



# Dialogue

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## Thank You to All Who Participated in Holiday Giving Programs at RCOC



*Above:* Saddleback Valley Christian School students gave Nancy & Joe Stage (at center) a Christmas tree, decorations and presents. The school "adopted" 30 RCOC South Area families. *Far right:* RCOC East/Central employees donated non-perishable food items every week for 3 months, then filled decorated boxes at the holidays to surprise 70 needy consumers and families.

Literally hundreds of people came together in 2000 to make the holidays brighter for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The Wish Tree program, through corporate and individual donations of gifts, food certificates or money provided holiday meals or presents to more than 1,200 consumers and families who would not otherwise have received them. RCOC sponsored its holiday party for consumers up to age 6 and their families on December 10 at the Irvine Marriott. The Vietnamese staff of RCOC hosted a Christmas party for Vietnamese consumers and families on December 15.



*Above:* Girl Scout leader Jane Mero supervised troop members Amy Williams, Kristin Miller and Amber Penkoff as they wrapped a few of more than 70 gifts donated by Girl Scouts to South County consumers. Four-year-old Kierra Penkoff helped, too!



### Consumer Spotlight Meet Patricia Daley, Spotlight Award Recipient

Patty Daley has severely limited physical mobility, yet she is very mobile. Patty uses a wheelchair to get around because she has cerebral palsy that restricts her arm and leg movement. Imagine how it must feel to require assistance with grooming and dressing every day. Most of us with freedom of movement would feel vulnerable and perhaps even timid, knowing that we couldn't run away from danger or that we had to depend on someone else for basic personal tasks.

Patty can dress herself if necessary, but it takes two hours. She knows that because she has done it before. The patience and determination developed out of necessity have

strengthened Patty's spirit and made her nearly indomitable. She fearlessly goes where she wants to go in her motorized wheelchair — whether that be to the supermarket, the movie theater, or the local senior center where she volunteers more than 20 hours each week.

Dale Garcia, training administrator at RCOC, said, "Patty Daley is a good friend. She's someone you can talk to. To me, it's inspirational that despite the significant challenges she has in her life she has such a positive attitude. She's realistic, but she doesn't see problems or challenges as preventing her from doing things, but as charging her to be more creative."

Despite dealing with multiple medical challenges and learning impairments in addition to her cerebral palsy, Patty contributes a lot to the community. As a member of RCOC's Board of Directors, Patty

provides valuable consultation to the Board and RCOC's executive director on issues that are important to people with developmental disabilities. Patty attended the regional center

*See Spotlight, page 10*



*Patty Daley poses for a picture at the Spotlight Awards with M.C. Tony Valdez.*

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## **Stay Informed about Legislation and Help Change the System**

*By Holly Nogales, RCOC Board Member*

**R**ecently a local news channel reported on the difficulties that a day care program sponsored by the YMCA was experiencing. The program had lost potential grant funding and was in need of dollars in order to continue providing day care. The loss of this program could be devastating for working families in Orange County. My initial reaction was to reflect on the prospects the YMCA may have for additional funding. While pondering the dilemma the local community faced, I could not help but think of what California regional centers face on a regular basis. Will proposed legislation affect our funding, will the governor veto a bill, will we have new man-

dates to fulfill and will funding for new mandates follow? These are just a few of the issues with which the regional centers struggle.

In order to promote unity and share experience and expertise, the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) was created. The mission of ARCA is to represent the autonomous regional centers in supporting and advancing the intent and mandate of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act. ARCA represents the 21 California regional centers in supporting and advancing the intent and mandate of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act. As such, ARCA participates in the development of state legislation that promotes

the continuing entitlement of citizens with developmental disabilities to all services that enable full community inclusion.

As a parent of a child with a developmental disability and as an RCOC Board member, I serve as a delegate to ARCA. That means I participate in regular meetings with the membership of ARCA to discuss pending legislation and system concerns and issues, as well as network and build coalitions of support for our local activities.

In organizing our efforts, the Board Member Delegates of ARCA have developed a mechanism for disseminating legislation and information, collecting letters of support, and building relationship with legislators in *See Legislation, page 9*

## A Community in Crisis

By Bill Bowman

A couple of years ago, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) hired an engineering firm to look at the infra-



structure of the five existing developmental centers (DCs). The bottom line is that the study found it would take \$1.5 to \$2 billion to retrofit the institutions to bring them up to code for earthquake safety and ADA accessibility compliance, not to mention replacing roofs, plumbing, updating electrical and telephone systems, and resurfacing roads and walkways.

