



TRC TODAY
a newsletter for
employees of the
Texas Rehabilitation
Commission

Vol. 13 No. 1
January 1991

INSIDE

LEGISLATURE
fiscal challenge 3

COMPUTER
virus infects
Dallas computers 4

CIRCLE
of Excellence
Awards for 1990 6

On the way with ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act won't go into effect for 18 months, but it's already working for Elaine Shelly.

Shelly, TRC client of Art Asebedo in the South Austin Field Office, found a temporary training position at TRC.

She provides office and clerical support for ADA/Texas, TRC's newly-formed unit designed specifically to promote ADA awareness and conformity to the act both inside and outside the Commission.

Shelly formerly worked as a journalist in Decatur, Illinois, Wichita Falls and Austin. Although newspaper reporting was physically demanding, multiple sclerosis has slowed her down somewhat.

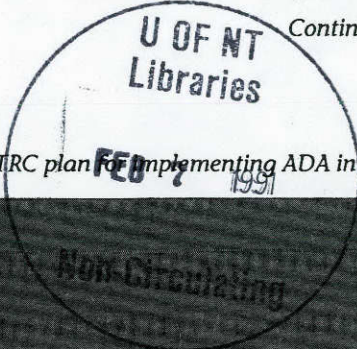
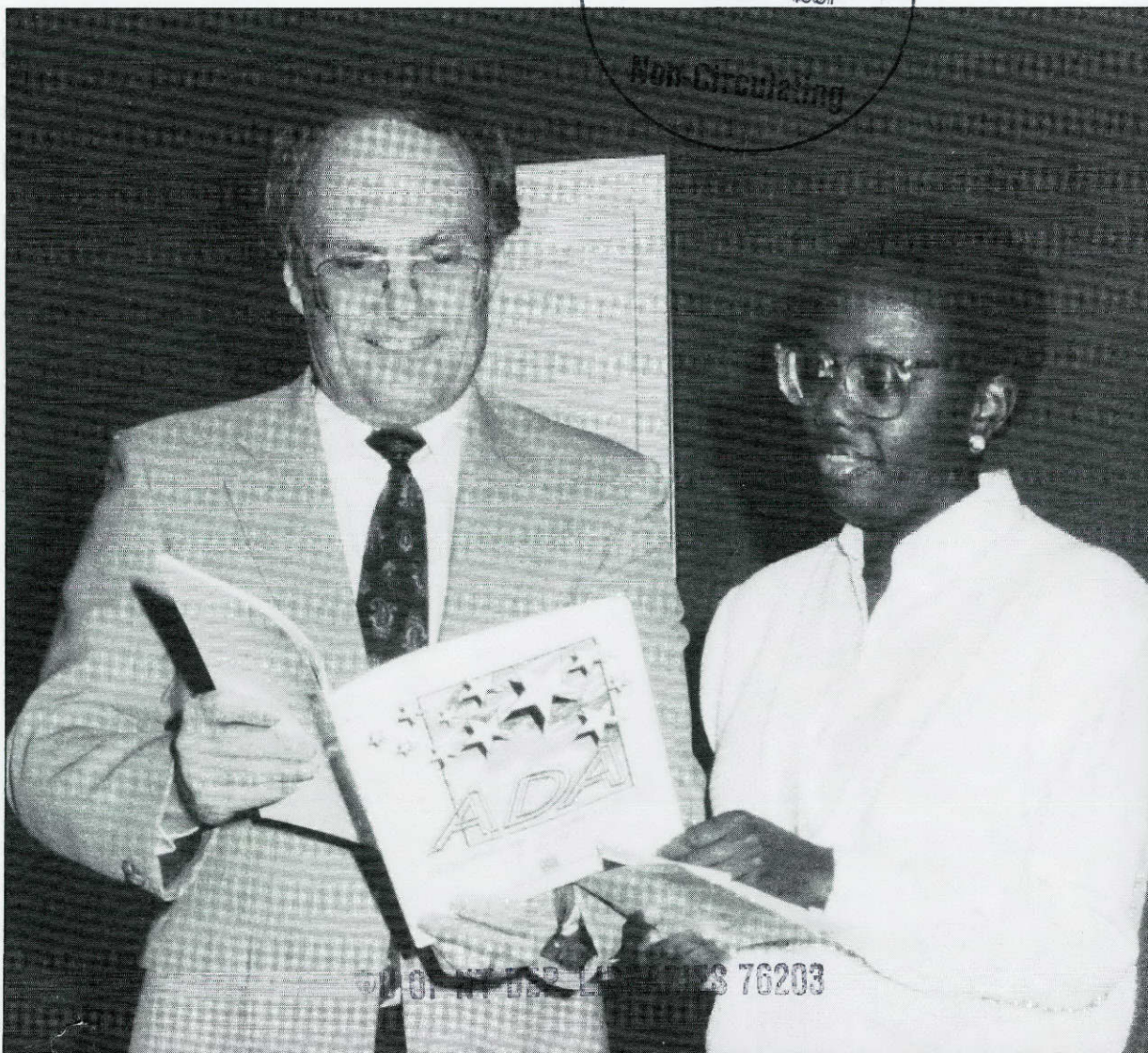
Now Shelly is interested in building up her endurance for work. "I need to know I can work a 40-hour week in a traditional work setting," she says.

