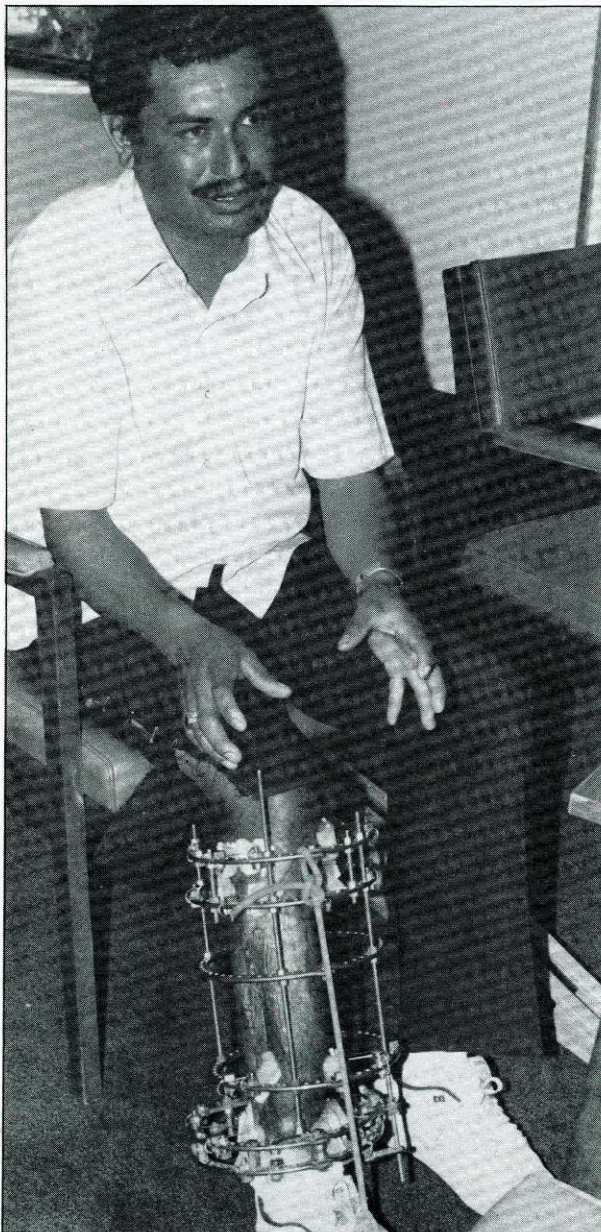


News & Views

★ Texas Rehabilitation Commission ★ A Human Energy Agency ★

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The wire cage which saved David Barrios' leg is often painful. But, if it helps him get back to work, it's worth it.

Don't tell David Barrios it's not a miracle

All Barrios knows is that since a hit-and-run accident on Interstate 10 near El Paso, he begged doctors not to amputate his badly-mangled leg. Now, after undergoing the Ilisarov procedure, named for the Soviet doctor who developed it, his leg is actually growing ... four inches in one year.

After doctors removed four inches of bone fragments from his right leg, his prospects for walking again looked bleak.

The Ilisarov procedure uses wires positioned in the bone (which is in several sections) connected to a metal device that surrounds the leg. The bone edges grow back together, and the leg is lengthened.

Every day, Barrios turns a series of screws on the device moving the bone sections apart.

Dr. Russel Van Norman, Barrios' El Paso physician, was skeptical after being introduced to the procedure in a New York seminar. But, after seeing Barrios' progress he says, "I am absolutely astonished. This procedure has all kinds of possibilities."

Jesus Terrazas, Barrios' counselor in the El Paso Field Office East, gives him much of the credit for the success.

"David has such an excellent attitude. He has to adjust the screws every day, with some discomfort. He wants to return to work because he has a family to support," Terrazas says.

The freeze is on in DDS

A Social Security Administration-imposed hiring freeze left DDS staff in the middle of the holiday season with no workload relief in sight.

In a memo to state DDSs November 1, SSA Commissioner Gwendolyn S. King wrote that proposed across-the-board federal budget reductions left SSA \$300 million short of its current spending plan.

SSA belt-tightening measures include an external hiring freeze and reduced funds for travel, training, equipment and supplies, among other things.

