

TRC TODAY

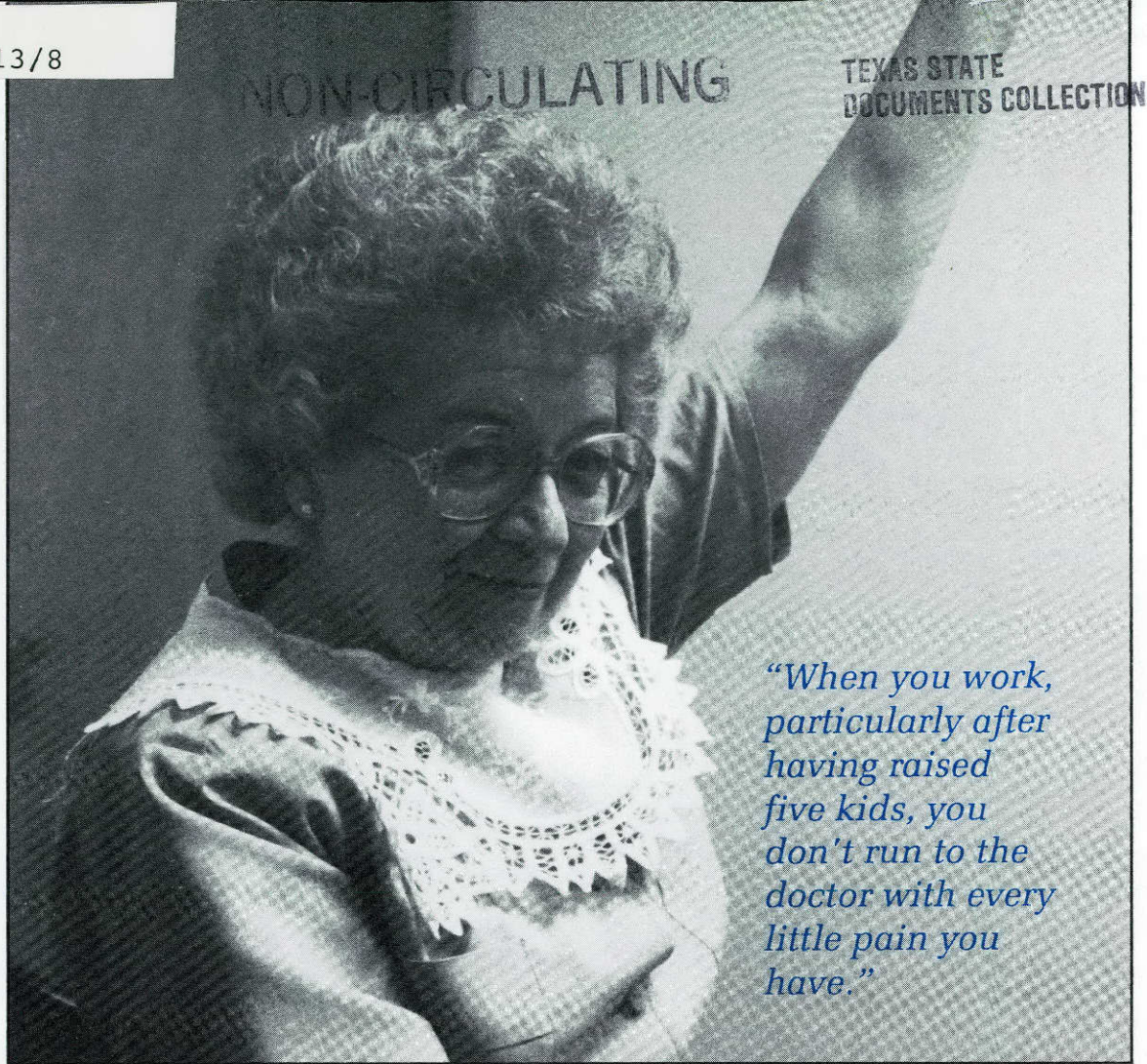
TRC TODAY is a newsletter for the employees of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission.

