

PHOTO: JEREMY SALEY



## INTRODUCING THE GRAPHIUM

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### ANNIVERSARIES NEW EMPLOYEES



## INTRODUCING THE GRAPHIUM BY: JENNIFER SCHLOESSER

After months of research, Empire acquired the Graphium: a hybrid of flexo and digital printer from FUJIFILM. Delivered at the end of February of 2018, operators, engineers, R&D members, and artists trained on new software, color management, and technical aspects to run this new press.

The learning curve is steep, but the Graphium will be an important asset for Empire and our customers once all aspects are ironed out. This press will expand our business, offering customers high-speed digital output, and the ability to run continuous roll graphics. An additional flexo station equips the press for clear coats, metallics, and back-printing options.

Fujifilm released a press release in September announcing our

addition of the Graphium.

Below is the Press Release written by William Rongey at Fujifilm.

"Hanover Park, Ill., September 24, 2018 – FUJIFILM North America Corporation, Graphic Systems Division's Graphium UV digital hybrid inkjet press for labels, packaging and specialty print extends capabilities at Onalaska, Wisconsin-based Empire Screen Printing.

'The Graphium opens up the door to a different digital output method for us, and additional revenues,' said Jennifer Schloesser, creative director, Empire Screen Printing. 'We are now able to enter new markets we previously were not able to consider.'

*(continued on page 5)*



**SAFETY NEWS** BY: AMY BETTIS

Advanced OSHA training for safety committee members Keith Cook and Amy Bettis in August 2018 has heightened our safety awareness. We complete our safety walks through our production facilities with “OSHA eyes.” This additional education has made us more proactive in protecting employees.

Older equipment is being re-evaluated and upgraded with safety features and new guarding (e.g., core cutter in flexo). Walking and working surfaces are being improved both inside and outside our production facilities (e.g., exits and courtyard in downstairs conference room). Building improvements such as new overhead doors by LVS to aid in noise reduction were added in screen making.

Empire also improved access to first aid by adding five stand-alone eyewash stations in the machine shop, SVS, doming, digital, and shipping. A sixth stand-alone eyewash station has been ordered and planned for installation in LVS-Cell 2. October 2018 completed our second year of testing, providing essential comparison data to 2017 for these employee health and safety programs.

These continued efforts contribute greatly to our safety record and bottom line. Empire is proud of our employees who have met this 1065-day milestone. That’s almost three years with no lost time accidents. This achievement was celebrated with a catered meal on Nov. 28th and safety raffle. Keep up the awesome work and keep moving our company safely forward.



**SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**SAFETY COORDINATOR**

Keith Cook.....R&D

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Lee Veith.....Plant Manager  
 John Johnson.....Operations Coordinator  
 Autum Jacobs.....Human Resources  
 Sherry Noble.....Insurance Agent  
 Amy Bettis.....Human Resources / Marketing  
 Nancy Gilbertson.....Customer Service  
 Curtis Johnson.....I.T.  
 Tom Donaldson.....Digital Manager  
 Shane Hulburt.....Doming Supervisor  
 Theresa Antony.....SVS Operator



# INSPIRING SUSTAINABILITY BY: CATHY BUTTELL

Empire Screen Printing was chosen as a winner of the “Inspiring Sustainability” award from the Sustainability Institute due to our innovative and sustainable advances in LED screen printing. This is the Institute’s first year presenting the award. In addition to Empire, the Dahl Family YMCA Community Food Forest was also recognized.

According to the Institute, “Their inspiring action to invent and implement change within their industry has brought cleaner outcomes for the environment, safer practices for their employees and significant cost savings. It is also important to note that Empire chose not to patent this technology but to share their information and experience with competitors in hopes that more within their sector will adopt these sustainable practices. Empire is also a three-year MPower Champions program alum. Their continued commitment towards sustainability within their business and community makes them a perfect recipient for this year’s Inspiring Sustainability Award.”

The walking stick was presented to Jim and Cindy Brush, along with a group of Empire employees at the Western Technical College’s Lunda Center on September 25th, 2018.



## GREEN COMMITTEE

- Jennifer Schloesser.....Creative Director
- Amy Bettis.....Human Resources / Marketing
- Cathy Buttell.....Project Manager
- Keith Cook.....R&D
- Jeff Gierok.....Electrical Technician



## WISCONSIN DNR - GREEN TIER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS EMPIRE SCREEN PRINTING BY: JENNIFER SCHLOESSER

Empire has been a Green Tier company since 2013. As a Green Tier member, we've committed ourselves to go above and beyond required regulations and adopted a sustainability policy. As our successes have been validated through external audits and through our annual Environmental Management System (EMS) report, Empire is turning heads with our innovations to change our industry and our willingness to share our technology.

