

above
&

beyond



Fall 2012

Featured Articles

RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Empire featured in
Industrial & Specialty Printing

SAFETY AWARENESS NEWS

Screen Making
Fire Drill 'Rescue'

COMMUNITY CORNER

Curt Blair - Haiti Mission Trip
Steppin Out in Pink 2012
Ben Bettis - Eagle Project
2012 CMN Christmas Card



EMPIRE UPDATES

New Indigo Press
Insurance Updates

What's Cooking
Nature's Bounty-Pete Fauske

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Options in the Community

CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT

Authorized Red Cross Provider

**EMPLOYEE
ANNIVERSARIES**

NEW EMPLOYEES

**EMPLOYEE
ANNOUNCEMENTS**



Empire Featured in National Printing Magazine

Industrial & Specialty Printing (iSP) is the only magazine covering functional and decorative printing done as part of the manufacturing process. The end product is not the print itself, but another final product, such as an overlay keypad, POP display, etc... iSP readers include in plant printing departments, contract industrial printers, and commercial printers selling into industrial markets.

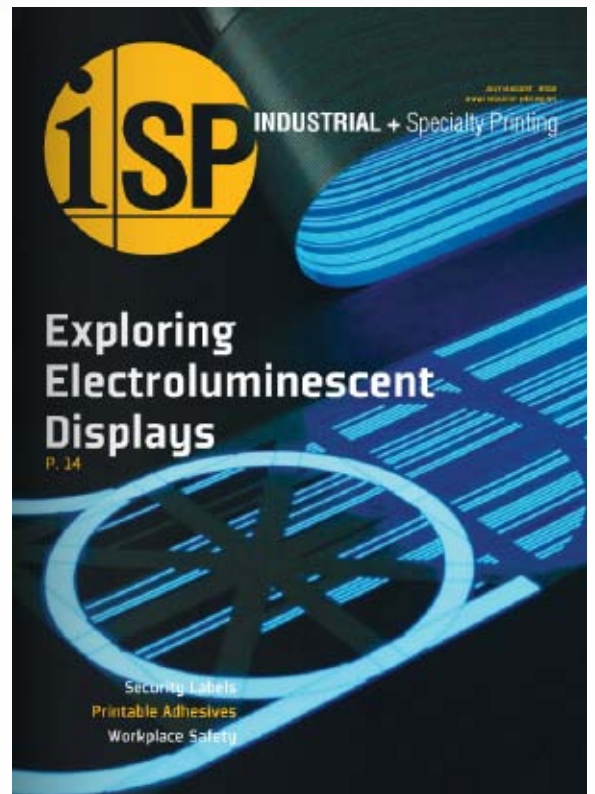
When you are a leader people will begin to notice. iSP noticed the innovations made at Empire and likened us to the pioneers of old forging ahead so they could thrive and prosper.

Check out the direct link to the current iSP article about "Innovative Industry Leader" on the home page of Empire's website, Facebook or LinkedIn pages. The article enlightens the readers about Empire's journey with UV/LED Curing and its new Kammann press.

Empire has also been invited to participate in a future issue of

John Freismuth invited to be a iSP Board Member

Gail Flower, editor of Industrial & Specialty Printing (iSP) magazine invited John Freismuth to become a member of the magazine's Advisory Board. John's name was suggested by his fellow peers within the printing industry. In the next year the iSP's



iSP's Shop Talk, a photo tour of our company's capabilities. It is a chance to blow our own horn and make a larger audience aware of all the things that make Empire great.

Advisory Board will be expanded from 6 members to nine.

As a board member, John will be retained to provide expert advice and input on articles when needed. John will be able to address his professional opinion to a readership of 12,000.



SAFETY AWARENESS NEWS

Welcome New Safety Committee Members



Alice Clark ❖ Screen Making



Dale Westaby ❖ Maintenance

Screenmaking - Safety Walk-Through

~Alice Clark

I have been with Empire Screen Printing for 20 years this coming December, in the Screen Making Department on first shift. My co-workers are great and a pleasure to work with. We work as a team, and this has made for great morale in the Screen Making Department.

