



The GRAnd Strand

Georgia Rehabilitation Association News Dispatch

Winter Edition
December 2012

GRA NEWSLETTER

Inside this issue:

- Message from the President
- GRA Chapter News
- GRA 2012 Memories
- Upcoming events

UPCOMING EVENTS

Govt. Affairs Seminar
See page 15-16 for details

March 2013

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	Fri	Sa
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

GRA Annual Conference
See page 14 for details

August 2013

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	Fri	Sa
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jennifer Howell



"As we move into 2013, I challenge all of you to focus on Special Projects and getting involved in your communities."

- Jennifer Howell
Past President, GRA

Final Greetings fellow GRA members!

It is with great honor that I have served you all in 2012. I leave you with mixed feelings this year. I feel that I hit the ground running and then ran out of steam at the end and now it is over all too quick.

I want to commend Ed and the Conference Committee for all of their hard work. The conference was a great success and received excellent feedback. I had one attendee tell me that they hadn't attended a conference in years but "would never miss another" after this one. That made me proud. Proud of all of you who made it a reality. You all "Dreamed Big" and pulled it off. Kudos.

As we move into 2013, I challenge all of you to focus on Special Projects and getting involved in your communities. GRA needs to establish and strengthen their presence so that more individuals can benefit from our advocacy and drive to assist. I know some Chapters and Divisions are already doing an excellent job of this but we can all do more.

I reminded you at the beginning of the year that "The Georgia Rehabilitation Association (GRA) is a membership organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities through education and advocacy." Do not forget this as we roll into 2013.

Since I am reflecting on the beginning of the year, I want to reiterate something that I have already said: "I would like to close by thanking you all for your continued dedication, support, and desire to serve those that need our assistance. We are a strong force in Georgia, still leading the nation in membership but we must always strive to be better and do more. I have and always will encourage you all to find your "active voice" because silence will only extinguish the flame that was started so long ago."

Best wishes and continued success in 2013 to you all.

Jennifer A. Howell, 2012 GRA President

GEORGIA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION

BOARD MEMBERS, CHAPTER & DIVISION PRESIDENTS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS

2013

President

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President Elect

* Mike Pryor
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Secretary

* Angie Rhudy
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Treasurer

* LaDetria King
706 832-6679 cell

* Executive Committee

Board Members

Class of 2013

* Lauri Tuten
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Class of 2015

Brian Spillers
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Mary Ellen Mendiratta
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Scott Jackson
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Carmella Jennings
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Local Chapter Presidents

South
Kim Bennett
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West
Jason Williams
2200 61st Street
Valley AL 36854
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Division Presidents

GARL
Ed Leyseth

* Only GRA Officers, Elected Board Members, and Local Chapter and Division Presidents vote at the GRA Board Meetings

Committee Chairs

Administrative Policy
Jennifer Howell
(see past president info)

Archives
Kay Harbin , Co-Chair
PO Box 1000
RWSIR
Warm Springs GA 31830
Ann.jones@gvra.ga.gov

GEORGIA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION

BOARD MEMBERS, CHAPTER & DIVISION PRESIDENTS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS

2013

Jason Williams, Co-Chair
(See previous contact info - Archives Committee)

Awards

Lauri Tuten
(See previous contact info - Board Member 2013)

Building & Modifications

Ken Hise
243 S. Main St
Cleveland GA 30528
706-348-4882
Kenneth.hise@gvra.ga.gov

Certification

Paige Tidwell
(See previous contact info - Board Member 2014)

Conference

Janie Fuller
(See previous contact info—VP)

Credentials

Cheryl Braswell
bonabeth@yahoo.com

Education & Advocacy

Cheryl Meadows Ussery, Co-Chair
2228 Starling Street
Brunswick GA 31520
912-264-3141 w
912-270-1683 c
share4@bellsouth.net

Jennifer Howell, Co-Chair
(see past president info)

Finance

LaDetria King
(See previous contact info—Treasurer)

Finance Review

Patsy G Morris
PO Box 1606
Albany GA 31702
229-293-6076 w
229-873-1342 c
888 890-1612 f
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Hospitality

Dana Skelton-Sanders, Co-Chair
(see previous contact info—Board Member 2012)

Mary Ellen M, Co- Chair

Marketing

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Newsletter

Raj Pagadala
Rajesh.pagadala@gvra.ga.gov

Nominations

Jennifer Howell
(See previous contact info - past president)

