

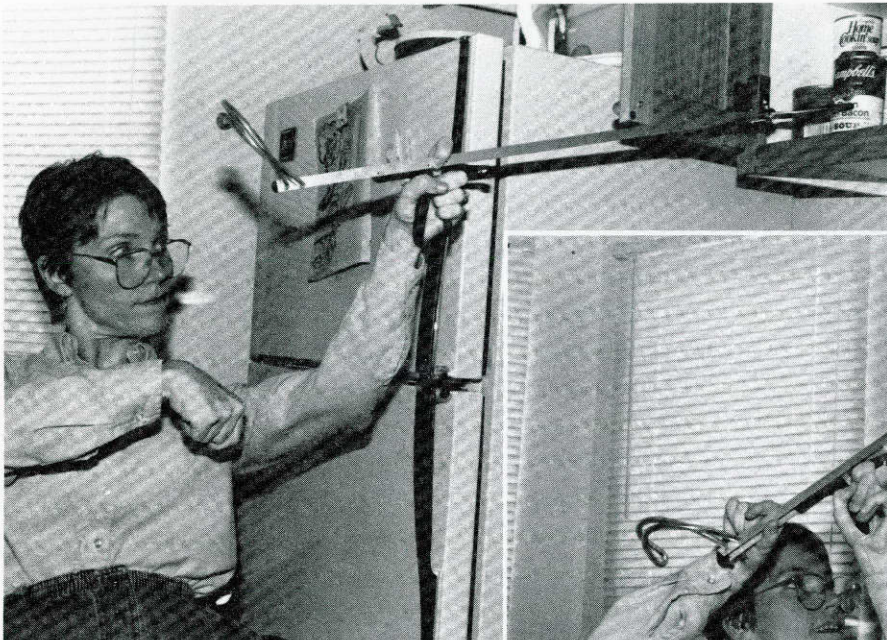
News & Views

★ Texas Rehabilitation Commission ★ A Human Energy Agency ★

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COIL Project Opens in San Antonio



Christine Parsons, resident at the newly-opened COIL Project in San Antonio, uses a TRC-purchased "grabber" to help her become more independent around the apartment.



Independence day came early this year for 10 people with severe disabilities in San Antonio.

After almost two years of planning, the Council on Independent Living officially opened its residential project at the Cambridge Village Apartments June 10.

For the 10 initial residents, nine of whom receive TRC services, the project offers the first opportunity they've had to live independently outside their parents' homes or institutions.

Over 200 well-wishers gathered at dedication ceremonies in support of the project and its goals. Speakers at the dedication included TRC Commissioner Max Arrell, John

Halloran, regional director and longtime COIL supporter, U.S. Representative Albert Bustamante (D-TX), who assisted COIL with inquiries into federal funds available for such a venture.

The COIL group was formed in 1985 by a group of parents of adults with cerebral palsy and severe speech limitations who desperately needed alternative living arrangements.

The group's shared frustrations and concerns led them to organize to solve long-term care and housing needs of their sons and daughters with severe disabilities.

Before the COIL Project, the only options for these people with cerebral palsy, as with thousands of other people with severe disabilities, were living at home, in nursing

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FEDERAL

- The House passed, June 15, a FY 1989 appropriations bill that includes \$1.6 billion for programs under the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The basic state grants program (Section 110 or funding for vocational rehabilitation) would be funded at \$1.4 billion, an increase of \$62 million over the amount available for 1988. The Senate, meanwhile, has completed hearings on its version of the appropriations bill but, at this writing, has not scheduled a final session to draft a measure.
- Education Secretary William Bennett has announced that he will resign his position on the president's cabinet in September. Bennett has recommended Under Secretary Linus Wright to be his replacement. Wright, former superintendent of schools for the Dallas Independent School District, is currently serving as acting secretary.
- Representative Steve Bartlett (R-TX) on May 25 introduced legislation to help remove federal disincentives to the increased employment of people with disabilities by ensuring continued access to health insurance through Medicare. The Social Security Work Incentives Act of 1988, H.R. 4680 (pending), would apply to recipients of Social Security Disability Insurance benefits—those who are judged unable to work due to a physical or mental impairment. Currently, if an SSDI recipient returns to work, his/her benefits will cease and Medicare coverage ends 48 months after they begin working. "Many disabled SSDI recipients are in the prime of their work years and want to try and go back to work," says Bartlett. "But the potential loss of Medicare after 48 months is a tremendous disincentive."

