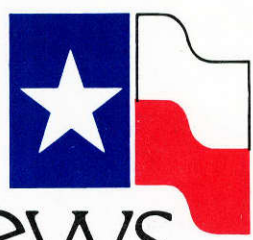


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News & Views



★ Texas Rehabilitation Commission ★ A Human Energy Agency ★

Vol. 5 No. 3

March, 1983

Committees Hear TRC Budget Request

The Texas Rehabilitation Commission's budget request for the 1984-85 biennium passed through two more phases of the state budget process in early February when two legislative committees heard the Commission's rationale for its request. Members of the Senate Finance Committee and the House Human Services Subcommittee heard testimony from Commissioner Max Arrell concerning funding requests for all programs operating within the Vocational Rehabilitation Division.

Members of both committees had already received a recommendation for TRC's budget from the Legislative



Members of TRC's Consumer Consultation Committee were among the dozens of disability consumer advocates who attended budget hearings before the Senate Finance Committee and House Human Services Subcommittee.

Budget Board. Generally, speaking, the committees must determine if the LBB's recommendation is, in fact, appropriate. The committees will forward their recommendations to the appropriate legislative bodies. The Senate Finance Committee will make a recommendation to the Senate. The House Human Services Subcommittee's recommendation will go to the House Appropriations Committee which will, in turn, make a recommendation to the House of Representatives.

for both hearings were packed to overflowing. The majority of the consumers were present to show support for the Commission's budget request for independent living programs. The Commission has requested a total of \$1.5 million for each year of the biennium to support the independent living program. The LBB recommendation was far below the Commission's request--\$159,000 for FY 1984 and \$169,000 for FY 1985. A number of advocates for the independent living program, including directors of several of the existing independent living centers, testified in behalf of the full amount of funding requested by the Commission.

Disability consumer advocates made a strong showing in support of the TRC budget request--meeting rooms



Disabled persons in Texas made a unified showing at the state Capitol on Disability Rally Day. More information and pictures appear on pages 4 & 5 of this newsletter.



Deputy Commissioner Doyle Wheeler was among the dozens of co-workers and friends who gathered in Wichita Falls recently to celebrate Marjorie Booker's 40 years of service to TRC. Booker, supervisor of the Wichita Falls Field Office, retired at the end of January. Booker joined the Commission in 1943 as a secretary. She has worked for every commissioner or state director who has served the Commission since the Vocational Rehabilitation Division was created in 1929. Upon retirement, Booker had more tenure with TRC than any other employee now working.

A Note of Thanks

A very special "thank you" to TRC staff who made my retirement a joyful occasion. I treasure each telephone call, card, letter, and gift.

It's gratifying to know that I have spent my forty years of working life doing something which I've thoroughly enjoyed. It's difficult to leave at this time when exciting things are happening to assist in rehabilitating clients. I will miss my "rehabilitation family" and hope each of you will contact me if you are in Wichita Falls. Now on to Rest & Recreation!

