

BCRC Seeks to Provide Hope for Recovery

by Frank Shialabba

The Beaver County Rehabilitation Center is dedicated to providing hope for every person served by the agency. Over the last 50 years, hope has been in short supply for persons with mental illness. With an unemployment rate of 85%, and a life span that averages 20 years less than the general population, people with mental illness have faced a grim future. It is a situation that is truly unacceptable and needs to be changed.

In order to let some light into the lives of people with mental illness and provide hope for recovery, the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center plans to implement an Illness Management & Recovery Program. IMR is based on the model developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and is an evidence based practice. This means

that the SAMSHA model has been researched, tried, and proven to be successful.

BCRC's implementation of Illness Management & Recovery is part of an effort to offer recovery-oriented services which have been shown to greatly enhance the quality of life, improve coping skills and lessen instances of relapse for persons with mental illness.

Persons with mental illness involved in BCRC's Work Activity Center will be able to participate in group sessions that include education about medication and mental illness, relapse prevention and coping skills, and behavioral tailoring (cues that help individuals remember to take their medication).

IMR sessions will be offered in groups with a staff leader or facilitator. IMR is based on the beliefs that recovery is defined by the individual, that education is the foundation of decision making and that people can and will recover from mental illness if given the proper skills and support. ■

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH SPEAK OUT

September's Employee of the Month, Dan Adams has only worked at BCRC for about 19 months. Already, he has won the hearts of the staff with his quick wit and genuine concern for everyone's welfare. He credits winning the award to "being friendly and good work." Staff feels that Dan has made great strides in improving his work production and he is interested in learning a variety of jobs.

Dan Mountain, Employee of the Month for October, feels that he won the award by "working hard and doing a good job." Dan says that he likes attending BCRC because "I really enjoy my coworkers." In the future, Dan hopes to "keep working hard and see where it takes me." Dan is a hard worker, who has done well at enclaves such as the Courthouse. He is very deserving of the title "Employee of the Month."

Our final Employee of the Month, Katie Hanton, won for November. Katie feels that she won the award because, "I work hard when I am at work and then I enjoy my days off." Katie is a well-rounded individual who enjoys reading, movies, television and going out to eat. She describes her passion as "scary movies and any book about the FBI or criminal investigation." Staff describe Katie as a wonderful worker who can do any job that she is asked to do. ■

Janna Thanks Service Men and Women

"To our most noble and valiant soldiers, I thank you sincerely for your service to America. Your honorable and selfless service is ever to be so appreciated. Leaving the comfort, warmth and love of home to serve your country with pride is an act to always be seen with the most tender feelings. You deserve brightness and sweetness in return, so I do hope you enjoy these cookies. Indeed, you deserve more than cookies, and there's nothing like the comfort or receiving things from your families. Still, this is a sincere gift that I hope you will enjoy."
Sincerely, Janna Nelson

This letter, written by Janna Nelson to our service men, was part of the WIN service project for the Yellow Ribbon Girls. In addition to writing this beautiful sentiment, Janna, who is both blind and deaf, also participated in making cookies. She cracked eggs, added water and butter to a mix, and gently stirred the cookie dough. She used cupcake pans to feel for placement and dropped a ball of cookie dough into a pan. Finally, Jenna stacked the finished cookies into Pringles cans to be frozen and shipped to the soldiers. Along with others at WIN, this was a labor of love sent with our thanks and gratitude to our gallant soldiers. ■

Quilt Expresses Recovery Theme

The consumers of the Aurora Program are celebrating recovery through self-expression. As part of their group work they put together a quilt, which is an expression of their feelings about recovery and a means to encourage others. The squares were used to express the groups' feelings about their experiences at BCRC and the Aurora Program. The quilt, which was assembled by Employment Specialist, Debbie Doyle is currently on display in the Aurora offices in Beaver and will soon be auctioned to the highest bidder. ■



Towels Represent “Clean” Safety Record

BCRC has had such a low incidence of accidents during the past year that the Board of Directors decided to present a “safety towel” to BCRC’s clients to represent their “clean” safety record. Every work activity center client had the opportunity to have their autograph printed on the towels. The towels were then distributed in each work group as a memento of the wonderful year in safety. The Board of Directors wishes to thank BCRC’s clients for contributing to an outstanding safety record. ■



Safety First towel is proudly displayed at the 601 Production Center.

