The Resource



March, 2020

Newsletter from

Families of Richmond State Supported Living Center

a charity devoted to enhancing the quality of life for our loved ones at Richmond State Supported Living Center and keeping our members informed about the facility and its services.

Our next regular meeting will be Sunday, March 15, 1:30 - 3:00 pm

in the Forever Young building by the chapel. Meetings are scheduled on Sundays so that you can visit your family member AND attend our informative meetings. For those who can't attend, a conference line has been set up. To use it, please follow the instructions below. **PLEASE:**

- 1. Turn off your television set, radio, and any other background noise.
- 2. Dial 877-226-9790.
- 3. Enter the Access Code: 9 2 0 6 9 1 9 and then press #.
- 4. Press the **"Mute"** button on your phone so we cannot hear what's going on in your house. Thank you.

Our mailing address: P O Box 1671, Richmond, TX 77406

(This mailing address is for the FAMILY association, not Richmond SSLC or Volunteer Services.)

Please check out our website now at **gofamilies.org**.

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"Under New Management" (Louise Clay)

Hello, everyone -

Our last newsletter was in September, 2019, which has been a while. In November there wasn't enough information for one, and in January we couldn't put one together. It takes more than one person's efforts. We hope you will find this one informative.

I want to take this opportunity to introduce the "New Management": our newly elected officers for 2020. We have a great group of three who are <u>siblings</u> of RSSLC residents. I am the only remaining <u>parent</u> who is an officer.

Our new president is <u>Peggy Osborne</u>, who was our vice president last year. Peggy's sister Elizabeth (Beth) Negrotto has lived at RSSLC for decades upon decades. Peggy has volunteered at Richmond since she was a young child while accompanying her parents, who were very active volunteers in their day. Peggy is a past president of the Volunteer Services Council of RSSLC and still volunteers there. Peggy knows RSSLC and its people like the back of her hand. We could not ask for a more capable or pleasant president. She has great ideas. Please read her message on the next page.

Our new vice president is <u>Jay Dietz</u>. Jay's sister was transferred to Richmond several years ago. Jay and his wife are very devoted to Jay's sister. Jay will be responsible for planning the programs for our meetings. Jay is still employed fulltime out in the real world.

Our new secretary is <u>Rita Brady</u>, whose brother has lived at RSSLC for a long time. Rita will be responsible for taking the minutes at our meetings. Rita is still employed fulltime and travels quite a bit, but she will be able to attend most of our meetings, we hope.

I am no longer president but remain as treasurer, which is an easy job that needs to be done correctly. I am now 80 years old and need an easy job. I was diagnosed over a year ago with an unfavorable variety of MDS (myelodysplastic syndrome), which is in the leukemia family. MD Anderson Cancer Center now runs my life. Sometimes I have to drive there five days a week and sometimes just twice, and I usually have transfusions twice. All of this eats up endless amounts of time. My condition varies from pretty good to pretty pathetic, depending on reactions to treatment. I am currently in a pretty good place, able to carry on my busy life as usual. The experimental treatment protocol I am on usually comes with some unpleasant "surprise" a week or so after an infusion. So things in my life are unpredictable. I am still going to be putting our newsletter together, and I am still going to support and modify our website as needed and deal with any computer problems that arise, as well as serve as treasurer. I can deal with these intermittently, between hospitalizations and other fun things (LOL!).

The reason I mention all this about myself is that there are lots of us older family members who are dealing with very serious stuff. So it is wonderful that siblings of RSSLC residents are stepping up to the plate and taking over. Thank you, siblings!!!!!!!

Hope to see you at the meeting on March 15. Hope I'm there!

Louise Clay Past President

Contact Information

Email: info@gofamilies.org

Mail: P O Box 1671 Richmond. TX 77406 Peggy Osborne, President Jay Dietz, Vice President

Rita Brady, Secretary Louise Clay, Treasurer

From the President

Dear Members of the Families of Richmond State Supported Living Center,

As the new president of the Families of RSSLC I would like to take this opportunity to thank Louise Clay for the many years she has served with dedication and determination to keep this organization together and functioning. We all owe her our gratitude for what she has done, and our efforts to follow her example. This is a worthwhile entity and I hope each of you will attempt to attend our meetings, or call in on the conference line, and/or read the newsletter. **Thank you, Louise**.

