



2011 Staff Reporter

January ★ February

May • June

July • August

September • October

November • December

Quit Smoking Today!

Kick the Habit! Nicotine is a powerful drug so the process of quitting will be difficult and could involve several attempts before you succeed. However, with power and persistence, you too can be smoke-free. Here are some tips:

- Aim for total abstinence; one cigarette will lead to a relapse.
- Treat yourself to things that make you feel special such as exercise, kissing, reading, and a cat nap when you feel the urge to have a cigarette.
- Lessen your coffee intake. Caffeine is a smoking trigger and its effects increase when you're not smoking. So, you will have similar symptoms to nicotine withdrawal.
- Modify your routines associated with smoking such as your morning coffee break or your commute to work.
- Join a quitting support group, which increases the odds of quitting successfully.
- Try nicotine replacement gum or patches to help with the quitting process. These products allow you to have control over the amount of nicotine in your blood stream.
- Be aware of withdrawal symptoms and triggers even three to four weeks after quitting. This is when most people relapse because they think that they are over the initial hurdles.
- Avoid or severely limit your alcohol intake when first quitting. Slowly introduce it back into your diet since it is a smoking trigger for many individuals.



To assist our staff in the quitting process, Liberty has offered two smoking cessation classes and will schedule more if we see a committed involvement and positive responses. Also, any staff that chooses to attend an offsite program (i.e. Nathan Littauer or St. Mary's) and completes the full course will be reimbursed.

Keep in mind, beginning with the first paycheck in May, there will be an additional \$25 charge per month for those who did not make an attempt to start a program prior to that date! ■

CALENDAR

◆ April

- 19** Bassett Health Care Screenings: DT Conference Room 2. *Contact Melissa Lasher for information.*
- 21** Ribbon Cutting & Business After Hours. 5–7 PM, at the new Liberty Day Hab Center, 91 West Main Street, Canajoharie
- 26** Bassett Health Care Screenings: LE Conference Room. *Contact Melissa Lasher for information.*

- 30** Day Supports Spring Banquet: 11 AM–3 PM at St Mary's Institute

◆ May

- 5** Liberty's Annual Dinner 6–9 PM at Crystal Ristorante
- 6** Spring Book Fair 9:30 AM–2 PM at LE Staff Training Room
- 7** LE Spring Banquet Noon–4 PM Crystal Ristorante

◆ June

- 4** Annual C.O.O.L Follies 2–4 PM – Fonda-Fultonville High School
- 9** 17th Annual Liberty Foundation Golf Tournament Rolling Hills Golf Course

◆ July

- 15** Annual Health and Benefits Fair 9 AM–1 PM, Day Supports Café

CQL Visit March 29, 2011



(l-r) Conductors Carry-Ann Schmidt, Melissa Thompson, and Maggie Rowley welcome their "passengers" on the Choice Train at the Inman Center Station. Congratulations to everyone involved in planning the Choices event—what a success!



(l-r) Melissa Feinour, Susan Bilili, Sarah Boyd, Susan Bentley, Sue Schulz, Kim Lawrence, and Erin Abele as they get ready for a presentation at the Inman Center during CQL's visit on March 29. The special presentations on "Choices" by individuals and staff were outstanding.

PERSONNEL PERSONALS



Birth

A son, Levi,
born March 2, 2011
to **Tammy Lorensen** (Nursing)

Values Winners



VALUES RECOGNITION WEEK for Quality

• First Prize: \$250 •

Tabetha Fredenburg *Direct Support Professional, FSS*

• Second Prize •

Day Off With Pay

Rhiana Sayers

Direct Support Professional, FSS

• Third Prize •

\$50

Debbie Oliver

Registered Nurse

OSHA Certification



Left to right, back row: Ray Dumar, Tom Jablonski, Sergio Muniz, Tammy Collins, Bernie Masterpolo, Dominick Wieszchowski, Gary Claburn, and Gary Greco.

Seated are: Claudette Brownell, Jan Rorick, Edwin Silva, Barbara Hoes, and Doreen Perretta. Missing are: Eric Capron, Sandra Bell, and Bill Sikora.