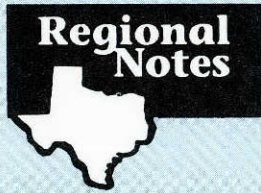
"I believe very strongly in the ADA," she says. "Even after it passed, I admit I was skeptical. But an office like this one boosts my confidence in the legislation and what it can do."

John Fenoglio, deputy commissioner, put the team together, borrowing four full-time equivalent positions from various TRC department—Tom Word, Human Resources Development; Ron

Continued on page 8

Ron Trull and Elaine Shelly review material to develop the TRC plan for implementing ADA in Texas.





Editor's Note: If you have items of interest in the various TRC regions (including DDS and Central Office), such as local awards, press coverage, conferences, meetings or other TRC-related activities which could appear in Regional Notes, please submit them for consideration to "TRC Today" c/o the Public Information Office.

Region I

Nedra Dill, counselor in the Amarillo Field Office, was recently elected president of the Amarillo College Advisory Council for Disabled Students for a one-year term.

Adrian Cervantez, area manager in the Amarillo Field Office, chaired the City of Amarillo Employment Symposium for Employers in October.

Socorro Baggerman, rehabilitation services technician in the Amarillo Field Office, participated in the Paramount Baptist Church Praising Hands Deaf Choir that performed at the "Focus on Disabilities" banquet on October 13th.

Region III

Sue McBeth, counselor in the Texas A&M Health Center Field Office, was recognized by WTAW Star 92 for outstanding contributions in the Bryan College Station area.

Bill Hawthorne was selected as a counselor in the San Marcos Field Office. Bill has 12 years of experience with TRC.

Region IV

Jim Muhlhauser, former operations director - Program Services in the Houston Regional Office, was selected as regional director of Region IV.

Bee Kennedy, rehabilitation services technician in the Conroe Field Office, was selected to fill the MSS position in the Houston North Field Office. Kennedy has 18 years of experience with TRC.

Leeda Laykasek, counselor in the Houston Field Office Central, has been selected as area manager in the LaMarque Unit in Region III.

Region V

Marisela Garcia, program manager in the Brownsville Field Office, received an award at the annual Spirit of American Woman banquet. Recipients of this award received recognition for contributions in various areas and for their impact on the lives of others.

Armando Vasquez, counselor in the San Antonio Field Office North, was the

Never, never, never

TV aside, most of the world still communicates in writing. For writers at TRC, whether for newsletters, memos, commission letters, reports, or just writing home to mother - here are a few tips to consider in your new year resolutions.

- Never quote an executive after dark (unless you are very close to retirement!)
- Never misspell or misprint a person's name (they may never forgive you for it!)
- Never tell anyone where to go in print unless you can provide a map.
- Never refer to yourself in print as "we" (unless you have a mouse in your pocket).
- Never let them "see you sweat" in print.
- Never say you "goofed", it isn't cute to make a mistake.
- Never, ever, proudly proclaim that you will not do something (you may well wind up having to do that anyway, with the usual embarrassment that comes with this situation.)

and, of course,

- Never take yourself too seriously. **Happy new year!**

Region V *continued*

winner of the Great American Smokeout Raffle. Congratulations go to Vasquez.

Maria Lydia Ortiz was selected as counselor in the McAllen Field Office. Ortiz comes to TRC with extensive experience as a caseworker with the U.S. Department of Social Services and as a career guidance counselor to students at the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University. Ortiz is originally from Mission, Texas.

