



# GCEH REPORT

Vol. II, No. 2

Austin, Texas

November, 1981

## Reflections: General Meeting and Awards Luncheon

On October 2, 1981 five Texans were honored for their outstanding contributions to the rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities. The five were awarded Governor's Citations during a luncheon ceremony in Austin at the Best Western Villa Capri. Speaking to an audience of more than 300 Karl Rove, representing Governor Bill Clements, presented the Governor's Awards.

**Texana Conn** of Austin was presented the **Governor's Citation for Meritorious Service**. Conn has been active in the deaf community for more than 25 years and continually strives toward increased public awareness of the needs and abilities of disabled persons.

**Dr. Rodney Simonsen**, recipient of the **Physician of the Year Award**, has devoted untold hours of his private and professional time to rehabilitating disabled individuals. A resident of Austin, Simonsen is committed to a practice of physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Mayor of San Antonio, **Henry Cisneros**, accepted the **Employer of the Year Award** (over 200 employees) on behalf of the City of San Antonio. The City of San Antonio employs almost 400 handicapped individuals, which is 8.9% of their total number of employees.

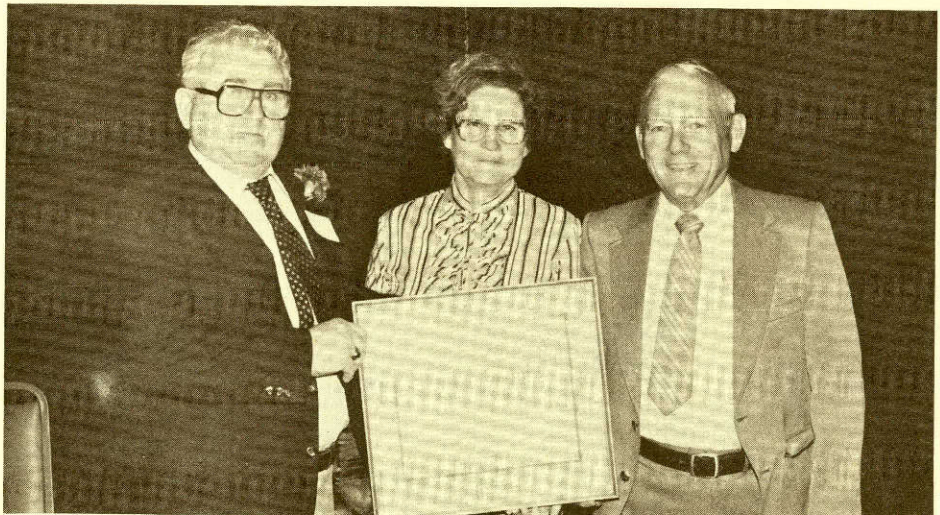
**George Higbie**, Manager, Googan's Restaurant & Club, Port Arthur, is this year's recipient of the **Employer of the Year Award** (under 200 employees). At his restaurant, Mr. Higbie has

an active program of recruitment which involves on-the-job training for disabled employees.

**Paul Geers, M.D.** received the **Handicapped Texan of the Year Award** largely due to his own disability and his unselfish devotion in providing quality medical services to disabled Texans. In order to insure the provision of quality medical services to aged individuals in the community of Whitewright, Texas, Dr. Geers built a nursing home and has insured that high standards are maintained. Aside from Dr. Geers' medical practice, he is continually involved in civic, community and church projects which are increasing public awareness of disabled individuals.

**Justin W. Dart, Jr.**, Chairman, Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (GCEH), presented **Allen Clark**, formerly Special Assistant to Governor Clements, with a Chairman's Commendation for his significant contribution to increased public awareness of and improved quality of life opportunities for disabled persons in Texas.

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**Paul Geers, M.D.** Handicapped Texan of the Year, Left



**Larry Johnson  
Luncheon Speaker**

Larry Johnson, a blind individual who serves as Assistant Staff Supervisor for Employment at Southwestern Bell in San Antonio, outlined the cost to our society in failing to employ and integrate disabled individuals into the mainstream. Johnson says, "Pushing disabled people back to greater dependency will only weaken our country's economy even more. The question and the challenge which we face is: Do we wish to see disabled persons as taxpayers or as tax users? It is a formidable challenge. And it is up to us to meet it with creativity, commitment and concern worthy of our purpose." Mr. Johnson is Vice-President of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, a non-profit organization which ad-

vocates the removal of attitudinal and environmental barriers to disabled persons.

