

B the *March* 2013 **BEACON**



"A new beginning"

Anniversaries in March

Congratulations

to all of you who have
been here for 5 years
or more!

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Carrie Blanchard | 17 |
| Joseph Felling | 17 |
| Julie Lifto | 17 |
| David Furst | 15 |
| Kathi Tollefson | 15 |
| Judy Koxlien | 12 |
| Maria Block | 9 |
| Dustin Doornink | 9 |
| Diane Powell | 9 |
| William Selenske | 9 |
| Brenda Flagge | 8 |
| Brooke Sandmire | 8 |
| Angelia Steen | 6 |
| Bernadine Wendt | 6 |
| Donna Bignell | 5 |
| Kristina Kuzniecki | 5 |
| Kathleen Martin | 5 |
| Norma Ryan | 5 |
| Rebecca Tyjeski | 5 |

CEO Corner

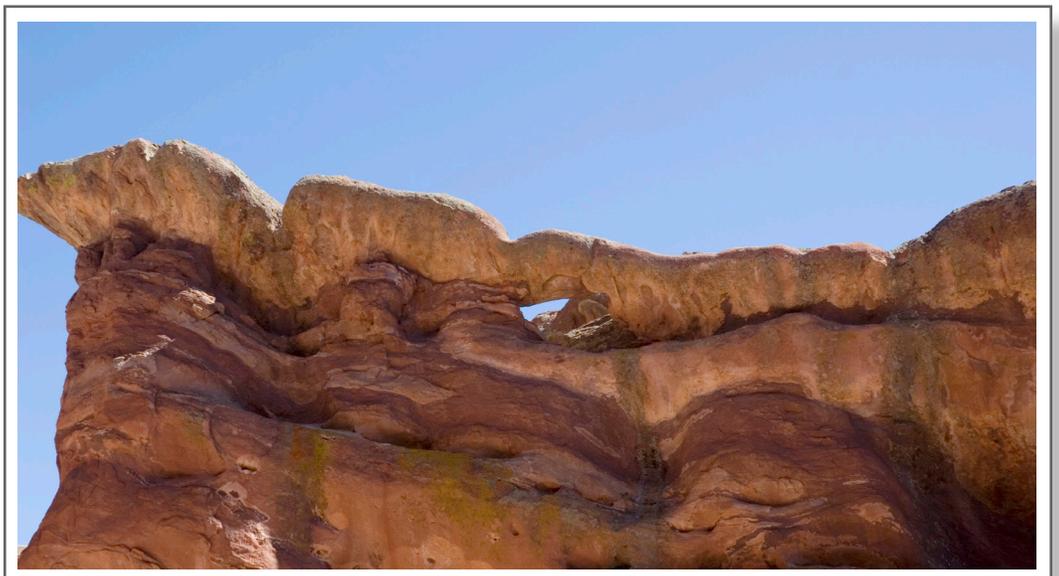
by Dave Barnard

Ever heard the old saying, "What do you think, money grows on trees?" I'll bet the majority of us have heard it more than once and probably have even said it a time or two. I find it interesting that even though everyone knows money doesn't grow on trees, it seems there are many that don't understand that money doesn't just magically appear when you wish for it. Unfortunately our government does nothing to help people understand that there is no such thing as "magic money."

When you hear that our Federal government is operating with a \$17 trillion dollar deficit (a loss that is growing nearly \$4 billion dollars per day) we have come to simply move on to the next headline because nothing horrible appears to be happening and no one seems overly concerned. Herein lies the difference between the average person and private businesses like Aurora versus

the Government. We as individuals and private businesses have to have \$1 dollar generated in revenue for us to be able to spend \$1 dollar in expenses. Simply put we have to earn some money before we can buy something. Unfortunately our government does not have to do that. They simply increase the debt ceiling. What that means is when they run out of money they just open another credit card and charge all the new stuff they want to spend money on. They even use the new "credit card" to pay interest on the old credit cards. It doesn't take an economics genius to see where this is going. In fact I'll bet every one of you understands that if I buy more than I can afford and I put it on a credit card because I can't afford it; then I open more credit cards so that I can pay off balances on my other cards and buy more stuff, it will lead to financial doom. This is the problem.

Continued next page



CEO Corner continued

Our government is setting a horrible example for everyone regarding financial responsibility. It also makes it challenging for private businesses to help employees understand that if the business doesn't have the money it cannot spend it. If government doesn't have the cash they just increase their debt limits and then increase taxes to everyone to cover their additional spending. Obviously businesses can't do this. With some businesses, if they need more money, they can increase the price of the product they make or for the services they provide. As all of you are aware we have in fact gone the opposite direction, due to Wisconsin's Family Care program, and have seen the fees we charge for the services we provide dramatically reduced over the past few years. It is for this reason that when Aurora needs to pay

Life Photo of the Month



more for something; insurances, food, fuel, wages and benefits, Aurora needs to cut in one of its' other expense categories to afford it. We cannot simply "charge more" for the services we provide.

There was a time, just a few short years ago, when State government was asking that provider agencies work on improving the wages of direct care staff to attain a reasonable living wage. Unfortunately that was then and this is now. It is apparent, through the many cuts and reductions, that the State does not care about that anymore. In fact I haven't heard it mentioned by either side in several years. Aurora, however, recognizes that what you do is the most important part of helping those we serve live a good life in their community. Last year we were unable to provide any wage increases due to the heavy cuts we were subject too. Although we have sustained continued cuts we realize we need to do something to help those doing our most important work. It is for this reason that we are taking measures to ensure a wage increase for direct line staff (management staff will not be receiving a wage increase again this year).

