From Isolation to Participation ...

A History of Disability in Texas

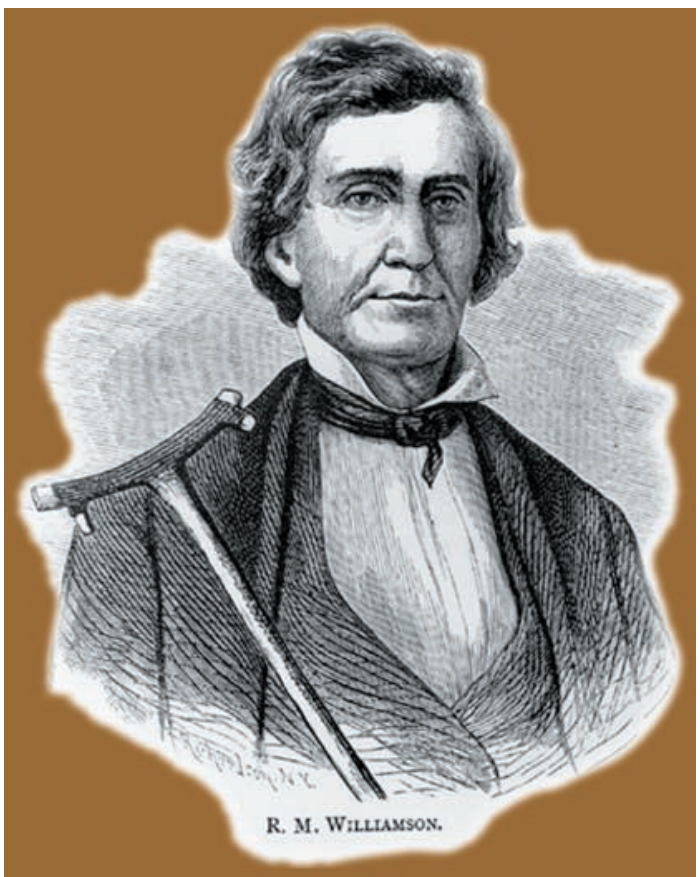
1835-1999

In celebration of our fiftieth anniversary, the Governor's Committee presents this history of our state's understanding of and response to disabilities over the years. We hope this reflection on our past will assist us all in shaping our future for the goal of full participation of Texans with disabilities. As with any "first" attempt at such a historical review, we hold this piece out merely as a beginning, with hopes that interested individuals will supply missing information. We will maintain this piece on our web site, and update it periodically. We apologize if there are inaccuracies, as every effort has been made to insure the correctness of the information. Please feel free to bring any errors to our attention.

As we researched for this booklet, one dilemma we encountered is that disabilities exist today that were not recognized or identified in early Texas, such as learning disabilities, diabetes and AIDS, to name but a few. We have tried to view a disability by the definition in the Americans with Disabilities Act, and to apply it as best we could according to the research findings.

The TGCPD celebrates 50 years (1949-1999) by publishing this history.

Click here to access history:
http://www.governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/disabilities_index.html



R. M. Williamson ("Three-Legged Willie") was a delegate to the Texas Constitutional Convention, participated in the battle of San Jacinto, and served in the Senate in both the Republic and the state of Texas.

(1807–1859)
"Three-Legged Willie"
Williamson County

Credit: "Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

Given the many contributions that Texans with disabilities made to our state, their legacy is reflected in the names of Texas counties.

Eight Texas counties bear the names of Texas leaders who had some form of disability. The achievements of these Texans remind us all of the productive role that people with disabilities have played in our state's long and colorful history.

Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

April 9, 1999

Another marked difference across the years is the way we describe disabilities. Today, the term "disability" has replaced "handicap" and words prevalent in early Texas such as idiot, insane, deaf and dumb, have likewise changed. In order to depict the language of the times we used the vernacular correct to the time period but placed these words in italics. We do not use such language today. Many disability organizations now emphasize positive words like "ability" "mobility" and "enable" rather than depicting specific disabilities. Like all cultures, the members evolve in the labels they choose for themselves.

So come travel with us on a journey through time; from buggies to jets, from inkwells to the Internet, from mostly rural to predominately urbanized Texas. You'll see the transformation of our state's attitude toward and responses to disabilities; from residential schools to public school participation, from custodial care to community integration, from service recipients to self advocates, tremendous change has occurred. In short, we moved from isolation to participation.

Before Statehood

Two significant early Texas leaders had disabilities. Erastus "Deaf" Smith served as messenger for William B. Travis when he was desperate for help in the Alamo, rescued the survivors of the siege, was appointed Chief of Scouts (modern day spies) by General Sam Houston, and later intercepted a courier carrying information to Santa Anna at San Jacinto. A childhood illness left him severely *hearing impaired*, and he was reportedly seen accompanied by his dog trained to alert him to danger by tugging on his clothes rather than by barking. Reports also indicated that he had "diminished eyesight."

Thomas William Ward served in the Texas military and lost a leg at the Battle of San Jacinto, where his leader Col. Benjamin Milam was killed. Legend has it that Milam's body and Ward's leg are buried in the same grave. In 1837, Ward contracted to build the first state Capitol in Houston. Thereafter he served three terms as mayor of Austin. He lost his right arm when a cannon was inadvertently shot during a ceremonial occasion, but continued to be highly active, pursuing a series of appointments within Texas and serving as U.S. Consul to Panama. He was popularly known as "Peg-Leg" Ward.

Early figures in Texas history often acquired disabilities during fighting. Such was the fate of Santa Anna, arch enemy of the independence fighters and two time Mexican president, who history records as losing the same leg twice in battle. He lost his original leg during the attack of San Juan de Ulloa two years after the Texas Revolution. Some years later in 1847, Santa Anna was again in battle, but this time at Cerro Gordo. While eating lunch, he was surprised by volunteer infantry from Illinois and in his haste to escape with his life, he left behind not only his lunch, but his artificial leg as well.

Another early Texas leader dealt with a childhood disability. Robert Williamson had a leg that was drawn back at the knee necessitating the use of a wooden leg. He thus was known as "Three-Legged Willie." His accomplishments included practicing law, editing newspapers and fighting in the Battle of San Jacinto. The first Congress of the Republic elected Williamson judge of the Third Judicial District, automatically making him a member of the Supreme Court. When the courthouse burned before he convened his first court, he held it under a large oak tree. In 1840, he was elected to represent Washington County in the Congress and later served as a Senator in the Republic. He also served in the Texas Senate.

Early Texans were pioneers and renegades. Although these traits propelled Smith and Ward to greatness, they

Texas Disability Timeline

This timeline contains mostly Texas information. However, national and international information is included when it impacted people in Texas.

1835 Samuel McCulloch, a man who was a free black, becomes the first Texan casualty of the revolution resulting in a disability when a musketball shatters his right shoulder.

1836 President David Burnet names Peter Grayson, who had a mental illness, Attorney General of the Republic of Texas.

First Congress of the Republic elects Robert "Three-Legged Willy" Williamson judge of the Third Judicial District, making him a member of the Supreme Court.

Jesse Billingsly, who received a permanent injury to his hand in the Battle of San Jacinto, serves in the House of Representatives of the First Congress of the Republic.

Greenburry Logan, a man who was a free black soldier, is wounded at the siege of Bexar causing a permanent disability.

1838 Charles Baudin's French Naval forces aid the young Republic of Texas by attacking the citadel San Juan de Ulloa. He had lost his right arm in battle in 1808.

1840 Henry Augustine, an amputee as a result of the Cherokee War, serves in the House of the Congress of the Republic; by a special act of this Congress he receives a wooden leg.

Robert Williamson, who used a wooden leg since one leg was drawn back at the knee, serves in Congress and later in the Texas Senate.

Erastus "Deaf" Smith, Chief of Scouts under General Sam Houston during the Texas Revolution, is pictured in an 1886 oil painting by William Henry Huddle "Surrender of Santa Anna."

"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

Texas Disability Timeline

1843 Henry Augustine, an amputee, serves on the Board of Trustees, San Augustine University.

1847 Welborn Barton, who had a physical disability from childhood, practices medicine, serves as a Mason, was a trustee of Salado College, and teaches Sunday school.

1851 Oliver Cromwell Hartley, who was disabled, is elected to represent Galveston in the state Legislature.

1853 Elisha M. Pease is elected Governor. He would later establish funds for a hospital for the mentally ill and schools for the deaf and blind.

1856 The *Texas Deaf and Dumb Asylum*, now the Texas School for the Deaf, begins with 3 students.

The *Blind Asylum* begins with 3 students.