Safety has always been encouraged at Empire for years. I have been awarded the honor to serve on Empire's Safety Committee. It would be my chance to make a difference.

At my first Safety Committee meeting my department, Screen Making was selected for the monthly safety walk through. Screen Making was inspected for safety hazards, violations, and areas for improvement.

A number of issues were brought to my attention by the other members of the Empire Safety Committee. Those issues were quickly addressed and resolved within one day of the safety inspection.

A safe work place is a clean work place. The

overall effort for cleanliness of the department needed to be stepped up. It was an easy fix. It was also pointed out that safe walk ways needed to be mapped out for people outside of Screen Making.



Note the updates: new floor markings, drip tray & overall cleanliness in Screen Making.

Designated routes were laid out to specifically avoid water hazards.

A drip tray was installed under the de-hazer and de-greaser containers to contain spills and leaks, avoiding a potential slipping hazard. GFCI outlets were installed to help prevent electrical safety issues.

After less than 24 hours Screen Making

was a much safer environment. Everything that was brought to our attention was easily fixed. It will be everyone's job in Screen Making to make sure we do not slide backwards into bad habits.

Every month a different department will be chosen for a safety inspection. Who know the next department could be yours, so remember SAFETY FIRST.

safety committee

Safety Coordinator:

Keith Cook..... R & D

Committee Members:

Lee Vieth..... Plant Manager

John Johnson..... Operations Coord.

Roger Henderson Insurance Agent

Amy Bettis Art Department

Brian Searle Maintenance

Dale Westaby Maintenance

Debbie Wolfe..... Large Value Stream

Alice Clark..... Screen Making

~The Ladies of the 'Ivory Tower'

Fire Drill - Nate Comes to the Rescue

Many of us forget the ladies on the second floor of Empire's corporate office. We jokingly refer to them as the maids in the ivory tower. Dawn Adamson & Diane Fitzpatrick perform vital functions in keeping Empire running smoothly.

In fact they keep things running so smoothly that they were forgotten in the fire drill this past Spring. This item was brought to the Safety Committee's attention. The committee addressed the lack of warning and sound of the current alarm system in the 'ivory tower'.

The Safety Committee ran another fire drill mid-August. When the alarm sounded Nate Monhaut happened to be on the second floor. Knowing the results of the previous fire drill, Nate made sure no man or woman was left behind.

According to Dawn Adamson, when the fire alarm sounded, Nate said, "LET'S GO LADIES! FIRE, GET MOVING!" and he threw down the forks and spoons he came up to get and escorted us out of the building. Even though we heard the alarm, Nate came to our 'rescue' that's why we call him our hero!!



Citizen of the World - Haiti Mission Trip ~Curt Blair



Curt Blair, shipping

In March of 2010 I had the opportunity to serve a group of people, that make up the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere, the people of Haiti. The Republic of Haiti occupies the western, smaller portion of the island of Hispaniola.

In January of 2010 an earthquake struck and left an already devastated country reeling as never before. The government was in shambles, the infra-structure was non-existent. Everyone was on their own. This island nation has endured invasion after invasion, now what would they do? The call for help went out and many countries and organizations responded.

Our mission group landed in Port-au-Prince. As we waited to make our way through customs we were given very specific instructions for leaving the airport. This seemed odd, but we would soon find out what happens. Our instructions were, carry all of your own bags, no matter how heavy or how many. We had tool bags that weighed more than 80 lbs., plus all our other luggage and personal items.

As we exited the airport, we were



The amount of devastation was incredible

met and surrounded by men wanting to carry our bags for a tip. They even went so far as to pull your bags out of your hands and off your shoulders. This created arguments amongst

these men, as to who was the first to take your bags. The mood was becoming charged and somewhat troubling. We worried about the distinct possibility of theft and riots.