Gramm-Rudman-Hollings budget measures kicked in earlier this fall causing a "sequester" of federal funds affecting not only DDS operations but federal vocational rehabilitation funding as well (see "Washington Update," p. 4).

Deputy Commissioner for Disability Determination Les Albrecht points out that DDS was already operating under the effects of two funding and full-time equivalent (FTE) position reductions earlier in the calendar year.

"We had already essentially implemented a full freeze internally," says Albrecht. "We had to make other decisions in order to meet our budget."

Some of those decisions include curtailing travel and training expenses, electing not to participate in the "lump sum" merit increase program offered by the last Legislature and assigning initial claims to all disability hearing examiners and to other employees with examiner experience.

Finally, as a result of the federally-imposed, total hiring freeze, all posted DDS positions were withdrawn and a DE class scheduled for January was postponed.

Also, on December 8, DDS decided to severely curtail Continuing Disability Review cases, placing CDR examiners on line to work initial cases.

"We don't foresee any changes on the federal level that will help us in FY 1990," says Albrecht.

"The question is: 'How do we handle the workload if we're not funded for it?'; that's what we're working on now," says Albrecht.

DDS officials have several ideas on the drawing board.

One idea stems from work done by the FTE Utilization Taskforce. It involves a series of steps to relieve pressure on initial determination units by redistributing the workload. "The longer the freeze is in effect, the more the initial unit workload," says Albrecht.

Also, Commissioner Arrell and his designees plan a visit to SSA headquarters in Baltimore by the end of February to talk about the DDS budget and workload.

Commissioner Arrell has already formulated his message to SSA officials: "You've given us a certain amount of money to work with--here's the number of cases we can work with that, and that's all we'll work with it."

Albrecht is considering other ways to counteract the effects on staff morale of the recent federal cutbacks.

Morale was put to a real test this fall. Amid the high workload, budget reductions and freezes, DDS staff faced the task of moving all DDS operations into one building, the old Central Office.

"It couldn't have been done without the patience and cooperation of DDS staff," says Albrecht.

For now, DDS is settling in after its move and is concentrating on holding its own in light of fewer resources. But, although 1990 may be a "lost cause" in terms of getting the funding planned for, there are prospects that 1991 may be different.

According to Albrecht, "The SSA commissioner has said 'enough is enough,' and she's focusing on making things better in FY 1991."

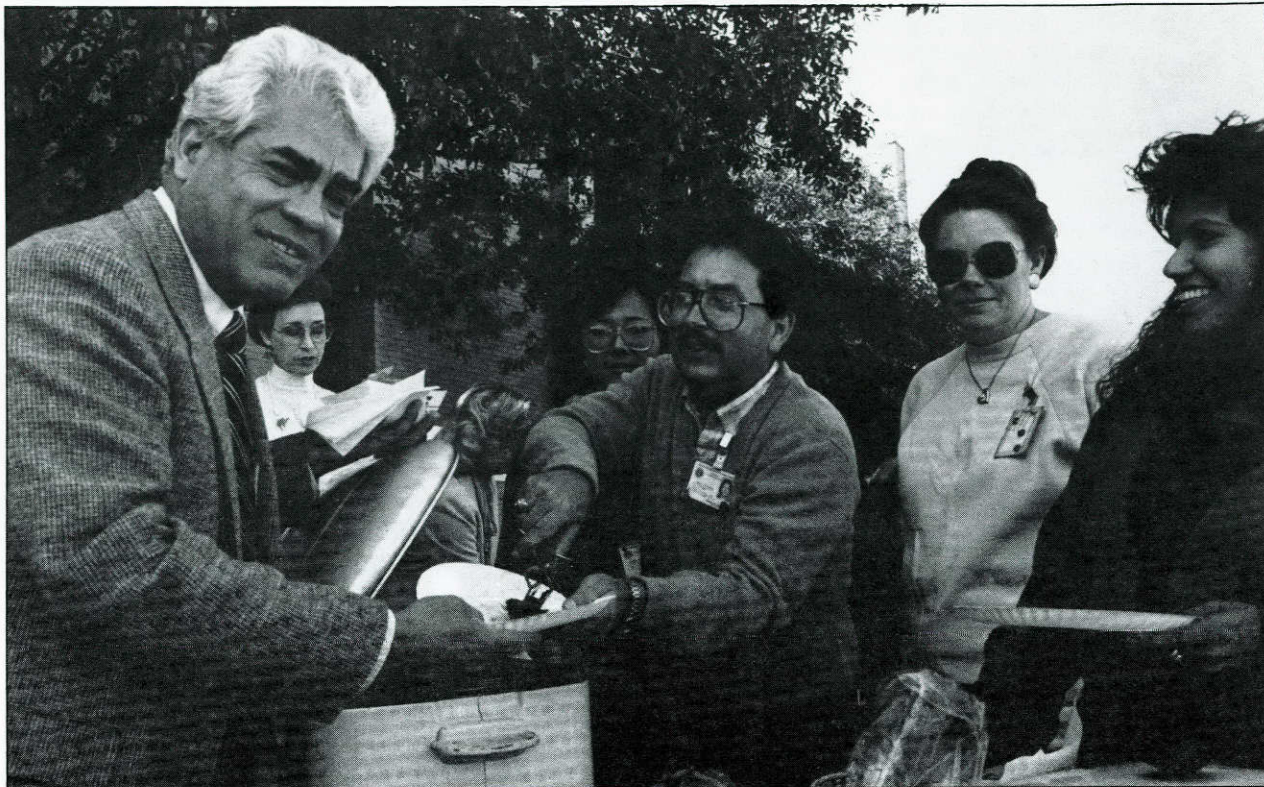
*How do we
handle the
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Hats off to the

