

*Coastal
Plains*

SUN

Summer, 2010

Coastal Plains Community MHMR Center



Approximately 400 members of the Texas Advocates converged on the Coastal Bend August 6th through 8th for the 2010 Texas Advocates Conference. The event was held at the Omni Hotel in Corpus Christi.

Danny Torres of the local Coastal Bend chapter was elected to serve as a board member for the upcoming year. He was among 20 Coastal Plains' consumers attending the conference.

The mission of the Texas Advocates is to stop unfair treatment of persons with disabilities and to advocate for more and better services and supports for people with disabilities enabling them to be included in their communities.

The event featured workshops on the following topics:

- o Advocacy
- o Transportation
- o Employment
- o Healthy Relationships
- o Voting
- o Self-Determination
- o Leadership
- o Independent Living

“Together We Stand” Conference Scheduled for October 8 and 9

The Coastal Bend Rural Health Partnership and the Voices Leadership Group are sponsoring the second annual “Together We Stand” conference Friday and Saturday, October 8th and 9th at Texas A&M University in Kingsville.

The Coastal Bend Rural Health Partnership is part of a statewide initiative dedicated to the transformation of mental health services at the local level. It covers the counties of Kleberg, Jim Wells and Brooks. The Voices Leadership Group consists of Coastal Plains' consumers, family members, mental health professionals and other interested individuals.

“The conference is designed to promote mental health awareness and a better understanding of what it is like to live with a mental illness,” states Vikki Baker of the Voices Leadership Group. “It will provide the opportunity for consumers, family members, service providers, community leaders, health professionals, administrators, educators and researchers to share information.”

The goals of the conference include:

- o Promote leadership and trust by educating and informing individuals and the community about the realities of living with mental illness.
- o Advancing a consumer movement to reduce stigma and discrimination by educating our community and ourselves.
- o Explore the importance of meaningful social roles and connections in maintaining health and aiding recovery.



“Voices Leadership” member Miroslava Valerio (right) invites B.J. Middleton of Padre Behavioral Hospital to the conference. Group members have been meeting with organizations throughout the nine counties to extend personal invitations to the conference.

Heather Janosky Of Rockport Wins 2010 “El Sol Award”

Heather Janosky of Rockport received the “El Sol Award” during the 16th Annual South Texas Family Support Conference held July 26, 27 and 28 in Kerrville.

The “El Sol Award” is presented each year in recognition of the recipient’s contribution toward the advancement of services for persons with mental illness and intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Coastal Plains clinic directors Johathan Heyward of the Rockport Clinic and Nisa Vela of the Beeville Clinic nominated Janosky for the award.

Janosky recently organized the First Annual “Picnic in the Park” to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month. She facilitates a weekly peer support group and organizes outside activities for other adult consumers. “She is tireless in her efforts to offer support to Coastal Plains MHMR consumers, whether in a group setting or on a one-to-one basis,” states Heyward. “She has a strong commitment to not only raising awareness of mental health issues but to improving resources in the community,” he adds.

Several Coastal Plains consumers attended this year’s conference. The South Texas Family Support Conference is a partnership of stakeholders dedicated to the empowerment of families and individuals with behavioral healthcare needs by providing information, support and networking opportunities. The aim is to provide information and education to consumers, families and the public about mental health and developmental disabilities and to assist consumers and families in identifying effective resources.

Janosky attended the conference for the first time. “I got a lot out of it,” she stated. “There was a lot of good information – some of which I have already incorporated into our peer support meetings.”

Center Employees Receive One-Time Pay Enhancement

All eligible Coastal Plains’ employees will receive a one-time pay enhancement equal to 3% of his or her annual base salary. The Board of Trustees approved the enhancement at their August 17th meeting.

To be eligible an employee must have been employed by the Center on or before June 1, 2010 and not have used leave without pay during the fourth quarter unless related to an approved FMLA event. The enhancement will be added to the August B paycheck.

“The Center is able to do this because of the great work employees have done to lower our costs and increase our revenue,” states Executive Director Charles Sportsman. “I hope this will become an annual tradition.”

