

Improvements Unveiled in 2007



New marquee graces entrance to BCRC.

The year 2007 will bring a number of improvements intended to enhance the presence of BCRC in the community. These changes will be highlighted by a new marquee and a new and improved web site.

BCRC unveiled a new marquee in January. The marquee is a classic gray and black with gold lettering. It is designed to compliment the beautiful new gray and white façade at the Administration Center. Black awnings will be added to the

building at 1517 Sixth Ave., New Brighton to provide a finishing touch. Awnings will also be added to the 601 Production Center to create a unified look for the two buildings.

In addition to the physical changes, BCRC will unveil a new web site in the near future. Flash effects, colorful program descriptions, a picture gallery, frequently asked questions, recent and archived newsletters, and hyperlinks to related agencies, are just a few of the features found on the new BCRC web site. The site can be accessed at www.bcrc.net. ■



BCRC's beautiful new façade at 1517.

Record Number Attend Christmas Party

On Friday, December 8, 365 people attended the annual BCRC client Christmas party at the Monaca Turners. Director of Client Services, Kathy Davis stated that, "This was the largest attendance at the party in BCRC's history." In addition to clients, current and former BCRC staff, representatives from the BCRC Board of Directors, Beaver County Behavioral Health, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and New Horizon School attended the party. A number of the guests commented on how nice the party is for the clients.

The clients genuinely seemed to enjoy the food, dancing, entertainment, and bingo. Entertainment was provided by ventriloquist Cindy Sparks and DJ Chuck Webb.

Many BCRC clients were honored with special merit awards and years of service awards. The Samuel Lippincott Award for the Physically Challenged was won by Andamo Horton. The Betty Meador Memorial Award was won by Cheryl Beightley. Jackie Willis won the William Lewis Merit Award and Joe Pflug won the Competitive Employment Award.

BCRC would like to thank the community for their contributions to the annual party. John A. Antoline Foundation members Scott Antoline and Dr. Michael Sisk presented a check to BCRC to defray the cost of the party. The IBEW Hall provided candy for BCRC's clients and the Monaca Turners donated pop.

Ms. Davis commented on the excellent menu, wonderful environment and reasonable prices provided by the Turners, and the faithful and ongoing support of the John A. Antoline Foundation. ■



School to Work students attending the Christmas Party.

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**Employee
of the
Month Profiled**

by

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Cheryl States*

Jacki Willis was voted Employee of the Month for August. Jacki has been with BCRC for three years and has enjoyed every minute of it. Jacki is sure that by being happy and positive, she is able to keep a good work attitude. Jacki is so excited about winning the honor of Employee of the Month. She feels that her hard work and her good nature made it possible for her to win. Jacki's plans for the future are to continue working at BCRC.



The BCRC Employee of the Month for September is Tammy Asper. Tammy has been working at BCRC for 12 years. She says that her good work attitude is because she likes the people here. Tammy is very happy to receive this award and thinks because she works hard and is a good girl is why she was selected to win. She loves animals and would like to have a job working with them. ▶

BCRC Bids Fond Farewell

by Frank Shialabba

The October Employee of the Month is Leona Williams. Leona feels by coming each day and doing the best she can help her keep a good work attitude. She is very excited about winning this award. She said her hard work and trying to do a good job made it possible to win. Leona says she wants to continue working at BCRC.



Mildred Elliot was voted Employee of the Month for November. Mildred has been with BCRC for 25 years. She says her good work attitude is kept by working hard. Mildred is very happy about receiving this award and says she thinks she won because she works hard. Her plans for the future are to continue working at BCRC.



Our December Employee of the Month, Ron Hoffman, has been with BCRC for 17 years. Ron's good work attitude is achieved by working hard and accepting all job assignments. He is very happy to accept this award and feels by working hard all of the time and following the rules is what let him be able to receive this award. In the future, Ron would like to get a job as a garbage man or work at a recycling center.

In summary, all five candidates are hard working and enjoy being at BCRC. They maintain a positive attitude. ■

Congratulations!



Paula Cordes retires after 21 years.

Approximately forty-five BCRC staff, family and friends attended a retirement celebration on Thursday, January 6 at Fire Mountain for Administrative Assistant, Paula Cordes. Executive Director, Paulette Miller, toasted Paula and Board of Director President, Jack Simon, offered the thanks of the board. Paula's coworkers contributed poems, readings and personal memories.

Ms. Cordes retired from the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center after 21 years of service for two executive directors. She was originally hired as assistant to Executive Director, Samuel Lippincott. In 1990, when Lippincott retired, Paula provided invaluable assistance to new Executive Director, Paulette Miller. Ms. Miller credits Ms. Cordes with easing her transition from PWAT Coordinator to Executive Director. She says, "Paula was there helping me every step of the way. I couldn't have done it without her." She also credits Ms. Cordes for being an unflinching advocate for the welfare of her coworkers.

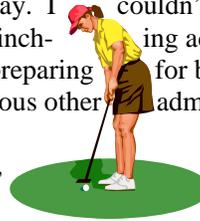
Ms. Cordes spent many hours preparing for board meetings and conducting human resource activities along with numerous other administrative functions during her 21 years at BCRC.

