*

Patricia Wirfs; Jack Graves; Pat & Mel Dean; Patricia Rinehart; Lions of Rockaway Beach; Robert Carter in Honor of Gregg Carter; Frants Poulsen; Roy & Claire Peterson; and Steve Darling in Honor of Mollie Nuppenau

Thank You!

The Foundation has been active in **promoting the financial wellbeing of Marie Mills Center**. In times like these the importance of the Foundation cannot be understated. **If you would like to find out more about the Marie Mills Foundation please contact Ron Rush at 503-842-2539 x 12, visit us at www.mariemillscenter.com or email ron@mariemillscenter.com.** Also, your remembrance of the Foundation in your **Estate Planning** can help to ensure the future of Marie Mills Center and its services for the developmentally disabled in Tillamook County.

2011/2012 Year In Review

Thankfully during the past year, planned **state funding cuts for programs like ours were averted** because of action by the Legislature. In the past year **we paid off our Nestucca House group home mortgage** eliminating the only long term debt that Marie Mills Center had. This is a major financial advantage in times like these. During the past year there were **many emerging trends** in the field of disability services. A couple of examples of these trends are the **rapidly aging population** of individuals with disabilities in programs like ours. Also, the ever **increasing medical care needs** for this aging population gained greater awareness. We can certainly relate to the rapidly aging population of individuals as the average age of those in our residential program is 57. We also have a number of individuals in their late 60s and above. Through the years, **the life expectancy of those with developmental disabilities has steadily increased** because of the quality of care they now receive in community based programs rather than the institutions of the past. Along with a longer life expectancy, we too are seeing an increase in our Residential Program participants' medical needs. As an example, in the past year alone, **we took individuals in our residential program to 384 medical appointments.**



There were many **improvements in our facilities** and programs during the past year. Through the PUD Weatherization Program we purchased new **energy efficient vinyl windows for our Nestucca House group home** (center). We were also able to acquire a utility trailer for use in our landscaping/janitorial program as well as acquiring a commercial rug shampooer. Both of these items will help us to provide better service to our Janitorial and Landscaping customers. In the past two years we have been

working on networking our agency PC's across all sites through a server based system. In the past year we also accomplished the setup and **implementation of a new database** complimenting this new system and better serving our needs. And finally, during the past year, we have continued **our tradition of giving back to our community** by holding our 25th Annual Halloween Party benefiting the Tillamook Food Bank. Last fall's event netted 351 pounds of food for our community. Also in the past year many individuals in our vocational program gave back to their community by volunteering for various local non-profit groups. **It was indeed a busy year!**

Nestucca House Generator Project

Several years ago, we engaged in a project to install a 49,000 watt whole house generator system in our Madrona House Group Home (pictured right). **We are now engaging in a similar project to install a 25,000 watt whole house generator system at our smaller Nestucca House group home.** The cost of this project will be about \$32,000. As was the case with our prior project, this project's completion is important because in times of power loss it is vital that our group homes are operational with power. Our Nestucca House group home has individuals with medical needs requiring the use of power to properly treat them. Additionally, we have individuals in our Supported Living program who live in apartments next door. This will provide a safe and easily accessible place for them in times of emergency.

To date Marie Mills Center has raised nearly \$5,000 to go towards this project.



Database Creation

For the past several months we have been diligently working on the creation of a database that encompasses all of the information that we need for the individuals that we serve, as well as encompassing our entire mailing list. This has not been an easy task **but thanks for the help and dedication of Phyllis Holmes**, we did it. Phyllis (pictured top left) started working with databases many years ago and soon learned their value. She took it upon herself to learn to write the intricate queries and create forms and reports that many non profit organizations in Tillamook are using today. Her knowledge and willingness to volunteer her time has definitely benefitted our organization. For that we are greatly indebted to her.

While we have pretty much completed the structure of our database we are still expanding its use and look forward to our continued working relationship with Phyllis. Recently we took her out to tea at one of her favorite places, La Tea Da. We decided to dress the part and enjoy ourselves while thanking this wonderful lady. In fact, staff participated that day by wearing “facinators” (fancy little hats).



Another Busy Fall Season

Marie Mills Center will hold its annual Open House on October 26th. This event will be sponsored

by the Marie Mills Foundation, Marie Mills Center, TLC Federal Credit Union and the Tillamook Chamber of Commerce, Business after Hours. This year **we will celebrate our 43rd year** of serving those with special needs. We will recognize longtime supporters of our efforts as well as longtime staff. Another highlight of this year's event will be **recognition of Disability Employment Awareness Month. On October 27th we will hold our 26th Annual Halloween Party** at the Swiss Hall. Again this year, admission will be canned food donations for the Tillamook Food Bank. Soon after these two events are

over we enter into our busy Holiday mode. Again it will be a breathless and exciting season.



Employees of the Month



May 2012
Emil Kruse



June 2012
Daisy Roemisch



July 2012
Tara Bench



August 2012
Teresa Palmer

Tillamook County United Way

Marie Mills Center encourages support of the Annual Tillamook County United Way Drive in October.

The Tillamook County United Way's Vision for a Better Community includes:

- Caring for Kids
- Strengthening Families
- Assisting People in Crisis
- Promoting Self-Sufficiency
- Promoting Health and Wellness

On average, the **United Way touches 16,000 lives in Tillamook County**. Giving through the United Way allows your donation to become a helping hand to someone right here in our community!

Visit the Tillamook County United Way at www.tillamookcountyunitedway.org



Up Coming Events

MMCI & MMF
Annual Open House
1800 Front Street
October 26th, 2012 5-7 pm

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Marie Mills Center, Inc.  
26th Annual Halloween  
Party & Dance  
October 27th, 2012 6-9 pm

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Visit Marie Mills Center

We invite you to tour Marie Mills Center. You will observe individuals at work and see our programs in action.

Call Ron Rush at (503)842-2539 ext. 12 or visit us on the web at
www.mariemillscenter.com

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