Coastal Plains MHMR

**24-Hour Crisis
Hot Line**

1-800-841-6467

“Together We Stand” Conference Continued from page 1

The conference will be held at the Student Union Building on the campus of Texas A&M University in Kingsville. No registration fee will be charged for the 2-day event. A healthy breakfast and lunch will be provided free of charge. In addition, Spanish language sessions will be included. Childcare will be provided, as well as free transportation to and from the event.

Persons may register for the conference or obtain more information by calling 361-664-0145 – Ext 283 or emailing MHConference@cacost.org. Registration deadline is September 24th. On site registration will be based on space availability.

Beeville Couple Provides Much More Than Just A Safe Place To Live

Six years ago Linda and Raul Casarez of Beeville had never met Eddie Gardley. They had never even heard of him. Today Eddie is a part of their family.

It would be hard to find a busier couple than the Casarezes. They own and operate the Lazy R Saddle Shop and My Sister's Dress Shop in downtown Beeville, and are part-owners of the John C. Beasley Golf Course. In addition, Mr. Casarez also serves as Justice of the Peace for Bee County Precinct 1.

They have three grown daughters, including a niece whom they raised. All three are nurses – two RNs and one LVN currently studying for her RN degree. There are also three grandchildren.

There's an old saying – "When you want something done, find the busiest person you know." That's exactly what Ruben Garcia did when he approached the Casarezes over six years ago about the possibility of becoming Eddie's foster family. Garcia is the director of Coastal Plains' Home and Community-based Services (HCS).

Eddie was in his early 40s at that time and in need of a secure, safe place to live. He got more than that. He got a family.

The decision to bring Eddie into their family was an easy one according to Mrs. Casarez. "We really didn't have to think about it," she states. "There were no second thoughts. We welcomed the opportunity to provide Eddie with a new home."

Garcia originally met the Casarezes a year earlier. Mr. Casarez's sister, who worked with the Center at that time, made them aware of another Coastal Plains' consumer who was in need of a home. They offered their home to her. But the consumer eventually went to live with her sister. Garcia remembered the event when Eddie's need became apparent.

The Casarezes have lived in the same home for the past 37 years. They have had the same neighbors for years. Eddie soon became a part of that neighborhood, according to Mr. Casarez. "Eddie has made some good friends here," states Casarez. "He usually joins some other guys in the neighborhood to watch Monday night wrestling on TV. He's just one of the guys – hanging out with his friends."

Eddie spends his days either at the Beeville MHMR Center or La Amistad Adult Day Care and Activity Center. By mid afternoon he arrives at the family saddle shop to help out by emptying the trash and doing a little straightening up. At the family home Eddie is proud of his room, which includes his own TV. The television was a Christmas gift from the Casarezes.

On weekends you may find Eddie hanging out with Mr. Casarez at the golf course or maybe doing a little fishing.

And what about the Casarez's grown children and the younger grandkids? How do they feel about Eddie? "To them, he is just family," states Mrs. Casarez. "The grandkids really love him. They go on bicycle rides together and really enjoy each other's company."

"Eddie can be set in his ways," admits Mrs. Casarez. "We all are. So there has to be a little bit of give and take. But isn't that what all families are about?"



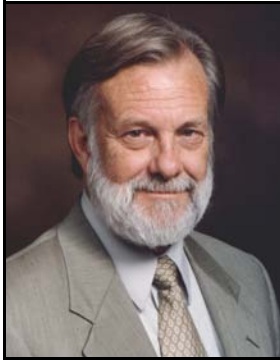
Linda and Raul Casarez pose with Eddie Gardley at their family business - the Lazy R Saddle Shop.



Eddie and Raul spend a little time together on the golf course.

Planning for Integration

By Charles Sportsman
Executive Director



Charles Sportsman

This summer a work group comprised of staff from Community Action Corporation of South Texas (CACOST) and our own Center has been meeting to devise a plan to integrate the primary healthcare services provided by the federally qualified healthcare clinics operated by CACOST into the Mental Health Clinics operated by our Center. The work of the group has been facilitated by Martín Ornelas, Director of the Coastal Bend Rural Health Partnership and Kathy Reynolds of the National Council for Community Behavioral Health. The work of the group was supported by a grant from the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Our two agencies have come together in this planning effort because we both recognize that most of the 3,000 adults served by Coastal Plains Mental Health Services do not receive adequate primary healthcare. Our recognition of this critical need led us to jointly work on the submission of a SAMHSA grant in May of 2009 to fund an integration effort. We were unsuccessful in obtaining a SAMHSA grant, but this first joint effort was so positive for both agencies, and so reinforcing in terms of our joint commitment to meet this unmet need in our community, that we have committed to find from our internal resources the means to achieve this integration.

