President-elect: Eleanor Williams (Richmond)

Secretary: Ed Navis (Richmond)
(1 year term)

Treasurer: Sherman Gifford (Richmond)
(2 year term)

Board Members At-Large: (3 year term)
Teri Bertsch (Alexandria)
Margaret Gillispie (Huddleston)
Shirley Lyons (Chester)

Congratulations to the incoming Officers and Board Members! Your willingness to serve on the VRA Board is very much appreciated.

Submitted by Mark Fletcher
Norman C. Hammond Award

Millie Hewett of MANPOWER International was nominated by Howard Green for this award, as she has worked hard over the past four years to change the way businesses view people with disabilities in the workplace.

She has been active in the rehabilitation community and is an active member of the VCU-RRTC Business Roundtable, VABLN, Richmond SHRM chapter, and agrees to serve on many panels discussing the hiring of people with disabilities. She goes beyond her scope of work by meeting with various rehabilitation agencies and organizations to give them advice on how to contact businesses on behalf of their customers.

Last year, this nominee developed a one-day training event for local call center businesses in the Richmond area to share the successes and benefits of hiring people with disabilities. The event was quite successful and provided a real education for many employers seeking to hire good people.

MANPOWER’s slogan is “we find the best in everybody, and we put it to work everyday”. Millie spends extra time figuring out the best accommodations to make in assisting people with disabilities who seek services from MANPOWER. Rehabilitation counselors and job coaches find this person easy to work with and a true advocate for people with disabilities seeking work. She doesn’t see a disability but looks for the positives and abilities of everyone.

Millie has embraced the hiring of persons with disabilities and seeks ways to share the benefits to other employers in the community. Her efforts in recruiting and hiring people with disabilities are a win-win situation for both the employee and the business. “It just makes good business sense” is Millie’s motto.

Presidential Pondering
(continued from page 1)

made by only those ballots cast, not by those who do not vote. So please take the time to read the web pages and the information that has been sent to you. If you do not vote, the decision regarding your membership organization will be in someone else’s hands. VRA has been fortunate to enjoy a good relationship with VRCA. We have many members who are members of this division. VRA and VRCA have mutually supported each other in the past. It continues to be a pleasure to work with Jane Bennett and the capable leadership of VRCA.

There have been many positive things happening with VRA, our Golf tournament was held on September 13th (no bad luck here!) and sub committees are active in looking for ways to better serve our members.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the October Board meeting. In the meantime, I wish everyone a safe and pleasant fall.

With best regards,

Bonnie Hawley, President
VRA

Membership Report

The Virginia Rehabilitation Association membership is holding strong. It is imperative in this time of budget crisis that you make the commitment to your professional organization. It is only through the strong voice of advocates that vulnerable persons in our society are protected from the ravages of budget cuts.

In Virginia, we have built a strong coalition with other professional organizations and parent groups to assist persons with disabilities. Now more than ever, these efforts must be strong. The voice of VRA is only as strong as the number made by only those ballots cast, not by those who do not vote. So please take the time to read the web pages and the information that has been sent to you. If you do not vote, the decision regarding your membership organization will be in someone else’s hands. VRA has been fortunate to enjoy a good relationship with VRCA. We have many members who are members of this division. VRA and VRCA have mutually supported each other in the past. It continues to be a pleasure to work with Jane Bennett and the capable leadership of VRCA.

