



# TMI

TOWARD MAXIMUM INDEPENDENCE

*A non-profit agency assisting people with disabilities to live, work and participate in their communities.*

ISSUE #39

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*This newsletter is published quarterly for program participants, family, friends and colleagues of TMI, a non-profit organization.*

## BUDGET CRISIS: CUT PAPER, NOT PEOPLE

The Governor's budget FY '03-'04 proposes a \$100 million cut to Community Services (POS) under the Department of Developmental Services. Many stakeholders in the system have taken a position of "No Cuts to POS," but have offered no alternative ideas to legislators, particularly those on the budget subcommittees in both the Assembly and State Senate. Providers, through their state wide associations, were told by legislators that a "No Cuts" position was not a viable solution and were challenged to submit an alternative plan. Even the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) has had a "No POS Cuts" position. If we all agree that services should not be cut, where should the cuts be made? The California Rehabilitation Association (CRA) has put forth a Position Paper to which several other state and local entities have signed on.

It seems there are two major ways to achieve the result the governor is looking for. First, we must look to revenue enhancements by maximizing federal matching dollars through the medicaid waiver. California ranks near the bottom by comparison to other states when it comes to drawing down available federal dollars for waiver-eligible service recipients. It has also been disheartening to observe how federal waiver dollars get siphoned from the DDS budget and moved to the state's General Fund. California needs to be consistent in its requirements or expectations across the regional centers when it comes to meeting federal guidelines for serving people eligible for the waiver.

The second way we can help to meet the Governor's goal is by implementing administrative efficiencies and by streamlining the existing bureaucracy. For instance, why does the Governor's budget propose a \$27 million increase in Developmental Center spending when the census at the DC's will decrease by 71 residents? Why do regional center operations' budgets allot 31% of their income for purely administrative functions while providers average 10-15% for administrative overhead? Why is the state willing to spend money in multiple redundant ways (licensing, Life Quality Assessment, Regional Center Q.A.)

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## Employer Highlight: Wal-Mart

Congratulations to Andrea, Eric, and Gordon for their new jobs at WAL-MART in Lemon



Grove. They each work part-time, 20 hours per week and are earning great wages. All three were featured on KUSI News in January by Rod Luck. Bryan Campbell, Store Manager reported that he has worked successfully with TMI referrals for nine years and values their dedication as employees. Bonnie Stanley, TMI Division Manager, emphasized on the livecast that hiring people with disabilities is a good business decision. Job coach Laura Barrios told Rod Luck that she enjoys working with this hard-working trio! Rod Luck emphasized the value of hiring people from TMI who are great workers!

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## TMI From a Social Work Intern's Perspective

*By Crystal Chuk and Marissa Mansfield*

As San Diego State University social work interns in Family Support Services, we have had an incredible learning experience over the past eight months. We felt immediately welcomed into the TMI family by the entire staff, but especially by the CFO Mark Saverino, a former SDSU social work student himself.

Working in an environment such as TMI has been a new and enlightening experience for both of us. As the FSS staff slowly eased us into working with children and families, we gained confidence, enthusiasm, and felt supported in our learning process. In addition to gaining valuable social work skills, we have been shown what it means to use a team approach to supporting people in a compassionate way. TMI staff modeled for us that working here is not about getting a paycheck; it is about providing quality support for people and sincerely caring about their needs.

Working with the children and families TMI supports has been a great privilege for both of us. We have learned the value of personally investing in the lives of those we come in contact with and truly appreciate the opportunity to see so many of the children in loving and nurturing alternative families. It has been a pleasure working alongside the alternative parents to improve the quality of life of the children they welcome into their homes.

As the school year winds to a close and we conclude our internship here at TMI, we would like to thank each of you for the time, encouragement, and wisdom you have invested in our education.

