

It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like BCRC

by Pat Healey

The CenterPlace building is looking more and more like a BCRC building every day. When entering the parking lot, the directional sign at the first turn identifies CENTERPLACE, then points visitors in the proper direction. The most obvious change can be seen where BCRC, Inc. now shines brightly in large, bold blue and green letters over the main entrance. The lighted sign makes BCRC's presence known at night as well. Upon entering the building, the newly carpeted vestibule houses another large, colorful sign letting visitors know they have reached BCRC, INC. The upstairs office and program areas are well marked with new signs identifying offices and locations. The delivery doors in the rear of the building are clearly marked, now making sure deliveries arrive at their proper destination.



Signs aren't the only change. BCRC was the recipient of a grant allowing the construction of a new safety fence behind the building. Additional lighting, also funded by a grant, offers extra safety and security, while new security cameras have their eyes open and watching all the time.

The new carpeting found in the front vestibule is actually safety tread and is already being greatly appreciated by BCRC evaluation clients and clients of LIFE of Beaver County.

Each day, both big and little changes occur in preparation for the day when BCRC clients will use the building as their new production center. ■

Beaver County Mental Health Transformation is Exemplary

by Frank Shialabba

Beaver County has been identified by the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services as one of four counties in Pennsylvania whose Mental Health Employment Transformation efforts are considered exemplary. Beaver County was chosen for "outstanding work in expanding and improving supported employment programming for individuals with psychiatric disabilities." BCRC's WIN Services will join Beaver County Behavioral Health to provide mentoring services to another county that is in the initial phase of its employment transformation.

The Mental Health Employment Transformation is now part of a larger county effort called Project Recovery. The Project Recovery movement was the result of a grant

written by Nancy Jaquette of BCBH. WIN Services Director, Sheila Silbaugh and Peer Specialist, Dawn Morningstar-Hall, will coordinate with Kim Hall, Project Recovery Project Director and Gregory Hill, Coordinator of the Employment Arm of Project Recovery, to facilitate mentoring services.

County officials will provide expertise in grant opportunities, creation of mobile employment peer specialists and peer leadership counsels, providing vocational supports within the criminal justice system and getting key stakeholders to make work a priority.

WIN Services staff will provide technical assistance on how to build strong partnerships with the business community and other agencies involved in the employment process, and the importance of developing a strong relationship between the Employment Transformation and psychiatric rehabilitation services. ■

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EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH SPEAK OUT

by Mike Little
and Gloria Beighey

As spring blossomed with new colors and warmer temperatures, BCRC bloomed with three new Employees of the Month. Aaron Harris was chosen for April, Daryl Evans for May and Tiffany Strickler for June.

April's winner Aaron Harris, feels he won the award through "hard work and spending time doing the right thing." Aaron started in the School to Work Program and has worked at BCRC for five years. He believes he learns to do new things by trying a variety of simulated jobs that keep him motivated. Aaron is very content to continue working at BCRC in the future.

Daryl Evans, who has been working at BCRC since 1993, feels he was chosen for this award because he keeps coming to work and giving a good effort. Daryl likes to try different jobs, as well. He's so happy at BCRC that he wishes to continue working at the production center for a long time.

The June winner, Tiffany Strickler, thinks the best way to be an award-winner is to use appropriate language at work. Tiffany also started in the School to Work Program and moved to the production center after graduation. What helps her stay motivated? She believes it's working on different types of jobs. Tiffany's future plans are to work at a daycare center. ■

Safety Lights

*Follow these tips this fall
and be safe.*

Space heaters need space

Remember to leave at least three feet of space around your heater. Unplug it when it is not being used.

Test your carbon dioxide detector

During cold weather, test the carbon dioxide detector near your home's bedrooms.

Never heat with an oven

On chilly autumn mornings, avoid the temptation to heat your house with a gas range or open oven door. Unvented fumes can build up to levels that can make you ill.

Replace fire extinguishers

Check the date on your fire extinguisher to make sure that it has not expired. If it has expired or discharged, be sure to replace it promptly.

Test your smoke detectors

Replace faulty batteries or if necessary replace the detector.



Consumers Say Aurora is Outstanding

The results of a recent Aurora Psychiatric Rehabilitation interview of 20 program participants are very encouraging. Eighteen out of 20 interviewees felt comfortable expressing their opinions and all 20 were satisfied with their practitioner.