DDS

Margaret Castillo, administrative technician in the Program Operations, was selected as administrative secretary to the assistant controller in Central Office

Central Office

Maria Rutledge, administrative coordinator in Legal Services, received special recognition for her contributions in a leadership role at the annual Outstanding Women in Texas Government awards ceremony at the Capitol. Rita Clements hosted the event in the Senate Chamber.

Deborah Shaw-Boatner, grants and contracts specialist in Special Services and a Certified Public Accountant, was featured on Longhorn Radio Network in the series "In Black America," titled: "Black CPA's," aired December 3 through 9, 1990.

Linda Ward, statistician in Civil Rights, was selected to fill the auditor position in Management Audit. Ward has a long history of positive working relationships with TRC personnel and is very knowledgeable of policies and procedures.

Ron Johnson, formerly with Compuadd; Steve Davis, formerly with the Department of Human Services; and Paul Koncak, formerly with UNISYS; are new employees in Data Services.

The Texas legislature is coming back

Gov. Ann Richards was swept into office with the promise of a "New Texas Team." And new it is ... governor, lieutenant governor, treasurer, comptroller, and many legislators.

New team, yes ... but the same old problem for the Texas Legislature—money, money, money. Who needs it? How much do they get? How do we pay for it?

This legislature is looking at the most formidable fiscal challenge in the history of the state.

With the state economy still slow in recovery, the big ticket items in state appropriations – DHS shortfall, financing public education, overcrowding in jails and prisons and federal court-imposed mandate on MHMR services – will quickly garner the available appropriations.

The days of creative bookkeeping and quick-fix increases in the state sales tax are behind us. This legislature will be forced to make hard decisions that may include overhauling the tax structure, a one year agency budget and close scrutiny of state agency efficiency.

"Make no mistake about it," says Commissioner Arrell, "this session will be a real tough one. Every agency, including ours, will need to reaffirm to the legislature that they are efficiently carrying out their mission. We are ready; our consumers and clients are ready. We are confident that the integrity of our programs will be well represented before the legislature."

The logo for TRC TODAY features the word "TRC" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with "TODAY" in a smaller, similar font to its right. A stylized star is positioned between the two words.

"TRC TODAY" is published by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission for distribution to its employees and retirees throughout the state. We welcome submissions for publication, but reserve the right to edit or screen materials according to newsletter policy. Address submissions or inquiries to Randy Jennings, Public Information Office, Texas Rehabilitation Commission, 4900 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas 78751-2316; or telephone (512) 483-4421.

Randy Jennings Editor
Susan Antoniewicz Illustrator
Jon Janas Photography
Printing Services Printing
Kaye Beneke ... Assistant Deputy
Commissioner

Computer Viruses: Serious TRC Threat



||
*Do NOT
use on
a TRC
computer
ANY
software
not
already
approved
by TRC...*

||

Someone in a Dallas office inserted a floppy into the computer drive and displayed a seemingly innocuous drawing on the CRT. Everyone who saw it smiled. "Hey, that's cute." "How 'bout that!" "Can I copy that?"

A week later, no one was smiling.

A few days after the drawing was first displayed, Dallas office's Michelle Nielson noticed that Samna was responding more and more slowly to commands. Luckily, Michelle had recently purchased a virus checking program, Virex, which she used

to discover that her computer not only was sick with a virus but already had infected eight other computer terminals.

A quick call to the Central Office brought three teams composed of members from Data Services, Security Administration and Management Audit. Tom Warkoczewski, CIC, wrote a custom virus-checking program for use by Management Support Specialists. Within several days, everything was back to normal.



**Load it up.
Who will
ever know!**

The virus-carrying floppy had been downloaded from a Dallas computer bulletin board. Some say such info exchanges are the most common virus breeding grounds.

Where did the virus come from that cost TRC some \$10,000 to cure? Per Ed Buffaloe, manager of data services, this virus is called Jerusalem-B. It was created by Palestinians in Israel to be a virus every day of the year except on Friday the 13th, when it destroys files. Israel became a free state on a Friday the 13th.

Thus TRC became an inadvertent participant in a macabre, malicious commemoration of an event in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But luckily not on a Friday the 13th.

Two years ago, there were 20 known computer viruses. Today: over 200, some with hundreds of strains! It's a SERIOUS threat to our delivery of VR services.

The moral of this story: Do NOT use on a TRC computer ANY software not already approved by TRC management. And should you suspect that your computer may have contacted a virus, call (512) 483-HELP (4357).