Now, allow me to introduce myself. I'm Peggy Osborne, the guardian of my sister Elizabeth who is 72 years old and currently living on Trinity C. Beth arrived at Richmond State School in 1971, and her family arrived with her. My parents, Bill and Vivian Negrotto, were very active volunteers and members of the Parent Association. Last week, while going through some old documents Louise passed down to me, I came across the original Articles of Incorporation of the Richmond State School Parent Association dated August 13, 1984. I was surprised, and very proud, when I read the name and signature of my dad, William D. Negrotto, one of the original directors of the Parent Association, the predecessor of this organization.

At that time I was raising three small children, but I did organize the women's club at my church to hold an annual garage sale which raised funds to purchase a piano, provide Christmas parties, and other activities for RSS. They continued the work even after my husband and I moved our family 4 times in 8 years to 3 different states before returning to Texas and settling in Sugar Land where we were close to our parents and to RSS.

Since 1982, I have been involved in various volunteer activities on campus serving 2 years as secretary of the Parent Association, 14 years on the VSC Board of Directors, which included 2 years on the VSC State BOD (no longer in existence), a myriad of committees and volunteer jobs including the Country Store. I have been on the Human Rights Committee for about 30 years, and also served 2 years as VP of the Families of RSSLC.

My career is my family and it has provided numerous challenges, a wide variety of experiences (good and bad), and an education no university could have provided. It also brought me to Richmond.

I tell you all this so you will know I care greatly about this place, these people and this organization. We make a difference here as family members and volunteers not only for our loved ones, but also the people who serve here in all those jobs that make up the staff caring for those loved ones.

Now having said all that, I have to go back to the fact that my family is my career. This career now includes 9 grandchildren in 3 states, and as life would have it, I will be in Atlanta on our meeting day, Sunday, March 15, where I will attend the engagement party for my oldest granddaughter. Jay Dietz, vice president, and also a brother of a woman residing at Trinity will run the meeting in my place. <u>Please</u> plan to attend.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns you think I might be able to assist with. If I don't have the answer, I'll certainly try to help you find one.

Sincerely,

Peggy Negrotto Osborne, President txteabag@aol.com

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P.O. Box 1671

Richmond, TX 77406

Announcements

Badges with Photo IDs for Families: Families can now get clip-on photo-ID badges to facilitate getting into the RSSLC campus. These badges are like those of employees and volunteers. If you have one of these you will no longer have to show a driver's license to the gate attendant. You can get your picture taken and receive a badge following the March 15 meeting, just as it was done following the January meeting for those in attendance. Family members will still have to get a pass and sign in at the switchboard.

Agenda for the March 15 meeting: Erin Knight, director of RSSLC, will give a "<u>State of the Campus</u>" report. Also on the agenda is a report by Dr. Carol Heath, head of the dental clinic.

New Behavior Treatment Unit at RSSLC for Men: Plans are underway to create a self-contained behavior treatment unit at RSSLC for men living at the various SSLCs around the state. The men receiving treatment at this unit would stay there until their behavior issues are resolved and then they would return to their respective SSLCs. An existing residential building at RSSLC would be renovated and staffed for this purpose. A similar unit for women is planned at San Angelo SSLC. Both units would be very secure.

A side benefit of having the behavior unit at Richmond SSLC is that RSSLC would have the only one of these among the SSLCs. In the future, if the state legislature is looking to close and/or consolidate the SSLCs, it would be unlikely to close an SSLC with such a specialized treatment facility. We hope to learn more about this at the March meeting.

Emergency Numbers

There is a cell phone for facility electrical outages and a separate Family Landline for facility emergency situations and in the event of an evacuation. A recorded message will be on the Family Landline should there be an emergency and or need to leave the facility. RSSLC will update the pre-recorded message with an up-to-date message.

Cell phone (located at the switchboard): (832) 945-7321 Family Landline (for facility emergencies): (281) 344-4399

Families of RSSLC Donations

The Resource is published to provide communications among families and friends of Richmond State Supported Living Center residents. Printing and mailing costs are covered by <u>tax deductible</u> gifts from individuals. Please make checks payable to **Families of RSSLC** and send to PO Box 1671, Richmond, TX 77406.

