

FEB 26 1981

MH-MR



arc

Association for Retarded Citizens of Fort Worth news

March 1981

RECOGNITION AND AWARENESS

On February 13th, Governor William Clements signed a proclamation which designates March as Mental Retardation Month across the state of Texas. Ellen Huffman, President of ARC, Texas and ARC, Fort Worth, as well as two self-advocates were present at that ceremony.

Locally, the City Council of Fort Worth and the Tarrant County Commissioners will sign and present similar proclamations soon. The following article was written by Gene Patterson, Executive Director of ARC/FW, and focuses on several facets of this nationally significant month.

Each year March is designated as Mental Retardation Month. It is our chance to focus public attention on the needs and accomplishments of our fellow citizens who are mentally retarded. Will Rogers once said, "I always like to hear a man talk about himself, because then I never hear anything but good." March is a time for the ARC to talk about itself and to make the public aware of our mission to serve retarded persons and their families.

For those of us who are involved in a day-to-day effort to improve the quality of life for retarded individuals, a special month is hardly necessary to make us aware. However, the other 90% of our population needs to know that handicapped individuals not only need an extra measure of our concern but that they can also be contributing members of our society.

Long term success of an advocacy group like the ARC depends on three critical factors: 1) a large number of members, 2) volunteers who are willing to give a few hours of their time to ARC activities, and 3) general public awareness of our mission. Mental Retardation Month is one major opportunity for us to get the word out and encourage people to join the ARC as active members. Have *you* asked someone to join the ARC this month?

Another aspect of this special month is our effort to create greater sensitivity among church groups of the need for retarded persons to participate in the community's religious life. The weekend of March 14 & 15 has been designated as Mental Retardation Sabbath/Sunday. The Biblical heritage of both the Jewish and Christian faiths demonstrates a great concern for all persons, affirming that all people, handicapped or

not, are created in God's image. There are numerous passages in the Psalms, Prophets and Gospels expressing God's concern for the weak, the lame, the lowly, orphans...those persons often overlooked by people and societies in search of power, wisdom and wealth. Our religious teachings tell us over and over again to remember, understand, respect and love those persons who may have special needs. Because someone may be less able does not mean they are less worthy.

The Judeo-Christian ethic affirms that, as God has accepted and loved us, with our faults and handicaps, so we are to love and accept one another. As communities of the people of God, we should be the first to include those persons and families who especially need to know that God loves them.

Talk with your minister, priest or rabbi and ask what your congregation can do to celebrate Mental Retardation Sabbath/Sunday.

CAN YOU HELP?

Gateway Club members and guests had a marvelous time at the skating party on February 12th. Many thanks to host and hostess Carl and Marcella Hehs for providing the opportunity for such fun -- even if one of those guests, a certain Mr. Patterson, did sit down rather carefully for several days hence.

While Cheryl and Ann Goin have volunteered to plan the activity for April, we do need volunteers to plan something for Gateway's March activity. Welcome to My World also needs someone to host their March 20th party. If you can help, please call the ARC/FW office at 336-8661.

Several families have recently asked about the availability of respite services. In addition to the respite service provided by Fort Worth State School, we find that a private nursing service agency is currently offering respite care.

Quality Care Nursing Service, located at 2320 S. Oakland Blvd., provides respite or temporary care for mentally retarded children and adults. During periods of crisis, or in order to provide a well-needed break in routine for family members, this nursing firm can provide bonded nurse's aides. These aides are trained and supervised by a Registered Nurse, who is available for consultation 24 hours a day.

To obtain information, or to request respite care, call 531-8632.

AFFIRMATION OF RIGHTS

The Bishops Advisory Committee on Ministry With Handicapped Persons, made up of 160 diocese, adopted a statement on September 26, 1980 in support of the U. S. Catholic Council. That Council has been set up to further the goals of the International Year of Disabled Persons in this country and has been named as a National Partner to the IYDP group.

The Pastoral Statement calls for a re-examination of attitudes toward handicapped persons, elimination of prejudices, however unconscious, and greater acceptance of handicapped brothers and sisters as having unique gifts. In addition, the Pastoral calls for both affirmation of the rights of handicapped people and actively working "to realize these rights in the fabric of modern society."

Among the elements of that resolution were:

- a) Expanded educational opportunities for Catholic youth and adults having disabilities.
- b) Emphasis upon inclusion of handicapped parishioners in recreational, social and cultural activities within the diocese.
- c) Cooperation with local public and private bodies in special events such as Special Olympics and other youth activities.
- d) Pastoral services for and with disabled persons in parishes as well as in institutions, residential facilities, and group homes.

ON A NATIONAL SCALE

Wayne Newton, internationally known entertainer, was recently named as Honorary Chariman of ARC for 1981.