Services Spell Success for Dallas Client

TRC client Dan Banks came to Texas two years ago with a small weekly disability income. With TRC's help he has turned a former part-time skill into a thriving Dallas-area jewelry business.

"I was living in New York driving an oil truck when I had a bad wreck," says Banks. "After a year-and-a-half in the hospital, I came to Texas to visit my brother and decided to stay. I got in contact with TRC, got their help, and now I'm making \$50,000 a year."

Banks had worked with jewelry as a side-line before his injury. He and his TRC counselor, Sharon Correy, of the Garland Field Office, decided this might make a good career for him.

He enrolled in classes at the Gemological Institute of America. Within a year, he earned his gemological certificate and was showing and selling jewelry.

"She was a motivator, making sure I kept up with my studies and my physical therapy programs. She actually guided me through this whole process," he says.

Now Banks, with the help of his wife Bo, manages his jewelry business, which he calls Gembanks,



Dan Banks has turned a small, monthly disability income into a profitable Dallas-area jewelry business with the help of vocational rehabilitation services at TRC. Here he examines some of his stones at a jewelry show at the Holiday Inn Northpark in Dallas.

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homes or in institutions. None of these options would allow them the chance to take control of their own lives.

COIL secured three-year leases on nine of the 10 apartments (one resident uses his own funding) through federal and city Housing and Urban Development Section 8 rent subsidy funds for people with disabilities. Residents pay 25 percent of their income toward the rent total while HUD picks up the rest.

Residents schedule attendant care time around the needs of the group as a whole. It's a real cooperative effort. The need for cooperation was established in planning sessions for the project. Here, they decided they each must answer one question: "What do I have to give up to make it work?"

Permanent modifications to the apartment units were made through funds raised this spring by the COIL members.

TRC, working closely with the COIL group to make the residence a reality, provided several other features as services to nine of the tenants who are TRC clients. According to Bill Glenn, counselor in the San Antonio Field Office South and liaison to COIL, TRC-provided features include automatic door openers, moveable ramps, remote control units to operate doors and lights and automatic dial telephones.

Just talking to the residents, you can feel the excitement they feel over the new opportunities awaiting them.

None is more excited than Christine Parsons, one of the residents addressing the crowd at the dedication ceremonies.

Parsons is a TRC/Independent Living Services client of Roger Peterson in the San Antonio Central Field Office. Recently, Southwest Research Institute has been evaluating her for training in color film processing. She hopes to start the training soon.

At the COIL residence, she lives alone and makes her own decisions for the first time in her life.

"Our parents aren't going to be around forever," says Parsons.

HHSCC Studies Tough State Agency Issues

In addition to his reappointment to the TRC Board as its chairman, Jerry Kane also won reappointment to the Health and Human Services Coordinating Council earlier this spring.

If you think that was just an honorary appointment, consider the tasks the HHSCC has at hand.

The HHSCC is charged with sorting out and making recommendations on issues crucial to state agencies.

The council has inherited the health and human services parts of the Stiles Bill from a special legislative study committee. Introduced during the last Legislature, the bill proposes to combine agencies providing health and human services into one "super agency."

The HHSCC has appointed a Restructuring Committee to study such items as administrative management, service delivery and employee working conditions.

Kane is a member not only of the council, but of the Restructuring Committee and the Management and Administrative Task Force.

He is supported in his efforts on the council by Ilene Gray, a program specialist on special assignment as staff liaison. "Aside from all of the anxious feelings of the council involvement in restructuring, people might be surprised at some of the positive deliberations which have taken place," says Gray.

Among these are discussions of the most supportive client-oriented service delivery systems, financial bonuses for productive employees and a career track for professional employees who are not interested in management.

HHSCC-sponsored public hearings, in which Elaine Irons, counselor in the Lubbock Field Office, and TRC client Joey Mason of Longview testified, have kept the focus on the needs of clients.

State Representative Anne Cooper, impressed with the testimony provided by TRC, lauded the quality of mutual planning and responsiveness to the needs of clients shown by TRC counselors.

TRC is increasingly referred to as an agency which is flexible and adaptable to the needs of their clients.

"Without this residence, I'd be living at home or with my brother," she says.

"I now have the freedom to come and go and have my own possessions," says Parsons. "I have my own turf."

Her freedom does not come without a sense of responsibility. "Living on my own means I'm doing normal things anyone would do and giving something back to my society," she says.

