

B the *September 2012* BEACON



"A new beginning"

Anniversaries in September

Congratulations

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

Connie Scheid	14
Sherrí Stevens	14
Betty Dueholm	11
Jessica Kroncke	11
Paul Okoroji	11
Edward Baier	10
Denise Haug	10
Amanda Schwartz	10
Debra Dzwonkowski	9
Louise Monson	9
Kristen Shaw	9
Christopher Zanko	9
Susan Mueller	8
Eric Cooper	7
Ezekiel Mose	6
Brittany Saunders	6
Judith Trybula	6
Jennifer Loken	5

CEO Corner

by Dave Barnard

In the midst of World War Two when things were looking bleak for England - Nazi Germany was bombing London almost daily, their resources were dwindling and it was before the United States entered the war. Sir Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of England, would speak to his fellow countrymen in an effort to keep them focused on victory. One of the statements he made to all of England in their darkest hours was, "Let our advance worrying become advance thinking and planning." Churchill has always been one of my favorite historical figures. He had the insight and ability to encourage and strengthen his people and always demonstrated great courage in his leadership.

Over the past few years Aurora has endured many trials and tribulations as the State has implemented cost cutting measures that have directly impacted many of those individuals whom we serve. I certainly am not likening this to the horrors of war that England endured, but Churchill's quote rings true in our circumstance as it did in theirs. It is easy to get caught up in the "worry world" when things aren't going as planned. The problem with "worry" is that it almost always leads to paralysis (where nothing is accomplished) or to a downward spiral into failure.

Aurora is very fortunate. We have a company comprised of

Continued next page





CEO Corner continued

people who, when faced with adversity, stepped into action in an effort to minimize the negative effects of that adversity. When faced with difficulties worry is a natural side effect. The great thing about Aurora is that rather than immersing ourselves in worry we immediately began planning and taking many action steps to create a better future. This has been possible due to the unlimited creative forces of our management and all of the Aurora staff/owners.

There are many things that are currently in motion and I will be sharing more details with you in the very near future. Suffice it to say that Aurora remains strong and will be getting even stronger as we move forward.

When England had been fighting the good fight for many years and all were becoming weary Churchill made a

simple but powerful statement to his people and also to England's enemies, "We will never, never, never give up." This remains one of my favorite quotes that I've used as a mantra for my life and also in establishing Aurora's business culture.

Aurora will never, never, never give up on those we serve and we will do all that is necessary to ensure their right to live a quality life in their community.

Thank you for everything you do to make that happen as we continue doing the right thing and fighting the right fight!

Dave

A Day in the Life

By Ann Tepp



Originally when I was approached to discuss a "day in my life," I thought, what in the world would my fellow Aurora colleagues possibly want to know about me? That I like mustard, cats, and riding my bike? Upon further thought, it occurred to me that a day in the life could be deeper than surface topics. So I rephrased the question. What would be of value that I could share with fellow staff? What gets me through the day when I want to give up?

Five years ago when I began my journey with Aurora, I had no idea how this career path would fundamentally change my perception of the world. Caregivers are often described as compassionate, understanding, and empathetic. Although true, I also consider all Aurora staff opportunists.

When everyone else settles for the status quo, Aurora pushes forward by asking questions, advocating for what's right (often at the resistance of the majority), and by paying attention to hidden opportunities.

Currently I oversee our Supportive Home Care program. These individuals live in the community, in a setting of their choice, using services they construct with the guidance of their support team.

In my experience, a majority of these individuals are very capable of completing daily tasks independently however have been told for so long that they CAN'T. After awhile, they themselves, start to believe it.

This is where the beauty of Aurora truly shines. We assist these individuals by giving them the freedom of choice for services, types of staff they wish to work with, and schedules that work best for them. We acknowledge and firmly respect that growth and happiness must come from the ability to be your BEST self, regardless of how society has defined your "abilities."

We are in the fight of our lives for those individuals we know deserve the utmost in services. While we're weathering the storm, let us not forget our foundation. Aurora, like America, was founded by rebels; rebels willing to take a chance for the freedoms each and every one of us deserves. When I'm struggling through my day, I remember the value of individual freedom. And why every individual matters.

Note: When I approached Ann about being interviewed for the "A Day in the Life" column she took it upon herself to tell her own story. Except for minor edits this is HER story. You did a great job, Ann, and certainly made this reporter's job very easy. - Scott Jacobs

Consumer Spotlights



By Brian Anderson

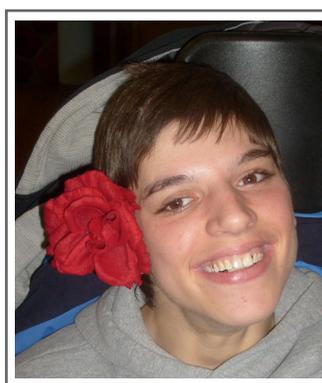
This month, instead of a nice lead in, we are going to get right into the meat and potatoes of this consumer, because what she has done deserves as much space as possible to tell the story. Nadine is a consumer at OP 46, and is a sterling example of a person we should all strive to be. She is

originally from Hayward, WI, but she has moved around a bit, spending time in Chetek and Rice Lake as well (most of her time was in Rice Lake or Hayward). She is one of 7 total siblings: three sisters, two brothers, and a step-brother and sister. As of now, she has only been with Aurora for one month, but already she has made a huge impact in the community.