The only way we are able to do this is to cut expenses from another category. It is for this reason that we are cutting the benefits that previously existed for staff working less than fulltime. This allows us to offer all direct line staff, full and part-time, a wage increase this year. We are also encouraging all of the part-time staff to request more hours to attain full-time status thus allowing continued benefits.

If we were government we would call upon the magic money pot to assist in providing all that we need. However, that type of thinking and action will eventually only lead to financial ruin. This is why we continue to be responsible stewards of the money we do have and pay for only what we can afford. Aurora is working diligently to create and/or increase new revenue streams that will ultimately allow us to provide even better wages and benefits. In the meantime while awaiting those new streams to develop we will continue being the dynamic, creative company we have always been and find ways to carry on.

I thank each and every one of you, the owners of Aurora, for your hard work and understanding as we continue moving forward to a bright future!

Thanks for all that you do!

Dave

A Day in the Life

by Scott Jacobs

"If I say no once, it's easier to say it again." This lesson has come to Hayley Moe as she has served clients in her role as a Program Director in our La Crosse region, where she works with about 15 consumers with chronic mental illness. In our helping professions we sometimes forget that saying no can be helpful—but not always easy to do!

The good relationships she builds with consumers, from the start, allows her to balance both support and challenge



(having to say no at times) to help consumers reach their overall goals—making good decisions and growing as people. For almost three years Hayley has taught emotional regulation, crisis management, mental health education, and behavior triggers to her consumer caseload.

She brings a wealth of experience

working with students (at UW-River Falls as an undergraduate student in Social Work), and later as a grad student at UW-Milwaukee. For three summers she worked with Upward Bound, a program that brought inner city children to the River Falls campus and helped them see the benefits of a college community. She also worked in residential settings with troubled teens, doing both individual and group therapy.

The Program Director position offered Hayley a chance to work with an adult population focusing on specific life goals. She spends time with four or five consumers each day, either in their home or out in the community, supporting them, helping them manage crises, and providing education so they can go beyond their limitations.

Another lesson for Hayley has been to recognize when she is working harder than the consumers. This is an age-old therapeutic dilemma for many in the helping professions. Here again, Hayley must balance the role of being someone's cheerleader (support) with that of tough love (challenge).

Hayley has learned the importance of her own self-care AND her own boundaries. One of her first self-care strategies is "to turn off my Blackberry after work, unless I'm on call!" She also enjoys spending time with her husband, Jake, doing some scrapbooking, reading, watching movies, and cleaning. And of course, there's the mighty Mississippi—calling her and Jake to boat, fish, and explore.

How Can You Be Responsible For Safety?

by The Safety Team

Being responsible for safety is everyone's job! Going the extra mile only takes a minute or a slight lifestyle change to create a safe work environment and home for everyone!

- Wipe up wet floors immediately! Whether it is from a spill in the kitchen or water left on the floor from a bath or shower. Wiping up the spill immediately may prevent a slip or fall later!
- Salt and sand often! At the first signs of snow or ice, spread salt and sand repeatedly to ensure a slip free surface.
- Pick up clutter to prevent tripping.
- Turn pot handles to the back of the stove to prevent someone from accidentally knocking a hot pan onto themselves or the floor.

- Allow yourself extra time so that you are not rushing to your next appointment! Rushing causes stress to the consumers and can result in vehicle accidents.
- GOAL (Get Out And Look) before backing a vehicle.
- Turn off your cell phone when driving.
- Stretch several times throughout your day to maintain flexibility in your back, shoulders and limbs.
- Get plenty of rest; your body and mind will work more efficiently.
- Take a minute to stop and think before approaching a consumer that is anxious or agitated. Stepping in when you shouldn't could result in an unnecessary injury.

Let's all be on board for safety every day!

Recipe: Warm Winter Lemon Cake

By Jessica Schloegel



photo by kraft

It's winter. Still. With hopes of spring coming soon, and pretty much just wanting summer here now, try this cake that will have lemony sunshine and citrus summer bursting in your mouth. The winter blues can be cured with this little bit of warmth for dessert!

what you need

- 1 pkg. (2-layer size) yellow cake mix
- 2 pkg. (3.4 oz. each) JELL-O Lemon Flavor Instant Pudding
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 2 cups cold milk
- 1-1/4 cups water
- 2 Tbsp. powdered sugar

make it

Heat oven to 350°F.

Prepare cake batter as directed on package; pour into 13x9-inch baking dish sprayed with cooking spray.

Beat dry pudding mixes, granulated sugar, milk and water with whisk for 2 minutes; pour over batter in dish. Place baking dish on baking sheet. (Baking sheet will catch any sauce that might bubble over sides of dish as dessert bakes.)

BAKE 55 minutes to 1 hour or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 20 minutes. (Sauce will thicken slightly as it cools.) Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Serve warm. Refrigerate leftovers.

From the Payroll Department

Now available....Electronic Direct Deposit Earnings Statements! If you are enrolled to receive your payroll check via direct deposit, you now have the option to log in to a secured website to view and print your pay stubs. Additionally, you have the option to have a notification of your pay stub sent to you by text and/or e-mail. If you choose a notification, you will no longer receive your Direct Deposit Earnings Statements by mail. With the cost of postage increasing and mail delivery slowing down, this is a win/win solution. You will also be able to view and reprint your pay stubs at your convenience. If you are not currently signed up for direct deposit, you may want to do so to take advantage of these options!

For further instructions on how to access these electronic options, contact your local office. We are excited to offer these options to our employees and hope that you find them helpful!



By Kathi Tollefson

If you have any questions or comments about the Beacon, please send them to: Beacon@AuroraServices.com or mail to: Stavroula at Aurora Community Services P.O. Box 68, Menomonie, WI 54751.