Strategic Planning

Mike Pryor
(See previous contact info - President elect)

Public Relations

Kim Bennett
(See previous contact info - Local Chapter President - South)

Remembrance

LaDetria King
(See previous contact info - Treasurer)

Scholarships

Lauri Tuten
(see previous contact info—Board Member 2013)

Resolutions

Frank Krause
(See previous contact info - Board Member 2014)

Special Projects

Inger Neal
(See previous contact info - Board Member 2014)

Fundraising

Mike Pryor
(See Previous contact info - President elect)
Myndi Hoffman
(See previous contact info - Board Member 2014)

Website

Raj Pagadala
(See previous contact info - Newsletter)

Ex-Officio

(GRA members who hold office within NRA or SERNRA or any division thereof)

NRA Board Members

SERNRA Rep to NRA Board

Frank Krause
(See previous contact info - Board member 2014)
Jason Williams, Co-Chair
(See previous contact info - Local Chapter President - West)

SERNRA Rep to ARTS (National)

Ellen Longinio
697 Stratford Green
Avondale Estates GA 31002
404-788031014 c
ellen697@yahoo.com

GRA Rep to SERNRA Board

Frank Krause
(See previous contact info—Board Member 2014)

SERARSS Board

Cheryl Williamson - President

**GEORGIA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEMBERS, CHAPTER & DIVISION PRESIDENTS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS
2013**

Jannie Fuller - Board Member
Patsy Morris - Treasurer

(See previous contact information -
SERNRA rep to ARTS - National)

GRA Contact Administrative Assistant
Ellen Longino

GRA Archives Committee Report

The GRA Archives Committee has been working diligently to scan and digitize all records of our professional association over the past year. It is estimated that approximately 50% of the documents, photos, and reports have been scanned to date. This is quite an accomplishment considering that we had, at one time, dozens of boxes of archived material that needed to be processed. A special thanks goes to Kay Harbin and Bruce Dukes, who have taken on the workload to scan and archive these items. Also, thanks to RWSIR and Mike Shadix for allowing us to store these items in Warm Springs. Fundraising continues on the planned Ann Johnson Heritage Center at RWSIR and GRA/NRA will have space to display items of historic significance in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kay Harbin and Jason Williams

GRA Archives Committee

GRA Membership Committee Report

The Membership committee presented a successful new member orientation at the conference with 20 new members attending. Information, motivation and a heartfelt welcome were conveyed by the membership chairperson, Jennifer Howell, GRA president and Ed James, GRA Vice President. Also, the Janice Black Spirit Award was awarded to Larry Shedd during the awards breakfast.

The Racehorse perpetual trophy was awarded to the Northeast chapter for recruiting the most members. They recruited 10, claiming the trophy from the Highlands chapter who recruited 8.

The South chapter came in 3rd by recruiting 6.

Angie Rhudy of the Highlands chapter received the cash prize of \$50 for recruiting the most members during the membership contest. Donna Jo Salhany's name was drawn out of all of the new members to receive the \$25 in the membership contest. Approximately 29 new members were recruited in 2012. Local chapter presidents are strongly encouraged to inform the membership chair when a new member joins.

GRA remains the largest chapter in the Nation with 449 members. Anyone interested in welcome to join in on the NRA membership conference call which will be held on Monday, Dec. 10 11:00 CST.

Regina Watts, M.Ed, CRC

Counseling & Special Needs Coordinator

Albany Technical College

1704 South Slappey Blvd

Albany , GA 31701

GRA Chapter News - Highlands GRA Chapter

25 Highlands Chapter members attended the annual conference in Savannah. Many members were assigned to conference committees throughout the year. *Ed James, GRA Vice-President, was responsible for organizing the conference this year. Angie Rhudy served on the Registration Committee; Wayne Denson served on the Door Prize Committee; Gwen Raines and Tamika Wright served on the Hospitality Committee.*

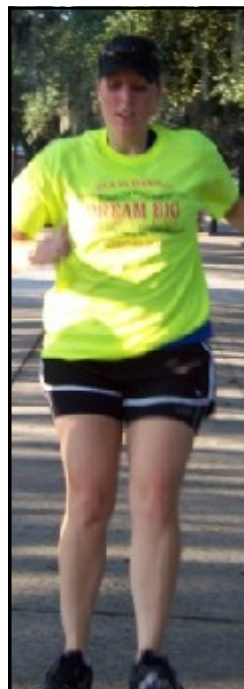
The Highlands Chapter helped with getting the following donations for the conference registration bags: Old Mill Kettle Corn, Little Debbie snack cakes, Walker County Farm Bureau peanuts, Convergys chip-clips, and Moon Pies.

