

BCRC Nominees Honored

by Kay Podbielski

Summer 2005 Edition
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May was definitely a merry month for BCRC, as a number of BCRC employees and friends received honors at area awards banquets.

Supported Employment Program Specialist, Sheila Silbaugh, received the Recognition Award at the annual ARC banquet. Sheila was recognized for assisting individuals with disabilities, creativity in resolving barriers to employment, and perseverance in helping people maintain employment beyond the follow along period. Sheila spends many evenings and weekends going "the extra mile" to assist people in securing and retaining jobs. Ever so humble, Sheila relates, "I'm overwhelmed that someone could do this for me." Her clients and co-workers like to extol her many virtues, however. They freely express their happiness and pride in Sheila's accomplishments.



That pride also extends to Richard Luketic who was the recipient of the Frank DeMatteis Award. Richard is a conscientious and capable worker who always has an encouraging word for his co-workers. Program Specialist, Katie Grable, nominated Richard for his dedication to family, work, friends, and community. Richard loves the ARC camp, NASCAR racing, and attending community activities such as car shows and local carnivals. His friendly demeanor and interest in learning and doing new things made Richard a very worthy honoree at this year's banquet.

Howard Parker of Sanitor/Systems Management was named Employer of the Year at the Mental Health Association in Beaver County's Fiftieth Anniversary banquet. Mr. Parker has hired a number of individuals through BCRC's Supported Employment Program. He demonstrates a genuine concern for the well being of the people he hires. He offers support and accommodations that allow people with disabilities to be successful.



Butch Graham was BCRC Pioneer



Robert "Butch" Graham passed away on April 26, 2005 at Friendship Ridge. Robert was 60 years old at the time of his death. He was preceded in death by his parents Melvin and Mildred Graham of 4513 Rochester Road, New Brighton. Most recently Robert lived with Baney and Tammy Willis of New Brighton and with HAP, Inc.

Robert worked at the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center for 36 years. He was affectionately known as "Butch" by his coworkers. Robert was a gentle soul. He loved people, and he loved to dance. He was a devoted worker at BCRC, who did not like to take a day off. His hobby was studying Indian folk lore.

Robert was one of the pioneers of special education in Beaver County. He attended the first special education class ever held in Beaver County at the old Fallston School. His mother Mildred Graham was one of the founders of the Association for Retarded Citizens. Along with William Lintz, she was one of the strongest advocates for services for people with mental retardation.

Robert and many others benefited from his mother's advocacy efforts. Robert grew into a person who, like his mother, cared about others. His gentle smile and easy laugh will be missed by all who knew him.



EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH PROFILED

by Mary Bender, Lavinia Craft, Robert Pollock, Mike Little

Tammy Sentz, February's Employee of the Month, has worked at BCRC for ten years. Tammy feels that attending work each day she is scheduled has helped to keep her positive frame of mind. She's sure all the good work she does for BCRC is what has helped her to win this award. Linda Glabb, Tammy's job coach, relies on Tammy. "She is a hard worker who is never afraid to try anything new. She likes to go to enclaves and her attendance is good." Linda continues, "I can count on Tammy to do good work and to do it neatly."



March Employee of the Month, Charles Vallecorsa, has been with BCRC for just three and one half years. Charles shows his good work ethic by eagerly accepting different assignments both at BCRC and at community work sites. Prayer is a big part of his life and Charles feels as if this helps him to keep a good work attitude along with the support of his fellow workers. He credits his perfect attendance,

Employees (con't)



“King” Happy to Work for “Giant”

by Frank Shialabba

excellent production speed and flexibility as major factors in being named Employee of the Month. While working three days weekly, Charles continues to work towards certifications in both Reflexology and Addictions Counseling. Program Specialist Robert Pollock remarks that, “Charles is extremely reliable and has good work skills. He can probably do any job BCRC has well.” This award is extremely meaningful to Charles because his peers have recognized him.



Last, but certainly not least, is Matt Barth, April’s Employee of the Month. Matt has been with BCRC for three years and wants to continue working for BCRC in the future. Hard work and dedication are attributes Matt feels helped him to win this award. Matt also feels that a positive attitude is what helps him to keep his good work attitude. He is happy and proud to be chosen as April’s Employee of the Month.

