I want to formally express my appreciation to Doug for his leadership in assuring that information and forms were shared with a majority of the membership. The call for nominations was published in the News Notes and on the VRA web page. We received 10 nominations for 6 awards. VRA has 8 possible awards available. This is a vast improvement from last year. I would like to express my appreciation to Steve Sommer and Norm Kropp for their excellence in publishing the News Notes in a timely and provocative manner that contributed to the increase in response from the membership. The awards were presented on 9/24/01 at 3:30 p.m. at the 5th Annual Collaborations Conference. Award recipients are as follows:

- Norman C. Hammond Award to Prudential Cleanroom Services
- Dr. Roy M. Hoover Award to Dr. Mammen Mathew
- A.R. Dawson Award to Steven Sommer
- R.N. Anderson Award to Susan Green
- Distinguished Achievement Award to Theresa Rankin
- 2001 Don T. Johnston President’s Award to Shirley Lyons

Contact was made with the division presidents to allow them the opportunity to present their awards at the Collaborations Conference 2001.

VRCA presented their Counselor of the Year Award to Jack Ballurio.

Congratulations are extended to the Award recipients, and to their nominators. I encourage all VRA members to consider making nominations for awards next year. Let’s go for giving all 7 awards! The 6th Collaborations Conference will be held in August in Richmond. Due dates will be sent out shortly after the VRA Board retreat.

Submitted by Naomi Aitken 804-296-5621; 804-296-2712 FAX; aitkennm@drs.state.va.us

As reported at the annual meeting, the Membership Committee has had a very exciting and busy year. Our membership has increased by 9 members in the first eight months of the year. Our student membership has increased by 46% over last year. More members are renewing on a regular basis.

I would like to publicly thank two individuals who greatly assisted in recruiting student members: Alison Higgs and Richard Kriner. These two student members took on the challenge and met it. THANK YOU for all your hard work.

Thinking about Tax Time?

Maybe it is early, but tax time does come in a few months. This is a reminder that it is also a time for us to take the opportunity to help build up the Foundation endowment with our gifts and take a tax deduction at the same time. The Foundation is required to annually present this opportunity to all VRA members. It is our pleasure to invite you to join us in taking advantage of a tax deduction that will benefit our membership. Thanks,

The VRA Foundation Board

The next VRA Board meeting is: Oct. 26, 2001
Membership Committee Report (Continued from page 1)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION WAS GIVEN AT THE COLLABORATIONS CONFERENCE DURING THE ANNUAL MEETING TO MEMBERS WHO HAVE BEEN AND ARE CURRENTLY PROFESSIONAL OR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS FOR 20 YEARS OR MORE. CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE MEMBERS AND THANKS FOR YOUR MANY CONTRIBUTIONS.

27 years: Patricia Stadler; 26 years: Susan Green;
24 years: Barbara Grecheck and Howard Green
23 years: Mary Kaye Johnston and Russ Ward; 22 years: Susan Olson;
20 years: Sharon Bunger, Bernice Chattin, Francis Denmark, Jr., Doug James, Maureen McGuire-Kuletz, and Helen Bolden Robertson.

Here are the members who are new and who have renewed since the last NewsNotes:

Renewals: Alice Berman, Bernice Chattin, Francis Denmark, Jr., Elizabeth Dugan, Margaret Gillespie, Susan Green, Kristi Lockhart, Byron Maddox, Scott Miller, Darlene Ackerman, Judith Ashley, Sharon Barton, Dale Batten, Jane Bennett, Teri Bertsch, Judith Bowen, Benjy Burnett, Marie Delgado, Barbara Grecheck, Bonnie Hawley, Alison Higgs, Diane Hinch, Ariane Karpf, James Maye, Sharon Miller, Beth Phillips, Annette Pope, Hinda Richards, Dan Semones, Mary Cathryn Stanley, Mike Wong, Joseph Wharff, Naomi Aitken, Anthony Bird, Philip Black, Kelly Desclos, Sherman Gifford, Sharon Harrup, Mary Kaye Johnston, Evan Jones, Lynn Kushner, Mary Lecuyer, Richard Melia, Elizabeth Schauer, Patricia Stadler.

New Members: John Thompson, Arlington; Diane Wheatley, Fairfax; Brian Redford, Richmond; Meredith Zimmerman, Richmond (student); Allen Lewis, Richmond; Amy Armstrong, Richmond; Charles Blaine, Richmond (student); Billy Smelser, Stephens City (student). Thanks to all!

