

# COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES



Spring 1987

## NEWSLETTER

### Organizing For Disability Rights

This past winter and spring CTD held a series of Legislative Update Meetings for "Organizing for Disability Rights in the 70th Legislative Session". Meetings were held in San Antonio, El Paso, Dallas, Houston and Amarillo and were well attended by both CTD members and representatives of groups with concerns similar to ours. Those attending were briefed on CTD's priority issues and were updated on the current status of legislation relating to these issues.

In addition to the Legislative issues update, the meetings provided an opportunity for people to meet the CTD Board Member(s) from their area. The Board Members talked about their involvement with CTD and encouraged local disability advocates to contact them regarding their advocacy efforts.

Attendees at these meetings were outraged to learn that funding for already limited services was slated for further cuts. People in each of the cities spoke of problems their people were having in getting services due to waiting lists, tightening eligibility, etc. because of lack of funds.

Attendees were also upset to learn that the issue of combining state agencies was seriously being considered again. One participant asked "When are they (the legislators) going to listen? Why must our services always be threatened?"

The news that the bills had been introduced addressing access to mass transit and better enforcement of the Architectural Barriers Law was met with great enthusiasm. People from all of the cities felt that local efforts could be greatly enhanced in both areas with strong support from the state. There was also a lot of support for the "In Home and Family Support Bill", although the fact that funding has been limited to only persons with mental disabilities was not well received. As one advocate noted "non-mentally retarded developmentally disabled persons continue to slip through the cracks. Families who choose to keep their disabled family member at home are in effect being penalized, since the state gives them no help unless they choose to institutionalize (the disabled person)."



Alan Meyer, CTD Board Treasurer explains his involvement to the Houston participants.



Stephanie Thomas, CTD Co-Executive Director, meets with disabled El Pasoans.

### Disabled Consumer Day A Big Success

Over one hundred twenty-five disabled persons met in the Capitol Rotunda March 31st. They came to bring to the legislators the message that real people are benefiting from the services and real people will be harmed by the cuts.

Breaking into small groups, the participants reviewed the issues and their presentations and then went off to meet with legislators. People with different disabilities worked together to give legislators a picture of the many ways health and human services funds assist disabled Texans. All in all, participants met with about forty legislators.

Most of the meetings went extremely well. One Legislator welcomed the support, others were interested to learn how disabled people got along with existing services. In each of the groups new people spoke up telling their story and were excellent spokespersons.

Most of the Legislators told Disabled Consumer Day participants that the greatest need was to talk with the Governor. So the day ended with a small group visiting with Dr. Land, the Governors liaison on disability issues. Although Land was fairly noncommittal the meeting showed the Governor's staff that people affected by the cuts are concerned and active.



San Antonio advocates express their concerns about legislative issues.

## Handicapped Mistime Efforts

Reprinted from the Beaumont Enterprise, Feb. 20, 1987

By Steve Levine

Some of the Capitol's best lobbyists got set up and used badly Monday night.

Now before you say, "It's about time," let me tell you we're not talking about the high-paid, three-piece-suit lobbyists for big business. No, Monday's victims were the often-volunteer advocates for those Texans who most need special representation in Austin: the blind, the deaf and the physically handicapped.

One more caveat before getting on with a story that might appear insensitive. State government deals more in symbols than in reality. When a handicapped woman in a wheelchair or a blind man with a cane and dark glasses enters a legislative hearing, the wheelchair, cane and glasses make as strong or stronger impressions on lawmakers than the words those men and women speak.

Now, the story. The House State Affairs Committee met Monday night to consider a resolution by Beaumont Rep. Mark Stiles that would create a special panel to study the organization of state government and come up with recommendations to merge, consolidate or eliminate various state agencies, boards and commissions. That's it. Just a study committee. Nothing concrete.

As part of the resolution, Stiles included a *suggested* plan for reorganization. That draft proposed, among many other things, combining the School for the Blind and School for the Deaf with the Texas Education Agency and merging the Texas Rehabilitation Agency and eight other social service agencies into the Department of Human Services.

Someone overreacted to that. Maybe it was a bureaucrat worried that he might lose his job under such a reorganization. If so, I hope he does. Because what happened Monday night, in the words of one of my fellow reporters, was unconscionable.

Someone arranged for some of the ablest advocates of the disabled to show up at the committee hearing and protest Stiles' study resolution. Someone arranged for the blind men and women with their canes and glasses to protest. Someone arranged for a whole

class of youngsters from the Texas School for the Deaf to silently file in and watch the proceedings as interpreted in sign language.

This was unconscionable, counterproductive over-reaction. Not because these men and women used their democratic rights to comment on legislation that could affect them. No. But because of the symbolism involved, someone talked these dedicated men and women into playing their cards too early.

Again, I am trying to be both sensitive and realistically aware of how things work in the Capitol. Such a display of outrage works at the right time. But Monday night was the wrong time. Had there been a proposal on the table that truly could have jeopardized the services those men, women and children so dearly depend upon, their presence could have made a difference. State legislators are human beings, sensitive — for the most part — to the plight of those less fortunate than they.

Monday night, however, it came across as cheap theater. And it very well could have hurt their cause in the future. The House State Affairs Committee is a high-powered panel. The chairmen of six other House committees serve on it. Sensitive men and women though they are, they are as subject to the "wolf-cry syndrome" as the rest of us. They realized that Stiles' resolution posed no serious threat to handicapped Texans.

But — understanding again the importance of symbols — the next time the wheelchairs, canes and glasses come in to make a point, no matter how worthy, their influence will have diminished. Lobbying the Legislature is tricky business. Timing is the key. Bringing a classroom of deaf children into a committee hearing only works so many times.

One last point. As of this writing, Stiles had not determined who set up Monday night's events. He rightfully is angry about it. He may ask the House General Investigating Committee to look into whether state funds paid to bring those children to the Capitol. If that is what they find, let's hope the finger points far enough up the ladder to expose the real culprit — not just the teacher or bus driver who might well have been following orders.