1857 The *State Lunatic Asylum,* now Austin State Hospital opens with about 50 patients.

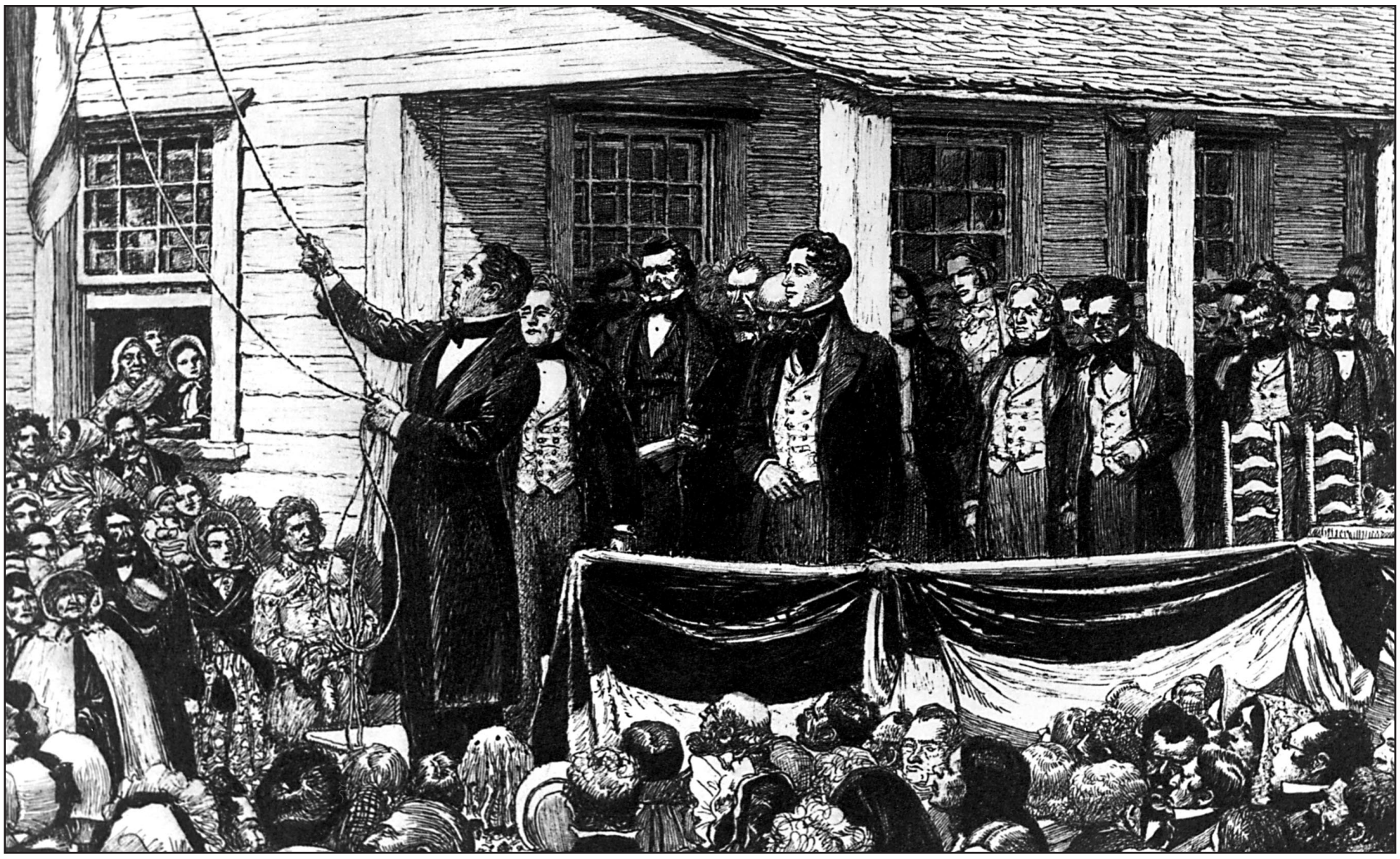
1858 Last president of the Republic of Texas, Anson Jones, whose left arm was disabled by an injury, dies at the age of 60.

1864 Alois Alzheimer, who first described the disease which was named for him, was born.

Gallaudet University begins.

1865 The Civil War causes 30,000 amputations in the Union Army alone.

1875 Matthew D. Ector, former Confederate general whose leg was amputated in 1864, serves on the Court of Appeals.



"The Republic of Texas is No More." President Anson Jones, annexation ceremony, February 19, 1846. In 1849 he lost the use of his left arm and later experienced depression.

"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

sometimes delayed other actions such as establishing public schools. Early leaders began schools for persons who were deaf or blind before beginning public schools in Texas.

Texas' population prior to statehood was small, sometimes poorly nourished, and faced many challenges dealing with diseases and adversities. Many families, ashamed of their members with disabilities, shielded them from others. Many people died who today would have been treated and survived. Harshness of early Texas life often resulted in the survival of the fittest.

The geographical size of Texas posed a particular challenge in dealing with disabilities. Dirt roads limited travel, especially during rainy seasons. Since most of the state was rural, the people needing services were widely scattered across the state. Most early disability services were provided in institutions where people of similar need could be jointly served.

Texas Disability Timeline

1876 Alexander Bell patents the telephone.

1878 William Walsh, who was severely injured in the Civil War and required the use of a crutch, serves as Land Commissioner.

George McCormick, whose leg was amputated during the Civil War, serves as Attorney General.

J.W. Smith invents American Modified Braille.

1879 John Bell Hood dies at the age of 48. Hood was a Confederate general during the Civil War who lost his right leg as well as the use of his left arm while in battle. He gained fame by commanding Hood's Texas Brigade, "perhaps the finest brigade of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia."

1884 John B. Hood Camp of United Confederate Veterans opens to provide a home for disabled and indigent veterans.

1885 *North Texas Lunatic Asylum,* now Terrell State Hospital opens.

William Hardin, unofficial advisor to the Alabama-Coushatta Indians and soldier who was disabled at San Antonio during the Texas Revolution, dies at the age of 79.

1886 The Bluebonnet Association of the Deaf begins, now the Texas Association of the Deaf.

1887 The *Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Institute for Colored Youth* begins.

1892 Southwestern Lunatic Asylum opens, later the San Antonio State Hospital.

Anson Jones from Baker's Texas Scrapbook.
"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

Texas Disability Timeline

Pattillo Higgins, who experienced a wound at the age of 17 that led to an amputation of his arm, incorporates the Gladys City Oil, Gas, and Manufacturing Company with partner George Washington O'Brien. The men hoped to find oil atop Spindletop Hill in Beaumont despite popular opinion that the Gulf Coast region lacked any oil potential.

1894 Thomas Gore, who was blind, practices law in Corsicana, later campaigns for the Populist and Democratic parties, and then serves in Congress representing Oklahoma.

1903 Lou Gehrig born.

1904 A colony for the *epileptic insane,* now the Abilene State School begins serving 100 patients.

1914 Jonas Salk, developer of the Salk polio vaccine, born.

1916 Joseph Mansfield, a wheelchair user, represents Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives, and serves as a vestryman in the Episcopal Church.

1917 *State School for the Feeble Minded,* now the Austin State School opens with 65 female students.

1918 Texas State Library provides raised-letter books for persons who are blind.

1919 The Rusk Penitentiary becomes a hospital for the "*Negro insane.*"

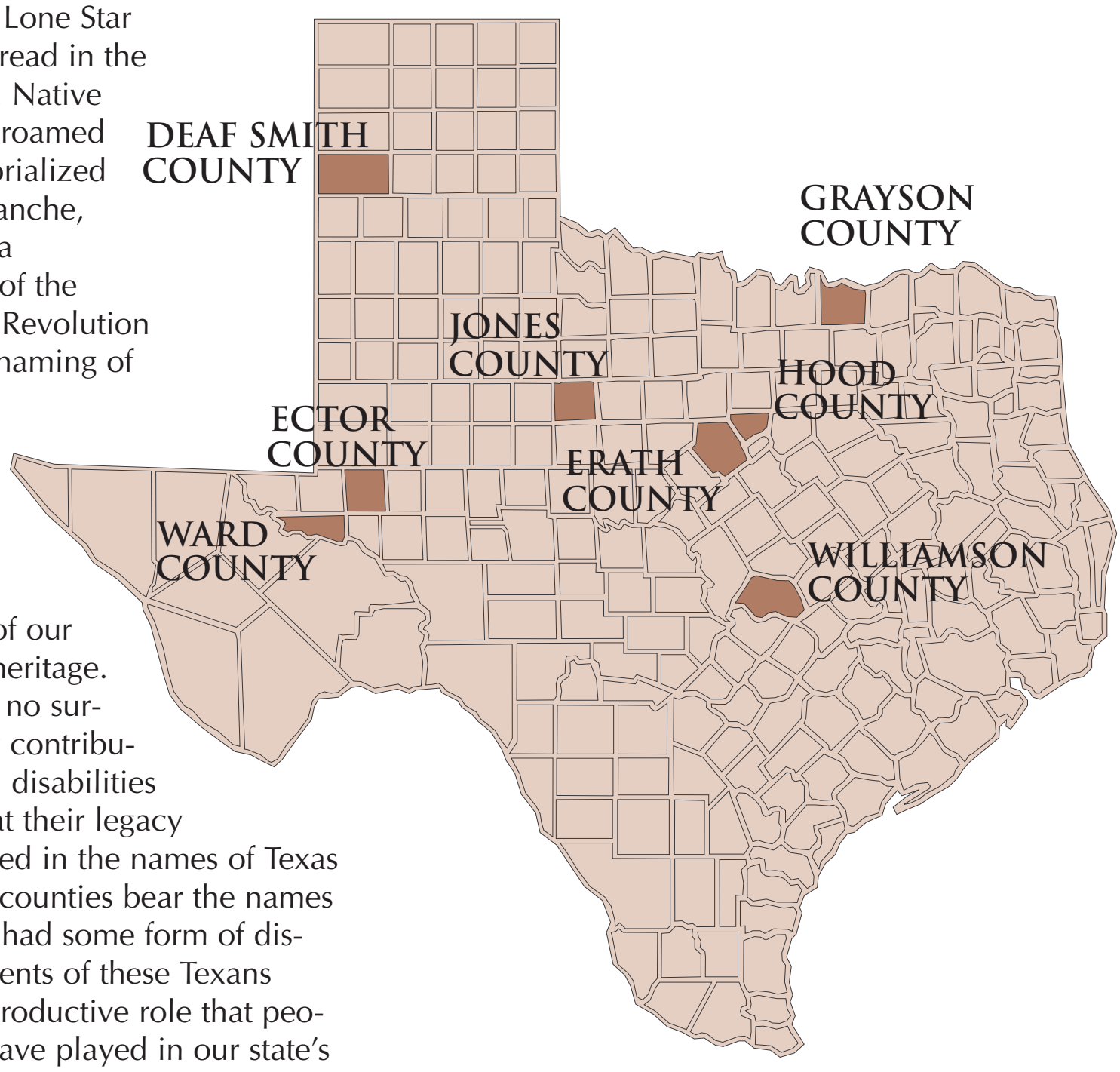
1920 Congress passes The Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act providing services for persons with disabilities.

1921 Disabled American Veterans (World War) forms in Fort Worth.

Disability History and Texas Counties

The history of the Lone Star State can, in part, be read in the names of its counties. Native American tribes who roamed early Texas are memorialized in the names of Comanche, Cherokee and Wichita counties. The heroes of the Alamo and the Texas Revolution were honored in the naming of Travis, Crockett, Bonham, and Fannin counties, among others. County names like El Paso, Zapata, and Gonzales remind us of our state's rich Hispanic heritage.

It should come as no surprise, given the many contributions that Texans with disabilities made to our state, that their legacy should also be reflected in the names of Texas counties. Eight Texas counties bear the names of Texas leaders who had some form of disability. The achievements of these Texans remind us all of the productive role that people with disabilities have played in our state's long and colorful history.