"They have to make decisions about everything, including small everyday household problems;

there's nobody else to do it," says Parsons' mother, Marliese Anders.

COIL officials plan to expand the residential concept to include further vocational education for the tenants as well as work areas for them to pursue whatever gainful employment is available.

They see the project as a model for cooperative funding efforts and for other residential projects for people who need more intensive attendant care services and specialized equipment to increase their degree of independence in the community.



Barbara Jordan Media Award winner Claire Barlow Roffino, of C L Productions in Mesquite (center), receives her medallion for the Individual Special Contributions category from Rita Clements (right) while Roffino's husband, Patrick, looks on. Roffino won the award for her bi-monthly cooking magazine, *Microwave Times*, published in braille and reproduced on cassette. *Microwave Times* explores cooking techniques and safe cooking methods for everyone, including people with disabilities.

GCDP Media Award Winners

The Texas Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons named the winners of the 1988 Barbara Jordan Awards at a Governor's Mansion reception in Austin May 10.

First lady of Texas, Rita Clements, presented eight awards to individuals and organizations in the communications media for increasing public understanding of the potential and problems of people with disabilities.

Kym King, award winner from Houston, best summed up the spirit of the Barbara Jordan Awards when she said, "People with disabilities often feel that the biggest 'handicap' they face is not their disability, but rather the attitude of others toward their disability."

Awards were presented in the categories of television, radio, print and special contributions by associated activities.

The GCDP-sponsored awards are named in honor of one of Texas' most distinguished citizens, Barbara Jordan, professor at the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs and former U.S. congresswoman.

Each winner received a three-inch bronze medallion designed by David Deming, an internationally prominent Austin sculptor.

Following are the 1988 Barbara Jordan Award winners:

Television

Public Service Announcement Robert A. Nowotny
Luminarye Productions
Houston

Documentary Kym King
KTXH, TV20
Houston

News Feature Janice Miles
KENS-TV5
San Antonio

Radio

News Feature Kenneth Frantz
Davidson and
Diana Weiss Davidson
Brenham

Special Contributions

Organization KVUE-TV24
Austin
David Little, producer

Individual Claire Barlow Roffino
C L Productions
Mesquite

Print

News Article Lori Stahl
Dallas Morning News

Feature Article Leslie Linthicum
The Houston Post

DURING THE 1930s . . .

- the first stock order was placed from a zeppelin;
- the planet Pluto was discovered;
- Persia was officially renamed Iran;
- the United States was plunged into a depression;
- President Franklin Roosevelt delivered his first fireside chat;
- the Star Spangled Banner became the official national anthem;
- by the end of 1930, 410 people had applied for vocational rehabilitation services in Texas with assistant program supervisor J. J. Brown. He visited 211 of the applicants and found jobs for 27 of them.

Hal's Pals, a collection of soft-sculpture dolls with disabilities, are now available from the National Easter Seal Society. Similar in size and shape to the original "Cabbage Patch" dolls, Hal's Pals were created by Mattel, Inc. For more information, contact National Easter Seal Society, 2023 West Ogden Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60612. Phone: (312) 243-8400 or TDD: (312) 243-8880.

President Reagan issued Executive Order 12640 May 10 which changed the name of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped to the **President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities**. You may also remember an earlier "News & Views" mention that the committee's yearly National Employ the Handicapped week campaign was renamed and expanded. It's now National Disability Employment Awareness Month and will occur in October as did NETH week.

Banks' Success

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from his home. He sometimes meets prospective customers at a friend's store but hopes soon to have a store of his own.

Some of Banks' jewelry is on display in other states. He made arrangements to show the rest of it once a month at the Holiday Inn Northpark in Dallas for their in-house guests.

These shows usually draw over 300 people during the course of the day.

"I feel I'm quite successful," states Banks.

But memories of tougher times and stretching a small disability check are vivid in his mind.

"A year ago, I was eating macaroni and cheese!" he says.

TRC's Public Information Office has begun producing a series of short, three to four minute video features on TRC clients around the state. They're designed for TRC employees interested in client activities in other parts of the state and to show employers the potential for productivity of workers with disabilities. Copies of the video features are available on one-half inch tape from the TRC Library. Call (512) 445-8264 for a list of titles and to reserve tapes.

The U. S. Equal Opportunity Commission reports a slight increase in the number of people with disabilities on the federal payroll. On October 1, 1985, there were 161,000 people with disabilities working for Uncle Sam. By September 30, 1986, that number had risen to 162,389, an increase of .04 percent. For a copy of the report, write Clayton Boyd, EEOC, 2401 E Street, N. W., Washington, D.C. 20507.

