

**Creating Chocolate Waterfalls
and Chocolate Dreams**

by Frank Shialabba

You may not know that there is a chocolate waterfall in downtown New Brighton, PA. However, Adrienne Agostinelli, an employee of Rosalind’s Candy Castle for the past 11 years, has been well aware of this wonder.

Adrienne places a multitude of items on a conveyor belt which takes them to the chocolate waterfall, where they are covered in Rosalind’s scrumptious chocolate. Adrienne is the “gate keeper” as food items like peanut butter, pretzels and pecans must first pass through her.

It is only during the last year that BCRC returned to provide job support to Adrienne. WIN Employment Specialist, Virginia Chaklos notes that Adrienne has made “tremendous progress in a number of areas during that time.” She describes Adrienne as “very capable, and a quick worker who has a good memory for procedures.”

Ms. Chaklos states, “Adrienne is usually upbeat and friendly to her coworkers.” She feels that Adrienne has become much more independent in the last year and cites the fact that “she now works in the afternoon without any support.”

WIN Director Sheila Silbaugh says, “Adrienne is becoming much more confident. We believe in her abilities, and she realizes now that she can do many things independently. Adrienne has grown in her ability to follow procedures and to competently complete her job in a timely manner.”

In addition to increasing her work speed, Adrienne is much more adept at quality control. She is proud of her new found independence, and she looks forward to creating many more chocolate dreams for us lucky chocolate lovers. ■

**Study Will Determine Date for
Production Center Move**

by Frank Shialabba

Plans are progressing steadily for BCRC’s move to the new 80,000 square foot space at 131 Pleasant Drive, Aliquippa.

According to Executive Director, Paulette Miller, “BCRC’s Board of Directors has approved a feasibility study for renovation of the clients’ work area. Plans are being made so that BCRC’s clients are as comfortable as possible in their new home.” Ms. Miller states that the study will look at such things as accessible entryways, updated lighting and heating, security systems, and new signage. She believes that “more definite dates on moving BCRC’s production centers should be known when the study has been completed.”

Significant progress has already been made in establishing a solid infrastructure at the new location. A complete and updated IT Network has been installed to facilitate communication, and a decision on a permanent phone system is almost complete.

While BCRC’s evaluation, MH Respite and Work Ready programs have already moved to the new building, the accounting and Human Resource Departments will move in the very near future.

While the new location in Center Township is being prepared for BCRC’s clients, the former site of BCRC’s evaluation program (509 5th Avenue, New Brighton) is being readied for sale. Interested parties should contact Ms. Miller at BCRC.

Executive Director Miller has been searching for a site with room for expansion for “almost twenty years.” She believes that the new location has limitless potential for future growth. She states, “It will allow BCRC to be innovative in the development of new programs to meet the needs of our clients.” ■



**BCRC’s current Production Center
pictured.**

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**EMPLOYEES
OF THE
MONTH SPEAK OUT**

*By Mike Little and
Gloria Beighey*

The winter months have been cold and dreary, but the sun keeps shining at BCRC. Three individuals were voted as Employees of the Month for January, February, and March. Robert Tinker, Cynthia Russell and Chris Worthy were the award winners.

Robert Tinker, the January Employee of the Month, believes he has been working at BCRC for about four years. He says “I work very hard” at keeping a positive attitude. Robert is very happy to receive this award, and he feels his hard work made it possible. Robert plans to keep working at BCRC.

The February award winner is Cynthia Russell, or Cyndee, as she is known by many. Cyndee has been with BCRC for seven years, and she is very proud to receive this honor. Cyndee keeps her good work attitude by “taking it day by day.” She feels hard work is the reason she won. Cyndee’s future plans are to find a job working with kids.

Chris Worthy is the March winner, and he truly loves winning the award. Chris started with the School to Work program in 2000. He believes the only way to win the award is to stay focused on “doing work the right way.” Chris plans to “keep on working.” ■

BCRC is Employer of the Year

by Frank Shialabba

Mental Health Association Director, Joseph Cook and Senator Elder Vogel presented BCRC with the 2011 Employer of the Year Award at the MHA annual dinner, held May 19 at the Berkshire in Beaver Falls. Mr. Cook cited the many people that BCRC has helped to achieve recovery over the years through our psychiatric rehabilitation and employment services. Senator Vogel also presented BCRC with a Senatorial Citation recognizing BCRC for exemplary service to persons with mental illness in Beaver County. The award was accepted by Executive Director Paulette Miller, who thanked her staff for the role they have played in positively impacting the lives of numerous persons with mental illness. In addition to helping with recovery and providing employment services, BCRC has hired numerous individuals as peer specialists at Aurora and WIN Services. The highlight of the evening was one consumer, who thanked Aurora Services for constantly providing hope and support over the years. This consumer has achieved true recovery and is currently serving as director of the Phoenix Center. ■