*TMI Will Miss You Both!*

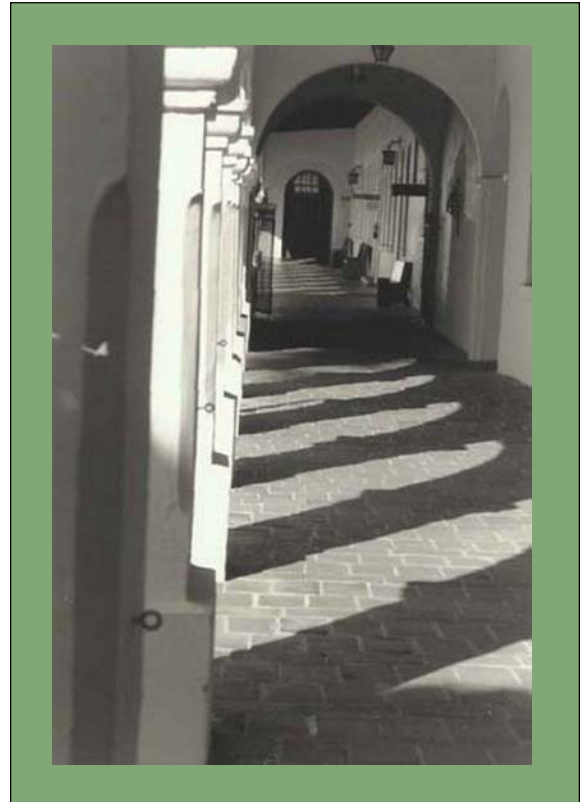
## Steve Knowles' Picture Taking Experience

*Purpose:* To photograph building structures.

*Where:* Mission San Luis Rey De Francia, known as "The King of the Missions" founded June 13, 1798.

*Personal:* On my birthday Mom gave me a photo guide which influenced my sister and I in that direction.

*Photo Tech:* I used black and white TMX film, 400 ASA on my Nikon 35mm camera. When I photograph landscapes (as in the mission), I look through the lens and evaluate the light and shadows. The sun was bright, so I adjusted the aperture (f-stop) to f22, which is a small hole letting in very little light. I used a polarized filter to eliminate some of the sky's bright light, which allows more of the sky's color to be photographed. At times, I chose wide-angle lens for the buildings to appear wider like a pyramid, more dimensions, more dramatic, and the camera encompassed a wider view. At other times, I photographed with my 80-200mm zoom lens. There were restricted areas; therefore, my zoom brought the areas closer and able to be photographed. I love to take pictures almost as much as being with my sister on an unseasonably warm winter day in January!



*Mission San Luis de Francia Points of Interest:*      *Location:*

- Up to 3,000 Indian converts worked on the Mission raising cattle, growing fruit, and making soap
- The Mission has the "oldest pepper tree" in California (from Peru 1830)
- The Mission had the oldest cemetery in North San Diego County
- It also has a Lavanderia (laundry area) which was supplied by aqueducts

4050 Mission Ave.  
4 miles east of Oceanside off SR 76  
Mon.-Sat. 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday 12:00-4:30 p.m.  
(760) 757-3651 / \$3

*Steve Knowles is TMI's own very serious amateur taking professional photographs for us to enjoy.  
Thanks Steve!*



**Interview With Connie Saverino**  
**By Sandy Burke**

Dear “people we support,” friends and employees,

**In this issue of our newsletter I have had the pleasure of interviewing TMI’s CEO, Connie Saverino. I found her a delight to work with. I hope you will enjoy this “close up” of Connie on both a business and personal level.**

*Connie, since many of us are not familiar with the actual start up of TMI, can you tell us the “Why’s” and Wherefore’s” encompassing the formation of TMI?*

TMI was formed in 1981 and began by providing Independent Living Services. Though I was involved in developing the original program design for that program, I did not actually work with people supported by the agency until a few years later. In the first few years TMI was a sole proprietorship and Mark (Saverino) was the only employee. When referrals exceeded his capacity, he hired independent contractors/consultants -- all people we had known and worked with at other agencies. We are now incorporated as a non-profit and many of them are still with us and together we have shared a lot of history. Many of the people they worked with are still supported by TMI also, though at reduced levels. Some of those first people have been our best teachers. They had a great deal of confidence and trust in us -- which we appreciated since we were so new!