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"When you work, particularly after having raised five kids, you don't run to the doctor with every little pain you have."

She's not taking anything for granted

Dorothy Miller was born and raised a Connecticut Yankee. She came to Texas 30 years ago with a husband, five kids and the kind of work ethic that made this country great.

She still has the work ethic. Dorothy, a 62 year old client in McAllen, never had a serious illness; her only injury was a stumped toe, until 1988.

Can you believe that?" she said, "I've always taken my health for granted until someone in a stolen car ran a red light and hit me and hurt my shoulder. That's when my problems started."

After the accident, Dorothy continued to work at her job as a secretary and bookkeeper. Never a complainer, she was reluctant to go to the doctor.

"When you work, particularly after having raised five kids—you don't run to the doctor with every little pain you have."

But, as the pain got worse, she finally went to her family physician. His response—"Dorothy ... you are just getting old."

"That burned me up," she says. "I am never going back to him."

It took a close friend who had a similar accident and injury to get her to go to another doctor—an orthopedic surgeon—and he introduced her to TRC.

One and a half years after her injury, her rehabilitation program began.

"Even though she couldn't raise her arm, was in constant pain and required help when dressing, she still continued to work," says Lydia Ortiz, her TRC counselor. "She is such a unique person. She follows through on everything—she's dependable and consistent. She is what the VR program was designed for."

What does she think about TRC? "I had heard of TRC, but I thought you only helped really disabled people."

She has learned many valuable lessons from her injury and the program of rehabilitation that followed. She is now very much aware of the need for a job with health insurance benefits. "I'm not taking anything for granted anymore."

Network opens doors for travelers with disabilities

Do you ...

- Need assistance planning a trip?
- Want to know what facilities are truly accessible to people with disabilities?
- Need to know what transportation is available upon your arrival? Or in an emergency?
- Ever encounter a situation away from home where any knowledgeable native could have become a welcome friend? Who do you call? Who really knows about accessibility for persons with disabilities?

Travelin' Talk does. It is a network of people all over the United States and the rest of the world that provides services to travelers with disabilities. If you'd like assistance where you plan to travel (nobody plans for troubles such as broken wheelchairs, sudden illnesses or missing supplies), just contact Travelin' Talk at (615) 552-6670.

The network also publishes a quarterly newsletter to update members on progress, introduce numerous resources available to travelers, share tips and some of the ways people are helping travelers with disabilities.

If you'd like to have the Travelin' Talk directory or become a member of the network, contact: The Travelin' Talk Network, P.O. Box 3534, Clarksville, TN 37043, (615) 552-6670.

Recycle now to save the planet

Concern for the environment is sweeping the country. The Texas Legislature passed S.B. 1340, requiring recycling programs in state government. Employees of the Brown-Heatly Building, housing the Central Office of TRC and the Texas Youth Commission, are doing something about it.

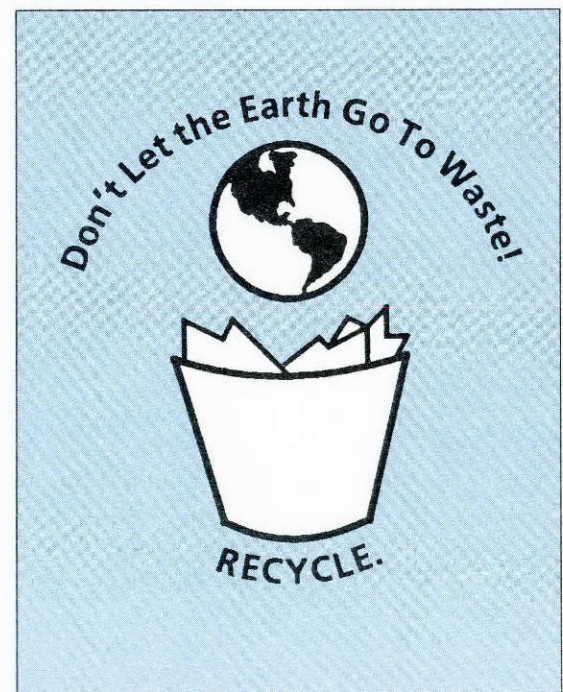
Commissioner Arrell and Ron Jackson, executive director of TYC, challenged employees to volunteer ideas and efforts to launch an effective trash recycling program. Mike Hendon and Marnette Walker, TRC accounting department, provided the contest winning slogan, "Don't let the Earth go to waste."

