Quarterly Report

Hello everyone! I am Sue Schuld and as of July, 2023 I will be the new chairperson of the Board of Directors at RSS. I will be taking Seth’s place, but I know that I am going to want him nearby so that I can figure out what it is I ‘m supposed to be doing. I’ve been a board member for a few years now. Since I became a board member, we have added some new faces and said goodbye to others. I’m feeling very hopeful right now because we have people with expertise in medicine, law, finance, real estate, and many many things I know nothing about. What I do know is that I am very proud to be a part of RSS.

 I have the utmost respect for all the employees and the amazing jobs they are doing, especially those of you who are on the front lines of the company; those of you who work directly with our people. Call them what you will-clients, residents, brothers,sisters, sons and daughters. I know you have an extremely challenging job and I want you to know that I am in awe of all of you for the work you do.

 I know how challenging it can be. I spent thirty six years of my life in public schools here and in Washington state teaching kids with developmental disabilities. Some of them are living in RSS group homes right now and it’s a joy to see how well they are doing. My own son lives in one of RSS’s homes. I have the utmost love and respect for the staff who care for him.

 Being on the board of directors has helped me see and understand what a monumental undertaking running this company is. Budgets, federal funding, state legislature, developing a public face, making sure our people are well taken care of- that’s only a part of it. Luckily, the board is full of very talented and caring people. I am also in awe of the staff who run the company. It’s an amazing group of people, dedicated to keeping the company running smoothly and always putting the health and welfare of the clients first.

 As with any company, and any new position, there are problems to be solved and joys and sorrows to be shared. With Jim’s loss, Cal has been taking on the job of executive director, with all of it’s obligations. He has some great ideas and deserves all the support he can get. It is up to all of us to work together with him to help keep RSS successful and expanding. As a board member I will do whatever I can to support his decisions. As a mom and former educator, I want to do whatever I can to see RSS and the individual group homes remain happy, safe places for our clients to live.

 My personal priorities are:

1. The group homes themselves. I would love to see the attitude of caring and teamwork shown in the homes to encompass all the homes as a whole. I’d love to see you sharing ideas, sharing problems and solutions, sharing victories, “Aha” moments when you have found something that really works well. You are the foundation of this company and I will always have your backs.
2. Finances. I realize that we get most of our funding from state and federal monies, and because of that, we are always at the mercy of the current political climate. Every couple of years a new administration shows up and legislative priorities change. The thrift store is doing very well right now, giving us a source of income that is under our control. Can we do more, and how can we get the general public more involved ?
3. Staff whose hearts are in their work. I think we need to expand our search for qualified people to work at RSS. I plan to spend some time at our college campuses and try to recruit some students interested in special education and human services. I’d like to look into staffing and possibly internship programs.

 One thing I learned I have learned during my thirty six years as a special education teacher is that it takes perseverance and a positive attitude to play the long game. I used to be the Mandt trainer for the Laurel school district, and in that capacity I learned that it’s very important to leave your ego at the door and learn to trust and rely on your fellow team members. Teamwork is a must, good communication is a must, trust in each other is a must. I am so proud to be a part of this group. I love seeing staff, managers, administration, parents and guardians working toward a common good, for our people. I hope I can be a positive force in this company and I look forward to working with all of you.