

February 2007

# Independence Post



*“A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words.”*

*Author  
Unknown*

## Staff Recognition and Holiday Party

Independence hosted the annual Staff Recognition and Holiday Party at The Gathering Rooms at PEACE. The occasion expresses our appreciation to all of our employees for their hard work and dedication throughout the year. Tradition accompanied the event through distribution of nominated employee and longevity awards.

The recipients of the employee awards were as follows: Ole Reliable Award, Carol Garrett; Sunshine Award, Michelle Bailey; Picture Perfect Award, Kathleen Admire; Lean on Me Award, Marquetta Laboo; Busy Bee Award, Diana Sedensky; The Miracle Worker Award, Mary Wilson; and All for One Award, Eric Daniels. Congratulations to all of the recipients.

Longevity awards were also presented. Staff receiving longevity awards for the 5 year category were as follows: Rhonda Capaldi, Loretta Forsythe, Claudia Garrett, Sue Mascio, Sheryl Miljak, Estella Simpson, Carolyn Steele and Deborah Withrow. The following were the recipients of 10 year awards: Deb Henderson, Malita Kurtz, Karen Oswald and Alice Yui. Recipients of the 20 year awards were: Sharon Goettl, Bev Long and Mary Newman.

Thanks to all of our employees for their dedication and commitment to providing excellent services.



## The Gathering Rooms at P.E.A.C.E.

The Gathering Rooms, located in historic downtown Ravenna, is an ideal venue for meetings, hosting showers, corporate functions, anniversary parties and birthday parties.

The Gathering Rooms offer several options for your unique event.

- The North Room, overlooking the downtown area, accommodates just under 100 guests comfortably.
- The East Room seats up to 32 guests.
- The West Room accommodates up to 60 guests.



The entire suite of rooms may be available for larger events.

Tables (60" rounds) and chairs arranged per your requirements. Linen tablecloths and napkins are available, as are candelabra centerpieces to create an elegant ambiance.

Other amenities include: parking in an adjacent lot, access to the second level from Main Street or via the Maple Street ramp and elevator access to the second floor for guests with mobility concerns.

Room rental pricing ranges from \$55.00 to \$200.00. For further information and room availability, please contact the Events Coordinator at Independence, Inc. main office at 330-296-2851 Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

## Brown Middle School Eighth Grade Ensemble



In December of 2006, the ensemble from Brown Middle School, under the direction of Carol Klone, entertained the participants of the PEACE Day Program with musical holiday selections.

The participants of PEACE enjoyed the hour of entertainment by listening, singing along and assisting in directing. Special thanks to the group for brightening our day.

## I Saw Sandy Kissing Santa Claus...

Santa, Mrs. Claus and Santa's Elf traveled all the way from the North Pole to Washington Group Home to let the residents know who had been naughty and who had been nice. Luckily, all of the residents at Washington had been nice!



# Santa Claus is Coming to Town...

Santa Claus made surprise visits throughout Portage and Trumbull Counties stopping by resident homes and places of employment bearing gifts.

Pictured from top: Andrew Sherwood, Ron Garrett, Eddie Hettrick, John Ellis, Ken Postlethwait, Dan Overton, Gerry Rogers, Connie Griffith and Melrissa Knight.



Pictured bottom right, Betty McCoy and Fern Leatherow.

# Independence is proud to present

...cards, wrapping paper and gift items at our Treats and Treasures shop.

The cards and wrapping paper were created by participants at the PEACE Day Program Center.

We also offer novelty cocktail napkins, specialty popcorn, scented



candles, jewelry, candy and more.

Treats and Treasures

126 East Main Street

Ravenna, Ohio

Store Hours: Tuesday- Saturday

Treats and Treasures

A gift shop featuring items made by participants at PEACE- an enrichment program for adults with developmental disabilities

## Coming Soon... Pirates of the Carribean III



## Johnny Depp's stunt double Guess Who?



In October 2006, Happy Day held their annual Halloween party. The residents had a great time socializing,, dancing and getting all dressed up. Pictured above left: Bev Jablosnski and Dan Overton on the right

## Thank You

A big thank you goes out to Becky Frawley, the owner of Scrap N Stamp Haven, for creating and donating framed photographs for each of the staff of P.E.A.C.E. to commemorate the one year anniversary of the operation of the day program.

