

CAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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Winter 2001

CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE OF INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

CAIRS 2001 Conference Preview

by Elise Levine, Conference Chair



MARK THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 THROUGH SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 on your calendars and join us in sunny San Diego for the 2001 CAIRS Conference!

This year's conference will return to the Red Lion Hanalei Hotel, located in Mission Valley in the heart of San Diego.

Workshops will cover a variety of topics for both line staff and management, including:

I & R 101
Crisis Intervention
211
The Homeless/Mentally Ill Client
Taxonomy
Resource
Management
Volunteer
Management
Funding and
Capacity
Building
The Older
Americans
Act and
other Federal
and State
programs
And more!

As is customary, the conference will wrap up Saturday morning, affording

attendees an opportunity to enjoy all that the Red Lion Hanalei Hotel offers including year-round heated pool, whirlpool spa, and nearby Riverwalk Golf Club. Or, venture out into San Diego — Sea World, the famous San Diego Zoo, Historic Old Town and ocean beaches are nearby and the Mexican border is just 30 minutes away.

Look for further details and registration packets in upcoming mailings. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Elise Levine, Conference Chair, at 1-800-804-7420 x2663.

See you in San Diego! □

2-1-1 Update



By Burt Wallrich

What standards should guide the implementation of 211 in California?

How many 211 call centers should there be in one county?

Who will decide what agency(ies) will provide 211 service in an area and how will that decision be made?

What is the most effective way to get the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to set standards that ensure that 211 is implemented by established agencies that are committed to professional standards of I&R?

These are some of the issues and questions that were discussed during two meetings that CAIRS hosted on December 7, 2000, in Oakland, and on January 11 in Ontario. After receiving basic introduction to 211, the attendees at both meetings participated in a full discussion of issues and concerns. Each meeting then developed a draft set of criteria for how 211 service should be provided around the state. The fact that both meetings

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Letter from the President...



Dear CAIRS Members,

For many people, the year 2001 is the beginning of the real millennium. Whether you are one of those believers or not, it is truly a beginning of many new things. It is the beginning of a new year, a new decade, many new opportunities such as 211, a possible new look to the AIRS organization, and for us in California, a new look to CAIRS.

If you participated in the election of members for the CAIRS Board you know that several people are rotating off. For the remainder of this letter, I want to tell you about those people.

Betty Creary was a member of the Board of Directors for six years. During that time Betty held several officer positions— Secretary and President. In addition, she chaired the Membership Committee. Betty's ability and success as a trainer is well known. Attend one of Betty's workshops and she will engage us in dialogue, entertain us with anecdotes, and provide us with valuable information to take back to our respected agencies. Those are skills that she brought to the board meetings. Using that training voice of hers, she would keep us on track and point out truths. She will be missed.

Richard Stahl is one of a kind. After serving one term, Richard's attention is on implementing 211 in California. Richard sees the future in ways different from most of us. His vision is extraordinary and he always seems to find ways to execute. His place is in the lead of 211 implementation or any other quest he deems important. The rest of us can just follow his lead.

Susan Martin served one term on the board. Her approach to life and to CAIRS work is nothing short of inspirational. It is the zen of CAIRS. Susan played a major role in bringing the opportunity of obtaining CEU's to our conferences. She has worked on both the Membership and Public Relations Committee and served as Vice President of Operations. In addition, Susan made changes to the "look" of all of our conference materials giving them a more professional appearance. Her humor and sense of reality will be missed by all of us.

Patricia Draper served one term on the board and leaves due to a job change. We all have roles in our personal lives and professional lives. Patricia's role on the CAIRS board was to clarify: for herself and for the rest of us. Patricia loves to ask questions. That's smart because that's how you get information. It's great to have someone in your group that asks questions, because then they get asked. O.K, so who's going to ask?

The board will be less rich for the loss of these very special people. Yet, this is a beginning of a new board, one with new special people and the board will again be rich with enthusiasm, energy and new ideas. Please welcome **Julie Plevancic, Michele Quinn, Amy Noakes, Burt Wallrich, and Nancy Kimura**. In addition, **Jan Coen** was elected for her first full term. Please take a moment to read the article on these new board members.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to say good bye to you all. I, too, am rotating off the board. I can't tell you how important serving with this group

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CAIRS Officers

Sharon DeCray
President

Jan Coen
Vice President/Operations

Brandon O'Brien
Vice President/Membership

Charles Wigle
Secretary

Lyn Pesely
Treasurer

The CAIRS Newsletter is published quarterly by the California Alliance of Information and Referral Services.

The CAIRS Newsletter is provided as a benefit to all CAIRS members. Please contact CAIRS if you wish to reprint any part of this newsletter.

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CAIRS

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California Alliance of Information
and Referral Services

CAIRS

Vision Statement

CAIRS believes all individuals should have barrier-free access to human services to enhance their quality of life.