Spotlight On: Amanda Pullinger by Jennifer Gengarella

Like a jack-of-all-trades, Amanda Pullinger wears many different hats in the Evaluation Department at BCRC. Assisting with vocational evaluations, helping to coordinate our jail-based services, and tracking billing for several of BCRC’s grants are just some of the hats she wears. Mandy will also be assisting in the evaluation of the Illness Management and Recovery program when it begins in our production center. Doing so many different jobs and doing them well is what Mandy accomplishes so brilliantly. Not only that, she does them all ▶

Gifts Delivered Sets Tone for the Holidays

by Robin Devine



(L to R) Sherry Lombardo, Stacey Quick and Mary Bender display the new Gift Delivered sign.

BCRC’s Gift Delivered has a new sign that advertises business hours as 8-4 at the 1517 Sixth Ave., New Brighton location. The sign is part of new Coordinator Susan Hill’s efforts to make Gifts Delivered more visible in the community.

Inside the New Brighton location, Gifts Delivered is gearing up for the Holidays. As you walk in the door you will see Christmas wreaths, embroidered bears, Christmas bouquets and a variety of Steeler items.

Once you turn the corner, you see mini-trees full of ornaments and packages full of different dips and appetizer mixes. All would make excellent gifts for the loved ones.

Speaking of popular gifts, BCRC’s light-up blocks have become a hot holiday item. They may now be purchased as scarecrows, snowmen

or Steeler snowmen. The glass blocks were the idea of Pat Tengeres, one of BCRC’s talented staff.

Talent is on display daily at BCRC’s Gifts Delivered. Pay us a visit and light up your holiday season with a beautiful creation from Gifts Delivered. ■



Snowman light-up blocks are a popular Christmas gift.

Susan Hopes to ‘Add Value’

Susan Smith, Program Specialist for BCRC CAPS youth program, was recently elected to the school board for the Big Beaver Falls Area School District. Ms. Smith is excited about the opportunity to assist the youth of the Beaver Falls area. She states, “I have been blessed and I hope to add value to the efforts of the school board.” Ms. Smith had worked for the Beaver Falls School District for three years. She received her Master’s Degree, and is currently a valued member of BCRC’s CAPS team, which provides support services to youth at-risk. ■

Visitors Bring Progress to Records Management

by Pat Healey

BCRC’s Records Management is growing rapidly as it partners with the state and local business.

In September, BCRC was designated as primary records scanning site for the Pennsylvania Industries for the Blind and Handicapped. PIBH received a five year contract for scanning services. This is a very exciting development, and should provide much work for BCRC clients and staff.

Before being awarded the contract, BCRC Records Management was visited by several people from PA State Department of General Services, the Department of Revenue and a representative from the Pennsylvania

Industries for the Blind and Handicapped. Their purpose was to decide if BCRC was an appropriate candidate to provide scanning services to the state of Pennsylvania.

In preparation for the visit, two RMC employees, Nancy Perkins and Pat Healey studied to be Certified Document Imaging Architects. Both ladies were awarded certificates, and BCRC was awarded the job.

Another customer is also growing its business and taking BCRC along for the ride. Each day clients and staff prepare and scan files for our customer at their Moon Township location. Later, packages are prepared for shipping and 400 to 500 pieces of mail are printed, labeled, stuffed and metered for mail pick up the next day. Clients and staff are being added gradually to keep up with the increasing work load. ■

Safety Lights

by Ashley Greenawalt



Driver's Safety Tips for the Winter

1. Check Tire Pressure

Make sure you regularly check your tire pressure, because if there isn't sufficient air in them, the risk of a blow-out increases dramatically. If your tire encounters a blow out at high speed, it is extremely difficult to maintain control of the vehicle.

2. Concentration and mental preparation

Getting a good night's sleep before your journey is also very important. Plan ahead and accept that it may take a little longer than you expected to reach your destination. Taking a short break every 2 hours will also help improve your concentration and it is great to have plenty of water on hand to stay refreshed.

3. Be mindful of stopping distances

Always leave enough of a gap between you and the vehicle in front at all times. Be careful of trucks and other road vehicles that usually need more time to stop. Weather should also be taken into consideration as stopping in the rain or wet weather requires much more time.