The planning document that we have developed this summer, as well as the memorandum of understanding between our two agencies which will guide this integration effort, will be shared with our two Boards at a joint meeting Monday night, August 30th in Kingsville, Texas. We feel sure that both of our Boards will be excited and supportive of our plans to better serve our communities. We plan to submit our integration plan and memorandum of understanding for approval by our Board at their September Board meeting. We project that integration of primary health services and behavioral health services will begin early in 2011.

The point person for our work on this project has been Barbara Giovannone, DoN and Director of Essential Services. She has been supported by her fellow workgroup members, Dr. Umamaheswara Maruvada, Medical Director; Dan Donnelly, Director of Mental Health Services; Linda Ramos-Perez, Director Alice Clinic; Theresa Guerra, Director of Authority; and myself. For Community Action Corporation of South Texas, Diana F. Bill, PhD, COO and Director of Health Services, has served as the lead staff member for this effort. She has been supported by CACOST staff; Rafael Treviño, Jr., Executive Director; Dr. Vandana Kamat, Medical Director; Cassandra Salinas, DoN, Director of Alice Health Center; and Sally Gonzalez, Billing Supervisor.

Once our plans for integration have been approved by our Board I will share more details about this exciting project.

OUR MISSION

Enhancing personal growth in our community through support, guidance, education and advocacy

OUR VISION

Coastal Plains Community MHMR Center will be the leader in quality Human services as defined by the people we serve.

Peer Provider Budget Increased Following PNAC Recommendation

Coastal Plains Board of Trustees voted to increase the budget for the Mental Health Peer Providers program by 50% during their August meeting. The vote came as a result of a recommendation from the Center's Planning and Network Advisory Committee (PNAC).

The committee, which meets quarterly, consists of consumers, family members and community members. It is charged with providing advice and constructive feedback to the Board of Trustees and Center management regarding the services provided by Coastal Plains.

The budget for the Peer Provider program will increase by \$15,000 as recommended by the PNAC. The program employs consumers to conduct peer support groups and provide one-on-one support to other consumers. Peer providers generally work 10 hours per week. "Because they are consumers, they know from experience what other consumers are going through," states Mental Health Services Director Dan Donnelly. "They fill an important role in opening up communications with some of our consumers."

The extra money may be used to provide more extensive training for existing peer providers and to possibly hire additional providers, states Donnelly. "We will be talking to our peer providers and get their input as to how best to use the increased funds," adds Donnelly.

Kingsville's Michael Weathers Wins Elaine Farmer Award



Michael Weathers of Kingsville was presented with the Elaine Farmer Self-Determination Award during an August 12th Awards Luncheon at the Kingsville Center.

Every year one Coastal Plains' consumer is chosen to receive the award based on their self-determination in learning the skills necessary to live independently and advocate for him or herself.

Human Service Technician Natalie Olivarez nominated Michael for the award. "Michael really exemplifies the meaning of this award," states Olivarez. "At one time Mike depended on us for a great deal. Today he is so much more independent – doing so much for himself. He is really the perfect candidate for this award."

Weathers has been employed as a custodian with LC Foundation at Kingsville Naval Air Station for the past 6 years. When the company was sold last year Michael, just like all of his fellow employees, was faced with the possibility of losing his job.

All employees had to re-apply to the new company and be interviewed for their jobs. Michael, with little assistance from staff, filled out the application for the new company. He then went through multiple interviews independently and was successful in getting the job.

Michael made all the arrangements for attending the required orientation classes and screening required to work with the new company. He did this without staff assistance.

Today Michael no longer depends on staff for transportation or job coaching. He now works completely independently.

The award is named for Elaine Farmer whose career as an advocate for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities spanned more than 35 years. Farmer served as director of quality management for Coastal Plains MHMR until her retirement in 2002. Following retirement she volunteered with the Coastal Bend Advocates until her death in 2006.