*Steve Levine is Austin bureau chief for the Beaumont Enterprise. The views expressed in this column are his own and are not necessarily those of the Enterprise.*

## CTD Responds: Prejudices Skew View of Handicapped

Reprinted from the Beaumont Enterprise, Mar. 21, 1987

By Stephanie Thomas

As one of the "wheelchairs" who "got set up and used" at the House State Affairs Committee hearing on Representative Stiles' resolution concerning combining state agencies, I feel I must respond to Steve Levine's column of Feb. 20.

It is misinformed, misleading and promotes very negative attitudes toward people with disabilities.

If Levine had not been so awestruck by the presence of persons with disabilities, he would have heard our testimony.

He would have learned that many of the disabled people testifying are members of a statewide disability advocacy organization called the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, CTD.

He would have learned that we are in our 10th year of existence, that we have 90 member organizations and more than 400 individual members who represent people of all disabilities from across the state, and that one of the oldest and most strongly supported CTD issues is keeping separate the disability agencies (such as the Texas Commission for the Blind, the Texas Commission for the Deaf, the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind).

He would have learned that this position is based on the experiences of disability groups in other states as well as the feelings of many disabled Texans.

He also would have learned that attempts to combine state disability agencies are almost an annual event (if you count special sessions and committees working on human services issues.)

*continued on page 11*

# 'PEOPLE FIRST' IN TEXAS??

Efforts are underway in the Legislature and in a number of communities around the state to tell the story of how people in Texas have already been affected by reductions in health and human services, and to demonstrate local support for funding these vitally needed services.

According to the State Comptroller, Texas will need an additional \$5.8 billion in state revenue for the 1988-89 biennium, just to continue the same level of services as in the 1987 fiscal year. The \$5.8 billion includes:

- \$1 billion deficit projected for fiscal year 1987, which ends August 31, 1987.
- \$2.8 billion just to spend the same amount in 1988 and 1989 as in FY 1987. This would not allow maintenance of current service levels because it does not account for inflation or increases in activities required by law (such as educating the 50,000 new children who will enter our schools).
- \$1 billion for the additional people we are required to serve or educate.
- \$1 billion to comply with court orders to relieve prison overcrowding, to allow for inflation across the whole budget, and to restore funds cut from higher education.

This \$5.8 billion is not needed to cover increases in spending, it is needed to cover decreases in revenues due to the recession and the inability of our present revenue system to grow with the state.

Even before its current economic problems, Texas has always been very conservative in its spending for health and human services. During the years when there were revenue surpluses, we still ranked at or just above the bottom of states in spending per child in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, and did not increase the grant at all from 1969 until 1983. Texas ranks

- 46th in AFDC payments to needy families.
- 45th in Medicaid expenditures.
- 47th in mental health services.
- 49th in services to our elderly population.

## The Immediate Challenge

The 70th Legislature must decide how to respond to its constitutional requirement to adopt a spending budget which is within the Comptroller's estimate of income for the biennium. Some will support reductions in spending for health and human services as a way to balance the budget.

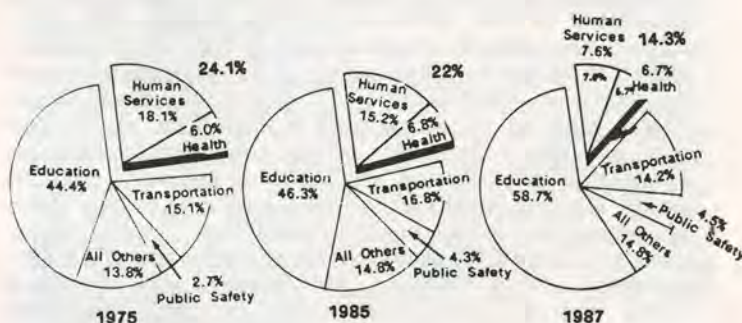
Unfortunately, when the economy retracts, the need for services expands, and applications for assistance have multiplied over the past few years. As federal spending for social services has been reduced, local governments and private charities have been stretched beyond their capacity to meet the needs in our communities. Here are some of the reasons.

- As the number of low to moderate income jobs is shrinking, the number of people living below the federal poverty level is growing. Approximately one in five Texans were poor before the current recession.
- One out of every four children in Texas are growing up in poverty.
- Texas has the fifth largest population of elderly people, and the fastest growing segment of our population is that of people aged 65 and over.

- At least 15% of all Texans have some sort of mental or physical disability.

The state is the only entity which has the capacity to serve the basic survival needs of these people. Although our economy is in a period of recession, we are still a wealthy state, with adequate revenue potential to afford all that is needed to make the necessary investment to build our state's future. Texas taxpayers have been carried by income from our natural resources up to now, but People First believes that Texans are ready to accept our responsibility as mature citizens and pay our fair share of the costs of providing an adequate quality of life for all our citizens.

## HUMAN NEEDS, STATE RESPONSE



State General Revenue Appropriations  
(Source: Legislative Budget Board)

## WHERE DO OUR STATE HUMAN SERVICES AND HEALTH DOLLARS GO?

- Almost half (47%, or \$720 million) provides assistance to people who cannot help themselves and can probably never be independent. Examples: food and medical services and nursing home care for low income elderly, supervised living for disabled persons, and residential care for mentally retarded people.

- Roughly 42% (\$640 million) is "invested" in people who need some help in order to become independent and develop their potential. Many of these expenditures generate federal dollars which match state dollars in varying percentages. Examples: rehabilitative services for mentally and physically disabled people, financial and medical aid to needy children and their caretakers (only in one-parent families), health services for very low income "working poor" families, treatment for drug and alcohol abuse, and services for juvenile delinquents.

- About 7.5% (\$115 million) of these state funds are in programs primarily intended to prevent more costly needs and dependence. Examples: health programs for pregnant women and children, immunizations and drug and alcohol abuse education and prevention.