The DNR took notice. As part of their annual reporting, they decided to highlight these achievements. Erika T. Kluetmeier, sustainability advisor for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, along with her camera crew, were eager to see for themselves just what Empire is all about. This summer, they interviewed John Freismuth and myself. Through this process, they asked great questions, toured our facility, and took several hours of video footage. After a few months of editing, the final cut was released in November. Check out Empire Screen Print - Sharing Successes on our website: [http://www.empirescreen.com/environmental\\_management\\_system.html](http://www.empirescreen.com/environmental_management_system.html) or visit the Wisconsin Green Tier Annual Report at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/GreenTier/2018Report.html>

A big thank you goes out to Erika and her team for selecting Empire Screen Printing as part of Wisconsin's 2018 Green Tier biennial report. Your partnership is helping us share our story with our state and others in the sustainability community.



## WATER CHALLENGE WINNER BY: ELLEN KLUG

In August, our Wellness team, TEAM, and Green committee put together a water challenge. The challenge was to make healthy choices to drink water over pop, caffeine, or sugar beverages. Empire supplied each employee a water bottle to use for the challenge, this eliminated the cost to buy plastic disposal water bottles and encouraged employees to participate. The goal of the challenge was to drink the recommended daily intake of 64 oz. of water. The challenge lasted a month. They say it takes 21 days to form a habit. Those who participated used a tracker to tally their usage. At the end of the month, the tracker was turned in for a chance to win a \$25.00 American Express gift card.

Congratulations to Trish Lastofka (flexo) on winning the challenge! Keep up the healthy lifestyle!





## INTRODUCING THE GRAPHIUM (CONTINUED) BY: JENNIFER SCHLOESSER

Graphium represents the next generation of UV inkjet press for labels, packaging and specialty print. The press allows print service providers to fully embrace complex label, packaging and specialty jobs that simply aren't achievable with standalone conventional or inkjet presses. It makes converting short to medium print jobs profitable, as the press streamlines workflow, requires less setup material, less ink/varnish/laminate, provides lower running waste and eliminates overruns. Furthermore, it is one of the only modular digital inkjet presses offering the option to integrate true flexo and finishing stations for hybrid production and conversion, in a single pass – greatly expanding the opportunities that can be converted.

'The print quality on the Graphium extends our capabilities of our screen printing when it comes to printing four color process, fine lines, and perfect register jobs,' said John Freismuth, president, Empire Screen Printing. 'The Graphium is going to change the way print goes to market. I've heard many colleagues say 'digital isn't fast enough' and 'digital isn't outdoor-durable,' and with Graphium, you get both; it's fast and the output is outdoor durable.'

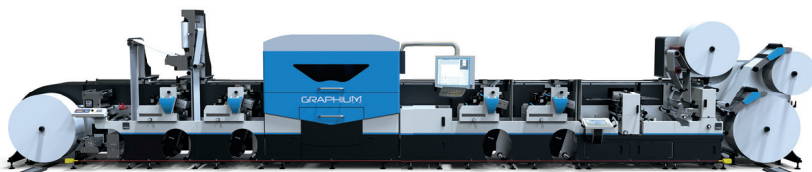
"Empire Screen Printing is one of the top print service providers for the polycarbonate market, and with the Graphium, new advantages with this innovative digital press allow the company to excel.

'We haven't found any other press that's cost-effective and provides durable labels for outputting solid color polycarbonate,' says Freismuth. 'They were either too slow or (the digital ink) didn't stick. We are now producing decorative polycarb elements that are directly applied to commercial grade and residential appliances, along with exercise equipment. Many of our jobs require a lot of white ink for the opacity, and the Graphium allows us to do this very well.'

"Complex artwork regularly arrives at Empire Screen Printing, and the traditional screen printing process wasn't able to handle the requirements demanded of clients.

'The Graphium allows us to successfully work with designers and companies looking for perfect registration,'" said Freismuth. "Screen printing hasn't been able to offer that, and with the introduction of digital, we can manage complex files at speeds faster than ever. With the Graphium we have the ability to output multiple jobs efficiently and cost effectively.'