What does the disposition of the state institutions have to do with you, a Regional Center consumer, or family member, living in the community? It could have a lot of implications for you. The Department has been actively seeking feedback from people in the community as well as other major stakeholders about options for the DCs. It is doubtful that the state will spend the large amount necessary to refurbish the institutions that house about 3,800 people with developmental disabilities, so the Department is considering a range of alternatives for the DCs and the people served by them. Some of those alternatives include four-bed homes in the community to be owned and operated directly by the state, leased facilities operated by the state, privately owned and operated facilities, or state-provided services and supports provided to consumers in their own or their family's home. All these ideas and options beg the question: should the state continue to

operate two separate systems — one run directly by the state and the other by private, non-profit regional centers? Consider the enormous disparity of a system that spends more than \$100,000 per year for each person in the DC versus about \$10,000 per year for each person served in the community.

If the state decides to do away with the developmental center system and sell the land on which the DCs sit, a lot of decisions would then need to be made about what to do with the funds generated from those sales. Under a single, community-based system — perhaps a hybrid of state and private operation — those dollars could be more equitably shared among all of the 165,000 people with developmental disabilities in California.

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### *The capacities of the regional centers to meet expectations simply cannot keep stretching.*

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That brings me to two major issues facing the community-based service system. While the regional centers have been charged with more and more responsibility over the past several years to ensure that quality services are being provided, the costs to fulfill those obligations have not been adequately addressed. The Regional Center of Orange County serves nearly 12,000 people. In recent years we have beefed up our quality assurance and service coordination staff. We have worked collaboratively with other organizations to create innovative ways of better meeting the needs of people in the community. These changes and improvements have been gratifying, as we have sought to respond to the changing needs that you in the com-

munity have identified. At the same time, the capacities of all the regional centers — not just Orange County — to meet the demands and expectations placed upon them have been stretched to the limit. Through the years, the number of dollars allocated to the DCs has increased as the population in them has decreased. Concurrently, the number of people living in the community has grown substantially, but the number of dollars per person has shrunk over time.

Related to the shrinking regional center allocations is the issue of salaries received by those people who most directly touch the lives of the people that we serve. It is a shameful fact that providers of services to people with developmental disabilities have to compete with McDonald's and Burger King for employees. How can anyone expect skilled, educated and compassionate people to choose careers in this field, knowing they stand little chance of earning much more than minimum wage? Such people are not looking to get rich, but they have to pay rent and put food on the table, as does everyone else. In light of the huge budget surplus the state has in its coffers this year, this issue should receive extremely high priority by the state legislature and the governor.

The capacities of the regional centers to meet expectations simply cannot keep stretching. Community care has reached a crisis point, both in terms of providing oversight, planning and effectively determining people's needs as well as delivery of the services required to meet those needs. It's time to address inequities in the funding streams associated with serving people in the community. I urge readers to take action now. The article by RCOC Board member Holly Nogales on page 2 provides suggestions on how you can become involved directly in this process. I strongly urge you to do so.

# R.A.D.D. Review

## **Tele-Friends Are Ready to Talk!**

Are you a consumer of the Regional Center of Orange County? If so, you might be interested in Tele-Friend. The purpose of Tele-Friend is to help consumers meet new people who live nearby. We suggest that you always meet in a public place and that you provide your own transportation. To place an ad in Tele-Friend, call (714) 796-5270 for the form you need. Here are some people interested in making "Tele-Friends."

### **Jackson of Costa Mesa...**

"I like malls, Disneyland, movies, walking around with friends, bowling, cooking and getting together with friends. I am 54 years old."



### **Dana of Fountain Valley...**

"Hi! My name is Dana. I'm a 33-year-old woman looking for a female roommate in the Costa Mesa area. I enjoy talking on the phone, movies, shopping, and going to Disneyland and Knott's Berry

Farm. I have mild cerebral palsy and want to make new friends."

**Eugene of Huntington Beach...** "I like movies, video games, theme parks. My age is 24."



### **Nicole of Huntington**

**Beach...** "Hi, my name is Nicole. I'm 31 years old. I'm looking for new friends in Huntington Beach. I like to go to movies, karaoke singing, dances and parties. I like bowling and working. I like to get along with people. I'm very easy to get along with." **Joey of Laguna Woods...** "I like shopping, movies, making friends, acting, and going out of town."

### **Jennifer of Laguna Hills...**

"I am looking for a female roommate under 30 who is neat and quiet and respects privacy. I will have my HUD rental voucher and my room-

mate can share in it with me. I love Disneyland and listening to music with friends."