More than 20 volunteers from TRC/TYC and the neighboring Department of Health joined the program effort and are working on the promotional campaign.

Some of the preliminary plans for recycling are:

- aluminum and paper
- vehicle oil and lubricants in agency vehicles
- purchasing goods made from recycled products
- recycling corrugated cardboard boxes
- using personal beverage cups in the building cafeteria.

Collett Foyt, TRC accounting department, is the chair of this volunteer committee. Her slogan, "Reuse it or lose it!" was an early favorite for the contest. Contact her at 483-4711 with any "trashy" ideas you have to help make this recycling program a whopping success.



Region I

Local Medical Consultant Norma Porres, M.D., Lubbock, has served TRC five years as of August 31, 1991.

Region II

Melba Funke, counselor in the Fort Worth South Field Office, and Stephanie Mosley, counselor in the Fort Worth Field Office North, were honored for their work by the Goodwill Industries of Fort Worth.

Tommy B. Brock, counselor in the Gatesville Field Office, retired August 1991, after 24 years of TRC service.

Counselor Mario U. Scorza, Waco Field Office, retired August 1991 with more than 22 years of TRC service.

Loyd Ripley, M.D., local medical consultant for Fort Worth Southeast, reached five years of service to TRC this month.

Region III

Region III's top employees are: Salary Groups 2-11 Janie Escobedo, RST, East Austin Field Office. Salary Groups 12-21 Nathalie Hallmark, MSS, Beaumont Field Office.

Charles Raines, M.D., Huntsville, has served TRC for five years this month as the local medical consultant.

Region IV

James Askew, counselor in the Humble Field Office, was the featured speaker for the Humble Alliance for the Mentally Ill on June 25.

Region V

Harry Miller, M.D., local medical consultant for the Brownsville Field Office, passed away June 28. Dr. Miller had been a consultant for TRC for approximately five years.

Region V's top employees are: Salary Groups 2-11 Dolores Flores, RST, Uvalde Field Office. Salary Groups 12-21 Marisela Garcia, program manager, Brownsville Field Office.

Three Region V local medical consultants have completed five years of service to the commission this month. They are: Antonio Gallegos, M.D., Eagle Pass; Carmen Gomez, M.D., McAllen; Nicolas Walsh, M.D., San Antonio Northeast.

Region VI

Ross Chambers, retired supervisor in

the Athens Field Office, passed away June 24, 1991. Chambers worked with TRC for nearly 26 years and retired in January 1984.

Marcus Abadie, M.D., and Ronald Heine, M.D., both of Athens, have served TRC for five years as local medical consultants for Region VI.

Central Office

George V. Clark, director, Office for Civil Rights, retired July 31, 1991. Clark has been with the commission for 22 years.

David Bost is the new support specialist in the Central Office. He previously held a position in private industry.

This week's for you!

The U.S. Senate recently approved a resolution designating September 15-21 as "National Rehabilitation Week."

A portion of the resolution text says "National Rehabilitation Week" gives the "people of this nation an opportunity to celebrate the victories, courage, and determination of individuals with disabilities in this nation and recognized dedicated health care professionals who work daily to help such individuals achieve independence."

Activities and programs during the week will educate people about services offered and honor the people (like TRC employees) who improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities.