Texas Disability Timeline

1922 The *Northwest Insane Asylum,* now Wichita Falls State Hospital opens.

Adam Rankin Johnson, Confederate general blinded during the Civil War, dies at the age of 88.

1923 Department of Texas, Disabled American Veterans, World War I, forms.

1926 "Blind Willie" Johnson, Texas blues performer, begins recording for Columbia Records.

1929 Texas Legislature passes the Texas Vocational Rehabilitation Act beginning the State Board of Vocational Education, now the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, with a staff of two and budget of $12,500.

1931 Texas Legislature creates the State Commission for the Blind with a volunteer staff, and later budgets $8,250 which was used to hire home teachers located in six Texas cities.

1933 Wiley Post, blind in one eye, becomes the first solo flyer to circle the earth.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt serves 1st term as President.

1934 Austin State School Farm Colony for Men for persons with mental retardation begins.

1935 Alcoholics Anonymous begins.

Dr. Alexis Carrel, a Nobel prize winner, publishes Man the Unknown in which he suggests the removal of *the mentally ill* and the criminal by small euthanasia institutions.

1937 Gonzales Warm Springs Foundation for Crippled Children begins serving children with polio.

• **Deaf Smith County**—Named for Erastus "Deaf" Smith, a scout during the Texas Revolution. Considered to be "the Bravest of the Brave" by Colonel William Travis, Smith destroyed Vince's Bridge during the Battle of San Jacinto, which prevented the retreat of the Mexican army and helped pave the way for Texas independence.

• **Ector County**—Named for Confederate General Matthew Duncan Ector, who had a below-the-knee amputation of his left leg at the Battle of Chickamauga in the Civil War. General Ector returned to Texas after the war and was elected to serve on the Texas Court of Appeals.

• **Erath County**—Named for state Senator George Bernard Erath, a former Texas Ranger and surveyor who surveyed the towns of Waco and Stephenville. Although Senator Erath was blinded late in life, he dictated his memoirs, which still serve as a valuable resource for early Texas history.

• **Grayson County**—Named for Peter Wagener Grayson, the first Attorney General of the Republic of Texas. Grayson, a person with mental illness, was a candidate for President of the Republic of Texas in 1838.

• **Hood County**—Named for Confederate General John Bell Hood, commander of the famed Texas Brigade. Hood lost the use of his left arm at the Battle of Gettysburg, and had his right leg amputated later in the Civil War. Nevertheless, Hood commanded the Army of the Tennessee in the battles of Atlanta and Nashville. Fort Hood is also named after him.

• **Jones County**—Named for Anson Jones, last president of the Republic of Texas. Jones led the way for Texas to be annexed to the United States in 1845. Jones was injured in 1849 and lost the use of his left arm. He may also have experienced depression that caused him to commit suicide in 1858.

• **Ward County**—Named for Thomas William "Peg-Leg" Ward, who served as mayor of Austin and commissioner of the General Land Office. Ward lost a leg to a cannonball during the Texas Revolution, and lost his right arm in 1841 when a cannon misfired at a San Jacinto Day celebration.

• **Williamson County**—Named for state Senator Robert McAlpin Williamson, prominent early Texas lawyer and legislator. Senator Williamson's right leg was drawn back at the knee due to a childhood illness. He wore a wooden leg below his right knee, giving him the nickname of "Three-Legged Willie". He was a delegate to the Texas Constitutional Convention, participated in the Battle of San Jacinto, and served in the Senate in both the Republic and the state of Texas.

Texas Disability Timeline

	Curtis Veach of Childress, Texas becomes first Texan to receive a seeing eye dog.
1939	Department of Public Welfare begins, known today as the Department of Human Services.
	Big Spring State Hospital begins.
	Dallas Society for Crippled Children opens, later becoming the Easter Seal Society for Children.
	Hitler orders widespread "mercy killing" of the *sick and disabled,* code named Aktion T4, which accounts for almost a hundred thousand deaths before being "suspended." However, it actually continued using drugs and starvation instead of gassing.
1941	Laurence Melton, an amputee, becomes national commander, Disabled American Veterans, and later secures an executive order from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt for government agencies to cooperate in the hiring of the physically handicapped which later became the President's Committee for the Hiring of the Handicapped.
1943	Congress expands the Vocational Rehabilitation Act to include persons with hidden disabilities such as mental health and mental retardation.
1944	James Fields wounded and rendered speechless, leads his depleted army platoon using hand signals, scatters the enemy, and later becomes an independent oil operator.
1945	National Employment of the Physically Handicapped Week begins.
1946	Mexia State School begins.

"Texas School for the Deaf" Thirty-Third Annual Report, 1889
"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

Early Institutions

In 1856, twenty years after Texas won independence from Mexico, the Legislature appropriated funds to establish institutions for the *blind, deaf,* and *insane.* Governor Elisha M. Pease first voiced this intention when in 1853 he requested that $250,000 in federal bonds be set aside in the permanent fund to build and maintain a *state lunatic asylum.* Besides its practical value, the appropriation showed an awareness that the responsibility for care might lie beyond the limited help a family could provide. Early institutions served Texans who were deaf or blind; many others with disabilities received services in the *state lunatic asylums.* These facilities served persons with epilepsy, mental retardation, and other disabilities.

Texas Disability Timeline

The film "The Best Years of Our Lives" premieres; Harold Russel later wins an Academy Award. He lost both hands in a wartime accident.

1947 Representative Jefferson Mansfield dies after 31 years of service in the United States Congress; 27 of those years were served in a wheelchair following paralysis in 1920.

President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities begins.

1948 First Texas Mayors' Committee for People with Disabilities, Harris County Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities, begins.

1949 Governor Shivers appoints first Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped now the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities.

1950 The Association for Retarded Children of Texas forms by a group of concerned parents of children with mental retardation.

1951 Kerrville State Home opens.

Vernon State Home opens.

Texas Legislature places the Texas School for the Deaf under the Texas Education Agency where it claimed the distinction of being the oldest publicly funded school in continuous operation in Texas.

1952 Texas State Library adds talking book services for children who were blind.

1953 First heart lung machine.

1954 United Cerebral Palsy of Texas organizes.

The very size of Texas posed an impediment to providing services for those in need. Distances were far more daunting than they are now. There was no network of highways, or even paved roads. The cost of travel was prohibitive, and before railroads began to criss-cross the eastern part of Texas in the 1870s, rain could turn unpaved roads into mud, preventing travel. In cities, medication gradually replaced some of the multitude of home remedies that were dispensed to deal with illness, but rural availability remained limited. More serious illnesses and disabilities often ended tragically in the absence of medical treatment.

When the railroad linked the Trans-Pecos to the rest of Texas in the early 1880s, the tracks were beyond the reach of most settlers. The School for the Deaf attracted only a handful of pupils in the first few years, and an early superintendent, perhaps nervous about the institution's future, blamed the absence of a viable railroad system. One ramification of the distances resulted in boys and girls who were institutionalized, virtually losing touch with their families.

Erastus "Deaf" Smith, Chief of Scouts under General Sam Houston during the Texas Revolution, is pictured on this five dollar vintage currency note. Reports indicate that he was hearing impaired and also had "defective eyesight".

"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

The 1870 U.S. Census enumerated four categories of disability: *blind, deaf and dumb, insane,* and *idiotic.* The lack of information probably under-reported the numbers, suggesting a total of just 404 Texans, some of whom had "a double or triple *affliction or infirmity.*" Commenting on the next Census, Frank Rainey, Superintendent of the *Blind Asylum* said "the census of 1880 states that there were 1,349, but as it was incomplete, no one really knows anything about, even approximately, the number of *blind persons.*" He added, comfortingly, "the equable climate is not favorable to production of diseases of the eye." With similar diffidence, and an equally flimsy resource base, it was assumed that there were 192 *deaf students* in need of education.

The *Blind Asylum* admitted Anglo and Hispanic children aged 6–19, at a small weekly cost for those who could pay, no cost for the indigent, and free board for all by state decree. By 1870, twenty-one students attended. Each spring at the end of the school year, they left for a two-month furlough with their families. But if they were homeless, they stayed on in Austin. This hardly allowed relationships to be reestablished before it was time for the lengthy journey back to school. In this particular year, once the new superintendent recovered from having to refurbish his house, as his predecessor had parted with the furniture, he set about improving the lot of the students. He expressed his gratitude for the newspaper subscriptions, the map of Jerusalem, and a supply of raised-letter books (prior to Braille books) from Louisville, Kentucky to enrich existing materials for the students who could not "see to read the ordinary print of school books."

The School for the Deaf, established in 1856 as the *Texas Deaf and Dumb Asylum,* first opened its doors half a mile south of the Colorado River, near the present day

Texas Disability Timeline

	Linus Pauling receives Nobel Prize for his work in chemistry, later promotes decreasing incidence of genetic diseases by requiring everyone to be tested for such, and to be publicly identified if they are a carrier.
1955	Criss Cole, who was blind, serves in the Texas House of Representatives.
	Salk vaccine becomes viewed as "safe", potent and effective.
1957	Texas Research Institute of Mental Sciences begins in Houston.
	State Welfare Department adds Aid to Permanently and Totally Disabled.
1958	First Pacemaker introduced.
1959	The Goodwill Industries of Austin begins.
	Texas Institute for Rehabilitation and Research, an expansion of the Southwestern Poliomyelitis Respiratory Center, opens in Houston.
1960	Denton State School for persons with mental retardation begins.
1961	The drug Thalidomide is found to cause birth defects.
	John H. Griffin, disabled World War II veteran, publishes his best known work, Black Like Me.
1962	Lufkin State School and Rio Grande State Center for Human Development begin.
	S.A. Kirk coins the term "learning disabilities."
	National "Employ the Handicapped Week" name changes.
	Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter, Little Persons of America begins.
1963	Criss Cole, who was blind, serves in the Texas Senate.

complex. A two-room cottage, three log cabins, and a smokehouse converted into a schoolroom served the three initial students. Matthew Clark, *a deaf and mute* teacher from New York, was appointed by the Board of Trustees to canvas the state for students. The first superintendent, Jacob Van Nostrand, served for 19 years and saw the school through the lean years of the Civil War. During that period, a shortage of funds prompted the matron to shear the school's sheep and teach the older girls to spin wool to make the students' clothing. Some boys had to go barefoot, and from time to time youngsters subsisted on bread and molasses. After the war ended, the school's budget in 1869 reached $10,382. Expenses ranged from $1,000 toward building and repairs, down to 45 cents apiece for mousetraps. A third of the total budget met salaries. An extensive building program began in 1875, the same year that vocational training began.

