



# The Competitive Edge

BCRC, Inc., 131 Pleasant Drive, 2nd Floor, Aliquippa, PA 15001-3515

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## MOVING PLANS CONTINUE

*by Pat Healey*

The slogan, “slow and steady wins the race,” seems to apply to BCRC’s progress toward moving clients and staff to BCRC’s new location at CenterPlace. However, much has been done in recent months to facilitate the move.

Individuals driving past the CenterPlace entrance now see a new sign directing people to BCRC or the Transportation Center. BCRC’s portion of the sign is a digital bulletin board that announces meetings, events, weather conditions, and other notifications.

BCRC has also been very successful in obtaining numerous grants to make several updates to the building. Improvements include...

*An updated sprinkler system, new work lights, ice guards (to stop snow and ice from becoming a hazard), completion of a beautiful accessible restroom, and updating the heating and cooling system.*

Preparations are also being made to relocate some of BCRC’s business ventures. The new embroidery business will be located in an area of the work center, while plans for BCRC’s Records Management business have been drawn up. A conference room on the second floor will be transformed into a highly secure document scanning facility. Additional offices will also be constructed for BCRC staff.

## Burkhart Nominated For Honor

Joseph Burkhart, a participant in BCRC’s WIN program and Work Activity Center, was honored for his work ethic at the PIBH Nettie Mann banquet on June 11 in Harrisburg. Joe had been nominated by the staff of WIN for the award presented annually by Pennsylvania industries for the Blind and Handicapped. Joe was one of 28 persons nominated for the award in Pennsylvania.

As a runner up for the award, Joe received a plaque, an HP tablet and \$500. Joe describes the honor as “awesome.” Joe is

described by Jay Thomas, WIN job coach, as “an excellent worker.”

Burkhart and Thomas were featured in a recent article of the Beaver County Times. Thomas had the honor of driving Burkhart and his grandmother to the Harrisburg event. In the article Thomas describes the experience as “a really fun trip.” Joe, who lives with his grandparents, credits them with giving him the opportunity to receive the award and participate in the WIN program.

It is obvious that the WIN staff feel a great deal of pride and joy in working with Joe. It is just as obvious that Joe has a strong bond with his staff at WIN which has resulted in an award winning team that deserves our heartfelt congratulations.

## “Over the Hump” Is Weekly Celebration

*by Frank Shialabba*

America is a country that loves holidays. Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter are all celebrated with great fanfare. However, the recent celebration of “**Over the Hump**” day at a local company is simply the representation of the indomitable spirit of two of BCRC’s finest.

Manuel Alonso and Ross Colonna have always been known for their gentle natures and positive outlooks. Manny and Ross take pleasure in the little things in life. One of the things that has given them great satisfaction is reaching the middle of the work week with an “Over the hump” day countdown.

Ross took this tradition with him when he entered a BCRC mobile work site in Moon Township. Every Wednesday, Ross leads his BCRC coworkers in a countdown as the clock clicks off the seconds until noon. Other workers on the staff of the Moon company noticed the smiling faces and happy cheers as BCRC clients enjoyed this weekly celebration. Inspired by the joy and happiness of the BCRC clients, these workers soon joined in.

Now every Wednesday, people from all around join together with BCRC workers in a bonding experience that brings joy to all. “Five, four, three, two, one”...BCRC clients are spreading joy as they help others get “**over the hump.**”

## Joe Burkhart Meets Race Car Idol

by Amanda Dodd

It was just a normal day for Joe Burkhart- or so it seemed.

Joe arrived at WIN Services, where he met with his employment specialist, Jay Thomas, to grab a quick bite to eat before work at the Chippewa DMV. While waiting in line for their food, Joe was approached by a woman who inquired about his t-shirt, which sported New Brighton race car legend, Kevin Bolland. Kevin is well known for driving his #777 DIRT car Big-Block Modified at dirt track circles all throughout the Northeast region; his award winning resume is stunning.

“Do you like that guy?” she asked, motioning toward his shirt.

Jumping at the opportunity to speak about his race car driver idol, Joe provided a dialogue covering his long-lived admiration for Kevin and the driver’s successful career.

The woman smiled and introduced herself as Denise Bolland Colby, Kevin’s sister. Joe and Jay were left staring in disbelief. How about that for a fortunate coincidence?! Denise explained that she was in for a short while from North Carolina and was actually on her way to visit Kevin in Chippewa. “Why don’t you come with me to meet him?”, she offered warmly. As Joe and Jay happened to be on their way to Chippewa for work, they couldn’t pass up the generous offer. After all, it was a literal “dream come true” for Joe.

Employment Specialist, Jay Thomas, described the meeting of Kevin and Joe as being an amazing experience. He said, “They talked about everything- the races, the cars...” And as if that wasn’t enough, Kevin presented Joe with an autographed t-shirt and a memorial souvenir from when Kevin was inducted into the Beaver County Sports Hall of Fame. Joe was left nearly speechless, apart from the “Holy Moly” he continued to exclaim for the remainder of the day.