The Chapter also helped with getting door prize donations from the following: Rock City, Ruby Falls, Paula Deen's Restaurant, Wild Adventures Theme Park, Costco Membership, Six Flags Over Georgia, Zoo Atlanta, Tellus Museum, Stone Mountain Park and Gwen Rains purchased and donated 2 bottles of wine from the Georgia Winery.

Tamika Wright assembled a big basket of Georgia Bulldog items and donated it to the GARL Auction.

The Chapter presented a monetary donation to the Wounded Warrior Project during the conference. Large plastic containers were displayed around the region for several months collecting donations prior to the conference.

There was a low turnout for the 5K Participation Walk/Run race held at Forsyth Park in Savannah.



Lila Guerra won 1st place; Laura Gall won 2nd place, and Carl McRae won 3rd place. Plaques were awarded to winners. All registrants received bright green t-shirts commemorating the event.



For the Candidate's Social, all Highlands members brought beverages to serve. A Mardi-Gras theme was used. Brian Spillers prepared red beans, and Gwen and Greg Raines prepared rice. All three candidates Angie Rhudy, Scott Jackson and Brian Spillers provided items for the conference registration bags. Each of the three candidates were elected to their State GRA offices: Angie Rhudy – Secretary, Brian Spillers – Board Member at Large, and Scott Jackson – Board Member at Large. Ed James was previously elected to be GRA President during 2013.



Following the President's Reception, Wayne Denson performed a lip-sync to "Stray Cat Strut" in full cat-style face paint, outfit, and guitar in the Talent Show!

During the Awards Breakfast, Highlands Chapter member Twyla Crump was presented the "J. Ellies Moran Outstanding Leadership Award" for demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities during the past year.

The Highlands Chapter had a year-long fund raiser of selling polo shirts with an embroidered GRA logo.



GRA Chapter News - Highlands Chapter Activity Report

January 27

Highlands Chapter Meeting. 9 members and 1 guest attended. Officers for 2012 are as follows: Angie Rhudy, President; Gwen Raines, Secretary; Wayne Denson, Treasurer.

There was a decision to create an incentive for attending the Highlands Chapter meetings starting with the meeting on March 23, 2012. If a member attends all regular Highlands Chapter meetings (not including the annual conference) the member's name will go into a drawing for \$150.00 at the end of the year. The Highlands Chapter will be having our 2nd annual 5K walk/run during the conference in Savannah.

The Highlands Chapter plans to host an Ethics Training in the fall.

March 23

Highlands Chapter Meeting: 10 members and 3 guests attended. The President showed the group the "Race Horse Award for Membership Recruitment" that the Highlands Chapter won for 2011.

Kathy Joule joined the Highlands Chapter.

The Highlands Chapter donated aluminum can tabs to the local Shiners association in the Rome area. We also

donated aluminum can tabs to the Ronald McDonald House in Chattanooga, Tennessee that supports Catoosa, Walker, Dade, and Chattooga counties in Georgia. The Highlands Chapter also donated a box full of new children's books to Kids for Christ in LaFayette, GA.

The President reminded the group to continue collecting money/change in the large plastic containers for the Wounded Warrior campaign.

Angie Rhudy announced she has agreed to run for the state office of Secretary for 2013. She is currently serving as a state Board Member-at-Large.

October is the National Disability Awareness month. The group discussed getting involved somehow to create awareness. Some suggestions included making banners to display in prominent locations, and making ribbons to wear. It was also suggested that we create spotlight booths for the local Employer Committees and the local Chambers of Commerce.

Ed James came up with the idea for us to make a fundraiser of ordering polo shirts with the GRA logo on them. The shirts would be royal blue. The chapter could begin taking orders for the shirts immediately, and continue for several months ending at the conference. Tamika Wright volunteered to find out the cost for making the shirts. Everyone agreed this would be a great fundraiser for the chapter.

Photographs were made of the 2012 Highlands Chapter officers, Gwen Raines (Secretary), Wayne Dens (Treasurer), and Angie Rhudy (President). A photo was submitted to Larry Shedd for the GRA website. A photo was also made of all those in attendance at the meeting.