The purpose of the *State Lunatic Asylum,* established in 1856, was to protect the patients from the world at large, and vice versa. It was the catch-all for disabilities affecting the mind rather than the body, and they served 54 residents by the mid-1860s.

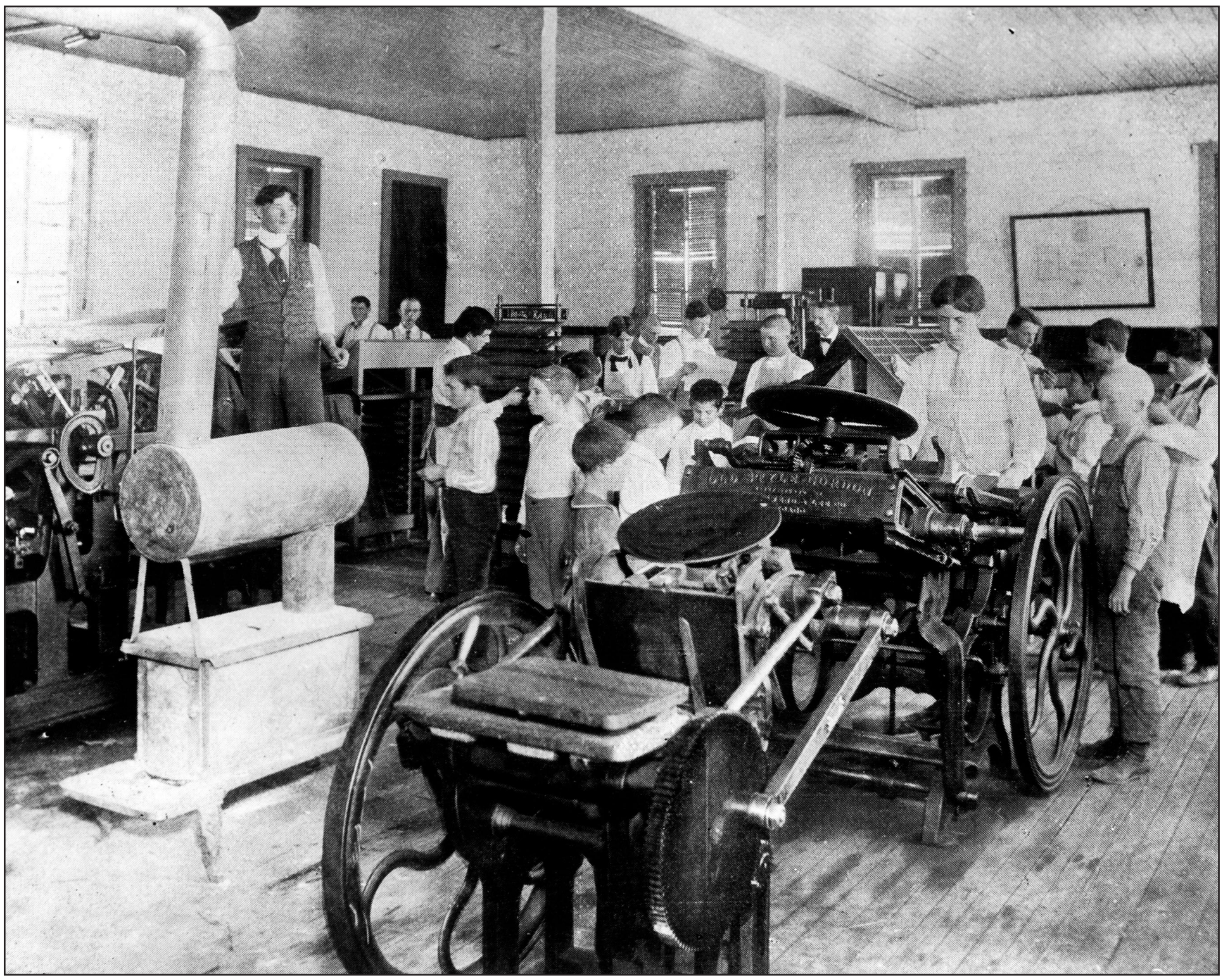
Initially, the school's function was to educate young people who could not follow the curriculum in a public school classroom. It became evident before too long that it was equally important to prepare students for life after school, for jobs not wholly dependent on classroom learning. For example, at the School for the Blind, several options were introduced including shoe-making and printing. In 1876, the State Printing Office was established at the school in the hope that students could undertake all state printing. More successfully, the students began publishing their own *Texas Mute Ranger,* which later became the *Lone Star.* Despite repeated discussion, no provision was made for speech instruction during the lengthy tenure of Van Nostrand. In 1893, an oral department opened to help students who had achieved some speech before losing their hearing. A wealth of vocational options provided varied job skill training over the ensuing years. In 1900, they began a Deaf-Blind department, which was transferred to the School for the Blind in 1934.

The purpose of the State Lunatic Asylum, established in 1856, was to protect the patients from the world at large, and vice versa. It was the catch-all for disabilities affecting the mind rather than the body, and they served 54 residents by the mid-1860s. Overcrowding was cited as a problem in annual reports for several decades. Many times the reports complained that despite expectations to the contrary, the non-indigents refused to pay their fees. County residents were expected to pay $2.00 a week, though $5.00 was considered more acceptable in view of the inadequate funding provided by the State. The reports expressed a belief that early admission improved the chances of cure.

Professional staff and board members often made revealing comments to the Legislature in these reports, especially the superintendents of each of the institutions responsible for the young and old with disabilities. At the *Asylum,* later the Austin State Hospital, James A. Corley tabulated the 1869 admissions and deaths, including a

Texas Disability Timeline

	Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children, Galveston Burns Institute opens.
1965	Texas Legislature creates the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR).
	Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County begins.
	The Learning Disabilities Association of Texas forms including parents and professionals.
	"Ironside" begins starring Raymond Burr using a wheelchair.
1966	Texas Constitution allows the State vocational rehabilitation agencies to contract with private providers.
	Texas State Library Talking Book Program expands to Texans with certain physical disabilities.
	Dallas County, Lubbock Regional, Amarillo Regional, Bexar County MHMR Centers, and El Paso Center for MHMR Services begin.
	Concho Valley Center for Human Advancement (formerly MHMR Center for Greater West Texas) begins.
1967	Texas Legislature allows certain state colleges to offer an elective course in "dactylology" (sign language).
	Vocational rehabilitation extends services to persons with behavioral disorders.
	Texas Commission for the Deaf begins.
	First successful heart transplant.



In the 1870's students at the Texas Deaf and Dumb Asylum printed both information for state agencies and their own newsletter called the "Texas Mute Ranger".
"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

Texas Disability Timeline

Austin-Travis County Regional, Hidalgo County and Central Counties MHMR Centers begin.

Paul Moreno, a wheelchair user, serves in the Texas House of Representatives.

1968 Richmond State School and Amarillo State Center for Human Development MHMR open.

Regional Center of East Texas and Heart of Texas and Northeast Texas MHMR Centers open.

Patsy Smith, disabled as a result of childhood Polio, serves as first woman judge of the 72nd District Court.

Congress passes Federal Architectural Barriers Act.

1969 Texas Legislature requires certain public facilities to be accessible.

Texas Legislature creates the Texas Rehabilitation Commission as a separate state agency.

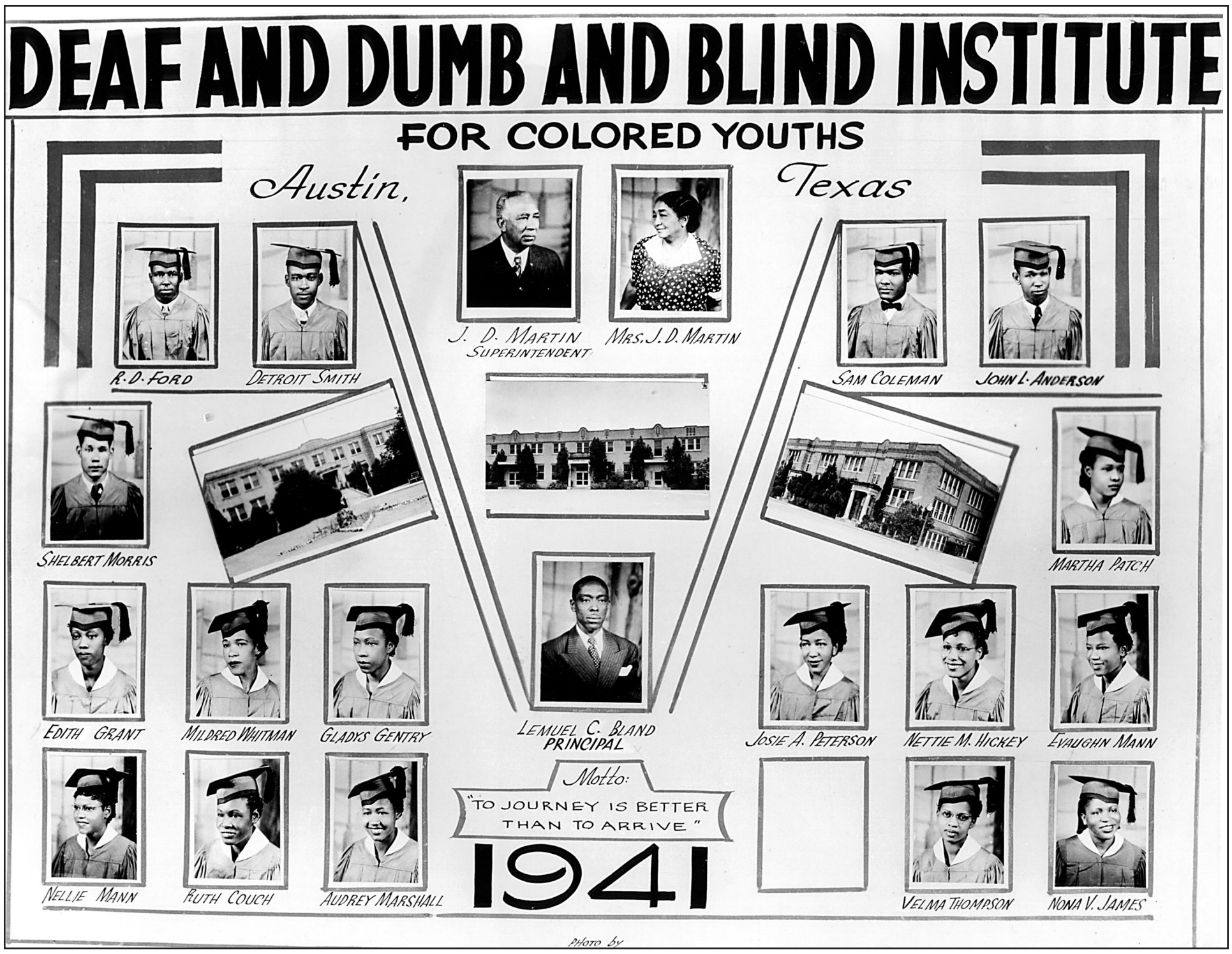
Lubbock and San Angelo State Schools begin; Wichita Falls Community Center for MHMR Services, Tarrant County MHMR Services, Beaumont and Laredo State Centers for Human Development begin.

Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Bexar County begins.

Big Spring State Hospital begins Texas MHMR's first community outreach program.

Criss Cole, who was blind, becomes President Pro Tempore of the Texas Senate.

Nueces County MHMR Community Center begins.



"Deaf & Dumb & Blind Institute–1941"
Graduating Class Composite
"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

Texas Disability Timeline

Special Olympics of Texas begins.

Leon Payne, country and western singer and composer who was blinded in childhood, dies at the age of 52. George Jones would record a tribute album of Payne's songs in 1971.

1970 Central Plains Comprehensive Community MHMR Center, Sabine Valley Regional MHMR Center, Gulf Bend MHMR Center and Corpus Christi State School begin.

Leander Rehabilitation Center begins.

1971 Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center for the blind opens.

Mobility **I**mpaired **G**rappling **H**urdles **T**ogether begins at The University of Texas.

Abilene Regional MHMR Center begins.

Governor Preston Smith appoints the first Texas Developmental Disabilities Planning and Advisory Council.

1972 The 47 foot high scoreboard at Memorial Stadium at the University of Texas at Austin is dedicated to Freddie Steinmark, who had his leg amputated and later died as a result of cancer. Steinmark was a defensive back for the Longhorns on their national championship team of 1969.

1973 MHMR of Southeast Texas, Permian Basin Community Center for MHMR, and Gulf Coast Regional MHMR Center begin.

Lynden Olsen, who was an amputee, serves in the Texas House of Representatives.

1974 MHMR Center for Central Texas begins in Brownwood.

Travis County Services for the Deaf launches.

woman who "committed suicide by hanging herself to the iron grating of her window with a sheet procured from her own bed," and noted that six *patients* had escaped. Many of the *patients* were born in Germany, the leading immigrant population in the area. The predominant forms of mental illness were diagnosed as acute and chronic mania, and melancholia. Corley stated his own preferred treatment for the *mentally troubled*: "There is nothing to surpass the old plunge bath; the most *maniacal raving* can often be subdued by a solitary plunge." In 1874, Dr. David Richard Wallace, a pioneer in the treatment of nervous diseases and whose clients included the Empress Carlotta of Mexico, became superintendent and introduced more humane and up-to-date treatments. He subsequently directed the *North Texas Lunatic Asylum,* now the Terrell State Hospital, which was set up with a $200,000 legislative appropriation in 1885 to ease overcrowding and provide for "*the chronic and incurable insane.*"

A notable difference in administration between then and now was the close supervision exerted by the administrators.

The first institutions catered only to Anglo and Hispanic Texans. William H. Holland, one of the few African-American state legislators prior to the turn of the century, introduced a bill to the 20th Legislature in 1887, with the support of both Anglo and African-American supporters, expressing the need for an institution for African-Americans. The bill was passed easily by the House, but went through the Senate only within minutes of the closing session. Governor L. L. Ross said that its passage gave him more pleasure than any other bill. The school opened as the *Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Institute for Colored Youth* in September 1887 some four miles northwest of the Austin city center. An existing catalogue emphasized that "this is not a place for the *feeble-minded, idiotic, epileptic and insane* boys and girls. This is a school and not an asylum."

A tract was purchased for the Institute for $10,000, a sum considered much below average for "naked ground" in the area. Household and farm articles cost $1,125, and included two mules and seven head of cattle. The next year, the school opened in makeshift accommodations while funds were procured to erect a new facility. But the new $18,000 structure soon "cracked through and through" and had to be condemned.

A notable difference in administration between then and now was the close supervision exerted by the administrators. For example, after several students died of pneumonia, the annual report paid homage to Superintendent S. J. Jenkins: "During the long weeks when the dark mantle of death seemed to hang over the institution, he gave his entire time, day and night, to aid in the care of the children, and there never was a time when these orphans, or those whose parents were absent at home, did not receive that love and tender care that the most indulgent and loving parent could have shown. Every hour between midnight and day he could be seen coming to the sickroom to look after the children's wants. Jenkins deserves the praise of his race and the thanks of his State for the unswerving devotion to duty in these times of trouble."

The *Deaf, Dumb and Blind Institute for Colored Youth* boasted five Jersey cows, and produced corn, hay, potatoes and other vegetables on their nearby 300-acre farm. It was commonplace for institutions to produce and grow much of the necessary food, a practice that continued for many years, though not always with student labor. As in the other institutions, building programs succeeded each other almost continuously as the need for more space seemed boundless.

Texas Disability Timeline

MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley, MHMR Services of Texoma, and Deep East Texas Regional MHMR Services begin.

Texas State Library expands Talking Books services to certain persons with learning disabilities.

Brenham State School opens.

Reclamation, Inc., launches for self-advocacy by persons with mental illness.

1975 The Coalition for Barrier-Free Living begins in Houston.

"Spectrum: Focus on Deaf Artists" starts in Austin.

El Paso State Center opens.

First handicapped parking ID sold.

Congress passes the Education for All Handicapped Children Act.

1976 Austin Special Transit begins.

Fort Worth State School opens.

Texas White House Conference on the Handicapped convenes in Austin.

Southwest Wheelchair Athletic Association forms.

Federal Communications Commission reserves Line 21 on television sets for closed captions.

1977 Texas sells first handicapped parking stickers for license plates.

Pecan Valley MHMR Center begins in Stephenville.

People, Progress, and Partic

	US	Texas	Texas Disability	Governor's Committee and Local Committees
1950's	post war prosperity; pacemaker invented; first heart/lung machine; polio vaccine; first commercial computer used by Census; Supreme Court ended segregation of public schools; air conditioning; *Peanuts* comic strip; 10,000,000 TVs in American homes; *Twilight Zone*; Elvis and Hoola Hoops	oil boom; women allowed to serve as jurors; semiconductor industry; college desegregation began; Dwight Eisenhower elected president	parent advocacy: The Association for Retarded Children of Texas, United Cerebal Palsy of Texas; Criss Cole served in Texas House of Representatives; medical research increased; Kerrville State Hospital opened; Texas State Library added talking book service for children who are blind	Governor's Committee: veteran and awareness focus; Lawrence Melton, an amputee, continued involvement with the DAV and the President's Committee as well as the Governor's Committee Chair Members were originally appointed by the Chairman pending approval of the Governor. The primary function of the committee was to promote the employment of handicapped persons in the state.
1960's	civil rights; Vietnam War; Peace Corps established; first moon walk; Cuban Missile Crisis; President Kennedy assassinated; Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated; first black person appointed to US Supreme Court; drug Thalidomide is found to cause birth defects; Medicaid and Medicare; Woodstock; Bob Dylan songs and Andy Warhol prints popular; mini skirts	prosperity from cotton and oil; poll tax repealed; aerospace growth; LBJ became president and re-elected; Barbara Jordan was first black woman in Texas Senate; Astrodome—first covered stadium	service expansion; first access law; Criss Cole served in Texas Senate; Texas Dept. of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) began, 17 MHMR centers and 5 state schools opened; Architectural Barriers Act passed; Learning Disabilities Association of Texas formed	Governor's Committee: continued public awareness and connection with the President's Committee; staff support through Texas Employment Commission
1970's	first disability civil rights; Congress passed the Education for all Children Act; first AIDS case reported; first outbreak of Legionnaire's disease in Philadelphia; first Apple computer marketed in US; *Roots* published; movie *Patton*	strong economy due to oil industry; William Clements elected first Republican Governor since Reconstruction; Dallas Cowboys won 2 Super Bowls; Earl Campbell received Heisman Trophy	service expansion; first independent living centers; Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center for the Blind opened; American Sign Language recognized as a language that may be taught in public schools; handicapped stickers for license plates; Lynden Olsen, an amputee, served in the Texas House of Representatives; Austin special transit begins; local advocacy groups increased; Advocacy, Inc. started; Coalition of Texans with Disabilities formed	Governor's Committee: increased awareness through essay contests and Employment Awards