### **Frederick of Orange...**

"My interests include ordering military books and videos through the mail, going to the "Y" and working out and swimming, coffee drinking and going out to parties and dances, country music and going to church and soccer. I am 43 years old."

**Angela of Santa Ana...** "I love the mall, beach, dinners, Six Flags Magic Mountain, Knott's Berry Farm, hanging with friends anywhere, and listening to music. I am 28 years old."

### **Brandon of Santa Ana...**

"My interests are going to the mall, the movies, and vacation. I also like to go to the beach and go on a boat. I like Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Magic Mountain, going bowling, and the Orange County Fair. I am 26 years old and would like to meet people 22 to 30 years old."

*Continued on page 5*

# Consumer Advisory Committee Update

By Sam Durbin, committee president



The Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) has been talking about hav-

ing some of its meetings at other places besides Regional Center's Santa Ana office starting in 2001. We plan to hold meetings at some of the Area offices of Regional Center and at some day program locations to make it easier for more people to attend. We may also vary the time of the meetings. I would like to see more consumers get involved. It is important for more people to become part of the CAC so a variety of voices can be heard. Please visit a meeting in the near future so you can find out what goes on and see what you think.

Within the coming year we will have speakers talk about

important topics such as independent living, being your own service coordinator, quality assurance, and of course, self-determination.

In the last issue of *Dialogue*, Bill Bowman, the executive director of Regional Center, wrote an article about the Core Indicators Project. This is a study that will look at all areas of consumers' lives to make sure that the services people are receiving are good and doing what they are supposed to be doing. It is exciting because people with developmental disabilities and their family members will conduct the surveys that will gather this information. That means consumers will be interviewing other consumers about what they think of the services they receive.

Another topic that RCOC's Board of Directors has been discussing is called the Developmental Center (DC)

Options Study. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is trying to decide what will happen to state institutions like Fairview in coming years. Consumers need to have their voices heard in this process. As the process moves along, I will let you know if there are ways that you can be a part of this and express your opinion.

There are a lot of exciting things going on that affect the future of people with developmental disabilities, so please come to CAC meetings when you can to learn more about new developments. Be sure to look in the Community Calendar that you get in the mail every month from Regional Center to find out where and what time the CAC will be meeting. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month. If you have questions about the group or the meetings, please call Delia Lona at (714) 796-5263.

## Tele-Friends (Cont.)

### Peter of Villa

**Park...** "I am 22 years old and I like going to the beach and working out and going to the mall and the coffee shop. I am



looking for a girlfriend to go out with."

### Kristine of Westminster...

"I like to go to the malls and swap meets and I like to go to Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm. I like all kinds of music

except rap. If you are interested and between the ages of 29 to 39, please call. I am 35 years old."



# Parent/Support Groups *Grupos para Padres*

For meeting times and locations, see the monthly RCOC Community Calendar that comes in the mail to you, or call the group contact or Jacqui Kerze at RCOC, (714) 796-5299.