On February 10, 2011, sixteen Liberty employees received their certification cards for completing the General Industry training course under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Out Reach Program. This program was implemented by the federal government in 1992 as a means of extending basic safety and health hazard recognition and prevention training to workers. ■

JANUARY 2011

Tessa Pelosi

Employee of the Month



Tessa Pelosi joined Liberty's Day Support Staff as an Assistant Habilitation Specialist 2 in August, 2008. Her hard work and dedication shine on a daily basis. When recent staff changes occurred in Area 9, Tessa was an employee who stood out and made sure individuals in program had their needs met and remained comfortable during the transition. New employees report that Tessa is approachable and eager to help orient them to the program.

Staff consistently ask to have Tessa scheduled in their rooms because of her great work ethic. She truly demonstrates Liberty's values. The individuals with whom she works consider her not just a staff member, but also a friend. Recently, Tessa was hired as a full time employee within Area 9. We are very proud and fortunate to call Tessa part of our team. ♦



LIBERTY *Montgomery County ARC* 518.842.5080
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FEBRUARY 2011

Linda Jennings

Employee of the Month



Linda Jennings joined the New Dimensions staff in 1997 as a dental assistant, after several years working in private practice dentistry.

She has been of service in the Health Center Dental Department through a remarkable period of growth and change. Linda is currently the lead assistant and her thorough knowledge of the workings of the dental department make her a valued asset to the Health Center.

Linda lives in Gloversville with her two Chihuahua children, Reese and Bean. ♦



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Leadership and Higher Learning

Opportunities at Fulton-Montgomery Community College

We are excited to announce some increased educational opportunities with our partners at Fulton-Montgomery Community College that could assist you in learning more about the people we support and increase your leadership opportunities at Liberty.



Fulton-Montgomery
Community College

Futures Made. Here.

FM has developed classes with a Human Services focus, specializing in areas of psychology and disability awareness. Many of these classes are web-based making participation easy.

The first class to be offered (Fall, 2011) is a web-based class in Developmental Disabilities. This presents an opportunity to begin or continue your college education from the comfort of your home. Liberty will reimburse you in full for this class. In addition, for staff working in our leadership track, who have a Leadership Development Plan in place, payment toward the books associated with this class will be included.

Anyone interested in pursuing this opportunity should talk with their manager and proceed with the registration process. Registration for fall classes began on March 28 and will continue throughout the summer. Keep in mind that this class has limited registration capacity, and will fill up fast, so do not wait too long—register NOW. Please contact Christie Crawford in FM's Advisement Center if you would like to register for this or any other course. She can be contacted by email at: christie.crawford@fmcc.suny.edu or by phone 762-4651 ext 4710, Monday – Thursday until 8PM.

You can view FM's fall course offerings at www.fmcc.suny.edu. Good luck as you pursue this great opportunity. ■



Liberty Employee Discounts & Extended Benefits

As a Liberty Employee, you and your family can take advantage of some great discounts/offers from other local companies. Below are just a few examples. Contact HR for even more extended benefits!

■ **Sprint Wireless** is offering a 22% discount on any new or existing cell phone plan with Corporate ID: HCANT ZZZ.

■ **Verizon Wireless** also offers our employees a 22% online discount (also available if you visit the CCS Wireless in Amsterdam) for plans over \$34.99 per month and a 25% discount on phones and accessories (with proof of employment).

■ **Alpin Haus Fitness** on Rte. 30, Amsterdam is offering a corporate membership rate (\$300 per year, paid in full or deducted monthly [\$25/mo.] from a checking or savings account). This rate is for Liberty employees and their immediate families. Children ages 12–17 pay only \$125 per year. Join anytime!

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Employee Retirements

Bob Agresta

On Friday, March 4, co-workers gathered in the LE conference room to celebrate Bob Agresta's 27 years of commitment and contribution in providing a safe, well maintained and healthy environment for the individuals we support.



Bob, of the Facilities Maintenance department, has exemplified Liberty's values through his dedicated service to our organization and his person-centered approach to every aspect of his job. Now, after nearly three decades of hard work and service, Bob is retiring from his position at Liberty.

During his long tenure and work, Bob became well-known throughout the agency and respected for his integrity and positive attitude. Although Bob will miss his work here at Liberty, he and his wife are looking forward to soon moving to a home they own in the Village of Old Forge. Their plan is to live in their Adirondack home year round. An avid outdoorsman, Bob plans to hike, kayak and keep active with his new found free time.