Marjorie Booker



Simmons to Serve as New DD Director

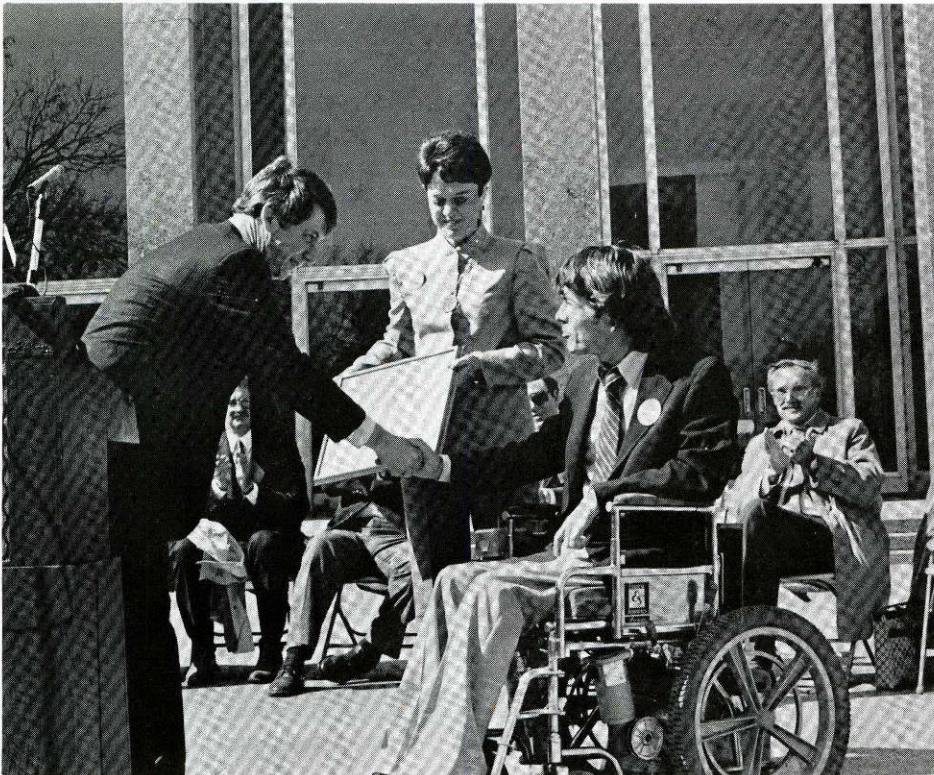
Joellen Flores Simmons has been named the new executive director of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities.

A former special education teacher, she has spent the past nine years with the Texas Education Agency. Her most recent position was as a fiscal specialist for special education programs.

The new executive director has a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education from Texas Women's University and a master's degree in special education from Texas Tech with additional studies in the areas of learning disabilities, educational diagnostics, psychology and mental retardation. She has done post graduate work at the University of Texas and has attended as an undergraduate student Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio, Southwestern Louisiana University in Lafayette, La., and the University of Heidelberg in Germany.

Simmons, 35, replaces Kathy Sandusky who left in June to attend law school.

Simmons and her staff will be moving from the current DD headquarters to the TRC Central Office April 1.



Bobby Simpson, executive director of the Austin Resource Center for Independent Living (ARCIL), was one of several persons selected to receive a special commendation from the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped during the recent Disability Rally Day activities. Simpson, who serves as vice chairperson of TRC's Consumer Consultation Committee was cited for his "significant contribution to increased public awareness of and improved quality of life opportunities for disabled persons in Texas."

Creamer Keeps on Truckin'

Jack Creamer has a new truck to drive on his trips around the state, carrying items to and from the TRC warehouse.

It's a new Ford diesel LN 8,000 with a 20-foot box and a 3,000 pound lift. The \$39,696 vehicle replaces a 1978 Ford that had 200,000 miles.

"They'll be no more breaking down out in the middle of nowhere," said Creamer, who remembers a three day wait for repairs when the old truck stopped running in Three Rivers.

He estimates he will put about 50,000 miles on the new truck this year.



Creamer, who has worked for TRC for seven years, will travel in comfort in the new

truck which has an AM-FM radio and a comfortable air seat.

TRC Employees Receive Home, Work Safety Tips

Texas Rehabilitation Commission employees received copies of two booklets dealing with safety in the past month as part of a Commission-sponsored program.

The first book issued to employees, "Being Safe," provides a variety of safety techniques for personal protection at work or home. The second publication, "Warning: Hotels Could Be Hazardous to your Health," provides information on what to do in case of a fire. The booklet was written by a captain of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

"The purpose behind the booklets is to alert employees to the many dangers they probably do not think of. We are attempting to focus on the total environment of the employee, both at work and home," said Mike Mericle, personnel director. "We hope that the publication on Hotel Fire Safety will be especially

helpful to TRC employees who must travel. I wish to recognize the cooperative spirit of the Southland Corporation for making this information available to us."

TRC expanded its safety program one-and-a-half years ago when the responsibility was placed under the direction of the Personnel Services Division. Linda Dryden, the Commission's safety coordinator, is currently working, in conjunction with staff development, on safety training programs to be presented to employees this fiscal year.