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- ❖ **A Touch of Love** - For limb deficient children and their families. (800) 493-5462. Hablamos español
- ❖ **Ain't Misbehavin'** - A support network of parents interested in exchanging information on behavioral issues. Call (714) 889-7260
- ❖ **Asperger Syndrome** - Contact Marilyn Van Dyke (562) 804-3114 or South County call (949) 454-6302
- ❖ **Autism Support Groups** - Newly diagnosed autism, contact (310) 543-0662; Huntington Beach, contact Leaza Howe, (714) 841-6766  
North County, contact Paula Peterson, (714) 288-9005; South County, contact Beverly Lee, (949) 249-9277
- ❖ **Cerebral Palsy** - For info. & support, meetings & groups, contact Family Support Services at UCPA, (714) 557-1291
- ❖ **Chinese Parent Support Group for the Disabled** - Contact Kitty Tsan at (949) 588-0123
- ❖ **CLASP (California League of Angelman Syndrome Parents)** - Contact Katie Hendren, (714) 962-4152
- ❖ **Compassionate Friends** - For parents who have experienced the loss of a child. Call Roy Redman, (714) 993-6708
- ❖ **DADS' Group** - For fathers of children with autism and related disorders. Call Norm Booth, (714) 961-1315
- ❖ **Epilepsy Connection** - We connect people to resources and information. Call Paulette Motzko at (714) 998-0391
- ❖ **Epilepsy Social Support Group** - To help fulfill the needs of those with epilepsy. Call Pat Porter, (949) 631-4333
- ❖ **Family Visions** - For parents of visually impaired children. Contact Karin Crilly, (714) 573-8880, ext. 109
- ❖ **Fathers Support Network** - Contact Jeff Braun at the Family Support Network, (714) 543-7600
- ❖ **First Evangelical Free Church Disabilities Ministry** - Contact Connie Hutchinson, (714) 529-5544
- ❖ **Fragile X Group** - For parents or family members of people with Fragile X. Contact Sali Farber at (714) 544-9551
- ❖ **Guys and Gals Group** - A recreational group for adult consumers. Contact Lena Lynch, (714) 796-5213 or Jacqui Kerze, (714) 796-5299
- ❖ **Hearts of Hope** - For parents of children with congenital heart defects. Contact Kris Krieger at (949) 348-2848
- ❖ **Hearts United Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (HUG)** - Contact Irene Kontz, (714) 636-5430
- ❖ **Mitochondrial Disease Group** - Call Sherry Clitheroe, (714) 968-9373, Lissa Mirand, (562) 929-8851, or Karen Ortiz, (909) 335-0721
- ❖ **Mom's Group** - For moms in North Orange County. Contact Jill Riley, (714) 288-1566
- ❖ **Mommy Network** - South County. Contact Julie McLain at (949) 888-1820 or Tina Muller, (949) 454-8573
- ❖ **Moving on at 3 Parent Group** - To support and educate parents of children transitioning from Early Start services. Contact RCOC's John Zeimantz at (949) 206-8876
- ❖ **Non-Ketotic Hyperglycinemia (NKH) Family Support Group** - Contact Tammy L. Hanna (714) 444-4454
- ❖ **One In A Million Kids** - For parents of children with rare or undiagnosed disorders. Call Georgia or Gary Freedman-Harvey, (310) 588-2562
- ❖ **Orange County Parents of Disabled Multiples** - Contact Bree Dennis at (909) 734-3616
- ❖ **Parent Connection** - To connect with other parents of RCOC consumers (Eng., Spanish & Vietnamese), call (888) FRC-BABY
- ❖ **Parents of Children in Residential Placement** - For parents of RCOC consumers. Call Jacqui Kerze, (714) 796-5299
- ❖ **Parents of Kids with Epilepsy** - A support group. Contact Mary Repp at (949) 582-8404
- ❖ **P.R.O.U.D. - Parents Regional Outreach for Understanding Downs** - Call the hotline at (714) 547-2895
- ❖ **Rett Syndrome Group** - Contact Rebecca Craft, (949) 856-9320 or Susan McLaughlin, (949) 858-8411
- ❖ **Sibshop** - Workshop for siblings ages 8-13 of children with special needs. Call Kathleen McFarlin or Susan Bonanni, (714) 557-1291
- ❖ **Single Parent Group** - For single parents of children with special needs. Contact Jacqui Kerze, (714) 796-5299
- ❖ **Spina Bifida Support Group** - Contact Brandy Van Hook at (714) 840-4303
- ❖ **Team of Advocates for Special Kids (TASK)** - Assistance and support for parents of children to age 22. Call (714) 533-TASK(8275)
- ❖ **Tuberous Sclerosis** - Support group for families. Contact Lee Ann Addison for more information, (949) 495-7126
- ❖ **Vietnamese Parent Support Group** - Contact Queenie Hoang at (714) 557-1291; pager number (714) 664-6899
- ❖ **Welcome Orientation** - For parents of children who have been recently diagnosed with a disability. Spanish & Vietnamese translation available. For information, contact Naomi Hall at Comfort Connection, (714) 748-7491 or Jacqui Kerze, RCOC, (714) 796-5299
- ❖ **Williams Syndrome** - Support for families of people with Williams Syndrome. Call Darlene Ginnett, (562) 598-5559

## *Grupos En Español*

- ❖ **Grupo de Autismo Angeles** - Para más información llame a Gloria y Jose Hernandez, (714) 995-1955
  - ❖ **Grupo Arco Iris Síndrome de Down** - Para más información llame a Maria Piceno, (714) 748-7491
  - ❖ **Hacia Los 3 Años...Transición** - Un grupo de padres con niños recibiendo Servicios de Intervencion Temprana Para Educacion y Apoyo durante el proceso de transición. Para más información llame a Consuela Morales (714) 685-5514
  - ❖ **Noche de las Madres** - Para más información llame a Barbara Dominguez (714) 974-9202
  - ❖ **Nuevos Horizontes** - Para más información llame a Barbara Dominguez, (714) 974-9202
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# Two Mothers Receive Spotlight Awards

They come from different backgrounds. Their children have different disabilities. They give of their time and talents in different ways to improve the lives of their own children as well as encourage and provide strength to other parents of children with disabilities. Yet these two women exude the same passion and energy and love in their advocacy and activities for their children and others with developmental disabilities. Barbara Dominguez received RCOC's Parent Spotlight Award, and Rose Lacher the Volunteer Spotlight Award on September 15, 2000. (See page 11 for a complete list of Spotlight recipients.)