Mission Statement

The Membership of CAIRS provides leadership and support in the changing world of access to human services information. CAIRS promotes the right of individuals to accurate, barrier-free information.

Goals

In order to achieve the Mission and Vision, the following goals have been established:

To *provide* training and support to enhance professional skills;

To *facilitate* the exchange of information among the membership and others within the helping professions;

To *promote* awareness of Information and Referral services;

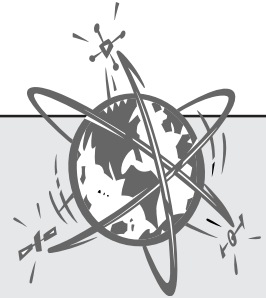
To *advocate* for the interests of the profession and the public it serves.

President's Message... from page 2

and representing the I&R professionals in this state has meant to me. These past six years have been fun, frustrating, challenging, eye-opening, and magical. I can only hope that I was able to give half as much to the board and the profession of I&R as the others who are leaving.

It is my honor to turn the gavel over to **Sharon DeCray** (Eden I&R) as President. The other new officers are **Jan Coen**, V.P. Operations; **Brandon O'Brien**, V.P. Membership; **Lynn Pesely**, Treasurer; and, **Charles Wigle**, Secretary. Congratulations and Good Luck!

—Linda Beth Swan
(formerly known as President of CAIRS Board)



The CAIRS web page includes an on-line version of this newsletter.

The web address is:

www.CAIRS.org

Add it to your bookmarks!

Meet the New Board Members

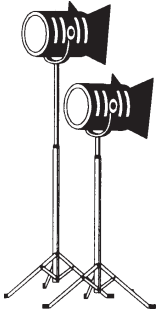
Amy Noakes is the Information and Referral Specialist for the AT (Assistive Technology) Network. The AT Network and Amy celebrated their first year on January 1, 2001. Amy provides Information and Referral for Californians who have questions regarding Assistive Technology. "Assistive Technology" refers to any device that enables a person with a disability to live independently or adds to his/her quality of life. Amy answers all questions and inquiries, and provides information on local resources, funding information and general assistance to Californians with disabilities. She is excited about being a part of the CAIRS board and is thrilled to be a representative for people with disabilities in California on Information & Referral matters.

Julie Plevancic is originally from Washington State, but at heart is a true Californian. Her interests include traveling, reading and writing, learning about different

people and places. She also loves playing all indoor or outdoor sports and listening to her husband play his guitar. Julie is new to the field of I&R, but being an information enthusiast, she fits right in. Julie works for Tuolumne County and is currently undertaking the implementing of an I&R program. Her goal is to advocate for more California rural communities to take advantage of the I&R industry, especially now that we are "full speed ahead" into the information age.

Michele Quinn began her career in I&R in 1978 and brings excellent organizational and public relations skills to the CAIRS board. She is a reporter, photographer and editor for her department newsletter. Besides her dedication to I&R, she has been an active volunteer in her community, especially with the Volunteer Center and the Crisis Prevention Hotline. She has three children and three grandchildren.

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Spotlight on:

Santa Clara County Directory of Health And Human Services On-Line

HelpSCC is a searchable directory of health and human service providers in Santa Clara County, launched in June 2000. HelpSCC resides on the World Wide Web at www.HelpSCC.org. The directory can be searched by "Quick Search" buttons, keywords (including full or partial name of agency), city or region, or the "Taxonomy of Human Services" AIRS classifications.

HelpSCC is a collaboration of Community Technology Alliance (CTA) and several health and human services collaborators: City of Palo Alto's Family Resource Center, Community Health Partnership, CONTACT Cares of Silicon Valley, Information & Referral Services, Inc., Integrated Services Committee at Chamberlain's Mental Health, Santa Clara County (Alcohol & Drug Services, Ambulatory and Community Care Clinics, Department of Pretrial Services, District Attorney's Office, Mental Health, Public Defender's Office, Public Health, Social Services Agency, Sheriff's Department), and Veterans Affairs Information & Referral Services. Almost 1400 directory entries are provided by the health and human services providers, including information about eligibility, application procedures, fees, languages spoken, and wheelchair accessibility. CTA provides the technical services and expertise necessary to create and maintain the Web site, the database structure, and other technical aspects that allows this information to appear on the World Wide Web.

The goal of HelpSCC is to create an up-to-date directory of health and human services in Santa Clara County available on the World Wide Web.

HelpSCC is user friendly, searchable, comprehensive, continuously updated, centralized, and linked to other valuable Web pages. Because the directory is on the Web, it is available to anyone with access to the Internet, either through home, school, workplace, shelter, or library. The directory can be used by anyone seeking information or assistance for themselves or a family member, a client, an employee, or anyone in need. In addition, the directory provides an overall view of the services and programs available in Santa Clara County so that overlaps or needs can be seen more readily.