- Some 3.1% (\$50 million) goes to help people in emergencies or at risk of injury. Examples: child and public health inspections, and licensing of facilities.

Note: These percentages are for 1986 spending of state revenue only, and apply only to services, not to agency administration. One of the largest programs for poor people, and Food Stamp Program, is totally federally funded, except for some costs of administration and determining eligibility.

## CTD's Client Assistance Program Outreach Project Holds Trainings Around the State



*Houston Center for Independent Living staff members express concerns of clients receiving VR services.*

Disabled persons, family members and service providers in San Antonio, El Paso, Dallas, Houston, Austin and Amarillo participated in the "Client Assistance Program and Advocacy Skills" training provided by staff of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities. These training sessions held in February, March and April provided information about the Client Assistance Program (CAP). During the morning session, participants learned what services are available to help them to receive services from the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, Texas Commission for the Blind and the Independent Living Centers. Information was provided along with a video presentation on using the Client Assistance Program Vocational Rehabilitation Client/Applicant Manual developed by Advocacy, Inc.

Participants expressed their concerns and problems in accessing rehabilitation and independent living services. Common problems that were discussed at the trainings include: case closure without notification; lack of a Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan; and services not being provided in a timely manner. The training session offered assistance and support to participants to encourage their involvement in advocating for the services they need. The Client Assistance Program and the outreach workers were presented as tools available to those individuals needing assistance with services.



*Rey Garcia, El Paso CAP Outreach Worker, and Norah Schwartz listen to concerns from participants.*



*Participants in Amarillo watch a video presentation on CAP services.*

The afternoon session provided the participants with skills to become self advocates. Local concerns and issues were utilized to demonstrate the variety of approaches available to advocates to resolve problems. Participants in each city expressed a variety of local issues (inaccessible and poor transportation, sexual abuse on special transit, lack of accessible and affordable housing, limited attendant and interpreter services, driver's licensing problems, etc.). Many of these issues were shared by participants in all the cities. Ideas were shared by participants and possible solutions were discussed to enhance their advocacy skills.



*Houston participants explain their experiences with VR services.*

In addition to these training sessions for disabled persons, family members and service providers, the CTD staff also held training sessions for the staff of the Independent Living Centers. As part of the contract with Advocacy, Inc. for outreach activities for the Client Assistance Program, CTD staff met with the ILC staff members to provide CAP information and discuss advocacy efforts.



*CTD staff member, Norah Schwartz and Becky Villarreal, CAP Outreach Worker in San Antonio answer questions about the Client Assistance Program.*

The training sessions not only offered the participants information, assistance and advocacy skills training but also provided an opportunity for the CTD staff to meet with individuals around the state and learn first hand of their concerns. These outreach activities were successful and beneficial to all those involved.

# REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

## CAP Workers Offer Presentations to Community Organizations

The outreach workers of the CAP Outreach Project of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities assisted in providing "Client Assistant Program and Advocacy Skills" training around the state. Aside from outreach activities for the trainings in their respective areas, the outreach workers continued interacting with and informing their communities about CAP. Over 500 participants attended 48 presentations statewide. On the average, outreach workers conduct two community presentations a week and are available at the Independent Living Centers to talk with individuals about the CAP program. The CAP outreach workers are part-time, working 20 hours per week.

Leigh Leslie, the newest member of the CAP outreach team joined the staff in February. Leigh has a B.S. in Speech/Communication Disorders from the University of Texas at Austin. She is also working as the Deaf Issues Organizer at CTD. Since joining the staff, Leigh has given presentations to such organizations as Austin Advocates, United Cerebral Palsy Support Group and the University of Texas Disabled Student's Association. Leigh is officed at the Austin Resources Center for Independent Living and can be reached at (512) 443-3811.

Kelly Yarbrough is officed at the Dallas Center for Independent Living. Kelly made presentations to 11 organizations including First Advocates of Texas, American Cancer Society, Dallas Head Injury Association and the Association for the Disabled. Kelly can

be reached at (214) 631-6900.

Rey Garcia conducted 18 presentations in El Paso, which were attended by 160 participants. Rey, who is bi-lingual, has conducted presentations for the Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, the El Paso Diabetes Association, the Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and the Disabled American Veterans, among others. Rey can be reached by calling Disabled Ability Resource Environment (DARE), (915) 591-0800.

Becky Villarreal, the San Antonio area outreach worker, conducted 14 presentations for 133 participants. Some of the organizations she visited include the San Antonio Council for the Deaf, Epilepsy Support Group, Texas Commission for the Blind and the South Texas Organization of Polio Survivors. Becky may be reached at the San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS), (512) 226-0054.

The outreach workers are in their communities to inform disabled consumers about the Client Assistance Program. Anyone wishing to learn more about the CAP program or to arrange a presentation for their community organization, may contact the local outreach worker at the Independent Living Center.

If you have concerns about the services you are receiving from the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, the Texas Commission for the Blind or the Independent Living Center contact Advocacy, Inc. 1-(800) 252-9108 for assistance.

## TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition services is the "new" programming emphasis in disability services for the '80s. Transitioning from school to adult life, from institutions to community based programs, from training to work, etc., transitions in all areas of living are in the spot light. At both state and national levels transition services are receiving special grants and program initiatives. At the state level the Leiz and RAJ cases against the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (TDMHMR) have helped spur the move toward transitioning people from institutions to community based services. Nationally, the reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act has added to interest in transition programs, especially those that transition disabled persons from school to adult life. This is in part due to the "aging out" of kids who have grown up with PL 94-142, The Education of All Children Act, and are now graduating from High School. People who have been involved in the independent living movement may question the "newness" of the transition goals and services since they are similar to those of independent living, but there can be little question of the need.