## In Search of a Better Life

Barbara came to California from Mexico 10 years ago seeking better benefits and support for her son, Omar, now 19 years old, who has cerebral palsy, quadriplegia and severe mental retardation. A wife and mother of three, Barbara has carved out time to lead two support groups for Spanish-speaking families, "Nuevos Horizontes" (New Horizons) and "Noche de las Mamas"



Barbara Dominguez holds her Spotlight Award as she stands next to RCOC Executive Director Bill Bowman.

(Mother's Night). Barbara has enlisted the assistance of several other mothers of Regional Center consumers, and together they have nurtured Nuevos Horizontes into a substantial group that provides support and training to an overall membership of more than 100 parents.

RCOC's Dale Garcia, one of three people who nominated Barbara, wrote, "She has modeled the spirit of community outreach, and it is not uncommon to see new faces each month. Recently, a group member invited a young pregnant neighbor who had learned that her baby had Down syndrome. The young woman was upset and wanted to meet other mothers of special needs children. The evening was a success, and the young woman left with the names and phone numbers of several new friends."

Another nominator of Barbara, Alejandra Cornejo, wrote that Barbara is always optimistic and willing to give a smile, hope and strength to those who most need it.

## Four Decades of Volunteer Service

Rose and her family moved from New Jersey to California in the 1960s on a quest for appropriate education for her daughter Amy, who has moderate mental retardation. Rose wanted Amy to learn living, grooming and social skills. Anyone who saw Rose receive the Spotlight Award with Amy by her side witnessed Amy's display of her social skills. She told the audience how proud she was of her mother and how excited for her to receive the honor.

Rose's volunteer service spans four decades. Since moving to California, Rose has immersed herself in the activities of Orange County ARC and the Jewish Community Center of Orange County. She serves on the board of directors of Orange County

Amy Lacher (right) accompanied her mother to the podium when Rose received the Spotlight Award for her many years of volunteer service.



ARC and served as president of OC ARC's Parent Council from 1991 to 1998. In that role she helped provide recreational programs and dances for hundreds of people with developmental disabilities.

Through Jewish Family Services, Rose started the Jeremiah Society, a social group for people with developmental disabilities that meets monthly and offers fun recreational and personal growth opportunities. Rose is currently working to break ground on Jeremiah House, her dream of a Jewish residence where adults with developmental disabilities could live in a supportive group setting. Raising sufficient resources to purchase property has presented an ongoing challenge, but Rose is not about to give up.

As she said at the Spotlight Awards, "These children are addictive, and once you get to know them, you love them and you're hooked!"

## Note from the President

### Expansion Activities at RCOC Santa Ana Site

By Richard Peterson, RCOC Board President

If you have visited RCOC's Santa Ana office in the past several months, you may have noticed some shifting ground as the reception area was temporarily moved and construction crews worked on reconfiguring the office space. The good news is, we are growing. Basically, the regional center ran out of space for the Intake group and needed more room for the Health Resources Group as it has been expanding to meet the growing health needs of our consumers. The

opportunity arose to expand on the first floor at our headquarters, so we took it. Our changing floor space requirements necessitated moving the Board room, which allowed us to enlarge it at the same time.

The additional space also allowed us to welcome Comfort Connection, the Family Resource Center for Orange County, as it is coming back to be housed with us. The Comfort Connection staff should be in their new facility the first part of February.

Thank you for your patience with our growing pains. We look forward to having improved space to better serve the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

## Vendor Spotlight

Read about these Spotlight Award recipients on the next page. The complete list of recipients is on page 11.



Left: Doug Wooley, Goodwill Industries, showed compassion to a grieving consumer.

Right: Kathleen Taylor leads Creative Support Systems, a dynamic independent living provider



## Comfort Connection is Moving!

Comfort Connection Family Resource Center will be moving from its Garden Grove location to the Regional Center Santa Ana office in the very near future, perhaps even as you read this. RCOC had the opportunity to expand its first floor space, so the executive directors of the two agencies put their heads together and decided this would be a good time for a good idea.

