



Journal

A Quarterly Publication of
the Texas Youth Commission

TYC benefits from legislative session

TYC ON NOV. 6 BALLOT

The legislative session that ended May 31 was a successful one for the Texas Youth Commission. Additional funding will provide improved services for delinquents under TYC jurisdiction, and pay raises for employees.

TYC was authorized to hire 30 new juvenile correctional officers and 14 gang intervention specialists, positions that will help to improve security and safety. We also were given the go-ahead to hire five additional educational diagnosticians and five more teachers who are certified in English as a Second Language.

We were successful in obtaining a pay increase for juvenile correctional officers. The Legislature appropriated \$16.4 million for the biennium to implement the JCO pay plan.

The Legislature set **PROPOSITION 8** as one of 19 ballot items that Texas voters will consider on Nov. 6. It would authorize \$850 million in general obligation bond authority for facility repairs at several state agencies, including TYC. The \$10.8 million for TYC would go to construction and repair projects at 14 facilities.

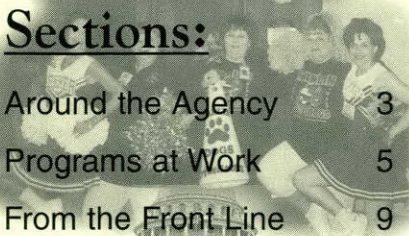
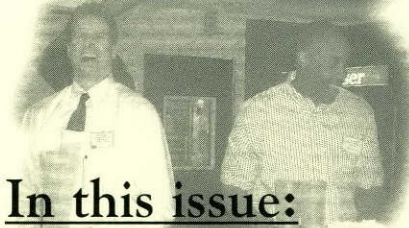
The state budget includes debt service to pay for the bonds, so **PROPOSITION 8** will not increase taxes.

For details on **PROPOSITION 8** visit the TYC homepage,

<http://www.tyc.state.tx.us>.

"Circumstances being what they were, I feel like we had a successful session," said Executive Director Steve Robinson. "Our main empha-

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PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

The TYC Journal will be published in Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. Articles submitted for publication must be submitted by e-mail to tammy.vega@tyc.state.tx.us, or on computer disk with delivery to TYC, Austin headquarters. Hard copy articles will not be accepted. Submission deadlines are December 1, March 1, June 1, and September 1. All submissions should be dated. All photos that picture a TYC youth must be accompanied by a publicity release.

TYC benefits from legislative session

(continued from page one)

sis was on staffing and improved pay, and we were able to make some strides in that area. I consistently maintain that TYC employees are the best there are, and they do a great job. And we are going to do everything that we can to make sure that their workday and their work experiences are the best we can provide."

Money was authorized to provide services to expand populations at four TYC facilities. In the previous session two years ago, the Legislature approved funds for construction at four facilities. The new appropriation will allow us to operate upcoming expansions of 320 beds at McLennan County, 48 beds at Corsicana, 24 beds at Gainesville, and 64 beds at Sheffield.

The Legislature also approved a four percent or \$100 per month pay increase - whichever is greater - for eligible state employees. Employees who started work before Sept. 1, 2000, will receive their pay increase on September 1, 2001. Employees who started work on or after September 1, 2001 will not receive their payraise until September 1, 2002.

Principals, assistant principals, diagnosticians, teachers and teacher aides hired before Sept. 1, 1999 weren't included in the state employee pay increase, as their salaries are tied to those paid by independent school districts in the towns where our facilities reside. Adjustments are made for the additional days TYC educators work during summer months.

CHANGES AHEAD

There also were a number of bills that passed with impact on TYC. Of particular interest, House Bill 1118 made a change in the sex offender registration process for juveniles, allowing the committing court to defer or exempt juveniles from registration. That bill also will automatically restrict access to juvenile records after supervision ends, although prosecutors and law enforcement would still have access.

House Bill 1118 also made a change in commitment criteria. Now, youth can be committed to TYC for a misdemeanor if they ever had a felony adjudication, even if they had completed their probation for that felony offense. Previously, they would have had to either still be on felony probation or have two previous misdemeanor adjudications.

In a last-minute amendment, the legislature directed that Jefferson County State School be renamed for former Beaumont-area State Rep. Al Price.

More detailed information about pay increases, the JCO pay plan and new legislation requirements will be provided by supervisors in coming months. ❁

Two generations of Harrells impact Crockett

Peter Harrell, Jr., TYC's Organizational Development Coordinator, has been in Crockett recently to conduct many training seminars for Crockett State School staff. Some of his classes include Teambuilding, Communication Styles, Bridging the Gap, Managing Solutions for Work and Self, and Changing Faces in the Workplace.

"Working for TYC since September 2000, Peter has already impacted the mission and philosophy of the whole organization in very positive ways." Juvenile Corrections Officer James Berry said, "His technique is not to come preach about equality, but to promote a different kind of thinking within one's self, and the means to change if we feel we need to."

Peter Harrell, Jr. has lived a life only others can imagine. Prior to joining the TYC team, he lived in Austin and attended St. Edward's University where he began his acting career. "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" was his first film, and from 1972 until 1993 he appeared in more than 50 commercials, 13 movies, spent five years on the set of Trapper John, M.D. and did spots on McGyver, Nightrider and Hill Street Blues. Upon the death of his mother, Emma Harrell, Peter started looking for other avenues of employment to be closer with his father, Peter Harrell, Sr. In 1993, he moved back to Austin and went to work for the Comptroller's office. Then, last year, Peter could not turn down the offer to get back into the TYC family. This is where Peter's life has another interesting facet.

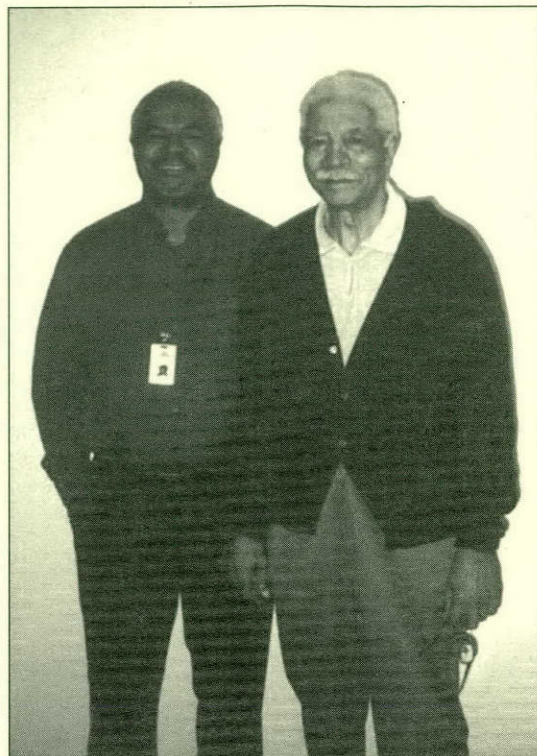
In the early 1950s, an old army barrack was moved from Brady to Crockett, and a school was opened for black female juvenile offenders. The principal was Emma Harrell and the superintendent was Peter Harrell, Sr., - the parents of Peter Harrell, Jr. The all-black school was not always welcome in Houston County, although it employed many people and was an asset to the community. Once, Peter came home from college to find guns propped at every door. Harrell Sr., told his son of a death threat. But the Harrells persevered, and continued to provide rehabilitation to juvenile offenders.

In 1973, Peter Sr. and Emma moved to Austin where Peter Sr. was appointed Director of Personnel and Staff Development of TYC. He started the staff Training Academy in Corsicana that is still in operation today, as well as the Affirmative Action Program and the Grievance Committee. He retired in 1982, but came back just one year later to become Assistant Deputy Director under Deputy Director Ron Jackson.

Peter Sr. also started a political consulting company with clients such as Lloyd Doggett, John Sharp and Ann Richards. In 1991, he was appointed to a six-year term on the TYC board, again helping to give juvenile offenders a second chance. Nowadays, he spends his time traveling, having fun with his grandson, and like his son, he is on television, doing commercials for Blue Bell, Thrifty and Panasonic.

He often travels with Peter Jr. to the different facilities across the state, so even in his second retirement phase, Peter Harrell, Sr., is staying actively involved in the lives of Texas' incarcerated youth. Both father and son have seen many changes since those early days in Crockett, changes that make for a better community and program for both staff and students statewide. ❁

Submitted by Patricia Wyman



Peter Harrell, Jr., left, and father Peter Harrell, Sr. were in Crockett for three days of staff development training.



Chamber honors San Saba State School

San Saba State School was honored on February 3 at the city's annual Chamber of Commerce Banquet. The school was recognized for its outstanding work and impact on the local community.

John Shero, minister of the San Saba Church of Christ and president of the Volunteer Resource Council at the school, presented a Certificate of Recognition to Superintendent Lydia Barnard.

Shero delivered an eloquent speech highlighting the impact the school has on the youth it serves and the difference it makes in the San Saba community. He emphasized how important volunteers are in rehabilitating the young men at the school.

More than 200 business and community leaders attended the banquet, held at the San Saba Civic Center. The Chamber also recognized outstanding small and large businesses, and the outstanding man and woman of the year.

State Representative Suzanna Hupp addressed the audience. Waggoner Carr also entertained the audience with his impersonation of the bandit Jesse James, through a story of his life and times.

TYC Executive Director Steve Robinson was a special guest at the banquet, along with Director of Juvenile Corrections Marie Murdoch and Administrator of Volunteer Services Tammy Vega. ❁

Submitted by Dagmar Poteet

Gang conference draws big crowd

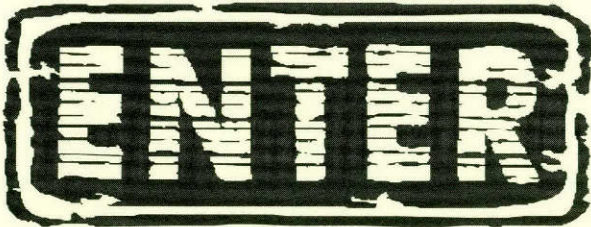
The Harlingen/Corpus Christi District Parole Office presented a Gang Conference at South Padre Island to more than 450 people. Those attending the conference included local, county, state and federal law enforcement representatives. Juvenile probation officers and school educators also attended.

The TYC conference hosted several gang experts. Among the conference presenters were U.S. retired probation officer Steven Gonzales, TYC apprehension specialist Raul Flores, and TYC gang specialist Tomas Gonzalez.

Conference coordinators did an excellent job of promoting community interest and enthusiasm. The following TYC employees are credited with conference coordination: parole officers Ricardo Leal, Bobby Davis, John Gravel, Manual Lopez, David Martinez, Guadalupe Limas Jr., and Maritza Ann Martinez, parole case aide Alan Maria, parole secretaries Cynthia Saldivar and Zulema Mendoza, parole volunteer Nelda Ortiz, and parole supervisor, Sylvia Martinez.

The success of the December conference helped to prompt the formation of several additional gang task forces throughout the state. Texas parole officers have been overwhelmed by numerous gang presentation requests from schools, civil groups, and the private sector. Parole officers throughout Texas also have been asked to participate in gang information panels. ❁

Submitted by Sylvia Martinez



Victory Field float wins first place

A Victory Field Correctional Academy float, entered in the Santa Rosa Round Up Parade, won first place in the "social and other non-commercial" category.