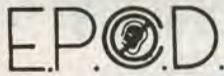
Here in Texas, several projects in the area of transition services have been developing over the last biennium. The Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC), Texas Education Agency (TEA) and TDMHMR were directed by the 69th Legislature, two years ago, to work cooperatively to develop a plan of transition services for persons with mental retardation. This agreement and plan is often referred to as SCR 129 (after the

legislative directive, which created it). The plan claimed to broaden its scope from persons with all disabilities, due to similar needs, but consumer groups monitoring the plan saw little indication of how this broadened scope would be addressed, although all agree the need is there. During this legislative session the three agencies have agreed to work for a continuation of the SCR 129 legislative direction.

Separate from SCR 129, but in a similar vein, these same three agencies are also involved in what is commonly called the "Valley Project", now called NETS. This is a cooperative demonstration project providing a range of transition services by pooling the resources of TRC, TEA and TDMHMR. The Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities assisted the project by giving a demonstration grant to the local community MHMR center, the Tropical Texas MHMR Center, to provide much of the community support services. TEA refers students after some initial training and TRC provides employment training through sheltered work contracts. Again the project is supposed to serve all disabilities, but in reality the vast majority of those served to date have mental disabilities. The project is just now really taking off and is intended as a model for future transition services, hence the concern over who is served.

The third statewide transition service thrust is of a somewhat different nature. It is the Transition Task Force, and is composed of representatives of a num-

*continued on page 6*



EL PASO CENTER OF THE DEAF, INC.  
1005 EAST YANDELL EL PASO, TEXAS 79902 544-6032 (VOICE OF T.T.V.)

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities  
Post Office Box 4709  
Austin, Texas 78765

ATTENTION: Bob Kafka, President

Dear Mr. Kafka

I want to bring to your attention, and to the attention of the CTD memberships, a concern which exists in the lives of deaf and hearing impaired individuals throughout our nation. That is, the lack of accessibility to programs and/or services.

Accessibility is not made available to most deaf persons by state, federal, city, county and other public facilities claiming to be fully accessible to the disabled. They may be accessible to some disabled, but certainly not to deaf and hearing impaired if they are denying to hire interpreters to facilitate communication.

Some of the responses used when interpreter services are requested are: "Interpreters are too expensive. . . We have no money for that service. . . I thought interpreters for the deaf were volunteers. . . Can't deaf people read lips? . . . I'll have him sit up front so he can hear me better. . . Gosh - I never thought about the deaf! . . ."

Deaf and hearing impaired individuals are tired of having to tolerate this sort of treatment from people where they must first check and see if an interpreter will be provided, most of the time finding there will be no interpreter because of one of the above excuses. Why should deaf people tolerate this! There are laws designed to protect the disabled community and the deaf are a part of that community. Nobody seems to recognize that fact.

On a local level, in El Paso, there is little accessibility measures taken to ensure deaf people have access to buildings, programs and/or services. Our own independent living center and advocacy groups designed to serve the disabled community are inaccessible to the deaf. By this, I mean they do not provide interpreters for the deaf. When they do, the primary hassle is to help them understand the need, and secondly to get them to agree to pay for the service. I usually get questions from our independent living center and advocacy groups like: "Will there be any deaf people coming to the meeting? If not, we will not have an interpreter." In the first place, why should there be conditions placed on the deaf community? This is like telling a mobility impaired individual: "If you come to the public forum we will install the ramp. If not, we

will not have to put it up." That building or service needs to be accessible and remain as such at all times. Years ago, architectural modifications were made to accommodate the mobility impaired. Money was never spent to accommodate the deaf since the disability is communication and not an obvious physical impairment. Money is still not being used to install the ramp of communication access for deaf and hearing impaired people.

If you say your program, meeting, building, etc. is accessible to disabled, then be prepared to welcome anyone in the community and be able to address their specific need. In the case of deaf individuals, you will need to have qualified interpreters for the deaf, NOT volunteers. By having volunteer (non-qualified) interpreters, you are band-aiding the need and not addressing the real problem. It is like providing a volunteer for attendant care services. You know this would not be tolerated! It is like installing a plastic ramp which may or may not support the weight of a person in a wheelchair. The deaf do not have to settle for infrequent attempts to addressing a communication need of having qualified interpreters.

It angers me to think that after so many years we still do not have it straight in our minds that deaf individuals have needs. It upsets me even more when nothing permanent is done to address that need. We are still having to explain why deaf people need interpreters. This problem is not only evident in El Paso, as this is a common concern faced by deaf people on a daily basis **everywhere**. This growing concern deserves much more attention than it gets, because the attention it receives is sporadic and on an individual incident basis.

If your organization is short of funds to provide these types of services, you should give strong consideration to generating monies or putting money aside for qualified interpreters. It is important to have a deaf or hearing impaired representative on your governing board to help sensitize your organization concerning deaf issues. If you cannot find such an individual, go to your local deaf advocate or organization serving the deaf and ask them for assistance. Let that organization know you are attempting to address the problem.

This problem needs serious attention and will not solve itself. It is going to require your cooperation and understanding of the need to be able to team up and do something about it. As supporters of disabled Texans, we have a moral obligation to help expose and educate people on the uniqueness of this invisible disability. . . DEAFNESS.

Sincerely,  
Oscar R. Pedroza  
Director of Operations  
El Paso Center of the Deaf, Inc.

## Transition *continued from page 5*

ber of consumer organizations and human service agencies. More cross-disability in nature, the purpose of this task force is to develop strategies and action plans for bridging the gap between education and the various adult services for persons who are disabled. It is a long term commitment to define, gather information and present recommendations to the service delivery system and the legislature.

Chaired by CTD Board Member Patricia McCallum and staffed by Mary Faithfull, of Advocacy Inc., the Tran-

sition Task Force has ample participation from the professional sector but is under represented by consumer and consumer advocate participants. Since the recommendations and probably legislative thrust will directly affect disabled persons and their families, CTD and the Task Force urge consumers to get involved. The Task Force is also seeking a legislative resolution this session to support its efforts.

Transition is a growing area of concern at both state and national levels. The need for disability consumer involvement can not be stressed enough.