Counselor Don Orgeron in the Longview Field Office received the following letter from a client:

"Just a note to say thank you for all you and TRC have done on my behalf.

"I go to work tomorrow as a Clerk III for Texas Department of Human Services. I will be at the office on Fairmont Street. You know, as we discussed, that this is exactly the type job I hoped to get. Without my training at BMI, it wouldn't have been possible.

"I have only the highest praise for you and Texas Rehabilitation. I truly appreciate your help."



TRC Public Information Office received this letter from Nancy Samerow, Texas Commission for the Blind/Austin JAYCEES.

"The Austin Area Opportunity Fair for people with disabilities was a great success and has been acknowledged by several awards from Texas JAYCEES. A first place for the Human Services/Community Development was quickly followed by the award for Overall Best Project, out-competing projects from 4 states, 15 regions, 152 chapters and 600 project areas.

"I can't say enough about the dedicated effort of TRC counselors Roxanne Wheelis and Bill Bush and the overall support of TRC in publicizing the event in PSAs and media relations.

"I was impressed with the extent of volunteer effort, representing all of the major disability groups and agencies serving people with disabilities.

"On behalf of the Austin JAYCEES, congratulations on a very special event."



Continued on page 7

Awards

TRC Service

DECEMBER 1990

Region II

10 years

George A. Calhoun

Region III

10 years

Harry Lundell

Region IV

10 years

Tracee A. Ridgeway

Region V

10 years

Cydeana L. Ramirez
Maria Esther Vera
Tommye B. Everett

20 years

Emeterio Pelayo

Region VI

10 years

Sandra W. Green

DDS

10 years

Cynthia Anderson

20 years

Mary Bohn

Central Office

10 years

Betty Eli

15 years

Robert Thomason

20 years

Randee Malmsten

The Circle of Excellence for 1990

The Circle of Excellence is growing. Ten counselors have achieved the Circle of Excellence award program for "weighted 26 closures" in 1990.

Counselor Robert Gonzalez, San Antonio, and his RST Carmen Gonzales join this elite group for the third consecutive year. Counselor David Stevenson, from Austin, makes his appearance for the second year in a row.

Eight other counselors, from five different regions, complete the Circle of Excellence for 1990.

All ten counselors exceeded the 72-point weighted closure quota by at least 80 points to log a minimum 150 points on their individual caseloads.

Incentives for counselors to strive to reach this high water mark of performance include:

- Individualized awards;
- A one-week, Commission-paid training anywhere inside of the continental United States;
- Calling cards noting their achievement of the Circle of Excellence.

Joellen Simmons, assistant deputy commissioner for Programs, expressed her appreciation for the long hours of dedicated effort which was needed for counselors to achieve this recognition. "This is the last year that recognition will be based upon

production points alone," said Simmons. "I am pleased that we will be acknowledging the new 'quality' test component next year ... an important part of the rehabilitation process."

Congratulations to the FY 1990 Circle of Excellence Award winners!

Doris Hickerson,
Fort Worth Field Office North

Elizabeth Rhodes,
Wharton Field Office

John Weeks,
Houston Field Office North

Eliseo Smith, III,
San Antonio Field Office South

Carolyn Burelsmith,
Tyler Field Office

Larry Hughes,
Plano Field Office

Suzette Skinner,
Dallas Field Office Southeast

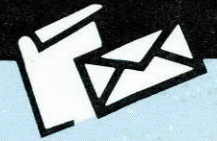
David D. Stevenson,
Austin Field Office South

Roxanne Cassard,
Houston Field Office North

Robert Gonzalez,
San Antonio Field Office South

FICA base goes up

The good news is that the FICA tax rate is not going up next year. The bad news is that the base that the taxes are figured from is up from \$50,400 to \$53,400. Effective January 2, 1991, we will all pay 7.65% of the first \$53,400 into the Social Security fund for the greater good of all. To avoid a big bite from your paycheck at the end of the year, you may want to consider the leveling option offered by TRC.



Letters *continued from page 5*

James Hiltz, director of Civilian Personnel, Department of the Army, Fort Hood, sent the following letter to Clifford Hughes, counselor in the Killeen Field Office:

"I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to you for conducting the "Handicapped Awareness" portion of the NAF Civilian Personnel Management Course held during the week of September 17, 1990. The professional competency you displayed during your presentation was superb and certainly reflects well upon the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. The supervisors who attended the training commented that you were very informative and well organized.