"Texas Youth are Tomorrow's Texans" was the theme of the Victory Field entry, which fit the theme of the parade: "Who's Going to Fill Their Shoes."

The massive boot-shaped float was constructed by Employee Wellness Committee members and volunteers led by Gay Rutherford, Tina Quick, Sandy Ray, Grant Smith and Scott Dickerson. Staff and cadets rode together on the float. The Employee Wellness Committee was awarded \$75 for their entry.

In addition to the float, the Victory Field Color Guard was present to lead the parade. They held their heads high, and it was evident that they were honored to lead the parade. ☼



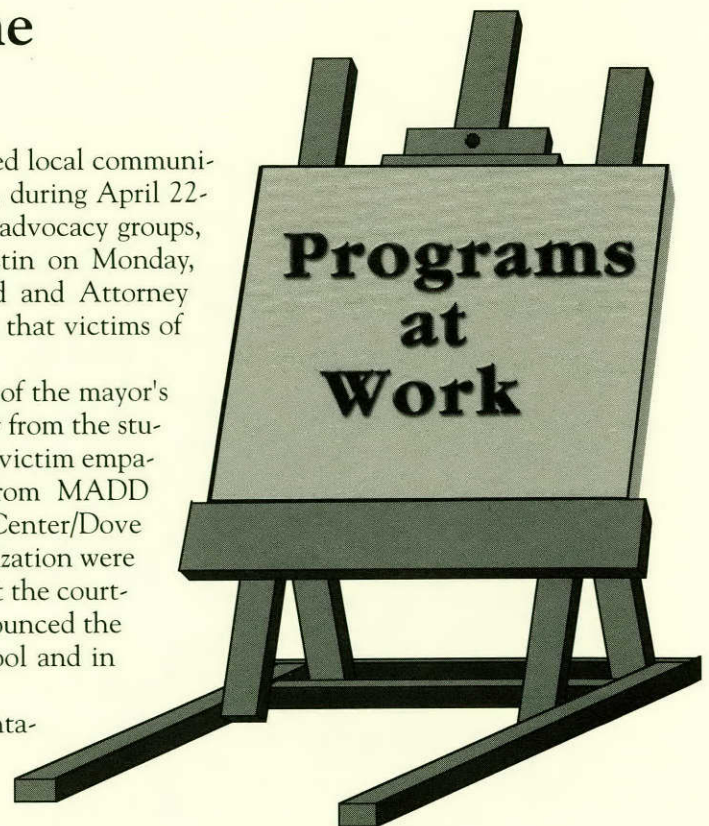
Victory Field Correctional Academy staff wave to the crowd as their float makes its way along the parade route during the 56th Annual Santa Rosa Round-up Parade.

TYC commemorates Crime Victims' Rights Week

Texas Youth Commission facilities across the state joined local communities in commemorating Crime Victims' Rights Week 2001, during April 22-28. Together with other government agencies and victim advocacy groups, our agency co-sponsored the opening celebration in Austin on Monday, March 23. Governor Rick Perry's proclamation was read and Attorney General John Cornyn spoke on the state's efforts to ensure that victims of crime receive all their rights under the law.

San Saba State School's program included the reading of the mayor's proclamation, a history of victims' rights, the winning entry from the student poetry contest, an original skit by students illustrating victim empathy and victims' rights. Remarks by representatives from MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), the San Saba Crisis Center/Dove Project, and the San Saba County Victim Assistance organization were also provided. Staff placed wreaths at local businesses and at the courthouse, white ribbons adorned trees while the marquee announced the special week. Throughout the week, activities at the school and in the community emphasized victims' rights.

The Giddings State School hosted victim impact presentations on Tuesday, with a total of 97 students attending nine presentations. The Community Advisory Council provided lunch for the visitors and donated \$500 to



Parents of Murdered Children to support the families and friends of those who have been killed by violence.

Vernon Mayor Kelly Couch issued a proclamation designating April 22-28 Crime Victims' Rights Week in Vernon. Victory Field held a Victim Impact Panel, the fourth panel presentation since the facility opened. The Community Advisory Council hosted an appreciation breakfast for the panelists. Superintendent Alan Walters was the guest speaker on a local radio station talk show and Victory Field hosted a Victim Impact presentation at the Wilbarger Auditorium. Members of the community were invited to attend and participate in an effort to raise victim awareness.

Youth at the McFadden Ranch prepared a brochure from the National Center for Victims of Crime for the information folders on "Family Day". Students also created banners illustrating victim issues for display throughout the facility.

Two TYC District Offices hosted their first victim impact presentations. Houston hosted youth from contract facilities and parole, volunteers, and the grandparent of a youth currently at the Corsicana State School. Dallas held presentations by victims of crime and by former gang members who have turned their lives around and are now working with a local gang intervention program.

TYC participated again in Austin's Annual SafePlace Walk benefiting the Austin Women's Shelter. Parole youth and TYC personnel donated over 50 hours by staffing the first water stand on the route. Several parole youth and their families, and staff from the Austin District Office and Central Office walked the 2.2-mile route. This year's donation of \$900 brings the total amount TYC staff and youth have donated during the past nine years to \$10,000.

At the Brownwood State School, a special bulletin board showcased Crime Victims' Rights Week. Staff and youth were encouraged to remember and support those who have been hurt by crime.

Youth and staff at the Jefferson County State School remembered victims of crime with a "Tree of Remembrance," on which youth placed ribbons to honor their victims. A candlelight vigil was held while youth read letters and poems expressing their apologies to their victims.

One youth said, "We are here to remember those we have hurt and to give back for the harm we have done. Only by recognizing and understanding the pain caused to our victims can we begin the journey to being positive members of society." ❁

Corsicana Challenge Course Program goes into action

The Challenge Course Program was initiated at the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center (CRTC) with funds received from a donor's will. A low-element challenge course and pavilion was built in the Fall of 2000, and eleven CRTC staff were certified as instructors for the course. Staff led participants in a variety of activities including icebreakers, games, initiatives and low elements.

The program has been integrated into Resocialization and Specialized Services for youth in the Emotionally Disturbed Treatment Program.

Youth and staff find the Challenge Course Program a fun way to process issues through experiential means. ❁

Submitted by Kimberly Fowler

“Get F.I.T.” in Corsicana

“Get F.I.T.” (Families Involved in Treatment) is the campaign slogan of the TYC Family Involvement Task Force. This campaign is in full swing at the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center (CRTC). In April the CRTC youth and staff had an Annual Resocialization Fair and Family Picnic. Four weeks prior to the event, youth completed special projects relating to their families.

Over sixty youth and ninety family members participated in the picnic. Festivities included decorating Easter eggs, horseshoes, sack races, frisbee toss and face painting, decorating Easter eggs and making cards for family members who were unable to attend the event. A large display highlighting the students' projects was presented at the picnic. Family members were able to visit informally with their child and facility staff.

Family seminars also began in April, designed to help families become involved in their child's treatment program. On the second Saturday of each month, the TYC Caseworkers conduct an ‘entrance seminar’ reviewing the basic rules expectations - the phase based privilege system and the Resocialization program with new families.

An ‘exit seminar’ is held for families of youth who are within 90 days of release from the Corsicana program. Caseworkers develop and present monthly seminars to families including the offense cycle, “from institution to home Resocialization - what is it”, and “parenting with discipline”. It is hoped that families will learn more about the TYC programs, become involved in the youth's treatment, and help youth make a successful transition to the community. ❁



Submitted by Kimberly Fowler

San Saba holds Sports Banquet

San Saba State School recently held its first annual sports banquet. Basketball team members selected the most valuable player, most improved player, and best all round player from among their peers. Winners were J. Smith, B. Reyes and C. Williams respectively. The track coaches selected C. William as the most valuable player of the team.

Recreation staff honored both the basketball and track teams with plaques of appreciation for their hard work and dedication to the department. The recreation staff were also awarded plaques by the team members in appreciation for their commitment to the youth and the sports program.

The basketball team competed in two public school tournaments and a total of 10 games with a season record of five wins and five losses. The track team competed in four public school track meets. The youth were able to practice their basketball skills at the local high school once a week.

Basketball and track help San Saba youth develop team-building skills while engaging in extracurricular activities. ❁

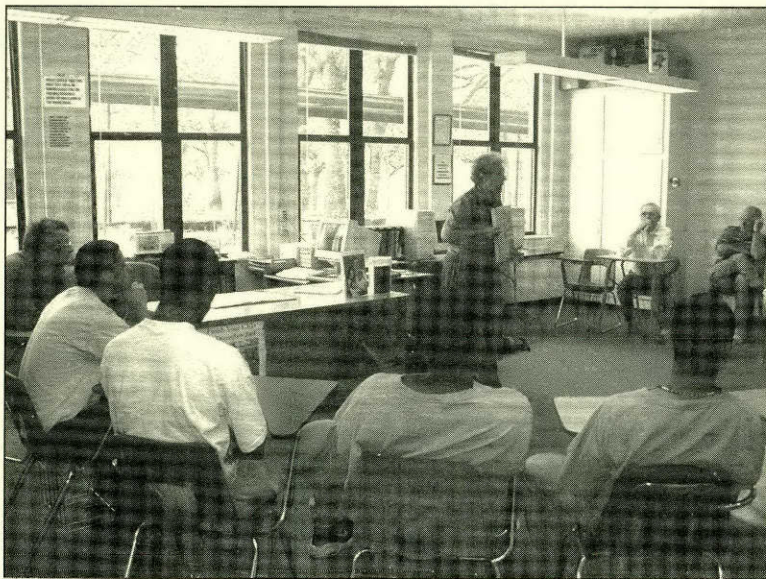
Submitted by Sharon White

Survivors urge students to choose right over wrong

Herbert and Emma Jo Snyder have criss-crossed the state visiting Texas Youth Commission facilities and telling their story of pain and loss of their son. In June, their audience was a group of boys at Gainesville State School.

Mr. Snyder stressed, "You all are here because you have chosen to be here by your actions. Some of you are here for petty crimes, while others are here for more serious crimes. Some of you are here longer than others, because you have extended your invitation. You choose to do right or to do wrong."

"In our case," he said, "the perpetrator chose to end the life of our son, father, husband, brother and friend forever."



Victim Impact Panel presenter, Emma Jo Snyder (standing), explains to the students at Gainesville State School how crime devastated her family.

The Snyders' son, Aytch, was murdered at age 30 by his brother-in-law, who suffered from a psychotic disorder. That tragic event nearly destroyed the Snyders. Eventually, in the painful months after their son's death, the Snyders came to forgive Aytch's murderer. They turned their grief into a mission, hoping that through their presentations of personal tragedy, other families can be saved from a similar loss. As victim impact panelists, they help TYC offenders develop empathy.

During the Gainesville program, the Snyders showed the boys pictures of Aytch to boys who were once his age. They recounted his childhood antics and accomplishments, his scraped knees, his wedding day, and the birth of his son and daughter.

Fidel F. Garcia, Coordinator of Volunteer Services and Victim Impact Panel Coordinator at Gainesville, said integrating victims into TYC programs provides victims the opportunity to tell their stories and gain increased control in their lives, while assisting youth in changing their attitudes and beliefs. Garcia said,

"Offenders need to show empathy for their victims and know that their actions have a domino effect on many, many people."

Emma Snyder ended the presentation by having the boys write the name of a loved one on a piece of paper. Then she asked, What if someone were to tell you right now that your loved one was buying groceries at a convenience store when two armed men came in demanding money. Mrs. Snyder then ripped the names into shreds. The pieces scattered on the floor.