## Exemplary Programs

The Regional Rehabilitation Exchange (RRX) is soliciting nominations of potentially exemplary service providers to persons with disabilities. Program nominations are being accepted in the following core areas:

- Job Placement/Job Development Programs
- Short-Term Transition Programs
- Transitional Programs with Ongoing Services (Supported Employment Programs)
- Supportive Services for Post-Secondary Disabled Students
- Adult Learning Disabled Programs
- Independent Living Service Programs, offering any or all of the following:
  - Housing Services
  - Transportation/Mobility Services
  - Living Skills Services
  - Counseling Services
  - Community Integration Services
  - Employment-Related Services

Program nomination forms are available from John D. Westbrook, Ph.D., Project Director, Regional Rehabilitation Exchange, SEDL, 211 East Seventh Street, Austin, Texas 78701 (512) 476-6861.



Austin advocates protest the decision by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that said the mentally retarded do not have a constitutional right to live in the community.

(Photo: Austin American-Statesman).

## Indigent Health Care Monitoring Project

In 1986 the Texas Alliance for Human Needs established an indigent health care monitoring project to continue its efforts in ensuring affordable and accessible quality health care for indigent Texans. The project was developed in response to the great demand for information on health care programs. The purpose of the monitoring project is to assist low-income communities to oversee and actively participate in providing community education on indigent health care reforms.

In order for the newly created Indigent Health Care Programs to be successful there must be strong community education to ensure compliance of newly enacted indigent health care laws. Therefore, as part of the Alliance's on-going efforts, they are assisting groups in key areas of the state to:

- conduct community education forums on the rights and responsibilities for emergency and indigent health care
- work with local officials on the implementation of these laws to ensure the best county plan,
- provide needed information on policies that affect Texas communities.

Community education forums on indigent health care have been conducted in South Texas, the Rio Grande Valley and the Pan Handle regions. These areas were selected due to interest generated by Texas Alliance Member Organizations in these areas and the large numbers of people meeting Medicaid eligibility criteria who have traditionally been denied this insurance. There are over 89,000 people in Texas who fall in this situation and whose annual countable assets do not exceed \$1000.

The Alliance has concentrated its efforts in areas in the state which do not have a public hospital or hospital district. The above areas have between 1000-12,000 indigent health care eligibles. **There are over 100 counties in the state of Texas that do not have a public hospital or hospital district.**

Other sites having large numbers of indigents and lacking a public hospital or hospital district are: Northeast Texas and the counties of Taylor, Tom Green, Fort Bend, Hays, Bell, Wharton, Brazos, Angelina, McLellan, Brazoria and San Patricio. (These are counties with over 1000 eligibles.)

## LBJ's Great Society and Park for All People

During his years as United States President, Lyndon Baines Johnson initiated many programs that led to richer and fuller lives for many Americans. Many of those programs were directed at handicapped Americans. So today, the staff of Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park feel it quite fitting they are able to provide increasing opportunity for handicapped visitors to participate in park programs and activities.

The fall of 1986 marked an important milestone toward that goal. The Austin Resource Center for Independent Living (ARCIL) and LBJ NHP staffs excitedly planned a visit to the park for a site inspection, program participation and sharing of ideas on improved accessibility and information on other resources available to the park staff.

According to park Superintendent Harry O'Bryant, "Discovering Pat Pound and the staff at ARCIL has indeed been a stroke of good fortune for the park. Through their individual areas of expertise the ARCIL staff have helped make an objective assessment of the park's facility and program access for Special Populations. They have put us in touch with other private and state agency groups to further help in our quest to make park visitor information more readily available and programs more responsive to the needs of all visitors."

Staff members of Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park have had a keen interest in effectively sharing the park story with all visitors for a number of years. Though interest and concern existed for making programs and facilities accessible to handicapped visitors the staff often felt challenged by a need for direction and expertise in the field. During the late 1970's and early 1980's the staff sought various resources and was able to make primary structures and programs accessible to mobility impaired by installation of stationary ramps, mechanical lifts and portable ramps designed for use with the tour buses. Some help was forthcoming in 1983 and 1985 through the

*continued on page 11*

# FREEDOM OF SPEECH AT STAKE

By Bob Kafka

Two of CTD's member organizations are embroiled in a national controversy over their right to associate with each other. The real issue is over the role of civil disobedience in attaining ones goals and in this case that of accessible public transportation.

The Texas Paralyzed Veterans Association (TPVA) has been told by their national organization that TPVA members should no longer associate with ADAPT. This came about when the PVA Board of Directors passed a resolution supporting the actions of the PVA Executive Committee. The Executive Committee resolution stated: "Therefore be it resolved that any further association with ADAPT or other organizations advocating illegal civil disobedience will not be tolerated and will cease and desist immediately." This resolution came as a shock to both TPVA and ADAPT. ADAPT has kept the issue of accessible public transportation on the front burner of the disability community and has forced people to take a stand. Though their activist techniques are not for everyone, ADAPT has gained the respect of many national and local disability rights organizations. Why then did PVA take the action they did?

The Texas Paralyzed Veterans Association (TPVA) one of the 31 PVA chapters had, by the PVA Executive Committee standards, "crossed over the line" with their actions by sending six of their members to the ADAPT protest of the American Public Transit Association (APTA) national meeting in Detroit. They then sent a letter to the 30 other PVA chapters encouraging

them to join with TPVA in sending people to Detroit and/or by contributing dollars to ADAPT. A Michigan PVA member then saw TPVA members at the protest and complained to the PVA national office. This complaint led to the actions of the PVA Executive Committee and the PVA Board of Directors though TPVA was never asked for any information about the matter.

The resolution is an embarrassment to PVA as a disability rights organization. It shows their ignorance of the concept of civil disobedience and their intolerance for active independent thought. The resolution infringes on the rights of PVA members and sends a message to them not to become too active. It assumes one way of advocating for accessible public transit is the only way. Image and fundraising took precedent over the issue of disability rights. The resolution itself may be unconstitutional. The implications of the resolution are frightening. If PVA can bar their members from associating with ADAPT, a legitimate disability rights organization, what next will offend the PVA folks?