"In 1960, Empire began in a garage in La Crosse, Wisconsin, as a one-man operation. Though their roots are in screen printing, the company has expanded into flexographic and digital printing with their newest solution being the acquisition of the Graphium. Empire Screen Printing provides output for well-known industries within automotive, aircraft, electronics, food and beverages, government, sporting goods and retail. Empire Screen Printing recognizes the importance of its carbon footprint, and as a Wisconsin Green Tier Company, it's committed to go above and beyond local, state, and EPA environmental standards."



William Rongey  
Fujifilm



## HALLOWEEN BY: ELLEN KLUG

Halloween at Empire consisted of four events this year:

- Company-Wide Potluck
- Murder Mystery
- Candy Guessing Game
- Costume Contest

We received a lot of positive feedback from employees over these events! Thank you to everyone who participated! Check out photos from the events!



The Candy Guessing Game consisted of three candies: Dubble Bubble Gumballs, Jolly Ranchers, and Reese's Pieces. There were jars sitting out filled with each candy. Employees were able to submit guesses for each. Our winners were:



**Total: 355**

**Winners:** Steve Remen • Nick Tomlinson • Dawn McGrath • Robert Fischer  
All 4 guessed 350!



**Total: 117**

**Winners:** Amy Bettis • Brock Eckert  
Both guessed 117 exactly!



**Total: 338**

**Winners:** Shane Hulburt  
He guessed 337!

Congratulations to the winners and thank you for your participation.

Rebecca Burg (art) created our very own Empire themed murder mystery for Halloween. The clues were given out daily the week before Halloween and winners were announced during our festivities.

Who killed Ron Livesmith? Was it Dennis Killings, Dom Throttleson, or Mick Dirge? The clues hinted that Dom Throttleson was a werewolf. And Ron, who was cooking bacon earlier in the day, made the poor decision to go outside while Dom was on lunch. A hungry werewolf was the demise of poor Ron.

Ten employees were able to figure out the mystery! Congratulations to the winners:

- Jeremy Seidel
- Teri Koski
- Sheldon True
- Rick Burg
- Matt Vanderloop
- Cathy Buttell
- Ellen Klug
- Eric Wienkes
- Jordan Bott
- Jenny Ledman



This year we had our largest number of participants for the Halloween Costume Contest! There were four categories for winners: scariest, funniest, most creative, and favorite overall. The winner of each category won \$25!

**WINNERS:**



**PARTICIPANTS:**







## 2019 EMPIRE CALENDAR BY: ELLEN KLUG

Each year, we hold a themed photo contest for the upcoming year calendars. The theme for the 2019 calendar is Animals: Wild or Domestic. We received a record 126 photo entries from employees. We produce two calendars: a flat 11" x 17" calendar and a desktop flip calendar, which are sent out to our customers. Employees can purchase a flip calendar for \$3.00 after January 1st.

Check out the winning photos below! If you want to see all of the photos that were submitted, check out our Facebook page!

Flat calendar winners:



Photo by: Maria Selezneva  
Engineering



**JANUARY:**  
Jenny Ledman • Art



**FEBRUARY:**  
Kevin Gerstenberger • Digital



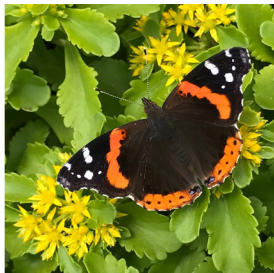
**MARCH:**  
Brian Subjek • Maintenance



**APRIL:**  
Jen Schloesser • Art



**MAY:**  
Cathy Buttell • Art



**JUNE:**  
Amy Bettis • HR



**JULY:**  
Lisa Slonka • Art



**AUGUST:**  
Autum Jacobs • HR



**SEPTEMBER:**  
Jeremy Saley • Customer Service



**OCTOBER:**  
Cass Rehfuss • SVS



**NOVEMBER:**  
Rebecca Burg • Art



**DECEMBER:**  
Kevin Gerstenberger • Digital





**COVER:**  
Arik Steele • Material Receiving & Converting Runner

The back of each calendar page will highlight various capabilities that we have at Empire. A QR code on each page will connect you to more information on our website!