"These are the lives torn apart, destroyed," Mrs. Snyder said. "It's your choice."

Gregory Hill, a 19-year-old student committed to TYC for assault, said, "When Mrs. Snyder let go of those torn papers it really got to me. Even though she hadn't called my loved one's name, I instantly felt the pain that they must have been going through," he said. "It has made me think before hurting someone. I think Victim Impact Panels should be held more often, because even though it might not help everyone, it will touch some of us."

Gainesville State School Caseworker Phillip Williford said, "The Victim Impact Panel has given students an opportunity to reflect on their victims, and the students involved have expressed a considerable amount of empathy. Also, in their reflections, students have come in touch with their own emotions and how they feel in victimizing others. This is good for them." ❁

Submitted by Fidel F. Garcia



DiAnne Craig, caseworker at Jefferson County State School, wrote this guest column in hopes of inspiring other employees to internalize the Resocialization concepts we teach our students.

Last November, Dr. Linda Reyes, TYC's Director of Rehabilitation Services, asked me to submit my 'success story'. After much thought, I decided why 'weight'? If you ever want to gain a full understanding of the TYC Resocialization program, try to apply

it personally to one of your own issues.

I accepted my job as a caseworker for Jefferson County State School (JCSS) in July 1997. I was hesitant to accept the job. I feared I couldn't handle it physically since I weighed close to 300 pounds. The biggest challenge in the beginning was to get through 'Handle with Care' training and walk to my dorm. Our campus covers thirty-three acres and for me back then, walking from the parking lot to my dorm was a huge challenge. I felt as if I had climbed Mt. Everest daily. I spent each day in a complete sweat, out of breath and exhausted.

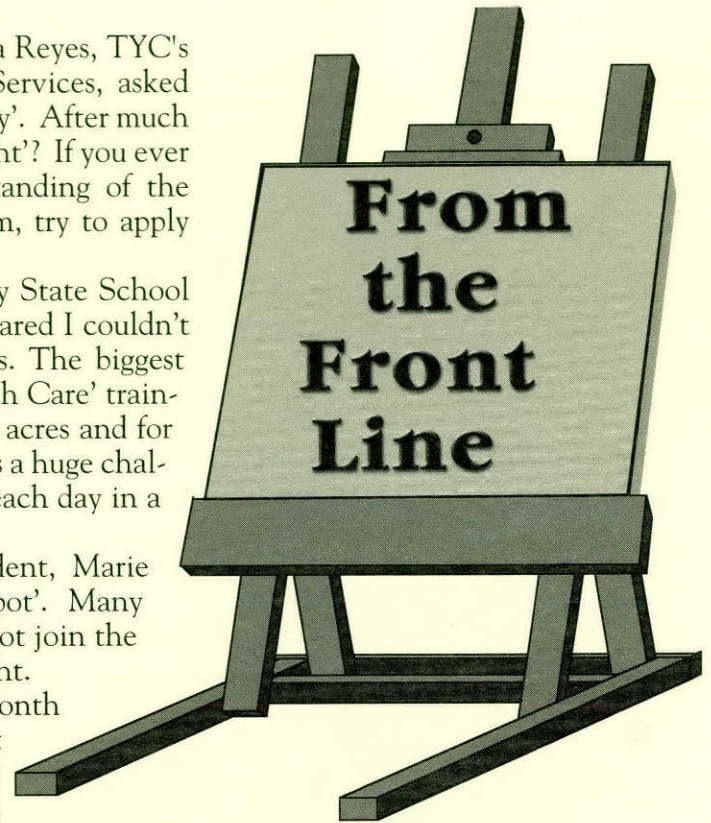
During my first year at JCSS, our then superintendent, Marie Murdoch, encouraged interested employees to join a 'fat pot'. Many employees who wanted to lose weight joined. I opted to not join the 'fat pot', even though I did decide it was time to lose weight.

I joined Weight Watchers in June 1998 for the millionth time. I was hesitant because I had been to Weight Watchers many times before and never experienced any long-term success. I would stay on the program for ten to twelve weeks but then quit. This time I followed the program. I could not believe how overweight I was. Twenty years before, I thought I needed to lose 15-20 pounds. That had been the beginning of my life long cycle of the 'yo-yo diet syndrome'. I lost weight on every diet I tried. However, as soon as I went off the diet, I regained the weight I'd lost, plus some. On June 16, 1999, I took my first step toward real personal change. I finally surrendered to the idea that 'quitting was not an option', it was a necessity.

My journey with this process has been interesting. First and foremost, God has been the biggest key to my success. I see how his loving guidance led me to all the people and places I needed in order to get me to the point where I was teachable. One of my favorite sayings is: "when the student is ready the teacher appears."

I have many teachers to thank and the TYC Resocialization program is at the top of my gratitude list. TYC has definitely been one of my teachers. After a year as a caseworker teaching the Resocialization program, I began to see how applying the concepts of Resocialization to my personal life could be beneficial with my weight loss efforts. Beginning as a phase one youth might, I thought about my own Basic Layout, what would mine be if I applied it to my relationship with food? "My name is DiAnne Craig, I am (none of your business) years old; I am from Beaumont, Texas, and I am responsible for..."

How had I personally used Thinking Errors related to food? How are



my early Life Story experiences and unmet needs related to food? And so on. Finally, one day while I was conducting a formal group session with the youth, I got it! I was able to see a way to apply these concepts to my own 'offensive behavior' with food. As I was teaching the youth, I could see my behavior patterns in all seven steps of the Offense Cycle. I had been in an offense cycle for over 20 years and the main person I was offending was me. I understood Empathy and I discovered the biggest piece of the puzzle was, "I can break this offense cycle with food."

For years my life revolved around my unhealthy use of food to comfort me. One day, at a local gas station while filling up my car, it dawned on me that 'food is fuel'. I became aware that my car did not leave the pump, wait 30 minutes and discover it needed fuel again. My car gets good gas mileage and can go a great distance on a single fill up. It has warning lights that alert me when it is low on fuel. Well, guess what? I have indicators too. I simply had fueled so often for fear of running on empty, or fueled just because, I never looked at my internal indicator lights. I once believed food was love, fun, connection and comfort. My relationship with food was unhealthy; I had come to rely on food for many of the wrong reasons.

I still enjoy food, but now I don't allow food to have the powerful voice it once had. I have learned to be a wise shopper when fueling my body today. I choose to fill up with premium, what I used before made me run sluggish. Food is fuel for me today. I 'resocialized' my relationship with food.

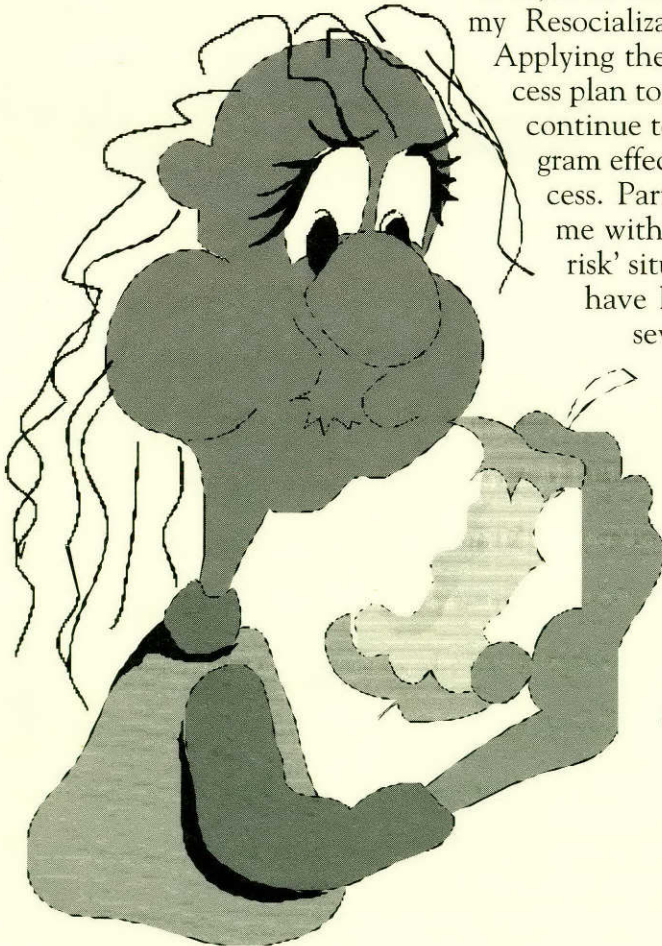
Well, as of now, I, DiAnne Craig, LCDC, CW, am on Phase 3.10 of my Resocialization program. I am working on my Success Plan.

Applying the Resocialization principles, I realize my need for a success plan to continue my progress. I monitor my daily Behavior and continue to focus on the self Discipline I need to practice the program effectively. I Work on personal changes to enhance my success. Participation weekly in Weight Watchers meetings helps me with new personal Values. I am aware that I will face 'high risk' situations for the rest of my life. So far, my Achievements have led me to a hundred-pound weight loss and to clothes seven sizes smaller. My personal weight goal is within

reach for the first time in my life. Initially my goal was to get to the 'suggested weight'; today my goal is to first practice what I teach. I believe had I not utilized the concepts of Resocialization, I would have simply given up in my attempts to lose weight.

So, if a youth tells you Resocialization doesn't work, let them know, "it works when you work it." I am living proof that our program can have dramatic results when it is applied.

P.S. I'll let you know when I get my exit with Special Services (goal) and make parole (maintenance)! 🌀



Eastern Service Area Family Involvement Coordinator gets Community Service Award

Carolyn Rogers, Family Involvement Coordinator in Houston, has been selected to receive the 2001 Community Service Award from the Houston Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. This award is given to those individuals or organizations that are making a significant contribution to the health and well being of families throughout the community.

The Association believes that Carolyn's work with the Texas Youth Commission provides vital support for incarcerated youth and their families. Her program assists with both family functioning and also with successful reintegration of youth into the community.

Carolyn truly helps families of adjudicated youth to maintain and build connections within the larger community. Carolyn received her award May 5 at the Houston Association for Marriage and Family Therapy annual dinner hosted at the Braeburn Country Club. ☼

Submitted by Denise Kennedy



T. C. 'Joe' Joseph congratulates Carolyn Rogers on receiving her recent award from the Houston Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

Cinco de Mayo celebrated at Hamilton State School

On May 29, the Hamilton Intercultural Awareness Committee (ICAC) hosted the second annual Cinco de Mayo talent show for local TYC staff, students, and volunteers. J.J. Ramirez, director of Save Our Streets Ministries (S.O.S.) in Bryan, was guest speaker for the festive event. S.O.S. is an outreach group that ministers to young people who are in need of spiritual guidance. Mr. Ramirez, who grew up 'on the streets', used his past involvement with gangs and drugs to enlighten and encourage audience members in developing their own positive vision for the future.

Hamilton students presented talents that included various singing acts and special readings and poems about the Cinco de Mayo holiday. After the cultural program concluded, the Hamilton ICAC treated all students that attended and participated in the event to nachos and drinks. ☼

Submitted by Nancy Jo Kuder



Former youth thanks Giddings staff

Giddings resident and long time employee of Giddings State School, Darrell Sanders remembered Larry as a 14-year-old youth who had little or no respect for authority. That is why it was such a surprise when over 20 years later, Larry showed his heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Sanders for helping him turn his life around.