Submitted by Shirley Lyons

They didn’t catch the Wave at Collaborations but you should have seen the one that got away!!!!
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Summaries of the Award Nominations

Norman C. Hammond Award
Mr. Hammond was credited with creating the IBM Data Processing for the Handicapped Program. This award was established to honor business and industry leaders whose contributions to the field of rehabilitation in Virginia are outstanding and have resulted in the employment of persons with disabilities. Preference is given to individuals or organizations that have effectively and actively advocated for individuals with disabilities; introduced innovative programs and approaches to rehabilitation.

The 2001 Norman C. Hammond Award was presented to Prudential Cleanroom Services Accepting the Award were Elisabeth Knott General Manager and Michael Blazer Plant Superintendent. This year’s winner, located in Sandston Virginia, takes a proactive approach to recruitment and maintaining staff, by maintaining close contact with organizations and agencies through active participation in the Metro Richmond Employment Network. They have willingly provided accommodations both for testing and for the work site. They offer incentives and employee recognition. Through their community outreach and work culture changes they have reduced their turnover rate from 90% to 20%. They have been eager to work with individuals who are deaf, and even offer classes in sign language to their staff. They have also offered accommodations to those in wheelchairs as well as those whose production speed is slower than average.

Dr. Roy M. Hoover for Outstanding Medical Achievement
Dr. Hoover former medical director at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center initiated this award. This award honors a physician practicing in Virginia who has given outstanding medical rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities and whose contributions are substantial.

The 2001 Roy M. Hoover Award was presented to Dr. Mammen Mathew. He has provided exceptional medical services to people with disabilities for over 20 years. He is the Director of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. He has provided valuable knowledge and support to rehabilitation counselors by interpreting medical information to assist in effective service planning. He is a kind, compassionate doctor who cares deeply about his patients but who can also be trusted to provide direct, truthful information upon which those sometimes-difficult choices to be made. He is also recognized for negotiating to have the Freehand System available for individuals with limited functioning in their hands, due to paralysis. This system restores an individual’s ability to grasp and pick up items. This candidate spearheaded this effort, resulting in the first case of this type in Virginia.

AR Dawson Humanitarian Award
In 1971, Dr. Dawson, who was director of geriatric and rehabilitation services for the Virginia Department of Mental Hygiene and Hospitals. It is presented for outstanding services to the disabled by a practitioner, who is not in an administrative or supervisory position. Awarded to a professional person having direct contact with persons with disabilities in the rehabilitation process, and whose efforts have had a significant impact on their lives.

The 2001 A.R. Dawson Award went to Steven Sommer. Since the early days of Supported employment, this rehabilitation counselor has encouraged each consumer to make choices and become the main driver in their plan. He is supportive of what the consumer wants to achieve, develops person-centered plans, with the consumer writing as much of the plan as they can. He enjoys visiting working consumers on their job, sharing and supporting their success. He works to assist consumers to understand the importance of commitment and hard work, as well as responsibility, taking on tough challenges, including individuals who to others may appear to be too risky to serve.

Awards Summaries (continued on Page 6)
RN Anderson Award

Mr. Anderson was the first Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services. Awarded to a current member of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association who has demonstrated excellence in service to persons with disabilities.

The 2001 R.N. Anderson Award was presented to Susan Green. She has dedicated over 25 years to the field of Rehabilitation, working as a vocational rehabilitation counselor, job placement counselor, education consultant, staff development specialist, coordinator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and as a Human Services manager. Susan always demonstrated a positive consumer perspective. She offers new perspectives to problem solving sessions, placing into action, those ideas that are generated. She supports others when they need a boost. Susan is noted for her humanitarian style of leadership. Better services are a direct result of her leadership and dedication. She is a stickler for quality, especially if it will have direct impact on a person’s life.

VRA Distinguished Achievement Award

This is awarded to a person with a disability who has demonstrated imagination, perseverance, resolve, and an indomitable spirit in working to overcome barriers in his/her life resulting in a better quality of life for themselves and others.

The 2001 Distinguished Achievement was awarded to Theresa Rankin, who sustained a brain injury in 1977 as a passenger in a motor vehicle, but did not begin to receive comprehensive evaluation or rehabilitation services until 1986. She was then able to return to school to complete her bachelor’s degree in Social Science and Environmental studies. She has dedicated much of her time to speaking about brain injury, and is the co-founder of the Mid-Atlantic Traumatic Brain injury Consortium. She has been a guest lecturer for graduate and doctoral programs at George Washington University, University of Virginia, and the University of Maryland School of Law. She has served as a consultant in the production of documentaries, and serves as a champion in the fight to prevent others from experiencing traumatic brain injury.