Good luck to Bob and thank you for your many years of service to Liberty! ■

Chris Larman

On Friday, March 11, individuals in program and co-workers gathered to bid a fond farewell to another outstanding employee with over 30 years of service to the agency. Chris Larman was surrounded by friends and family in the Day Support Café who were all there to wish him a happy and healthy retirement after three decades with Liberty.



Jerry Gallup, Director of Day & Family Support, praised Chris for his person-centered outlook and charismatic personality. He called him an ideal employee who always upheld Liberty's values in all aspects of his career.

CEO Frank Capone, noted that Chris joined Liberty during a time of growth and change. He described Chris as a team player who was instrumental in making the transportation program the well-managed and organized service it is today. He remarked that Chris was always willing to pitch in, even when it meant dressing up in various costumes for party skits.

Chris indicated that he and his wife Lynn (who retired from Montgomery County in December, 2010) are happy and looking forward to retirement and to the birth of their first grandchild.

We wish Chris all the best in the years ahead and thank him for his many contributions to Liberty and the people we support. ■

Safety Corner

The Other Side of Workers' Compensation

by Dana Dorlon

As our agency tagline states, "The people we support are at the center of all Liberty is and does."

As spelled out in Liberty's Vision Statement, "Our employees are the core of our organization; dedicated people who carry forth the spirit of our mission and fulfill the promise of our values on a daily basis." That is why workplace absences due to occupational injuries can have a substantial impact on the quality of care. Our employees not only provide for the daily needs and desires of our individuals receiving services, but also develop personal relationships which extend far beyond the work environment.

Stability is a key component in providing quality care. Imagine the comfort you would personally feel knowing your support professional and experiencing their integrity, respect, and person-centered approach on a daily basis. Now imagine how it would feel if that someone was no longer there to provide the care and dependability with which you were familiar and comfortable. Work-related injuries impact both our staff and individuals equally.

One of the main purposes of Liberty's Transitional Duty Program is to aid staff in returning to work and remaining a productive member of their team. Liberty recognizes the value of our well-qualified employees who fit seamlessly into our culture, value our mission, and provide championship service to the people we support.

Safety affects quality, teamwork, and responsiveness. Staff who are capable of working safely are able to maintain the level of consistency which is so important to the people we support.

Safety is the cornerstone of every job—build on it! ■



Heather Vecchio
Safety Manager

More...Employee Benefits

■ **Financial Planning** is offered FREE on a monthly basis and is an opportunity for you to meet with a financial planner who is familiar with Liberty's benefit plan to help out employees maximize and coordinate personal financial planning. Appointments can be made by contacting the business office at x3221.

■ **Employee Eyewear Direct** is located in the LE Building in the workshop area and offers affordable eyewear for you and members of your family...even friends! Stop by the Eyewear Direct Display Room to learn more about our full eyewear packages that include your choice of frames/lenses starting at only \$39.95.



Employee Recognition

Far-Reaching Impact of FSS Staff

by Stacy Antos

Many of the staff within the FSS department directly impact the lives of the people they support every day. **Laurene Taft** is just one example.

Laurene has been working with a child named Pennie for over two years. Pennie is a 12 year old girl with autism. She has a very short attention span and her teachers at school reported regression in her abilities.

Pennie's skills and interest in learning have markedly improved thanks to Laurene's patience and persistence. In an effort to help Pennie with her schooling, Laurene began taking her to the Amsterdam Public Library. For months, Laurene would engage Pennie through puzzles and reading. She read to Pennie and encouraged her to point at pictures and colors in the books, as well as assisting her in completing puzzles.



Pennie is motivated to learn, attributed to Laurene Taft's one-on-one work with her over the past two years.

Recently, Pennie's family had a meeting at her school. The news they received was in every way shocking. The school reported that Pennie had an extreme increase in her attention span and could now sit for reading and library activities with her classmates. Laurene's hard work and dedication had paid off. Now, the school was able to use the skills Laurene taught Pennie in her alternative assessment for state testing.

Pennie's mother was ecstatic with the news and stated, "...they would have struggled to find a real improvement in anything had it not been for Laurene's effort."

While Laurene may have thought she was simply doing her job, the skills and opportunities she has given Pennie will be an invaluable asset to her growth and development as she continues her education. It is a great example of the positive impact our FSS staff have on the individuals we support and their families. ■