In 1974 Larry was committed to the Texas Youth Council (which later

became the Texas Youth Commission). He was sent to Giddings State School because, as he puts it, "I was out of control and I wouldn't listen to the authorities in Bryan." Giddings State School, and especially a staff member named Darrell Sanders, got his attention. Darrell says he himself was raised to respect authority. The program at Giddings State School showed respect for others and also demanded respect back. He modeled this behavior every day to the youth at Giddings. Larry and the other students tested him, yet each time Sanders would be firm but fair. As the months went by, Larry began to respect authority and to show some real potential.

Today, Larry is a successful businessman and a responsible citizen. His work includes real estate, trucking, and car sales. He demonstrated his appreciation for Mr. Sanders recently by presenting him with a plaque inscribed:

"The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude. I thank you for taking the time from your life to make a difference in my life. Words say so little when someone has done so much. With sincere appreciation of your kindness, Your student, Larry."

Darrell Sanders was truly touched by this former student's expression of gratitude and said, "If you can help that one kid and you find out that all your efforts at trying to help someone counted for something, no one can take that away from you." ❁

Submitted by Bill Bradbury

Hamilton honored at Brazos Valley United Way luncheon

The United Way of the Brazos Valley held their annual campaign recognition luncheon on March 1, 2001. Non-profit agencies, groups and individuals throughout the community gathered to honor participants in the local campaign. Over 300 people gathered to celebrate United Way's surpassing its fund-raising goal last year by collecting more than \$1.2 million in contributions. As a result of the generous efforts of caring agencies and individuals in the Brazos Valley, almost 10,000 area residents benefited from United Way programs and almost 3,000 children were enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Representing Hamilton State School at the event were Dr. Delbert Price, Superintendent, Curtis Simmons, Assistant Superintendent, Debra Pace, Administrative Assistant, and Nancy Jo Kuder, Volunteer Coordinator. In recognition of their participation in the State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC), Hamilton was awarded a plaque as the 'State Agency With The Largest Dollar Increase' during the 2000 campaign. Nancy Jo Kuder was also awarded a plaque recognizing her as the 'State Agency Volunteer of the Year.' This award is given to the individual that has shown outstanding volunteer commitment and dedication to the SECC campaign.

Dr. Price applauded the efforts of the Hamilton staff and their efforts in the SECC Campaign. "Through participation in the campaign, Hamilton employees continue to display their investment in our caring community, and further TYC's commitment to the Bryan/College Station community." ❁

Submitted by Nancy Jo Kuder



Congratulations!

Helen George honored in Houston

Helen George, Quality Assurance Administrator in the Eastern Service Area, was honored by the Houston Independent School District during Black History Month for her work with youth throughout Houston.

Black History Month gives us an opportunity to emphasize accurate historical information and most importantly motivate all of our youth to understand that individuals of all races and ethnic groups can achieve, lead and make a difference. Helen George's efforts on behalf of TYC youth support these goals and provide an opportunity for the youth to see themselves in key roles. Helen George was presented her award during a celebration at the Hattie Mae White Administration Building.

Helen was also selected to receive the Houston City Wide Beauticians Inc. Leader's Award for her service to the community. She was presented this award in April at the Radisson Hotel in Houston. ❁

SEIP recognizes suggesters, evaluators

Gail Anderson (Central Office Human Resources Systems Manager) and Donna Bone (Central Office Juvenile Corrections Specialist) were recently honored as outstanding State Employee Incentive Program (SEIP) evaluators. Ms. Anderson and Ms. Bone received plaques and gifts from the Texas Incentive and Productivity Commission (TIPC) to recognize their contributions to this program. Evaluators play an important role in the SEIP by examining suggestions submitted by employees and making recommendations about whether or not to implement them. They may perform cost-benefit analysis and other tasks to make sure that each suggestion is completely and fairly evaluated.

Sandra Dreessen from the Austin Parole Office also received a cash award for over a thousand dollars for her money-saving idea.

Other employees who have recently received certificates of achievement for their suggestions are Paul Coghlan (Brownwood), Karen Collins Giles (Central Office), Garry Jistel (Hamilton), Phillip Little (Corsicana), Delicia Moore (Marlin), and Monique Robertson (Central Office).

In addition, Joshua Hord (Sheffield) won a weekly drawing to receive a prize from TIPC. Every Monday during the third quarter of fiscal year 2001, all state employees who had submitted eligible suggestions the previous week were entered in a drawing.

The incentive program was created to recognize and reward suggestions that improve working conditions, save money, or enhance quality or safety at state agencies. The Texas Incentive and Productivity Commission (TIPC)



Gail Anderson and Donna Bone receive certificates of appreciation for their role as Evaluators for the State Employee Incentive Program. Left to right, Asst. Deputy Director of Human Resources Eric Young, Gail Anderson, Asst. Deputy Director of Juvenile Corrections Chester Clay, Donna Bone, and Deputy Executive Director Dwight Harris.

administers the program for all state agencies. Since TYC began participating in the SEIP, employees have submitted over 300 suggestions. Suggestions can be submitted by using the standard SEIP form or online through TIPC's web page (<https://www.tipc.state.tx.us/seiponline/default.asp>).

TYC's SEIP Coordinator is A'Lann Truelock (Training Specialist). She can be contacted by e-mail, phone (512-340-2745), or fax (512-340-2702). She can also be contacted by mail at: Texas Youth Commission / Staff Development Department / 6400 Hwy 290 East, Suite 202, Austin, TX 78723. ☼

S.T.A.R. teams collaborate

The Brownwood State School and San Saba State School Special Tactics and Response (S.T.A.R.) Teams have pulled together in an effort to cross train on a monthly basis by alternating training locations at least once a month. This training effort provides versatile experience to each facility based on the different campus styles, populations, and needs of each facility. Located in the heart of Central Texas, the response time between the two facilities is approximately 60 minutes. These two campuses have realized the benefits of collaborating in their training efforts to assist one another in the event of riots, hostage situations, facility-wide disruptions, and any other major disturbances.

Together, the Brownwood State School and San Saba State School S.T.A.R. Teams are comprised of approximately 45 members who regularly engage in training in communications, formations, riot control, proper use of pepper spray, and physical conditioning. Both school teams also benefit from the shared knowledge of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Emergency Response Team whose members periodically share their knowledge and expertise.

On April 7, the Brownwood State School treated S.T.A.R. teams from West Texas State School, San Saba State School, and Giddings State School to a delicious fish fry. The event was organized to foster esprit de corps, as well as to express appreciation for the services these teams provide to the Texas Youth Commission.

Team members shared ideas, experiences, and tactics. Organized activities included competition in horseshoes, softball, and a tug-of-war. The West Texas State School team earned the tug-of-war championship. ☼

Victory Field steps out for MS

A great cause on a beautiful spring morning rallied the Victory Field Correctional Academy (VFCA) troops to lace up their shoes and join 37 other participants in the Annual Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Walk in Vernon recently.

Volunteers were pampered for the entire morning starting with a complimentary breakfast, followed by rest stops complete with free beverages and food and, for everyone that completed the walk, a massage therapy treatment session and plenty of pizza. Gift certificates and prizes were awarded to many participants as well.

There are more than a third of a million Americans living with MS, a chronic, often disabling disease of the cen-



Victory Walkers take pride in receiving both the Top Team Fundraiser and largest Team Participating awards during May's annual MS Walk. Standing, back row, left to right, are Lucinda Scott, Diane Gibson, Sherry Torrez, Cherie Roper. Front row, Gay Rutherford and Tina Quick hold their trophies.

tral nervous system. "The MS Walk was a fun way to get together with coworkers and raise crucial funds to help end the devastating effects of this illness," stated Sherry Cano-Torres, 'Victory Walkers' team organizer. The entire event raised over \$12,000 from sponsors and participants with VFCA's team bringing home the honors for Top Team Fundraiser as well as honors for the Largest Team Participating. ☼

Submitted by Becky Benson

Volunteer conference held in San Antonio

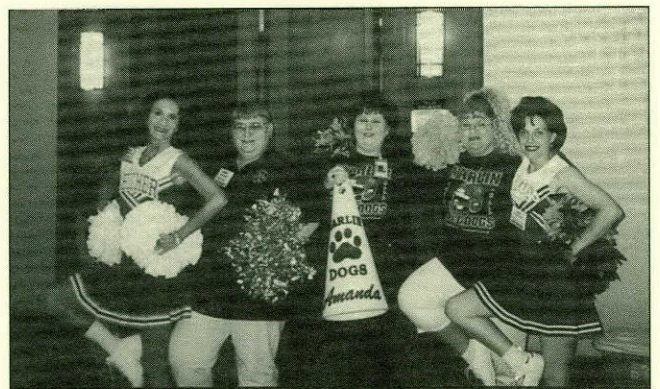
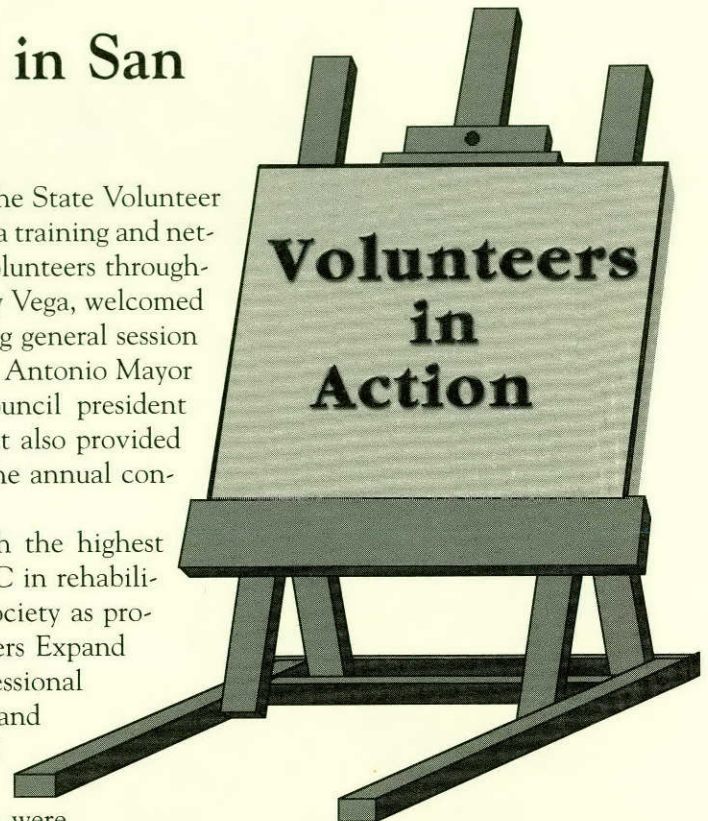
For seventeen years, the Texas Youth Commission and the State Volunteer Resource Council for Texas Youth have joined forces to host a training and networking conference designed especially for the dedicated volunteers throughout our agency. Administrator of Volunteer Services, Tammy Vega, welcomed more than 250 volunteers and employees during the opening general session at the San Antonio Airport Hilton Hotel on April 20. San Antonio Mayor Edward Garza, Board Member Pete Alfaro, volunteer council president Sandy Bergman, and state council vice-president Don Scott also provided welcoming comments to the largest group ever attending the annual conference.