The Coastal Plains Community MHMR Center SUN is published quarterly by the Community Relations Department of CPMHMR. We are located at 200 Marriott Drive in Portland, TX. You may contact Community Relations Coordinator Kay Pickett at:

(361) 777-3991

kpickett@cpmhmr.org

Mental Health And Law Enforcement Professionals Meet To Better Serve Citizens With Mental Illness

“These meetings are great. They give us the ability to bring up any issues we might have and work them out together – before they can become problems.” This is how Kingsville Police Chief Ricardo Torres described the recent Mental Health/Judicial Coalition meeting at Coastal Plains’ Kingsville clinic.

The group has been meeting for approximately two years according to Kingsville Clinic Director Leo Trejo. “We usually meet every three or four months,” states Trejo. “But if issues come up between scheduled meeting we will get together sooner.”

The coalition covers the counties of Kleberg and Brooks. Those in attendance at the August meeting included representatives from Coastal Plains MHMR, the Kleberg County Sheriff’s Department, Kingsville Police Department, Brooks County Sheriff’s Department, Christus Spohn Kleberg Hospital, and Care Regional Medical Center (formerly North Bay Hospital).

The coalition’s goal is to reach a clearer understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the justice system, healthcare professionals and the mental health authority in regard to serving those with mental illness.

Topics for discussion at the group’s August meeting included transportation, the reduction of time spent in the emergency room and possible ways to expedite medical clearances.



Kingsville Clinic Director Leo Trejo (far right) visits with Kingsville Police Chief Ricardo Torres (left) and Captain Michael Gonzales (center) of the Kleberg County Sheriff Department prior to the coalition meeting.

In Home And Family Support Available For Eligible Consumers

The In Home and Family Support (IHFS) program of Coastal Plains is small when compared to other programs – representing just over \$45,000 a year of the Center’s annual budget. But it can make a big difference to those who receive services from the program.

Any consumer with a diagnosis of intellectual and developmental disability may be eligible for funds from the program, according to Roger Castillo, program coordinator. Applicants must also show proof of residence, income and need for the service requested.

IHFS funds may be used for a variety of things, according to Castillo. “They can pay for modifications to a consumer’s home, for walkers, shower chairs, etc.,” states Castillo. “It can also be used to pay for respite care, allowing the caregiver to attend to duties outside the home while assuring that the consumer is receiving adequate care in the home.”

Consumers are urged to contact their service coordinator for assistance in applying for IHFS funds. “I would also like to remind service coordinators to keep the IHFS in mind when working with our consumers,” states Castillo. “There are consumers that need this program, and it is up to us to let them know that it is available.”

For more information on the program Castillo can be reached in the Portland office at 1-888-819-5312.



**Abuse Or Neglect
Report It**

Abuse/Neglect And Exploitation

All cases of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation must be verbally reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services no more than one hour after the incident.

Abuso/Descuido And Explotacion

Caso sospechosos de abuso, descuido o explotacion deben ser reportados verbalmente dentro de una hora al Departamento de Familia Y Proteccion servicios de Texas.

**Call Toll Free
1-800-647-7418**

Spotlight on Guardianship and Rights

By Andrea Tippit
 Director of Quality Management/Privacy Officer

Guardianship – What is it? Who can be a guardian? Does every one need one? Are there other options?

What is a guardian? A guardian is a parent of a person under the age of 18 OR a person appointed by a judge to make certain decisions for someone over the age of 18 who cannot make decisions for himself or herself (must be determined by the court).

Who can be a guardian? A guardian may be an adult (parent, family member, loved one) who is appointed by the court after he or she has proven that the person (who is over age 18) is unable to make certain decisions for himself or herself, can prove that they will be responsible for the person and have the person’s best interest in mind. Guardianship is a lifelong commitment – once a person is designated as guardian, he or she must report to the court annually on their ‘wards’ status.

Does everyone need a guardian? No. The majority of the people who get MHMR services can, and do, make their own decisions. Sometimes the decisions people make may seem to be “bad” decisions to someone else – but, hasn’t everyone made mistakes? Most people learn from making choices. However, there are people who need assistance to make decisions regarding their health and welfare and guardianship is appropriate.