"Commission employees are most fortunate to have the Commissioner give his full support to a safety program. Many agencies have little or no safety programs and training. The purchase and distribution of these booklets is a good example of TRC management's concern for employee safety," Mericle said.

TRA Plans Conference

Plans for the 1983 Texas Rehabilitation Association convention set for July 17-20 in Houston are being made by association members.

Conference chairman Ken Vogel has started meeting with committee heads to outline activities for the event to be held at the Hilton Southwest in Houston. Tentative plans are for the conference theme to be based on the economy and the "Dynamic Duo/Human Concerns vs. Economic Realities."

News & Views

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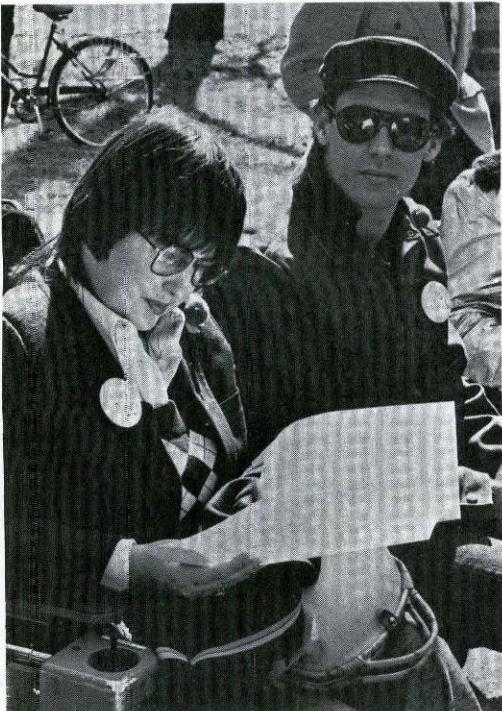
Disability

★ February 1

If there is strength in number, the advocacy movement proved its worth. Hundreds of disabled persons and their families gathered in Austin for Disability Rally Day. Sponsored by 29 of the state's major disability groups from throughout the state, the rally drew participants from all over the state.

The highlight of the meeting was the singing at the Texas State Capitol building—a rally designed to show the unity and strength of disabled persons. Participants wore buttons, bumper stickers and T-shirts. "Disabled but Able..." decorated the University of Texas Longhorn Band. The Texas State Singing and Signing Choir and Texas State Ensemble set an upbeat tone for the day. Legislators and consumers received a large crowd.

A resolution adopted by the Legislature on Feb. 2, 1983, as Disability Rally Day, in recognition of the initiative of the Legislature to rededicate its commitment to programs and services which enhance the capacities and quality of life of disabled persons. Earlier in the day, legislators received a large crowd for legislative "support of all in the maximum potential of every disabled person." 20,000 persons.



