

location is a source of not just financial relief but also emotional relief—while the county provided some services on the Ridge, a lot of people had to make trips to Chico or Oroville since the fire, and it was a real hardship.

“It’s really important for us to have a presence here,” she said. “A lot of times people [have said], ‘I just can’t get there.’”

The Paradise center likely will improve staff efficiency as well, employees told the CN&R.

Since the fire, the county has had workers reaching out to survivors across the Ridge, Kennelly said. Like Gilligan, they traveled to various locations to provide care. In the meantime, the county did a lot of assessing before deciding whether to open a physical location again. For example, it had to determine how many children would return to Ridge schools, and how many people would choose to stay in the region.

It became clear through its

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work and conversations with survivors that there was definitely a large enough population in need of help to warrant re-establishing a location on the Ridge, Kennelly said.

“As soon as we realized we had enough people that were interested and available ... we started looking for locations,” he added, and pursuing grant funding.

The county received a one-time \$100,000 grant from the North Valley Community Foundation to help open the center. But it’s Kennelly and Boston’s hope that it will grow and become an integral part of the recovery on the Ridge.

“There are people here and they already have so many barriers and challenges to their progress,” Boston said. “This is a place they can come and get whatever service they need.” □

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WEEKLY DOSE

Kid’s best friend

Growing up with a canine could lower the risk of developing schizophrenia as an adult. That’s according to a recent study of more than 1,300 individuals conducted by Johns Hopkins University and the Sheppard Pratt Health System. The findings, published last month by PLOS

ONE, showed that those who have a dog before turning 13 are significantly less likely to be diagnosed with schizophrenia later—as much as 25 percent. Dr. Robert Yolken, the study’s lead author, said in a Johns Hopkins Medicine news release that this possible protective effect could be attributed to “something in the canine microbiome that gets passed to humans and bolsters the immune system against or subdues a genetic predisposition to schizophrenia.” Researchers reported mixed news for cat lovers: they found a slightly increased risk of developing both schizophrenia and bipolar disorder for those first exposed to a cat between the ages of 9 and 12.



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