All photo submissions can be viewed on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EmpireScreenPrinting/>

Flip calendar winners:



**JANUARY:**  
Kevin Gerstenberger • Digital



**FEBRUARY:**  
Autum Jacobs • HR



**MARCH:**  
Maria Selezneva • Engineering



**APRIL:**  
Jen Schloesser • Art



**MAY:**  
Chris Johnson • SVS



**JUNE:**  
Ellen Klug • Art



**JULY:**  
Audra Moline • Account Manager



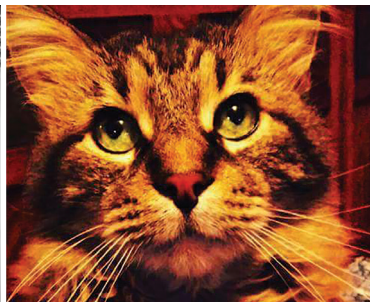
**AUGUST:**  
Teresa Johnson • Hard Tool Operator



**SEPTEMBER:**  
Steve Lechnir • Ink



**OCTOBER:**  
Jackson Huus • Kammann



**NOVEMBER:**  
Cass Rehfuß • SVS



**DECEMBER:**  
Jeremy Saley • Customer Service





## "NO ONE WALKS ALONE" THE TWINS EMPIRE BY: VANESSA FOX

Gundersen Medical Foundation's 13th annual Steppin' Out In Pink was on Saturday, September 8, 2018. Steppin' Out in Pink is a walk for local breast cancer research, awareness programs and patient support services. Employees came together to support Evelyn Mihalovic (accounting), who has been battling breast cancer. "The Twins Empire" was a group of Empire employees who participated.

It was an unbelievable experience! We were so honored to have walked the 4.5 miles beside Evelyn to show her our support in her battle with breast cancer. Evelyn wasn't quite strong enough yet after all of her treatments to walk, so her husband Wayne pushed her in a wheelchair. For most of us, it was a first, and it will not be our last. This is an amazing organization. We all left feeling so touched by seeing all the people who walked, volunteered, and showed support and love. The Twins Empire raised \$275!



## THANKFUL TREE BY: ELLEN KLUG

This year, we had a Thankful Tree posted in our hallway for Thanksgiving. The purpose of the tree was to take a little time out of your day and write down what you are thankful for this holiday season. It was wonderful to read the happy comments people left.





## RETIREMENTS



**Kim Radke**  
32+ years of service



**Lu Ebersold**  
17 years of service

Thank you, Kim and Lu, for everything you have done for Empire Screen Printing! We greatly appreciate your hard work and dedication. Enjoy retirement!

## BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



Jesi Acord (account manager) gave birth to Lex Riley (aka: Iron Man) on October 5, 2018 at 7:01 am. Lex was 8 lbs. 7 oz., 21 1/4 inches long with a head full of dark brown hair.

Sidney Condos (large value stream, 2nd shift) gave birth to a little girl, Amoura, on October 10, 2018, at 2:06 pm. Amoura was 7 lbs. 5 oz.

Congratulations, Jesi and Sidney, on your little bundles of joy!



## RAFFLES/BENEFIT FOR EVELYN MIHALOVIC BY: ELLEN KLUG

To help raise money for Evelyn Mihalovic on her journey battling breast cancer, Rhonda Peterson and Joann Anderson (QC) spearheaded many raffles throughout Empire. All of the proceeds from these raffles went directly to Evelyn.

The first set of raffles were meat bundles from the Holmen Locker & Meat Market. Tickets for these raffles were \$2 a piece. Winners received: 2 New York strips, 3 pounds of hamburger, 3 pounds of pork sausage, 4 pork steaks, 4 pork chops, and 1 pound of bacon. Yum! Winners of the meat bundles were: Sherri Schueler, Jennifer Schloesser, Jim Weber, Eileen Ustby, Trish Lastofka, Dawn McGrath, Dawn Gorniak, Dawn Kehr, and Autum Jacobs.

The final raffle was a gift basket that was hand-crafted and generously donated by Lisa Collins. The basket contained: wooden jack-o-lantern, welcome sign, painted wine-glass candlesticks, wine bottle lamp, and a wooden fall sign. The tickets for this raffle were \$5. The lucky winner was Nancy Gilbertson!



On Saturday, March 2, 2019, there will be a cancer benefit at the Holmen American Legion from 1 pm - 6 pm. There will be a bakesale, silent auction, food, meat raffles, and other raffles that will include a homemade quilt, afghan, and cornhole boards with bags. Some of Evelyn's co-workers are collecting donations and doing raffles to raise money to help with medical expenses.