April 19-20

Angie Rhudy and Ed James attended the Conference Committee and Board Meeting in Warm Springs.

May 6-9

Ed James attended the SERNRA Conference in Florida.

May 18

Highlands Chapter Meeting. 9 members attended. The following people have recently joined NRA/GRA: Scott Jackson, Betty Sue Kelly, Melissa Lawson, Hope Welch, Janell Smith, Deborah Thurman, and Hannah Harwood. This makes a total of 8 new members for 2012!

Hope Welch reported she is in the process of organizing a blood drive in the Rome VR office area. Dates and times will be shared when confirmed.

Brian Spillers and Scott Jackson have announced they are running for 2 of the 4 vacant Board Member-at-Large positions.

Motion was made, carried, and voted favorably that our Chapter purchase an ad for the conference program. The ad will be ¼ page and will cost \$75.00. The ad will be in support of our three political candidates.

GRA Chapter News - Highlands Chapter Activity Report

**May 18
continued**

Motion was made, carried, and voted favorably that our Chapter will donate \$50.00 to each of the three candidates for campaign materials and supplies. Each candidate will need to have campaign items to place in approximately 300 conference registration bags.

The 5K Walk/Run during the annual conference in Savannah is being planned. This year's race will be a "Prediction" race where participants predict the time it will take them to complete the walk/run prior to the start of the race. Awards will be given to the top three most accurate predictions. Transportation will be provided from the hotel to the race site (Forsyth Park) and back. Angie showed members the t-shirt logo. The shirts will be bright green with the logo being a black design with hot pink lettering. Highlands Chapter members were encouraged to sign up to complete the race themselves, or to volunteer to help work the race. Anyone who does not want to participate in the race, but wants to purchase a t-shirt, will still have to pay the race registration fee in order to get a shirt (\$20 up to August 10; \$25 afterwards).

GRA Polo shirts are currently for sale. All members were encouraged to purchase a shirt to wear during the conference. Shirts are \$22 (2X-\$24; 3X-\$25; 4X-\$27).

Another annual fund raiser for the Highlands Chapter is the Ethics Training in the fall. It is currently in the planning process.

Angie and Gwen told members about touring the Eagles Rest Ranch in Flintstone, GA. This is a Spirit Horse Therapeutic Riding facility that works with children and adults with disabilities. Photos of the ranch were shown. Needs of the ranch were shared, and Angie suggested the Chapter donate \$500.00 for the purchase of 5 youth-size archery bows, 1 canoe, and any remaining cash be used for day camp supplies. A motion was made and carried, followed by a unanimous vote, to approve the donation. A photo and article will be completed when the check is presented at the ranch.

June 6

Angie Rhudy and Ed James presented the \$500.00 donation to Eagles Rest Ranch for the purchase of archery bows and youth-size canoes.

July 30

Highlands Chapter meeting. 12 members and 1 guest attended.

April 19-20

Angie asked for a vote that the chapter pay to place a 1/4 page ad for Fleet Feet Sports in the conference program for \$75. This ad is to thank the store for their assistance with the race. A motion was made, seconded, and carried favorably.

Candidate's Social: The social is scheduled for Wednesday, 9/5/12 at 6:00 pm. Our theme this year will be Mardi Gras with purple/green/gold colors. We will use beads, masks, feather boas, etc. Gwen and Wayne volunteered to cook red beans and rice to serve. Instead of serving mixed drinks, it was decided it would be easier to provide canned beer, and it would go better with the meal. It was decided that all members should purchase and bring 1 12-pack of beer to the conference for the social. Angie reminded candidates to gather and submit 300 items for the registration bags. Members were asked to sign up to work the social from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm or later.

Highlands Chapter Meeting during Conference: Angie announced there would be a Highlands Chapter meeting at the conference on Tuesday, September 4th, at 6:00 pm. This meeting will help the Chapter organize for the 5K walk/run, to schedule volunteers for all events, to organize the candidates' hospitality event, and so forth during the conference. Telephone numbers of members present were collected so that text messages can be sent for notifications during the conference.

Conference Door Prizes: Wayne Denson is a member of the Conference Door-Prize sub-committee and needs help gathering donated door-prizes for the conference. Members were asked to collect door-prizes and take them to the conference.