♥ Our recent donors: Thank you!! ♥

Jean Glidewell Wendy & Patrick McDowell Luisa Kluger
Jerry & Louise Smith Ann Towle Tayde Lara

We are a 501(c)(3) organization named "Richmond State School Families and Friends, Inc.", a non-profit incorporated in Texas. Our operating name is "Families of Richmond State Supported Living Center", which is an assumed name registered with the state. If you look us up on the internet, be sure to enter the entire organization name as underlined above. An acknowledgment will be mailed for all contributions. If you fail to get yours, please call Louise Clay at (281) 346-0346.

March Leisure Recreation Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 & 9:30 Sun Service- CH 1:00 to 3:00 Gym 3:00 Roaming Campus Church Service 3:15 to 4:00 Coffee Shop 6:00-7:30 Open Gym	2 1:00 Catholic Service CH 2:15 Art Studio w/ Albert &Fran 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 3:30 Purim Holiday FYP 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Open Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop TJ 5,6 and Quads Wear A Cowboy Hat Day	3 3:00 Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:00 Open Swim at the Pool 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:15 Coffee Shop Pecos 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM. 6:30 Special Edition Dance Fitness w/ Randi – Gym Wear Western Boots Day	1:00 Catholic Service CH 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 4:00 Residents Rights Meeting – Light Rock w/ Fernando 4:15 Coffee Shop/Computer Lab 6:00 Basketball Practice - GYM 6:15 Coffee Shop SAJ Wear Jeans Day	5 2:30 to 4:30 Jeremy's "100.3 The Bull" Event at the Gym 6:00pm Open Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop SAB & TJ 7.8.9 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM 6:30 Open Swim – Pool	6 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/Fran 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop GUA & LVA	7 1:00 - 3:00 Open Gym 3:15 to 4:00 Coffee Shop 6:00 Open Gym 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM
8 9:00 & 9:30 Sun Service- CH 1:00 to 3:00 Gym 3:00 Roaming Campus Church Service 3:15 to 4:00 Coffee Shop 6:00 Open Gym Day Light Savings Time Begins	9 1:00 Catholic Service CH 2:15 Art Studio w/ Albert & Fran 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Open Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop TJ 5,6 and Quads	10 3:00 Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:15 Coffee Shop 5:00pm to 10:00pm HLS Rodeo Assigned Persons Only	11 1:00 Catholic Service CH 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 4:15 Coffee Shop 5:00pm to 10:00pm HLS Rodeo Assigned Persons Only	3:30 Art Studio Class 4:00 Open Swim at the Pool 4:15 Coffee Shop/Computer Lab 6:00pm Open Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop SAB & TJ 7.8.9 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM 6:30 Open Swim - Pool	3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/Fran 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop GUA & LVA	14 1:00 - 3:00 Open Gym 3:15 to 4:00 Coffee Shop 6:00 Open Gym 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM

9:00 & 9:30 Sun Service- CH 1:00 to 3:00 Gym 3:00 Roaming Campus Church Service 3:15 - 4 Coffee Sh 6:00-7:30 Open gym Camp Aranzazu	16 1:00 Catholic Service CH 2:15 Art Studio w/ Albert &Fran 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/Fran 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 5:00pm to 10:00pm HLS Rodeo Assigned	17 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:00 Open Swim at the Pool 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00pm to 7:30pm St Patrick's Day Party Gym	18 1:00 Catholic Service CH 3:30 Art Studio w/Fran 4:00 Residents Rights Meeting – Light Rock w/ Fernando 4:14 Coffee Shop/Computer Lab 6:00 Basketball Practice -GYM 6:15 Coffee Shop SAJ	19 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:15 Coffee Shop/Computer Lab 6:00pm Open Gym 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM 6:30 Open Swim - Pool	20 10:30 Sabbath Service-CH 3:00 Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 4:14 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop GUA & LVA Camp	21 1:00 - 2:00 Open Gym 2:00 to 4:00pm Monthly Birthday Party - GYM 6:00 Open Gym 6:30 Quad Birthday Party Neches Dining RM Camp
- Diva Dolls 22 9:00 & 9:30 Sun CH 1-3 Gym 3:00 Roaming Campus Church Svc 3:00 Faithful Paws Pet Therapy GYM 3:15-4:00 Coffee	Persons Only 23 1:00 Catholic Service CH 2:15 Art Studio w/ Albert &Fran 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Open Gym	Patrick's Day 24 3:00 Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:00 Open Swim at the Pool 4:15 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM. 6:30 Special Edition Dance Eitness w/	25 1:00 Catholic Service CH 3:30 Art Studio w/Fran 4:14 Coffee Shop/Computer Lab 6:00 Basketball Practice -GYM 6:15 Coffee Shop SAJ TSO State Basketball Tournament	26 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:00 Open Swim at the Pool 4:15 Coffee Shop/Computer Lab 6:00pm Open Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop SAB & TJ 7.8.9 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM 6:30 Open Swim - Pool	Aranzazu - Diva Dolls 27 3:00 Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran 4:14 Coffee Shop/Comput er Lab 6:00 Gym 6:15 Coffee Shop GUA & LVA TSO State	Aranzazu - Diva Dolls 28 1:00 - 3:00 Open Gym 3:15 to 4:00 Coffee Shop 3 Rivers 6:00 Open Gym 6:30 Quad Act Neches Dining RM TSO State
Shop 6:00-7:30 Open gym 29 9:00 & 9:30 Sun CH 1-3 Gym 3:00 Roaming Campus Ch Svc 3:15-4:00 Coffee Sh	30 1:00 Catholic Svc 2:15 Art Studio w/ Albert &Fran 3:00 "Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio w/ Fran	31 3:00 Take A Break at Light Rock 3:30 Art Studio Class 4:00 Open Swim at pool 4:15 Computer	Spring forward Don't forget to set clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. Sunday. AP Sunday March 8, 2020	Tuesday March 17,	Basketball Tournament ATS' Casino Night	Basketball Tournamen t Pre Rodeo Party
6:00-7:30 Open gym TSO State Basketball Tourname nt	dio w/ Fran 3:30 Torah Study CH 6-8pm ATS' Casino Night Gym	Computer Lab/Coffee Shop		2020	March 30	Thursday March

Minutes from the September 15 Meeting

Meeting started at 1:34 with Chaplain Billy Guerrero giving an opening prayer.

Mr. Messinger, Admissions Coordinator, was our guest speaker. He gave a brief history of his education and work history. A unit at RSSLC will be made into a Behavioral Unit. This will be a self contained unit for men with behavoral issues. It is hoped that this will help residents and others with like kinds of challenges to get help without having to go up to Austin State Hospital.

Louise Clay gave the Treasurer Report.

Cynthia gave an update on Staff Appreciation Day. For that event, the staff were given lunch and the evening staff got pizza.

There was a reminder to those who want to be part of the video meeting on October 4, 2019 with Scott Schachlin, head of all SSLCs. They should remember to keep their messages united on what needs to be done and not personal experiences. A group decided to combine these needs and have a few people speak for all.

The meeting ended at 2:50 pm.

Submitted by Pat Lodder, Secretary

Minutes from the November 17 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1:35. Chaplain Billy gave the invocation.

The minutes from the last meeting were read, and President Louise Clay gave the treasurer's report.

Louise reported that the nominating committee will have an election in January, 2020, and is looking for families and friends to step up and help lead or join the family association's efforts.

Our guest was Deatrice Potlow, Assistant Independent Ombudsman from the Office of the Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers. She provided some detail on her background and noted that she has been an Ombudsman at RSSLC since 2012. Deatrice explained that the Department of Justice created the Office of the Ombudsman to oversee the SSLCs, providing one Ombudsman per SSLC, with the duty to monitor, investigate concerns and provide feedback and/or recommendations with an unbiased approach to the administration at the SSLC. Deatrice and people in her same position at the other SSLCs meet monthly with Dr. George Bithos, who was reappointed by Governor Greg Abbott earlier this year as Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers, regarding concerns or issues, which could then go to the Governor's office. One parent noted that she had an excellent experience working with the Ombudsman in Brenham (before her daughter moved to the RSSLC) as they have the ear of the Governor. Ms. Potlow is also part of the Human Rights Committee on the RSSLC campus which meets weekly.

Deatrice talked about wanting to grow relationships with all of the families of RSSLC, and encouraged everyone to reach out to her with concerns or issues, or to contact her simply to establish the relationship. She provided us with her email, deatrice.potlow@hhsc.state.tx.us, and also her phone number (281) 344-4271. Her office is at Angelina, on the RSSLC campus.