"We look forward to your continued support. It is through your commendable efforts that NAF Supervisors will learn more about the handicapped and they can benefit the organization. Again, thank you for a fine performance and a job well-done."



The following is a letter to Counselor Clarence Howard of the Houston South Field Office from a client:

"I just wanted to express how great my grades are improving due to your outstanding help. Because of the Word Finder and the Black's Law Dictionary, which you and Texas Rehab Commission provided my rehabilitation has been made easier to cope with. It's a pleasure to have a counselor with such great understanding. Keep up the good work!"



Counselor Nelda Choate of the Athens Field Office received the following letter from a client:

"Many thanks to you and the staff that supports you. I'm back at work and enjoying my life again. I'll never forget you. Your guidance through the lowest point in my life was truly a blessing. You will always hold a special place in my heart."



Ramiro Hernandez, disability examiner in DDS Initial Unit 12, received this letter from Commissioner Arrell:

"Thanks to you and all of the folks in Unit 12 for taking the time and effort to create and support the Super Max pumpkin. I loved it! It was for a good cause."



Here is a portion of a letter received by Commissioner Arrell from the Polk County Indigent Health Administrator Molly Locke re DDS staff:

"As usual your kind capable staff member David Norman devoted his morning as well as his expertise to this claimant's request. The hard work resulted in a favorable decision being sent out this same day to the Dallas Office.

"...On several occasions over the past ten years I have contacted your office and never have I worked with a more dedicated and caring group."



Now hear this!

Realignment in TRC, like change, is inevitable. Public Information is no exception.

Vernon Dement, the auspicious editor of *TRC Today* (and *News & Views* before that), moved on to a special assignment with the ADA/Texas unit. Vernon made his mark on the newsletter. He is largely responsible for the change in format, scope and flavor that we now know as *TRC Today*. He will continue to contribute articles from his new home, but his presence and influence will be missed.

Randy Jennings has assumed the editorial responsibilities of the newsletter. Your comments, suggestions, and positive criticism will be appreciated – especially if they are upbeat, creative and helpful.

II
*...we want
 our efforts in
 promoting
 the ADA
 to reflect
 confidence
 in people
 with
 disabilities.*

II

ADA *continued from page 1*

Trull, Programs; Cindy Counts, Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons; and Vernon Dement, Public Information Office.

"This team was put together to become the Commission's catalyst and focal point for our ADA activity," says Fenoglio.

"We hope that, with TRC resources, we can provide assistance, information and coordination to the many individuals, groups, and organizations who will be and want to be involved in this very important movement."

This is an aggressive step for the Commission as it continues to blaze trails in promoting opportunities for people with disabilities.

An informal poll, at the latest Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) meeting in Dallas, showed that TRC is one of the first to develop an approach to ADA including a formalized plan and staff positions dedicated solely to the effort.

Tom Word, director of ADA/Texas, says the group has already targeted its goals and is moving quickly to achieve them.

"Above all, we want our efforts in promoting the ADA to reflect confidence in people with disabilities," says Word. "Our willingness to share quality, effective information on the act is essential to the team's success."

Simply put, the ADA/Texas mission is to provide training on the ADA, technical assistance, information and coordination of resources.

The training, scheduled for release in February, includes an ADA overview, employment issues, legal aspects of ADA, practical steps for implementation and disability awareness, among others.

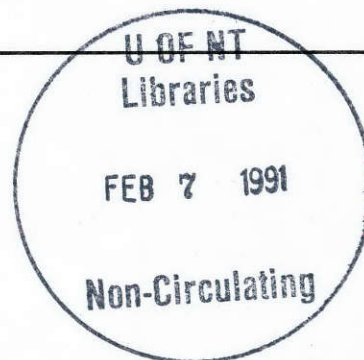
It is designed for employers, disability consumers and community groups, as well as TRC employees.

Along with reaching out to the community with ADA information and training, ADA/Texas will also focus on TRC, itself, evaluating possible ADA effects internally and reaffirming Commission obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

"It will be a lot of work, but it's very exciting to me," says Shelly. "I like knowing what's going on before anybody else does."

TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION
4900 N. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78751-2316

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



BULK RATE
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Austin, Texas
 Permit No. 1605

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS 63
 DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT
 NTSU LIBRARY
 BOX 5188 N T STATION
 DENTON TX 76203