Regional Notes



TRC Today

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

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TOPS IN TEXAS

Rehab association honors outstanding professionals at annual conference



CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The Texas Rehabilitation Association annual conference in El Paso, July 14-17, highlighted memorable speakers, surprises and awards for people working in all aspects of rehabilitation.

Among the more notable speakers were Ann Rhoades, vice president of the People Department for Southwest Airlines; Joe Owens, executive director of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation; and Jerry Cooper, vice president for human resource management, HCB Contractors in Dallas.

A common theme for the conference was the growing impact of ADA on employment prospects for people with disabilities and changing attitudes of employers.

At the TRC staff meeting, Commissioner Arrell presented two surprises. Arrell made a special presentation to Deputy Commissioner John Fenoglio for his dedicated effort to help pass the Comprehensive Medical Rehabilitation Trust Fund law and awarded the new Commissioner's Medallion, to Dr. David Wade, the first interim commissioner of TRC.

It was at a TRA annual conference in El Paso in 1969, that Dr. Wade received word that he would be the first commissioner for the newly formed rehabilitation agency in Texas.

Another highlight of the conference was the TRA awards luncheon, where rehabilitation professionals were recognized for outstanding contributions to the field. Commissioner Arrell also received three awards.



Ann Buck, recently retired receptionist for TRC in Fort Worth, receives Disabled Citizen of the Year award.

TRA AWARDS

Research Project Demonstration
•Dallas Rehabilitation Institute
Rehabilitation

Professional of the Year (physician)

•Wayne K. Watson, M.D.

Rehabilitation Professional of the Year (non-physician)