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With best regards,

Bonnie Hawley, President
VRA

Membership Report (continued on page 3)
R. N. Anderson Award for Leadership

Dr. Maureen-McGuire-Kuletza was nominated by Dr. Joseph Ashley. She has demonstrated dedication to the Virginia Rehabilitation Association (VRA) through long standing service and continual commitment to improving the services and opportunities for persons with disabilities in Virginia. Maureen has routinely attended the National Rehabilitation Association’s Legislative Forum and served as president of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association, board member and president of the National Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (VEWAAA), and has been a board member of the Mid Atlantic National Rehabilitation Counseling Association. She has maintained her commitment to the VRA and improving the Collaborations Conference while both a manager within the VA Dept. of Rehabilitative Services and in her current position as Assistant Research Professor at the George Washington Rehabilitation Counseling Department and Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program faculty. She continues to move the profession of rehabilitation counseling forward, championing distance education and ethics courses for rehabilitation counselors and evaluators. Maureen has demonstrated her commitment in terms of training other professionals by presenting at most of the past Collaborations conferences. She is selfless in her dedication, always bringing new technology and methodology to those who serve people with disabilities. Her active involvement in legislative affairs has impacted legislative outcomes and helped to inform legislators and others about the needs of the individuals with disabilities and the rehabilitation community.

VRA Schedule 2001-2002

October: 18 – VRA Board Meeting
24-27 – Indianapolis – NRA National Training Conference
December: 5 – VRCA Board Meeting
6 – VRA Annual Retreat

Membership Report (continued from page 2)

of members we have. Even one less voice lowers the influence we have on vote conscious legislators.

Membership provides the opportunity to stay current in your field. Your membership allows you to participate in training opportunities at no or reduced cost. The Collaborations Conference is a major conference in the Commonwealth. This year, members who were unable to receive full assistance from their employer took advantage of sponsorships from VRA. And this assistance is ONLY available to VRA members!

Here are the names of those who have recently renewed:


And a special welcome to our new members: Brenda O’Neal Wiggins, Woodbridge; Mary- Margaret Cash, Richmond; Dianne Graves, Glen Allen; Lavon Mayo, Goochland; Gloria Joyner, Norfolk; Faith Horter, Lynchburg and LaVerne Budd, Richmond.

Submitted by Shirley Lyons,

The VRA Legislative Update For September 2002

David Williams has written a very comprehensive article to update us on the current legislative issues. Please read this on the VRA Website by going to WWW.VRA.ORG on the internet.
Golf Classic Report

The 3rd Annual VRA Golf Classic was a success. The tournament was on Friday, September 13, 2002 at the Hollow Golf Club. The winners were: 1st place - Good Samaritans with a score of 56,--- 2nd place - The Supply Room Company with a score 56 and 3rd place - to Allen, Allen, Allen, & Allen with a score of 57. There were 20 teams 18 Corporate Hole Sponsors. In addition, a number of individual and businesses donated gifts certificates, prizes, and funds. See VRA.ORG for more information.

Submitted by Howard Green

The Virginia Office of Protection and Advocacy

This past year, the General Assembly passed, and Governor Warner signed, House Bill 9, creating the new Virginia Office of Protection and Advocacy (VOPA). This legislation, patroned by Delegate Phil Hamilton, removed DRVD from the executive branch of government and created an independent state protection and advocacy agency with an 11 member Governing Board that will hire the Director of the agency and supervise its overall operations. For more information please see VRA.ORG

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www.vra.org
An Open Invitation to All VRA Members

Hermitage Enterprises, 8247 Hermitage Road, Richmond, VA., will be having an OPEN HOUSE on Wednesday, October 16, 2002 from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Hermitage is home to several programs operated by the Henrico Area Mental Health/Mental Retardation Services including the Hermitage Enterprises workshop, the enclave program and the Individual Employment component of the Community Teams.

VRA Members are welcome to come, see our expanded new building and learn about the continuum of services offered by our staff.

Call 262-6665 for directions or more information. Light refreshments will be served.