ipation through the Decades

	US	Texas	Texas Disability	Governor's Committee and Local Committees
1980's	end of Communism; Fall of Berlin Wall; first woman appointed to US Supreme Court; MTV and CNN; Congress passed Air Carrier Access Act, Fair Housing Act; AIDS; Marlee Matlin won an Oscar for her performance in *Children of A Lesser God*; compact discs introduced; *Batman*; *On Golden Pond*; *Jaws*	began diversifying economy; Andrew Foster, founder of the Negro Baseball League, was inducted to the Baseball Hall of Fame; Houstonian George Bush elected President	increased advocacy and independent living centers; first interpreter certification program; employment discrimination is prohibited; access to polls guaranteed by law and other access laws; Legislature established Relay Texas to provide telephone access for persons deaf, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired; Victor Galloway became first deaf superintendent at the Texas School for the Deaf; Legislature created Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities; Todd Freeland competed in the Oita International Wheelchair marathon in Japan	Governor's Committee: began Barbara Jordan Media Awards; supported 15+ Local Committees; *Time* magazine published a letter from the Committee to Gallaudet University students; published a report of a Transportation Barriers questionnaire Local Committees: first volunteer parking enforcement program started by Beaumont Mayor's Committee; Dallas Mayor's Committee awarded first scholarship for students with disabilities
1990's	information technology; the Internet; ADA signed; Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty; Desert Storm; NAFTA; Magic Johnson was NBA MVP; Michael Jordan retired; Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa; Oklahoma City bombing; stock market reaches 10,000; first balanced budget since 1969; swing dance returns; *Jurassic Park*; *Beauty and the Beast*; *Titanic*	Ann Richards first woman elected Governor in her own right; Kay Bailey Hutchison first woman US Senator from Texas; Greg Abbott appointed to the Texas Supreme Court; George W. Bush first Governor elected to consecutive four year terms; floods and tornadoes; Ricky Williams broke NCAA all-time rushing record and received Heisman Trophy; Dallas Cowboys won 3 Super Bowls; Houston Rockets won back-to-back NBA Championships; high tech boom; economic growth	advocacy groups increased; ADA compliance began; lottery outlets required to be accessible; first handicapped parking placard sold; Texas Accessibility Standards adopted; Braille translation of textbooks facilitated	Governor's Committee: created by law; moved into Governor's Office; Focused on policy recommendations and ADA implementation; supported 30+ local volunteer committees adding rural areas; hosted largest ever President's Committee national conference in Dallas; published first booklet describing key Texas laws affecting disabled persons and reported first data about disabled State employees; presented first entrepreneurship award Local Committees: Texas Association of Mayors' Committees formed

Service Expansion

In 1901, due to considerable effort by the citizens of Taylor County, the 26th and 27th Legislature, which met respectively in 1899 and 1901, established a *colony* for the "care, treatment, and support of the *epileptic insane*" of Texas on a 640-acre tract donated by the city of Abilene. The first one hundred patients arrived in 1904, transferred from the *asylums* in Austin, San Antonio, and Terrell. With no reliable treatment for epilepsy available, the best options were believed to be a proper diet and hygiene, regular habits, and exercise. The 1913 annual report mentions "the only thing new in the treatment of epilepsy is the crotalin, or rattlesnake venom. We are giving it a thorough test but as yet are not prepared to say what the ultimate result will be." A year later, hopes had waned: only a limited number were taking the crotalin and "the benefit they receive is psychological, mostly at least."

However, the early promise of care continued, and "a spirit of kindness seems to pervade the entire institution, inspiring the employees (sic) and *patients* to render one another help and assistance in the alleviation of the *common affliction*." Epidemics of flu and measles took their toll, along with several cases of pneumonia, epileptic convulsions, and exhaustion which led to the death of sixty-six people in a single year. Pneumonia was regularly the leading cause of death, tuberculosis was prevalent, and by 1918 the annual report said "we have nothing new to offer in the way of treatment of epilepsy." The *Colony* became the Abilene State Hospital in 1925. During the 1920s, the *Colony* became the test site for a new drug, Dilantin.

In 1917, the *State Colony for the Feeble Minded,* later named the Austin State School, opened with an enrollment of 65 female students. Until this time, many people with retardation were housed in the *Asylum*. With no thought of enlisting volunteers, employees were responsible not only for caring and supervising during work hours, but also for organizing recreational pursuits and church attendance. Later, in 1934, men from the Austin State School were removed to the Austin State School Farm Colony, in part because there was a prevailing belief

. . . the early promise of care continued, and "a spirit of kindness seems to pervade the entire institution, inspiring the employees . . .

that retardation was linked with criminal disposition and promiscuity. Here they farmed to supply food to area psychiatric institutions. Several of the residents working on the farm were, in fact, not retarded but delinquent, as the courts favored the school over remand homes for young offenders.

A statewide survey of state hospitals was carried out in 1916. The survey recommended that *eleemosynary (charitable) institutions* throughout Texas be placed under a central Board of Control. The Board was created by the 36th Legislature in 1919, and formally organized in 1920. Made up of three members appointed by the Governor, the Board took charge of overseeing purchasing for state departments, institutions, and agencies. It controlled and supervised the State's *eleemosynary institutions* including the state schools, hospitals, and sanitariums. One important purpose was to ensure that overcrowding was reduced, and that people who were mentally ill or had retardation were not languishing in jails or almshouses. The Board also contracted for all construction, repairs, and improvements made to the institutions. Thirty years

Texas Disability Timeline

Association for Individuals with Disabilities begins in Dallas.

Travis County Council for the Deaf launches.

Independent Living Research Utilization begins.

Secretary of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) signs Federal 504 Regulations, after a sit-in in by persons with disabilities in nine cities. When FBI agents prevented people from leaving the HEW building in Washington D.C., a person who was deaf signed out the window to another person who was deaf and he communicated with the media.

Congress passes the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit, encouraging employment of people with disabilities.

Advocacy, Inc. starts.

White House Conference on the Handicapped convenes in Washington D.C.

1978 San Antonio State School opens.

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities forms.

ADAPT demands lifts on buses in Denver.

Launch, Inc. starts for self-advocacy of adults with learning disabilities.

1979 Texas Legislature recognizes American Sign Language as a language that may be taught in public schools or state colleges.

Texas Legislature establishes the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf.

Navarro County MHMR Center begins in Corsicana.

Calisthenics performed by people at Big Springs State Hospital.
"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

later, in 1949, the Legislature transferred control of the *eleemosynary institutions* to the Board for State Hospitals and Special Schools and the Youth Development Council.

In 1919, the Rusk Penitentiary in East Texas became a hospital for the "*Negro insane.*" African-Americans were transferred here from other asylums, jails, and places of restraint. At first, it was a general hospital for the *acutely sick, aged, and frail* accommodating both Anglo and African-American tubercular *patients.*

The *Northwest Texas Insane Asylum,* which later became the Wichita Falls State Hospital, received the first mental patients from the 62 surrounding counties in

Texas Disability Timeline

Leander State Center opens.

Waco Center for Youth comes under direction of Texas MHMR.

Austin Resource Center for Independent Living forms.

Governor's Committee issues the first awards for employment of people with disabilities.

First documented case of AIDS.

"Facts of Life" premieres; Geri Jewell, a person with cerebral palsy, sometimes appears on this show.

1980 Austin City Council names February 21 "Charles S. Eskridge Day" in honor of his work for the mentally ill and mentally retarded.

Houston Center for Independent Living begins.

Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf begins instruction.

Texas Advocates begins—first Texas self-advocacy organization for persons with mental retardation.

Tony McGregor, an artist who is deaf, wins honor from the Austin Chamber of Commerce.

Blind Lemon Jefferson is inducted into the Blues Foundation Hall of Fame.

Miller Reese invents electric hearing aid.

Sears, Roebuck & Co. sells television decoders for closed captioning.

1922. Built on a cottage plan, with the chapel as center of both religious and recreational activities, the function and building complex of the School expanded over the years to include a branch at the Vernon State Home, and added programs for the geriatric and persons with retardation.

The School for the Deaf published a brief handbook of information in 1935. In it, the authors noted that despite its official name, and despite no offense being intended, to refer to the children as "Dummies" was thoughtless. The school catered to the deaf and hard of hearing between 7 and 21 years of age, and the students were "capable of receiving a common school education and knowledge of a useful trade." In a turnaround from the first years when only manual instruction was given, a notice now announced, "sign not taught." The school

. . . the students were "capable of receiving a common school education and knowledge of a useful trade."

expanded extracurricular activities which allowed the children a chance to integrate with other young people. The campus athletic association offered several team sports. Students could also join the Scouts and the Christian Endeavor Society. To help boys in both discipline and exercise, uniforms were provided and military instruction given. The School for the Blind, also now encouraged to broaden student horizons, took advantage of the services which had first been provided by the Texas State Library as early as 1918 when the Legislature appropriated $1,000 to purchase raised-letter books. The new state

Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio employed wo
employee repaired electronic equipment

Texas Disability Timeline

1981 Texas celebrates International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) by nominating Pat Pound and Allen B. Clark, Jr. to receive awards at a special gala at the Baltimore Convention Center in Maryland.

Edna Marie Moore, noted Texas artist, donates a bluebonnet picture to the state in honor of the IYDP. She was a wheelchair user.

San Antonio Independent Living Services forms.

Victor Galloway becomes the first deaf superintendent at the Texas School for the Deaf.

Texas Head Injury Association forms later becoming the Brain Injury Association of Texas.

Texas Legislature starts the nation's first interpreter certification program to provide qualified sign language interpreters to serve the state's deaf population.

Andrew Foster, who was the founder of the Negro Baseball League and had mental illness, is elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

1982 Governor's Committee publishes a report of a transportation barriers questionnaire.

1983 Texas Legislature prohibits employment discrimination against persons with disabilities.

Texas Legislature creates the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities.

Texas Legislature provides increased access to polling places for people with disabilities.

orkers who are blind during the early 1950's. This and performed routine electronical tests.

"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

librarian and former archivist, Elizabeth Howard West, saw to it that despite no provision being made by the law, a good selection of juvenile books was made available.

By 1931, the Library of Congress selected Texas to participate in a regional system established to provide service nationwide to adults who were blind. The service introduced juvenile books in 1952.

A spurt in the opening of new institutions matched the increase in population and the trend toward urbanization. In 1910, Texas had a population of 3,897,000. Of this figure, 938,000 people lived in cities in towns. A decade later the total population had reached 4,663,000. More than a million and a half people now had urban homes, while the rural increase was barely 200,000. This trend continued, and the 1930 U.S. Census showed that for the first time Texas was more urban than rural, with the population divided into a 60% to 40% ratio. The urbanization of Texas between the two world wars allowed for a vastly improved infrastructure, and an increased job pool able to supply enough staff and peripheral labor for the hospitals and schools designed for people with disabilities.

Vocational and Physical Rehabilitation

When members of the armed forces returned from World War I, the Federal Soldiers Rehabilitation Act of 1918, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1920, moved in a new direction to provide for those seriously injured on the battlefield. The workforce, depleted by unprecedented military loss of life, needed all men and women to serve their country in a civilian capacity.