ARC National Headquarters has completed moving its offices to 2501 Avenue J in Arlington.

While many ARC members are familiar with the story of the small group of parents who established the forerunner of today's 300,000-member Association, other ARC members may not be aware of some of our historical milestones. By petitioning assistance from field professionals, politicians, and other people to achieve rights for mentally retarded citizens, ARC members and volunteers can take pride in many accomplishments:

1950 - The National Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Retarded Children was founded in Minneapolis, MN on September 30, with representatives from 13 states attending.

1950 - 1956 - Enactment of the first pieces of major legislation which recognized the unique needs of mentally retarded persons.

1954 - President Dwight D. Eisenhower endorsed the first observance of National Retarded Children's Week.

1956 - ARC backed the proposed change in the Social Security Act which authorized what is now known as the Adult Disabled Child Benefits Program. Under this plan, a surviving adult dependent child of an insured worker may receive benefits if the child has a permanent and total disability originating before age 18.

1957 - The Poster Child Campaign was started.

1961 - The Association received the Distinguished Service Award from the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped for its meritorious contributions.

1963 - The ARC achieved representation in all 50 states when the first Alaskan unit was admitted to membership.

ARC representatives participated in the White House Conference on Mental Retardation and provided considerable consultation and support to President John F. Kennedy's mental retardation legislative program.

The first bill implementing the Kennedy program to combat mental retardation, Public Law 88-156, was signed in October. It authorized funds for grants to states to begin comprehensive mental retardation planning of their own, on a coordinated inter-agency basis. The law also funded special maternal and child health grants.

1964 - The Employer of the Year Award program was started.

1965 - The organization received funds from the U.S. Department of Labor for the establishment of the On-The-Job Training Project.

1970 - The ARC played a major role in the formation and passage of the Developmental Disabilities Services and Facilities Construction Act.

1971 - United Nations formally adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons.

1974 - A landmark event was the issuance of the postage stamp, "Retarded Children Can Be Helped." ARC members and friends had sought such a stamp for nine years as a means of focusing national attention on mental retardation.

1977 - The ARC adopted the third and final challenge, the search for cures for conditions and disorders involved with mental retardation.

1981 - United Nations designated 1981 as International Year of Disabled Persons.

PUNCHING HOLES IN THE DARK

The month of March seems an appropriate time for publishing the following excerpts from an address entitled Punching Holes In The Dark. This definition of leadership was written by Dorothy G. Murray, a former officer of the national Association, Southeast Region.

The year was about 1855. The place, Scotland's romantic, ageless Edinburgh. The time was a cold, foggy twilight hour. A small, frail five-year old boy stood with his nose pressed firmly against the windowpane of his upstairs bedroom staring intently into the street below. For twenty-five minutes a loving but gradually-growing-impatient Nanny had been gently urging him toward preparation for bed time. And he, as small boys have been wont to do from time immemorial, was using every device at his command to postpone the inevitable. Finally, in a voice that gave full indication of her rising indignation, the Nanny called sharply: "But what in the world are you doing so long, Bobby?"

"Watching old Thomas," came the matter-of-fact reply.

"But what could old Thomas possibly be doing to keep you spell-bound for all this time?", queried the now curious Nanny.

"He's punching holes in the dark," answered wee Robert Louis Stevenson, continuing to watch with fascinated gaze as crippled old Thomas, the street's lamplighter, moved slowly down the street, lighting each lamp until the street was safe for all who passed by. It was a scene of breath-taking beauty for the small, imaginative boy whose physical world was often limited to the four walls of his bedroom.

Punching holes in the darkness -- could a more descriptive phrase be found for the work of the faithful old street-lighter as he made his evening rounds?

I think not. And, although the colorful phrase is over a century old, it is still a most apt one, and might be applied to those of us who are attempting to serve the needs of the mentally retarded, whether we are volunteer workers or whether we belong to the vast army of professional people now moving into the field.

Through the ages light has stood as a symbol of warmth, of safety, of understanding, of compassionate concern; can it not truthfully be said that we, too, are punching holes in the dark? Punching holes in the darkness of ignorance and misinformation and sheer superstition which surrounds the retarded in the minds of the general public; punching holes in the darkness of despair and loneliness that would be the lot of thousands of retarded persons were it not for our activity; punching holes in the armour of apathy and indifference worn by many public officials who are charged with the responsibility of securing adequate tax funds with which to serve the needs of the retarded. These are only a few of the ways in which we, as volunteers and as career people, are literally "punching holes in the dark" for these often neglected and misunderstood members of our human family.