Submitted by Shirley Lyons
Don T. Johnston Award
Recipient 2002

Teri C. Bertsch was nominated for the Don T. Johnston award by Bonnie Hawley, VRA President. This award is presented annually by the VRA President to a member of VRA who has made significant contributions to our organization over the past year. It is named in recognition of the late Don Johnston, former VRA President. Ms. Bertsch has been rehabilitation professional for over 20 years, holding both a Master's degree and a CRC. She has served in many professional positions within DRS, as a job placement counselor, regional marketing specialist and a rehabilitation counselor. Past and current supervisors report that Teri is a true professional and is held in high esteem by co-workers and customers. Within VRA, Teri’s contributions have been an asset to our organization. Assisting not only with fund raising, but also for the past two years, serving in the office of secretary. She has done an outstanding job of keeping track of minutes and motions. She never hesitates to raise her hand when a volunteer is needed. Teri is an inspiration to those who work with her and so deserving of this special recognition. Congratulations Teri and continued thanks for all that you do for VRA and the field of rehabilitation.

Distinguished Achievement Award
William Clowney (continued from page 5)

not give up! Eddie returned to work in a light-duty capacity in October 2001. In December he returned to regular duty work as an Ironworker, and was promoted to a Foreman in February 2002. He enjoys ironwork and takes pride in his work. Eddie is very responsible, mature, conscientious, and an excellent role model for his work crew. His employer states that Eddie adapted to ironwork quickly. He described Eddie as dependable, trustworthy, honest, and family oriented. Eddie could have given up, but since returning to work in October 2001, he has done a wonderful job. He’s a hard worker who willingly works overtime to get the job done.

FACT SHEET: TELEPHONE ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH SPEECH DISABILITIES

If you have a speech disability and live in the USA (including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), you can now use a new, free telephone service 24 hours a day. It is also available (fewer hours of the day) in Sweden and Australia. This FCC mandated service, called Speech to Speech (STS), provides communication assistants (CAs) 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 as many people with speech disabilities 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. Every month users make about 6,000 calls nationally. STS is the only way for many people to telephone others not accustomed to their speech. Many STS users have Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, ALS, multiple sclerosis, or muscular dystrophy. Other users stutter or have had a laryngectomy. STS also helps some speech synthesizer users.

Bob Segalman, Ph.D. has cerebral palsy and developed the concept of STS. Now it makes telephone use much easier for him. To try out STS, report problems or get more information: Call 800-854-7784 and ask for Dr. Bob Segalman (direct 916-263-8689). You may also visit the STS website: http://www.stsnews.com/ or contact Katherine Keller at stslistserv@stsnews.com to place you on the STS List Serve.

Submitted by Bob Segalman, Ph.D.
Founder of Speech to Speech
**VRA Scholarship Awards**

*The VRA Foundation is pleased to announce three scholarship awards for the academic year 2002-03.*

The recipients are: *Lee Ann Smith* and *Thomas Marshall Smith, IV* of Burke, and *Valerie Michelle Sommer* of Richmond.

*Lee Ann* is in the graduate program at UCLA in California. *Thomas Marshall* begins his academic career as a freshman at Virginia Commonwealth University. *Valerie Michelle* will be completing her senior year at James Madison University in Harrisonburg.

Each year VRA members help to make these awards possible through donations to the Foundation Endowment. These donations are tax deductible, so remember to make your Foundation grow as you consider your year-end giving. Every donation, however small, gives the Foundation a greater opportunity to serve our membership.

**Benjy Burnett, President**

**Project HEAR (Higher Education Access Retention)**

Project HEAR is a demonstration pilot that was launched at WWRC, using existing resources, as a collaborative partnership between the Center, the Virginia Community College System and seven local community college campuses. Currently it is moving into its second week of the fall semester with a well rounded representation of the Virginia Community College System. Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center has four deaf/hard of hearing students in this distance education classroom. Two students list Tidewater Community College as their home campus. One student lists Thomas Nelson Community College as his home campus, and the final student lists Danville Community College as her home campus. These students, making excellent progress, are collectively taking the following courses from nine community college campuses, through remote technologies:

- Tidewater Community College - Math 02 & Math 03
- Virginia Western Community College - English 01
- Wytheville Community College - English 04
- Northern Virginia Community College - IST 100 (Intro. to Information Systems)
- New River Community College - Business Math 121
- Patrick Henry Community College - Health 116
- Central Virginia Community College - AST 101 (Keyboarding)

If you have questions about this innovative project, please contact Ms. Christine Day, Manager, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Department at WWRC by calling 540-332-7236 or TTY 800-811-7893.