A Training and Outreach Coordinator, funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, provides training for agencies that need to use the "Taxonomy

of Human Services" search in HelpSCC for information & referral. The Coordinator also attends information fairs to publicize HelpSCC, provides "train the trainer" sessions and materials, and identifies new collaborators to expand and improve HelpSCC's entries.

Community Technology Alliance was founded in 1991 to provide information technology tools to link and network agencies in the region so that they can deliver services more effectively to at-risk populations. Among its many services, CTA provides voicemail for the homeless and is the lead agency for a \$1.3 million grant provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to fund Project BAHA, a nine-county collaborative in the San Francisco Bay Area. HelpSCC is an expansion of the Santa Clara County part of Project BAHA.

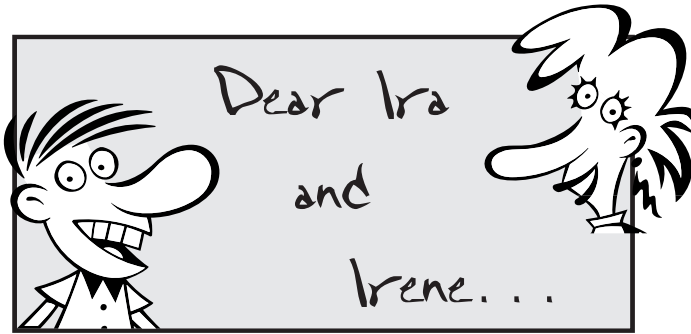
For more information, please visit CTA's Web site at www.ctagroup.org, or call the HelpSCC Training and Outreach Coordinator at 408-451-0734. □

Rate Increase for Memberships

Dear Members,

During its annual retreat, the Board planned services and activities for the coming year and developed a budget for 2001. CAIRS' primary sources of revenue are the annual conference and memberships dues. The dues provides an important part of the funds needed to effectively serve all CAIRS members. It has been several years since membership rates were last revised. As with all organizations, CAIRS is experiencing a rise in the cost of operations; increases in postage and printing are examples. After careful consideration, a decision was taken to increase the membership rates to \$45 for individuals and \$90 for agencies. These rates will be effective with your 2001 Membership renewal. We are pleased to announce that you will also be receiving a new benefit with your 2001 membership, the Key Access Directory (KAD). The KAD lists information on the various providers of I&R and I&A throughout the state of California. CAIRS has reissued this directory at the request of many of our members. We hope that you and your staff will find it very useful when assisting callers with questions about services in other areas. This member benefit will be in addition to the important professional information available to members through the CAIRS web site, www.cairs.org, and the CAIRS Newsletter. You will also continue to receive discounted fees for the annual conference.

— Sharon DeCray, President



Dear Ira & Irene,

I have heard about an I&R "ListServ" on the Internet. What is it and how can it help me as an I&R Manager?
—Charles in San Diego

Dear Charles,

A ListServ is a way of exchanging information over the Internet. Any question or comment sent to the ListServ is then distributed to all ListServ members automatically. All members of ListServ can then send their answers or comments back to the main address, and those answers and comments are then sent to all members. Advantages are:

- Immediate answers to questions you may have from numerous sources
- Contact with other I&R professionals across the Country.
- Timely information on regulations and changes to the Profession
- Source for recommendations of specialized I&R software.

This is an excellent way to get information and to introduce novices to the vast potential of the Internet.

Dear Ira & Irene,

In a recent conference, I heard people talking about something called assistive technology. What exactly is assistive technology?
—JoAnn, San Jose

Dear JoAnn,

The term assistive technology, or "AT," is simply referring to the equipment, tools, and resources utilized by individuals with disabilities to assist them and improve their quality of life. It can be as simple as a pencil grip to help someone hold a pen or an extra long shoe horn to assist someone to independently get dressed. It can also be as technically advanced as a voice-activated or eye-controlled computer to communicate information or control normal household equipment and utilities. In general, assistive technology is used to aid anyone in the

activities of daily living.

The next time you go to the grocery store and the door automatically opens, that's "AT."

There are resources for more information on assistive technology at AT Network, 800-390-2699, or visit their web site at www.atnet.org. □

Meet the New Board Members...

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Michele has been married for 37 years. She and her husband enjoy golf and travel.