Talent Show: It was decided that our Chapter would have some type of act enter the conference talent show. Submit all suggestions to Angie as soon as possible.

GRA Chapter News - Highlands Chapter Activity Report

- August 24** Angie picked up donations from Old Mill Kettle Corn and from the Chattanooga Bakery (Moon Pies) for the conference.
- August 27** Gwen picked up donation of packs of peanuts from the Walker County Farm Bureau Insurance office for the conference.
- August 28** Angie picked up donations from McKee Bakery (Little Debbie) and from Convergys (chip clips) for the conference.
- September 2-7** 25 Members of the Highlands Chapter attended the GRA Annual Training Conference in Savannah.
- There was a low turnout for the 5K Participation Walk/Run race. Lila Guerra won 1st place; Laura Gall won 2nd place, and Carl McRae won 3rd place.
- Angie Rhudy (Secretary), Scott Jackson (Board Member at Large) and Brian Spillers (Board Member at Large) were all elected to their GRA offices.
- Wayne Denson performed a lip-sync to "Stray Cat Strut" in full cat-style face paint, outfit, and guitar in the Talent Show.

GRA Chapter News - Metro GRA Chapter

Great things have happened this year with the Metro Chapter and we are extremely proud of the things we have accomplished. Not only did we have an incredible Ethics training back in August, we've offered Lunch-n-Learn trainings on Customized Employment and the Discovery Process, as well as, Postsecondary Options: Transition to College. With a renewed spirit of giving, we contributed \$500 to the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund in honor of Gene Spalding. Gene was a Rehabilitation Engineer with GDOL-Vocational Rehabilitation Program who passed away in March 2011. We wanted to recognize his tireless work in helping individuals with disabilities overcome obstacles to employment through the use of assistive technology.

We will be ending the year with a BANG! We are hosting a Holiday party for Metro Chapter members at the Goodwill Industries, 3337 Buford Highway Northeast, Atlanta, Georgia, on Friday, December 14th at 12 pm. There will be free food, fun, and networking; you won't want to miss it. During our Holiday festivities, we will hold elections for the new leaders of the 2013 Metro GRA Board. If you are unable to attend and would like to vote using an absentee ballot, you may contact Michell at metrogra@gmail.com for a ballot.

The Metro Chapter has always considered Community Outreach an important part of who we are and what we do. A part of our outreach, in the past, has involved donating new toys to children during the holiday season. We are again soliciting the support of our members to donate new toys and bring them to the Holiday party. The toys will be delivered to Pride for Parents, a program that offers toys to local families at very affordable prices.

It has been an awesome year and we are very appreciative and grateful to our members for their support. There is more to come in 2013: The 7th Annual Ethics Training, Lunch and Learn Trainings, Community Outreach, and more.

Yours in Service,

Marilyn Butler

GRA Chapter & Division News - Northeast Chapter



The Northeast Chapter sponsored our 5th annual car show on October 13. As in each previous year, our show benefitted the Wounded Warrior Project. Prowler Boy Productions once again produced our show. This year we wanted to do something special for the veterans who were showing their cars and others who were in the audience. The Color Guard from North Georgia College and State University presented the Colors to the veterans in the audience. Prowler Boy Productions opens each show with the national anthem, played from the DJ's tent. The DJ asked all veterans to gather in front of his tent, and then the Color Guard advanced. Trophies and plaques were awarded to winners chosen by our professional judge. Northeast members Beverly Raznoff and Tamie Roper won Top 10 plaques.

GRA Chapter News - West GRA Chapter

West GRA purchased an advertisement in the GRA Conference Program Book and had several members to attend this training event as well. We are recruiting officers for the following positions in 2013:

President	President Elect	Secretary
Treasurer	Board Members at Large	

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Williams, West GRA President

GRA Chapter News - GAMRC Chapter

GAMRC would like to express appreciation for the time and effort our new board members have pledged to give for the upcoming year. Please join me in welcoming the new board members:

Michell Temple	Barbara Richards
Marcia Blanding	Lutrell Thomas

We are expecting to offer, in the upcoming year, events and trainings that highlight the needs of multicultural populations with disabilities as well as educate rehabilitation practitioners. If you would like to contribute your time to advancing the mission of GAMRC, please contact us via email at gamrc2012@gmail.com.