Don T. Johnston President’s Award

The 2001 Don T. Johnston President’s Award was presented to Shirley Lyons, a very active member of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association. The President of VRA selects the recipient of the award based upon that member’s valued contributions to the Association. The award was renamed in 1993 and presented to Don T. Johnston as the first recipient. VRA presents this award in honor of Don Johnston who served twice as association president, was the recipient of the RN Anderson Award, and was employed as a Human Services Manager by the Department of Rehabilitative Services. Mr. Johnston made a significant impact on VRA through dedication to his principals, diligence in setting and attaining goals, and the pursuit of excellence in his personal and professional life.

WWRC Graduation Ceremony

The Vocational Training Department held its Summer Graduation on June 29th, 2001. Thirty-one graduates received their certificates of attainment from 10 vocational training programs. The graduation speaker was Mr. Sidney Nicely of Virginia Prosthetics in Roanoke, VA.

The following special staff-to-student awards were presented:
(The following special award and certificate, a $100 Series E, U.S. Savings Bond was presented to each student by the WWRC Foundation)

Frank O. Birdsall Award, presented for distinguished service, achievement, and personal growth
Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority

The US Department of Education notified the Department of Rehabilitative Services on September 27, 2001, that it's competitive grant award submitted by the Virginia Assistive Technology System, in collaboration with the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority, has been approved. For the second consecutive year, these two organizations have successfully competed in this national competition. This year's award totals $2,464,000.

The twelve-month grant pays for salaries and benefits of the Authority's staff, as well as a portion of staff salaries from the Virginia Assistive Technology System, which oversees the grant for the Department of Rehabilitative Services. The grant also pays for some banking consultative services, evaluation, rehabilitative engineering marketing, and other general administrative expenditures. However, the majority of the funding will go directly to capitalize the Loan Fund. It effectively doubles the cash assets of that organization, making it the second largest loan fund of its kind in the country.

The grant award will allow the Authority to provide low interest and guaranteed loans to many more eligible Virginians with disabilities who are purchasing assistive technology. The grant will also allow the Authority to make loans to small businesses and non-profit organizations for accessibility modifications and for purchasing assistive technology for current or potential employees.

Submitted by Kathryn A. Hayfield

TELEPHONE ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH SPEECH DISABILITIES

If you have a speech disability and live in one of the 38 states that offer this service, you can now use a new, free telephone service 24 hours a day. This service, called Speech to Speech (STS), provides communication assistants (CA's) for people with difficulty being understood by the public on the telephone.

STS is provided through the TTY relay in each state. Unlike TTY, STS enables people with speech disabilities to communicate by voice through a CA since many people have difficulty typing. People with speech disabilities can dial toll free to reach a patient, trained, CA who is familiar with many speech patterns and has excellent language recognition skills. This CA makes telephone calls for them and repeats their words exactly in a 3-way calling environment.

Bob Segalman, Ph.D. has cerebral palsy and developed the concept of STS. It makes telephone use much easier for him. To try out STS, report problems or get more information: Call 800-854-7784

You may also visit the STS website: http://www.stsnews.com/ or contact Katherine Keller at stslistserv@stsnews.com

For a list of U. S. Speech-to-Speech access numbers go to: http://www.stsnews.com/Pages/STSDial-UpTelNumbers.html
VRA Golf Tournament!

The 2nd Annual VRA Golf Tournament was held on Friday, September 14th, 2001. The tournament was extremely successful and lots of fun for everyone. VRA was able to raise $4,351.00. We had 19 teams and 20 corporate sponsors. Also, 28 businesses and individuals donated prizes and merchandise. Due to the horrific tragedy of September 11, the VRA Golf Committee recommended to the VRA Board that $500.00 of the profits be donated to the American Red Cross.

