

Iowa Rehabilitation Association Newsletter 1st Quarter 2008

Suzanne Paulson, Editor

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

John TenPas

Senate Resolution 487 Designates March 22, 2008, as National Rehabilitation Counselor

Appreciation Day

Date: Friday, March 14, 2008

For those who read on the run, please take a moment to read the attached important message from the U.S. Senate.

In the wee hours of this morning, March 14, 2008, the United States Senate passed by Unanimous Consent Senate Resolution 487, designating March 22, 2008, as National Rehabilitation Counselor Appreciation Day. The Senate stands in recess until March 31, 2008.

This important bipartisan Resolution was principally co-sponsored by Senator Saxby Chambliss of Georgia and Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana.

Congratulations to all qualified Rehabilitation Counselors everywhere. You deserve this honor and we are proud to have assisted the Senate in making this honor a reality once again this year.

As we said again at the National Rehabilitation Association's 27th Annual Government Affairs Summit which just concluded this week, one person, one chapter, can and has made a difference.

In that spirit, on behalf of NRA's 2008 President Ray Feroz, NRA's Executive Committee and NRA's Board of Directors and all in NRA, we want to commend our Georgia and Louisiana Chapters for their assertive advocacy on behalf of Qualified Rehabilitation Counselors and the individuals whom they serve, including our heroes at home.

In particular, we want to thank Dru Fentem of Georgia for her dogged determination once again in shepherding this Resolution to its final destination: The United States Senate.

By way of background and as some of you may know, on March 22, 1983, Martha Lentz Walker of Kent State University, who was President of NCRE at the time, testified before the Subcommittee on Select Education of the U.S. House of Representatives and was instrumental in bringing to the attention of Congress the need for rehabilitation counselors to be qualified.

That message is as important today as it was then and may be even more important with so many of our heroes at home struggling to recapture their economic and personal independence. As we all know, **QUALIFICATIONS COUNT**. All individuals with disabilities deserve the very best that we have to give. Our qualified rehabilitation counselors and associated qualified VR personnel are the very best we have in our great country and we thank you for the

bottom of our hearts for your selfless service over the years to and with individuals with disabilities.

So many of our wounded warriors are returning home with significant disabilities and, you, as the professionals in the field, have the expertise, the experience and the determination to assist these and other individuals in the long road back to recovery. Rehabilitation counselors everywhere, the message is clear: **YOU ARE SO IMPORTANT TO THIS COUNTRY AND ITS CITIZENS.**

Our wounded warriors have given so much to all of us, they, and other deserving individuals with disabilities, deserve the very best we have to give.

However, our work has just begun. As we have said in the past, nothing worth fighting for ever comes easily.

We must continue our advocacy at all levels of government until every Senator, Congressperson, Governor, and every Mayor knows of and fully appreciates not only the programs administered under the Rehabilitation Act, but the Qualified Rehabilitation Counselors and qualified VR personnel on the front lines of services to others.

As we have often said at NRA's Government Affairs Summits over the past 27 years -- when a representative of government does something for the good of all persons -- that person should be thanked.

In keeping with this sentiment, we ask you to call or e-mail Senators Chambliss (202-224-3521) and Senator Landrieu (202-224-5824) to thank them for sponsoring Senate Resolution 487, designating March 22, 2008, as National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day.

If you would prefer to thank Senators Landrieu and Chambliss via e-mail, their respective e-mails are:

Saxby.Chambliss@Chambliss.Senate.gov;

Senator@Landrieu.Senate.gov;

We also ask that you copy your respective Senators on the e-mail to Senators Landrieu and Chambliss.

Congratulations to qualified rehabilitation counselors everywhere. Today and March 22, 2008, is your day and we in the National Rehabilitation Association join the U.S. Senate in saluting you.

Brag and Steal

was established in 1982 and was designed as a training seminar to promote the sharing of ideas and experiences of professionals involved in the placement of people with disabilities. This year's Brag and Steal will continue that tradition by having speaker topics that focus on employment for diverse populations.