Photos by Kaye Beneke and Chris Petrison

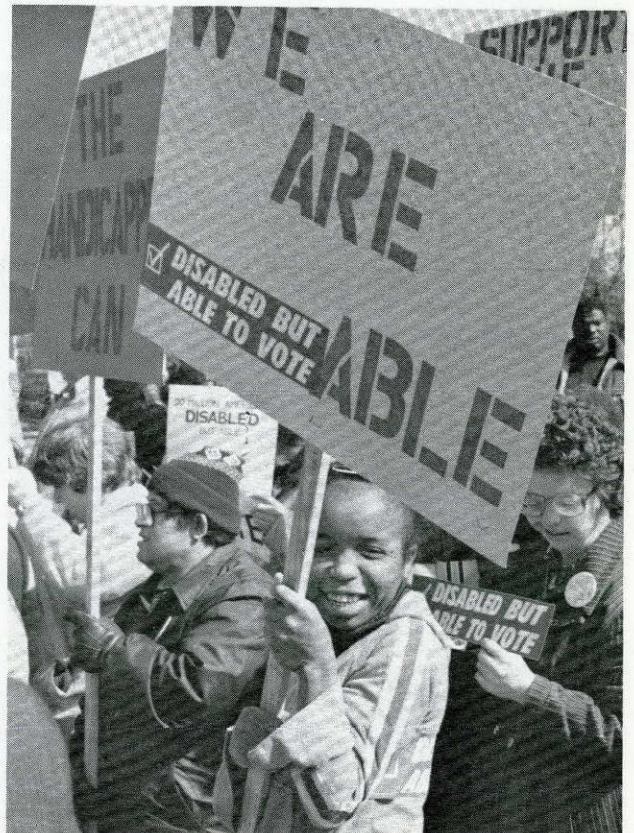
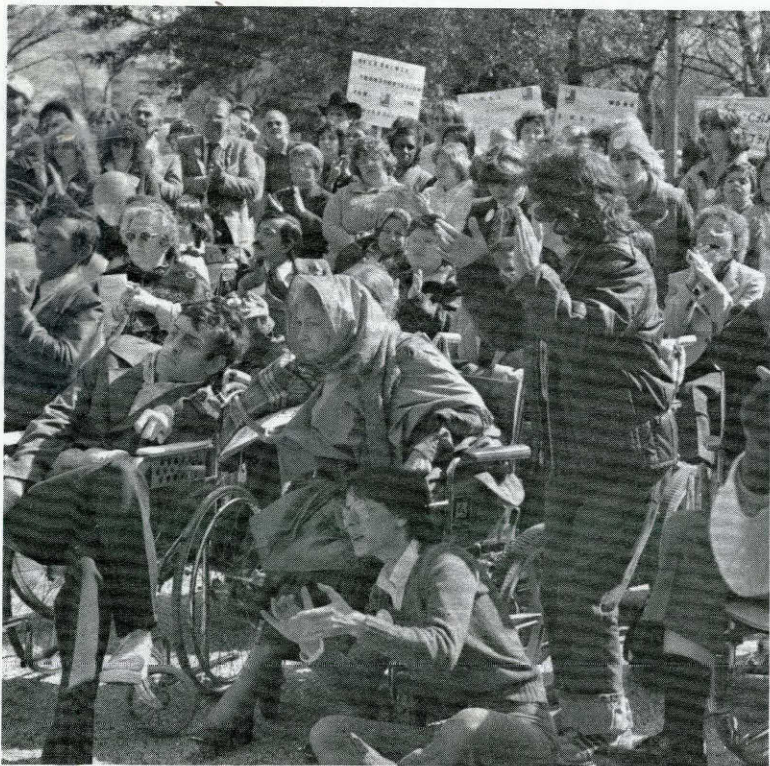
Rally Day

2, 1983 ★

s, then the Texas disability
ff strong in early February as
consumer advocates gathered
y. The two day event, spon-
consumer advocacy organiza-
representing a wide variety of
the state.

ing was a noon rally at the
to show state officials the
persons in Texas. Banners,
floons bearing the message
the gathering. Music by the
d, Texas School for the Deaf
Texas School for the Blind Jazz
the rally. Speeches by legis-
enthusiastic responses from the

Texas Legislature declaring
Day resolved "...that, in re-
Texans with disabilities, the
ment to support community
will increase the independent
persons with disabilities..."
ad received a petition calling
atives which help develop the
abled citizen" signed by some



FROM



Gravenor Returns to Work After 30 Years at Home

. . .by Chris Petrison

Electric typewriters, modern Dictaphone machines and the pay all took Sally Gravenor by surprise seven months ago when she started as a stenographer in Disabilities Determination Division Unit 12.

She discovered that each had changed drastically over the past 30 years since she decided to leave the work force and stay home as a full-time wife and mother.

"I was a whiz on the manual typewriter when I worked before, but an electric typewriter is much different. It took me time to get used to it," Gravenor, 55, said.

Gravenor quit her job with the State of Texas 30 years ago when she discovered she was going to have her first baby.

Four children later, with her youngest ready to start college, she decided it was



time to go back to work.

"I came to the TRC to take a typing test and found they were using electric typewriters. I tried and did badly," Gravenor recalled.

On her third try she passed the test and after her fourth job interview was hired by Ralph Cearley, supervisor of the Initial/Recon Unit.