It is unfortunate, that at a time when we should be working together to advocate for our civil rights, PVA has chosen to stifle active involvement of their members. It is ironic that both PVA and ADAPT have similar positions on accessible public transportation. CTD's position on this issue has been reaffirmed by numerous resolutions - we support 100% mainline accessibility with paratransit for those who cannot ride the mainline system. Goals not tactics should be debated.

## ACCESS: A CIVIL RIGHT

Over one hundred ADAPT activists gathered in Phoenix to protest the Western Regional Conference of the American Public Transit Association, APTA. (APTA is the organization which sued and won the removal of the original federal regulations mandating access to mainline transit.) With a series of hard hitting protest actions ADAPT once again let APTA know that they would not let the transit association alone until APTA agreed to support a position for full mainline access. More than 70 arrests were made during the course of the four day event.

With groups at each of the airport terminals and outside the hotel, ADAPT "welcomed" APTA members as they arrived into Phoenix. Other protests included: disruption of a dinner for APTA delegates, further protests outside the hotel and blocking off a luncheon for the "APTA spouses" so they had to walk a half mile to their waiting vehicles. When asked by a reporter "Why disrupt the social functions?" one ADAPT protester pointed out, "we have been inconvenienced all our lives [by these people] because of lack of transit, it's time they learned what inconvenience means."

At one point protesters and Phoenix police were at a complete stand off in front of the hotel. The street was barricaded off and several protesters had been arrested for honking their horns on their wheelchairs. As the church bells tolled the hour, ADAPT marched out single file in a line that stretched the length of a city block.



*Minutes before the arrests for honking horns began, ADAPT protests outside the Hyatt Regency Hotel where the APTA Conference was held. Plain clothes police stand in background.*

The height of tension came the evening of the third day when 40 people were arrested for blocking buses in the downtown area. Twenty nine were held for three nights in the county jail. Linda Ellerby, who covered the event on *Good Morning America* put it well when she said in Phoenix the paddy wagons have lifts but the buses don't.

Local support, especially from the independent living center, A Bridge to Independent Living, was among the strongest ADAPT has received. It paid off, too. The Regional Transit Authority has adopted a resolution promising to buy only lift equipped vehicles and the city system has promised significant improvement in mainline access.





Bob Kafka, CTD President, outlines CTD Legislative Priorities to the TRA/CTD Legislative Seminar.

## President's Message

As I headed for the President's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped National Meeting in Denver, Colorado I began to remember back ten years. April 28, 1977 was a historic day in the disability rights movement. Protests in Washington, D.C. and 15 other cities around the country forced Joseph Califano, then Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (now known as Health and Human Services) to sign the 504 regulations. A euphoria swept the country. Disabled people were taking control of their lives. Talk of independent living and cross-disability cooperation brought about the creation of the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities (ACCD). Federal dollars were available for 504 training sessions to educate up and coming advocates who were motivated by the desire to change an insensitive, inaccessible and uneducated system. State Coalitions were being formed nationwide. Local cross-disability consumer groups were working on issues and made changes they never thought possible. People like Frank Bowe, Terry O'-

Rourke, Al Pimenthal, Larry Johnson, Judy Heumann, Eunice Fiorito, Durwood McDaniel, Ed Roberts, Lex Frieden, Pat Pound, Phyllis Rubenfeld, Bruce Curtis and more became leaders of what was being termed "the movement".

It was in this environment that CTD was created and held its first Delegate Assembly, October, 1979 in San Antonio. Pat Pound was our first president. CTD will now be celebrating our 10th Anniversary October 30th - November 1st in Houston, Texas. We will look at what we have accomplished over the last decade and what we need to do in the decade ahead. What is the role of consumer advocacy is a question that must be addressed as we move toward the 1990's.

There are tensions in "the movement" today that were not obvious 10 years ago. Agreement on concepts such as mainstreaming, accessible mainline transportation, and de-institutionalization are not unanimous. Cross-disability cooperation is becoming harder and harder to maintain as groups battle for scarce resources. Questions about the role of Independent Living Centers arise frequently. The 80's and 90's will be crucial years for CTD.

Though the future may be uncertain, CTD through it's Long Range Planning Committee is attempting to plan for the continuance and growth of the organization. The CTD Board of Directors has a positive attitude about the future and with CTD member input and direction we will work together on the issues of the 1990's.

Active involvement of disabled people brought about the signing of Section 504 10 years ago. The times are different but one thing must remain the same. We need to be active on the issues otherwise we will lose what we have worked so hard to achieve and not achieve new heights. Together we can!

## Report on the RSA Region VI Forum Available

The RSA Region VI Forum on the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 was held in Dallas, Texas on December 10-11, 1986. Over two-hundred and fifty individuals attended this forum, representing broad involvement of consumers, advocates, families, facilities and agencies involved in the field of rehabilitation.

Although the purpose of the Regional Forum was to focus on the implementation of the 1986 Amendments, oral presentations and written comments received from ninety-one individuals addressed numerous concerns and priorities relevant to the field of rehabilitation. A sorting of written comments, by appropriate Section of the VR Act, resulted in two hundred and sixty-seven pages of material.

In view of the large number of requests for copies of this information, the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Materials will disseminate this material. The cost of obtaining this report is \$17.65, representing the cost to the National Clearinghouse of duplicating and mailing this report. Individuals desiring a copy of the "Report on the RSA Region VI Forum", should forward \$17.65 to: Mr. Paul Gaines, Project Director, Nat. Clearinghouse of Rehab. Materials, 115 Old U.S.D.A. Building, Okla. State Univ., Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078 (405) 624-7650.

Individuals and agencies should find this material useful as a resource document focusing on the legislative process, and input from consumers, advocates, families and service providers prior to the development of program regulations and operational policies.