4. Ensure head restraints are at the right level

Often overlooked, it is also necessary to check that the head restraints are at eye level with the occupant to help prevent whiplash injury. Seatbelts should also be fastened for all passengers.

5. Take notice of warning lights

It's very important to immediately stop and take note of warning lights that have come on in your car. Some warning lights are signs there's an issue with your vehicle. The temperature gauge indicates hot. When the oil gauge is low and/or flashing, a warning light continues to stay on. There may also be unusual vibrations or unusual noises. ■

with a smile on her face and always a kind and encouraging word for everyone she meets.

Mandy has served BCRC for almost 2 ½ years. A graduate of Malone College, she notes that one of her favorite things about BCRC is that it serves a wide variety of clientele in the Beaver County area. "It's great to be a part of an agency that offers many solutions to many needs." She also notes that "having a vocational rehab center that's comprehensive in nature allows people with all different skill sets to have the opportunity to serve the Beaver County community in a way that most utilizes their gifts and talents- this is what produces quality services for individuals."

In her spare time Mandy enjoys anything outdoors, playing piano, working with her church's youth group, and also coordinating mission trips through her church. We at BCRC are fortunate to have someone like Mandy who can readily wear all of these hats and do them so well. ■



Pictured below is a quilt that was hand cut and machine sewn by consumers of WIN Services. The quilt was then machine tied by a WIN employee. The quilt will be raffled to raise money for the client Christmas gift fund.



Have Job, Will Travel

by Frank Shialabba

Some people want jobs, while other people are willing to completely uproot their lives in order to work. Kevin and Lynn Shields did the latter in November 2007.

After experiencing some family problems, Kevin moved to Beaver County from Colorado. Kevin had worked successfully as a DJ and hoped to find a similar job in Beaver County. However, job prospects in Beaver County were slim, and as a person with a disability, Kevin sought help from BCRC's WIN Services.

While job hunting, Kevin met former BCRC consumer Lynn Mester. Lynn was working as interim director of the Lighthouse for the Blind. Kevin and Lynn fell in love and were married in October of 2007.

With the help of WIN Services, Kevin and Lynn looked for jobs as far away as Pittsburgh. They were willing to do anything to work. They attended many interviews. However, the economy greatly hindered their job search.

After exhausting all options locally, WIN guided Lynn and Kevin to Winston-Salem, North Carolina where they found employment. Lynn began as a seamstress, while Kevin taught braille. Eventually the wonderful work ethics of both Kevin and Lynn paid off. Today, Kevin teaches computer classes, while Lynn works in the lending library and serves as a consumer advocate. Sheila Silbaugh, Director of WIN Services, states, "I truly admire the courage of Kevin and Lynn. It had to be difficult to move so far away to find work."

Kevin and Lynn are truly an example of perseverance. They are two highly motivated and capable people who happen to be blind. In their case blindness is not a disabling condition but an incentive to help others and achieve personal success. ■

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Creative Endeavors Raise Money for Client Gift Fund

by Amanda Pullinger

There's no doubt about it, our clients offer many hours of hard work and dedication each year to BCRC. BCRC utilizes the Christmas season as a time to give back to these individuals and to celebrate their hard work. In an effort to express our gratitude, clients are presented with a Christmas gift from the BCRC staff.

This year, each department was issued the challenge of facilitating a fundraiser for the client gift fund. Staff raised well over two thousand dollars. See below for just some of the events.

- Soup Social headed by Sue Middleman; staff sold Boscov's coupons.
- Tomato and pepper plants sale, Tracy Hughes; Stan Ho Garage sale, Susan Hill.
- Aurora services tea bag with a warm invitation to donate to the client gift fund.
- Seasonal Frame and Card Raffle headed by Denise McCormish. The items are made and donated by *Denise-Rae's Simply Handmade Cards & More*.
- iPod (donated by 3rd Generation) raffle headed by Janet Simon.
- Nacho Days, Production Center staff; WIN Services put together a craft show. ■

Shop Talk

The annual safety carnival was held on a beautiful September afternoon. The festivities began with a picnic lunch followed by safety themed games and prizes. The New Brighton Fire Department was on hand for anyone who was interested in checking out the fire truck and related equipment. The carnival was a fun way to celebrate BCRC's excellent safety record. ■



New Brighton firemen give tour of a fire truck to BCRC clients.

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