Since 1950, the National Association for Retarded Citizens has been hard at work setting the stage, so to speak, for lighting up the world in behalf of the retarded; legislation has been passed at both state and federal levels enabling us to get out in the street and take action in lighting the lamps of added services for the retarded; commissions and committees have been set up at every level of government to coordinate efforts and stimulate governmental action; constitutions and by-laws have been developed to serve as rules for the various organizations and agencies serving the retarded; rules have been spelled out and delineated for the establishment and operation of service programs.

The stage has been set -- all systems are go -- the countdown has come -- and

now what are we going to do about it? Will we decide we're too tired to keep going? Will we decide we've already done our part and it's time for somebody else to take over the torch and hold the light high? Will we (and this is the worst possibility of all) assume that the job has gotten too complicated for us and will we just give up and let someone else take over completely from here on out?

I believe the answer is "no" to all three alternatives. But if we are going to continue to serve, we owe it to our fellow team members as well as to those whom we serve to become more effective in our service, to work unceasingly toward the goal of becoming more able lamp-lighters, if you please.



Commissioner's Column
by John J. Kavanagh, M.D.

NOTE: Commissioner John J. Kavanagh of the Texas Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, meets each month with employees at Central Office to bring them up to date on administrative news. Here are excerpts from recent meetings.

"The Texas Research League report to the board and commissioner of TDMHMR is called "Improving the Delivery of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services in Texas." The report drew conclusions obvious to all of us, and about which we've been trying to do something.

"The first conclusion they reached is lack of comprehensive continuum of care, and the fact that there is no real MHMR system. They recommended, in order to correct that, a common point of entry for MHMR clients, which would be a community center.

"The report stated that facilities and programs are inadequate or nonexistent in certain communities. We agree with this, and we have attempted to do something about it with the Community Support System project, increased state grant-in-aid, regionalization of the centers and expansion of their existing programs. Again, it depends upon funds and personnel.

"The report mentioned the need for a continuum of care system and a lack of community support facilities. They recommend that alternate residential facilities in the communities would have to be tripled at a cost of \$300 million and that vocational programs would have to be increased by a factor of 33 percent. Obviously there's a conflict here. We have the Texas Research League telling us to expand services and get more funds, and at the same time we have significant others in our daily life telling us to reduce staff.

"Aftercare needs to be improved. Well, that's the other end of the continuum of care. The bottom line was that we should develop a practical plan to go from an institutional-based care to a community services model. The department is proceeding in this direction by means of the Community Support Program, Fairweather lodges and depopulation efforts. Moreover, a task force is studying two Health Systems Agency areas to inventory what MHMR services exist, what the needs are and develop a model for delivery of community-based services.

"We did fairly well on the Legislative Budget Board recommendations for funding for the 1982-83 biennium for state grant-in-aid to community centers. They recommended \$62.7 + million for 1982 and \$66.3+ million for 1983. That's better than the \$48-49 million of recent years. Hospitals and schools were recommended for an eight percent increase for each fiscal year. That excludes salary increases, which would raise the increase to about 20 percent."

--Reprinted from *IMPACT*.

DUE PROCESS HEARINGS
SPONSORED FOR RETARDED

Staff at Northern Virginia Training Center (NVTC) and attorneys from the Young Lawyers Conference of the Virginia State Bar Association have designed an unusual teaching program for legal violations by retarded residents. Ninety clients have been educated on legal avenues for solving their problems via due process hearings. Furthermore, lawyers and judges are increasing their awareness on the types of behavior problems they may encounter from higher functioning retarded persons living and working in a community setting.

The pilot program allows formal hearings to be held for legal infractions by retarded persons residing at the Center. Emphasis is placed on helping the residents settle their differences. The program permits a resident to bring suit against another resident or against a staff member, and allows local merchants to file claims against a NVTC resident outside the traditional legal system.

Volunteers were recruited from practicing attorneys in the surrounding county of Fairfax to serve as lawyers and judges. A conference room at NVTC serves as the court room with hearings being held in the evenings to accommodate the resident's schedule.

The actual "hearing" is clearly and simply structured for understanding by the retarded person. Participants include a complainant, the accused individual, witnesses, lawyers and a judge. If the accused is found "guilty", a sentence may consist of: a reprimand, public or personal apology, return or replacement of property, restrictions from the area where the offense occurred, counseling sessions, written assignments or a required community service.

To date, 16 hearings have been held. Offenses include assault charges, property damage, stealing and disturbing the peace. Nine residents were found "guilty", six cases were dismissed and one "not guilty" verdict was handed down.

According to David H. Lawson, Ph.D., director of NVTC, the program has been extremely successful. It allows many of the Center's mildly retarded clients to accept responsibility for their actions.