One consumer expressed his comments very eloquently stating, "I love the people at Aurora. First, they made me feel very at ease, which is critical to recovery. They taught me and gave me the tools necessary to accomplish the goals I am working on, on my own. They worked with me to find out exactly what I need and [they] work hard to help me get there with lots of compassion and a little tough love."

Other comments include, "The staff is wonderful and peers are supportive," "My health has improved" and "It's like a gem in Beaver County. It is amazing and outstanding." ▶

Two Honored by PIBH

Justin Ehrenberg, who cleans the state police barracks for BCRC, and Joanna Greco, BCRC Director of Contract Acquisition, were recently honored by PIBH (PA Industries for the Blind and Handicapped).

Justin was chosen as runner up for the Nettie Mann Achievement Award at this year's annual banquet in Harrisburg, PA. Justin was honored as "an individual who shows exceptional work ethics on state contracts." Justin received a plaque and cash award and was profiled in the PIBH newsletter. He was most excited about meeting guest

speaker Scott McIntyre. Scott was a runner up on one of the recent seasons of American Idol. He plays piano, sings and composes music, and he is an artist who happens to be blind.

Also recognized by PIBH was Joanna Greco, BCRC Director of Contract Acquisition. Joanna was recently named to the Board of Directors of PIBH. Joanna will be involved in future PIBH planning meetings. ■



"I've Got It"

by Frank Shialabba

When confronted with a new job task at Kuhn's Market in Hopewell Township, 28 year old Carl Boler smiles confidently and simply says "I've got it." Yes, Carl Boler has it. He has a job that he loves and the self-esteem to work independently.

Carl always had a kind, gentle and soft-spoken manner. However, when he was referred to BCRC's WIN Services by OVR Counselor Kathy Smith, he didn't have the opportunity to use these assets at a regular job. He worked three hours a week making boxes for a local pizza company, but he wanted to do more. With the help of WIN and OVR, Carl started a job at Kuhn's Market in October 2010. According to WIN Employment Specialist Laura Foss, "Carl was a quick learner. This was the first time I had ever job coached someone, and Carl was just a joy. He made it easy for me. After only two weeks, he knew the basics of the job and I was able to start fading."

Carl's work habits are impeccable. Along with bagging customer's groceries, he always looks for extra ways to help out his employer. He is quick to help with carts, clean the floors and find any number of little jobs around the store. Ms. Foss states, "Carl sincerely wants to do a good job. I gave him a written checklist of his duties and he now has a mental checklist which he uses with great skill to complete his job tasks."

Along with a wonderful work ethic, Carl's personality is valued greatly by his employer. Ms. Foss describes Carl as, "A very likeable young man who has just the finest manners. He is one of the most polite and sincere persons I've ever met and he treats the customers with such respect."

Carl's employer is confident that he will do an outstanding job, and Carl smiles broadly as he proudly pronounces, "I've got it." ■

Board Acknowledges Staff Safety Record

The BCRC Board of Directors acknowledged the superb safety record of BCRC's staff with a reception at the First Presbyterian Church in Beaver, PA on Tuesday, June 28. Executive Director, Paulette Miller, praised staff's efforts to protect the welfare of all and maintain low insurance rates through exemplary safety practices. Refreshments were served and gift cards from the BCRC Board of Directors were presented to staff for maintaining safe work practices. The BCRC staff wishes to thank the Board of Directors for this thoughtful and greatly appreciated acknowledgement. ■



BCRC Staffer Collaborates On Work of Art

BCRC Director of Contract Acquisition collaborated with nine children from the Keystone Blind Association to create a sculpture for Scott McIntyre, who was a guest speaker at this year's Pennsylvania Industries for the Blind and Handicapped Banquet. Mr. McIntyre is a singer who also happens to be blind.

The piece of art, represented in heart shaped balloons, was done in honor of the song *Heart Strings* by McIntyre. While the children sculpted the hearts, Ms. Greco "helped put the piece together."

Many stories are told through the sculpture. One of the beautiful pieces feels more like a circle because the artist wanted Scott to know that her heart was inside the piece (not showing on the outside). Another looks incomplete with the outside cracked and dimpled. This was done intentionally so that the dimples of the artist's fingers could be felt by Scott's fingers.

The plaster hand at the base of the piece was handled by all the students so they could feel that their contribution was part of the entire work of art. ■



Children's hearts spring forth in original sculpture.

Two Lives Touch at Annual Picnic

by Ashley Greenawalt



Joanna (left) and Linda (right) meet at picnic.