The agency is committed to providing volunteers with the highest quality of continuing education as they work alongside TYC in rehabilitating youthful offenders and integrating them back into society as productive citizens. This year's conference, themed "Volunteers Expand Horizons", featured advanced workshops taught by professional trainers, panel presentations on religious group ministries and family involvement initiatives, and an interactive panel between parolees and volunteers.

Nationally acclaimed trainers, Jep Enck and Tom Lagana, were the keynote speakers throughout the conference. Jep Enck electrified the audience with his humor and high-energy message of the 'Power of We'. Tom Lagana inspired the large group of volunteers through his personal stories featured in *Chicken Soup for the Prisoner's Soul*. He autographed the limited edition copies of the new book during the conference, a fundraiser benefiting the State Council.

A celebration of the 2001 International Year of Volunteers was held throughout the weekend. The United Nations has declared this a year to promote volunteerism. All Americans have been challenged to recognize our shared traditions of volunteering, and to commit to volunteering as a unifying force to build strong communities. TYC volunteers celebrated their common vision with a kick-off pep rally led by volunteer managers Tanya Rosas and Angie Anastasio, and a country hoedown at Leon Springs Dance Hall.

The conference culminated with an Awards Celebration that recognized outstanding programs, administrators, and volunteers. Chester Clay, Assistant Deputy Executive Director for Juvenile Corrections, delivered a rousing address to the agency's volunteers. Several board members and executive staff joined



An enthusiastic cheerleading squad from Mart and Marlin led TYC volunteers in a kick-off celebration at the Statewide Volunteer Conference, held in April in San Antonio. Pictured from left are Dana Renschler, Mart Council member; Debbie Nowaski, Marlin employee-volunteer; Tanya Rosas, Marlin Volunteer Coordinator; Angel Dieterich, Marlin employee-volunteer; Angie Anastasio, Mart Volunteer Coordinator.



Members of the San Antonio Conference Planning Committee stop just long enough to smile for the camera. Pictured (L to R) are San Antonio Council members Mary Ann Rodriguez, Rosie Abreu, and Chairperson Sandy Bergman, along with volunteer Vanessa Rodriguez.

Executive Director Steve Robinson in presenting the statewide outstanding volunteer awards.

The Executive Committee of the State Volunteer Resource Council and the local Conference Planning Committee organized the conference. The SVRC executive committee is comprised of Eva Burford, President; Don Scott, Vice-President; David Williams, Treasurer; Joan Gibbs, Secretary; Irene Arthur, Member-at-Large; and Tammy Vega, Administrator of Volunteer Services for TYC. Volunteer manager Roberto Ruiz chaired the local planning committee. His committee members were Mary Ann Rodriguez, Lori Montelongo, Dora Rameriz-Itz, Janie Rios, Laurie Westfall, Sandy Bergman, Elizabeth Lee, Rosie Abreu, Janette Torres-Gloria, and Tracey Garza.

The McFadden Ranch volunteer council will host the 2002 Statewide Volunteer Conference in the Dallas-Grapevine area next Spring. ❁

Volunteers honored at statewide conference

Chester Clay, Assistant Deputy Executive Director for Juvenile Corrections, delivered a motivational message to more than 250 volunteers and employees at the Annual TYC Volunteer Awards Brunch at the San Antonio Airport Hilton in April. The three-day statewide volunteer conference was a celebration of the difference made by community volunteers in the lives of TYC students.

Volunteers involved in our agency - whether a mentor, tutor, council member, or chaplaincy volunteer - have a vital role in rehabilitating troubled kids and bringing out the potential that they hold inside. Outstanding volunteers and programs were recognized during the awards brunch.

Clay congratulated the top three institutions - Gainesville, Giddings, and Vernon - that have had exceptional levels of volunteer involvement and contributions during the last fiscal year. McFadden Ranch and the Eastern Service Area were recognized as the halfway house and parole area, respectively, that recorded the most volunteer service. Clay praised the 1,600 individuals and countless groups that have generously given 118,000 hours of volunteer time to our students last year. The agency recorded almost \$2 million in contributions of time and gifts during fiscal year 2000.

Executive Director Steve Robinson served as master-of-ceremonies for the Awards Brunch. Awards were presented to the most outstanding volunteer individuals and groups. ❁



Dr. Leonard Lawrence, TYC Board Chairman, recognizes the nominees for the Outstanding Individual Volunteer in an Institution Award

Gloria Helleson named Outstanding Individual Volunteer In an institution

TYC Board Chairman Dr. Leonard Lawrence awarded Gloria Helleson the 2001 Outstanding Individual Volunteer Award for institutions. As a New Life Prison Ministry regional director, Helleson was notified when TYC's McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility was being planned. She immediately began a campaign to recruit volunteers to work with the kids. This campaign included printing and distributing approximately 1,500 flyers, holding a public meeting to provide information about volunteering, training volunteers, and meeting with TYC staff to keep them up to date on her efforts.

This volunteer makes personalized birthday, get-well, and Christmas cards for the kids; provides them with gift bags; leads Bible studies at Marlin; initiated a youth pen-pals program; sponsors and hosts an annual Christmas party at Marlin; and continues to help recruit and train volunteers at other facilities.

She provides many supplies for volunteers and assists them in whatever way she can. She obtained, donated, and delivered numerous collections of educational books and other reading material to the libraries at four different TYC facilities. She mentors and tutors many youth, both in person and by correspondence. At Mart, she personally recruited the vast majority of the volunteers, both religious and non-religious.

Dr. Lawrence presented a certificate of appreciation to the other nominees for this award: Matt McGowen, Brownwood State School; Jim Jones, Corsicana Residential Treatment Center; Elouise Wooten, Crockett State School; James Bourg, Evins Regional Juvenile Center; Ronald Linam, Gainesville State School; Janis Jackson, Giddings State School; Kati Coile, Hamilton State School; Jewel Dorsey, Marlin Orientation & Assessment Unit; John Shero, San Saba State School; Heber Brantley, Victory Field Correctional Academy; Marissa Layton, West Texas State School. ❁



Gloria Helleson (far left) receives the Outstanding Individual Volunteer Award from Volunteer Manager Angie Anastasio (Mart). Executive Director Steve Robinson, Volunteer Manager Tanya Rosas (Marlin), and Gloria's husband, Jim Helleson, share the moment.

Phil Sanders selected Outstanding Individual Volunteer In a Community-based Program

Director of Juvenile Corrections Paula Morelock presented the Outstanding Individual Volunteer Award (in a Community-Based Program) to Phil Sanders. Sanders has been an active member of the Austin Area Community Advisory Council for fifteen years. He has served on numerous committees and has held several elected positions within the Council. He contributes much of his personal time dropping in to Turman Halfway House to deliver treats, say hello, or offer tutoring. He makes generous donations, most recently a barbecue pit and a stationary weight set for Turman House youth.

The volunteers who work with our students in halfway houses, on parole, and in contract programs often make the difference in their transition back to the community. This transition is always challenging, but volunteers help youth not only cope with it, but also become stronger and more confident in the process. Other outstanding individuals nominated for this award were: Veronica Perez, Ayres Halfway House; Roque De Avila, El Paso District Office; Cynthia Darthard, Houston Parole and QA; Roland Jones, McFadden Ranch; Mary Ann Rodriguez, San Antonio Parole; Sandy Bergman, San Antonio QA; and Roger Van Houtan, Willoughby House. ❁

Michelle Wasson selected Outstanding Employee-Volunteer

TYC is fortunate to have employees who are dedicated to our youth. Many of our staff feel that their job is more than a job - it's a "calling." Every day, they go the extra mile in devoting their personal time to tutoring and mentoring youth, participating in religious programs, and raising money to fund youth activities. All of these efforts help ensure that our students have what they need to succeed when released.

Nine employees were nominated for this year's Outstanding Employee Volunteer Award. Board Member Pete Alfaro presented a certificate of appreciation to these nominees: Michelle Wasson, Brownwood State School; Kelvin Powers, Corsicana Residential Treatment Center; Glenna Medina, Crockett State School; Elita Ellison, Evins Regional Juvenile Center; Anita Skinner, Gainesville State School; Stephanie McDermott, Giddings State School; Michele Jordan, Hamilton State School; Deborah Nowaski, Marlin Orientation & Assessment Unit; and Vicki Koen, McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility.

Alfaro announced Michelle Wasson as the 2001 TYC Outstanding Employee-Volunteer. Wasson began volunteering in 1993 and became employed with TYC two years later. She began her work through her church ministries, coordinating religious services at the Brownwood State School. During Christmas she volunteered as a stocking stuffer, distributed gifts, and organized dorm activities. Bob Contreras, Brownwood Principal, stated, "Ms. Wasson's driving motivation, and most notable quality, is her love for kids. She espouses an unshakeable belief that every child has innate goodness and that we just have to find it and pull it out. She knows that every student in our facility has made mistakes, but also understands that their lives can be turned around if given an opportunity. She has no doubt they can become better human beings and productive citizens if nurtured and shown how." ❁

Sonic Drive-In awarded Outstanding Volunteer Group in an Institution

The Sonic Drive-In has been working with the Giddings State School for 18 years, giving youth at the institution the chance to work in the community. Approximately 135 youth have earned a combined total of \$185,000 through their work with this business. The importance of this group's work extends far beyond the institution, however. Because of the job skills and confidence gained while working in the community, the kids are able to move easily into employment when they go to their halfway houses or back to their neighborhoods. They develop a sense of pride from holding down a legitimate job, earning money, and gaining knowledge.

In addition, this group has helped the Giddings Community Advisory Council many times throughout the 18 years. The Council often operates food booths at fairs to raise money to benefit TYC kids. This group gladly donates food trays, drinking cups, napkins, cooking equipment, and condiments. The volunteer group orders food at cost and donates freezer space for storage as needed. These donations allow the Council to save money on expenses and generate more profits to benefit the youth.

This group exemplifies the generosity and commitment that can help turn the lives of our youth around. Board Member Cathleen Herasimchuk presented an awards plaque to this Outstanding Volunteer Group.

Other groups nominated for this award were: K-Mart Distribution Center, serving Corsicana Residential Treatment Center; Wings of Texas, serving Gainesville State School; Foster Grandparent Program, serving Jefferson County State School; and Ovilla Road Baptist Church, serving Marlin Orientation & Assessment Unit. ❁

Carswell S.H.A.R.E. Program named Outstanding Volunteer Group In a community-based program

Christi Mallette, Administrator of Parole, presented the award for Outstanding Volunteer Group in a Community-Based Program to the Carswell S.H.A.R.E. Program of the Federal Medical Center. Through this unique program, female inmates from Carswell interact with young women at TYC's Willoughby Halfway House and share stories about their life experiences. The presenters serve as mentors to the girls in the hope that they will learn from their examples and make the effort necessary to turn their lives around.

S.H.A.R.E. stands for Sharing Hope About Recovery Experiences, and the Carswell inmates have done exactly that. They have helped the girls see that other alternatives exist and that they can begin to change the direction of their lives. One of the Willoughby House residents said about this program: "The S.H.A.R.E. presenters have helped me to understand and realize that I have a chance to make the right decisions to get my life together now and have a better future."