The representatives who met us at the airport told us, "Hurry and get into the bus, throw your bags in the back and take a seat." As soon as all of our team was accounted for, the door was closed and we were moving. What a way to be greeted and introduced to this nation!

As we traveled to the campus where we would be staying, the sights



One of the churches slated for earthquake repairs

were more than one could take in. Buildings were leveled. There were hundreds even thousands of tents and man-made shelters in which families took refuge was beyond imagination.

The amount of garbage and debris was staggering. The sewer system was a 12 foot deep by 12 foot wide channel running along the street. Smoke from fires burning in certain areas would cause you to cover your mouth and nose.

The current government in Haiti was corrupt, and unable to render any significant aid. Churches in Haiti became the refuge for the people, and became the natural channel in which aid was distributed to those in greatest need. That need became the focus of our mission trip.

It was our assignment to rebuild two churches while we were there. The

Article continued on page 4

Community Options

volunteering

Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign

The Red Kettle Christmas Campaign enables the Salvation Army to provide food, toys and clothing to millions of people during the holidays. Check out how you can sign up to volunteer at www.ringbells.org



Humane Society

Coulee Region Humane Society

Volunteers provide care for the animals; making sure they are clean and have fresh food and water and a little one on one time. We couldn't do everything that we do without the help of our volunteers. If interested go to the following link:

www.couleehumane.com/volunteer-main



WAFER

Food for Those in Need

WAFER depends on volunteers to help us keep our doors open. If you would like to join our growing team, call us at 782-6003. Advance training is not necessary, so come and join us! Check out our volunteer page:

www.waferlacrosse.org/main/page_volunteer.html



citizen of the world **Haiti Mission Trip**

first church was damaged so badly that the local people were afraid to enter. So, from the ground up we started the work; pouring footings, setting block with mortar, then putting the first roof rafters in place. After this took place, the local folks broke forth in celebration. They could not express their thanks enough for us coming to help them. The second church was not as severely damaged as the first. The first order of business was to remove damaged parts of the floors and walls. We then patched and painted the entire building. As we built pews we had the opportunity to spend more time with the local people. We watched craftsmen take 55 gallon drums and old car bodies and pound them flat, as they began to shape and cut out art and



Some of the local children we met on our trip.

furniture. This was all done by hand with a hammer and a few chisels.

The sights and sounds of Haiti were overwhelming when one focused on the effects of the earthquake. Yet, that was not the complete picture. The scenery was breath taking. Life in the capitol city was bustling. The population was endeavoring to work their way back to being somewhat normal. Families and children left an impact upon you, as you watched them care for one another. In spite of what these people don't have and how they have struggled, you have to admire their spirit. They wanted so much to give back to us, because we responded to their need.

Would I go back to this island nation if the need rose again? Absolutely! Yes!

In addition to working at Empire in the

shipping department, Curt is also one of the co-pastors at the Community Church of the Nazarene, 1831 George Street in La Crosse. Check out their website to view more photos from Haiti and see all the wonderful things their church community is accomplishing. Go to www.lacrossenaz.com

Curt gave his life to Christ during Feb., 1976. He was then called into full time ministry in June, 1980. Curt went to Nazarene Bible College and graduated in 1984 with an AA degree. With his wife, Wyonne and daughter Denae they started their first pastorate assignment at the Berthoud Colorado Church of the Nazarene. His second pastorate brought him to Appleton, Wisconsin, where he, while serving in full time ministry, finished his BA degree through Mid-America Nazarene University.

His third and current pastorate is here in La Crosse, serving as an administrative Pastor and adult teacher. Curt's future goal for his church is to see lives changed and the impact of Christ on those I minister to.

A vision for the future **Next Generation's Leaders**

Empire Helps Local Scout Earn His Wings



After the lessons he's learned this Eagle is ready to fly.

Eagle Scout is the highest rank attainable in Boy Scouts of America. Just over 2 million boys have reached Eagle in the past 100 years. Currently, only 4 of every 100 scouts earn Eagle, that's less than 1% of the male population. Requirements include earning at least 21 merit badges and demonstrating Scout Spirit through the Boy Scout Oath and Law, service, and leadership. This includes an extensive service project that the Scout plans, organizes, leads, and manages.