Are there other options? If a person has problems managing his or her money, a representative payee can be assigned to him or her for Social Security benefits. If the person can make daily living decisions on their own but doesn’t understand complex medical decisions, he or she can sign a durable power of attorney to make health-care decisions for them (however, they can revoke the power of attorney at any time). But remember, a durable power of attorney means nothing if the person doesn’t know what he or she is signing. Develop your relationship with the person who needs assistance making decisions so he or she will come to you for advice, support and involve you in their life.

Guardianship costs money. Is it worth it? Yes, sometimes it is. Sometimes it is not. The best option is to consult an attorney.

Resources:

Advocacy Incorporated 1-800-252-9108

The ARC of Texas 1-800-252-9729

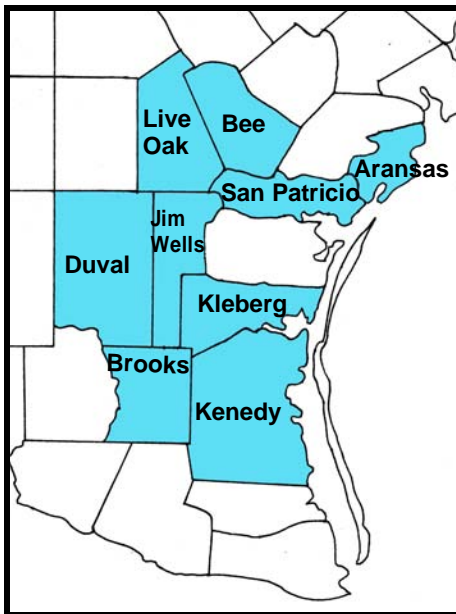
Texas Guardianship Association 1-888-399-9115

Fiscal Year 2011 Holiday Schedule			
Month	Holiday	Date	Day
September	Labor Day	09-06-10	Monday
November	Thanksgiving Day	11-25-10	Thursday
November	Day After Thanksgiving	11-26-10	Friday
December	Day Before Christmas	12-24-10	Friday
December	New Year’s Eve	12-31-10	Friday
January	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	01-17-11	Monday
February	President’s Day	02-21-11	Monday
May	Memorial Day	05-30-11	Monday
July	Independence Day	07-04-11	Monday

**The Number To Call
 When You Don’t Know
 Who To Call**

2-1-1

**Your link to health
 and community services
 A free help line answered
 24 hours a day
 7 days a week**



We're Here - Where You Live!

Aransas and San Patricio Counties

Taft Center for MH & MR
 201 Roots Ave.
 Taft, TX 78390
 361-528-4516

Rockport Mental Health Clinic
 620 E. Concho
 Rockport, TX 78382-1446
 361-727-0988

Aransas Pass MR Center
 1010 S. Commercial
 Aransas Pass, TX 78336
 361-758-4043

Bee and Live Oak Counties

Beeville Mental Retardation Center
 2808 Industrial Loop Blvd.
 Beeville, TX 78102
 361-358-8248

Beeville Mental Health Clinic
 2808 Industrial Loop Blvd.
 Beeville, TX 78102
 361-358-8000

Brooks County

Falfurrias Center for MH & MR
 101 W. Potts
 Falfurrias, TX 78355
 361-325-9776/361-325-3673

Jim Wells & Duval Counties

Alice Mental Health Clinic
 614 W. Front St.
 Alice, TX 78332
 361-664-9587

Alice Mental Retardation Center
 614 W. Front St.
 Alice, TX 78332
 361-664-9587

Kenedy and Kleberg Counties

Kingsville Mental Retardation Ctr.
 924½ E. Fordyce
 Kingville, TX 78364
 361-516-1067

Kingsville Mental Health Clinic
 914 E. Fordyce
 Kingsville, TX 78364
 361-592-6481

Home & Community-Based Services

may be contacted at our administrative headquarters located at:

200 Marriott Dr. - Portland, TX 78374
 361-777-3991

Or Toll Free at 1-888-819-5312

Visit our web site at www.cpmhmr.org

Coastal Plains Community MHMR Center
200 Marriott Drive
Portland, TX 78374