--Reprinted from *New Directions*

* COUNSELING WITH PARENTS *
* OF RETARDED CHILDREN *
* WORKSHOP *
* Co-Sponsored by *
* Association for Retarded Citizens *
* of Fort Worth *
* and *
* Harris College of Nursing *
* and *
* Division of Continuing Education *
* Time/Place: *
* Saturday, March 28, 1981 *
* 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. *
* Brown-Lupton Student Center *
* Rooms 207-209 *
* Texas Christian University *
* Purpose of Workshop: *
* --To improve professional skills in *
* assessment, crisis intervention, *
* and counseling of parents of se- *
* verely handicapped children. *
* --To increase professional knowledge *
* regarding types of appropriate *
* counseling interventions. *
* --To increase professional sensi- *
* tivity to mishandling of parents *
* of severely handicapped children. *
* --To increase professional know- *
* ledge about causes of mental re- *
* tardation and available services *
* for retarded persons and their *
* families. *
* Fee: \$15.00 *
* (Special rate of \$10 for Asso- *
* ciation for Retarded Citizens *
* members.) *
* For program agenda or any further in- *
* formation, call 921-7130. Space is *
* limited. You are encouraged to reg- *
* ister by March 23. *

CHAIRPERSONS NAMED

At the February 5th ARC/FW Board of Directors' meeting, President Ellen Huffman announced the following chairpersons of several committees:

STANDING COMMITTEES

Public Information	- Bob Frost
Summer Day Camp	- Cathy Ryan Karen Patty
Education	- Carol McKay
Governmental Affairs	- Beryl Gibson
Ways & Means	- Jerry Terrell

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Advisory Council	- Jim Patton
Gateway Club	- Zada Bruce
Task Force on Criminal & Juvenile Justice	- Linda Hill, Coordinator Pro Tem

SHOP SAFEWAY!

Safeway supermarkets have begun a promotional campaign which could become every bit as valuable to ARC as the 7-11 Stores have become to Muscular Dystrophy.

Millions of dollars worth of advertising, while free of cost to ARC, has been prepared by Safeway to run throughout the month of March in newspaper ads and on radio and television. Their grocery bags and cartons of Lucerne milk will be printed with the ARC logo and messages concerning mental retardation. Coupons in displays throughout the stores will tell customers how they can receive a free, colorful T-shirt with a \$10.00 or more contribution to ARC.

Shop with Safeway and encourage your friends to do so! And you might convey a personal message of thanks to your local store manager for Safeway's big boost to ARC.

Build the arc

Association for Retarded Citizens

ARC NEWS is a monthly publication of the Association for Retarded Citizens of Fort Worth, a local unit of the Texas Association for Retarded Citizens and the National Association for Retarded Citizens. ARC of Fort Worth is a United Way agency serving children and adults with mental retardation in the greater Fort Worth area.

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Vice President: Carol McKay
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Treasurer: Jerry Terrell
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ARC OF FORT WORTH, 1300 West Lancaster, Fort Worth, Texas 76102 Phone: (817) 336-8661

A GESTURE OF CELEBRATION

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS: Many persons find a deep personal satisfaction in making memorial contributions to the Association for Retarded Citizens of Fort Worth, to serve the living and pay thoughtful tribute to the memory of a relative, friend or associate.

SPECIAL GIFTS: a growing custom is that of sending gifts to the Association as a gracious gesture in celebration of birthdays, anniversaries, or other occasions.

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT is sent to the person honored, or to a relative in the case of a memorial gift. Your name and the purpose (but not the amount) of the gift is designated. You, as donor, will be sent an official receipt for your tax-exempt contribution.

Your contributions support the Association's programs of public education, research and community service.

ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CITIZENS OF FORT WORTH

1300 West Lancaster Fort Worth, Texas 76102

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Or, in Honor of _____

On the Occasion of _____

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(Please Print)

Address _____

From (Donor's Name) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- March 5 - ARC/FW Board of Directors meeting, Child Study Center Lounge, Noon.
- March 7 - Second Texas Art Therapy Symposium, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., University of Texas at Arlington. (Call 274-1686 for further information.)
- March 20 - Welcome to My World, Child Study Center South Auditorium, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- March 28 - "Counseling With Parents of Mentally Retarded Children" Workshop, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Texas Christian University.
- April 2-4 - Second National Conference on Arts for the Handicapped, Texas Women's University, Denton, Texas.

ARC UNIT Fort Worth

DUES: \$12.00 Individual
\$20.00 Family

NAME _____

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I AM A NEW MEMBER _____ RENEWAL MEMBER _____

I AM A PARENT _____ PROFESSIONAL _____ FRIEND OF THE RETARDED _____

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE ALL ARC PUBLICATIONS Yes _____ No _____

Date: _____



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