Safety Lights

by Cindy Kirkpatrick

Summer's Coming, Protect Yourself

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. Protection from sun exposure is important all year round, not just during the summer or at the beach. Ultra-violet (UV) rays can reach you on cloudy and hazy days, ▶

Her Levity and Longevity Will Be Missed

by Frank Shialabba

Marlene Shialabba has worked at the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center longer than anyone in the history of the agency (41 years). Her retirement, July 1, 2011, marks the end of an era and the passing of the baton to a new generation of employees.

Marlene began her employment at the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center in 1970. At that time, BCRC was known as the Lintz Workshop and had only been in existence for eight years. The agency served only clients with intellectual disabilities and was limited to traditional workshop activities. Marlene has witnessed many positive changes over the years, and she is valued by her coworkers as an integral part of that progress.

Job Coach Supervisor Pat Sullivan calls the staff lunchroom, "Marlene's domain." She says, "While we all take turns cleaning the kitchen, Marlene goes above and beyond the call of duty. In addition to making sure the lunchroom is spotless, she makes sure there is plenty of iced tea and coffee for her coworkers."

Program Specialist Karen Buccelli says she will miss what she calls "Marleneisms." "She leaves the longest detailed messages of anyone I know, and if anything is sitting out it goes in the refrigerator. Nothing ever spoils at the 601 building with Marlene here. She also watches out for the clients, and alerts us if anyone is experiencing problems." Client Services Director, Kathy Davis states, "That's Marlene's way of taking care of us. She is the first one to help out and the first one to remind us if we forget to do something. She seldom complains and she believes that her job extends beyond her regular duties to help the clients and her coworkers wherever needed."



Marlene is doing what comes natural, helping out.

It is obvious that the bond between Marlene and her coworkers is great. That bond is particularly great with the clients and staff of the 601 Production Center where she has worked for so many years. Job Coach Supervisor, Pat Sullivan states, "I will miss Marlene's sense of humor and spirit of fun. She is always ready to help and assist her coworkers, especially the clients. She always has time for them and she is always very encouraging."

Marlene may be leaving us, but her kindness and caring will never be forgotten. ■



Marlene's never afraid to laugh at herself.

PIBH Orders BCRC's Candy Bouquet Roses for Annual Event

by Ashley Greenawalt

BCRC's Gifts Delivered Featuring Candy Bouquet will be making 500 small red roses for the Pennsylvania Industries for the Blind and Handicapped (PIBH). Director of Contract Acquisition, Joanna Greco, secured this work for BCRC as a newly appointed PIBH board member. The beautiful and edible red roses will be used as favors for the annual Nettie Mann Achievement Dinner in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

These roses were created under the direction of Job Coach, April Connolly and the process involved seven clients. The process of creating these unique roses involves using candy kisses and a red Mylar square. The candy is attached to a wire stem and secured by floral tape. This same floral tape is used to attach leaves and cellos to the stems. After a crystal ball is glued to the tip, the rose is given a tag noting the event attached with a colorful ribbon.

These classy and elegant roses are just one example of the many possible arrangements made within BCRC's Candy Bouquet. With this large order, Candy Bouquet workers stated, "We are excited to have such a wonderful order and honored to be represented at this outstanding event." To order an arrangement for your special occasion from Candy Bouquet, call 724-847-4513, Monday thru Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ■



WIN Services Tours the World

by Amanda Pullinger

Nearly 200 parents, agency representatives, clients and friends “toured” countries from around the world during WIN Services’ April 20 cultural event. Sheila Silbaugh, Director of Employment Services at WIN, explained that a tour to the cultural rooms at the University of Pittsburgh helped serve as an inspiration for this wonderful evening.



Marla wows the audience with her presentation.

The event was an effort to develop an appreciation for the broader world community. Over thirty countries were represented and forty different foods were offered. Flags and passports were made for display, jokes were told, songs were sung, and dances were performed. Needless to say, each guest left feeling as if they traveled the globe in just an evening.

In preparation, clients were given the opportunity to select a country of interest and then research cultural characteristics unique to each location such as foods, sports, languages, clothing, and currencies. With the assistance of staff, clients were then taught how to develop Power Point presentations to aid in the presentation of their research. On the night of the event, communication devices, sign language, and speeches were all utilized in the clients’ presentations.

