

Valley Village to Open Specialized Home

*Larkspur House Offers Services,
Life in the Community*

By JO ELLEN KRUMM

Valley Village, the nonprofit where adults with developmental challenges thrive, will soon open a new home specially designed for medically fragile adults, those who have multiple medical problems.

The home, called Valley Village Larkspur House is in Sylmar. "It's beautiful," said Barbara Smith, Director of Residential Programs at Valley Village. "It's a home, not an institution. Each client will have his or her own bedroom. Plus there is a kitchen, living

room, activities room and bathrooms."

As part of a State Assembly bill, the home is owned by a nonprofit housing corporation, Home Ownership for Personal Empowerment, and program services will be provided by Valley

Village, with specialized funding from the State of California through the North Los Angeles County Regional Center. Valley Village is well equipped to operate the specialized new home.

The nonprofit, founded in 1971, already owns and operates 17 family-style homes (two of which offer nursing care), three day programs for adults with developmental disabilities and other needs, and a recreation program. The Larkspur clients are being relocated from the Lanterman Developmental

Center in Pomona, transitioning into the community from an institutional setting. As the state developmental centers close or downsize, many clients will be relocated. The five residents have already been identified.

"The clients at Larkspur House will have a bright, cheery, family-style home that provides 24-hour nursing care from licensed nurses," said Smith. In addition to the much-needed nursing care, Larkspur will offer occupational therapy, physical therapy, behavioral services, consultation with a licensed dietitian, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, and music therapy.

"There will also be trips out in the community to places like Santa Monica Pier, Universal Studios, and many festi-

vals and parks. These five lucky folks are going to have a full life in the community, including recreation and real-life meaningful opportunities," Smith continued.

"After a year and a half of planning and preparation, we are looking at opening Larkspur House this spring, and we are all so excited," said Smith. Valley Village will be hiring nurses and other staff for the new home, she added.

For information about Valley Village, including volunteer opportunities, please contact the development office at info@valleyvillage.org, or (818) 587-9450. Visit the website at www.valleyvillage.org, or on facebook at www.facebook.com/ValleyVillageLA.