One of the most likeable things about Banks is a refreshing excitement over his new-found career.

"I feel that this was the right career choice for me to make," he says.

Banks plans to go back to the Gemological Institute to get a graduate gemological certificate—credentials he hopes will make Gembanks even more successful. He hasn't forgotten the part TRC played in his success.

"If it wasn't for TRC, I wouldn't be in the position I am today," he says. "TRC helped me restructure my entire life. I feel that I've gotten a new lease on life."

A new brochure, "What happens when the driver can't hear?," is available from the Texas Commission for the Deaf. It offers some common sense information on specific problems encountered by drivers who are deaf. For copies of the brochure, contact TCD at (512) 469-9891.

Transitions

Ilene Gray, program specialist in the Central Office, will be leaving the Commission in August. She served most recently as TRC liaison to the Health and Human Services Coordinating Committee, working closely with Board Chairman Jerry Kane.

Robert Phelps joined the Commission June 6 as records administrator in Administrative Services. He has a 20-year background in records administration, including setting up the records function at Fort Hood.

Linda Mitchell has joined the Odessa Field Office as a vocational rehabilitation counselor.

Maurene E. Mallow, stenographer in the San Antonio Field Office West, retired May 31 after 10 years with TRC.

Alvogene W. Tenery, stenographer in the Dallas Southwest Field Office, died Thursday May 18 after a long-term illness. Tenery was a Commission employee for six years.

The Commission opened a new field office in Austin in April. The **Texas School for the Deaf Campus Field Office** is operated by **Roxanne Wheelis**, counselor, formerly of the Houston Central Field Office, and **Rossett Guerro**, secretary.

Another field office opened on the Southwest Texas State University campus where **Virginia Bosman** will serve as courtesy counselor and **Baudelia Arrendondo** is secretary.

MILESTONES

★ Applause

These TRC employees recently received press coverage for the Commission: **Ty Morris**, area manager in the Athens Field Office; **Alan Craig**, counselor in the Baytown Field Office; **Russell Mahoney**, counselor in the Beeville Field Office; **Ronald Acuff**, counselor in the Pampa Field Office; **Carolyn Cornett**, counselor in the Tyler Field Office; **Jo Anne Hull**, counselor in the Corsicana Field Office; **John Halloran**, regional director, and **Richard Palacios**, operations director for programs in the San Antonio Regional Office; **Ted Thayer** and **J. Duarte**, both program specialists in the Central Office; and **Jerry Kane**, TRC Board chairman.

Frank Castillo, counselor in the El Paso Field Office Central, received a certificate of appreciation from the El Paso Independent School District Department of Special Education for outstanding contributions and work in the Transitional Program.

Mario Martinez, area manager in the El Paso Central Field Office, received a certificate of recognition from the Tigua Indian Reservation for his work to combat intravenous drug use and related complications.

Ted Thayer, program specialist in the Central Office, was elected by unanimous vote to the board of directors of the Texas Head Injury Foundation.

JUNE 1988

Region II		DDD
15 years:	Gene F. Lane Russell P. Howard	10 years: Kristina K. Cue Cheri L. Kepper Floradell E. LaGessee
Region III		15 years: Charlia M. Lewis Jean H. Martin Patricia R. Hayden James E. Briggs Mary Jane Wilkes Jack C. Bradshaw Mary Ann Johnson Shirley A. Hamm Dale W. Harper John D. Nelson John T. Patterson
15 years:	Judith A. Streett Russell Mahoney	20 years: Berta Palacios
20 years:	Charles Ray Fenton	
Region IV		Central Office
25 years:	Yeura S. Smith	10 years: Elias Mojica, Jr.
Region V		20 years: Lee Henderson
10 years:	Maizelle Currans Art Longoria	
15 years:	Antonio Ocana, Jr. Doroteo Sandoval	
Region VI		
10 years:	Faye Wootten	
25 years:	Gordon L. Graves	

Steve Mayeux, TRC Consumer Advisory Committee member, has been named director of the Dallas Office of Handicap Services. He replaces Steve Johns, who resigned to take a job in California. Since 1985, Mayeux has worked with Project LINK which helps people with disabilities find jobs. Most recently, he was employment coordinator for Project LINK.

Live and let live is fine, but live and help live is better.



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