"She convinced me that she was there to work and that she wouldn't take absences. I took a gamble on her and it worked. Most

people wouldn't touch someone who was out of the labor force for that long," Cearley said.

Gravenor said that, besides different typewriters and other modern equipment, the pay had also changed over the past three decades.

When she started her first job at the age of 17, she was earning \$25 a week and thought that was a lot of money. Today her income is considerably higher.

Gravenor, who lives at her family's ranch in Henly in Hays County with her husband and 17-year-old daughter, said since she has started working, she has found she has a hard time keeping up with her interests.

"I have a garden, do oil paintings and make most of my clothes. Between that and work, my day is not long enough," she said.

Tax Information for Disabled People

A booklet that outlines federal income tax rules of interest to disabled people is now available through the Internal Revenue Service.

IRS Publication 907, "Tax Information for Handicapped and Disabled Individuals," provides general information on deductions, credits and taxable income. For example, it specifies rules which allow taxpayers to exclude certain disability payments from income, to deduct medical expenses and to claim a credit for disabled dependent care expenses.

To get a copy of the publication, contact the IRS.

ERS Clients Shine



Martin Ortiz (left), South San Antonio Goodwill campus work achiever; Pat Helwig (second from left), Graduate of the Year; and Richard Lopez (right), North San Antonio campus work achiever, show awards they received during the Jan. 28 Goodwill annual meeting. They are pictured with Roy Riggans, TRC Extended Rehabilitation Services operations director. Both Ortiz and Lopez are current ERS clients, and Helwig is a former client.

More From the Field . . .



As part of the regional safety program, Region V employees are participating in the Red Cross "Race for Life" course. The four hour program teaches emergency first aid for respiratory failure and cardiac arrest in adult victims. Region V Personnel Officer Sharon Sattler, a certified Red Cross instructor, is conducting classes in each supervisory unit. Sattler (foreground) is pictured instructing Senior Counselor Ed White (right) and Counselor Alice Gomez.

Letters . . .

Even a cursory review of the current membership list of the Texas Rehabilitation Association can be a shocker.

It's all those blank spaces that get you!

Take almost any TRC office in the Lone Star State. Run your eye down the list of names, comparing them with the TRC roster as you go. Suddenly you are aware that TRC is not generally all that hep on professional memberships - at least not of the NRA/TRA/Subchapter/Divisional kind.

That bothers me. For many reasons. Not the least of which is that NRA/TRA is a frontrunner in providing for the advancement in rehab of all disabled persons. Add to that the impact which this one private, non-profit organization has had upon federal/state legislation in behalf of ourselves, and you've got something to think about, and then some!

I almost wish we were required to belong. Why, TRC alone would raise the state and national memberships by several hundred, if that were so. But that's not the way we do it - the choice still rests with you and me.

Back to those blank spaces - reckon, if one of those happens to belong to you, you just might decide to be a member too? I've got a red-hot committee of eager folk standing ready in the wings to lend a hand at your request!

- Ralph Hasten, Membership Committee Chairperson, HARA Subchapter, Houston.

Retirements

Mary Edgin, Disability Examiner II, Disability Determination Division, employed June 1, 1973, retirement effective January 31, 1983.

Calendar of Events

MARCH	Activity	Sponsor	Location
6 - 11	Management Training for Managers of Managers	TSMDC	Lago Vista
6 - 11 13 - 18 27 - 4/1	Management Training for First-Line Supervisors	TSMDC	Lakeway
7 - 8	Vocational Special Needs	Texas A&M	Austin
7 - 11	New Personnel/Specialized Orientation	TRC	Austin
9 - 10	Medical Services Coordinators Workshop	TRC	Austin
14 - 16	Model State Plan for the Deaf-Blind	ARRTC	Little Rock, Arkansas
15 - 18	Managing Human Resources	RAMP	University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK
17 - 18 24 - 25	Technical Training for Administrative Technicians	TRC	TSTI, Waco
21 - 22	Seminar on Internal Auditing	Institute of Internal Auditors	Austin
22 - 23	Field Trip to Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf	TRC	Big Spring
22 - 24	Medical Training for VR Counselors Phase III	TRC	Dallas