Good work attendance, a positive attitude, willingness to accept different job assignments and taking pride in a job well done seem to be lessons that Tammy, Charles and Matt are teaching all of us. BCRC is fortunate to have them as workers.



For eight and a half years, Al Zeluski, of Ambridge, reigned as the “king” of Al’s “Court of Food” at the Beaver County Courthouse. Tiring of the stress of owning a business like the Courthouse snack bar, Al decided to retire three years ago. While Al enjoyed the first days of his retirement, he soon became restless. As Al puts it, “a person can only take so much of Bob Barker.” With the urging of his wife, Al contacted Blind and Visual Services, a division of OVR. Randy Medwid of BVS referred Al to BCRC’s supported employment department for help in finding a new career.

According to SE Program Specialist, Sheila Silbaugh, “Al worked successfully at a number of jobs over the years. In addition to owning his own business, he worked as a call-taker for Allegheny County Public Safety for a number of years. Al has earned the chance to stop and smell the roses, and he wanted a job without the responsibility of running a business. An opening in customer service at the Leetsdale Giant Eagle has been a perfect fit for Al.”



Al’s current job has afforded him the luxury of doing a job he loves, while filling his idle time. He enthuses, “I like being with people and I love to serve the public. Most of my past jobs have

been in the area of public service.” Ms. Silbaugh states, “Al seems very happy in his position, as evidenced by his wonderful performance appraisals.” According to Ms. Silbaugh, Al gets rave reviews for his customer service and work procedures. Most importantly to Al, “I get to serve as a role model for the young people. Kids need to know that you have to have a proper work attitude.”



As a partially sighted person, Al has excelled in helping customers navigate the store to find the items they need. BCRC staff developed a chart of the store, and Al

worked tirelessly to memorize the positioning of every item. Al regards this impressive feat as “just part of my job.” Al has reversed the traditional image of sighted persons helping the blind. He frequently retrieves grocery carts and helps sighted customers carry items to their cars.

As a member of the Board of the Beaver County Lighthouse, as well as an active member of the Ambridge Lions Club, Al has extended help to other persons who are blind or visually impaired in Beaver County. As Ms. Silbaugh states, “Al is a remarkable individual who has chosen to live a life of service and accomplishment.” Al may be working for the “Giant” now, but he will always be a “king” to those who know him.



Safety Lights

Let the Celebration Begin

by Cindy Kirkpatrick

Let the celebration begin! The BCRC Safety Committee will host the second annual Safety Event on July 1, 2005. Included in the festivities will be a play, written by Frank Shialabba and performed by talented staff volunteers. The play will address tornado safety. A picnic lunch, beverages, prizes and dancing will be enjoyed by all.



SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Picnics, swimming, ball games, vacations...finally summer is on the way! While the summer months bring longer days, warmer weather and tons of outdoor fun, it can also bring the tribulations associated with the outdoors. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org), Walter Reed Army Medical Center (www.wramc.amedd.army.mil), and www.keepkidshealthy.com, the following summer safety tips should always be foremost on our minds.

Protect yourself from the sun - The best protection from the sun is to avoid sun exposure as much as possible. Refrain from going outside during the sun's most intense period of time, between 11:00 and 3:00. When you do need to be out during this time the first line of defense is to cover up with light weight cotton clothing and a brimmed hat. Sunscreen of a minimum SPF 15 should be applied at least 30 minutes PRIOR to going outside. It should also be reapplied after swimming, profuse sweating, or every 90 minutes, even on cloudy days.



Know the signs of heat injuries - Prevent heat injuries by forcing water consumption (recommended intake is one quart in the morning, before each meal, and before hard or strenuous work). When possible try to schedule heavy workloads for the coolest parts of the day such as early morning or late evening. Remember to take frequent rest breaks also.



Heat Cramps: Muscle cramps of the abdomen, legs, or arms. **Heat Exhaustion:** Profuse sweating with pale, moist, and cool skin; weakness; loss of appetite; dizziness. May also have heat cramps, nausea, chills, rapid breathing, tingling of the hands or feet, and confusion. **Heat Stroke:** Headache, dizziness, stomach pains, confusion, weakness, sudden loss of consciousness, and may have seizures. Skin is hot and may be dry; pulse and respiration are rapid and weak. Heat stroke is a medical emergency.

