

Gulf Bend provides a needed service in the area

December 11, 2008 - 6:06 p.m.

We know of no harder-working group of people dedicated to the public good than the administration and staff at Gulf Bend Mental Health-Mental Retardation Center.

Created as part of the Texas Mental Health and Mental Retardation Act of 1965, the Victoria facility opened in 1970, and the Gulf Bend Center has been an absolute godsend to countless people in need.

The center's mission sounds rather simple: "To improve the quality of life of persons and their families who are challenged with problems related to mental illness and mental retardation."

But that runs the gamut of human emotional needs, from addictions and phobia to severe mental disorders.

Executive Director Don Polzin and his staff of professionals seem never to tire in their efforts to help the people they serve - folks who often are helpless without them.

Gulf Bend Center recently moved into its expansive new quarters at 6502 Nursery Road after outgrowing its former home on Airline Road years ago.

Replacing the old cramped quarters is a three-tiered setup in which patient services, business offices and administration each have a floor of their own.

State Rep. Geanie Morrison and state Sen. Glenn Hegar showed up to voice their support for the important work being done by the center.

"You appreciate something that a lot of people in Texas do not," the senator told those who gathered for the formal dedication of the new Gulf Bend Center. He was referring to the treatment of mental illness and retardation.

Humankind has created a high-stress world in which high anxiety can lead to all sorts of problems involving the workings of the mind.

Perhaps never in our history has a place like Gulf Bend been more needed.

And now, thanks to the M.G. & Lillie A. Johnson Foundation, and with Gulf Bend helping itself with the sale of bonds and by giving funds of its own, a shiny new place of hope has arisen.

Congratulations, Gulf Bend, and keep up your vital work for the people of Victoria, Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca and Refugio counties.

This editorial reflects the views of the Victoria Advocate's editorial board.