

## **Texas Chapter 25th Anniversary Observance**

The evening of February 28, 2008, was simple in design and execution, but had the one ingredient guaranteed to bring about an evening of anticipation, excitement, happiness, and satisfaction; that ingredient was the gathering and assembly of more than 50 individuals who had a long history with each other, but in recent years had “lost” some of the feelings of “family.” These 50 plus individuals were assembled to mark the observance of the IARP Texas Chapter’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; the Texas Chapter of IARP is known as TARPPS – the Texas Association of Rehabilitation Professionals and Providers of Services. The organization was officially chartered in the closing days of 1982 and began fully operating as a professional association in the early months of 1983.

Gathered in a beautiful hotel banquet room at the Southfork Hotel, the 50 TARPPS members and their guests engaged in a little social drinking, a lot of enthusiastic welcoming, and fond recollections of past years including remembrances of places, meetings, seminars, conferences, social occasions, elections, lobbying activities, and, of course, people – professional associates involved in the newly emerging rehabilitation profession known by so many different names that it was often difficult to get a firm hold on the group’s identification – counselors? vocational counselors? case managers? rehabilitation specialists? and many more.

Included in the distinguished guest list was Evelyn Hartman, one of the twelve original founding members who got the organization started and officially chartered by the State of Texas; there were also nine former Chapter Presidents – Robert Boudreaux, Carol Bennett, Joyce Shoop, Evelyn Hartman, Dillon Snowden, Tom Selman, Emma Vasquez, Julia Crume, and Tim Anderson. Two other past Presidents were scheduled to be present but had to cancel due to conflicts – William J. Kramberg of Houston – the first TARPPS President, and Cecil McGough of Lewisville. Patricia Tennery, now living in Illinois, sent her regrets and congratulations.

TARPPS was fortunate in having the International IARP President, Neil Bennett from Washington State, present for the occasion, and he was joined by the Executive Director of IARP, Debbie Witt, from Illinois. Both international officers spoke briefly to the group, and Debbie Witt, on behalf of IARP and its Board, presented the Texas Chapter a Certificate of Celebration for its 25 years as a professional association in service to the rehabilitation community.

Another highlight of the evening were brief comments and recollections shared by Evelyn Hartman (the Founding and the Early Years), Dillon Snowden (the Intermediate Years), Carol Bennett (Remembrances and Recollections of People), and Tom Selman (the last 10 years to the present). Each recalled and shared special memories concerning people, places, events, and activities. Individuals in the audience were invited to share special remembrances or asked to recall special incidents or problems over the years. And many did so!

In bringing the observance to a close, President Tom Selman recognized, among those present, Past Presidents, former Secretaries, former Treasurers, former Newsletter Editors, and former Board Members. He also paid special recognition to the representatives of the various rehabilitation facilities and programs who were present – all representing organizations that had been very supportive of TARPPS and IARP over the years – PRIDE, Dallas Spinal Rehabilitation Center, Pate Rehabilitation, the Centre for Neuro Skills, and NeuroRestorative Specialty Services at UTHCT.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Observance was, indeed, a celebration- bring good friends together for a social occasion that turned into a great evening of fun and sharing – and a commitment to get together more often in the future for some purely social activities in addition to those educational activities and meetings the Chapter already holds during the year.

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### **All-Day Seminar**

All day on Friday, February 29, 2008, the Texas IARP Chapter (TARPPS) held an All-Day Seminar centered around the theme ***Rehabilitation Professionals: Soaring to New Heights!*** More than 80 TARPPS members and guests participated in the Seminar as Attendees and, for those who stayed the entire day, earned up to 8.0 contact hours for continuing education for CRC, CCM, CDMS, and LPC.

In addition, those in attendance got to enjoy a catered breakfast, catered breaks, and a very delicious catered lunch. In between all the eating, those present got to hear and learn from six (6) well organized and timely seminar presentations. Kevin Gill, M. D. of Dallas and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, spoke on the ***Multidisciplinary Care of the Injured Spine Patient – the Future!***

Dr. Gill's timely presentation was followed by a presentation on the current working and predicted changes to the Ticker to Work program created by the Social Security Administration. Paula Vieillet of Employment Options, Inc. from St. Petersburg, Florida, and Sallie Rhodes, Ticket to Work Program Specialist with CESSI, Inc. from McLean, Virginia, spoke on **A New Social Security "Ticket to Work" Program.**

Occupational Therapist and Ergonomic Consultant Heather McBride of Rowlett, Texas, and Keith Michael White, Ph. D. a Dallas-based Ergonomics Consultant with Lennox International, Inc. presented on ***When Claims Happen – Validating Claims With Ergonomics Reports and Getting an Audience With HealthCare Physicians*** in which they detailed what should happen when a claim is filed – what should happen on a timely basis and under the direction of trained, responsible professionals. They also emphasized how much more receptive and cooperative physicians and other healthcare professionals

would be to timely, thorough, and easily understood reports based on scientific study and analysis.