Bill Bowman, RCOC executive director, said, "It's an exciting thing. When I came to California, I was greatly disappointed that Comfort Connection had separated from the regional center. It has been one of my goals to invite the FRC back into the family of services here. It looks like that is going to happen with this move, which will occur in February. We enjoy a great relationship. We have a common vision for supporting families, and an increased amount of

support will be available because of the economies of this move. It's win-win all the way around."

Comfort Connection is a separate non-profit organization funded through RCOC that serves parents of children up to 36 months old who were born at risk or with disabilities and are eligible for the California Early Start program. RCOC and Comfort Connection will remain two separate entities, but since they work so closely together, this move will facilitate that partnership.

According to Hedy Hanson, Comfort Connection executive director, "There are several benefits. We can share in-kind services, such as printing, mail processing, conference rooms and staff contributions. We will be looking at expanding our hours, and maybe being open an occasional weekend and evening. This will give us the opportunity to meet parents where they are at and will give families more access to us. Having the large Board room will

enable us to hold conferences or have a moms group during the day."

Jacqui Kerze, RCOC's family support coordinator, will work closely with the Comfort Connection staff. She said, "We are going to be partners. I'm really excited. It will be an awesome resource center. It will house computer stations for parents to access the Internet. The physical setup will have the computer stations across from the children's play area, so parents will be able to use the computers and keep an eye on their kids.

"I think the biggest benefit will be for our staff because of the physical proximity. Our staff will have great support. It will provide a place for our Intake staff to meet with families and show them the resources available."

Comfort Connection will retain its toll free telephone number, (888) FRC-BABY, which will be the ongoing link during the relocation, but its local phone number will change, and that information will be provided as soon as it's available.



## Vendor Spotlight

# Collaboration, Superior Care and Quality Make Winning Combination

One corporation and three RCOC service providers received Spotlight Awards for their premium work with people who have developmental disabilities.

Polaroid Corporation received the Employer Spotlight Award for its collaborative contract to employ clients of the work service program at Orange County ARC. Michael Galliano (*pictured*), Polaroid's western regional marketing center manager accepted the award for Polaroid and was nominated along with Don Ritucci, optical cameras director.



For more than 10 years consumers have provided assembly and packaging services, and Polaroid has made a major commitment to continue this partnership for years to come. The company invested millions of dollars to purchase the building adjacent to Orange County ARC and plans to tear down walls to create an opening between the two organizations to enhance the flow of material and products. The company may also use people with developmental disabilities for janitorial and grounds maintenance at its new 58,000 square foot facility.

Kathleen Taylor of Creative Support Systems was honored with the Living Options Vendor Spotlight Award for providing outstanding supported and independent living services. The agency has an excellent reputation for quality services in both Orange and Los Angeles Counties. Creative Support Systems allows many people with developmental disabilities to live authentic lives in the community by providing strong and

enabling support.

Doug Wooley of Goodwill Industries received the Support Services Vendor Spotlight Award. He was described as supportive and compassionate in his work with a consumer who needed a little extra emotional support while grieving for her mother who passed away. The transition of moving from her mother's home into her own apartment shortly after losing her parent brought on a debilitating depression for this woman. As a job counselor for Goodwill, Doug encouraged the consumer and went beyond his job responsibilities to provide one-on-one support for several weeks until her work productivity improved and she could smile again.

The Lifetime Achievement Spotlight Award went to Linda Wallace (*pictured*) of Wallace Care Homes for the tremendous impact she has had on the lives of many people with developmental disabilities for more than 25 years. Linda has driven a special education school bus, worked in the RIO (Rehabilitation Institute of Southern California) infant program, worked at RCOC, started the New Horizons recreational program, and currently owns two group homes. Throughout her career she has focused on the needs of the people she serves. The results of her care and focus are reflected in the faces of the residents of her home — they know it is *their* home. The love, appreciation and respect that Linda shows to people with developmental disabilities have been key to her success and their satisfaction.



## Legislation (from page 2)

order to influence issues that affect our consumers. ARCA has instituted a System Challenges Task Force that operates via an e-mail communication network to keep interested parties informed of bills that are about to be voted on so that we can take immediate action by faxing or e-mailing letters or calling the appropriate Senate or Assembly member.

Such a network helps assure that we stay informed and have the opportunity to express our views to our elected representatives in a timely way. This kind of grass roots activity can be a very persuasive force to help direct the outcome of these bills. Elected politicians do listen to their constituents! And the more input they get, the greater weight it has.

My purpose for writing this article is to urge the involvement of other parents, consumers and advocates in a grass roots campaign to influence legislation that affects our children. Hundreds of bills are introduced in our state capitol every year, and many of them propose changes to the system of service as we know it — some are positive and some could be disastrous.