•Vernon "Max" Arrell

Employer of the Year

•Humana Hospital, Dallas/San Antonio

Extra Mile Award

•Zanda Hilger, Fort Worth

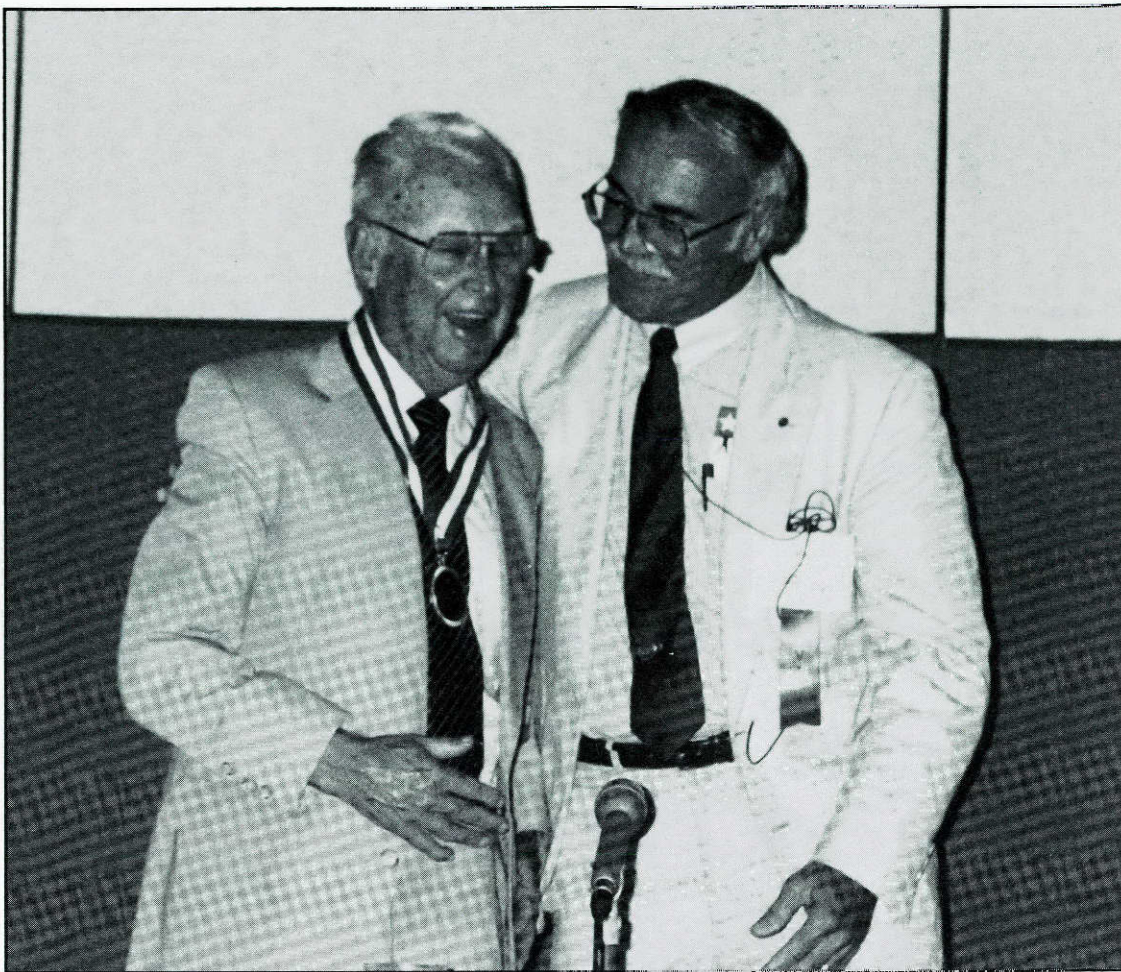
Disabled Citizen of the Year

•Ann Buck, Fort Worth

President's Meritorious Service Award

•Chuck Brewton, San Antonio

•Jerry Robinson, Austin



Max Arrell presents the first Commissioner's Medallion to Dr. David Wade, the first commissioner of TRC.



Ann Rhoades, vice president of the People Department for Southwest Airlines, delivers employer insights on employing people with disabilities.

August 1991

DIVISION AWARDS

Job Placement Division/Bottom Line Award

- Alice Nichols, Victoria

Texas Association of Disability Examiners Doyle Wheeler Award

- Dan Eudy, DDS-Austin

Texas Association of Rehabilitation Secretaries

- Vernon "Max" Arrell, Boss of the Year

- Ruth Bartay, Elkins Award

- Carolyn Napier, TARS Merit Award

Texas Rehabilitation Administrators Association

- Vernon "Max" Arrell, Giant Step Award

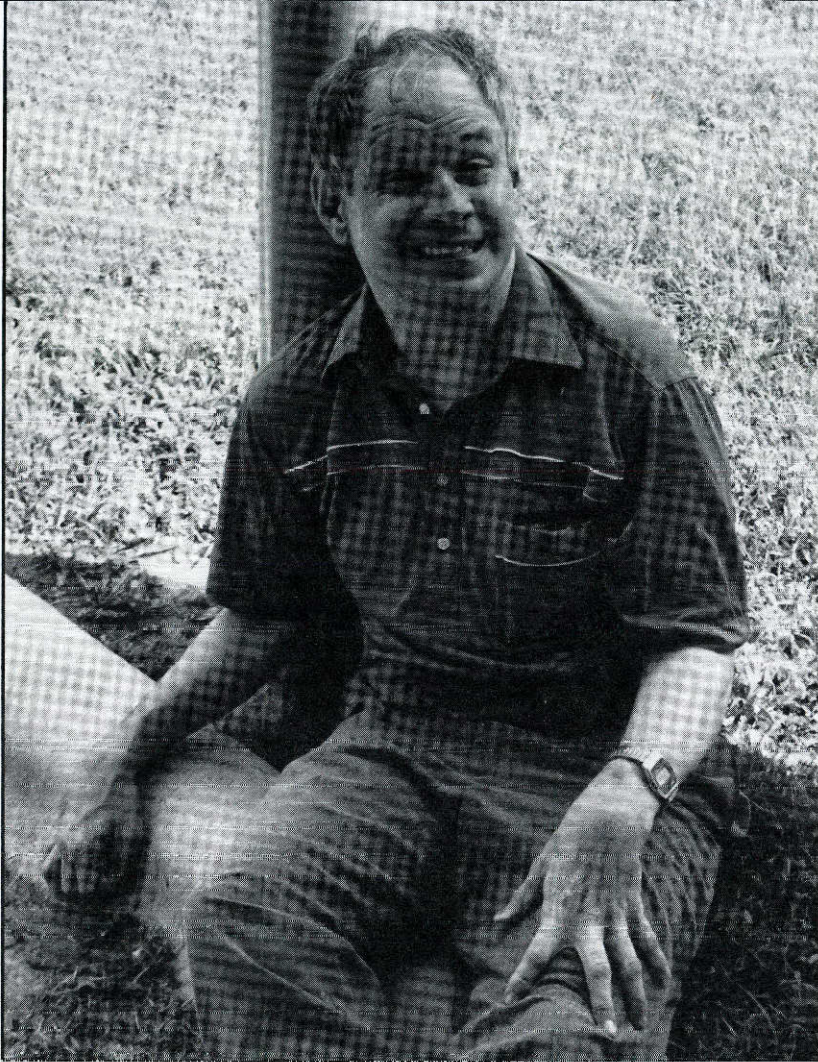
- Bertha Hinojosa, Administrator of the Year

