

## ‘Circle of Friends’ training

By Marie Campbell

In early 2008, the CARE (Community Advocates for Rural Elders) Partnership of Clallam County received a grant from the PLAN (Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network) of Vancouver, B.C. to develop an innovative pilot project: Circle of Friends. Based on the idea that we all get along better “with a little help from our friends,” we work with individuals, their loved ones, friends and caregivers to coordinate circles or personal safety nets.

Trained Community Connectors meet with folks to identify strengths, hopes, goals and dreams using the Circle of Friends format.

People in the circle commit to helping the individual at the center live more active, involved, fun and creative lives.

PLAN has a 20-plus-year history of working with families of adult children with disabilities, and are internationally known for its work around strengthening communities through social networking, encouraging the participation of those who may be marginalized by age, disability or other barriers.

This fun, friendly, free program also has an online social network component (adult version of MySpace or other facebook.)

Watch for a training for families on Circle of Friends in January, sponsored by Clallam County Health & Human Services, WISE (WA Initiative for Supported Employment) and Special Needs Advocacy Parents (SNAP).

Flyers for the training will be included in the January edition of *DDDdetails*.

*Marie Campbell is Coordinator of the Circle of Friends and welcomes your call or e-mail. (360) 452-3525, or at\_home\_marie@yahoo.com*

## Continuing education

Free workshops are being presented by the Division of Developmental Disabilities for continuing education credits.

*Use of Psychoactive Medication on People with Developmental Disabilities:*

**9 a.m.- 4 p.m., February 6, 2009.**

*From Schools for the Feeble-Minded to Self-Determination: An Evolution in Values;*

**9 a.m.- 4 p.m., March 17, 2009.**

All workshops will be held at **203 West 1st Street, Port Angeles**, the DSHS office.

The workshop training is for adult family home providers and resident managers; caregivers; medicaid personal care/respice providers; group home staff; supported living staff; companion home providers; employment support staff; and ombudsman representatives.

To register call:

**Debra Terry** at **360-565-2702**, or

**Andrea Reetz** at **360-565-2701**, or toll free **1-877-601-2760**.

## Family Network Groups

The Family Network Groups next meeting is **Parents with children who experience autism** from **6~7:30 p.m.**, Monday, January 26 and again April 27, 2009, at the Olympic Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall, 73 Howe Road, Port Angeles.

Dinner will be provided and free childcare is also available, but with a one-week notice. Upcoming meetings are:

**Senior parents who have adult children with developmental disabilities** meet, from **6-7:30 p.m.** Monday, February 23 and Monday, March 30, 2009.

Contact **Jenell Dematteo** at **360-379-8934**.