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DOCUMENTS COLLECTION



TRC TODAY
a newsletter for
employees of the
Texas Rehabilitation
Commission

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Regional Director Lon Young, in the Fort Worth Regional Office, congratulates Martha Bursik, counselor in the Fort Worth North Field Office, on her retirement after 43 years of TRC service.

Longest tenured TRC employee retires

Everybody loves "Dearie."

That was plain to see at Martha Bursik's November 7 retirement luncheon in Fort Worth when over 150 friends, family, co-workers and former co-workers gathered to say "good-bye."

Bursik acquired the nickname, "Dearie," when she went to work for Jim Hillis, former Region II regional director, in 1947.

It stuck through a career in vocational rehabilitation that spanned 43 years.

"I was so young and naive when I started," says Bursik. "The nickname was just part of taking me under his wing."

At the luncheon, Commissioner Arrell pointed out that before her retirement, Bursik was the longest tenured employee at TRC. Her retirement leaves the

Commissioner, himself, as the TRC employee with the longest tenure with 29 years of TRC service.

"The thing I enjoyed most about working at TRC was the people--the clients and my peers," says Bursik. "They have a lot of empathy and caring for people."

The people she has worked with through the years could say the same about her.

In addition to Hillis, Bursik worked with G.C. Holder, former supervisor in Fort Worth; Lon Young, regional director in Fort Worth; and James L. Jackson, executive deputy commissioner.

Jackson remembers that "Dearie" always had a warm smile and a supportive word for the employees in the Fort Worth office.

Continued on page 8

COD conducts long overdue survey

How many people with disabilities live in Texas? Where are they? What services do they need?

These are some basic questions the Texas Council on Disabilities hopes to answer with the first statewide demographic survey of Texans with disabilities scheduled for next spring.

"When we started the project, the biggest surprise to me was that it had not already been done," says Jerry Robinson, executive director of the council.

According to Robinson, the purpose of the survey is clear: to locate people with disabilities so that more and better services can be made available to them, especially in rural areas.

"One of the things we're hearing is that rural transportation and rural health care is a big concern," says Robinson.

For the survey, the council is mobilizing disability advocacy groups, community groups and other volunteer organizations to help with data gathering. "The beauty of this thing is that we're going grassroots," says Robinson.

Rather than a costly random survey, the COD taskforce in charge of the survey, headed up by Rick Marek, is pursuing a "snowball" or targeted approach for best results with minimum expense.

The "snowball" survey approach relies on identifying "key informants" across the state who are in a position to know people with disabilities to be surveyed in their areas. These people will contact others, who, in turn, will contact others, and so on, creating a kind of survey pyramid.

Some 5,000 key informants have already been contacted through disability advocacy organizations and other community groups. Human service agencies such as the Department on Aging, the

Department of Human Services, the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and the Department of Health, among others, are sharing mailing costs with the council in an effort to reach as many people with disabilities as possible.

The survey questions themselves are based on ones used in a 1984 five-county pilot survey funded by TRC and the Developmental Disabilities Council which has since become a national model among demographic surveys for validity and reliability.

The actual surveying, being done by interview, by mail or by phone, begins in December, continuing through February. The final results should be available in June 1991.

If you would like to participate in the survey, or for more information, contact the Texas Council on Disabilities, 4900 N. Lamar, Austin, TX 78751. Telephone: (voice) (512) 483-4353 or (TDD) (512) 483-4269.

Awards

TRC Service

NOVEMBER 1990

Region I

10 years:

Yvette Cervantes

Region III

15 years:

Jim Tom Nichols

25 years:

David Stanley

Region V

15 years:

Terry Smith

Region VI

15 years:

Veda A. Mason

DDS

10 years:

Cynthia Weintraut

Victoria Knoblauch

Mary Rey Martinez

Cristino V. Duran

Central Office

10 years:

Jackie McPhail

15 years:

Paulette Nall

Albert Davis

Programs Update

The Targeted Jobs Tax Credit, which had expired in early October, was reinstated through a reconciliation bill signed by President Bush. TJTC allows employers a tax credit for hiring people with disabilities. The reconciliation bill contains a 15-month extension of TJTC retroactive to October 1990.

Unit 12 wins with "Super Max"

The Halloween Pumpkin-Carving Contest proved to be the largest money-making event among Disability Determination Services fund-raisers for United Way this year.

DDS Unit 12, supervised by Ralph Cearley, won the contest with an entry titled "Super Max," an uncanny, pumpkin-carved likeness of Commissioner Max Arrell.

The Commissioner, on hand for the winning presentation, accepted the tribute in good natured fashion.

The contest worked like this: Each unit and department was allowed one contest entry. Employees bought votes for their favorite entries at 10 cents a vote with no limit on the number purchased.