Water Safety - When swimming, remember the basic rules: never swim alone; always have adult supervision for toddlers and small children (a young child can drown in only a few inches of water); know your abilities, don't try to show off; swim in a safe place; and do not drink and swim. When diving, be sure to check the water for depth and obstacles prior to diving in (never dive in unknown water) and always keep your hands in front of your head.



Food Safety - Foodborne illnesses increase in the summer months as most foodborne bacteria grow fastest in temperatures between 90 – 110°F. Follow these four steps to safe food in the summer. **Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often. **Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate. Remember to wrap raw meats securely when packing the cooler, and avoid raw meat juices from coming in contact with ready-to-eat food. **Cook:** Use a food thermometer to check internal temperature of meats. Hamburger should be 160°F, ground poultry 165°F, steaks and roasts 160°F for medium and 170°F for well done, and poultry 180°F in the thigh, 170°F for breast meat. **Chill:** Refrigerate promptly. Food left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours may not be safe to eat.



By following these basic rules for summer safety you can prevent unfortunate accidents or illnesses that can spoil the fun summer brings. One more safety tip to remember for young children: always insist that they wear a helmet while biking, rollerblading, skateboarding or riding a scooter. This simple act can prevent a horrible tragedy from occurring.



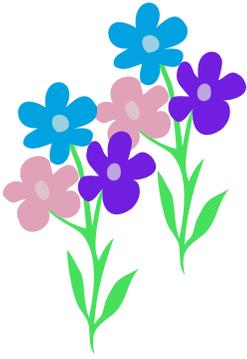
Carla Wins Athena Nomination

Former BCRC Supported Employment Coordinator, Carla Hill, was nominated as one of the area's outstanding women at the annual Athena Awards Banquet. Carla, a current employee of the Allegheny County Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, was nominated for her tireless efforts on behalf of needy children. Carla was instrumental in the development of the Ambridge Center for Hope. The program helps Aliquippa and Ambridge children with educational, spiritual and personal development. Along with the mentoring program, the center also offers meals and free computer training. Carla's compassion for others has always run deep. She has truly been the "center for hope" for many people.



Safety Committee Recertified

BCRC's Safety Committee has been recertified by the PA Department of Labor and Industry. The BCRC Safety Committee meets monthly to review the results of safety inspections, accident reports, etc. The committee makes recommendations for the improvement of safety at each of BCRC's five buildings. Scott Wiant, Manager, Health and Safety Division, Department of Labor stated, "Your initiative in establishing and maintaining this committee demonstrates your commitment to workplace safety. Thank you for making Pennsylvania a safer place in which to work."



SUMMER

SHOP TALK

By Paula Cordes

Hold onto your hat – BCRC received another 100% from the Department of Welfare state inspectors for its facilities at 1517 Sixth Avenue, 601 15th Street and 401 Seventh Street. Congratulations to all who made this possible.



Competitive Edge Editorial Staff

Kathleen Ayers, Paula Cordes,
Pam DePace, Jennifer Gengarella,
Pat Healey, Gary Hewitt,
Cindy Kirkpatrick, Kay Podbielski,
Frank Shialabba,
Pat Tengeres...layout



Training featured at BCRC this quarter seminars on Aging, Asperger’s Syndrome, and Microsoft Office’s Tricks & Tips. Staff other training on First Aid, Down Syndrome, responding to disasters and consumer systems.

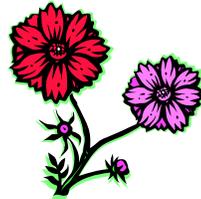


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On April 20, 2005 BCRC participated in the National Youth Day of Caring sponsored by Job Training of Beaver County and hosted 11 youths, ages 15-18 from Midland, Rochester, Beaver Falls and Chippewa. Beth Demoratz, Youth Case Manager, coordinated this project. Although this was BCRC’s first time participating with this group, it will continue as a yearly project.

April 28th saw 16 youths from the Beaver Valley Christian School from West Mayfield participate in the Beaver County Youth Day of Caring, sponsored by Representative Michael Veon. BCRC has been a yearly participant in this event. The teacher assigned to the group was Sarah Carleton. BCRC is always grateful for the helping hand provided by the youth of Beaver County. Their efforts help us maintain the standards that have become synonymous with our facility.

recently held a Mothers’ Day Tea on May 5th. ersspring and summer and candy bouquetsFor all your unique shopping needs, stop by or callFoot



Have a safe and fun summer!