*What is your education and experience working with people with developmental disabilities?*

While Mark was getting TMI off the ground and going to graduate school, I was teaching. My undergraduate degree is in English and History. I had a secondary education credential and taught high school literature and composition classes. Later I received my Learning Disabilities credential and worked with students struggling in reading and writing. I have a Masters of Arts in Education with an emphasis in Special Education — primarily working with students with severe disabilities. I gave up teaching high school to work with adults with developmental disabilities because it was more rewarding to me. What struck me was the difference in desire and motivation between my high school students and the adults I worked with in my first job in this field. I had worked part time in an Independent Living Program at an agency in East County as a “counselor”, teaching ‘life skills.’ I noticed that so many of the adults I worked with put such effort and energy into learning to do things, while my high school students either had no interest learning or took so much for granted. In looking back, I realize that much of that apathy is just a normal part of adolescence. However, I have never regretted my decision. I love what I do or most of what I do and I feel very fortunate to have so many amazing staff who really care about the people we support.

*Tell me about the “personal side” of Connie Saverino--your family and interests outside of TMI.*

As for my personal life, some people might say that I really don’t have one outside of TMI, especially now that both of my daughters are away at college. It doesn’t help that Mark and I work together. We have to make a special effort to talk about things other than work

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## TMI Council News

The Council has been busier than ever with many exciting events on the horizon. It is pleased to announce three new members: Donnie, Brent and Clayton. Welcome!

A group of Council representatives recently went to the transit authority meeting to advocate for a bus route to remain on Murphy Canyon Road (across the street from TMI). Unfortunately, the bus route was still removed despite the Council's protests. Currently, a group of TMI staff are working with the Council to try and have the bus stop in front of TMI reinstated. The council has established a calendar of events for 2003 which includes fundraising activities such as Movie Night and a Bake Sale. The Council has also arranged for trainings on self-esteem, personal assistant training, building friendships and relationships, public speaking, and voting/laws. Other events being planned by the Council include TMI's Annual Picnic, Holiday Party and Spring Fling, as well as other fundraisers including a Fashion Show and a Pizza Party. The Council voted to donate some of the profits raised from the events to the Julie Casey Scholarship Fund.

The Council is also in the process of designing a brochure and business cards to distribute throughout San Diego, as well as concentrating on advertising through other Supported Living and Independent Living providers and the Regional Center. The Council's activities are open to all.

Come check the Council out at the People First Conference in May here in San Diego!

If you are interested in getting involved with the Council, please call Andrea Cedillo at (858) 467-0600, Ext. 332. New members are always welcome!

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when we are not working. This year we will celebrate our 24th anniversary. We are very different from one another and that is positive because we offer some balance in the way we think, plan, and resolve situations and problems. This applies to raising our daughters Aubrey and Ashley and to TMI.

As for my family, I am the oldest of three children. My sister works at TMI, my brother lives in Utah, and my parents live in Borrego. Originally I'm from Wisconsin, but I have lived in San Diego since fourth grade. In my "spare" time, (the little I have), I enjoy reading, crossword puzzles, walking, movies, shopping for antiques, and spending time with my three dogs. Mark and I both love the theater and traveling. I am very involved in my church and liturgy planning. I am also a member of the San Diego Historical Society and SOHO, (Save Our Heritage Organization). I love old houses, especially from the Arts and Crafts era. Mark and I own a 1912 Prairie-style bungalow that is a San Diego Historical Site.

*Connie, thank you for giving us all a bigger picture of you and Mark and, of course, TMI. I am sure we all enjoyed getting the inside scoop on the company we work for and its CEO.*



# PROGRAM NEWS

## Community Living

### *News & Congratulations*

Alex Owens and Nadelle Hamby have come on board in Supported Living as new roommates for Darrell C.. Joining the Supported Living program are: Richard G., Leslie A. and Sandy H.. Welcome!

Clayton W. had successful gall bladder removal surgery. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Willie L. married his long-term girlfriend Janice. Congratulations!

After 31 years of volunteering at Victoria's Special Care, Gayle P. was recognized as the number one volunteer for all of California. Way to go!!

Donette Trosper, a CLS Coordinator at TMI, and Tammy Y. are both having a baby. Congratulations!

Recognition goes out to Terry G. for making it through some rough times and pulling things together. Best of luck!

Denise W. was hired at Old Navy and Caryn S. was hired by UCP. Congrats!

Gary H. purchased a new home. Blaise D. moved into a new Section 8 apartment (1st ever) in Mira Mesa. Susie H. and Kathy B. both moved into new apartments. We wish them all the best!