Jay puts it best (*as quoted by Maura Zurick Calkins of the Ellwood City Ledger*). “I think this story is an example of how this community supports people with disabilities. People from Beaver County are very genuine and just overall supportive. She didn’t have to invite Joe and I to meet her brother, but she did, and it was amazing.”



**Joe Burkhart visits Kevin Bolland at Bolland Machine in Chippewa.**

## **Buddy’s Buddy is Everybody’s Buddy**

by Frank Shialabba

I met Dustin Taylor for the first time recently, and I was immediately struck by how much he loves people, his job, and his dog Buddy. Dustin touches everyone he meets with his spirit of caring.

Dustin expresses that caring at work through his willingness to share. He shares a wonderful work ethic with his employer and the customers of the Aliquippa Giant Eagle. WIN Employment Specialist, Latasha Nelson, describes Dustin as “very friendly. He has a great laugh and sense of humor.” Typically, Dustin describes the people he works with

as the best part of his job because, “They are friendly and funny.”

Dustin’s love of his job carries over in exceptional job performance. Ms. Nelson states, “We have had no complaints about his work. He is very conscientious. He wants to know if he is doing well, and he always does very well.”

Dustin shares his abilities by volunteering his time at the Beaver Library where he clears DVD’s using a professional disc repair machine. Dustin also shares his love of animals by volunteering at the Beaver County Humane Society.

Dustin has a deep and abiding love of animals, especially for his pet Shih Tzu mix, Buddy. Dustin states that he and Buddy are inseparable. Buddy has made himself at home in Dustin’s bed and in his heart, while Dustin has found a place in the heart of everyone he meets.

## ***Spotlight On: Sue Middleman***

*by Jennifer Gengarella*



Job coach extraordinaire, Sue Middleman, has been a fixture in the workshop since 2000. Overseeing a work group, Sue guides individuals in their jobs daily, offering direction, leadership, and a friendly smile along the way. Sue enjoys the outlook on life that those in her group offer, as well as the many friendships she has developed over the years. She has remarked on how much the School to Work program

has grown and advanced over the years as just one of the many changes BCRC has undergone.

Sue and her husband Bobby have two children and one grandson. In addition to playing with her grandson and taking weekend trips, Sue enjoys vacationing in Myrtle Beach, and would love to retire there. Until then, we at BCRC will benefit from her warm smile and cheerful presence.

## **“Onna” Retires**

Linda Glaab, also known as “Onna” or “Glaaby”, retired from BCRC on June 28, 2013 after 12 years of service.

Linda began her career at BCRC in March, 2001. As a job coach, she has served many clients over this 12 year span. Linda was very intuitive, anticipating and addressing each client’s individual and diverse needs. Patience, kindness, and her ability to teach in the most supportive and creative ways are just a few of her strongest qualities.

- She used every teachable moment to its fullest potential by discovering each client’s unique talents, helping them to grow personally and vocationally. In her eyes, there were no small accomplishments.
- Linda served several job coaching roles throughout her career from working in the workshop to coaching clients at community work sites. She trained numerous clients, giving them confidence and a strong sense of belonging and accomplishment. Congratulations Linda, we wish you well. As we continue to work with the clients you loved and served, BCRC will carry on the good you have instilled in all. Thank you for your service.

## **School Students Learn Gardening Skills**



This past May the students in the School to Work program began researching different varieties of flowers, plants and vegetables. The garden project not only teaches the students how to grow a garden, but it teaches them other transferable skills such as responsibility, budgeting, and healthy eating, just to name a few. After researching the different varieties of plants, they began planning what they would like to plant in the School to Work garden.



Once the garden was planned, the students had to create a shopping list by comparing prices for the items they picked based on their budget. Before purchasing the plants, the students prepared the areas for planting, not only in the garden but by the marquee and patios. The students planted the flowers they purchased around the building, planted the garden, and were in charge of up keeping these areas. What happens to the garden when the students are out for the summer? The adult clients have been graciously helping us by watering and tending to the garden. The crops that are produced can usually be found



in a basket in the lunch rooms. Donations are accepted, which will allow the School to Work program to continue this tradition next year. Make sure to check for the fresh herbs and vegetables in the break room!



# Shop Talk

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*Executive Director*

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**Employee**  
**of the**  
**Month**



**Dawn Acheson**  
*April*



**Jay Schooley**  
*May*



**Carol McCullough**  
*June*



Live life to the "Fallest" with Gifts Delivered! We have fabulous silk flower designs, unique decorative accents and gifts and new Wind and Willow gourmet food selections.

**BCRC wishes to thank Monaca Recreation and ESB Bank for their sponsorship of our annual picnic.**

**BCRC extends our sincerest appreciation to Center Township for the excellent job they did on correcting a drainage issue involving our CenterPlace property.**

*BCRC is an equal opportunity employer and provider. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). In addition, BCRC is funded in part by BCBH, OVR, DCED, USDA & United Way.*