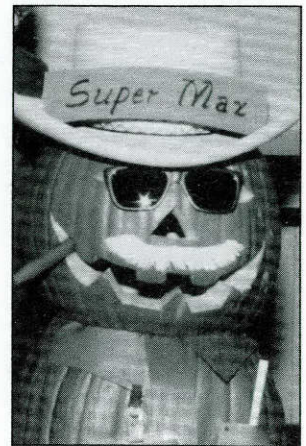
According to David Norman, DDS United Way Campaign chairman, a total of 6,594 votes were cast.

"DDS employees went all out for United Way this year," says Norman. "There was a real spirit of competitiveness, and everyone had a lot of fun."

As chairman, Norman enlisted help from 27 coordinators representing all the various DDS units and departments. Their task was to come up with successful fund-raising projects.

In order to give a boost to next year's campaign, the coordinators met for a post campaign "debriefing" to identify this year's successes and pitfalls. Their report should help make the 1991 DDS United Way effort even more successful.

When the fund-raisers were over and the contributions and pledges were tallied, Norman presented Commissioner Arrell with a check for \$6,296.80.



DDS Unit 12 swept the United Way Pumpkin-Carving Contest October 31 with "Super Max," a Halloween tribute to Commissioner Max Arrell.

ADA celebration to be taped for broadcast

The first nationally televised concert for persons with disabilities will be produced on December 8 at Trinity University's Laurie Auditorium in San Antonio by America's Disability Channel (ADC) and The Silent Network (TSN), sponsored by the San Antonio Mayor's Committee for Disabled Persons.

This musical extravaganza will be taped live for national television and will air on ADC and TSN and other broadcast stations throughout the nation during July 1991 to celebrate the first anniversary of President George Bush's historic July 26, 1990 signing of what he called "the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act."

The December 8 concert and media event will feature Ken Medema, an internationally-recognized musician from San Francisco. Medema, blind from birth, has thrilled audiences around the world with his unconventional manner and brilliance.

Medema will be joined by Mary Beth Barber, a deaf actress from New York and a former Miss Deaf America. Having made appearances on "MacGyver," "THROB" and most recently, the nationally televised Citibank commercial, Ms. Barber will provide exciting dance and visual images to complement Medema's music.

Other performers and musical groups with disabilities will be part of the matinee and evening performances.

Various national corporations, some located in San Antonio, are underwriting the production expenses and providing concert seats for many who could not otherwise attend.

For more information, contact Sandra Kester, The Silent Network/Public Affairs, 1777 N.E. Loop 410, Suite 1401, San Antonio, TX 78217. Phone: (512) 824-7446 (voice) or (512) 825-1666 (TDD).



"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. Submissions or inquiries may be addressed to Vernon Dement, Public Information Office, Texas Rehabilitation Commission, 4900 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas 78751-2316; or telephone (512) 483-4422.

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Commissioner's Message Box

Q Just a note to say how much I appreciate the opportunity to be part of last night's celebration of the closed-captioned news broadcast on Channel 24 (October 1). The fact that it was held at the Brown-Heatly Building, and TRC was a part of it, makes me proud to be a TRC employee. I'm sorry that more TRC staff weren't there -- it's events like these that I feel really draw us together as a team and illustrate how the jobs we do individually contribute to the total TRC mission. In my work at the agency, I seldom have direct contact with persons with disabilities. Last night, interacting with the deaf community made me see how much our services, and services like those provided at Channel 24, can help enrich the lives of persons with disabilities. Watching the 6 p.m. local news for me is a given; it never occurred to me that hearing-impaired people must learn about today's local news events by reading tomorrow morning's paper. Again -- I appreciate the opportunity to attend last night's celebration, and I look forward to more such activities in the future.

A I appreciate hearing your thoughts regarding the recent celebration of the closed-captioned news broadcast on Channel 24. I too was proud that TRC was a part of this event. I'm glad you enjoyed it. I hope more TRC folks are able to attend such events in the future.

TRC top employees

Two Top TRC Employees of the Year were named at a meeting.

For 1990, top employee honors went to Gordon in Local Area Network Services in the Central Office and Maria Rutledge, administrative coordinator in the Central Office (salary groups 2-11).

The top employees were chosen from a field of Employee Award winners picked for this honor from all regions, the Central Office and Disability Determination Office.

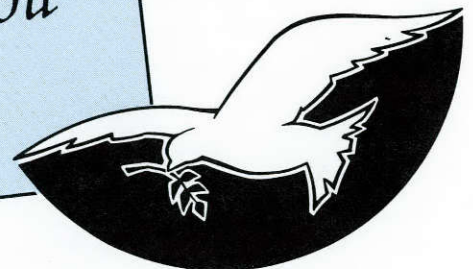
Outstanding employee selections are based on: performance of regular job activities; positive relationships with the public; dependability, initiative, and flexibility; agency image; and participating in community projects with people with disabilities.