Every year, the difficult transition from TYC to the community is made easier for many kids because of volunteers. These groups provide encouragement and support in countless ways. Their care and generosity make the lives of TYC youth brighter and the work of staff easier. The other outstanding group nominated for this award was Junior League of Victoria serving the Victoria County Juvenile Services. ❁

Adopt-a-Group Bible Study selected the Outstanding Religious Volunteer Group

Director of Juvenile Corrections Marie Murdoch recognized 12 groups that were nominated for the Outstanding Religious Volunteer Group award. By demonstrating their faith in acts of care and compassion, these groups show youth other possibilities in life and help them begin to rejoin their communities.

The nominees for this award were: Christian Motorcycle Association, Brownwood State School; Westhill Church of Christ, Corsicana Residential Treatment Center; New Life Ministries, McLennan and Crockett; Epiphany of Texas, Gainesville State School; Living Word Fellowship Church, Giddings State School; New Life Aggies, Hamilton State School; Cathedral of Faith Baptist Church, Jefferson County State School; Buried Stones, Marlin Orientation & Assessment Unit; Chuck and Dana Renz, McFadden Ranch; Willing Workers of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Schaeffer House; Adopt-a-Group Bible Study Group, Victory Field Correctional Academy; and the Epinoza Family, West Texas State School

Murdoch named the Adopt-a-Group Bible Study Group as the Outstanding Religious Volunteer Group. This conglomeration of congregations demonstrates that great things can happen when churches work together. This group is made up of volunteers and pastors from twelve churches in Vernon. Their team leader is the Reverend Sterling Lentz of the Central Christian Church. Each church adopts at least one platoon of twenty-four cadets at Victory Field Correctional Academy. The church provides its adopted platoon with weekly Bible study, monthly birthday recognition,

individual encouragement, and prayer support. They also provide Christmas gifts and a home-cooked Christmas dinner each year.

This group has also made an important contribution by providing help for parents in need who wish to visit their sons. The churches make arrangements for motel rooms, transportation, and food for the parents when they visit. A pastor or volunteer often picks up a parent or parents at the motel, eats breakfast with them, and shuttles them back and forth to the facility during the weekend. Caseworkers at Victory Field know that they can refer parents in need of assistance to this group, and that such requests are never turned down. This group is a demonstration of the power of faith to make a difference in the lives of our youth. ❁

Steven Holloway awarded the Outstanding Religious Individual Volunteer

Administrator of Chaplaincy Services John Stutz awarded Steven Holloway the 2001 Outstanding Religious Individual Volunteer award. Holloway has been volunteering for more than six years at Crockett, Jefferson County, Giddings, and Houston. His experiences with the kids he met convinced him that they needed male role models, people they could look up to for assistance, guidance, friendship, and strength. He decided to design an after-care program to provide these things for newly released TYC youth.

The program he designed is called PACE, standing for Positive self-esteem, Academics, Character, and Employment. It is run by volunteers from his church and serves seven to 10 TYC youth at a time, selected by a Houston Parole Officer. Each youth is assigned a mentor, or "coach," and they attend fifteen weeks of two-hour sessions on such topics as money management, employment, and personal development.

To put this program in place, this outstanding volunteer had to meet with Parole Supervisors and Parole Officers, recruit volunteers to serve as coaches and presenters, and provide training for all the volunteers in Resocialization and mentoring. He updates the Parole Officers on the youth's progress, the content of the weekly sessions, how many parents attended, and time spent by each mentor for the month. In the meantime, he continues to visit youth at Giddings State School and hold down a full-time job.

Other nominees for this award have shown an incredible devotion to TYC youth and have helped them develop a sense of spirituality and community. Through their efforts, many of our youth have found the courage to grow and change in ways they never thought possible.

A certificate of appreciation was presented to nominees: Jean Harr, Brownwood State School; Lynn Berry, Corsicana Residential Treatment Center; Reverend Mark Simien, Crockett State School; Mercedes Salinas, Evins Regional Juvenile Center; Phillip Grimes, Gainesville State School; Betsy Goodnight, Giddings State School; Jon Ewton, Hamilton State School; Floyd Durbin, Jefferson County State School; Carlos Gonzales, Marlin Orientation & Assessment Unit; Lee Scott, McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility; Doug Suggs, San Saba State School; Philip Hanna, Victory Field Correctional Academy; Dennis Bowers, West Texas State School. ❁

Nellie Tristan selected for 2001 Spirit Award

Deputy Executive Director Dwight Harris named Nellie Tristan as the recipient of the 2001 Spirit Award. This award was first presented last year to recognize our agency's administrators and other employees who have seen the value of volunteer involvement and recognize the tremendous impact that an individual can have in the life of a troubled young person. The award seeks to distinguish those who open the doors to their facilities and departments and break down the barriers to volunteer involvement. These individuals are not employee-volunteers, but rather go beyond expectations to promote volunteer involvement within the TYC program.

Nellie Tristan is a Program Administrator at Evins Regional Juvenile Center. In this position, she serves as a strong advocate for youth and volunteers, offering training, leadership, and encouragement to integrate volunteers into the program. She ensures that volunteers are given proper direction and job assignments, and she personally recruits staff to serve as volunteers as well.

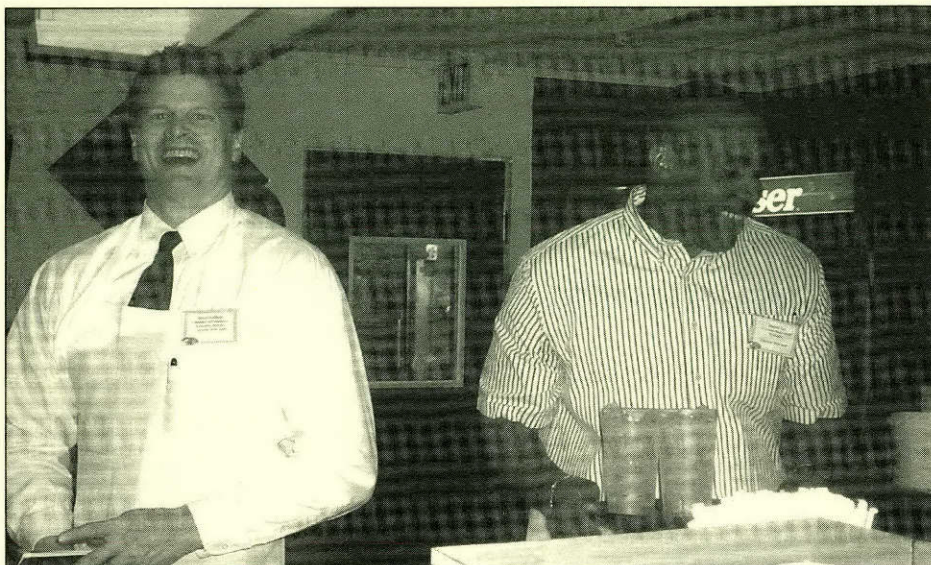
Her assistance to college interns doing their field practicum at Evins has helped make it possible for them to offer specialized classes to the kids on such topics as anger management and parenting skills. She recruits volunteers from churches and community groups to serve as mentors, and to provide Bible study and religious programs at Evins.

Her dedication has also extended to making a change in the GED graduation ceremonies. These ceremonies were previously held in a partially covered outdoor gymnasium, which was subject to inclement weather. She recommended that the ceremony be held instead in the cafeteria, which she then decorated with table linens and flowers for a dignified atmosphere. She also recruited staff to attend and participate, and some of them brought extra refreshments. The event was transformed because of her leadership. She has also recently finalized plans to start a "fatherhood" program, to help youth learn how to be responsible, caring fathers. She recruited a staff member to volunteer on Saturdays to conduct the program.

Nine other nominees were recognized because of their efforts to promote volunteerism, integrate volunteers within TYC programs, educate and recognize volunteers, and make a difference in the overall volunteer programs where they work. A certificate of appreciation was presented to: Penny Riggs, Brownwood State School; Laura Cohen, Corsicana Residential Treatment Center; Johnny Hellums, Crockett State School; Elizabeth 'Lisa' Compean, El Paso District Office; Tanya Iselt, Giddings State School; Charlotte Shanks, Marlin Orientation & Assessment Unit; John Hopkins, McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility; James Griffin, Victory Field Correctional Academy; and Sheila Wilson, Willoughby House. ❁



The Corsicana Residential Treatment Center held its first community 'Adopt a Highway' clean up in February. Council chairman Jim Jones initiated the project. Pictured left to right, Director of Clinical Services Dr. Philip Taft; Business Manager Robert Whitecotton; Paul Taft, volunteer; Superintendent Dr. Don Brantley; and (kneeling) Jim Jones. To the right of the sign is Corsicana student Frank Salazar; Placement Coordinator Brad Richardson; and Assistant Superintendent Pedro Cohen. Staff, volunteers and students of the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center clean the stretch of highway as a community service project.



Corsicana/Navarro County Chamber of Commerce Director Daryl Schliem, left, and Corsicana High School Principal, Danzell Lee, prepare drinks as they wait tables for the Corsicana RTC Community Advisory Council Celebrity Wait Staff fund-raiser.

Celebrity wait staff bring in over \$1,000 for Corsicana council

Seventeen Corsicana 'celebrities' donned aprons, grabbed menus and silverware, and pounded the floors of Italian Village Restaurant this spring to raise money for the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center Community Advisory Council.

Under the guidance of council members Hank Sturma and Dyetra Limbrick, the four-hour stint of attending to every need of the customers went smoothly and netted over \$1,000 for the programs for youth in the CRTC. Limbrick stated, "We use the funds to assist the students and their families

with needs."

Superintendent Dr. Don Brantley and Assistant Superintendent Pedro Cohen were two of the celebrity waiters. Other celebrity wait staff included city and county officials, and representatives from Navarro College, KAND Radio & Northland Cable TV, the Sheriff's Office, Corsicana Daily Sun, Chamber of Commerce, local police departments, and Texas A & M. ☼

Submitted by Lucy Humbert



Texas Youth Commission Executive Director, Steve Robinson, praises the efforts of volunteers during the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

Corsicana holds 18th annual volunteer banquet

For the eighteenth year, the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center honored volunteers during a banquet celebration attended by more than 100 volunteers, staff and students. TYC Executive Director Steve Robinson provided the keynote address, stating, "Volunteers are crucial in the success of the students at CRTC. The real gift is time."

Tammy Vega, Administrator of Volunteer Services, recognized the 2001 Corsicana outstanding volunteers. Awards were presented to Jim Jones, Outstanding Individual

Volunteer; Kmart Distribution Center, Outstanding Volunteer Group; Lynn Berry, Outstanding Religious Individual Volunteer; Westhill Church of Christ, Outstanding Religious Volunteer Group; and Laura Cohen, Spirit Award.

Tenure awards were presented to Lynn Berry and Mary Rozelle, each earning 1000-hour pins; and Wanda Eckeberger, Sylvia Bonin, Gretchen London and Kelly Berry, each earning 500-hour pins. ❁

Submitted by Lucy Humbert

Halfway house and parole unite to clean up Corpus Christi

On Saturday May 19, 2001, the Corpus Christi Volunteer Council members, York House, Corpus Christi Parole, staff, and youth participated in the Beach to Bay Relay Marathon clean up project. With 8,000 participants, the 26th annual Marathon was the largest in Corpus Christi history, attracting people not only from around the state but also Canada and Mexico.