Richard F. set up an art studio in his apartment. Have fun, Dick!

Nona W., Lea G. and Rosemary R. joined the Independence Club. Enjoy!

Patty W. purchased new furniture for her place with her own money and she is also the newest member in the best buddies program. Way to go!

John P. went to visit his family back east and Cynthia C. went to visit her mom with her children in Arizona. Dennis B. went to Disneyworld in Florida for one week!

Gary B. started computer classes at Cuyamaca Community College and Steve K. is taking a computer class. Miguel P. is getting a new computer through A.C.E.S. program..

## Community Employment

### *News & Congratulations*

John M., Nathan B., John D. and David A. were hired to work at Ace Parking by Ace's Vice President Steve Kitts. Congratulations!

Adam T. started a new job at the Vons in Santee. We wish him the best!

Juan M., Jan B., Jesus Q. started working at Job Options at the San Ysidro border and Arness J. started at Job Options/Balboa. Way to go!

Lee D. and Tyler F. were hired to work at Sea World. Have fun!

Gordon, Andrea and Eric started new jobs at Wal Mart in Lemon Grove and Greg, Nora and Donald started work at Wal Mart in San Diego. Congrats!

Lee began work at the Alpine Chamber of Commerce Steven will now be working at a Hotel 6 and Keith A. started work at Viejas Casino. We wish you all the best!

# Staff's Corner

## New Staff

### New To Administration

Deana Sanchez has been promoted to a Lead Facilitator in Integrated Work. She is a welcome addition!

### New To Community Employment

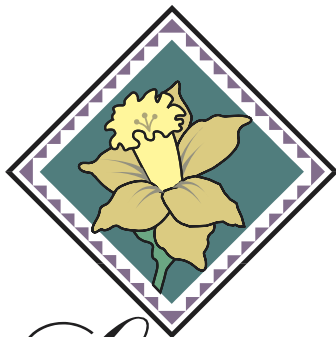
Jerold Abell, Rosa Darnell, Sean Gallagher, Melissa Martin, Dana McConaughy, Erin Miller, Roger Nixon, Mary Pietrowiak, Chad Ryan, Allison Turner and Brett Tyson have all come on board with Community Employment.

### New To Community Living

New staff in Community Living are:

Nadelle Hamby, Matthew Lucas, Aden Maxwell, Ben Mbewa, Laura Montgomery, Penelope Olfers, Christina Olson, Alejandro Owens, Melinda Simmons, Jeremy Stearns, Trista Stier and Vincent Tursi.

*Welcome to all of you!*



*Spring*

*Continued from Page 1 - Budget*

to assure quality services rather than pay providers decent rates so they can build in quality? Many of us pay for an outside accreditation process for many programs and are willing to expand that to cover services currently monitored by regional center quality assurance.

Prior to 1996 unallocated budget reductions were shared between POS and Regional Center operations. What happened to that plan? What is wrong with a system, which when faced with a financial crisis, looks first to cut direct services to the very people to whom it owes its existence? These are not easy cuts to make and proposing an alternative is not an attempt to demolish the current system. We are faced with difficult problems to which simple solutions do not apply. Our legislators have asked us to show them another way and we have taken a proactive approach by offering an alternative to the governor's proposed budget.

The budget trailer bill language, if signed into law, would have devastating effects on the Lanterman Act and the entitlement. Current language gives broad authority to DDS to reduce provider rates, mandate closure days, and limit services by type, duration, scope, or intensity. The language also eliminates the **right to appeal** for both recipients and providers of services.

Diane Van Marin, a veteran budget staffer says, "Though the language contains a sunset clause (July 1, 2006), it is very unlikely that the proposed policy contained in the language would change substantially after the sunset date since it represents such a fundamental difference in policy and potential expenditures." The Lanterman Act as we know it will cease to exist if the proposed trailer bill language is adopted and signed into law. We need to let our legislators know where we stand.

# OUR MISSION

It is the mission of TMI to support the value, right and responsibilities of all people with the support of their advocates, to make informed choices regarding how they live, work and express their membership in community. We accomplish this by providing personalized supports to people in their own homes, workplaces, schools, families and neighborhoods.

## ■ TMI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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