The winners were:
First Place: WINN Inc.: Richard W. Winn, Richard A. Winn, Joe Kehminski, & Joe Gyomory
Second Place: The Choice Group, Inc.: Todd Daniel, Joe Tucker, Perry Scott, & Samantha Lively
Third Place: Bennett Family: Jane Bennett, Joyce Bennett, Barry Bennett, & Matt Bennett

Special thanks to the following individuals who contributed and helped with the tournament: Bill Burnside, Benjy Burnett, Bob Canaday, Jack Hayek, Susan Green, Mary Kaye Johnston, Naomi Aitkens, Mark Fletcher, Bonnie Hawley, Ed Navis, and Holt Livey. Please say thank you to these folks for their hard work! Thanks and I hope you will help and play next year.
Submitted by Howard Green

Co-Editors, Norm and Steve thank all the VRA members who have been submitting their articles to the NewsNotes. In December we would like to move up the dead deadline date to December 10th to allow for the busy time of the season. We will need all your calendars, workshops, legislative insights, election updates, and professional insights for the January 2002 issue. Those items sent by way of the US Postage Service, should be sent to Norm Kropp at DRS, 2930 W. Broad Street, Suite 15, Richmond, Va. 23230. Please send your articles by way of email to both Norm and Steve at KroppNV@drs.state.va.us and SommerSA@drs.state.va.us. We would also like to encourage you to sell some ads to the NewsNotes, by referring your favorite rehabilitation-related business to us. Your Officers and Board have been very supportive! Thanks again for a great year with the VRA! It is great to have VRCA helping us to get the word out. Also visit www.vra.org !!!

VRA Schedule/Rehabilitation Events for 2001

October
26-VRA Board Meeting-Richmond (Henrico MH)
31-Nov. 4-NRA Annual Training Meeting-Biloxi, MS., Beau Rivage Resort

December
7-VRA Board Retreat
15-Deadline for VRA News Notes Articles

DRS Vocational Evaluators Meet to Discuss High Tech Employment

The vocational evaluators of the Department of Rehabilitative Services will discuss high tech employment options at their annual conference in October at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. The training will be opened with a greeting from Judy Ashley, WWRC Center Director. The agenda features two days of training on information technology jobs, what they are, and how to get them. Experts in the field will discuss the need for these workers, the requirements for these types of jobs, how to assess potential students and workers for this field, and onsite accommodations. Dr. Joseph Ashley will discuss accessibility issues. Dale Batten, Chief Evaluator, will discuss the Workkeys Assessment System.
Submitted by Norm Kropp

Run An Ad in the VRA NEWSNOTES

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$24 / issue : $90 / year
Full Page
$50 / issue : $175 / year
WWRC Graduation Ceremony (continued from page 6) to **Joseph Rudolph Lewis of Williamsburg, VA.** His DRS Counselor is Patricia Kipps of Williamsburg, VA.; WWRC Counselor: Mary Jo Taylor; WWRC Program: Mechanical Drafting/CAD; WWRC Instructors: A.D. Strickland, Ed West. This award is given to a graduating student in recognition of Outstanding Qualities of Citizenship and Service to fellow students, staff and community while attending Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center.

**President Woodrow Wilson Award**, given for exceptional personal growth was presented to **Martin Ray Chaffee of Boston VA.**, who works with the following staff: DRS Counselor: Warren Blatz, Culpeper, VA., WWRC Counselor: Emily Huffman, WWRC Program: Stock Checker-Materials Mgt., and WWRC Instructor: Larry Plyer.

**Gail Louise Shelton of Mineral, VA.**, who works with the following staff: DRS Counselor, Sherry DeMoss, Fishersville, VA., WWRC Counselor, Ann Gardner, WWRC Program: Certified Nurse’s Aide, WWRC Instructor: Chris Rowe, R.N..

**R. N. Anderson Award**, given for exceptional achievement in a specific training or academic program was presented to

**Larry Webster Drew of Portsmouth, VA.**, and who works with the following staff: DRS Counselor: Janet Boone, Portsmouth, VA., WWRC Counselor: John Gibson, WWRC Program: Construction Laborer, Carpenter’s Assistant, and Cabinetmaker’s Assistant, WWRC Instructor: John Davis, Al Clausen.


**Bits & Pieces:**

The Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center was informed that a recently submitted application to the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration, was accepted. The Center will receive $315,000 in contractual fees.

The Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center general information video has been updated. The Public Information Office at the center plans to distribute them to all DRS field offices throughout the Agency as well as staff in the central Office and other center customers.
Whether You:

- are involved in wheelchair seating and mobility clinics;
- provide inpatient, outpatient, or home health therapy services, or
- use a manual wheelchair  This Handbook is a MUST for quick and easy access to solutions for some of the most common every day wheelchair adjustments.

