

Interest in Sign Language Classes Increases

by Pam DePace



BCRC's sign language classes have become the subject of increased interest in recent weeks. BCRC has received inquiries about the classes from a number of individuals in the community, including the Rochester Police Department. Law enforcement officials have begun to acknowledge a need to increase their knowledge of the deaf community, and their ability to communicate with persons who are deaf.

A recent article in the Beaver County Times highlighted the need for persons who are deaf to have avenues to express their needs and concerns. The ability to communicate with others is something that most people take for granted. To their credit, local officials have begun to recognize their need to be proactive in bridging the gap with persons who are deaf. BCRC provides an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance for persons who are deaf by requiring all staff to learn sign language. Staff is available to listen and interpret information for clients who are deaf.

BCRC hopes to bridge the gap between persons who are deaf and the general community by continuing to offer sign language classes at a minimal cost. Twelve persons participated in BCRC's Spring Sign Language class. Four persons, including three officers from the Rochester Police Department, have already signed up for the fall class. The cost of the class is thirty-five dollars; an optional sign language book is available for twenty dollars. The two hour classes are held on Wednesday evenings, and they last for eight weeks.

In addition to sign language classes, BCRC offers an interpreting service that assists persons who are deaf to communicate while they are at the doctor, court appearances, important meetings, etc.



BCRC is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities. For more information on any of BCRC's services for persons who are deaf, phone 724-847-1306 or visit their main office at 1517 Sixth Ave., New Brighton, PA.

BCRC Using New Software System

For the past year and a half, BCRC has been using a new software system, called Vertex. BCRC staff have been using the system for client payroll and funding and billing. BCRC job coaches are able to track all client jobs, activities and pay during the course of day. This data is entered into computers that are located near the work station of the job coaches in the Production Centers.

Recently, BCRC Program Specialists began training in the Consumer Trac portion of the Vertex Program. Program Specialists received twenty-four hours of training on the Consumer Trac system between the months of May and August.



BCRC continues to develop technical expertise in the program, while constantly adding client information to the system. Consumer Trac will enable BCRC to convert most of the client information files from paper to electronic formats. This puts BCRC in excellent position to transition to Pennsylvania's new PROMISE billing system which is an anticipated state requirement sometime after July, 2006.



Employees of the Month Speak Out

by Karen Buccelli,
Dennis Gibson,
Linda Glaab,
Sherry Lombardo

May's Employee of the Month, Randy Squire, has worked at BCRC for two years. His good work attitude comes to him naturally. He is a positive thinker, who has developed excellent work habits. According to Randy, the Employee of the Month Award "gave me a sense of accomplishment. I am proud that BCRC thought of me for the award." Randy has big plans for the future. He would like a job working in shipping & receiving. He has three goals. He would like to gain employment, purchase a car and live near his parents in Florida.



Rick Morrow, June's Employee of the Month, has worked at BCRC for eight years. He believes that he has developed into a good worker because he has been challenged to do difficult jobs at BCRC. Rick also feels that he has received excellent training and support. When notified that he was an award winner, Rick humbly



Employees (continued)

commented, "I was just doing my job." In the future, Rick would like to move into independent housing and continue to work at BCRC's community based work sites.



July's Employee of the Month, Cheryl Beightly, is a standout worker for BCRC's Gifts Delivered Featuring Candy Bouquet business. According to BCRC Job Coach, Susan Hill, "Cheryl is an outstanding worker and a true joy to have in Candy Bouquet." Cheryl attributes her positive attitude to the fact that "I really enjoy what I do." She feels, "very good about winning the award. I consider it a great honor." In the future, Cheryl would like to have a job in a flower shop so "I can use the skills that I have learned in Candy Bouquet."

Congratulations to our very deserving Employees of the Month.



School to Work, Candy Bouquet Impress at Fair

by Heather Frazzini

On June 18th, BCRC's School to Work staff attended the Mike Veon Children's Fair in Beaver Falls. BCRC set up an information booth and answered questions about BCRC and the School to Work Program. The booth was decorated

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World of Opportunity Opens to Dave Moffett

by Frank Shialabba

It's hard to ask for help, especially for someone who has learned to expect the worst from people. When role models have not been available, a person has little to guide him through life's travels. Dave Moffett had very little guidance in life, and his life experiences had not been good. That all changed when Dave entered the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center. He learned that trust was possible and help was available.

Dave blossomed in the supportive environment of BCRC. He learned that he had the potential to accomplish much in his life. Dave began to set goals, and he soon learned that those goals were within his reach. He became one of BCRC's best workers at one of the agency's community enclaves. He excelled at small parts assembly. Dave set his sights higher, however. He wanted a full time job in the community.

On May 22, 2000, through help from BCRC's Supported Employment Department and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Dave began employment at Advanced Alloys in Ambridge. He found work in his specialty, small parts assembly. According to SE Program Specialist, Sheila Silbaugh, "Dave worked hard to keep his job. He faced many obstacles, but he was determined to stay employed."



Three years ago, Dave was diagnosed with an illness that threatened his health and his ability to be properly rested for work. However, he took this problem in stride and faithfully followed the recommended course of treatment.

According to Ms. Silbaugh, "Dave also learned that it was all right to ask for help. Years ago, he made some questionable choices because he didn't have the proper guidance. Now, Dave uses BCRC as a resource. He does not hesitate to contact us when he is faced with choices that call for some friendly advice."

Dave's choices now involve improving his quality of life. Dave recently moved from a sleeping room to his own apartment. For the first time in his life, Dave did not have to share bathroom facilities with the people "down the hall." He has now set his sights on getting a good dependable car that will allow him greater freedom and independence.