GRA 2012

M E M O R I E S

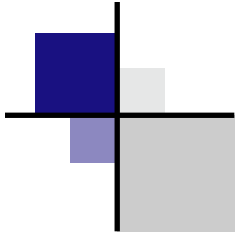


"I want to extend a BIG Thank you to all of the 2012 Conference Committee. You all excelled and emphasized "Dream Big Dare to Fail". The conference, attendance, networking and of course all the social activities were GRaAt. I look forward to seeing all of you at St. Simons in 2013.."

- Ed James, Vice President,

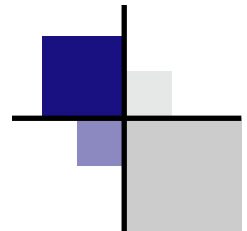
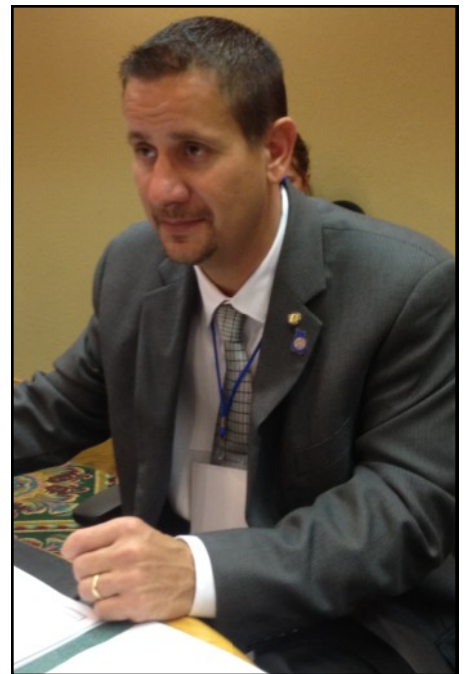
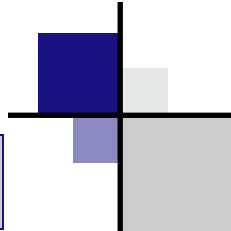






GRA 2012

MEMORIES





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SAVE THE DATE



August 21-23, 2013
for the
GRA 2013 Training
Conference
At
Sea Palms Resort
On Saint Simons Is-

Wonderful Training
Beautiful Setting
Great Networking
Hope to see you there!





2013 Government Affairs Summit

March 17-19, 2013

Washington Marriott, Washington, D.C.

Registration Form

Section A: Badge Information

Please type name, company, city and state as it should appear on badge.

Name _____

Name on badge _____

Organization/Agency _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone _____

E-Mail Address _____

First Time Attendee Yes _____ No _____

Membership Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Attending Pre-Seminar for first timers? _____ Yes _____ No

Certification

_____ CRC _____ CWA _____ CVE

Section B: Accessibility Needs

Please describe reasonable accommodations; including any special food requests (must be received by February 25, 2013)

Section C: Registration fees

Pre-Registration

Includes Training Sessions (CRC, CWA and CVE credit applied for)

	Early Bird Postmarked by February 25, 2013	Regular Postmarked after February 25, 2013
Member	_____ \$235	_____ \$255
Non-Member	_____ \$315	_____ \$335
Student Member	_____ \$150	_____ \$170
Student Non-Member	_____ \$190	_____ \$210

A \$25 service charge will be added for on-site registration.

- Payment or purchase order must accompany registrations.
- "Early Bird" registration must include payment and be postmarked on or before February 25, 2013.
- **"Early Bird" registration postmarked after February 25, 2013 will be invoiced at the regular fee.**

Badges must be worn to all events to be eligible for certification credit.

Section D: Refund Policy

A \$25 processing fee will be assessed on ALL cancellations before February 25, 2013. There will be NO REFUNDS after February 25, 2013.

Section E: Payment Information

If paying by check or money order, print this completed form and send along with your check payable to National Rehabilitation Association, PO Box 150235, Alexandria, Virginia 22315.

Credit Card: MC _____ VISA _____

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature _____

Section F: Accommodations

Hotel Information

Please call the hotel directly to make room reservations. **Mention the National Rehabilitation Association 2013 Government Affairs Summit for Special reduced room rates.** Special rate cut off date is **February 22, 2013**. Reservations received after February 22, 2013 will be accepted on a space available basis. ALL changes, cancellations, etc., of hotel reservations should be made directly with the hotel.

Washington Marriott,
221 22nd Street NW,
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 872-1500