Save the Date

SAVE THE DATE FOR BRAG N STEAL, Friday July 25, 2008 at Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny, Iowa. A block of rooms will be set aside at a local hotel (details will come in the next issue). The program will include topics on Asperger's, older workers, tips on getting into state employment, an employer panel, and other interesting issues. Watch your mail and email for complete registration and details.

Questions about credits

You should soon be receiving your CRC credits from the 2007 Annual Training conference. For those of you requesting ethics training credits, the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification only gave credit to the presentation which dealt with the new revisions in the CRCC Code of Ethics. For those of you requesting credits for the session regarding ethical considerations in electronic communication, that was computed into your general credit. We apologize for the inconvenience that this may cause.



2008 AWARDS CEREMONY

Hello everyone, I am the awards chair for the up and coming fall conference in Council Bluffs October 8, 9, 10. As you all know one of our big events is our Awards Luncheon Held on the second day of the conference. I am sure you work with a co-worker who you feel should have some special recognition and have assisted a client to become successfully employed who you would like to be recognized for their hard work. Please consider nominating them for an award. The awards are: The Achiever of the year, Counselor of the year, Bill Donahue Placement Award, Gerry Byers Award, and the Chuck Wood Award. Please note the criteria for each of these awards published in this newsletter. If you have questions please give me a call at: 1-515-281-4268 or e-mail me: Marcia.gracey@iowa.gov. I would like the packets on the Achiever and the counselor awards to me by September 1, 2008. I am sure the other divisions sponsoring the other awards would probably like the packets in by early September also. Check it out! Do a great deed and nominate someone for specially recognition

Mark your Calendar – October 8-11

The Iowa Rehabilitation Association is planning its annual training conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa at Harrah's Hotel and Casino from October 8-10th. Keep these dates open and plan on some great training as well as southwest Iowa hospitality.

I.A.I.L. News

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR CHUCK WOOD AWARD

The Iowa Rehabilitation Association is seeking nominations for the Chuck Wood Memorial Award. *The nomination flyer is enclosed with this newsletter.* This award is given to recognize the achievements of a person with a disability who has attained a high level of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency in the community.

For several years in a row, recipients of the award have been blind. There is nothing wrong with this, as it is perfectly respectable to be blind, but there probably are deserving nominees with other disabilities out there, just waiting to be recognized. So, bring on the nominations, no matter what the disability, and may the best person be honored at our awards luncheon on October 10 in Council Bluffs!

Please contact Jonathan Ice at 319-365-9111, or e-mail at ice.jonathan@blind.state.ia.us. Please send nominations to Jonathan Ice, Iowa Department for the Blind, 411 3rd Street, Suite 745, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402.

what's new...

National Association of Disability Benefits Specialists.

With so many of the Workforce Navigators present at last year's IRA Training Conference and the development of the Iowa Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program with statewide training, this is likely to become a strong division. Our own Sheila Stoeckel,

MS, CRC is on the National Board of this new division.

Membership Report

At the end of February 2008, the chapter and division memberships are:

IRA Total 86 -	60 Professional
	3 Student
	23 Full Life
Job Placement/Development	24
Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association	18
National Association for Independent Living	1
Vocational Evaluation/Work Adjustment Association	6
Natl Assoc. of Service Providers/Private Rehab.	6
Natl Assoc for Rehabilitation Leadership	3
National Association of Rehabilitation Support Staff	1
Natl Assoc of Multicultural Rehab Concerns	1
Natl Assoc of Disability Benefits Specialists	4

FYI: Dues have increased - Member \$132, Student \$42

Look for two feature articles highlighting NRA members. In this newsletter, meet new NRA member and board member Mike Williams and Past President Harlan Watson (Full Life member).

This committee is developing a membership campaign to be introduced later this spring. We hope to target college students and our partners in employment.

Tim Gracey, Maureen McClain and Sheila Stoeckel are returning to the IRA Membership Committee this year. Also joining us is Marcia Gracey. We have room for you, too! Call me at 319-230-8737 or email me at victoria.kollmann@blind.state.ia.us to join this committee or with any suggestions or ideas.

