

Setting Sails



A Quarterly Publication For Friends And Consumers of San Antonio Independent Living Services

Winter 2011

Message from SAILS' Executive Director: Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

SAILS Celebrated 30th Anniversary with a Free Music Festival!



Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke,
Executive Director of SAILS

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) hosted a fantastic, FREE Music Festival at Morgan's Wonderland on October 2, 2011 to celebrate 30 years of service to families with disabilities. Over 2,200 excited guests thoroughly enjoyed the music of three dynamite bands that performed at the Rapier Amphitheatre: Rick Cavender, Ruben V and Henry Brun and his Modern Latino Big Band! SAILS extends a very special thanks to presenting sponsor WellMed Medical Management and the Rapier's for their tremendous support as presenting sponsor.

Morgan's Wonderland is a beautiful, fully accessible park with fun rides for Everyone! It promotes inclusion for all. So, it was a perfect choice for SAILS Music Festival to commemorate SAILS 30th Anniversary. Since October is also Disability Employment month, the venue could not have been more appropriate for the festival.

Please enjoy the enclosed pictures of SAILS 30th Anniversary/Music Festival. SAILS would also like thank our sponsors listed below for their financial support and confidence in our abilities to host an outstanding event:

Sponsors of SAILS 30th Anniversary Music Festival

Presenting Sponsor:

Special Thanks To Our Sponsors of SAILS 30th Anniversary Music Festival

Teachers Can Also Have Disabilities

by Albert Pulido



Effanbee Ayala

Ms. Effanbee Ayala has a severe hearing loss, but that has not prevented her from getting her Master's degree in education and teaching part time at UTSA (University of Texas at San Antonio). In September 2009 she was offered a part time job as a temporary teacher, but she was reluctant to take the job, because she was afraid

of losing her Social Security Benefits. I explained the new SSA rules concerning working and keeping her benefits. We discussed the Ticket to Work, Trial Work Programs, Medicare extensions program and the Expedited reinstatement of benefits.

She decided to try working and monitor her hours, so as not to go over the Social Security limits. In August of 2010, she was asked to increase her teaching work load. She contacted SAILS to ask if she could increase her income and still keep her benefits. Again we went over the rules and regulations of SSA and I explained that if we could develop enough "Income Related Work Expenses" (expenses she has because of her disability), then she could increase her wages and still be eligible for SSA benefits.

Since then she has been contacted by the college about becoming a full time instructor/teacher and may start teaching "Special Needs students". She feels this is one way she can help people who need help as she needed help at one time.

SAILS' STAP Serves Hearing Loss Association Members

by Lori Crowover

For the past several years, SAILS Specialized Telecommunications Program (STAP) has networked with the local chapter of the Hearing Loss Association (HLA) to inform members about special telephones available through STAP and assist them with the application process.



Barbara Hunter

Lori Crowover has attended regular HLA meetings, at times, to inform members of services available through STAP and assist them with the application process. Many members have received amplified phones, captel phones, ring signalers and a variety of other adaptive equipment through STAP.

The founder of the local chapter, Barbara Hunter, received her amplified phone through STAP recently and is pleased that the phone is also equipped with an emergency response system. Lori was invited to attend HLA's 25th Anniversary Banquet this past month, where Barbara and several others were recognized for all of their hard work on behalf of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

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Robert Rodgers Pursues a Degree in Computer Engineering

by Mary Blake



Robert Rodgers

Robert has been a participant in the Gateway to Disabilities Program (GAP) for several months. He has also been a student at DeVry University pursuing a BA's Degree in Computer Engineering. His academic journey has been long and bumpy, but he has kept on a steady course. His instructor at DeVry assured me that Robert has attended all scheduled classes.

During a recent phone interview, Robert praised GAP stating "the Program has been a blessing in many ways. My goal at SAILS is to keep all medical appointments to maintain good health. My case manager has encouraged me to do so and has monitored me with concern."

Robert also told me the bus pass has allowed him to get his medication, among other things and the voucher for non food items keeps him supplied with hygiene products.

It should also be noted that Robert has been awarded SSI benefits which will greatly ease his present financial situation. He has met all his goals at GAP. Congratulations, Robert. We are proud of you.

Presentation To Special Education and V.A.C. Teachers

by Albert Pulido



Albert Pulido, CWIC Specialist from SAILS, gives a presentation to a group of Special Education and V.A.C. teachers

On November 16, 2011, I had the special pleasure of speaking to a group of Special Education and Vocational Adjustment Counselors from 10 different school districts. I explained the Social Security Ticket to Work program and how it affects the students in the various special needs programs. They were very interested in the multiple changes that affect the "transitional students" between the ages of 18 to 22. They (Teachers and Counselors) were especially interested as to how working would affect the student and how it would affect there Social Security and Supplemental Security Income that they received.

We spent the next hour and half discussing various situations that could affect the student and cause him/her to stop working or to lose benefits. We also discussed how the parents could help or hinder the student/worker. The Teachers/Counselors also expressed concerns about the parents' fear of losing their student/child benefits and not being able to get them back. This was also discussed and the Teachers/Counselors felt comfortable in explaining these issues to there students.

All left the meeting feeling comfortable that they could address most of the issues that the parents or students could have.

Events And Community Outreach

S.A.I.L.S. 30th Anniversary Music Festival



Guests line up for SAILS Free Music Festival



Guests entering Morgan's Wonderland



Water works fun!



Round and round they go!