Ms. Cordes, who loves to travel, will also spend time on the golf course and with her large family, including children and grandchildren.

It is obvious that Paula leaves BCRC with mixed feelings. In a note to her coworkers she states, "I have enjoyed my time at BCRC because of all the relationships that I have formed over the years with each of you. You are a wonderful group of people who work hard for the betterment of others-for that I admire you. I will miss you."

There is no doubt that Paula will be missed by her many coworkers at the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center.

Paula, we wish you a fond farewell, and we know that "You've only just begun." ■



BCRC Acquires State of the Art Employment Skills

BCRC Supported Employment Coordinator, Sheila Silbaugh and Employment Specialist Gary Hewitt are currently receiving state-of-the-art instruction in "customized employment" of people with disabilities. They are attending 10 intensive training sessions. Each session lasts nine hours and involves detailed instruction and lengthy assignments.

A key part of the instruction is the development of a comprehensive profile that lists details such as an individual's interests, extra-curricular activities, interaction skills, abilities, and strengths in all aspects of their environment. These individual attributes are matched to the unmet needs of a community employer. A job is thus customized to meet the needs of both employer and employee.

The "customized employment" method was developed by Marc Gold & Associates after intensive trials and research. ■



Full Time Patient to Full Time Employee

While most people in their 30's are in the prime of life, Assonia Underwood's life was anything but promising. Her days were filled with doctor's visits, medication and debilitating illness. She lived in public housing with her two sons, and her future was bleak.

Her constant doctor visits and medical treatment made it difficult for her to find work and to provide for her children. Things began to change for the better,

however, when she was referred to the Supported Engagement Program of the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center. The Program, funded by the Department of Public Welfare in conjunction with the Office of Community and Economic Development, provides one-to-one job preparation and placement assistance to people who are economically disadvantaged.

Program Coordinator Dawna Bott was impressed by Assonia's outgoing personality and positive attitude. She says, "In spite of Assonia's physical difficulties, she was very cheerful, positive, and upbeat. She just needed to see that there was some hope for a better life."

BCRC worked around Assonia's doctor's appointments, as she participated in job preparation activities two days a week. As time went on she gained both

strength and motivation and her prospects began to improve. With some assistance, she obtained her driver's license and her first job at a personal care home for the elderly. This once ill person, who liked to sleep late, walked nearly two miles and reported to work at 5 a.m. each morning.

Her thriftiness combined with guidance and financial assistance from the Supported Engagement Program enabled her to purchase her first car. This ac-

complishment enabled her to aim even higher.

Assonia dreamed of working for a company that provides residential and vocational opportunities for persons with disabilities. Her determination paid off. After numerous applications, Assonia was hired to oversee individuals at one of the group homes. According to Ms. Bott, "Assonia is doing a great job. She is a caring and determined person, who provides an excellent role model for the people who are in her care. I would like to thank the Community Development Program for enabling us to provide life-changing opportunities for people like Assonia."

Assonia and her sons look forward confidently as they strive to some day own their own home. This is possible because Assonia overcame illness and doubt to obtain a full time job in the community. ■

Assonia dreamed of working for a successful agency.

Technology Upgraded at BCRC, Inc.

A number of technological initiatives were made at BCRC in 2006. A computer lab was installed at the Records Management Technology Center, while the number of computer work stations at the Evaluation Center increased by eight.

BCRC also purchased new software that will allow staff to receive training in all applications of Microsoft Office conveniently at their own computers. Efforts were also initiated to enable staff to access BCRC files and e-mail from their home or remote locations. This will greatly enhance agency efficiency. ■

Gift Sale Will Be Annual Event

Many BCRC clients became Santa Claus for their families this Christmas. From December 5 through December 12 clients purchased gift items specially designed for them by BCRC's Gifts Delivered. The gift sale offered a variety of attractive gifts at special discounted prices.

Among the items available for purchase were painted slates, kitchen towels, small candy bouquets, mugs with tools, snow men in sleighs, refrigerator magnets, hot chocolate and artificial poinsettias.

The shoppers felt that the sale was "wonderful" and the gifts were "beautiful." Many stated they really enjoyed the experience and "loved shopping for the family."

Due to the enthusiastic response of clients, the gift sale will become an annual event. ■



Competitive Edge
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SHOP TALK

by Paula Cordes

- BCRC has added a number of new employees to the ranks. Deborah Doyle transferred to the SE department as a full-time Employment Specialist, and joining the evaluation team is Kelly Newhouse, Job Developer/Program Assistant.
- BCRC's Supported Employment Department placed 32 people during the last year. Individuals were hired in 15 different job categories by 21 different employers.
- Recently, the Goodwill enclave expanded the number of positions available to BCRC clients from six to eight. Clients work at Goodwill, located in Rochester, five days a week providing support services to their sales operation.



BCRC's 601 Production Center has a new sign that can be seen from 5th Avenue in New Brighton.