Nadine recently set up a car wash at Mega Foods, raising \$84 dollars for the Humane Society of Eau Claire. Originally, Nadine had to do community service at the shelter, but the experience stuck with her. She would continue to visit the animals, even after her service was completed. Of the experience, she says that helping the animals was one of the things that she valued the most; furthermore, the experience gave her a sense of fulfillment, as she was able to give back to her community. While fulfilling, there were still challenges to setting this plan in motion. Nadine had to find a venue, and choose a date for the event, a task which took around two months. Along with the logistical issues, Nadine also kept in close contact with the humane society's coordinator, as well as another coordinator. To top this off, she was doing all of this (in the beginning) completely autonomously, with little to no supervision or help. As the project progressed, and Nadine became a part of Aurora, her housemates and the staff at her home lent a helping hand.

While talking to Nadine about the entire experience, she stressed that I include some thoughts she had on the whole thing. She told me that she wants people to not be afraid to do something that you want to do. Be it a dream you have, a short or long-term goal, or anything, just go out and do it! Furthermore, she wanted to thank everyone who was supportive and helpful in this venture.

Courage, perseverance, humility, and thankfulness are all qualities that I would attribute to Nadine. Combine these together, and you have a formula for success in all facets of your life. I think we could all take a page out of Nadine's book; were we to do so, we could live the REAL life that it is evident she lives. Thank you Nadine, for doing something so selfless and beneficial to the community!



By Laura Annen

Kristen has touched the hearts of many, both people involved with Aurora, and others whom she has met while out in the community. Her 'million dollar smile' will win anyone over instantly, but it is only the frosting on the cake. Kristen has such a big heart, such compassion for others, and exhibits these

qualities without any consideration of compensation for her genuine kindness.

Anyone that has had the opportunity to get to know Kristen understands that she is an amazing listener. She may not always be able to express her thoughts and feelings, and trying to articulate them tends to frustrate her. In spite of that, while listening to others' stories, both good and bad, her muscles will relax, and she will listen. The best part of a good listener is recall. When Kristen sees you the next time, she is able to recall the last conversation, and ask about it. That is a quality that most people do not have. To further emphasize the gratuity of this quality, Kristen knows and remembers countless family, friend, and staff members' names. Kristen not only remembers their names, but can remember their loved ones as well.

When someone close to Kristen does something extra special for her, she knows. This could be taking her to Pizza Hut, out shopping, or simple activities such as a back massage, organizing her closet, or a bike ride down the Red Cedar Trail. The phrase, 'thank you much' shoots off at every opportunity, and 'please' and 'thank you' are two kind words that are not foreign to Kristen's vocabulary.

Kristen's amazing qualities originate from her family. Her family has fought for increased communication in the past, because they care so deeply about their daughter. Living far away is tough on loved ones, but it is reality for many. Luckily, technology can keep us closer and make the distance feel a little smaller. Kristen communicates via Skype, Facebook, E-mail, USPS, and on the telephone with friends and family. She becomes overwhelmed with joy when the phone rings, or if the mail is for her. The fight in her family for better communication has given this writer hope for all relationships. It is not well hidden the love this family has for each other.

The reason why Kristen deserves the consumer spotlight, is simply because she has the capability and understanding to do what is wrong, yet, she chooses to do what is right. Thank you Kristen, for all of the smiles you have created in this world!

Quarterly Safety Award Winners - 2nd Quarter

Eastern Region's 2nd Quarter Winner - OP 025

"Communication, one of the best rules-of-thumb as far as safety is concerned. The team here at 025 communicates very well, taking both positive and negative feedback in stride. We process issues, set a plan in place that everyone follows, and execute that plan as a team. Any concerns or issues we (as a team) encounter, be it behavioral or medical, are met with a team effort to develop a solution, as well as follow up on the issue if need be. This level of communication is exhibited on our incident reports and 1st Report of Injuries. We use our communication skills in lifts, transports, med passes, and treatments. As Program Manager, I really feel our ability to communicate with each other at 025 has aided to our success in safety. That's why I feel the team at 025 needs to get that pat on the back they so deserve. Job well done!"

Northwest Region's 2nd Quarter Winner - OP 066

"I recently took part in a site review on Thursday, May 31, at site 066 in Balsam Lake. My responsibilities during this site review were environment and safety review. During this review, I asked staff questions about consumers, as well as requested them to demonstrate several transfers for multiple consumers in the home. I was extremely impressed with the performance and knowledge base of the staff."

I took this opportunity to act as a new hire, and asked staff to 'train me in' with both personal cares, as well as behavioral techniques a new hire wouldn't know right away. Not only did staff perform beautifully, answering rather difficult questions in regards to training and behavior, the staff present also did a phenomenal job with all transfers witnessed. Staff communicated each step with the consumer, utilized proper body mechanics, and engaged the consumer to complete as much care as the could themselves. This home is one with both specific physical cares and moderately challenging behavior.

I really felt impressed with the energy, communication, and performance all around during the visit. The active L.I.F.E. programs within the home really embody what Aurora stands for."

Central Region's 2nd Quarter Winner - OP 069

"I would like to nominate Operation 069 for taking a proactive and creative approach to safety. They have created a 'Safety Pail' in which any questions on safety that staff have they can be written down, and deposited. At each team meeting, they will dig into the pail, and discuss each question. Staff members are still encouraged to report any major safety concerns immediately."

Life Photo of the Month



by Donna Ernst

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.