Top employees are two of the 16 who best exemplify these characteristics.

Craig, the LAN administrator for TRC since 1985, kept the LAN technical system up and running in record time during the TRC/Central Office building move in 1989. Beyond his duties at work, Gordon commits himself to being there for others and helping those in need. In addition to various community activities, Craig takes communication classes on his own time. "I don't mind being unable to communicate with deaf people. It's their ability, not theirs," says Craig.

Employed with TRC since 1978, Rutledge goes above and beyond her way to assume added duties not required of her. She does so only because someone needs the help. She gives of herself both on the job and off, as seen in her many community projects. She works with the Austin Arts Commission, the Sister City program and is a major supporter of the Special Olympics, among others. Rutledge gives 100 percent of herself with a smile on her face. No wonder TRC workers consider her a "breath of fresh air."

*Peace and goodwill to you
this holiday season!*
from the TRC Today staff



ees

ed at the October Board

Craig, system analyst
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16 Outstanding
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Congratulations to top employees Gordon Craig and Maria Rutledge, and to the winners of the 1990 TRC Outstanding Employee of the Year Awards!

Region I

- Groups 2-11 *Suzanne Brundt*,
rehab. services technician
El Paso Field Office Central
- Groups 12-20 *Duane Mitchell*,
program manager
El Paso Field Office Central

Region II

- Groups 2-11 *Mary Edwards*,
rehab. services technician
Fort Worth Field Office North
- Groups 12-20 *Dennis Dunlap*,
staff psychologist
Abilene Field Office

Region III

- Groups 2-11 *Adeline Kasper*,
rehab. services technician
Wharton Field Office
- Groups 12-20 *Polly Walton*,
counselor
Beaumont Field Office

Region IV

- Groups 2-11 *Sylvia Capetillo*,
rehab. services technician
Rosenburg Field Office
- Groups 12-20 *Frankie Watson*,
administrative director
Houston Regional Office

Region V

- Groups 2-11 *Gloria Alderette*,
personnel clerk
San Antonio Regional Office
- Groups 12-20 *Sharon Sattler*,
personnel officer
San Antonio Regional Office

Region VI

- Groups 2-11 *Sylvia Spears*,
rehab. services technician
Greenville Field Office
- Groups 12-20 *Carolyn Burelsmith*,
counselor
Tyler Field Office

DDS

- Groups 2-11 *Debra Grayson*,
clerk
Initial Unit 10
- Groups 12-20 *Richard Hopkins*,
disability examiner
Initial Unit 07

Central Office

- Groups 2-11 *Maria Rutledge*,
administrative coordinator
Legal Services
- Groups 12-20 *Gordon Craig*,
system analyst
Local Area Network Services

TRC Board Chairman Jerry Kane presented top employee awards to Maria Rutledge, administrative coordinator in Legal Services, and Gordon Craig, systems analyst in Local Area Network Services, at the October 26 Board meeting.

Disability awareness highlights GCDP conference

The Conference and Awards Luncheon, sponsored by the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons, drew hundreds of participants for disability awareness training and recognition of employers of people with disabilities.

The training was conducted by Richard Pimentel, author of the renowned "Windmills" training package, and his fiancée Geri Jewell, a stand-up comedienne and sitcom TV star.

Their three-hour presentation on disability awareness delighted the audience with hilarity, new facts on the impact of ADA, and profound advice for employers on communicating with people with disabilities.

Pimentel and Jewell also helped to acknowledge people at the luncheon who were honored for their achievements in advancing the cause of employing people with disabilities.

1990 GCDP Employment Award Winners

Martha Arbuckle Award

John Wayland
Chairperson
Waco Mayor's Committee
for Disabled Persons
Waco

Governor's Citation for Meritorious Service

Doug Nicholson
Director
Lufkin Workshop and
Opportunity
Center, Inc.
Lufkin

Healthcare Professional of the Year

Dr. Mary Bubliss
Plainview

Public Employee of the Year

Larry Blowers
Wichita Falls

Governmental Agency of the Year

Army & Air Force
Exchange Service
Major General
Jeffrey D. Kahla
Commander
Dallas

Small Employer of the Year

Scarlett Rabalais
Hot Diggity Dogs, Inc.
Carrollton

Large Employer of the Year

Gene McDavid
President
Houston Chronicle
Houston

Disabled Person of the Year

D. Scott Royall
Houston



Jerry Turner, member of the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons from Hillsboro, presents a certificate of affiliation to Virginia Ener, chairperson of the newly-formed Orange County Mayor's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities. The Orange County Committee recently completed the necessary requirements for affiliation with the network of mayors' committees.