Ed Short, a senior physical therapist at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC), was inspired to write this Handbook after several years of repeating the same information and demonstrations to countless wheelchair users and new physical therapists.

Purpose of the Handbook:

- to provide written and visual instructions for the adjustment of lightweight manual wheelchairs;
- to provide information on basic manual wheelchair adjustments, and their effect on performance, accessibility and positioning.

Intended Audience:

- Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Rehabilitation Engineers, Wheelchair Users & Families, Wheelchair Vendors  Even if you have had little or no experience, with practice you will be able to perform most of these adjustments.  More importantly, you will increase your understanding of how to configure wheelchairs to meet individual positioning, mobility and accessibility needs.  ---Ed Short, PT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.  Introduction
II.  Basic Manual Wheelchair Adjustments
The first section of this Handbook covers how to make adjustments on modern, lightweight manual wheelchairs.  Basic manual wheelchair adjustments are explained as simply as possible, using diagrams or photos for illustration.

III. Positioning and Performance Adjustments
This section presents the theory and reasons for making adjustments.  It addresses the needs of the individual with limited capacity or special needs.

IV.  New Technology
This section describes advances in wheelchair technology and some of the adjustments possible on these new wheelchairs.

The 57 page Handbook is available in the following formats:

- Printed (Color): $55
- Printed (Black & White): $45
- CD Rom: $25 .pdf file
- Email attachment: $20 .pdf file

Plus shipping/handling and tax.

Quantity discounts are available.  Ordering Information:

Download the order form from our website: www.wwrc.net/html/Foundation.htm
Fax: 509-756-3417 -or- Mail: Box W-131, P.O. Box 1500, Fishersville, VA 22939
Email: lavignpa@wwrc.state.va.us  Phone: 540-332-7905

Check or money orders, purchase orders, VISA, or MasterCard are accepted.

Wheelchair Adjustment  A Handbook (continued on page 11)
Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center's mission is to help people with disabilities achieve greater economic self-sufficiency and optimum independence through comprehensive rehabilitation and vocational training. For more information, visit: www.wwrc.net.

WWRC Foundation's mission is to secure and provide funds and support for comprehensive rehabilitative services, including goods, services, and program support not otherwise available to WWRC. For more information, visit: www.wwrc.net/html/Foundation.htm.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 2001
By the President of the United States of America A Proclamation

Our Nation's annual observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month allows us to reflect upon, and consider the potential possessed by, the millions of Americans with disabilities who currently serve in our workforce, as well as those who are ready and willing to join the workforce. In keeping with this year's theme, "Win with Ability," we recognize and salute the skills, creativity, and dedication of working people with disabilities and take appreciative note of their commitment to our Nation and its continued prosperity.

When President George H. W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, our Nation made a promise to no longer underestimate the abilities of disabled Americans. That Act, and its subsequent implementation, has liberated the energies and talents of millions of Americans with disabilities. We have seen evidence of progress in improved access to employment, public places, commercial facilities, information technology, telecommunication services, housing, schools, and polling places.

Although America has made great progress since the signing of the ADA, many opportunities for further improvement still exist. My Administration is committed to tearing down any barriers that unreasonably prevent the full participation of Americans with disabilities. I proposed my New Freedom Initiative to help disabled Americans realize their dreams through meaningful and successful careers. I also have proposed programs that will give persons with disabilities greater access to technology, which will increase their productive capacity and allow some to work at home. My proposed programs will expand educational opportunities, facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities into the workforce, and will allow increased participation in community life.

I have signed an Executive Order requiring full implementation of the Supreme Court's 1999 Olmstead Decision mandating that individuals with disabilities should be given a reasonable opportunity to live close to their families and friends, when appropriate.

We can no longer accept the continued existence of barriers, whether physical or social, that unreasonably prevent persons with disabilities from full integration into our society. I ask every citizen to join me in recognizing and valuing the contributions that people with disabilities have made to our society and to commit to a collective effort that creates reasonable access for disabled persons to all that America has to offer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2001, as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. I call upon government leaders, labor leaders, and employers to collaborate to ensure the full inclusion of our Nation's Persons with disabilities in the 21st Century workforce.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence Of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENT:        Mark Fletcher  
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VRAA PRESIDENT:  Sharon Bender  
News Notes       Steven Sommer  
CO-EDITORS:      Norm Kropp  

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