With a little help from his employer, Empire Screen Printing, and lots of help from his family and fellow scouts, Ben Bettis (Cell 2 and Jobout) was able to complete his Eagle Project and earn his place in the top 1% of Boy Scouts. The children's playroom at the Newman Center in La Crosse was in dire need of remodeling. Ben raised over \$1000 to fund his project, coordinated multiple volunteers for over 100 man hours to complete his project. Empire's Digital department created vinyl lettering that compliments the quilted wall hanging, made by Ben's aunt, Wendy Staniszewski. Now the kids of the Newman parish have a new and fun room where they can safely play.

Ben will join the ranks of many Eagle Scouts like, Neil Armstrong (Astronaut), Steven Spielberg (Filmmaker) and Mike Rowe (Dirty Jobs TV Host). The rank of Eagle is held for life, "Once an Eagle always an Eagle."



Ben puts the final touches on the vinyl wall graphics



Completed Eagle Project at the Roncalli Newman Center

A scout is... trustworthy • loyal • helpful • friendly • courteous • kind • obedient • cheerful • thrifty • brave • clean • reverent

A tradition of caring **CMN Christmas Card**

The tradition of caring continues with Empire producing the 2012 Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Christmas Card for Gundersen Lutheran, a CMN hospital. For over 25 years Empire has donated all materials, labor and printing, and has helped raise over \$250,000 to aid families in need through Gundersen and CMN.

This year's card was created by 13 yr. old Kayla Koecher of New Lisbon, WI. Kayla's inspiration for her design was her family. Her drawing included in great detail, her family decorating the Christmas tree. Kayla is excited for the opportunity to give something back to CMN Hospitals®.



Kayla's winning design for Children's Miracle Network

Kayla struggles with cystic fibrosis, a hereditary disease that causes thick mucus to build up in the lungs and other areas of the body. It is one of the most common chronic lung diseases in children and young adults. It is a life threatening disorder. Kayla's younger brother Braden also suffers from the disease.

When you purchase CMN Hospital holiday cards you're providing a helping hand to kids, like Kayla and her brother, who have medical challenges. For example, while Kayla was hospitalized with complications from the disease, CMN Hospitals helped the Koechers with transportation costs, meal vouchers and an iPad, to ease the burden.

Kayla and her family were able to visit Empire and see the path her artwork has traveled; from Kayla's imagination, to Empire's Art Department, to the end of the printing press, ready to be delivered to store shelves.

A package of 20 cards w/ coordinating Christmas seals will be available for purchase (\$8/pkg.) at Degen Berglund (La Crosse and Onalaska locations), the Children's Museum and the Gundersen Lutheran Gift Shop. You may also call the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Foundation to purchase cards (608-775-4424). One hundred percent of sales benefit local children facing medical challenges.



L-R: The Koecher's, Braden, Ben, Kayla, & Kara



Kathy Cuellar shows Kayla her cards running on press

steppin out in pink **Promoting Breast Cancer Awareness & Health**



L-R: Rebecca Burg, Amanda Kuehl, & Jenny Ledman

On Saturday, Sept. 8, Gundersen Lutheran, La Crosse, WI was a sea of pink. Over 5,000 walkers and 300 breast cancer survivors took part in Steppin' Out in Pink (SOIP). Team Empire did its part, with 12 adult team members and 6 youth members. Each individual raising awareness and pledges to fight breast cancer. A big thank you also goes to our sales rep C.J. Sales in Florida for generously pledging to Team Empire.

Surpassing last year's fundraising total took a lot of hard work. With all individuals and teams participating, the community raised estimated \$370,200 and pledges are still coming in. We not only exceeded our 2012 fundraising goal, but we have now fully funded the Norman L. Gillette Jr. Breast Cancer Research Fellowship—a \$2 million goal that was set forth when SOIP began in 2006.