Congratulations to TRC employees who quit or tried to quit smoking for 24 hours November 16.

The Great American Smokeout, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, each year encourages smokers to "give it up" for at least one day.

This year, 20 TRC employee/smokers statewide were "adopted" by 33 sponsors who were committed to helping them quit. Sponsors furnished "cold



Disability Determination Services wrapped up its 1989 United Way Campaign with a November 2 Fajita Cook-off in the DDS parking lot in Austin. Resident cook-off champ Ramiro Hernandez, disability examiner in Unit 12, prepared 120 pounds of meat donated by HEB food stores. A long line of DDS employees, paper plates in hand, "queued up" at 11:30--by 12:00 noon the fajitas were gone. If that doesn't indicate a successful event, then the \$550 raised for United Way does! Campaign chairman Don Hensz, operations director in Unit 03, says the cook-off resulted from a brainstorming session to decide the best fund-raisers for this year's campaign. "We wanted to help United Way and have a good time while we were at it," he says. Les Albrecht, deputy commissioner for disability determination, congratulated Hensz for leading DDS in raising a total of over \$5,000 for the United Way this year. Above, head cook Hernandez serves Carlos Valdez, assistant deputy commissioner for appellate operations, while Paula Stone, directorate secretary in Directorate 01, and Sylvia Cantu, switchboard operator, help out. In the background are Lajuana Burgess, disability examiner in Unit 16, and Carmen Vasquez, directorate secretary in Directorate 02.

Transitions

Dennis Kutach was recently named area manager for the Dallas Southeast Field Office. Kutach previously served as ERS program manager at the Dallas Goodwill Field Office.

J. W. Burgess, counselor in the Longview Field Office, will retire December 31 after 20 years with the Commission.

Loretta Whitley, USSS in the Victoria Field Office, retired November 30 after serving 14 years with TRC.

Gayle Guffey was selected as a counselor in the Odessa Field Office. She came on board with TRC November 1.

James Archer recently became ERS program manager in the Odessa Field Office.

"Smokeout" quitters

turkey" quitters with gum, candy, cookies and assorted other munchies to take their minds off the habit.

As an added inducement to quitting, sponsors completed adoption forms which were entered in a raffle the day of the smokeout.

First place winners Marion Johnson and Nell Crawford of the

Houston End Field Office divided \$70 between them.

A second place prize of \$30 went to Carol Balles and Pat Rivera of DDS Unit 16. Two third place "T" shirts went to Candace Yocum and Emery Taylor in DDS Unit 02.

A short disability awareness quiz

Everybody get a pencil and paper. It's time for a short disability awareness "pop quiz."

The following is a list of excuses for what:

- "I was only going be there for a minute; what's the harm?"
- "I was going to move if someone needed it."
- "I thought anybody could use it."

Time's up! Let's see a show of hands.