Caricature of Medea



Rick Cavender's Band

Events And Community Outreach



Guests at Rapier Amphitheatre



JAZZ91 and Trinity University Group



Donation check from WellMed, Presenting Sponsor



Ruben V and his band



Modern Henry Brun Latino Big Band



Judi DeLeon sings with Latino Big Band

OCTOBER - National Breast Cancer Awareness, Dental Hygiene, Domestic Violence Awareness Month and National Celiac Disease Awareness, Disability Employment Awareness, Down Syndrome Awareness and National Physical Therapy, Spina Bifida Awareness, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness, Sarcoidosis Awareness Month

- 2 SAILS MUSIC FESTIVAL - Morgan's Wonderland - 2 to 8 pm
- 4-7 TAIRS Meeting--Austin, TX
- 7 Support Groups Picnic--Lighthouse-1:00 pm
- 10 Columbus Day--SAILS closed
- 27 GAP Workshop--American GI Forum - 1:00 pm
- 30 AccessAbility Fest--Morgan's Wonderland

NOVEMBER-American Diabetes Month, National Adoption Month, and COPD Awareness Month

- 4 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon - Barn Door
- 5 Understanding Mental Illness - Norris Center
Celebrating Caregivers - Christus Heritage Hall
Musikfest - Pedrottis North Wind Ranch
- 17 GAP Workshop - American GI Forum
- 23 SAILS closed (half day)
- 24 Thanksgiving Day (SAILS closed)
- 25 Day after Thanksgiving (SAILS closed)

DECEMBER-National Aplastic Anemia and MDS Awareness Week and Handwashing Awareness Week

- 2 Support Group Christmas Party-- Brookhill - 1:00 pm
- 7 SAILS fundraiser luncheon at Los Mariachis
- 9 Staff Appreciation Luncheon
- 11 Door in the Wall Christmas Party-- Villita Assembly Bldg. -1 to 6 pm
- 13-15 NCIL Responding to Crime Victims with Disabilities - Orlando, Florida
- 19-31 SAILS Closed for Christmas Holidays

JANUARY 2012

- 7 -10 SILC Congress
Houston Marriott at the Texas Medical Center: Presentations and discussions on the critical issues pertaining to the Independent Living movement
- 14 SAILS Board Retreat
Community Room at Lions Field from 9 am to 1 pm.

Welcome New S.A.I.L.S. Staff Members

Charles Villarreal

Charles Villarreal is the new accountant for San Antonio Independent Living Services. In this role, Mr. Villarreal handles all aspects of finance and accounting as directed for the organization. Before joining SAILS he obtained his BBA from University of Texas at San Antonio, was



a successful entrepreneur for numerous years, a branch manager for a non-profit/martial arts studio, and worked in retail for over seven years. His diverse background in accounting, management, and general business function provided the perfect foundation for finance and accounting here at SAILS.

Congratulations Charles! If anyone is interested in contacting him please call 210-281-1878, extension 117. He will be happy to help you!

Marie Herrera

Marie Herrera is SAILS IL/ Volunteer Coordinator



Ms. Marie (Mary) Herrera recently joined the SAILS team as the new IL/Volunteer Coordinator. Mary comes to SAILS with a wide array of experience from administrative skills, handling medical records, human resources, schedule coordinator and assisting consumers with relocation from nursing homes back into the community.

SAILS wishes to congratulate Mary Herrera on her new position at SAILS. If anyone is interested in volunteering at SAILS please give her a call at 210-281-1878. She will be happy to sign you up!

SAILS Is For Consumers



2011 SAILS Annual Open House

by Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

SAILS hosted the 2011 Annual Open House on November 18 from 5:30p.m. until 7:00p.m. Guests from the San Antonio community visited with SAILS current Board members Andy Galan and Vince Boyd, past Board member Willie Mae Clay and staff. Some of our guests included Pride's staff, David Massey (Massey's Allstate) and his mother and sons and a our own Commissioner Tommy Adkisson!

Guests enjoyed a light meal and great company. Many guests complimented staff and also received information regarding SAILS services. Afterwards, SAILS staff, along with guests, recognized the SAILS Board of Directors for their dedicated volunteerism and served up a delicious cake! I extend a personal thanks to all who came to enjoy this wonderful evening. I hope to see everyone again next year!



Attending 2011 SAILS Open House (left to right): Willie Mae Clay (former SAILS board member), Dr. Jeffrey S. Rosenbloom, Sam Rosenbloom, and Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke.

SAILS Hosts 2011 Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

by Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

On November 4, 2011, SAILS held the 7th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at The Barn Door Restaurant. There were approximately 115 volunteers in attendance. Le Paul and Liz Mee provided the musical entertainment while the volunteers had an opportunity to socialize and dine. John Banik provided the invocation. Edwin Blanton, Volunteer Coordinator from Trinity University presented some inspiring words about volunteerism to all the guests.

Volunteers received a lapel pin and certificate of appreciation. The Volunteer of the Year plaque was awarded to Donna McBee. She was very surprised and honored to receive this award stating, "I had no idea!"

This luncheon is just SAILS way of thanking all the volunteers that contributed countless number of hours of service! If you have not signed up to be a volunteer and would like an opportunity to help SAILS with a variety of tasks please contact the SAILS Volunteer Coordinator, Marie Herrera at 210 281-1878.



Volunteers attending the 2011 Annual Appreciation Luncheon



Ms. Donna McBee accepts the Volunteer Of The Year Award

San Antonio Independent Living Services
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OTHER FORMATS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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Gloria T. Banik	Director of Programs & Resource Development
Mallika Rangarajan	Executive Administrative & HR Manager
Charles Villarreal	Accountant

Gloria Aguirre	IL/Outreach Specialist	Mary E. Blake	IL Skills Coordinator
Marie Herrera	I&R/ Volunteer Coordinator	Lori Crownover	IL/STAP Specialist
Albert Pulido	CWIC	Irma Medrano	Receptionist

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