With the fellowship endowment now fulfilled, future proceeds of SOIP will be used to help other breast cancer research initiatives at Gundersen Lutheran. A portion of the proceeds will also be designated to provide free mammograms to the uninsured and underinsured, just as they have been this year.

Gundersen Lutheran Medical Foundation is continuing to accept donations for Steppin' Out in Pink. **Don't forget to mark your calendar for next year's walk—Sept. 7, 2013.**

Article Excerpts & Photos Courtesy of Gundersen Lutheran Medical Media, Autumn Brush, and Amy Bettis



L-R: Nicholas Meier, Melissa Meier, C.J. Meier, Amy Bettis, Abbey Bettis, & Elissa Nott



L-R: Paige Brush, Kaara Freismuth, Boston Jacobs, Autumn Jacobs, Cindy Brush, Brooklyn Jacobs, Caitly Brush, Sam Martin, Kathy Brush, & Savannah Brush



Great cause, great day to be out and about



Smile and wave ladies... smile and wave



Empire Company Spotlight

New Indigo Purchase

At the end of the summer, Empire replaced one of its HP 2000S presses with a new HP5600. This new press delivers improved image quality, versatility and productivity. Its updated rip will allow us to utilize our Alwan color management, and will soon prove to be a valuable asset to Empire as it is integrated into production.



The new press can be loaded with multiple substrates, reducing change over time.

Quirky & Fun: Anything Goes 2013 Empire Calendar

Over 200 photos were submitted to the calendar contest by employees, their family members and Empire sales reps. There will be two different calendars designed, the 12 month desk calendar and a 11 x 17 poster calendar. A new twist has been added, on the back of each month for the desk calendar. Eyeball benders riddles and/or puzzles will be included.

Rebecca Burg will be designing the calendar this year, instilling the design her own quirky sense of humor. She is simply the right person for the job.



Insurance Updates

A heartfelt 'Thank You' to all the managers, supervisors and employees of Empire for your patience and support as we introduced and implemented new insurance programs. It is our hope that you will all find the new products implemented to be beneficial in your lives as well as your families.

As with many new things there will be some growing pains. Please verify all your payroll deductions regarding insurance are correct, even if you enrolled in all insurance programs, declined the additional offerings, dropped current insurance or somewhere in between. If you find a discrepancy please contact Lee Vieth or John Johnson to rectify the situation. Questions can be directed to Lee or John and they will do their best to see that they are answered in a timely manner.

IF YOU DON'T THINK YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE, THINK AGAIN!

INCENTIVE PROGRAM COMPARISONS

2010-2011

Average Incentive Deposit \$7409 (Oct.-Sept.)

12 Month Incentive Total \$88,906

Average % of Lost Dollars taken out from profit was 71.5% (Oct.-Sept.)

Average sales total (Oct.-Sept.) was \$20,687,300.46

2011-2012

Average Incentive Deposit \$11250 (Oct.-Sept.)

Average Incentive Deposit increased 152%

Final 12 Month Incentive Total \$135,009

Average % of Lost Dollars taken out from profit was 58.5% (Oct.-Sept.)

Employees reduced losses by 13%

Average sales total (Oct.-Sept.) was \$21,584,267.17

We not only increased sales, we did a better job at controlling lost dollars.



Food for thought: If sales remain consistent from this year to next, and we are able to reduce the average percentage of lost dollars by the same amount we did this year (i.e. 13%) to 45.5%, means we could have \$160,000 or more in the incentive fund for 2012-2013 program.

Nature's Bounty - Outdoor Edibles ~Pete Fauske

Foraging for food has been practiced since humans first set foot on land. In those times it was for survival. In many parts of the world, it still holds true today.

Sometimes we take it for granted that it will always be there for us. Just look at all the stores around and the many types and varieties

available that came from nature. I would bet most people do not know the origin of the food products that they buy.