*Submitted by Wendell Coleman*
PFIZER LAUNCHES ‘CONNECTION TO CARE’ PROGRAM TO PROVIDE MORE FREE MEDICINES TO MORE LOW-INCOME, UNINSURED AMERICANS

Combined Pfizer, Parke-Davis Programs Expand Access to Five Million More Americans Up to 22 Million Now Eligible to Receive Assistance

NEW YORK, September 9 -- Further demonstrating its strong commitment to increased access to medicines for those most in need, Pfizer today launched Connection to Care, an expanded program providing free medicines to low-income, uninsured patients.

By combining existing Pfizer and former Parke-Davis assistance efforts and lowering income eligibility requirements, Pfizer will partner with health care professionals across the country to provide free medicines to up to 22 million eligible patients who suffer from diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and depression.

Under the new program guidelines, single persons with annual incomes of less than $16,000 and families with annual household incomes of less than $25,000 who have no prescription drug coverage through private insurance or any public assistance program are eligible for Connection to Care.

"The enhanced Connection to Care program, combined with our widely used Sharing the Care initiative and the rapidly growing Pfizer for Living Share Card puts more than 30 Pfizer medications in reach of over 27 million Americans either free or at greatly reduced costs," said Pat Kelly, president, Pfizer U.S. Pharmaceuticals.

To reach as many eligible patients as possible, Pfizer has distributed information on Connection to Care to more than 120,000 physicians and health care centers across the U.S. and set-up a toll free number at 1-800-707-8990 for doctors and patients to call with enrollment questions.

For more than 30 years, Pfizer has provided no-cost medications to help physicians care for low-income, uninsured patients. In addition to Connection to Care, Pfizer oper-

Pharmaceutical Assistance (continued on page 10)
Transitioning persons with traumatic brain injury into the workplace or back into the workplace can be a daunting task. Some of the common physical, cognitive, and behavioral changes resulting from injury, as well as how these changes can impact the process of returning to work, will be described and explained. Approaches to returning to work will be discussed and we will examine how persons with TBI can gain and maintain employment.

Sponsored by the Virginia Rehabilitation Association

Presented by:
Robin Metcalf, M.Ed., M.S., LPC, CRC, CCM, NCC, CRP
Robin is Program Director for The Choice Group, a private company who offers career and counseling services to persons with disabilities. She has over twenty-three years of experience in the fields of education and counseling. Her special interests are in Acquired Brain Injury, children, women’s issues, and people with disabilities.

Friday, November 1, 2002
9:30 – 2:30
at
Main Street Library
110 Main Street
Newport News, VA 23601

RSVP to make your reservation and to request your accommodation needs to Jean Steveson or Annette Pope by October 23 at 757-865-3111 or 757-865-3105

VRA members $10.00 Non Members $15.00 Make checks payable to VRA
Lunch will be provided CRC Credit available

Your Board Members, Sharon Barton and Phil Black, are holding the VRA website banner high to remind you that you have the option of getting your quarterly issue of the NewsNotes only on the internet. If you wish to have your name removed from the NewsNotes mailing list, please email Mary Kaye Johnston at mkaye1@erols.com Otherwise, your issues will continue to come to your postal address as usual.
Fredericksburg Clubhouse to Open in October 2002

Brain Injury Services, Inc., a private, non-profit organization based in Northern Virginia, was awarded a grant from the Department of Rehabilitative Services to develop a clubhouse for people with brain injury in the Fredericksburg area. A clubhouse is designed to support people in their daily efforts to set personal goals and function more independently in personally relevant environments. There are currently two other clubhouses for persons with brain injuries in Virginia: The Mill House in Richmond and The High Street Clubhouse in Charlottesville. The new clubhouse in Fredericksburg will be located next door to the local DRS office in Westwood Office Park off of Route 3. The Clubhouse is slated to open on October 1st, and will function three days a week, with a goal of becoming full-time in the future. Anyone interested in more information, on becoming a member or providing assistance, please contact

Beth Stanhagen,
Clubhouse Manager,
at 703-451-8881.