Burt Wallrich is the oldest newbie in the class of 2001 in two ways. He both has more years on his carcass than the others, and more experience on the Board, having previously served from 1990 to 1997. Burt has worked at INFO LINE of Los Angeles since 1988. His current title there is Grants Contract Developer and his current assignment is to work on development of 211. Previously he focused primarily on disaster preparedness. This included building INFO LINE's own disaster readiness, helping to build the county-wide coalition of nonprofit organizations that prepare for and participate in disaster work, and representing INFO LINE and the coalition in government disaster bodies. Prior to coming to INFO LINE Burt had a checkered past that included working as a welder/union steward, printer, nonprofit director, and founder of a nonviolence training and direct action institute. □

CAIRS Board Actions

California Alliance of Information and Referral Services Board Actions

January 19-21, 2001

Motion that the Board delegate Board President, Linda Beth Swan to approach Maryanne Nix for Board membership.

Motion to accept the Financial statement as presented with corrections.

Motion to accept the recommendation from the Executive Committee to sell the mailing list.

Motion to have a check box on the membership forms for permission to sell their name on the mailing list.

Motion to increase the membership fees by the actual cost of the new KAD plus shipping rounded up to the nearest \$5 with the agency membership to cover the cost of two KADs.

Motion to accept the amended budget.

211 Update...

from page 1

produced almost identical lists of concerns and proposed criteria shows that the process was effective in achieving real consensus.

Approximately 55 agencies were represented at the two meetings. They included generic I&Rs, senior information and childcare resource and referral lines, other specialized information services, and other people with an interest in 211. The notes from both meetings are on the CAIRS website: www.cairs.org.

The two meetings endorsed a strategy of using AB301, a law that was passed in 1999, to achieve PUC action on 211 in a reasonable time. AB301 allows people who want the PUC to adopt regulations to submit their own draft regulations to the Commission. Generally speaking, within six months the PUC must either grant their petition and open proceedings to make the regulations final, or summarily reject them for cause. The proposed criteria that were developed in the two meetings provide the framework for the draft regulations to be submitted to the PUC.

The two meetings agreed that there should only be one 211 *system* in each county. A *system* may be made up of one or more agencies that function collaboratively as 211 call centers. A call center could serve more than one county, especially in sparsely populated areas.

It will be up to each county to determine what agency or agencies will operate the 211 call centers in its area. Any agency that wants to serve as a 211 call center needs to demonstrate that its bid has the support of its county's network of information providers as well as other stakeholders. Other stakeholders that should be consulted might include county and major city political leaders, heads of organizations that do major planning and/or funding of the human services, and directors of major health and human service agencies.

Another criterion that was adopted by both meetings is that 211 service should be offered to the public in accordance with the professional standards for information and referral. If this criterion is adopted by the PUC it will preclude anyone from offering 211 service in the manner of a 411 information line. All of the criteria are on the CAIRS website.

A follow-up meeting is scheduled for February 1 (after this article is being written but before this newsletter is distributed). The goal of that meeting is to begin the process of forming a statewide 211 Steering Committee. It is envisioned that the Steering Committee will include both CAIRS and non-CAIRS members who have a stake in how 211 is implemented.

CAIRS is providing leadership to the statewide effort with the understanding that this has to be a broad effort involving many sectors in each local community. CAIRS' role in the Steering Committee will be exercised through a new 211 Ad Hoc Committee that was created at the January meeting of the CAIRS Board.

For further information about 211 and CAIRS' role in its implementation, contact the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, Burt Wallrich, at INFO LINE of Los Angeles, phone 626-350-1841, or e-mail burtw@ix.netcom.com. □

Community Education

I often wonder how people hear about our services and Information and Referral in general. The following story is an example of community education.

Several weeks preceding the NPR program on homelessness, representatives from our local public radio station contacted me about the program and had some questions to ask me. The woman I talked with explained how overwhelming the problem is and that she found so much information that it boggled the mind.

Her question to me was, "There should be a central number that people can call to get help or to help." My response was, "There is. And you just called it."

— Linda Beth Swan

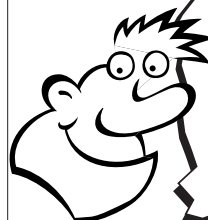
CAIRS Pledge

by Michele Quinn

I pledge allegiance to I&R,
from it I will not stray far.

I respect and support the
goals for which it stands,
and will spread the principles
across the land.

One I&R, under 211, with
High-Touch for each call,
and respect and dignity
for them all.



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Letters to the Editor

As always, the Board of Directors is looking for your input. You can provide yours by contacting the editor, Rick Sakamoto (see address above).

Contact Brandon O'Brien at 714/639-0105 for any questions regarding CAIRS membership.

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Mail this form along with your check (payable to CAIRS) to:

Name: _____

Agency: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____

Fax: (_____) _____

E-mail _____ Referred by: _____

I will permit my name to be placed on a mailing list that will be offered for sale.

single membership \$30

multiple membership \$60 (please enter two names for multiple memberships)

YES! I want to be a CAIRS member. Please sign me up.

CAIRS Membership Application



California Alliance of Information
and Referral Services

P.O. Box 4307

El Monte, CA 91734-0307

**Address Correction
Requested**