

May 2, 1973.

Mrs. Helene Wollguth
Secretary of Welfare
Harrisburg, Pa.

Dear Mrs. Wollguth:

Have you missed it?

Have you attended the Spring Musical the
Christmas Program or Circus Day at Park
State School?

Fifteen years ago I took an active
part in the activities at Park State School
and Hospital as an attendant (now classified
Chief Care Aide). Presently, I attend these
functions with my devoted husband and
four beautiful children. As we sit in the
auditorium viewing these programs, it is not
only with gratitude & thankfulness to God for
my good fortune, but a deep tingling of the
"Heart Strings" for those precious boys & girls
residents of Park State School, who display a
marvelous performance. The children (yes,
some 60 & 70 years of age) singing, dancing &
playing musical instruments; astounded that
these children can be taught to perform, to learn
music. A blind girl sings a solo accompanied
by a blind pianist. A paralytic playing bells.
Oh yes, my eyes fill with tears & even overflow
with thankfulness, love, astonishment! Consider the

Hours, weeks, months spent to train these children the patience, tolerance and initiative. It indeed takes a "Special Kind of Person!!"

Have you visited the Craft Shop, the Hobby Shop, seen the blind weaving? Seen the various forms of recreational activity? Seen a child with twisted arms & legs throw a ball? Seen a Christmas tree veiling gifts for 50 or 60 children? (Even the less fortunate who have no family to provide gifts for them - someone on the staff saw to it they had gifts, too!) Viewed the immaculate [&] ultra-modern dietary facilities? The cottages which are kept spotlessly clean [&] home-like? Not to mention the Laundry, Carpenter Shop, Tailor Shop, shoe shop [&] all other forms of industrial Management. Have you seen or know Eighty-two (82) Mental Patients to receive diplomas for credits achieved in a Technical Training School? Park State School [&] Hospital DID - April 23, 1973. Vo-Tech.

Have you had patients that you cared for Twenty (20) years ago, run up to you, still remembering who you are, embrace you, telling how much they care for you [&] miss you, asking how you enjoyed their part in the program? Have you had patients that were transferred to other Institutions or placed in community life, travel several hundred miles to pay you a

special afternoon visit? Have you had a patient tell you he prays for you every night?

How unfortunate that your visit had to be on a Saturday, for truly you did miss nearly all the afore mentioned. Certainly there are undesirable conditions at Park State School as in all Institutions, but these are handled ^{and} treated with methods beneficial to all concerned. How would you handle a child who beats his head against the wall until it bleeds? One who would put his fist thru every window in a Cottage? One who would rip clothing from everyone he comes in contact with? One who eats his own secretions? Yes, there are just a few undesirable conditions that have been handled with restraint, not for the sake of pleasing the child (which has no idea what he is doing or has done) but for the safety of all concerned. If you had a child in this Institution would you want him exposed to the harassment of this type of patient? Would it not be better to have him live a happy life alienated and protected from this type individual by use of restraint?

The purpose of this letter is not to ask you to reinstate our Superintendent, but to ask you to do some soul searching, to weigh all matters at Park State School ^{and} Hospital, to plan a visitation during the week. I am sure

if you take an open minded view of our Institution, the constructive measures will far out weigh the undesirable measures you seemed to find. Spend a day in The Cottage that has the play pens, see what a full day entails, then offer your suggestions as to how to handle this particular type of patient.

As I am sure you are very attractive intelligent & most capable in your position, considering your time valuable and very limited, I feel confident you will handle this situation with deep consideration; However, if you must answer the many questions herein, negatively, then truly, YOU HAVE MISSED IT!!! I know of no greater reward, no deeper feeling of satisfaction, no humbler recognition of gratitude, thankfulness, the intimate feeling of solidarity, but that that comes from being a Part of Polk State School.

Most sincerely,
Mrs. Eugene (Ruth E.) Andrews
205 W. 2nd. Cleveland Avenue
Polk, Pa.