Not only did the clients’ understanding of the world grow, but they also expanded a variety of skills from cooking to computer skills, from public speaking and performing to woodworking and sewing. It was an evening of development, growth, and affirmation. As Sheila put it, “Staff and clients have been the recipients of great accolades for their hard work and tremendous performances!”

For those who were unable to attend this event, you can still view the new photography exhibit on the first floor of the Aurora building. Over forty pictures are available for viewing, representing a myriad of perspectives and styles. It’s more than worth a look! ■



WIN participants pictured as they present “Egypt.”



Spotlight on: TJ Witterman

by Jennifer Gengarella

On December 10, 2010, TJ Witterman was hired as the facilities manager of the CenterPlace building.

Tackling the daunting job of planning the relocation of four buildings and numerous programs into one facility, TJ has met the challenge head on. With a background as a former estimator for an underground utilities company, and a position in international sales for a waterworks distributor, he has brought a unique

set of skills to manage this process.

One of TJ’s challenges is studying the feasibility of adding a 2nd floor to the warehouse section of the building. If approved, the second floor will enable BCRC to have adequate space for the future, as well as providing a warmer, brighter work area for BCRC’s clients.

Although TJ has only been with BCRC for four months, he already notes that one of the things he likes the best about working at BCRC is “the people I’ve been able to meet and work with. There seems to be a genuine attitude with the staff to make a positive impact in the lives of the people we serve.”

TJ enjoys his time in Pennsylvania after having relocated from Florida. He and his wife Elisa have three daughters Kaitlyn, five, Alina, three, and Emma, age one. T.J. notes that he and his family “enjoy the outdoors. He also describes himself as a “sports junkie” with a special fondness for the Penguins and Steelers. ■

as well as bright and sunny days. UV rays also reflect off of surfaces like water, cement, sand and snow. The CDC recommends these options for sun protection: when in the sun, seek shade, cover up, get a hat, wear sunglasses, and use sunscreen. The sun’s UV rays can damage the skin in as little as 15 minutes. Use a sunscreen assigned a SPF (sun protection factor) of at least SPF 15. The higher the number the more protection is provided. Don’t forget to reapply every 2 hours and to check the expiration date on the bottle. If there is no date, the shelf life is no more than three years. ■

Don’t We Look Good for Our Age?

50 Year Celebration Planned

by Pat Healey

Next year, 2012, BCRC will be 50 years old. BCRC may be getting older, but we’re also getting better, as accentuated by the purchase of our new building in Center Township. In the near future, plans for a 50th year celebration and grand opening for our new Center Township facility will be announced.

BCRC was founded in 1962 by a group of parents of individuals with mental retardation. During that time, BCRC has grown from nine clients to serving more than 700 today. In addition to prevocational and transitional employment programs, BCRC also provides habilitation, supported employment, psychiatric rehabilitation, vocational assessment, job readiness, mental health employment transformation, school to work transition, payment agent services, and vocational support for those involved with the juvenile justice system. These programs and the successes of our clients will be featured in the upcoming anniversary celebration. ■

Paulette Miller
Executive Director

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Shop Talk

By Kay Podbielski



The purpose of BCRC's School to Work program is to prepare students from participating school districts to transition from the school environment to the workplace. For some students, this involves volunteering in the activities department at Rochester Manor. The students help with games such as bingo and special holiday activities. Although the students are certainly having fun, they are also learning important skills such as planning activities, working within a budget, comparative shopping, meeting deadlines, communication and social skills, and public speaking. Most recently, the students prepared flower and candy gifts for the residents at Easter.

Trent Newman, a School to Work participant, is a very proud volunteer in training with the Beaver Falls Fire Department. Trent shared what he has learned with fellow students and staff by thoroughly explaining what the job involved as well as each part of his uniform and each piece of equipment. As part of his commitment, Trent reports to the station three days a week and on one weekend a month, he gets to spend the night.

Damian Perminter is a student who has taken his work in the STW program to the next level. Damian is a student in the Aliquippa School District who has obtained employment at the Embassy Suites in Moon Twp. He works as a pantry bus person servicing the breakfast buffet. You can spot Damian at the Embassy Suites typically on weekend mornings. Damian has also been participating in a paid work experience through Job Training of Beaver County at the Eat 'n Park restaurant in Center Twp. At Eat 'n Park, Damian's duties include dishwashing and prepping for the buffet.



As the school year comes to a close, BCRC would like to congratulate Trent, Damian, and all of the School to Work students on all of their accomplishments.