In closing, Mr. Johnson stated, "In this age of 'new federalism' of budget cuts, it is going to be primarily up to the private sector to take the initiative in providing the training and the jobs required in order for us to significantly reduce that figure of one half million unemployed disabled Texans. To quote David T. Kearns, President of Xerox Corporation, "Unfilled jobs cost American business billions of dollars a year in lost orders, reduced productivity and lowered profits. Industry must respond quickly and vigorously to the idea of hiring talented individuals who are, incidentally, disabled."

The morning session of the meeting featured recognition of individuals and organizations receiving special honors this past year. Special recognition was given to: **Sam Millsap**, who received the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (PCEH) Meritorious Service Award; **Martha Arbuckle**, who displayed her PECH Distinguished Service Award; **Dan Davidson**, who shared the

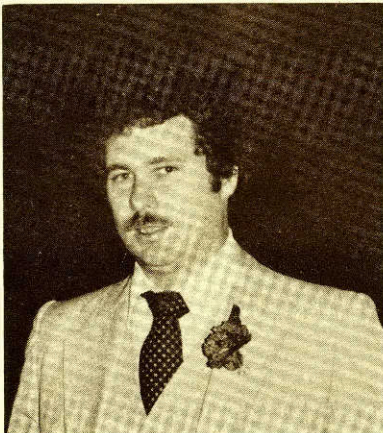
**Employer of the Year**



**Mayor Henry Cisneros  
City of San Antonio**

Carolyn Keane Memorial Award presented to the City of Austin; the GCEH Chairman's Commendation was given to the **Southwest Wheelchair Athletic Association "Lone Stars"**. Certificates of Affiliation with the GCEH were presented to **Jim Raatz** for the Bryan - College Station Mayor's Committee (MCEH), **Judy Morales** for the Temple MCEH, and **Wells Rader** for the Harris County CEH. Activities included a choice of workshops on independent living, employment and activities of local committees on employment of the handicapped.

Special entertainment at this event was provided by a talented 12 piece Jazz Band from the Texas School for the Blind under the direction of Stan Beard.



**George Higbie  
Employer of the Year**



**Texana Conn  
Governor's Citation  
for Meritorious Service**



**Rodney Simonsen, M.D.  
Physician of the Year**

# MEET THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS . .



**Robert Price**, appointed by Governor Clements to serve as Vice Chairperson of the GCEH, resides in Dallas. Price is partner and practicing attorney with the firm of Taylor, Mizell, Price, Corrigan and Smith. In addition to chairing the Legislation and Legal Awareness Subcommittee, Price was appointed to serve on the ad hoc Subcommittee to develop procedures for handling gifts and contributions to the GCEH.



**Tommy E. Polk**, a quadriplegic since 1952, is a Stockbroker with E. F. Hutton and is a tax shelter coordinator for the community of Beaumont. He is presently on the Board of Goodwill Industries and is Past President of the Jefferson County Council on Alcoholism. Polk was selected as the Easter Seal Person of the Year for the State of Texas in 1975. Currently, he chairs the Local Committee Development Subcommittee of the GCEH.



**Gladys C. Keene, M.D.**, graduated from medical school at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. She now has a private practice in pediatrics in Laredo. Keene also serves as Chief of Staff for Doctors Hospital in Laredo. She is the Vice Chairperson of the Legislation and Legal Awareness Subcommittee.



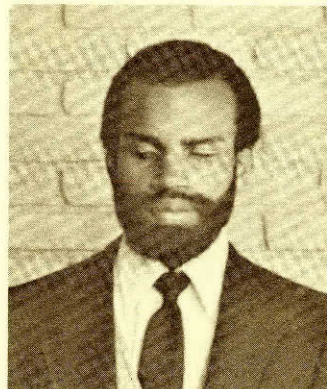
**Susan Tiller**, parent of a 15 year old hearing impaired child, is active in the deaf community of Corpus Christi. She has served as Past President of the Parent Teacher Friend Organization of the Regional School for the Deaf in Corpus Christi and also has served as Past President of the Corpus Christi Interpreters for the Deaf. Tiller currently serves as Vice Chairperson of the Environmental Barriers Subcommittee of the GCEH.



**Ray Harrington, M.D.** a practicing ophthalmologist in Dallas, is Chief of Ophthalmology at St. Paul's Hospital and Medical Arts Hospital in Dallas. Harrington has one daughter who was born with retrolental fibroplasia and one totally blind foster child who attends the Texas State School for the Blind in Austin. Harrington is interested in aiding all handicapped individuals and is currently Vice-Chairperson of the Veterans Affairs Subcommittee of the GCEH.