In addition to the statewide efforts, RCOC's plans include development of a local legislative committee to be made up of people with developmental disabilities, family members and Regional Center Board members. The committee will make regular visits to the local offices of the Orange County state legislators to provide feedback and bring to their attention the issues and pending legislation that affect people with developmental disabilities.

If you would like to be included in the ARCA e-mail network, please feel free to e-mail me at [nogales@home.com](mailto:nogales@home.com). If you would like more information about the network or the RCOC legislative committee, please contact RCOC's Executive Office at (714) 796-5205.

## Fighting the Flu

Flu season is here! What is the flu? It consists of symptoms such as body aches, fever and sore throat caused by a virus. If you or your family have not been hit by the flu, the best way to avoid it is through prevention. How can you avoid the flu? By eating a



well-balanced diet, getting plenty of rest and exercise, and avoiding smoking, stress, and unsanitary living conditions. Most important, wash your hands often, especially after blowing your nose.

What can you do if you or your family catches the flu?

1. Drink plenty of liquids – 8 ounces every few hours.

2. For a sore throat, gargle with warm strong tea or warm salt water.

3. Suck on lozenges (cough drops) or hard candies to soothe your throat (do not give to small children who can choke).

4. Take Tylenol or any other non-aspirin medication and a decongestant. (Aspirin should not be given to children with flu-like symptoms because it can cause Reye's syndrome, a potentially deadly disorder).

What should you do if you are having nausea and/or vomiting?

1. Sip lots of liquids to replace liquids you may be losing.

2. Allow your stomach to rest. Do not eat until you feel better.

3. Avoid milk, milk products, and fatty foods that can cause further discomfort and cramping.

4. Follow the B.R.A.T. diet which consists of Bananas, Rice,

Applesauce, and Toast or Tortillas

5. Slowly add more foods. Eat five small meals, gelatin, and broth.

6. Rest.

Most flu symptoms last about five to seven days. If flu symptoms continue beyond one week of home treatment, make an appointment to visit your doctor.



### Spotlight (from page 1)

“Grass Roots Day” in Sacramento last April and enlightened many state legislators on issues affecting the developmental disability community. Patty also sits on the City of Irvine Disabilities Board where she advocates for the disabled citizens of Irvine. She also joined an Easter Seals community project that provides feedback and evaluation about the Orange County Transportation Authority ACCESS program.

Dale observed, “She’s a tireless advocate for people with developmental disabilities. She’s got the most volunteer spirit of anyone I know. She takes her role as an RCOC Board member very seriously and really wants to be a good director of the regional center.”

Patty is fiercely independent, living in her own apartment and rarely asking for assistance. At 43 years of

age, Patty has lived in a variety of situations, from board and care homes to independent living with a roommate. She has lived by herself for seven years and said, “I graduated [from independent living services] and got my own apartment here in Irvine. I like it a lot better because I can come and go whenever I want to.” She has a personal care attendant come in for a few hours a day in the mornings and evenings to help her shower, dress and cook her meals.

In her spare time, when she is not volunteering at the Irvine Senior Center or at Regional Center, Patty enjoys bowling, going to the movies and karaoke singing.

Derek Bush, Patty’s Regional Center service coordinator, said of Patty, “She is a very independent, strong-willed individual that is an excellent advocate for people with disabilities. Anybody who has contact

with her soon finds that Patty is able to show that people with developmental disabilities can acquire a lot of skills that other people need to be aware of.”

Patty, in her modesty, credits the regional center with much of her success in living an independent life. She said, “I have been through two major surgeries all by myself, but regional center has always been there for me. Bill [Bowman] and Dale [Garcia] came to visit me. The regional center is always trying to open more independent outlets for people.”

Patty Daley received RCOC’s Spotlight Award because she sets an example for other people with developmental disabilities. She serves as an advocate for others as well as herself. With the support and services she receives through the regional center, Patty brings the positive attitude, courage and perseverance needed to fully live her independent life.

## Important Things to Know...

**A two-day training seminar on PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)** will be held on February 15 and 16 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Trinity United Presbyterian Church. PECS is an initial language training package that is used to teach communication skills rapidly to those with limited functional speech. Presenters will be Andrew S. Bondy, Ph.D. (developer of PECS) and Susan Peterson, Ph.D. Cost is \$225 per person and pre-registration is required. Contact Toni Wilson at RCOC, (714) 796-796-5330 for a registration form and more information.

