

Directions Newsletter

**Deep East Texas Regional
Mental Health Mental Retardation Services**

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No. 3

Off and Running Special Olympics '89

Join the world of winners! That is exactly what happened on April 21 and 22 at the Abe Martin Stadium. This was the culmination of a lot of hard work and hope for many athletes and volunteers involved in the 1989 Special Olympics. Athletes competing in the Area 7 Special Olympics meet made it clear that all athletes are the same, with or without handicaps.

Over 100 MHMR competitors from Shelby, Sabine/San Augustine, Nacogdoches, Jasper, and the Family Support Services in Angelina County competed in a variety of track and field events, including the 25 & 50-meter runs, competitive walking events, softball throw, and four-man relay race.

The wheelchair events kicked off the program. This was the first year that wheelchair Olympians have had their own night of competition, and those participating were overjoyed. With the Huntington Junior High cheerleaders cheering them on from the finish line, and yelling and support of their peers, you could feel the excitement in the air as the athletes took the field.



***Participants Johnny Walker and Charles Dawson
On your mark...get set...GO!***

Although some struggled, all participants crossed the finish line. Smiles covered the faces of the athletes stepping onto the awards stage to accept medals.



'The Bunch' from Nacogdoches at the opening ceremony.



***Mike McNellis and Kevin Hickman savor the moment
cont'd on page 2***

con't from page 1



The determination to win is evident on Charles Snider's face.



Joe Davis prepares for his next race



A winner! Mayor Bronaugh presents a gold medal to Francis Johnson.

Saturday's events began with the running of the Special Olympic Torch and the reading of the Special Olympics Oath, "Oh Lord, let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt".

Athletes were accompanied by staff and volunteers, and were coached by five staff members. Noal Price coached athletes from Sabine/San Augustine; Sherman Kossie coached competitors from Nacogdoches; Lori Williford coached competitors from Jasper; Alvin Davis coached athletes from Shelby; and Mary Byron coached the Family Support Services team, The Tigers.

Special Olympics is an opportunity for family and friends to see the olympians succeed at some pretty difficult tasks. Hard work and determination enables these clients to participate. Athletes and volunteers spent many hours training for this event. And, as always, they were rewarded by lots of ribbons and medals of gold, silver, and bronze.

As Head Coach for the Tigers this year, Mary Byron was very proud of her athletes. "We learn a lot by watching them in action", she said. "One athlete came in last in his division, but was ecstatic because he had finished. Another athlete who could barely walk ran the 50-meter dash and won a bronze medal. He was determined to do it, and he did", she beamed.

Competitors from all counties extend a huge "thank you" to the supporters who helped make it possible for them to participate. A special thanks goes to Harold Wunderlich, Lisa McCollum, and Yvonne Powers for finding local restaurants to donate enough food to feed all the hungry athletes.

Congratulations are in order for all athletes and coaches.



James Kreger....going for the gold



Judy Allen basks in the glory.

Greenhouse On The Grow



Teresa Seal loves her job in the greenhouse.

The Growing Concern will also have watermelons and cantaloupes ready to purchase by the end of July and, of course, always have a large supply of beautiful household plants to choose from. Jeff says the greenhouse business would be impossible to run by himself, and he relies heavily upon the help of the clients. "Without the clients, we would not be nearly as successful. Although I get great pleasure gardening and working with the plants, my greatest reward by far is association with the most special people in the world - our clients".

The Growing Concern of Jasper, a specialty nursery greenhouse program, is having another busy season. In a creative financial move last winter, nurseryman Jeff Guillory initiated the plant-sitting of over seventy-five houseplants from the Jasper area. The funds earned from the plant-sitting venture were used to help defray costs of the greenhouse operations. Mr. Guillory also coordinated the sale of over 100 poinsettias to local families and community groups to raise money.

January saw the start of the annual bedding plant season with seedlings of tomatoes, broccoli, jalepeno peppers, and cauliflower being planted for retail sales. We can look forward to a plentiful crop of these vegetables around the middle of June. Jeff is proud to report that "the Growing Concern will have over twenty different herbs, including thyme, oregano, lavender, rosemary, and a wide variety of mints". Staff are ready to take your orders now.