As an Equal Opportunity Specialist for NASA, **Shirley Price** is very aware of the needs of disabled Texans. Price is currently on sabbatical leave for one year to complete her graduate work. She is a member of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission Consumer Consultation Committee, National Council for Handicapped and Disabled Citizens, and Chairperson of the GCEH Consumer Affairs Subcommittee.



**Don McDowell**, a blind student at the University of Texas, is a volunteer with the Services for Handicapped Students in the Office of the Dean. He has participated in numerous workshops, seminars and other activities which have addressed the needs of the disabled while at the same time educating the non-disabled of the myths, stereotypes, and facts of being disabled.

McDowell is presently a consultant in the implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. He is Vice Chairperson of the Recognition and Awards Subcommittee of the GCEH.

**Rafaela G. Acosta**, parent of a deaf daughter, resides in El Paso. Acosta is the Project Coordinator of the Halfway House for Juveniles, Crossroads, in El Paso. She also serves as the LULAC's liaison to the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (PCEH). Acosta is Vice Chairperson of the Public Information Subcommittee of the GCEH.



The August 1981 issue of the GCEH Report provided information on the other members of the Governor's Committee.

# Local Committee Notes

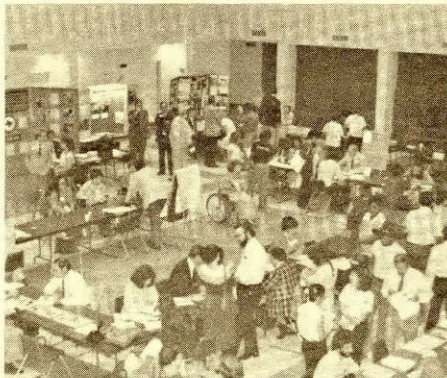
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## Job Fair for Disabled Individuals

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A well-attended job fair occurred at the Market Place in **San Antonio** on Tuesday, October 6, 1981. Approximately 40 major employers participated in an all day job fair which was sponsored by the San Antonio Mayor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (SAMCEH).

A representative from Datapoint, a leading independent producer of business computers, indicated that their corporation had distributed over 300 applications by 2:00 p.m. the same day. From 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. each day Datapoint offers a **JOB LINE:** (512) 699-7224 which provides continuous information on positions currently available at their corporation.



Norma Gallegos, Industrial Relations Assistant, EG & G Automotive Research, Inc., stated that she had interviewed 35 individuals and through a pre-screening process scheduled 4 individuals for second interviews. Gallegos added, "As of October 8, I have hired one individual and I am currently reviewing medical records on another job candidate."

Feliz Nerio of Southern Steel Company stated, "I have distributed 55 applications and as a result one man sent for a pre-employment physical. If he receives approval from his Doctor he will begin work on the loading crew. Fred Morales, another job applicant who was interviewed, will be hired when he can be placed in a location suitable to his job skills."

Employers participating in the job fair included Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, Eastern Airlines, Alamo Heights National Bank, City of San Antonio and others.

A detailed follow-up study is currently being conducted by the SAMCEH. Initial results of this study will be available for distribution in November. For further information contact: Maj. Gen. William Starnes (Ret), 4310 Little Lane, San Antonio, TX 78229, (512) 341-4376.

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## Transportation in Denton

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A transportation program was funded this past September by the City of **Denton** to provide transportation for Denton citizens with disabilities. The pilot program is geared toward employment needs, but will also provide for occasional medical and shopping trips. The City provided funds to contract with the local Services Program for Aging Needs office which presently provides transportation to citizens who are 60 and older.

The Denton Committee worked with the City of Denton Human Resources

Committee, an advisory board to the City Council, to obtain \$20,000.00 with which to fund this pilot project.

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## Workshops

For the first time in the history of the Texas GCEH, a series of workshops were conducted at the general meeting and annual awards luncheon.

"**Yes You Can!**", so stated Joe W. Russell, electronics company Vice President, during his presentation at the employment workshop. Russell, head of Corporate Relations for E-Systems, Inc., in Dallas, told 79 participants that the positive-approach title is his response to fallacious myths commonly held regarding accurate evaluation of disabled job applicants.

Following Russell's presentation the participants met in small groups to identify myths and solutions. The results of these discussions will be used in a brochure to be published by the Employment Development and Labor Affairs Subcommittee of the GCEH of which Russell is a member.

"**Independent Living - The Means and Ends of Employment**" was a workshop moderated by Lex Frieden, Executive Director, Independent Living and Research Utilization Project (ILRUP) in Houston, Texas. Other panel members included Laurie Gerken, ILRUP, Mary Lou Widmer, ILRUP, Donald Grazier, Houston Center for Independent Living, and Marshall Levett, Austin Resource

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Center for Independent Living.