How many said these are common excuses for parking in a disabled parking space? How many said it's a list of excuses for using a toilet stall modified for people with disabilities?

Congratulations! Both answers are correct.

There are many more excuses; some might even seem reasonable. But, you get the point ... none of them are good enough.

So why is it still an issue? Why do non-disabled people keep tying up accommodations, facilities, etc. meant for people with disabilities?

Maybe accessible accommodations aren't marked well enough. No, that couldn't be it. Designated parking places usually have signs that list fines for misuse. Accessible toilet facilities might have signs. But, come on!

Even if they don't, it's hard to miss a toilet stall with a three-foot door and grab bars screwed into the wall.

Maybe monitoring/enforcement is too lax. It's usually not a high priority with local police. And as far as I know, there are no toilet stall monitors ... it's not exactly a job with a career ladder.

Besides, it's not hard to slip in and out of an accessible toilet or a designated parking space without being detected. So, what's the harm?

The harm is this. People with disabilities have no other options. Wider parking spaces are the only places they can park; modified rest room facilities are the only kind they can use; curb cuts are the only way they can get onto the sidewalk; lowered telephones are the only ones they can reach; water fountains, ramps, elevators ... the list goes on.

The answer? It may be as simple as becoming aware that people with disabilities face a world of limited choices. You don't want to limit them more, do you?

Remember, **they** can't do it if **you** get to it first!

Washington Update

- Just two days after approving the 1990 regular appropriations package, Congress passed an omnibus budget reconciliation measure to reduce the federal deficit by \$14 billion. A portion of this savings was achieved by retaining about one-third of the "sequester" (across-the-board cuts) imposed in October on discretionary and defense programs, including all rehabilitation programs. For Section 110 (basic state grants), the revised sequester reduces the FY 1990 appropriation of \$1,550 million to \$1,528.5 million. Nevertheless, the final funding figure for Section 110 represents a 5.4 percent increase over FY 1989 funding levels. The Texas share of the FY 1990 basic state grants funding is approximately \$81.4 million.
- The first session of the 101st Congress adjourned in November without a full House vote on the Americans with Disabilities Act. Three committees with jurisdiction over the ADA have yet to "mark-up" the bill--Judiciary, Public Works and Energy and Commerce. Observers expect the ADA will not reach the House floor until early 1990. Meanwhile, other legislation was introduced in the House which would provide small business with a \$5,000 tax credit to offset costs incurred in complying with the ADA.
- Congress passed a nine-month extension of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit. The provision was included in the budget reconciliation measure. The new TJTC expiration date is September 30, 1990.

Disability Determination Services officials recently received the following letter from a grateful claimant concerning the excellent work done on his case by Skip Frazier, disability examiner in Unit 60:

"My name is John Giles. I am writing to you about one of your disability examiners, Mr. Skip Frazier. He was appointed to review my case to see if I was still eligible for social security. I talked to him several times on the phone about my case, and what I should and should not do concerning my doctor's appointment. What I am trying to write down on paper is how professional, kind, understanding and helpful he was. I am sure you have more fine examiners, but I would say he is tops!"

Mario Martinez, area manager in the El Paso Field Office East, received this letter from a successful client of Counselor Cesar Quinones:

"On May 6, I got my diploma-- a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Texas at El Paso. I write this letter to thank Texas Rehabilitation Commission and particularly my counselor Cesar Quinones for helping me with tuition and books plus constant support and advice to accomplish my academic goals. Again, thanks to TRC and all the staff members involved in helping me complete my college education and consequently becoming a productive citizen myself."

Here is a portion of a letter from a client of Greg Jamison, counselor in the Liberty Field Office:

"I want to thank you for the assistance given to me in re-training for a new profession after back surgery. I graduated with honors after two years of college in the field of diagnostic

radiography. I have been employed at Methodist Hospital since graduation and have made great advancements within the Radiology Department in the short time of my employment. Again, thank you for the opportunity that your department has given me to support my family and to be a productive citizen of the great state of Texas."

Here is an excerpt of a letter from client Elizabeth A. Kegg about the help she received from Karen Mitchell, counselor in the Conroe Field Office. The letter was written to Stephanie Slattery, area manager in the Conroe office:

"I want to thank you for the wonderful support and guidance I have been fortunate enough to receive through Karen Mitchell. After our first interview early in the year, I was scared and lonely. Through her moral support, she has added to the success of what is about to be my first complete year being clean and sober. I just wanted you to know that Ms. Mitchell and Shirley Rainey (stenographer in the Conroe office) deserve a lot of credit for helping another human being.