Let's take for example, the potato, it was cultivated in the Andes of South America. Someone gathered it, then made it bigger and better. Most of our vegetables have evolved this way over time. Edible wild plants of all kinds surround us. When we look for them, many are from the origins of our own gardens.

Myself having been raised on a farm in Vernon County, Wisconsin, we had a



Commonly found wild purslane

huge orchard and garden on which we depended. The most fun we had was gathering many types of wild plants, berries, and nuts.

Did you know that the wild purslane that you mow in your yard is one of the most nutritional, medicinal, vitamin enriched, leafy salad herbs that you can eat? The

peppery flavored watercress grows in local springs. It is also grown commercially in Vermont.

I am not an expert by any means, but I was always interested in nature's abundance of edibles. That interest in foraging edibles has expanded into mushrooms. Of course anyone who loves mushrooms, has heard of the Morel. It is gathered during a short window of time in the Spring. It is a very prized edible amongst shroomers (a person crazy for mushrooms).

Another time to hunt for mushrooms is in the Fall. So many types come up at this time, that they are hard to identify. A few years ago, I joined another shroomer to hunt fall mushrooms. We found about 10 lbs. of Golden Chanterelles and a few King Boletes in just a small area. Of course,

we were really lucky that day, because it is rare to find that many at once.

As good as those tasted, I became interested in other fungi that I had seen. So, I bought a good field guide at Barnes and Noble, *The Audubon Society Field Guide to Mushrooms*.

To learn more I attended a field seminar at the Necedah Wildlife refuge. The host was a well known shroomer from WI. She had many types of edible fungi on display. We learned how to perform a spore test to positively identify fungi. We also learned which fungi are poisonous or at very least not very appetizing. That alone

should alert the amateur shroomer. The rule is when in doubt, throw it out.

I can personally identify 10 different mushrooms that are edible. Five of those I

would classify as excellent. However, if it is a really dry fall it is tough to find them.

I was amazed to hear about the number of people out in the woods shrooming in the fall long before I started. I would recommend to anyone starting this hobby to do a lot of research. Make sure you go with someone that is experienced to gain knowledge. Shrooming can be a lot of fun and is very rewarding. For more info go to www.wisconsinmushroom.com for a really good look at the fungi.



Edible Oyster Mushrooms on a decaying log



Watercress, another tasty edible plant

Wild Purslane Salad w/ Olive Oil & Lemon Dressing

Recipe courtesy of www.food.com

Ingredients (Serves 6)

3 Bunches of purslane (large bunch = 4 cups)
1 Large red onion, peeled and finely diced
3 Tomatos, finely diced

Directions

Make the dressing by mixing the lemon juice, olive oil and salt together. Adjust seasonings to personal taste.

Thoroughly rinse the purslane and remove the small fleshy leaves in clusters (the stems are easily broken with your finger and thumbnail). Rinse the purslane and pat dry.

Add the diced onion and tomato and with your hands mix everything together. (Remove any roots that may still be attached.)

Add the dressing and again, mix well - so that all the leaves are coated, as well as the diced onions and tomatoes.

Serve alongside grilled meat, fish, or cheese. You can also serve as a light salad with crusty French bread.

Dressing

1/2 Cup lemon juice
3/4 Cup olive oil
1 1/2 Tsp. salt



CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT

Empire Becomes Authorized Red Cross Provider

As a direct result of the AED being installed at Empire the Safety Committee addressed the lack of CPR/AED trained employees. A few employees were noted to currently be CPR certified, but in a workplace of this size they were few and far between. There were other employees who were CPR certified at one time but have let their certification lapse and have not taken the time to re-certify.

This past summer Empire sent me (Amy Bettis) to become certified as a CPR/AED/First Aid Instructor through the Red Cross Training

Program. I gave up a couple of weekends to participate in a rigorous training program to receive my certification.

Now we will be able to train employees internally. Not only will they learn proper CPR techniques but they will also learn to use the AED and how to respond to different first aid emergencies.