The panelists discussed various concepts of independent living and developed some definitions pertaining to independent living. Representatives from the Austin and Houston independent living centers described their programs and answered questions from the audience.

**"The Local Scene"** workshop was moderated by Tommy Polk of Beaumont. Mr. Polk is Chairman of a local committee and a member of the GCEH. Other panelists, also chairpersons of local committees, were: James Moudy, Ph.D., Fort Worth; Maj. Gen. William Starnes (Ret), San Antonio; Genny Tarkenton, Mineral Wells; Gary Truitt, Denton. Pat Pound, Austin, discussed common needs of disabled persons which can be addressed by local committees on employment of the handicapped.

The panelists described projects in each of their local communities. Projects ranged from a scavenger hunt by high school students to identify architectural barriers to job fairs participated in by major employers.

## Wheelchair Sports

Wheelchair athletics, as part of the rehabilitation process, have many benefits. Disabled persons are allowed an opportunity to regain self-confidence, release everyday tensions, and develop leadership skills. A sense of responsibility, purpose and social skills develop as the individual becomes involved in competitive sports.

Able-bodied and disabled

## CTD Delegate Assembly

The 4th Annual Statewide Delegate Assembly of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) was held in Houston, Texas, October 30 through November 1, 1981.

CTD is a statewide advocacy coalition with a membership of some 28 organizations and a large number of interested individual members. Workshops offered included "Basic Sign Language", "Involving Other Minorities in Disability Rights", and "How to Keep the Flame Lit", a workshop on avoiding "burn-out".

The keynote speaker at the October 31 banquet was Clarence Johnson, Texas Legal Services Center, who addressed the group on the subject of how block grants may impact disabled persons in Texas.



On October 2, 1981 at the GCEH luncheon, Bob Kafka and Dwight Goodman accepted a Chairman's Commendation on behalf of the Southwest Wheelchair Athletic Association (SWAA) - "Lone Stars". This award was presented by the GCEH Chairman, Justin W. Dart, Jr.

alike are afforded the chance to view disabled individuals as active and productive members of society. Self-confidence and experience in team cooperation can be significant factors enhancing the employability of disabled persons.

There are almost a dozen organized wheelchair basketball teams in Texas, including the San Antonio

Sonics, Houston Rolling Cougars, Dallas Mavericks, and UT-Arlington Free Wheelers, to name a few. Today, wheelchair athletics involve a myriad of activities including track and field, bowling, racquetball, softball, tennis, skiing, and sailing.

Adaptive equipment, innovative thinking, and interested people render the possibilities endless.

# International Year of Disabled Persons 1981



## El Paso - Juarez Celebration

A spirited celebration for the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) took place in El Paso on September 24 - 26, 1981. The weekend was kicked off by an international wheelchair basketball tournament which included teams from Canada, Mexico, Houston and El Paso. The tournament was co-chaired by Ed Wisbrun and Bob Geyer of El Paso.

At a reception and tamale dinner held to honor the athletes, Justin W. Dart, Jr. presented each team with the Texas flag on behalf of Governor Bill Clements. Dart commended the athletes for contributing to the creation of a new positive and active image for disabled persons.

The highlight of the weekend was the celebration of IYDP by the Sister Cities Association of El Paso - Juarez at an elegant dinner at the El Paso Country Club. Dignitaries from Washington, D. C. and other parts of the nation were present to participate in this celebration. Virginia Knauer, Special Assistant to the President and Director of the U. S. Office of Consumer Affairs, brought special greetings from the President to the El Paso - Juarez Association. Ambassador John MacDonald, Chairman of the Federal Interagency Committee for the United Nations for IYDP, was the keynote speaker. In his remarks, he stressed that

there is still much to be accomplished in creating equal opportunity for persons with disabilities.

Canada, Mexico and the United States through their support and participation made this tri-national event a memorable one.

## Beyond 1981

On October 3 and 4, 1981 in Washington, D. C. more than 100 state and community leaders of IYDP gathered to sustain focus on improving life for disabled Americans beyond 1981. At the request of Justin W. Dart, Jr., Texas was represented at this significant event by Bob Geyer of El Paso.

U. S. Council President Alan Reich noted that "the IYDP has underscored the importance of partnership and community-based participation. Our experience has demonstrated that, whatever their disability, disabled Americans can work together and that they want to reach solutions to their problems by working in full partnership with the larger community."

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1981 as IYDP, issuing a global call for goals and programs for improving the lives of 450 million disabled persons worldwide. To date, 129 countries are participating in the program.

The IYDP state liaisons and community partners concluded the meeting by passing a unanimous resolution for the continuation of IYDP activities beyond December 31, 1981 when the IYDP is officially scheduled to complete its year-long program.