During the designated lunch time, attendees were treated to an entertainment filled hour and a half ethics presentation: ***Ethics: A Musical Comedy!*** The presentation was made by Dancing Moose Productions of Denton, Texas, and featured music, comedy, drama, and dance by Timothy Anderson, Gordon Leeman, and Meredith Jeppson – all rehabilitation professionals. This group had actually premiered this unique and entertaining presentation on professional ethics at a TARPPS All-Day Seminar in June 2005. This presentation was polished, honed, and professionally underscored with many lessons in personal and professional situational ethics that every rehabilitation professional faces from time to time during their careers.

Darleen Lortz, MS, CRC, LPC, and CEO of Motivational Foundations, Inc. out of Lake Dallas, Texas, made a highly informative, very educational, and very timely presentation on ***Competing in a Changing Job Market***. Of course, the current job market has changed considerably in the past few years and is still changing – in some cases dramatically. Therefore, rehabilitation clients have to be prepared to seek employment in a rapidly changing job market, and rehabilitation professionals must be prepared to teach up-to-date job seeking and employment seeking skills; if they don't, the jobs will not be successfully gained.

The last session of the day was an interactive, sharing session between a panel of insurance professionals, rehabilitation professionals, and employer representatives and an audience of individuals who have as one of their responsibilities, the providing of vocational rehabilitation services to a clientele seeking training, education, and employment in a very tight market following an on-the-job injury or a work-related injury. The looming question was Why do some insurance payors and employer representatives purchase vocational services and others seem to go out of their way to avoid such purchases? Why can't these insurance and employer representatives understand that use of vocational rehabilitation professionals can greatly increase the quality of vocational services, increase the probability of success, provide a means of real accountability, and result in greater return to work scenarios?

Those participating in this last session of the day included Moderator Dillon Snowden, Ph. D. of Dillon Snowden & Associates, Fort Worth, Texas; Linda Tootle, Senior Claims Representative with Unitrin Business Insurance, Dallas; Christina Lay, Senior Claims Representative with Unitrin Business Insurance, Dallas; Thelma Lee, Nurse/Case Manager With United Parcel Services, Dallas Regional Office; and Robert S. Cogburn, Vocational/Medical Case Manager with Texas Mutual Insurance Company, Dallas.

The All-day Seminar was considered a great success by all in attendance, and the Seminar was made possible, in part, through the support of enthusiastic vendors and exhibitors who presented a variety of products and services for the rehabilitation market. Exhibitors included Centre for Neuro Skills (Irving, Texas); CORE HealthCare (Dripping Springs, Texas); Dallas Spinal Rehabilitation Center (Dallas); DFW CMSA Chapter;

Environmental Modifications Unlimited (Division of Nurses Unlimited), (Odessa, Texas); H. M. Health, Inc. (Rowlett, Texas); Horcher Lifting Systems (Dallas); Motivational Foundations, Inc. (Lake Dallas, Texas); NeuroRestorative Specialty Services @ UTHC (Tyler); Pate Rehabilitation (Dallas); PRIDE (Dallas); Rehab Without Walls (Gentiva) (Irving, Texas); and Texas Rehabilitation Association.

The next All-Day Seminar will be in the Fall – likely mid-October to early November, although the date will be officially announced before the end of March.

IARP President Neil Bennett and IARP Executive Director Debbie Witt attended over half of the All-Day Seminar before they had to return to their respective home bases. The Texas Chapter was honored to have them present for the seminar and encourages other IARP Chapters to invite national participation in some of their activities in order to promote better understanding, maintain closer international, national, and state cooperation, and to foster a greater understanding of available resources.

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## TARPPS MONTHLY MEETINGS RESUME

The Dallas-Fort Worth Division of the TARPPS State Chapter will resume its monthly meetings and educational seminars on Thursday, April 17, with registration to get underway at 11:00 a.m. This first monthly meeting of 2008 will be hosted by **Gentiva: Rehab Without Walls** at its Irving, Texas facility. The lunch time presentation will feature Toni Alexander Willis, M. D. in a discussion of *Spinal Cord Injury: Making an Optimal Transition Home*. Those in attendance will receive 1.50 contact hours for continuing education for CRC, CDMS, CCM, and LPC.

The physical accommodations, audio-visual media, and lunch will all be provided by Host Organization Rehab Without Walls. Lunch will be served beginning at 11:20 a.m., with business activities and announcements to follow. The formal presentation will begin at 12:00 noon and end with a Q & A at 1:30 p.m.

Those who plan to attend should RSVP to Tom Selman (972/788-2069) prior to Monday, April 14 at 12:00 noon. Walk-ins will be welcome on the day of the meeting provided the maximum attendance of 55 has not been exceeded. To guarantee space and lunch, RSVP. General Announcements have already been sent by mail and e-mail announcements will be sent out beginning the week of March 24. Questions may be directed to Tom Selman at 972/788-2069 or 214/803-6335 (cell).