Have a great spring!
Victoria, IRA Membership Chair



Meet Mike Williams.

He is a new NRA member this year and he is beginning a term as an IRA board member.

Mike's wife Jo works for Mercy Medical Clinics in Des Moines. Mike says their two daughters Maddie, age 11 and

Abby, age 9 are both awesome young ladies thanks in most part to their mom. Both girls are busy with a variety of activities including piano, Girl Scouts, softball and basketball. Mike shared that for the first time for

their family, both girls will both be on tournament teams this summer. Mike's views on this: "I believe we have officially gone mad."

His hobbies revolve around the family. He is very involved with his kids' education and he helps coach both softball and basketball for them. He claims he can make a great home made thin crust pizza. When time permits, he home brews from scratch using all grain batches.

Mike's educational background: Simpson College-Business Management and Drake University- Masters in Public Administration.

While many of us know Mike from his position at the Department of Human Rights, he also worked for Hy-Vee during his high school and college days, and for Kirke-Van Orsdell (now Marsh-McClellan) selling and underwriting Professional Liability policies for electrical engineers, processing claims for the National Rifle Association members when their guns were damaged or stolen, and working closely with Lloyd's of London.

Mike shared that he was the king of Seiko's when he worked in jewelry sales. During another position as grounds crew worker at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute on South Padre Island, Mike became the Island Ace mole and cat catcher. This was part of the actual job description, not "special duties as assigned!"

Mike began his position with the Department of Human Rights in the summer of 2000. He considers Harlietta Helland and John TenPas to be two of the best mentors a new person could ever have. One of Mike's primary responsibilities is to manage the Iowa Youth Leadership Forum, and he credits the help of another awesome guru-Jackie Wipperman, in getting the program to where it is today.

When I asked Mike why he joined NRA, he told me, "I was first introduced to IRA/NRA by Harlietta Helland as she felt it would be a good way to network and learn more about the big world of disability. More importantly, people could get to know more about YLF and CLF programs. I continued to attend the conferences, missing only one year. I found out that I really enjoyed the format. I could set up and display YLF and CLF material, go to the sessions and learn about many different aspects of rehabilitation and then take part in the social aspects after hours-which is where the real relationship building takes place. This allowed me to network on many different levels. Admittedly, it

took me a while to join the NRA – not being fully immersed in the rehabilitation realm, I felt a little awkward about membership, but after evaluating all of the positives from attending the conferences each year, it was a no-brainer. Professionally, I gained so much from the sessions and the national speakers that have been brought in over the years, the topics and discussions have been both significant and instructive regarding all aspects of rehabilitation, from working with individuals as they transition from school to work or as they re-enter the workplace, or trends and industry standards needed to have continued success with my career. Both of the transition programs that I work with would never have been as successful as they are without the knowledge, networking, and mentor support that I have gained through the strong relationships made with others at IRA. Being involved with the IRA/NRA has probably been the most powerful experience I have had towards professional success in my job. Finally, going back to hobbies, I would be extremely negligent if I did not mention that I do enjoy an occasional cigar, a guilty pleasure often indulged when attending the IRA conventions.”

So look for Mike at the next Brag and Steal or IRA Training Conference.

Victoria Kollmann,
IRA Membership Chair

Meet Harlan Watson...

Harlan Watson has been a Life Member of NRA since he joined the organization. He became involved in the vocational rehabilitation field as a graduate student in the University of Iowa Master's in Rehabilitation. He did an internship in the Waterloo VR office, and was hired as a counselor in 1959. He was the Supervisor of the Waterloo office from 1964-1966, when he moved to Des Moines and held several positions including Assistant Director of Field Services, Chief of Casework Services, and was also responsible for the social security reimbursement program and managed the first Independent Living funds that came to Iowa DVRS. Harlan worked for the VR general agency for 35 years.

Harlan related that the first organizational meeting for the Iowa Rehab Association was held at the YMCA. Alban Coon was the first President of the association, and Harlan was elected as the second President of the association and served in 1962/63

(mid-year elections were conducted then). Harlan indicated that membership in a professional organization was pretty much expected. Harlan still enjoys reading the newsletter even though he knows fewer and fewer of the members; and has attended Past President Breakfasts when the conference is held in central Iowa.