A total of 14 youth, seven staff, and two volunteers spent the day cleaning and emptying trash cans around the finish line, amphitheater, and where sponsors had tents set up for the runners. As an incentive, the Corpus Christi Runner's Club (sponsoring organization) donated \$350 to the Volunteer Council. This was \$50 more than promised due to the excellent job done by the youth.

The race director was so impressed by the youth's efforts and hard work that he requested a commitment for next year's participation (which they agreed upon). The youth and staff had such a good time that there is even talk of forming a team to compete in the 27th annual marathon, in which the Volunteer Council stated they would sponsor. ❁

Submitted by Michelle Pruneda and John Gravell

Nebraska spring breakers visit Evins

Contrary to popular belief, not all college kids spend spring break partying on the beach. Twenty-seven students from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln spent part of their spring break tutoring students at the Evins Regional Juvenile Center.

The students were part of an 'Alternative Spring Break' program, which emphasizes community service. Carolyn Nolte, from the University's Student Involvement office, coordinated the visit. After a campus tour and orientation, the visitors spent two days helping youth in the classroom.

Feedback from the University students was all positive. Some of them were even asking about career opportunities in TYC. They added that they found out about Evins and TYC via the internet and were able to research the agency before their trip. They also spent time on a construction site, building homes for low-income residents in the area. ❁

Submitted by Raul Arredondo

Volunteers honored at San Saba banquet

The San Saba State School gym was the setting for the school's Annual Volunteer Recognition dinner on April 24th.

Volunteers enjoyed a Mexican meal prepared by ARAMARK and served by San Saba State School youth. Special guests for the evening were Dwight Harris, TYC Deputy Executive Director, and Tammy Vega, TYC Chief of Volunteer Services.

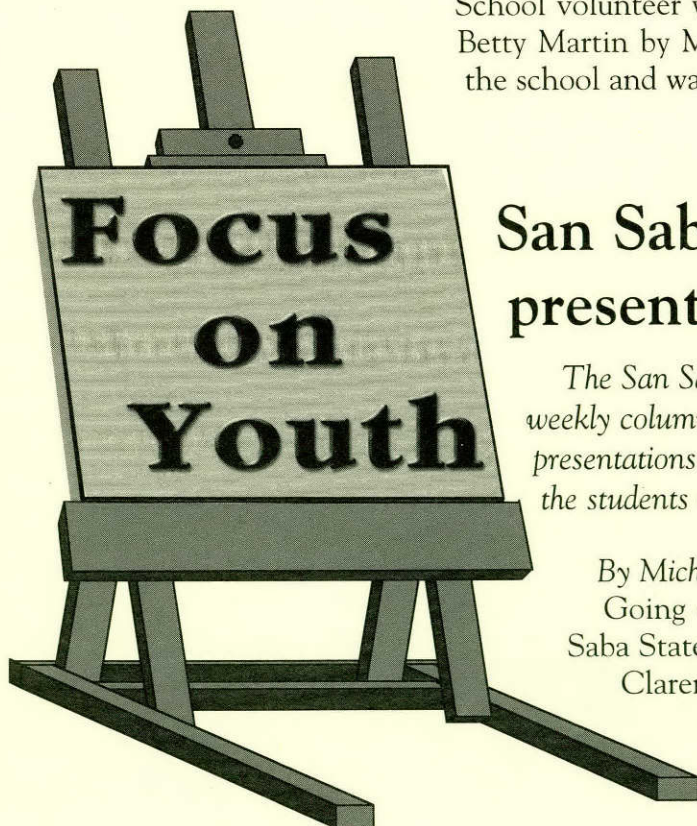
Entertainment for the evening was provided by the wonderful voices of Angela Addkisson and Gabe Johnson.

Mr. Harris read a letter of congratulations from the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, and then added his own words of appreciation. Guest speaker for the evening was Tammy Vega. She shared with the group the impact volunteers are making in the lives of the youth served at TYC facilities across the state. She also added her accolades to the group for what they do at San Saba.

Mr. Harris and Lydia Barnard, San Saba State School Superintendent, presented each volunteer a Certificate of Appreciation. Special recognition plaques were presented to John Shero, Outstanding Individual Volunteer Of The Year, Doug Suggs, Outstanding Religious Volunteer Of The Year, Cherokee Church of Christ, Outstanding Religious Group Of The Year, and Mary McLin, Outstanding Volunteer Employee Of The Year.

This year, a special volunteer award, The Wanda Vick Memorial Volunteer Award was begun. Wand Vick was a long time San Saba State School volunteer who passed away last year. The award was presented to Betty Martin by Ms. Vick's granddaughter, Natalie Reeves, who works at the school and was instrumental in convincing Ms. Vick to volunteer. ☼

Submitted by Dagmar Potet



San Saba RIO-Y Toastmasters give presentation in community

The San Saba RIO-Y Toastmasters have been busy! In addition to a weekly column in the San Saba Star newspaper, they have started giving presentations to local youth groups. Here is an article written by two of the students who went off-campus for such a presentation:

By Michael White and Edgar Gamez

Going off campus is such a privilege for the youth at the San Saba State School. This past week Edgar Gamez, Michael White, Clarence Scott and Gerald Jackson were able to pay a visit to one of the many productive churches in San Saba, the Pecan Grove Baptist Church.

When we first arrived we were nervous; we had but-

terflies in our stomachs and we didn't know what to expect. These feelings quickly passed because the friendly people there gave us a warm welcome. We hit it off right from the start.

Who would have ever thought that coming from the environments that we did, we would actually face a day in our lives when we would stand up in front of an audience and give them our thoughts on ways to change their own lives? We were also able to make connections from our past life experiences and actually turn it around to help another person with their personal struggles in life.

Being able to express our past experiences is not easy for most people because some of it is embarrassing and shameful. It brings back old memories that hurt and remind you of the pain you experienced. We have begun to overcome these obstacles by facing them. It's not always easy, but we can use our past to help others learn from our mistakes.

Prevention is better than cure. We want to stop and prevent others from coming to places like this. This is our primary objective. While we were there we were able to experience and realize that we are not the only ones who feel like giving up at times. We talked to a young lady who expressed the fact that she felt like giving up sometimes because of the lack of attendance at her Christian youth group at school. We were able to provide her with different ideas and a broader perspective on how she could get more youth involved. We learned from her and the rest of the group that we must all stand firm in our beliefs and always have faith in our higher power. We were able to learn from each other that we must continuously believe in ourselves and in our dreams.

This was one of the best experiences in our lives because they not only believed in us; they also trusted us and cared. They helped us build our self-esteem and confidence.

Life is not easy. One of the best ideas they gave us was to find a good church and supportive friends when we are released. This will help us with our hard times.

Along with their kind hospitality, we also enjoyed the fried chicken. We don't eat 'real food' everyday, so we are grateful for everything they did for us. A big thank you goes out to the kind people at Pecan Grove Baptist Church and the community for allowing us to work with you. ☀



Edgar gives a speech at the San Saba Gavel Club meeting.

Crockett youth help local elementary school

Since Crockett Elementary School was built in the early 1960s, they've had the same playground equipment. Recently, the Crockett PTA decided to raise funds in order to purchase new equipment.

Johnny Hellums, Crockett State School's wood-shop teacher, was approached by one of the PTA members about donating a wooden porch swing for an auction. Without hesitation, Hellums and the students went to work on this community project, producing a large swing that brought over seven hundred dollars at the auction.

Thanks to the efforts of Mr. Hellums and his class, it was possible to raise the funds in half the time expected. When the elementary students returned from spring break, the children wore big smiles as they noticed the newly installed equipment. ☼

Submitted by Patricia Wyman

Winning season for Evins Diamondbacks

The Evins Regional Juvenile Center Youth Baseball team, the Evins Diamondbacks, ended a successful spring season. Winning a first place trophy at a baseball tournament held in La Feria, TX, highlighted the season.

The Evins Volunteer Council provided financial support by paying for umpire and tournament fees, and also by purchasing some baseball equipment.

Coached by Recreation Director Javier Medina and staff, Michael Balderas, Jose Castellanos, Gregg Ontiveros, and Victor Perez, the youth competed against area high school teams. The Diamondbacks competed on a junior varsity level; however, some games were played against varsity teams. These teams provided tough competition since some were ranked on a state level. Aside from winning the tournament, the Diamondbacks ended the season with 7 wins and 5 losses.

This success is laudable, but coaches believe that a sport extends beyond the win and loss column. Castellanos commented: "Yes, many times with lumps in our throats and tears in our eyes, upon their release we wonder what lies



Under the direction of Instructor Robert Flores, Evins Regional Juvenile Center students spread concrete on a sidewalk as part of a building trades construction project. The finished sidewalk connected an area from the infirmary to the cafeteria. The project is one of several scheduled this year. Most notably, the students will be building frame homes for low-income families in the area.

ahead for them. Did we teach them something? Did they learn responsibility or appreciation for what they lost or have?"

As if someone had heard him, several weeks later, Castellanos got a reply. A former player promised staff that he would go to the Catholic Shrine of the Virgin of San Juan, located in San Juan, TX, to pray and give thanks for his release. Castellanos added, "I did not think anything of it at that time. But, then, one morning, I went to pray at the Shrine myself. I felt an urge to go into the 'Miracle Room'. There I noticed a photo that had been left at the prayer altar. The photo was of the former young player taken after the team won the Championship trophy in La Feria. It was signed with his name and the inscription, 'Evins Diamondbacks -Number 11'." ❁

Submitted by Raul Arredondo

Galveston youth make a difference

TYC youth are involved in several Galveston County community service projects throughout the island and in the mainland. Every Friday, TYC youth can be seen at the Texas City Dike and West Beach of Galveston, picking up a multitude of trash left behind by the many tourists that visit the island. Students also assist in the Barkus and Meoux parade held yearly during Mardi Gras. It benefits the Animal Shelter and Adoption Center of Galveston Island.

In addition to participating in community service projects, TYC students make quarterly presentations to college students majoring in criminal justice at the College of the Mainland. As an expression of appreciation, Associate Judge Suzanne Radcliffe wrote the students a letter thanking them for their honesty and frankness in sharing their stories and personal involvement within the juvenile justice system.

The TYC youth who hold jobs in Galveston County have made special contributions to the community as well: the youth have collected fans, blankets, Easter baskets, and canned food for the needy. Not only are TYC youth making a difference at the community level, they are learning to help others as individuals and are working to create a positive image of TYC and themselves. ❁

Submitted by Jennifer Stranz

Giddings wins state track championship

On May 4th and 5th, the Giddings State School track team, coached by Sandy Brown and Lester Ward, competed in the State Track Meet in Waco sponsored by the Texas Association of Parochial and Private Schools (TAPPS). The track team accumulated enough points to place first with a score of 110 points. In contrast, second place was 62 points.

Coach Brown commented that, "It always seems like the students' performance is directly related to the number of staff and volunteers that attend the meets. You can't say enough about the way they supported and

encouraged our students throughout the season.”

For the first time in the history of the Giddings State School, a female student placed first in the 300-meter hurdles at the State TAPPS Track Meet. This is the 3rd State Championship for Giddings track team and a proud moment for staff and the 13 students who participated. ❁

Submitted by Sharon Sanchez & Bill Bradbury

Houston youth honored for success

Thirty-three teenagers were honored May 10 for their achievements in the face of adversity and for turning their backs on crime. H-E-B Grocery Company generously underwrote the cost of the 9th Annual Youth Awards Banquet that was sponsored by the Texas Youth Commission's Houston Community Volunteer Youth Council. The event recognized TYC youth in Houston that were making remarkable progress after a history of juvenile crime

The banquet recognized the educational achievements and the positive 'can-do-attitudes' among select TYC youth from Harris County. The honorees are continuing to stay out of trouble, are staying in school and are making 3.0 grade point averages or higher.