Region I

In his post as chair of a subcommittee for the Amarillo Advisory Commission for the Disabled, Adrian Cervantez, area manager in the Amarillo Field Office, helped form the idea for the Amarillo Employment Symposium which was held October 13. The symposium, and a related banquet, was held in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month drawing representatives from local organizations and agencies providing work-related services to people with disabilities.

Region II

Stan Tidwell, counselor in the Wichita Falls Field Office, recently received a commendation of merit from the mayor of Wichita Falls for his work on the Commission for Disabled Persons.

Region III

Larry Matthews, counselor in the Temple Field Office, was named Public Employee of the Year by the Temple Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities at the annual committee awards luncheon October 31.

Region IV

Jeff Burns, counselor in the Baytown Field Office, was recently selected for a counselor position in the Houston West Field Office effective November 1.

Region V

Carol Champion, counselor in the Brownsville Field Office, moved to a counselor position in the Austin East Field Office October 8.

Joe Rodriguez, counselor in the Eagle Pass Field Office, recently received congratulations from Gov. William P. Clements on his reappointment to the Middle Rio

Grande Private Industry Council as a representative of the rehabilitation sector. Clements specifically noted Rodriguez' efforts in the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program.

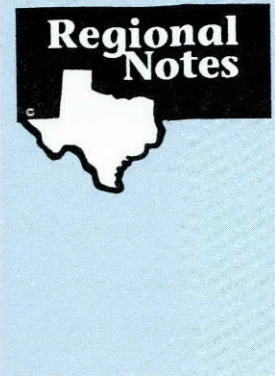
Region VI

Judy Freeman, counselor in the Longview Field Office, along with several other Longview and Marshall staff members, recently played a large part in the success of the Job Fair '90 in Longview. Freeman, fair coordinator, reports that over 500 job applicants attended the fair with booths representing over 20 employers from the private sector and local, state and federal agencies. A major goal for fair organizers was to dispel myths about hiring people with disabilities.

Central Office

Joanne Edge, manager of compensation/benefits/classification in Human Resource Management, recently received a letter of commendation from Senator Gonzalo Barrientos and Senator Nolan "Buzz" Robnett, co-chairs of the Joint Select Committee on Employee Benefits, for her work on the employee benefits survey project. Results of the survey will help shape state employee benefit legislation in the upcoming legislative session.

At the 1990 Annual Institute of the National Association of Mental Health Information Officers, the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons received three first place regional awards and three second place national awards in the "Light Up the 90s" media competition. Winning entries included "Workstream," a quarterly newsletter; "People Perspective," an annual report; and newly-designed GCDP stationary. Special thanks go to Becky Nieto, illustrator, who designed the newsletter and the annual report (the first desktop published product completed in Media Services). The new stationary design was a grande finale performance by Sue Durban.



Editor's Note: If you have items of interest in the various TRC regions (including DDS and Central Office), such as local awards, press coverage, conferences, meetings or other TRC-related activities which could appear in Regional Notes, please submit them for consideration to "TRC Today" c/o the Public Information Office.



Luck or skill?

Commissioner Arrell displays his form at wheelchair basketball during an October 23 disability awareness event at the Central Office. It was one of hundreds of similar TRC-sponsored events across the state held in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October. Sponsors estimate almost 100 Central Office staff participated in demonstrations illustrating such disabilities as mobility impairment, blindness, dyslexia and deafness, among others.

Retiree *continued from page 1*

Starting out as a secretary, Bursik moved up through the TRC ranks to interviewer, then medical services coordinator, finally retiring as a TRC counselor in the Fort Worth North Field Office. When Bursik went through new counselor orientation, it had taken seven years to get her degree from Texas Christian University.

She doesn't like to think of leaving IRC as retiring. "I'd rather think of it as a transition," says Bursik.

Although heart bypass surgery in July didn't force her to make this "transition," she admits it made her consider some other options.

The surgery caused her to miss almost one full quarter of the 1990 fiscal year, but she still met her targeted number of closures for the year. "You have to plan ahead," says Bursik.

But, Bursik's plans for the future are not yet clear. She wants to continue ballroom dancing, a hobby she has pursued two nights a week for 10 years. She also wants to enroll in a fitness program to help get her strength back and learn more about low-cholesterol cooking. "Whatever I do," she says with characteristic shyness, "I'd like to be a blessing to somebody."

It's a blessing everyone who knows Bursik has already experienced.

Her former supervisor, G.C. Holder, said it best at her "good-bye" luncheon, "We all love you 'Dearie.'"

TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION
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