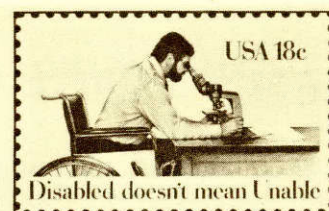
## Reduced Rates?

AT&T has filed tariff adjustments with the FCC that provide hearing and speech-impaired customers reduced interstate rates.

The new rates would apply when those customers use telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs) to place long distance calls from a residence.

Effective Oct. 30, the adjustments would permit certified hearing and speech impaired customers who use TDDs, also known as teletypewriters (TTYs), to receive day and evening reductions on customer direct dialed, interstate long distance calls.

## Disabled Doesn't Mean Unable



A new 18-cent commemorative stamp has been issued by the U. S. Postal Service in an effort to urge all nations to render special attention to measures and programs which help disabled individuals during 1981 for IYDP.

As a result of a series of nationwide interviews with disabled individuals, Martha Perske of Darien, Connecticut created a theme for a stamp design which depicts a disabled individual in a wheelchair, working alone and unaided with a sophisticated microscope.

Ask for these stamps at your local post office and join us in promoting IYDP in your community.

# NETH Week

The Governor's Committee general meeting and awards luncheon served as a "kick-off" for the National Employ the Handicapped (NETH) week in Texas. A proclamation was signed by Governor Clements designating October 4-10, 1981 as Employ the Handicapped Week in Texas. Over 500 packages of information pertaining to NETH Week were mailed to local committees, radio and TV stations and interested organizations throughout the State of Texas.

NETH Week provides an opportunity to recognize the potential of disabled persons when they have been given an opportunity to work. Special focus was devoted to architectural, vocational and attitudinal barriers facing disabled persons.



Governor Bill Clements signed the proclamation initiating Employ the Handicapped Week in Texas. Looking on from left to right are: Lucy Todd, Martha Arbuckle, Don McDowell, Justin W. Dart, Jr., and Virginia Roberts.

## Local Committee Development Subcommittee

The mission of the Local Committee Development Subcommittee of the GCEH has been expanded from an advisory role regarding site selection for development of local committees to that of facilitating communications between local committees and also with the GCEH and its staff.

Chairpersons of each of the 14 affiliated local committees were invited to become members of the subcommittee chaired by Tommy Polk of Beaumont, with Priscilla Lupe of San Antonio, serving as Vice Chairperson of the Subcommittee.

Periodic meetings will provide opportunity for training in program and organizational methods as well as giving local committees an opportunity to

share suggestions and problems.

GCEH and staff are expecting valuable feedback on all aspects of local

committee development. As new local committees become affiliated with GCEH they will be invited to join this program.



Left to right (standing) Henrietta Newbury, Wells Rader, James Moudy, Priscilla Lupe, Major Gen. William Starnes, Judy Morales, Gary Truitt, Genny Tarkenton, Jim Raatz, (first row) Virginia Roberts, Tommy Polk, Charles Eskridge, Jr., Mary Ellen Bailey.

# Affiliation?

Fourteen (14) communities in Texas have chosen to express their commitment to promote employment and improve quality of life opportunities for disabled persons through the establishment of local committees on employment of the handicapped.

By structuring their committees on the same pattern as the state committee, GCEH, they are able to become part of a statewide network and

maximize the use of local and state resources.

When interest is expressed in a community about establishing a volunteer program to promote employment of disabled persons, a staff representative from the GCEH will schedule a meeting with local citizens and their top public official to discuss the GCEH model. This meeting helps clarify the concept of the program and formalize local commitment. A series of

citizen planning and organizational meetings further develop the goals and objectives of the local committee.

GCEH staff members are available to provide orientation, training, and technical assistance, and to provide materials to the subcommittees of the local committees on employment of the handicapped.

During fiscal year 1981, four committees on employment of the handicapped affiliated with the GCEH.



Left to right: Wells Rader, Harris County; Jim Raatz, Bryan-College Station; Judy Morales, Temple; accepting **Certificates of Affiliation** on behalf of their local committees.

## Issued quarterly

The GCEH Report is published quarterly by the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (GCEH) to provide information about employment and related concerns regarding the disabled. Communications may be addressed to: Virginia Roberts, Executive Director, GCEH, 118 E. Riverside Drive, Austin, Texas, 78704, 512-447-0276 or TDD, 512-447-8346.

Special Note: GCEH will provide taped copies of the GCEH Report upon request.

### TEXAS GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED

118 East Riverside Drive  
Austin, Texas 78704