Jeff is also extremely proud of the 605 blueberry plants he and the clients planted this year. "The blueberries have started blooming and we expect an excellent crop by the latter part of June. The winter freezes didn't harm our plants." As in the past, the blueberries will be available to the general public on a "pick your own" basis at a cost of \$1.00 per pint.

The Trinity Valley Marketing Cooperative, an organization that supplies specialty items for sophisticated restaurants in Dallas, has contacted The Growing Concern requesting herbs, baby green beans, baby zucchini, baby squash, and purple ruffle basil. Staff and clients are excited about this new marketing enterprise, and are looking forward to the challenge of providing all the co-op's needs at a good profit for the greenhouse.



Wilbur Thompson watching "his" ferns.



Glenda Thompson waters everyday.

Peavy Switch Farm Growing By Leaps And Bounds

According to Peavy Switch Farm Manager, Tim Gillespie, "onions you can eat like an apple" will be ready in July. These are the Texas A & M 1015Y Super-Sweet Onions.

Onions aren't the only things you can find at Peavy Switch to eat. Yellow and zucchini squash, bell peppers, and jalepeno peppers are ready for your cooking pleasure now, and "the finest quality Hastings Red Chief Hybrid tomatoes you can eat" will be ready the latter part of June. Tim reported that Jeff Guillory, Nurseryman at the Jasper County MHMR Center, ordered the special seeds for these tomatoes, and he and his clients started the plants at The Growing Concern in Jasper.

Also ready the latter part of June will be plenty of black eyed peas, zipper cream peas and okra, and in July you can purchase all the cantaloupe and watermelons you could ever want.

Something else new and exciting is happening at Peavy Switch. In a joint venture with Stephen F. Austin State University, Peavy Switch is growing Asian vegetables and herbs. "Nearly a quarter of the garden will be used for this experiment", said Tim. A graduate student from SFA is providing the seeds and laying out the plots for the vegetables, and Peavy Switch Farm staff and clients are providing the labor.

A requirement of SFA's grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture is to develop the marketing strategy for the Asian crops, so the joint venture evolved. According to Tim, "Asian vegetables are a good cash crop for agricultural diversification". He further states that "there is a large Asian population in the southeastern United States and no one is growing their traditional foods in significant amounts".

Over twenty different varieties of Asian vegetables will be grown at Peavy Switch. Everything from melons with a shelf life of over one year to yard-long beans and cucumbers will be grown at Peavy Switch as part of the experiment.



Farm Manager, Tim Gillespie, shows off his super-sweet onion field.



Yellow and Zucchini Squash flourish

Nondiscrimination Policy

Deep East Texas Regional MHMR Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap or age in admission or access to treatment or employment in its programs and activities.

George Patterson, rights protection officer, has been designated to coordinate efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulation which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap.

**In an emergency
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toll-free**

**CRISIS LINE:
1-800-392-8343**

All Are Winners!

Kirbyville/Newton Sheltered Workshop Brings Home the Gold

Nineteen individuals from the Kirbyville/Newton Sheltered Workshop participated in the regional Special Olympics held in Beaumont April 8th. They fared very well, bringing home 22 gold, 14 silver, and three bronze medals.

In May, six of those clients then traveled to San Marcos, Texas to participate in the State Special Olympics. Again they were successful. They came home with a bag full of 14 medals: 9 gold, 3 silver, and 2 bronze. Sally Navarre-Macon, Service Director of the Workshop, just beams as she talks about their accomplishments.

Anthony Mattox, Melvin Herrin, and Wylie and Derrell Westbrook were on the relay team. They ran the 4X100 and won a gold medal. Fay Castilaw, Anthony Mattox, Melvin Herrin, and Richard Terry also brought home gold medals in the softball throw, and Derrell and Wylie Westbrook took silver. Wylie won a gold medal in the 100-meter race, Anthony won silver, and Richard took bronze. Derrell, after just having run the last leg of the 4X100 relay, still managed to bring home a silver in the 200-meter dash.

They Olympians arrived back in Kirbyville two days later tired, red, and happy. Wayne King, their Coach, stated that each gave his/her all and showed great sportsmanship and team spirit. "I feel that the trip was the highlight of the year", said Sally. "We're already making plans to take more athletes to the State Meet next year."



Service Director Sally Navarre-Macon with "her" winners.