Harlan is a stalwart supporter of IRA and has been on the board at the state, regional and national level of divisions and chapters. I hope we can get him back to one of the conferences. He can tell some great stories. He is lucky enough to be spending the first two weeks of March in Hawaii with his wife Lois (he will have been to every state in the nation then). I hope it isn't too hot for them.
TimGracey



Legislative Report

FY 2009 Budget Resolution... Both Houses of Congress narrowly adopted their versions of the Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Resolution. The House adopted its resolution on March 13th and the Senate voted on March 14th to adopt its version. A one year moratorium on earmarked spending was shot down in both Houses. There are several major differences in the Budget Resolution as follows:

- ✓ Domestic Spending...Both bills would spend more money on domestic spending than the White House budget. The House would provide \$3.5 billion more than the Senate for domestic spending. The House would allow for \$25.4 billion for non emergency discretionary spending while the Senate would spend \$21.8 billion over the Bush Administration request/
- ✓ Reconciliation Instructions...The Budget Resolutions differ in reconciliation instruction given to committees to reshape entitlement spending. Reconciliation is the usual procedure used to modify entitlement spending such as Medicaid, Medicare, and

Social Security. The House bill instructs the Ways and Means Committee to produce \$750 million in savings over the next six years from entitlement programs. These savings would be used to prevent a looming ten percent reduction in Medicare payments to physicians. The Senate has no reconciliation instructions.

- ✓ FY 2001 and 2003 Budget Cuts...During the debate on the Budget Resolution, the Senate spent considerable time debating the fate of the Bush budget cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003, many of which are set to expire in 2010. Specific action on these cuts is expected to be delayed until next year.
- ✓ Education.. An amendments offered by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) that would have added \$10 billion to IDEA funding as well as other increases to human service program was defeated by a vote of 43 to 55.

The House and Senate will attempt to reconcile the difference in these bills in April.

Ticket to Work...The Social Security Admin. and its numerous partners on the Ticket to Work program met in Louisville, KY recently to re-energize the Ticket to Work program in anticipation of the release of new regulations governing the program. Although a success for some individuals seeking to leave the Social Security disability programs for work, the Ticket program has been more limited than was expected by advocates in 1999 during passage of the authorizing legislation. SSA met with representatives of state vocational rehabilitation agencies, other rehabilitation service providers and employment networks, businesses, Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Programs, Protection and Advocacy Systems, consumers, and national organizations to stimulate more interest and share opportunities for improved cooperation among the various players. Final regulations that are expected to further improve the mechanics of the Ticket program are expected to be published within the next month or so.

Congress is on a two week spring recess...When they return to work on March 31st, they will face an uninterrupted eight week session where practically all "must pass" bills will need to progress in order to have a chance to become law before the scheduled adjournment in early October.

Senator Tom Harkin has announced his intent to run for re-election for the Senate in 2008. All members of the House of Representatives are up for re-election this year as well.

ADA Restoration Act...The ADA Restoration Act continues to move forward in both Houses of Congress. All Democratic members of the House have signed on to this legislation. In the Senate, while there is strong, Democratic support, bi-partisan support for this bill is being looked for. Strongly urge Senator Charles Grassley to sign onto this piece of legislation.

Mental Health Parity Act...The Mental Health Parity Act has passed both Houses of Congress. In the House, the vote for it was along party lines with the Democrats from Iowa, Braley, Loeb sack and Boswell voting for this measure.

Both the Senate and the House bills will now go to committee to iron out the differences.

In Iowa...Iowa is also looking at mental health parity. Bills that would have expanded Iowa's biologically based parity laws to all mental illnesses and substance abuse died in the funnel. The House Veterans Affairs Committee unanimously passed out a bill (HF 2003) that will require insurance plans to pay for mental health and substance abuse treatment for veterans, It includes any recognized mental illness, not just those that are biologically based. Rep. Ray Zirkelbach, the Monticello legislator who sponsored the bill, returned to the Legislature this year after spending more than two years in Iraq. Opponents of parity say that parity legislation will cause big jumps in insurance premiums. The estimated impact of the veteran's parity bill came in at .07% increase in premiums for private insurance plans. IF Congress should pass a version of

mental health parity indicating that insurance plans would have to treat mental illness and substance abuse as they would a physical illness, there may be no need for state legislation.