Dave has gained a great deal of freedom because he has discovered that there are people in this world who are willing to help. He no longer sees the world as an overwhelming place; it is now a world of opportunity.



SAFETY LIGHTS



Guarding Against Identity Theft

by Cindy Kirkpatrick

We are hearing so much these days about identity theft. Here are some things you can do to keep others from stealing your identity. Shred all financial documents. Don't carry your social security card in your wallet or write the number on your checks. And never give out personal or financial information over the phone unless you initiated the call. Another area to be extremely careful with is the Internet. Do not put your personal information on the Internet unless you are sure it's a secure site. It should say secure server. Look for an "s" after the http on the address line and make sure you have a good firewall in place. Also, since many pre-approved credit card applications are stolen out of mailboxes, eliminate these offers for two years by calling 1-888-567-8688.



Annual Client Picnic Beats the Heat

by Kathleen Ayers

On Friday, August 12th, BCRC held its 28th Annual Client Picnic at Monaca Turners. Nick Makowicki, Monaca Turner's Head Trustee donated the use of their social hall when the thermometer reached 92 plus degrees.

The humid weather did not dampen the spirits of the clients and staff. In fact, Gloria Beighey, BCRC Secretary said, "I am so grateful that BCRC takes the safety of the clients and staff into consideration; we would have passed out in this

heat and humidity at the park. It is good we are in air conditioning."

With the exception of the softball game, all the usual festivities and games took place. The Pirate Parrott, a perennial favorite, appeared. BCRC clients loved his zany antics and they especially enjoyed having pictures taken with him. BCRC clients also enjoyed Bingo games with monetary prizes and dancing to the music of DJ, Chad McGowan of "Dreams Come True Karaoke."

ESB Bank and its employees donated beautiful baseball hats that were given to the winners of a spirited dance contest. The employees of ESB Bank raised money for the hats by contributing money to participate in "dress down days" at their banks. ESB Bank then matched the funds raised by their employees.

The delicious food and desserts, donated by Monaca Wal-Mart and Bruster's Ice Cream and cooked and served with love by volunteers of the Recreation Board of Monaca also contributed to a wonderful day. Recreation Director and chief cook, Theo Polce, again directed the volunteer crew. To a person they remarked on "how much they received from donating their time." Volunteer Helen Antoline, wife of John A. Antoline, co-founder of BCRC's picnic, comes back every year in memory of her deceased husband. He was instrumental in helping start the picnic **PICNIC** 28 years ago. She states, "Since his death, I come in his place and I enjoy the feeling that I get when I see all the clients so happy. I just want to help."

Danielle Bertagna, Quigley Catholic High School junior and veteran picnic volunteer remarked, "I just love doing this. I have to do community hours that are required for my senior project, but I would volunteer if I didn't have to. I get so much from the clients. It is a true joy to be here again this year."

Monaca High School junior, Bradley Schassa, did not have to volunteer. In fact, he came after morning football practice. He echoed the same sentiments as Ms. Bertagna and Mrs. Antoline. He said, "Volunteering and seeing the clients have fun makes me feel better about myself."

Invited guest Maureen Wylie, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, remarked that she also felt good about attending the picnic. She said, "The picnic is always a good time. The food and company are good. But it is especially gratifying to see what BCRC does for their clients."

New BCRC staff member, Howard Parker, remarked, "I can't believe how nice this is for the clients and how much fun they have. They were dancing and playing bingo at 9:00 in the morning. I wish I had that much energy. It makes me feel good about working here."

By all accounts, BCRC's 28th Annual Client Picnic was a colossal success, despite the scorching weather. *Just ask anyone who was there.*

School continued

with Candy Bouquet arrangements. Many people requested additional information about BCRC's Gifts Delivered Featuring Candy Bouquet business. People were very impressed with the colorful Candy Bouquet arrangements. They were also excited to know that there was a new and "different" gift idea available. Lisa Moore of Hookstown was the winner of the bayberry wreath.



Rec Night Schedule for 2005-2006



September 15
October 6
October 20 HALLOWEEN PARTY
November 3
November 17
December 1 CHRISTMAS PARTY
February 16 VALENTINES DAY PARTY
March 2
March 16
April 6
April 20
May 4 END OF YEAR

See page 4 for more information.



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SHOP TALK

By Paula Cordes



Our annual "Scouting for Food" campaign netted staff and clients two wonderful rewards for their efforts in collecting over 1,000 food items for local food banks.. On Friday, July 20th all staff and clients were treated to pizza for lunch, courtesy of BCRC. Then, on Friday, July 22nd eight clients and two staff were treated to lunch at the mall. This is one of our major community events at BCRC and everyone enjoys seeing who can bring in the most food items.

Rec Night, the BCRC social program, began its thirty-third year of operation on Thursday, September 15th. The social program is held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at New Horizon School. Registration is free for all BCRC clients and participants in BCRC's School to Work Program. Registration for all others is \$5.00. Refreshment prices have stayed the same with juice at 25 cents and chips at 50 cents. *See page 3 for schedule.*



This year's United Way Campaign began with a Kickoff Breakfast on September 22nd. This year should be no exception for BCRC, who in the past has had 100% staff participation. Just in case you forgot and want to direct "your" United Way pledge to BCRC, our donor option number is **685**.

BCRC's ranks swelled by two with the addition of Virginia Chaklos and Howard Parker. Virginia accepted a part-time Job Coach position at Records Management on June 6, 2005 and Howard started his job as a Contract Specialist at the Administration Center on August 11, 2005. BCRC would like to extend a warm welcome to them both.

Welcome
Welcome