“These kids in Houston exemplify what we're trying to achieve with all the young people that are sent to us each year,” said TYC's Executive Director Steve Robinson. “At the Texas Youth Commission, we deal with kids who are not successful day in and day out. When you find young people like these in Houston who are out in the community, involved in productive activities and who are achieving despite all odds, it's important to recognize that achievement,” said Robinson, who spoke at the event.

Dr. Bennie Lambert of North Harris County Community College served as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. William D. Workcuff, Jr., and Mrs. Bessie Orr Williams provided entertainment.

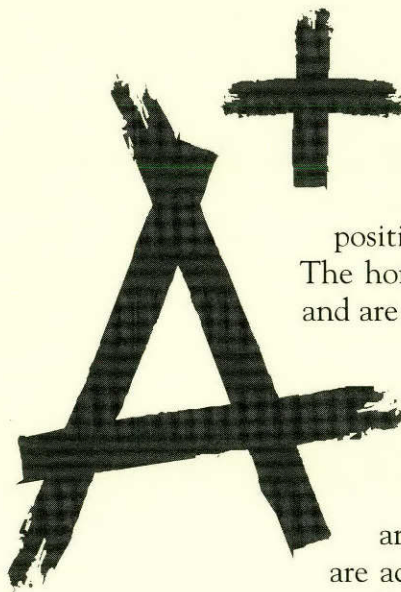
Special guests from TYC's Central Office in addition to Steve Robinson included Paula Morelock, Director of Juvenile Corrections; Dr. Deborah Nance, Superintendent of Education; Rodger Wiley, Educational Liaison Coordinator; and Christi Mallette, Parole Administrator. Also in attendance were Educational Liaisons Clyde McClatchey from the Northern Area, and Max Schwarz and Edna Martinez from the Southern Service Area. ❁

Submitted by Ada Tasso

Local 'Red Raiders' Stay the Course

Students at San Saba State School, a.k.a. local “Texas Tech Red Raiders,” continue to successfully complete college courses. Students who meet certain criteria may enroll in “dual-credit” college courses that are offered through Texas Tech University.

Course participation is done by correspondence and allows the students to earn high school credits while earning three credit hours of college cred-



it. The courses are freshman level college courses. Students may enroll in English IV, U.S. History, World History, Government, Economics, and Algebra II. The courses are self-paced, but students must complete the course work within five months and are allowed an additional month to prepare and complete the final examination.

In the 2000-2001 school year, twelve students were enrolled and successfully completed thirteen courses. They earned 4 A's, 4 B's, and 5 C's. Two of the successful "Red Raiders" have expressed interest in attending Texas Tech University. Others plan to attend a variety of community colleges and then transfer to a senior college to complete their degrees. The teachers and staff wish them well in their endeavors and look forward to receiving some graduation invitations in the future. ☉

Submitted by Dagmar Poteet

May brings marching madness to San Saba

'Left! Right! Left!' was the call as youth at San Saba State School competed in a marching contest on May 4th.

Each dorm prepared a special march that they presented during the contest. They marched in lines, in circles, forward and backward, side-ways and back again as they displayed their skills and precision.

Contest judges were Fred Chavez, School Liaison Officer, SSG Donald Abbott, SFC Michael Tomaszewicz, and 1st Lt. Larry Emmer from Fort Hood, as well as Sharon White, San Saba State School Recreational Program Manager.

Each dorm was judged on marching commands and stationary drills, creativity and originality of the march, and presentation.

Dorm 8 was the victor and was rewarded with a pizza party. The Dorm 8 champions also performed their drill at the school's graduation ceremony later in May. ☉

Submitted by Dagmar Poteet

Record number of San Saba diplomas awarded

Graduation exercises were held for 22 high school graduates and 63 GED recipients on May 11th in the pavilion at San Saba State School. This was a record number of high school graduates for San Saba. This year's class motto is, "Although our paths may lead us in different directions, our spirit and legacy will walk on forever."

Mike Moses, who is the head basketball coach at St. Edward's University, Austin, was the keynote speaker. Presenting diplomas were Lydia Barnard, Superintendent of San Saba State School, Dr. Deborah Nance, TYC Superintendent of Education, and Lisa Pasholk, Principal at the school.

Several students received special awards. The Superintendent's Award went to Jose Rodriguez. Robert Blaylock received the Principal's Award

and Wesley Lucas earned the GED Honor Award for the highest GED score.

The San Saba State School choir directed by Ms. Tooter Jacobs sang "the Star Spangled Banner" and "Lean On Me". Richard Hashaway and Ms. Jacobs were featured soloists.

Parents and guests enjoyed a reception following the ceremony and graduates had the opportunity to take formal graduation pictures.

Central Office guests included Steve Robinson, Dr. Deborah Nance and Billie Flippen. Nan Barker coordinated the program. ☀

Submitted by Carole Robb

San Saba youth places in anti-gang poster contest

The Texas School Safety Center and the Texas Gang Investigators Association held their first annual Anti-Gang Poster Contest. Out of 503 poster entries, San Saba State School student Randu G. placed third and won a \$100 savings bond. Savings bonds valued at \$500, \$250, and \$100 were awarded to the winners.

Thirteen San Saba State School youth participated in the contest. Four students placed in the Senior Division. The students were able to create any type of poster that promoted anti-gang activities. This opportunity gave students the chance to creatively express their views on gangs and to impact others through their work.

The posters of the students who participated were displayed in the North Central Gallery of the Capitol in Austin, where experts and elected officials judged them. Winners were announced in May. ☀

Students honored by Rotary Club

Nineteen students from San Saba State School were honored for their academic achievements at a luncheon hosted by the San Saba Rotary Club at the school pavilion in May.

The students had received 4 credits in one school year with an average of 90 or above. Another student, Billy Rodriguez, was honored for earning 10 credits in one year while maintaining an 87 grade average.

Dustin Baum, one of the honor students, gave a very moving speech entitled "Shoot for the Moon." The students, teachers and guests enjoyed barbecue, baked potatoes, salad, rolls and chocolate cake provided by members of the Rotary Club. ☀

Submitted by Carole Robb

Brownwood track sets the pace

Brownwood State School's 10-member track team, the 'Cougars,' began its season with only three returning team members. Throughout the season, the team overcame various injuries and endured unusually cold weather at every meet they attended. However, team members did

not let such minor adversities prevent them from having a successful season.

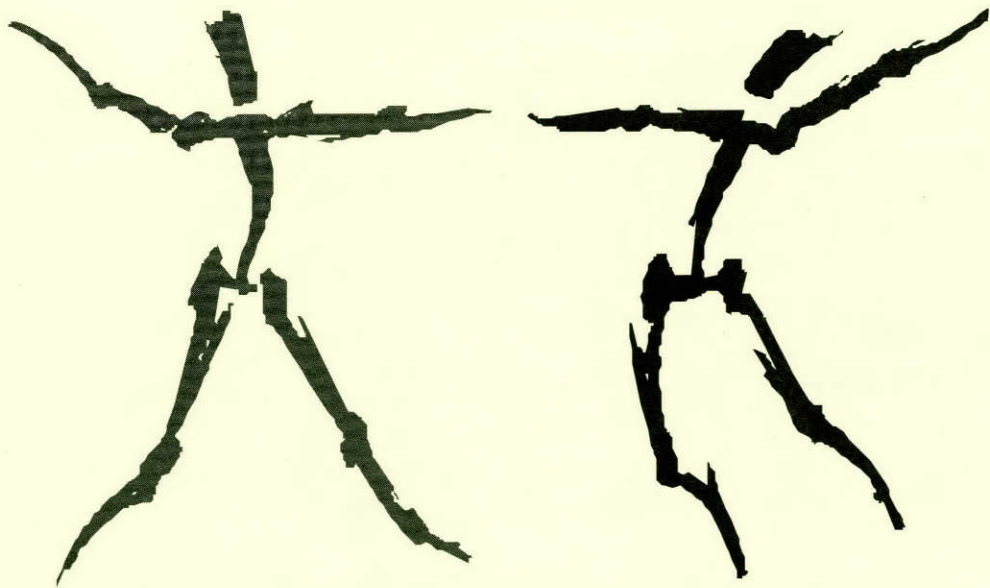
Coached by Recreation Supervisors Michael Luckey and Jackie Galloway and Recreation Director Kimberly Roberson, the track team completed the season by earning 67 medals and seven plaques. They also placed first in two of the five meets attended.

Of note, was the best mile relay of 3 minutes, 34 seconds, and the sprint relay team that finished with a best time of 43.8 seconds. Josh Cameron, who ran the 2-mile race, placed first in three meets. Josh also recorded a 2 minute, 28 second time in the 800-meter race. He was undefeated in this event throughout the season.

This season's team captains were Tim Johnson and Ivan Reed. Coach Luckey stated, "These two were the leaders. They pushed and led the team to success. They led by example at the track meets. This showed in their times in the sprint relay, 100 meters, 200 meters, and mile relay." The sprint relay team finished the season with three championship plaques and finished second at two other meets.

"When the Brownwood State School Cougars stepped off the vans, other schools were in awe - not only because of their presence, but also because of the spirit of teamwork that this team exuded," said Coach Luckey. "They displayed competitiveness both on and off the track by preparing themselves to exhibit their skills. This group of young men is a success not only on the track - but in life." ❁

Submitted by Melissa White



Austin youth inspire dance production

Last year, a dance company called RealmDanceProject began work with Texas Youth Commission's Parole Office to produce an interpretative dance. The dance company members became TYC volunteers, and began to meet with Austin District Parole staff to learn about TYC. They met with parolees to learn their life stories and teach those youth what it takes to put together a production, including theater warm ups, technical stage design and dance moves.

This project was intended to be a learning experience for the TYC youth, but the dancers also learned about the youth and their rehabilitation process. They realized how skeptical the youth can be of adults, and how much more needs to be done for these youth.

The youth learned that a theatrical production is not a simple project. Sadly, none of the TYC youth participated in the final production. The youth's experience taught them that it is difficult to be on stage and that an outgoing personality does not always provide one with confidence. Overall, both the youth and the dancers

took new knowledge away from this experience.

During several workshops with seven parolees and parole staff, the RealmDanceProject finally developed 'on the Outside'. The interpretative dance moves reflect-



Austin Parole youth helped RealmDanceProject develop an interpretative dance production and learned a lot in the process.

ed the youths' life stories through dance numbers such as 'Frontin', 'Trouble', 'In Deep', 'Cycles' and 'This Time'. Each dance was reflective of different times in one of our youth's lives and how they are trying to break free of the 'cycle'. The production was performed May 18th-20th, 2001 at the Dougherty Arts Center in Austin. Several TYC staff attended all three shows.

TYC would like to give special

thanks to those seven youth that volunteered, particularly Steven and LaChanda. Applause also goes to the RealmDanceProject for taking the time to get to know our youth, interpreting that knowledge into dance moves, and investing their own energy and compassion in trying to understand the lives of our TYC parolees. The production was a wonderful piece of work! ☼

Submitted by Astrid Lertora and Ingeborg Brooker



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