Deatrice noted that several guardians did not renew their guardianship. The new Human Rights Officer at RSSLC, Fernando Ramos, is trying to reactivate the Guardianship Committee. It was recommended by Nancy Kircher, family member, that the Guardianship Committee meetings, once reinitiated, be held immediately after the Families of RSSLC meetings for convenience.

Next order of business was Legislation, with nothing to report.

The campus update was provided by Cynthia Fannin, Assistant Director of Programs, and Sam Lynn, Assistant Director of Administration. Cynthia and her team now publish the "Communication Corner" each Friday, which has information on facility activities and the very positive things going on at the RSSLC. Cynthia is forwarding this newsletter to the board members to forward on to family members. However, RSSLC needs more email addresses from the families and friends of RSSLC residents, as there are 317 residents, and RSSLC has email for about 80. Cynthia agreed to send out an email to all parents and families to ask if we can add them to the Families of RSSLC email list.

Cynthia also proudly reported that RSSLC is deficiency free with the state, as all issues from the Annual Survey have been identified and the RSSLC has been able to "exit with Regulatory".

Cynthia informed us that Melissa Salinas, the new Hiring Authority, is working aggressively to find good candidates to fill open staff positions. Background checks are performed on all applicants.

Sam shared that there is a staff awards ceremony appreciation and luncheon in January, to award 20 to 30 staff members for longevity. Sam's administrative assistant has been with RSSLC for over 40 years! We will likely donate a large cake for the ceremony.

The meeting ended at 3:20 p.m.

Minutes from the January 19 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 PM by Vice President Peggy Osborne in place of President Louise Clay who was absent due to illness.

INVOCATION was given by Chaplain Billy.

MINUTES from the November meeting were not available.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Peggy Osborne in Louise's absence

Business Checking Account

Opening Balance 12/15/2020

\$ 4,310.03

2 Donations received in December totaling

Balance as of 1/18/2020

\$ 4.910.03

600.00

Business Savings Account

Balance \$15,000.39

TOTAL \$19,910.42

We welcomed a new member, Dan Bordelon, who is an employee at RSSLC as well as a parent of a young man who resides on Guadalupe Home.

GUEST SPEAKER: Peggy introduced <u>Residential Staffing Coordinator</u> Melissa Salinas who spoke about the responsibilities and challenges of her office. She is charged with the screening and placing employees on the various homes at RSSLC. Melissa has been in this position since September, 2019.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Parent/member Kathleen Boyce presented the slate of names for consideration by the small membership present:

President Peggy Osborne (sibling)

Vice President Jay Dietz (sibling)

Treasurer Louise Abt Clay (parent) Secretary Rita Brady (sibling)

Jay Dietz made the motion to adopt the slate as presented. Janie Ramirez seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION & LONGEVITY AWARDS: Assistant Director Sam Lynn reported RSSLC is now recognizing employees' years of service, Longevity Awards, in increments of 5 years on a semi-annual basis. The first presentation of these awards took place in August, 2019, in conjunction with the Family Association's Staff Appreciation Day. The second Presentation is to be held in the gym on Monday, January 27, 2020, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

Food trucks will arrive at the gym at noon which will allow staff to purchase their lunches and gather in the gym where the Family Association will be serving cake and coffee. Kathleen Boyce reported she has acquired an underwriter for the purchase of several cakes, beverages and paper products for the event. Kathleen has also organized some of the ladies from the San Jacinto home to decorate the gym and to meet and greet those attending the occasion.

CAMPUS REPORT: Director Erin Knight, Assistant Director Sam Lynn, Assistant Director Cynthia Fannin, and Director of Residential Services Cheryl Rhodes all were in attendance at the meeting. Each had something to contribute to the Campus Report. Their main focus is on the safety and health of the individual residents. At this time there are no deficiencies.

An employee council has been formed in order to improve the communication between employees and administration. Melissa Salinas is the current chairman of this council.

Sam Lynn announced an identification card has been designed for family members. It is a photo ID similar to the staff's and volunteers' ID badges. Family members who have a photo ID will no longer be required to show their driver's license and obtaining a name tag when entering the campus. They will still be required to sign in at the Administration Building and obtain a pass to visit their family members. Sam had arranged for a staff person to be on campus today for any members who wanted to acquire a photo ID.

There was no new business. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 to allow time for obtaining an ID.



See you on March 15, we hope!

Chaplain Billy, thank you for always being in Forever Young first to open that beautiful space for our meetings and putting the chairs back in place.