Ginger Eways, of Inquiries Services in DDS, received this letter from Linda Penny Anderson, president of Medical Advisory Services for Healthcare, about the quality work done for a claimant by Julia Bayne, disability examiner in Unit 12:

"Please pass along my thanks and highest regards to Julia Bayne, the examiner who went above and beyond the call of duty to get the case moving. She did a super job! The quick action by TRC was the topic of many conversations."

Here is a letter written to the El Paso Central Field Office by Richard De La Paz about the quality of TRC services provided to his wife by George Valdez, counselor in that office:

"We wish to thank the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, particularly Mr. George Valdez, who was the caseworker for my wife, Susan De La Paz, and who was instrumental in obtaining approval for the endometrial surgery that she needed and received. She is free of pain now and well on the road to recovery. Mr. Valdez is courteous, knowledgeable, efficient and definitely an asset to your organization."

MILESTONES

TRC Service NOVEMBER 1989

Region I
20 years: Ronald Carlton Acuff

Region II
10 years: Rosla L. Hocker
20 years: Minnie Moses
J.F. Jacobsen

Region III
10 years: Dixie McLeod
15 years: Paul D. Peterson
Charlotte A. Hill

Region IV
10 years: Stephanie Slattery
20 years: R. D. Williams

Region VI
15 years: Kaye G. Redding
20 years: Terry D. Carlton
Sandra K. Sitton

DDS
10 years: Mary J. McMillan
Thomas A. Beck
Elvira Flores
Gertraud T. Mulligan
20 years: Pat Clark
Carol M. Wallace

Central Office
10 years: Donna K. Buchanan
Bonnie L. Anderson

★ Applause

These TRC employees recently received media coverage for the Commission: **David Stanley**, counselor in the Edinburg Field Office; **Billy Chavera**, counselor in the El Paso Central Field Office; **Louisa Rosales**, counselor in the Galveston Field Office; **Brenda Augustus**, counselor in the Galveston UTMB Field Office; **Charles Wasson**, counselor in the Greenville Field Office; **Jerome Duderstadt**, counselor in the Gonzales Warm Springs Field Office; **Wes Huerta**, area manager in the Harlingen Field Office; **Kathy Streblo**, area manager in the LaMarque Field Office; **Larry Gladden**, **Phillip**

Roddy and Suzanne Baxter, counselors in the LaMarque Field Office; **Greg Jamison**, counselor in the Liberty Field Office; **Judy Freeman**, counselor in the Longview Field Office; **Ray Fenton**, counselor in the Nacogdoches Field Office; **Linda Mitchell**, counselor in the Odessa Field Office Central; **Arnold Barrera, Jr.**, area manager in the Richmond Field Office; **Jean Wieser** and **Thomas Metcalf**, counselors in the Sherman Field Office; **Diane Grisham**, counselor in the Sulphur Springs Field Office; **Manuel Santos**, counselor in the San Angelo Field Office; **Gilbert Bermea**, counselor in the Uvalde Field Office; **Les Lovell**, regional director in the Houston Regional Office; **Russel Clarke**, research associate in the Office of the Controller, **Executive Deputy Commissioner James L. Jackson**; and **Commissioner Arrell**.

plaque of appreciation from the TRC Medical Consultation Committee in October. Presented by **John Fenoglio**, deputy commissioner for programs, and **James Payne, M.D.**, committee advisor, the plaque recognizes Caraway for nine years of outstanding service to the MCC. Caraway served on the committee until September 1989.

Little Mistakes

What would you get if the people you depended on performed their jobs right only 99 percent of the time?

- At least 200,000 wrong drug prescriptions each year.
- Unsafe drinking water almost four days per year.
- No electricity, water, heat, telephone, or television for about 15 minutes a day.
- No newspaper delivery four times a year.
- Nine misspelled words on every magazine page.

What we expect is products and services that are defect-free. Obviously, then, we've all got to watch those pesky mistakes and strive for 100 percent as individuals and as a company.

The American Society of Quality Control.



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