The Texas Legislature created the Board of Vocational Education (now the Texas Rehabilitation Commission) in 1929 to provide vocational rehabilitation services. Two years later, rehabilitation workers were stationed in Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston, with most of the appro-

Texas Disability Timeline

Governor's Committee presents first Barbara Jordan Awards for excellence in communicating the realities of persons with disabilities.

Texas Diabetes Council begins.

Dallas Center for Independent Living opens.

National ADAPT organizes to secure access on buses.

World Institute on Disability launches.

1984 Texas Alliance for the Mentally Ill begins.

Arnett Cobb, disabled as a result of a car crash, shares a Grammy with B. B. King for best traditional blues performance.

President Reagan issues National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.

Congress passes Federal Voting Accessibility Act.

President's Committee begins services to employers, called the Job Accommodation Network.

Advocacy, Inc. files a federal complaint against Southwest Airlines for denying a woman who was deaf-blind the right to fly unaccompanied.

1985 Texas Association of the Deaf celebrates its centennial convention in Austin.

Texas Cancer Council begins.

Disability Rally Day convenes at the State Capitol.

Governor's Committee co-sponsors Disabled Hispanic Texans: Rehabilitation & Employment Conference.

The Texas School for the Blind Students & Exhibits
"Texas State Library and Archives Commission"

priation earmarked for vocational training. Within ten years, the annual budget rose from $12,500 to $150,000, and a staff of ten had rehabilitated over 400 people. The number of clients tripled over the next decade. It increased substantially more during the years following World War II as medical advances enabled people with spinal cord injuries to survive. By this time, Texas was counted an urban state. It was necessary to provide training for jobs in industry, rather than on the farm.

The 61st Texas Legislature established the State Commission for the Blind in 1931 to provide all services to visually *disabled persons* except welfare services and

Texas Disability Timeline

1986 Dallas Mayor's Committee for the Employment of People with Disabilities awards first annual scholarship for individuals with disabilities.

Congress passes the Air Carrier Access Act.

Disabled Women's Political Caucus forms in Washington, D.C.

Nellie Moone of San Francisco stops a city bus with her crutch until a lift equipped bus is sent.

1987 Texas Legislature creates a pilot attendant care delivery system, allowing individuals with disabilities to supervise their own attendants.

Austin City Council passes a Disability Rights Ordinance.

Secretary of Transportation rules that Southwest Airlines discriminated against a deaf-blind person who was not allowed to fly independently.

Marlee Matlin wins an Oscar for her performance in "Children of a Lesser God."

1988 *Time* magazine publishes a letter from Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons vice chairperson Kathy Weldon commending Gallaudet University's students for urging to have a president who is deaf.

Texas Mental Health Consumers begins.

300 people parade in Dallas to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that includes equal rights in Section 504.

First volunteer parking enforcement program starts through efforts of Beaumont Mayor's Committee.

the services to children provided by education agencies. The commission relied on voluntary funds to cover the expenses of operating the program until 1933 when the agency received its first appropriations from the 43rd Legislature, the sum of $8,250, and hired the first home teachers to work in Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, El Paso, Galveston, and Houston.

World War II affected people with disabilities both in military medical advances that allowed persons with spinal cord injuries to survive as well as offering an opportunity for persons with disabilities at home to serve in defense jobs. Of course, war always creates more people with disabilities and subsequent governmental service and policy responses.

Polio survivors needed physical therapy that was often long and painful. One of the first actual rehabilitation centers in Texas dates back to a serendipitous discovery in 1909 when an oil exploration team found warm springs along the San Marcos River in what is now the Palmetto State Park. Almost 30 years later, during a polio epidemic, the Center was established in 1937 as the *Gonzales Warm Springs Foundation for Crippled Children—the first rehabilitation hospital in Texas.* Its reputation grew, and long after the Salk vaccine for all intents and purposes ended polio, the therapeutic benefits from the warm springs, and supporting treatment continued. The Warm Springs Rehabilitation System has now expanded far from the geographic area of the first discovery. Polio was also the catalyst for the West Texas Rehabilitation Center in Abilene. Originally the *Taylor County Society for Crippled Children,* the center was first housed in two classrooms of a local elementary school with a staff of three and just 17 young *patients*. The first year's operating budget was $10,000. The center became the nation's largest provider of outpatient rehabilitation services. Now, 17,000 children and adults with disabilities are treated annually in Abilene and the satellite center in San Angelo. Rehabilitation programs integrating physical and psychological needs precipitated a new phase in the treatment of people with disabilities.

The Last Half of the Twentieth Century

The last half of the Twentieth Century ushered in dramatic changes for Texans with disabilities. Parent and self-advocacy groups began advocating for improvements and likewise, services increased greatly. Although institutional services increased, focus began to shift toward providing services in local communities. Schools began serving students with disabilities rather than students attending residential disability-specific schools.

In 1967, Barbara Jordan became the first black person to serve in the Texas Senate since 1883, and in 1972 was elected President Pro Tempore.

Several people with disabilities became leaders of the State, serving as members of Congress, the Texas Supreme Court, the Texas Legislature, and various state boards. Criss Cole, blinded in World War II, completed high school, got his law degree in 1954, and was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1955. He later served in the Texas Senate from 1963 to 1970. He helped pass bills regarding pollution, multiple use of Texas water, establishment of the Padre Island National Seashore, improving vocational rehabilitation as well as banning racial discrimination in state and local governments. In 1971, Criss Cole was appointed as judge presiding over

Texas Disability Timeline

Congress expands National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Congress passes Fair Housing Act.

Grupo Dignidad, Igualidad y Oportunidad (Dignity, Equality and Opportunity Group) begins.

Dr. I. King Jordan becomes first hearing impaired President of Gallaudet University.

1989 Texas Legislature allows public schools to give language credit for American Sign Language.

Texas Legislature establishes Relay Texas to provide telephone access for persons who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired.

Texas athlete Todd Freeland competes in the Oita International Wheelchair Marathon in Japan.

Congress passes Hearing Aid Compatibility Act, making telephones accessible for hearing aid users.

"Life Goes On" with actor Christopher Burke, who has Down's Syndrome, airs on ABC.

1990 President George Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act at the largest bill signing ceremony ever on the White House grounds.

TV movie "When You Remember Me," about the formative years of ADAPT and the disability movement, airs on ABC.

Disability Policy Consortium forms.

Criss Cole served as a Texas Legislator beginning in 1955. He helped pass bills regarding pollution, multiple use of Texas water, and the establishment of the Padre Island National Seashore. He was blinded in World War II.

the 315th District Court which handled juvenile cases. He chaired many efforts and was vice president of the Texas Air and Water Resources Foundation. He successfully gained funding for a rehabilitation center serving Texans who are blind which was named after him.

In 1967, Barbara Jordan became the first black person to serve in the Texas Senate since 1883, and in 1972 was elected President Pro Tempore. She became known for her distinct diction and forceful delivery on a wide range of subjects. In 1973, she became the first black

Texas Disability Timeline

1991 Texas Legislature moves the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities into the Office of the Governor.

Texas Legislature requires sellers of lottery tickets to comply with the ADA.

Texas Legislature requires textbooks to be available in electronic format to facilitate Braille translation and provides for Braille instruction for students who are blind.

Texas Association of Mayors' Committees for People with Disabilities organizes.

Governor's Committee in conjunction with the Dallas Mayor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities hosts the largest ever President's Committee national conference in Dallas with more than 6,000 attending.

Texas Deaf Caucus forms.

ADA Texas forms through efforts of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and the Governor's Committee to train employers, people with disabilities and service providers about the ADA.

"Reasonable Doubt" starring Marlee Matlin (hearing impaired) premiered on NBC.

1992 Governor's Committee publishes "From Institutions to the Community," recommending how the state can increasingly serve Texans with disabilities in their local communities.

First disabled parking placard sold.

Governor Richards announces the closing of the Fort Worth and Travis State Schools.

Texas Assistive Technology Partnership begins.

In 1993 Barbara Jordan presented Donna Cline of KENS TV in San Antonio a Barbara Jordan Award Medallion.

"If America is to remain a productive nation, it must use the power and energy of each one of its citizens. The reality of a person with a disability does not exempt that individual from contributing to the growth of the nation. Every life has value and a person with a disability is no less a citizen and should be honored with the rights and opportunities available to all people."

Barbara Jordan, 1993

Texas Disability Timeline

Jeff Kurz, a Gallaudet University student, becomes the first hearing impaired athlete to be named Scholar-Athlete by the National Football Foundation.

1993 Texas Legislature establishes a birth *defects* registry and creates financial incentives for teaching students with disabilities in the regular classroom.

Texas Legislature expands the architectural barriers law to all buildings covered by the ADA and increases accessibility of private polling places.

Capital Metro in Austin equips all buses with wheelchair lifts.

Barbara Jordan presents the Barbara Jordan Media Awards for the first time.

Governor's Committee presents First Governor's Trophy to Dik Johnson.