Ms. Frawley, along with Pat Artz, Executive Director of the Ravenna Chamber of Commerce, have mentored us in our new venture, Treats and Treasures, by providing us with product and supplier information for the shop. Additionally, the encouragement received spurred us on to participate in Midnight Madness, which was the Grand Opening for Treats and Treasures.

## Can Crushing

One of the vocational ventures at P.E.A.C.E. has been the aluminum can collection. Twenty four individuals participated in the crushing and collecting of cans. One hundred percent of the \$1,200.00 earnings for this job were paid out bi-weekly to the consumers based on their participation. If you are interested in having a collection receptacle at your place of business or club, please call Rhonda @ (330) 296-2851.

## Graceland

In September of 2006, David Hornsby, Tom Wirth and Calvin Garrett got the ultimate experience of visiting Graceland for four days and three nights. They took the tour that led them through Elvis's amazing journey to superstardom and the cultural and social barriers that he experienced along the way. They cruised through Elvis's automobile museum viewing over 33 vehicles owned by Elvis. Highlights included his famous Pink Cadillac, Harley-Davidson motorcycles, the red MG from Blue Hawaii, and Stutz Blackhawks. They spent an evening on a riverboat cruise enjoying dinner and jazz music. All of the gentlemen had a great time.

## Jingle Bells

Every year around the Holidays, you can count on the Salvation Army being present at you local grocery and department stores. This year, several of the participants of our P.E.A.C.E. day program volunteered for this worthwhile cause by ringing the bells at our local Giant Eagle grocery store. Pictured below, left to right: Doug Damron, Andrea Harlow and Brenda Lanham.



## Hawaii

Home of the world's most active volcano and the world's tallest sea mountain. Birthplace of surfing and the hula. Former seat of a royal kingdom. Hawaii is one of the youngest geological formations in the world and the youngest state of the union. But perhaps Hawaii's most unique feature is its Aloha Spirit: the warmth of the people of Hawaii that wonderfully complements the Islands' perfect temperatures. Gretchen Mace traveled to this exotic paradise in September 2006. In addition to the above, she visited the Dole pineapple farm and went to the Pearl Harbor exhibit. She had a beautiful view of the ocean from her balcony and made many memories of her trip.



## HR Corner

(FMLA) was passed in 1993 to protect workers from having to make a terrible choice: should they attend to their own medical needs and/or those of family members, or should they keep their jobs?

Recognizing that most of us have to balance the demands of work and family, Congress provided workers with up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to deal with certain medical emergencies.

In the past 10 years, 35 million workers have used some portion of this job protected leave.

Not all workers can take advantage of the law: in fact, only about 60 percent of American workers are eligible.

To use FMLA, a worker must

- Work for an employer with more than 50 employees
- Have worked 12 months for that employer
- Have worked 1250 hours in the 12 months preceding the leave
- Work within 75 miles of 50 employees.

Thus, new hires, part-timers, workers at small companies, and those who work in isolated locations may be ineligible to use FMLA. Similarly, only certain family members can qualify a worker for FMLA. Workers can take FMLA for their own serious conditions, or for those of a spouse, child under age 18, or parent. FMLA does not cover the medical emergencies of adult children, siblings, in-laws, grandparents, or others who may be dependent upon the worker for support.

FMLA leave can be taken in a large block, such as 12 weeks, or intermittently. The employer must allow the worker to take leave intermittently if the physician certifies that it is medically necessary to do so.

Your most important function as an employee is to have your physician complete and return the Form WH-380. This 2-page form requires them to include medical facts, an estimate of how long a condition might last, and the time an employee might need to be away from work. Your employers may substitute their own version of the certification form, but they may not ask any questions that are not on this form.

## **Independence, Inc.**

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INDEPENDENCE, INC.

*Opening Doors to  
Opportunities for  
Individuals with MR/DD*

## Agency Mission

At Independence of Portage County, we believe that each developmentally disabled person is entitled to the rights and dignity afforded to all persons, and to be served in the least restrictive manner. With this philosophical base in mind, the Agency's mission is to:

- \* Recognize individual needs and goals, while providing services and support in an enriched environment which fosters independence. This environment of teaching and growth focuses on quality of life, decision-making, development of friendships, interests and activities, and the modeling of behaviors which promote community inclusion.
- \* Advocate for those we serve, acknowledge the role of family, friends and community supports and coordinate services between providers.
- \* Provide residential services in a safe, comfortable and family-like atmosphere.
- \* Increase awareness and involve the community in the lives of those with special challenges.