## Business Opportunities New Tax Deductions

Many dollar-wise business owners cut their taxes by taking advantage of a new opportunity allowing a deduction of up to \$35,000 annually from taxable income.

A provision of the Tax Reform Act of 1986—Section 190 of the Internal Revenue Code—permits businesses to make renovations to provide access to handicapped customers or employees—and get tax credits for doing it.

R. Jack Powell, executive director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, praised the new legislation, calling it "A creative and cost-effective way for businesses and the federal government to work together for the voluntary removal of architectural barriers that prevent handicapped, elderly and disabled persons from gaining access to places of commerce and recreation."

In addition, businesses using vehicles to transport customers, clients or employees also can take advantage of these deductions for making vehicles accessible to handicapped persons.

Since 1947 the Paralyzed Veterans of America, a veterans service organization chartered by Congress, has worked to promote and expand legislation for the removal of architectural barriers.

Free brochures describing the tax advantages and requirements of Section 190 are available from: Section 190 Program, Paralyzed Veterans of America, 801 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

# TRA/CTD Legislative Seminar a Success!

Over 200 people attended the Legislative Seminar co-sponsored by Texas Rehabilitation Association (TRA) and CTD. The seminar, held in January, gave an overview of the legislative process and the main legislative issues of CTD, TRA and several other statewide disability groups. Participants came from across the state to have a part in advocating for human services at the state level.

The morning session covered how to advocate for your issues as well as an overview of disability issues for this session. In the afternoon participants were given the choice of visiting with their legislators or attending a session covering CTD issues in greater detail. Lt. Governor Hobby addressed the group at the luncheon, and in the evening Representatives and Senators attended a reception at the Hyatt.



*Lt. Governor Hobby addresses the seminar participants.*



*Dave Sloane, Advocacy, Inc. explains the "Do's and Don'ts" of contacting your legislator.*

## FYI

*A Handbook for the Disabled: Ideas and Inventions for Easier Living*, By Suzanne Lust (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982) paperback edition, 276 pp., \$9.95

If you suddenly find your life disrupted by disability, where would you turn for answers of such questions as these:

Where can I find lists of durable medical equipment that is needed to accommodate my impairment?

What accessories are available to increase my personal comfort and make routine chores easier?

How can I connect with others who share my interests and hobbies?

Where can I find lists of major hotel/motel chains that are accessible and how can I know in advance the policies of each airline and airport?

How can I find a market for my creative endeavors?

The answers to these questions and many others are addressed in this excellent resource book, written by a layperson as a practical guide to specific problems encountered by mobility, visually and speech and/or hearing impaired persons. Material is apropos to other caregivers—relatives, teachers and friends.

Its contents run the gamut in gadgets and mechanical aids to general tips, hints and advice to aid in personal care, communication, transportation and economics.

Lists of devices include such unusual items as a "talking clock" which uses a voice synthesizer (e.g. "It is now 6:00. Please hurry!") Complete with reminder five minutes later) and currency identifier for the blind.

For "make-it-yourselfers," instructions on how to adapt a riding lawn mower as a wheelchair alternative are given!

The information about adapting home and furnishings to make living and work areas accessible and basic factors to consider when choosing between the different types of wheelchairs and accessories were especially helpful.

The appendix which lists sources of medical equipment and adaptive aids, support organizations and associations and bibliography are well worth the cost of the book.

By Audrey Bryson, Member HOW - Queen City Chapter.  
(Reprinted from HOW Newsletter - 12/86)

## Fitness is For Everyone

Anyone can improve aerobic fitness, physical strength and flexibility, regardless of disability, with the *Fitness is for Everyone* video tape series.

Developed by leading physical therapy exercise and fitness experts, each routine is demonstrated by both a professional aerobics instructor and a person with the disability for which the movements have been designed.

Individual aerobic exercise programs have been developed for amputees, paraplegics, quadriplegics, and individuals with Cerebral Palsy or other impairments. A strength and flexibility program, demonstrated on a separate tape, is designed to accommodate a wide range of disabilities.

Aerobic fitness is the essence of good health and well being. It increases the demand on the cardiovascular and respiratory systems, improving the body's ability to deliver oxygen to the muscles and use that oxygen. The resulting benefits are more energy, increased stamina, lower blood pressure and lower risk of heart disease. And, because the body must consume more fat tissue to perform aerobic exercise, weight control also is improved.

Strength is an important component in everything we do, and without exercise, our muscles lose strength. The strengthening exercises featured in this program will help your muscles function better and improve your chances of avoiding injury and chronic strain.

Flexibility training helps keep the muscles limber for freer and easier movement, as well as prepare the body for vigorous activity.

Each 30-minute aerobic dance routine program (approximate running time) includes a warmup period followed by vigorous activity, and a cooldown period. A manual describing every exercise in detail, along with instructions for measuring heart rate and a chart for tracking fitness progress, will be available later in the year.

Fitness is for everyone, and it's fun, too! Your friends and family will have fun and benefit from these workouts. And, you can exercise anytime, anywhere. All you need is a VCR. For more information contact: NHSRA/Invacare, c/o Wyse Public Relations, 24 Public Square, Cleveland, OH 44113 (216) 696-1686.

## Prejudices *continued from page 2*

If Levine had been able to look past his prejudices, he could have communicated what he learned to the *Beaumont Enterprise* readers. Had he bothered to ask me a question or two when he spoke with me after the hearing he would have learned that the disabled persons testified only about disability agencies, because that is what we are familiar with and that is what we felt qualified to talk about. He would have learned that we are busy on many critical issues and if we can nip an old dangerous issue in the bud so we will not have to spend months attending committee meetings, we would prefer the quick route.

Although I did not know the deaf students were coming, I, for one, was glad to see them. Why should they not come and learn about government through issues that affect them? If it had been a Boy Scout troop I doubt Levine would have objected. That they were silent when they came into the hearing seems only polite to me.