**A new parent network has formed for those interested in exchanging ideas for solutions to behavioral issues related to their school-aged children.** The group, "Ain't Misbehavin'," meets on the first Thursday of each month from

6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Westminster Lutheran Church. The topic of the March 1 meeting will be communications systems and devices; i.e., PECS assisted technology. Childcare is provided free of charge but requires RSVP seven days before the meeting. For more information, call the group hotline at (714) 889-7260.

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual California State-wide Self-Advocacy Conference**, sponsored by people First of California, Organization of Area Boards and Supported Life Institute will be held June 8-10, 2001 at the Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento. This year's theme is "Self-Advocacy: Being in Control of Your Life." For more information, contact the Supported Life Institute office at (916) 567-1974 or write to Supported Life Institute, 1010 Hurley Way, Suite 195, Sacramento, CA 95825 or e-mail [sli@supportedlife.org](mailto:sli@supportedlife.org).

**If you would like to receive an agenda in the mail for the monthly RCOC Board of Directors meeting**, contact Leslie Walker in the Executive Office at (714) 796-5205.

**Dove Song Ministry is a Christian organization that gives concerts for seniors, youth and the disabled.** They are interested in performing at board and care homes at no charge. Concerts include a husband and wife duo playing guitar and flute and singing. Interested service providers can contact Dove Song Ministry at (949) 453-7333 or by mail at 7700 Irvine Center Drive, #270, Irvine, CA 92618.

### **Helpful Web sites...**

- [www.careguide.com](http://www.careguide.com) to locate child or elder care in your area.
- [www.disability.gov](http://www.disability.gov) provides one-stop online access to resources, services and information available throughout the federal government.

## **'The Recipient of the Spotlight Award Is...'**

**T**he fourth annual Spotlight Awards held September 15, 2000 recognized ten people who set examples for the rest of us with their outstanding service and contributions to a better quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. Seven hundred fifty people attended the celebration held at the Irvine Marriott. Tony Valdez of Fox 11 News was Master of Ceremonies. Award recipients were:

**Community Partnership:** Sandy Becker, for the wonderful vacations she has organized for consumers to such places as England, Hawaii and Alaska.

**Consumer:** Patricia Daley – see the "Consumer Spotlight" article on page 1 for more about Patty.

**Employer:** Polaroid Corporation – see page 9 to find out about this company's innovative collaboration with Orange County ARC.

**Lifetime Achievement:** Linda Wallace, Wallace Care Homes – read about Linda's work on page 9.

**Living Options Vendor:** Kathleen Taylor, Creative Support Systems – turn to page 9 to learn why Kathleen received this award.

**Parent:** Barbara Dominguez – read about Barbara on page 7.

**Professional Achievement:** Lonnie

Lovingier, D.D.S. – this pediatric dentist makes what can be a scary experience comfortable and even fun for children with disabilities and their parents.

**RCOC Achievement:** Juda Carter, Education Specialist at RCOC, received the first award in this new category for her knowledgeable advocacy and collaborative work with school districts on behalf of students with developmental disabilities.

**Support Services Vendor:** Doug Wooley, Goodwill Industries – read about Doug's compassion on page 9.

**Volunteer:** Rose Lacher – read about Rose on page 7.

## Board of Directors 2000-2001

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### 2001 Board Meetings:

Feb. 1 ❖ Mar. 1 ❖ Apr. 5 ❖ May 3 ❖ June 7

*The board of directors meets at 6:00 p.m. The public is welcome.  
Please call (714) 796-5205 one week before the February, March  
and April meetings for location.*

### The Regional Center of Orange County has four locations to serve you:

#### Orange Office

3111 N. Tustin Street, Suite 150  
24-hour phone no.: (714) 685-5555  
TDD: (714) 685-5575

#### Laguna Hills Office

24012 Calle de la Plata, Suite 200,  
24-hour phone no.: (714) 699-1900  
TDD: (714) 699-3367

#### Santa Ana Office

801 Civic Center Dr. West  
24-hour phone no.: (714) 796-5100  
TDD: (714) 667-6021

#### Westminster Office

13950 Milton Ave., Suite 200  
24-hour phone no.: (714) 889-7200  
TDD: (714) 889-7234

RCOC Web site: [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)

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We welcome your ideas, contributions and suggestions. Please send all  
correspondence to: **Karen Taylor**, Dialogue Editor, Regional Center of Orange  
County, P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA 92702 or call her at (714) 796-5208.*

## Regional Center of Orange County Administration

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*The Regional Center of  
Orange County is a nonprofit,  
private agency that contracts with  
the California Department of  
Developmental Services to provide  
services to individuals with  
developmental disabilities.*

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Look for Tele-Friends on page 4!