Volunteers Send Clients To Legislature

Thanks to the Houston County Association for Handicapped Persons, seven clients from the Houston County Sheltered Workshop toured the Texas State Capitol on Wednesday, April 12th.

Present in the Senate and House for reading of a resolution promoting "State Use Day", over 150 handicapped citizens from throughout Texas were applauded in the gallery. Houston County clients pick up litter along highways, clean roadside parks, and provide janitorial services for local state highway departments. Through "set aside contracting", the state gives nonprofit programs like MHMR first option to bid on services and products. More than 35 Houston County residents are productively employed through these contracts.

Clients and staff enjoyed a visit to the office of Representative Mike McKinney. Present to answer questions and comment on life at the Capitol was Mrs. McKinney, who works alongside her husband.

Our special thanks to Lynette Jordan. Lynette leads the Association, which operates the resale shop located at 206 South Sixth Street in Crockett. Volunteers sell clean, usable items to the general public on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Proceeds from the shop enable clients to take special trips, like this last trip to Austin.



Representative Mike McKinney chats with Michelle Blocker and Chad Fore.

MHMR Welcomes New Service Directors

We are pleased to introduce Linda Harris as the new Service Director of the Shelby County MHMR Center, Michelle Blocker as Service Director of the Houston County MHMR Center, and Susan Holt as Service Director of the Jasper County MHMR Center.

Linda Harris, M.S.W., undergraduate honor student at Stephen F. Austin State University, and a 1977 graduate of the University of Houston School of Social Work, joined the staff in April.

Prior to her promotion as Service Director at the Shelby MHMR Center, Linda served as the Foster Care Coordinator for the Family Support Program. Before joining our agency, she was a social worker for the MHMR Authority of Harris County.

Like most supervisors of MHMR programs, Mrs. Harris is active in the community outside her professional role with MHMR. She teaches a young women's group in her church and is also the new member orientation coordinator. She is also involved in a student tutoring program for potential high school dropouts and those students who may be encountering drug abuse problems.

Michelle Blocker joined our staff in April. She is a graduate of SFA and UT-Arlington, and has a Master's of Science in Social Work and Administration and Planning.

Prior to her employment with Deep East Texas MHMR, Michelle served as Director of Middleton House, a 24-bed facility for youthful offenders committed to the Texas Youth Commission.

Michelle lives in Crockett, Texas with her husband, Tim, who is self-employed.

Susan Holt, M.Ed, L.P.C., also joined our staff in May. She comes to us from the Beaumont Neurological Hospital, where she served as a psychotherapist for the General Adult Psychiatric Program.

Susan currently serves on the

Jasper County Child Welfare Board, and is a lifelong resident of Jasper County. She previously worked as a Juvenile Probation Officer in Jasper, and also served as Treasurer of the Jasper County Salvation Army in 1987-1988.

Susan's counseling experience includes eating disorders, substance abuse, adolescents, chronic adult psychiatric patients, acute psychiatric patients, and dysfunctional family therapies.

We are very pleased to have Linda, Michelle, and Susan on our staff, and believe that under their leadership the Shelby County MHMR Center, the Houston County MHMR Center, and the Jasper County MHMR Center will expand and fulfill vitally needed services.



*Michelle Blocker,
Linda Harris,
and Susan Holt*

And The Winner Is.....

The suggested names are in, the committee has met, and the selection has been made. The new Employee Recognition Program's official name is Making A Difference. The first awards will be presented in August.

The winning name was submitted by William Tullis, an LVN at Pineywoods Hospital. Mr. Tullis won \$100 for his winning entry. The selection was made by the Personnel Committee from 92 entries.

Congratulations, Bill Tullis, on winning the contest!



*Paul Jackson presents William Tullis with his
winning check for \$100*

Trinity County MHMR Reception for Mother of the Year A BIG SUCCESS!

The clients, Trinity County's support group - Helping Hands Association - and the staff of the Trinity County MHMR Center hosted a reception for the winner of the "Mother of the Year" contest held in Groveton on March 16th.

Every year the Groveton Chamber of Commerce sponsors the East Texas Timber Fest to raise money to cover expenses they incurred the previous year on various projects. This year, the Trinity County MHMR Center decided to participate in the activities by holding a "Mother of the Year" contest. All Trinity County residents were invited to participate in the contest by submitting a short paragraph describing why they thought their candidate should win. Letters were judged by an independent group, who said their final decision was a very difficult one to make.