Training will begin sometime in Nov 2012. We will strive to have key supervisors or employees trained on each shift. Trainings will be run annually and as needed. Each employee who gets trained will hold a CPR certification for 2 years. The end result will ensure we always have employees who have current

certifications.

If a CPR or first aid emergency arises there will always be trained employees on hand, ready to help. Who knows, it may be your life they save.



Training makes taking charge in an emergency easier.

Employee Announcements

Congratulations **Kim Kaiser!**
On winning the AED Vacation Day Raffle sponsored by the Empire Safety Committee

Best wishes on your marriage
Steve Johnson & Teresa Schulze
married on June 23, 2012

Congrats to **Russ Kuehn** & his wife Amy on the birth of their daughter, Addison Ann
Born on June 29, 2012

Congrats to **Sam Sokolik** & his wife Shirley on the birth of their daughter, Stella Elizabeth
Born on August 19, 2012

Congrats to **Allie Piske** & her fiance Mike Pedrin on the birth of their daughter, Brooklyn Marie
Born on September 7, 2012

Best wishes on your marriage
Beth Lightfuss & Wallace Roush
married on September 8, 2012

Congrats to **Jen Schloesser** & her husband Nick on the birth of their son, Vincent Nicholas
Born on September 11, 2012

QUALITY POLICY

Empire Screen Printing has an ongoing commitment to fully satisfy our customer. Through continual improvement in all aspects of our business, we supply the best product and service in the screen printing industry, in the most efficient and professional manner possible.

Employee Anniversaries

OCTOBER

Lisa Slonka 27 yrs.
Eileen Ustby..... 18 yrs.
Angela Gammons 7 yrs.
Laurie Arentz..... 7 yrs.
Charles Hills 6 yrs.
Benjamin Bakken..... 2 yrs.
Amanda Hanson 2 yrs.
Joshua Xiong..... 2 yrs.
Jacey Stoddard..... 2 yrs.
Spencer Arttus..... 1 yr.

NOVEMBER

Beth (Lightfuss) Roush... 29 yrs.
Jim Weber..... 27 yrs.
Keith Cook 21 yrs.
Roman Kamrowski . 18 yrs.

Dawn McGrath..... 18 yrs.
Jill Schultz 15 yrs.
Mary Lakey 14 yrs.
Candy Amann..... 12 yrs.
Morgan McDonah ... 10 yrs.
Theresa Baird..... 8 yrs.
Kevin Gerstenberger... 6 yrs.
Jon Schubert 6 yrs.
Chris Kendhammer .. 5 yrs.
Rick Auterson 4 yrs.
Bonita Anderson..... 3 yrs.
Janet Meyer 2 yrs.
Albert Vang 1 yr.

DECEMBER

Kim Kaiser 27 yrs.
John Johnson..... 27 yrs.

Kathy Vaughan 24 yrs.
Alice Clark 20 yrs.
Dave Collins..... 18 yrs.
Steve J. Johnson 17 yrs.
Rita Howe 16 yrs.
Robert Karaffa 13 yrs.
Steve Vinson 13 yrs.
Hans Hanson..... 12 yrs.
Eric Coleman 8 yrs.
Kathy Inglett 7 yrs.
John Yehle..... 7 yrs.
Marcia McFarlane..... 5 yrs.
Nathan Smith..... 2 yrs.
Jordan Vaughan 1 yr.

*Part-time employees

New Employees

Caitlin McMahon*	Jameson Kaiser*	Codi Jacobs	Matthew Hastings
Ellen Klug	Karina Richards*	Britton Kuehn*	Adam Krupa*
Cheryl Osley*	Travis Oldenburg	Jordan Listheim*	Matthew Hart
Scott Urbanek	Tamara Sheire*	Amanda Slimmen*	Jared Papenfus
Justin Ross*	Kevin Schmidt*	Laura Bjorkman	

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..... Dawn Adamson, Mandy Nogle
..... Amy Bettis

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER: December 28, 2012

All articles and announcements can be submitted to: Doug Billings (2311) or Amy Bettis (2371)