Two remarkable women, who have often been isolated from other people, connected at this year's annual client picnic through sign language and shared experience. These two individuals, Linda Gatto and Janna Nelson, met for the first time and touched each other in a way that few people could understand.

Linda Gatto, a woman who is deaf, has made remarkable progress during a long and difficult road. After initially resisting Aurora Services, she found a whole new world of communication through deaf and

hearing peers and staff who include her in their conversations.

Since joining Aurora, Janna Nelson, who is not able to see or hear, has participated in psycho-educational groups and mobile psych rehab with an interpreter. Janna has been a great asset to her peers as she provides valuable feedback. She has been accepted by other group members who love to spend time with her.

When introduced for the first time at the annual BCRC picnic, Linda was aware that Janna was also deaf and wanted to meet her. Linda immediately understood the need to sign in Janna's hands. She bravely and confidently communicated with Janna, asking her questions and telling her about her new shirt. Janna was pleased to meet Linda and was delighted that Linda described the flag on her shirt and guided her to feel the beading.

Janna later told Aurora staff that it was nice to meet someone who understands her deafness, and Linda echoed this sentiment with a big smile. Linda grabbed Janna's hands and held them with the pride and happiness of new-found friendship. This experience has touched everyone who knows Linda and Janna, and the value of their friendship goes beyond what words can express. ■



Janna and Linda's hands touch in friendship.

Congratulations to the amazing and outstanding consumers and staff of Aurora Services. ■

SPOTLIGHT ON: **Robin Devine**

According to Robin Devine, spare time is something that other people have. She is a single mother



who works, teaches, goes to school and raises a seven-year old daughter. Robin was recently hired to join BCRC's secretarial staff.

Robin brings a world of talent and ambition to her secretarial job at BCRC. She has a daily schedule that most people would find daunting. Along with working eight hours a day as a secretary and raising her child, she teaches at the Community College of Beaver County in the evening. She teaches Office Technology at CCBC which includes classes like medical terminology, billing, medical transcription and the Microsoft Office applications.

Robin also attends Geneva College in pursuit of her Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership. She anticipates receiving this degree on September 21 of this year. Currently, Robin has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources from Geneva and hopes to get her doctorate degree in the future.

This ambitious young lady, who came to Beaver County from Madison, Wisconsin eight years ago, loves her new job. She states, "on my previous job I worked mostly by myself. I love being around people and especially the friendly atmosphere of BCRC."

BCRC would like to extend a warm-hearted welcome to Robin Devine, an exceptionally ambitious young woman and a wonderful addition to our staff. ■

Paulette Miller
Executive Director

Competitive Edge
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Shop Talk

by Kay Podbielski

The 2011 Chairman's Award was presented to BCRC on July 30 at the annual Scouting for Food luncheon. Seven of our clients attended the banquet to accept the award which was presented by the Greater Pittsburgh Boy Scouts Council. For the 15th consecutive year, BCRC exceeded our annual goal in collected food items for those in need. The clients collected more than 1000 food items which were delivered to the food bank at the Salvation Army in Beaver Falls.



Two hundred people attended this year's BCRC picnic which was held at John A. Antoline Park in Monaca. Monaca Recreation has sponsored this event since 1976. We are ▶

so appreciative of all of the hard work that results in such a great recreational event for our clients year after year. The most popular activity of the picnic, (aside from eating the delicious lunch of course), was the softball game complete with team hats and a play by play announcer. The clients were thrilled to hear their names over the public address system as they took the field or stepped up to the plate. Bingo players took to the shade in hopes that their lucky number will be called, while music lovers danced to the tunes of the disc jockey in the pavilion.



Step right up for the safety carnival to be held on Friday, September 16, 2011.

HR Director Leads Seminars

BCRC has always felt a responsibility to give to the community above and beyond the day-to-day contributions of our programs.

BCRC Director of Human Resources Carolyn McNicol participated in the recent Career Week sponsored by Penn State University, Beaver Campus. Ms. McNicol lead seminars focused on professional career development for students. The seminars included resume review, interviewing skills, and networking initiatives.

Fall Open House

Gifts Delivered, 1517 6th Avenue
New Brighton, PA

September 13 - September 16, 10am-4pm
September 15 until 8pm

Fall wreaths and arrangements, candy bouquets,
new Steeler items, scarecrow lighted glass
blocks, embroidered gifts, Wind & Willow dips,
soups and cheese ball mixes

Delivery, UPS shipping and postal services
are available

724-847-4513 or 724-847-1306