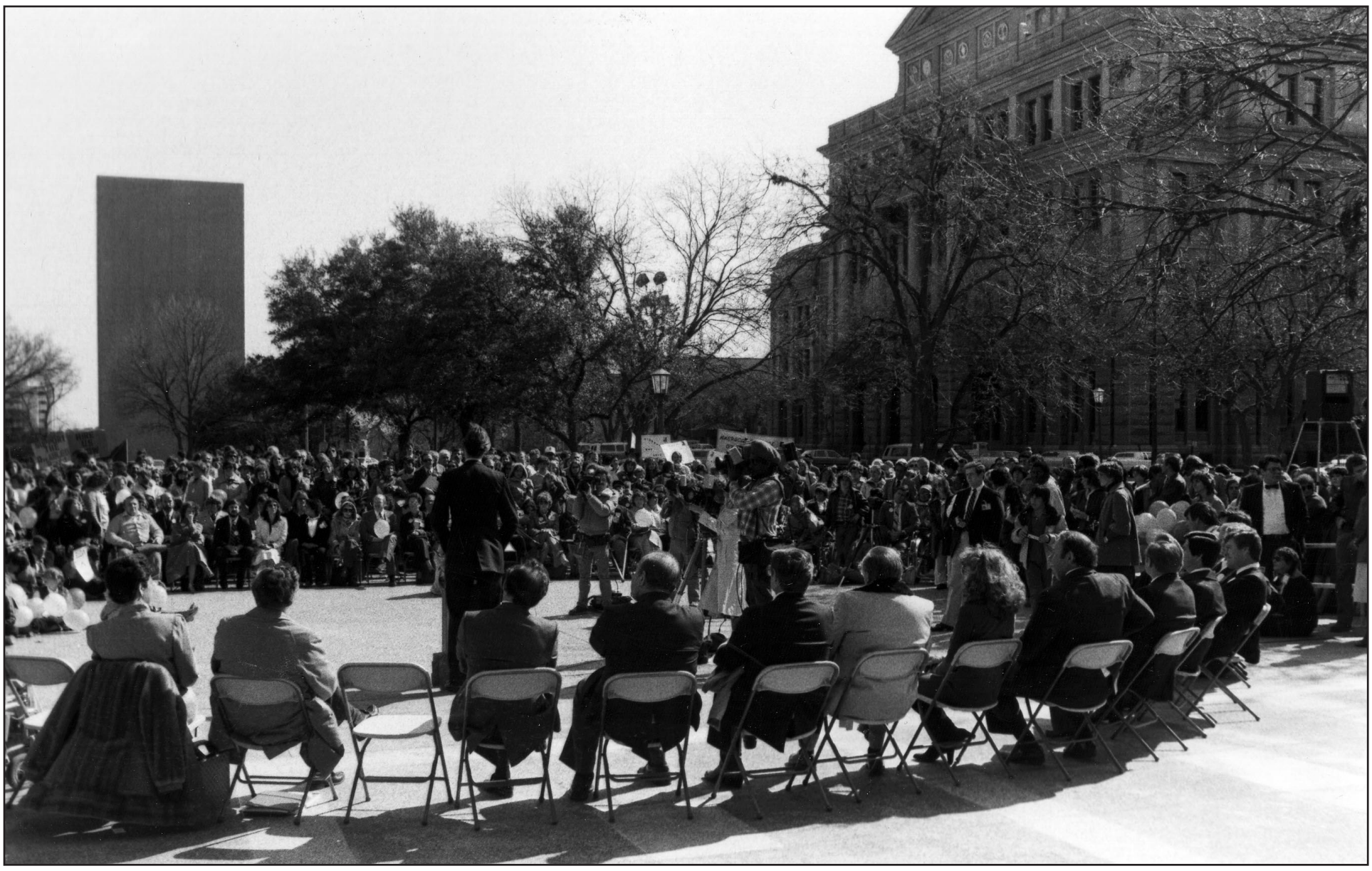
John Hockenberry, national news correspondent and a wheelchair user, joins ABC's "Day One."

Sewering, an SS member and lung specialist in Germany who sent a 14 year old girl with tuberculosis to be gassed, becomes president-elect of the World Physicians Association. Protests force him to resign.

1994 Texas adopts the Texas Accessibility Standards.

1995 Governor George W. Bush appoints Greg Abbott to the Texas Supreme Court, the first person who uses a wheelchair to serve on Texas' highest court.

Texas Legislature renamed the Texas Commission for the Deaf the Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.



Disability organizations advocate together in the 1980's at Disability Rally Day.

woman from a Southern state to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. Barbara Jordan delivered the keynote addresses at the 1976 and 1992 Democratic Conventions, emphasizing unity, equality, accountability and American ideals. Retiring from Congress in 1979, she became a professor at the LBJ School of Public Affairs and became known as an outstanding educator. She is in the National Women's Hall of Fame and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994. Barbara Jordan allowed the Governor's Committee to name its media awards after her, and presented them in 1993. She coped routinely with the challenges presented by multiple sclerosis.

In 1995, Governor George W. Bush appointed Greg Abbott to the Texas Supreme Court; he was elected to continue this service in 1996 and 1998. Prior to his appointment, Justice Abbott presided over the 12th Dis-

Texas Disability Timeline

First monetary penalties assessed for inaccessibility under the Texas Architectural Barriers Act.

Mattel markets first Barbie doll in a wheelchair and later modifies her house.

Quaker Oats and M.I.T. pay $1.85 million to more than 100 former residents of the Fernald State School in Massachusetts who were fed radiation-spiked cereal in nutrition experiments during the 1940's and 1950's without consent of their parents.

1996 Governor's Committee publishes the first booklet describing key Texas laws affecting persons with disabilities.

Texas Accessibility Standards become equivalent to federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

Congress passes the Telecommunication Act requiring captioning and telecommunication access.

1997 Governor's Committee reports first data about State employees with disabilities.

Texas law provides for telecommunications or other adaptive devices to make telephone use accessible for persons with disabilities.

Governor's Committee presents the first Entrepreneurship Award to Chad Raney.

President Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act at 10:26 a.m. on July 26, 1990; witnessed by more than 3,000 people from every state. Pictured are EEOC chairman Evan Kemp (left), Justin W. Dart, Jr., chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (right), the Rev. Harold Wilke, and National Council on Disability chairperson Sandra Parrino (standing).

"Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down."
President George Bush

Texas Disability Timeline

James A. Michener publishes his last book, A Century of Sonnets, after becoming a person with a disability.

Governor George W. Bush joins disability advocates urging that an additional statue depicting Franklin Delano Roosevelt using a wheelchair be erected.

1998 George Bush Presidential Library and Museum opens including an exhibit on the ADA.

Governor's Committee offers information on its new website.

U.S. Supreme Court hears first ADA case and finds on behalf of a person with AIDS who a dentist refused to treat in his office.

Justin Dart Jr., former chairman of the Governor's Committee, receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom in January from President William Clinton.

Lex Frieden, senior vice president at The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research, is named the Henry B. Betts Award laureate for his instrumental role in the development of the ADA.

Casey Martin wins the right to use a golf cart as an accommodation for his disability based on the ADA.

In 1981 recognized artist Edna Marie Moore presented one of her bluebonnet paintings, "The Glory of Spring", to the State of Texas. Governor Clements accepted the gift.

"This celebration is a time for all Texans to remember the brave men and women who fought for our independence, and it is also a time to dedicate ourselves to the removal of barriers which impair a disabled person's search for complete independence."

The chairman of the Council on Disabilities Task Force on the Sesquicentennial event

trict Court in Houston. In 1984, Justice Abbott became a wheelchair user when he was injured by a falling tree limb while jogging. He continued his career receiving many honors. He was selected Trial Judge of the Year by the Texas Association of Civil Trial and Appellate Specialists. Additionally, he was honored as an Outstanding Young Texan by the Texas Jaycees.

Several key events illustrated progress of Texans with disabilities during the latter part of this century. Texas commemorated its Sesquicentennial in 1986. In December of that year, the Governor's Committee assisted with a celebration illustrating how Texans with disabilities contributed to our state. More than one thousand pieces of colorful artwork prepared by students with disabilities hung in the Capitol, and ceremonies emphasized contributions by people with disabilities. The Chairman of the Council on Disabilities Task Force on the Sesquicentennial event, said: This celebration is a time for all Texans to remember the brave men and women who fought for our independence, and it is also a time to dedicate ourselves to the removal of barriers which impair a disabled person's search for complete independence."

The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities held its 1991 annual meeting in Dallas, the first time they met outside Washington D.C. This meeting drew approximately 6,000 people, over 1,000 more than expected, in celebration of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Conclusion

In reflection, the Lone Star State can be proud of its leaders with disabilities. Both the early pioneers with disabilities who led the Republic and the disability advocates of today shaped our state for all Texans, including persons with disabilities. If we continue the rate of progress seen in the last quarter century, Texans with disabilities will become more equal participants in our great state. We have certainly moved from isolation to participation in education, employment, public service, housing and transportation. The next century will magnify this participation.

Texans Honored

Two current Texas leaders exemplify the roles Texans with disabilities play today in charting the course of the future. Justin Dart Jr., former chairman of the Governor's Committee and a longtime activist for the rights of people with disabilities, received the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in January 1998. At a White House ceremony, President Clinton praised Dart for his tireless efforts to promote the passage of the ADA, and for touring every state in the Union to discuss disability rights in public forums. Typical of Dart, he asked persons with disabilities in attendance to share the medal by putting it around their necks.

Lex Frieden, senior vice president at The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research, professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Baylor College of Medicine, and project director for the Southwest Disability Business Technical Assistance Center, earned the honor of being the Henry B. Betts Award laureate for his instrumental role in the development of the ADA. Governor George W. Bush congratulated Frieden, stating, "I commend you for your vision, your energy and your commitment to developing and promoting independent living. People like you help make Texas and America better places to live."

Governor George W. Bush congratulated Frieden, stating, "I commend you for your vision, your energy and your commitment to developing and promoting independent living. People like you help make Texas and America better places to live."

Lex Frieden, senior vice president TIRR (center), winner of the Henry B. Betts Award of $50,000, receives honors at a Houston reception hosted by TIRR, Baylor College of Medicine and the Texas Medical Center. E. Ashley Smith, TIRR Systems' President and Chief Administrative Officer (right), and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (left) congratulate Frieden.

Justin W. Dart, Jr. shares his Presidential Medal of Freedom with Greg Smith, founder of On-A-Roll Radio.

Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

About the Governor's Committee

The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities consists of 12 volunteer members appointed by the Governor (seven of whom must be persons with disabilities). There are four additional ex officio members representing state agencies serving people with disabilities. The Committee meets at least quarterly and is supported by a small staff. The mission of the Governor's Committee is to further opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to a life of independence, productivity, and self determination.

Greg Abbott, the first Texas Supreme Court Justice who uses a wheelchair, swore in new Governor's Committee members in 1996.

Members

James L. Caldwell, Ph.D., **Chairman,** *Austin*
Mary Ann Board, *Bellaire*
Victoria Christman, *Dallas*
Douglas F. Grady, Jr., *Fort Worth*
Peter Grojean, *San Antonio*
Roland Guzman, *Corpus Christi*
Thomas P. Justis, *Grapevine*
Debbie H. Morrill, *San Antonio*
James G. Olson, *Houston*
Shirley Smith Pacetti, *Houston*
Judy C. Scott, *Dallas*

Ex Officio Agency Members

Vernon M. Arrell, *Texas Rehabilitation Commission*
Ron Lehman, *Texas Workforce Commission*
David W. Myers, *Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*
Terrell I. Murphy, *Texas Commission for the Blind*

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