Iowans leaving the legislator. The following legislators have decided to retire at the conclusion of the legislative session this year....

Representative Carmen Boal (Polk County)

Representative Dan Click (Polk County)

Representative Chuck Gipp (Allamakee and Winneshiek County)

Representative Clarence Hoffman (Crawford, Ida, Monona and Woodbury County)

Representative Libby Jacobs (Polk County)

Representative Walt Tomenga (Polk County)

In the Senate:

Senator Jeff Angelo (Adams, Clarke, Decatur, Montgomery, Reiggold, Taylor and Union County)

Senator Mike Connolly (Dubuque County)

Senator Thurman Gaskill (Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Hancock, Winnebago and Worth County)

Senator Mary Lundby (Linn County)

Senator John Putney (Benton, Grundy, Iowa and Tama County)

Those running for election from the House to the Senate include: Representatives Pam Yochum and Representative Swati Dandekar.

Please take the time to thank those that are retiring for their service to Iowans.



2008 IRA Board Member Contact List

President-John TenPas, 515-281-5969

john.tenpas@iowa.gov

Vice President-Matt Bruinekool,

matt.bruinekool@drake.edu

President-Elect-Harlietta Helland,

harlietta@marshallnet.com

Secretary-Mary Augustus, 515-573-8175 (work)

mary.augustus@iowa.gov

Treasurer-Rosie Thierer, rosie.thierer@blind.state.ia.us

Past President-Gary Herrig, gary.herrig@mchsi.com

Board Member-Curt Jones, curt.jones@iowa.gov

Board Member-Vienna Hoang,

VHoang@mercydesmoines.org

Board Member-Becky Cox, 515-266-1801

Board Member- Jonathan Ice 319-365-9111

ice.jonathan@blind.state.ia.us

Board Member-Gary Johnson,

gary-johnson@uiowa.edu

Board Member-Mike Williams,

mike.williams@iowa.gov

Membership Chair-Victoria Kollmann

victoria.kollmann@blind.state.ia.us

Newsletter Chair-Suzanne Paulson 515-229-7748

Suzanne.Paulson@iwd.iowa.gov

Awards Chair-Marcia Gracey, 515-281-7643 (work)

t.gracey@mchsi.com

Nominations Chair-Gary Herrig,

gary.herrig@mchsi.com

Legislative Chair-Ellen Sokolowski, 1-800-432-5852, ext. 3280

ellen.sokolowski@iowa.gov

APSE Liaison-Sherry Becker,

sherry@nivcservices.org

Division Chairs

RCE Association-John Lee-Egan,

john.lee-egan@iowa.gov

JPD-Job Placement Division

Vacant

Please contact any of these individuals if you have questions about or suggestions for IRA!

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2008 CHUCK WOOD MEMORIAL AWARD

The **Iowa Rehabilitation Association** is seeking nominations for the Chuck Wood Memorial Award. This award is given to recognize the achievements of a person with a disability who has attained a high level of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency in the community.

If you know of a person who has demonstrated achievement of their goal of independence in their community and personal life, we strongly encourage you to submit a nomination packet.

The Chuck Wood Award will be presented at the Iowa Rehabilitation Association Annual Conference Awards Banquet.

NOMINEE _____

ADDRESS _____

SPONSOR _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

A nomination packet may include:

- One or more nomination letter(s)
- Information concerning the nominee's disability
- Nominee's personal achievements

Please send your nomination packet to:

Jonathan Ice
Iowa Department for the Blind
411 3rd Street SE, Suite 745
Cedar Rapids IA 52401-1811
jonathan.ice@blind.state.ia.us

Nominations should be submitted no later than September 1, 2008

IOWA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION

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