Training: “Job Placement for the Ex-Offender “

The training is scheduled for Friday, November 8, 2002, 10:00 - 3:00. It will be held in the DRS Regional office conference room, 3433 Brambleton Ave., SW, Roanoke, VA. People can contact me at gillismt@drs.state.va.us or Dan Semones at semonerd@drs.state.va.us. The available products available under this program include some of Pfizer’s leading medications, including: Lipitor* (for high cholesterol), Neurontin* (for epilepsy), Norvasc (for high blood pressure and angina) and Zoloft* (for depression).

Submitted by Margaret Gillispie

Pharmaceutical Assistance

(continued from page 8)

ates two additional programs to expand access to medicines for those most in need. Through Sharing the Care, an innovative program developed in partnership with the National Governors Association and the National Association of Community Health Centers, Pfizer provides free medicines to needy Americans at more than 375 community clinics in 48 states. Introduced in January 2002, the Pfizer for Living Share Card provides health education materials and any Pfizer prescription for a $15 flat fee to income eligible Medicare enrollees without prescription drug coverage.

Pfizer currently donates more medicines to patients than any other pharmaceutical company. In 2001, Pfizer helped approximately 1.4 million patients by providing 2.3 million prescriptions valued at nearly $345 million.

To verify eligibility for Connection to Care, patients must have a prescription from their doctor for a Pfizer medication, complete an application form and submit copies of their income tax return together with the appropriate supporting financial documents. Doctors who are treating patients who lack the necessary documentation should contact Pfizer to discuss other options available for those particular situations. If approved, patients receive a three-month, renewable supply of Pfizer medication through their physician’s office.

Jane H. Woods
Secretary, Health and Human Resources
Commonwealth of Virginia
Post Office Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218
(804)786.7765
fax (804)786.3389
jwoods@gov.state.va.us
<<Jane Woods.vcf>>
JOB PLACEMENT FOR THE EX-OFFENDER

This training will address legal issues and will provide practical ideas to assist in the placement of individuals with disabilities who also have a criminal record.

Sponsored by the Virginia Rehabilitation Association

Keynote Speaker
Todd Leeson, Attorney – Flippin, Densmore, Morse & Jessee

PANEL PRESENTATION
Dale Smith, Transition Specialist, Department of Correctional Education
Terry Bergen, Regional Vice President - Hired Hands & Associates
Neil Ordway, General Manager - Clarion Hotel

CRC Credit Provided

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2002
10:00 – 3:00
At
Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services
Regional Office Conference Room
3433 Brambleton Ave., SW
Roanoke, VA 24018

To make reservations and to request accommodations contact
Margaret Gillispie or Dan Semones by November 1st at (540) 776-2740.
gillismit@drs.state.va.us OR semonerd@drs.state.va.us

VRA Members $10.00 Non Members $15.00 Make checks payable to VRA
Lunch will be provided
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PRESIDENT-ELECT: Howard Green
PAST PRESIDENT: Mark Fletcher
TREASURER: Eleanor Williams
SECRETARY: Teri Bertsch
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VRCA PRESIDENT: Russ Ward
VARSS PRESIDENT: Diane Hinch
VRAA PRESIDENT: Bill Burnside (Acting)
News Notes: Steven Sommer
CO-EDITORS: Norm Kropp

All Newsletter articles should be submitted to both co-editors by Email at: SommerSA@drs.state.va.us and KroppNV@drs.state.va.us
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