There will be raffle tickets available for purchase and everyone is welcome to come and support Evelyn. If you have any questions, you can contact any of the volunteers: Vanessa Fox, Nancy Gilbertson, Kathy Inglett, Penny Segura, Audra Moline, Brenda Hansen, Amy Bettis, Becci Bosworth, Rose Chamoun, Nicole Abbott, Joann Anderson, Rhonda Peterson, Sandy Loken, and Petra Vogel.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered and participated in the raffles and benefit.



## KOREAN WAR VETERAN LAID TO REST BY: JESSICA KAMROWSKI

I've been to my share of funerals, including that of my own father, but none have been as touching as the funeral for my Uncle Leonard.

Leonard V. Purkapile was born August 11, 1924. He served our great country in World War II from April, 1943 until December, 1945. Leonard then re-enlisted in November, 1948. He was a Corporal of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division during the Korean War. He was listed as Missing in Action while fighting the enemy in North Korea on November 28, 1950 and was presumed dead on December 31, 1953.

As a child, I remember our family gathering at the kitchen table to view memorabilia kept in an old cardboard box in the attic. Included were letters written to my mother from Leonard (her brother) while he was abroad. Everyone became quiet then, maybe out of reverence. The same questions popped up every year: What happened to Leonard? Was he really dead? It was so hard to believe that he was gone, as no body or remains were ever found to be brought home and buried. That is, until earlier this year.

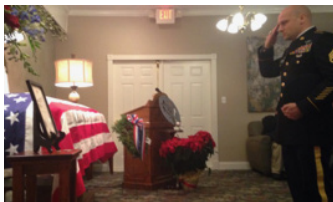


My mother, Jeanette, submitted her DNA to the Defense Department back in 2008 in hopes of helping find and identify his remains. Lo and behold, some of Leonard's bones were identified as a match to my mother's DNA sample from a group of 33 boxes of human bones that the North Korean government handed over to the United States in 1993. She was informed of the match by a phone call from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency in February of this year.

I could hardly believe it! After all these years, Leonard was finally coming home. His remains were flown from Hawaii to Chicago and were driven to Lancaster in April. A funeral with full military honors was held in Lancaster on April 26.

I was amazed by the huge family and military presence at the funeral. I think every veteran in the surrounding area was there to show their respect. It was when the first serviceman leading the procession marched in, turned, and slowly raised his arm as he saluted Leonard's casket, that I lost my composure and started to cry. It was a profound display of honor and gratitude.

There was a lengthy funeral procession to the cemetery. Once there, the military presence was even greater. The mournful bugle played "Taps," the 21 gun salute sounded, and the flag was meticulously folded and presented to Leonard's daughter, Delores Hall, who was an infant in 1950. The whole ceremony was greatly moving.



I am so thankful that my mother had the foresight to submit her DNA. Had she not done that, Leonard would still be scattered amongst the many boxes of remains waiting to be identified.

Welcome home and rest in peace, Uncle Leonard.



# GRAND CANYON PHOTOS BY: FRANCIS SCHMITZ

Francis Schmitz (large value stream floater) recently visited the Grand Canyon. Here are some photos from his trip!





# GREAT JOB!!!

# 1065+ DAYS

## No Lost Time Accidents



- Brad Ames
- Nick Antony
- Theresa Antony
- Ben Bakken
- Jamin Bishofsky
- Stacie Boisen
- Jordan Bott
- Rose Chamoun
- David Clemments
- Eric Coleman
- Sidney Condos
- Jacob Conrad
- Richard Cornforth
- Gigi Cundy-Lalande
- Megan Dickerson-Caacby
- Aaron Dobbs
- Brock Eckert
- Sarah Erickson
- Bill Feyen
- Shelia Fox
- Kiecila Fruetel
- Debbie Gilbertson
- Dawn Gorniak
- Troy Hanson
- Tyler Herricks
- Rita Howe
- Tanya Hulburt
- Codi Jacobs
- Desire Jenkins
- Dalton Johnson
- Steve Johnson
- David Johnston
- Aaron Jurjens
- Jessica Kamrowski
- Roman Kamrowski
- Dawn Kehr
- Christine Kendhammer
- Burt Kendrick
- Sylvester Kendrick
- Ashleigh Kidd
- Andy Kiedrowski
- Mark Klinski
- Ellen Klug
- Rhonda Knobloch
- Gabrielle Krueger
- Russ Kuehn
- Trish Lastofka
- Jenny Ledman
- Randy Lemke
- Michael Lillard
- Steve Limpert
- Traci Low
- Sue Maule
- Anthony McDowell
- Marcia McFarlane
- Cathy McMahan
- Dan Metz
- Amie Miller
- Matt Miller
- Jarrod Olson
- Carina Olson
- James Owsley
- Kim Page
- Michael Parker
- Mary Parris
- Sharon Ronnie
- Jon Schubert
- Sherri Schueler
- Angie Severson
- Lisa Slonka
- Nick Sly
- Randy Smith
- Walter Staff
- Becky Stark
- Arik Steele
- Jane Steinhorst
- Alissa Stenberg
- Steve Stenberg
- Brian Subjek
- Richard Sweeney
- Jade Turnipseed
- Michael Valin
- Sherri Vinson
- Petra Vogel
- Cody Volden
- Anthony Vue
- Donny Vue
- Jacky Vue
- Leon Vue
- Suki Vue
- Ethan Walker
- Johanna Wanie
- Jim Weber
- William Weber
- Eric Wienkes
- Amber Williams
- Michael Wolfe
- Rebecca Wurzel
- Kobari Xiong
- George Yang