Texas Rehabilitation Counselors Association

- Sandy Smith, Fort Worth

Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association

- Jo Ann Nunnally, Denton - Member of the Year



Programming a way of life

"Some CPs have done better than I have. Some haven't tried at all. I have always tried."

Those words sum up the indomitable spirit of Tom Hoolsema, now completing his fifth month as a Central Office programmer.

Born with cerebral palsy, Tom learned early that life is not always easy. At age 5, he was placed in a special school in Galveston, where he experienced painful homesickness.

After high school, he applied to many universities that couldn't or wouldn't accept him. But he kept trying, and with TRC paying part of his tuition, Tom wound up with a degree in math from Houston Baptist College.

His interest in math led him to computer programming positions with Hycel (seven years), NASA, Datatech, Brown and Root and others. There were some layoffs, due to mergers and eco-

nomic downturns, and yes, bias. One supervisor said he couldn't hire Tom fulltime because he was "handicapped." Yet he kept trying.

An off and on TRC client for 21 years, Tom was helped by three different counselors over the years: Troy Marler, the late Donn Vorse and Christie Meador, all in the Houston South Field Office.

In the fall of 1990, Tom asked Ed Stephens, Houston Disabled Workers Placement Program, "Does TRC ever hire programmers?" Ed told him that all the programmer jobs are in Austin. Tom had never lived on his own, although he had long wanted to try living alone. So he filled out the application Ed gave him.

While awaiting TRC's response, Tom was not optimistic, thanks to many recent turndowns. But Christie Meador, TRC counselor in Houston, encouraged him to keep his spirits up.

On January 2, a friend drove Tom to Austin in a rainstorm to interview with Bob Gray, who told Tom at the end of the interview that 19 people were being interviewed. "I pretty much wrote the job off then," Tom says.

Bob called the following Friday to offer Tom the job. "He was the best qualified applicant for the position," Bob says. "And he's doing a good job. We're glad to have him."

Tom says his job at TRC has opened up many new doors for him. He enjoys living alone in an apartment near work. An attendant comes in to help in the mornings and evenings.

The son of a Presbyterian minister, Tom has found a church where he is active. And he has joined TRC Talkers, a Toastmasters club, where members work to improve their speaking effectiveness.

When Tom delivered his first prepared speech, his poignant message brought tears to the eyes of some Toastmasters. And his speaking improvement was evident to all. "He's an inspiration to the rest of us in the club," one member said.

Personal goals? "I want to excel to please God, whose hand guides my life, and who gives me a peace the world cannot give."