Staff with "Mother of the Year"

The lucky winner was Mrs. Martha Mericle. Mrs. Mericle is the mother of a ten-year old daughter, Miranda, who submitted the winning letter.

Mrs. Mericle is employed as the local postmaster of Groveton.

The Mother of the Year walked away with over \$500.00 worth of cash and prizes that had been donated by the friendly businesses of Groveton. The Trinity County MHMR Center truly appreciates their generosity and kindness, and is already making plans for next year's contest.

Here Comes Peter Cottontail



Carlos Tovar joyfully discovers another Easter egg at the Cornerstone West Easter Egg Hunt held at the Angelina MHMR Center on March 23rd.



Another one enjoying the Easter Egg Hunt is Daniel Wrottenberry. The decorated eggs were provided by the children's parents, and their older brothers and sisters helped "hide" them.



Meet the new President. Phyllis Wars, CSA at Trinity County MHMR, was recently elected President of the Board of Directors of the Groveton Chamber of Commerce. As President, Phyllis will direct Chamber activities for 1989-90. Congratulations, Phyllis.

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Deep East Texas MHMR Services
4101 South Medford Drive
Lufkin, Texas 75901-5699
(409) 639-1141
Sandy Vann, *Editor*

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Peavy Switch Celebrates One Year



Jim McDermott enjoys socializing with guests at the Peavy Switch Recovery Center open house celebrating their first year anniversary.

Client Rights

Any client, relative of a client or representative of a client who has a complaint, comment or suggestion regarding confidentiality of records or the health, safety, welfare or legal and human rights of a patient or client of this center is invited and urged to submit them in writing to:

Chairperson
Public Responsibility
Committee
P.O. Box 935
Lufkin, Texas 75901

The Public Responsibility Committee is an independent, impartial body. None of its members are employees of this center.

Copies of Deep East Texas MHMR's operating policies and procedures may be reviewed at Central Administration, 4101 South Medford Drive, Lufkin, Texas.

From The Executive Director

I was reviewing a publication put out by Dennis Jones, Commissioner of the Texas Department of MHMR, called **Executive Fact Book**, which covers the first quarter of FY 1989. A variety of statistical data regarding mental health and mental retardation services in the State of Texas is documented in this booklet.

Two of the statistical tables compared community MHMR centers in the amount of total dollars spent per capita for mental health and mental retardation services. With a population in our region of approximately 380,000, the per capita expenditure to provide mental health services in our region is \$12.69. The per capita statewide is \$10.29. Out of 36 centers in the state, we ranked 9th in per capita expenditures.

With regard to mental retardation services, the state average is \$8.31, and Deep East Texas MHMR spends \$14.17 per capita, which ranks us 10th in the state.

For mental health services, 38% of the total funds came from our TDMHMR contract dollars. The remainder of the revenue came from funds we have earned by keeping people out of state hospitals and from local funds - primarily client fees.

On the mental retardation side, only 17% of the total funds came from the TDMHMR contract, with the remaining dollars coming from money we have earned by removing people from the state hospitals and placing them in the community, as well as from locally-generated funds such as sheltered workshop contracts and

highway department contracts.

If we had to rely more heavily on TDMHMR contract funds, our ranking within the state for both mental health and mental retardation services would be considerably lower. Our staff's performance in reducing the populations of state institutions, as well as our diligent efforts to provide services at the local level that consumers are willing to purchase, has made it possible to bring in the large number of performance-based dollars. This has allowed our Center to provide a level of services that allows us to enjoy the high ranking statewide in terms of per capita expenditures for mental health and mental retardation services.

Again, it is important to emphasize that without the dedication and hard work of our staff in the field, none of this would be possible. The Board and staff have dedicated themselves to providing the highest quality services, and in order to accomplish this have produced at a level far beyond most centers in the state.

Although we cannot be totally satisfied with our accomplishments, we should at least recognize that progress has been made and that through a continued spirit of hard work, a consumer orientation, and a philosophy of social entrepreneurship, we can continue to increase our revenue base and thereby enhance the range and quality of services we offer to citizens of the Deep East Texas region.