## ANNIVERSARIES

### SEPTEMBER

James Brush.....58 years  
 Steve Stenberg.....40 years  
 Randy Smith.....27 years  
 Nancy Gilbertson.....21 years  
 Mike Rowlands.....14 years  
 Kaara Freismuth (P.T.).....13 years  
 Kim Page.....11 years  
 Fawn Marsh.....10 years  
 Jared Papenfuss.....6 years  
 Penny Segura.....4 years  
 Brandon Eckert.....3 years  
 Paula Anderson.....3 years  
 Brock Eckert.....1 year  
 David Johnston.....1 year  
 Ginger Anderson.....1 year  
 Joe Piper.....1 year  
 Kong Vue.....1 year  
 Michael Valin.....1 year  
 Nick Tomlinson.....1 year  
 Rebecca Bosworth.....1 year

### OCTOBER

Lisa Slonka.....33 years  
 Eileen Utsby.....24 years  
 Cathy Buttell.....23 years  
 Laurie Arentz.....13 years  
 Charles Hills.....12 years  
 Benjamin Bakken.....8 years  
 Traci Low.....4 years  
 Dawn Kehr.....4 years  
 Dylan Ebersold.....4 years  
 Naomi (Osley) Finney.....4 years  
 Troy Hanson.....3 years  
 Chrissy Riedel.....3 years  
 Amelia Otteson.....1 year

### NOVEMBER

Jim Weber.....33 years  
 Keith Cook.....27 years  
 Roman Kamrowski.....24 years  
 Dawn McGrath.....24 years  
 Marcia McFarlane.....21 years  
 Candy Amann.....18 years  
 Morgan McDonah.....16 years  
 Theresa Antony.....14 years  
 Kevin Gerstenberger.....12 years  
 Jonathan Schubert.....12 years  
 Chris Kendhammer.....11 years  
 Rick Auterson.....10 years  
 Bonnie Anderson.....9 years  
 Chris Johnson.....6 years  
 Dustin Maule.....6 years  
 Jason Koopman.....4 years  
 Maria Selezneva.....4 years  
 Todd Lejeune.....3 years  
 Alex Remen.....3 years  
 Dalton Johnson.....3 years  
 Jacob Kane.....3 years  
 DonnyVue.....3 years  
 Analiese Mueller.....1 year  
 Francis Schmitz.....1 year  
 Jennifer Coey.....1 year  
 Jill Johnson.....1 year  
 Matthew Miller.....1 year

## NEW EMPLOYEES

Tammy Stephans  
 Alix Sheraden  
 Alex Yaeger  
 Tony Carpenter  
 Paula Medinger  
 Desiree Mierow  
 Paul Fanning  
 Ashley Saley  
 Carla Schumann  
 Jeffrey Brandt  
 William Moline  
 April Holstein  
 Charlee Moua  
 McKenly Moua  
 Sandra Loken  
 Robert Bialecki  
 Tristen True-Miller  
 Niina Sjogren  
 Lisa Chang  
 Corinna Zaconne  
 Liam Murphy  
 Morgan Pedretti  
 Dawn Bentzen  
 Joshua Walske  
 Heidi Stach  
 Brandy Rose  
 Lisa Prestwich  
 Marina Carpenter  
 Jessie Otto  
 Annie Wolfe  
 Ma Lee  
 Darian Krueger

Deadline for the next  
 newsletter: 02/22/2019



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