Tom's still trying ... and succeeding.
—by Watt Pye

"He was the best qualified applicant for the position. And he's doing a good job."

HALFWAY TO ADA

ADA Texas steps up to challenge of 1992 effective date with aggressive campaign

President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act one year ago July 26, and supporters have one year left to see the results of the act.

TRC continues to gain momentum in its implementation efforts through the activities of ADA Texas, which celebrated ADA's first anniversary with the ninth in a series of two-day workshops.

With less than four months to go before portions of the act go into effect, the commission is gaining national recognition in its training, technical assistance and resource coordination campaigns.

Here are some highlights of the first eight months of TRC's ADA-related activities:

- Justin Dart's special citation to Commissioner Arrell for his pioneering support in the passage and implementation of ADA;
- Established a 1-800 number for information and resource referral;
- Developed information packets with items on ADA history, enforcement dates and resources;
- Developed an ADA training package in conjunction with Milt Wright & Associates, a nationally known disability consulting firm;
- Distributed, reviewed and provided comment on proposed ADA regulations;
- Conducted training workshops for more than 300 participants in all six TRC regions for commission staff and selected employers including Southwest Airlines, the U.S. Customs Office and Motorola, among others;
- Assisted in developing a disability

etiquette video and accompanying brochure to prepare the Dallas Loews Anatole Hotel staff for the May President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities annual meeting and;

- Presented ADA information to numerous community groups, advocacy organizations and employers.

ADA Texas closely coordinates its efforts with the Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities, the designated group to oversee ADA information efforts for the state.

What's next for ADA Texas?

Plans are underway for an informational video for TRC staff outlining ADA issues and responsibilities related to Commission activities.

TRC planning boards are taking steps to incorporate ADA issues into the interactive planning process with consultation from the ADA Texas unit.

ADA Texas and GCDP are working with Levinson, Levinson and Hill, a Dallas-based firm working *pro-bono* to develop an ADA media campaign scheduled for release in October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

For now, ADA Texas is scheduling more statewide training workshops along with speaking engagements and technical consultations, activities which will, no doubt, keep TRC in the forefront of ADA activity nationwide.

For more information on training and other ADA Texas activity, call 1-800-442-9502. Call the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons for official Texas activities at 512-483-4384.

—by Vernon Dement

July 1991 Service Awards

Region I

10 years:

Adrian Cervantez
Saundra Jo Vandeven

20 years:

Gloria Barron

Region II

20 years:

David Stanford

Region III

20 years:

Robert E. Rankin

Region IV

10 years:

Peggy Stewart
Mary Gray

Region V

15 years:

Josephine Contreras

Region VI

20 years:

Betty G. Hughes

25 years:

John O'Brien

DDS

10 years:

Kimberley Fletcher
Mary Ann Rodriguez

Helen J. Lazard

Annie H. Meza

Alice Janell Smith

Barbara Johnson

Deyon Denman

Shirley Spencer

Julia Dobbins

Dora Garcia

15 years:

Elsie R. Reynolds

Cynthia J. Kingsley

Sheila I. Carter

Don L. Oelschlegel

Patricia A. Bell

Robert C. Gips, Jr.

M. L. Crone, Jr.

Camille E. Seaton

25 years:

Elmer L. McLeod

Central Office

10 years:

Dawn Bosley

25 years:

Sarah Hallum

Social security hearing

Executive Deputy Commissioner James L. Jackson provides testimony at a July public hearing in Austin before the Subcommittee on Social Security. The panel of three congressmen, with J.J. Pickle presiding, heard impassioned pleas from disability applicants and stories of a cumbersome and impersonal social security system.



The Texas DDS program, a national leader in accuracy and timeliness of disability determinations, is reeling from dwindling budget and growing number of applicants.

Mr. Jackson urged the subcommittee to take immediate action to restore the integrity of the disability program that touches the lives of thousands of Texans with severe disabilities.

TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION
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