Unfortunately for us all, Levine labors under many of the familiar prejudices about disabled people. He seems to think we are unable to think for ourselves. ("Someone arranged for . . . the disabled to show up at the committee hearing and protest Stiles' study resolution. Someone arranged with the blind men and women with their canes and glasses to protest.") Eight people testifying is a protest? He seems to think we are nothing more than our adaptive equipment and interpreters, that disabled people are simply symbols. Do we not have a real right to be a part of our government and its process? We are, according to your reporter "cheap theater".

One thing Levine's column tells me is that disabled people have a lot of work to do with the media.

*Stephanie Thomas is co-executive director/Community Affairs of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities.*

**Editor's Note:** *HCR 36, the Resolution introduced by Representative Mark Stiles of Beaumont to study the combination of State Agencies, has passed the House of Representatives and is awaiting action by the Senate.*

### Advocate's Manual

The Texas Alliance for Human Needs has produced an Advocates Manual to Indigent Health Care in Texas. The manual is designed to assist low income community leaders in their local advocacy efforts and provides some tips on how to conduct community education forums on indigent health care laws. You may obtain a copy of this manual by calling Rosie Torres at (512) 474-5019 or writing the Alliance at 210 Barton Springs Rd., Suite 352, Austin, TX 78704. The Alliance also has health care rights pamphlets and a health care card available for use at community forums on the County Responsibility and Treatment Law (S.B. 1) and the Hospital Licensing Law on Patient Transfers.



## Welcome New CTD Members

**Travis County Council for the Deaf**  
2201 Post Road, Room #100  
Austin, Texas 78704  
512/448-7597  
512/444-4181 TDD  
Contact: Rosemary Stapp, President

## LBJ's Park *continued from page 7*

Washington Office of the National Park Service in the form of two park inspections and recommendations for facility and program access improvements. Texas School for the Deaf provided assistance in producing a tour script for use by hearing impaired persons.

Today visitors are invited to enjoy the areas that tell the story of our 36th President. In Johnson City, tours are conducted through his Boyhood Home every half hour, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. From the nearby Visitor Center visitors are directed to the trail leading to the Johnson Settlement, early home of the President's grandparents and headquarters of the Johnson Brothers cattledrover business. Fourteen miles west of Johnson City, bus tours of the LBJ Ranch area originate at the Lyndon B. Johnson State Historical Park. The 1 1/2 hour tours are conducted daily (except Christmas) from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., following Labor Day through the week preceding Memorial Day weekend and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. The tours take visitors past the school Lyndon Johnson attended, his grandparents home, the Ranch House, across fields and pastures of the working ranch and stop for a visit at the President's reconstructed Birthplace/Guesthouse and his nearby gravesite. Visitors are accommodated on a first-come, first-serve basis. Organized groups of fifteen or more or those with multiple wheelchairs should make advance arrangements. There is no charge for visiting any of the sites. For further information call (512) 868-7128 or (512) 644-2241. (A TDD number will be announced when available).

## CTD Editor's Note

The CTD Newsletter is edited and published quarterly by the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, a statewide cross disability consumer group. Any member who wishes to submit future articles for publication should send them to:

**CTD, P.O. Box 4709, Austin, Texas 78765**

# JOIN CTD — The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities is a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to cross disability communication, cooperation and coordination. The Coalition promotes social, educational, physical, and mental well-being of disabled Texans. The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities brings together people and

organizations with similar goals in a united effort to represent all disabled Texans to government, the private sector, and general public. Membership in the Coalition enables organizations and individuals to enhance their effectiveness in improving the quality of life for Texans with disabilities.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### Individual Member

- Yearly \$12.00
- Life Member \$100.00

- Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ organizational membership forms
- Please send me the CTD's newsletters on cassette tape.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:

**CTD**  
**P.O. Box 4709**  
**Austin, Texas 78765**

## Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) Board

### OFFICERS

#### President

Mr. Bob Kafka, P.O. Box 4709, Austin, TX 78765  
(512) 482-8543, Residence; (512) 443-8252, Office

#### Vice-President

Mr. Steve Johns, City of Dallas, City Hall - 7AN,  
Dallas, TX 75201 (214) 254-0901, Residence  
(214) 670-5208, Office

#### Secretary

Ms. Patricia (Pat) McCallum, 815 High School Drive  
Seagoville, TX 75159 (214) 287-4974, Residence  
(214) 634-9815, Office

#### Treasurer

Mr. Alan Meyer, 3233 Wesleyan #102,  
Houston, TX 77027 (713) 541-6662, Residence;  
(713) 621-3703, Office

#### Immediate Past President

Mr. Marshall Mitchell, 4610 South Crockett,  
Amarillo, TX 79110 (806) 371-5436, Office

### Board Members

Ms. Willie Mae Clay, 4815 Dick Gorden Drive,  
San Antonio, TX 78219 (512) 226-0054, Office

Ms. Betty Huffman, 2819 Foster Lane, #228F  
Austin, TX 78757 (512) 452-6975, Residence;  
(512) 459-2612, Office

Mr. Frank Lozano, 3871 Highgrove Dr.,  
Dallas, TX 75220 (214) 902-9661

Ms. Donna McBee, 416 South Main,  
San Antonio, TX 78204 (512) 226-0054, Office

Mr. Jim Parker, Community and Human Dev. Dept.,  
City of El Paso, 2 Civic Center Plaza, El Paso, TX 79930  
(915) 564-0544, Residence; (915) 541-4643, Office

Mr. Jerry Zenor, P.O. Box 33039, Austin, TX 78746  
(512) 454-2820, Residence; (512) 443-3323, Office

Mr. Kevin P. Tracy, 833 Houston St., Austin, TX 78756  
(512) 447-3013, Residence; (512) 454-6694, Office

Ms. Margaret Robinson, 4700 Virginia, #118,  
Amarillo, TX 79109 (806) 353-3616, Residence



## Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

Post Office Box 4709  
Austin, Texas 78765  
(512) 443-8252

NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Austin, TEXAS  
Permit No. 1466