

EARC NEWS EXPRESS - *Sweetheart Edition*

EARC MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

FEBRUARY 2009

From The Director's Perspective:

In times of uncertainty and crisis, people instinctively band together and plan for the support of all. Hopefully, this will occur in this time of economic crisis. Some of the things most Americans agree upon is that we need to conserve our resources, stimulate the job market and get tax breaks. Non-profit operated Thrift Stores, like EARC's, are a means of recycling clothing, house wares, and other reusable goods that not only benefit their new owners with the value of a bargain price, can be a tax deduction for the donator and prevent the items from becoming part of our growing accumulation of product waste. Although it may seem like a small step, a contribution to a Thrift Store of good saleable clothing, furniture or house wares is a step in the right direction toward recycling and product conservation. The other factor of shopping in an EARC Thrift Store is that donators of goods and customers alike are supporting productive jobs for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Some of the people getting the most benefit from Thrift Stores sale of clothing and other essential household items are young mothers and their families with growing children. Especially in these difficult times being able to buy children's clothing, coats, shoes and toys for a fraction of the cost they would pay even at the most economical retailer, may mean the difference in being able to pay the rent or make the car payment. Some of the new rules under the Consumer Product Safety Commission have been softened for resellers through exemption from certification of product testing of potentially hazardous children's items. However, all thrift store operators have to carefully check the recall lists to ensure nothing with possible defects or know hazards gets into the hands of the uninformed shopper.

If you donate to or shop in one of the three EARC Thrift Stores, you are automatically contributing to the continuation of employment opportunities for adults with disabilities, who want to be productive, pay their own way and automatically reducing their dependency on government subsidy. Talk about a WIN-WIN for everybody! It is good to note that there are many more new thrift store shoppers out there now than ever before, soaking up those great bargains. EARC receives many quality brand name clothing items as donations. Often we receive items that have never been worn and are still brandishing the original store tag. Our donators can be shoppers, too, and visa versa. Since EARC is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, all contributors of saleable clothing, furniture or other items can receive a receipt listing the donated items for your tax deduction purposes. **Save, recycle and get a tax break, while you help support EARC meet their mission to increase the independence of individuals with developmental disabilities.**

Bonnie B. Wells, Executive Director

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Nova Centre Spotlight:

Nancy Brawner, M.S.W., L.C.S.W. is the Nova Centre's Social Work Consultant. She provides monthly services that include yearly psychosocial assessments for each resident, attends monthly individual habilitation planning (IHP) meetings, makes programming recommendations, provides in-service education and consults with administrative staff regarding social work services needed for our residents.

Nancy has a Bachelor's degree in Medical Science and Technology from the University of North Texas and spent several years researching infectious diseases. In the early 1970's she and a friend opened a free clinic in Oklahoma City to provide medical care and social services to those who could not otherwise afford it. She helped recruit doctors, nurses and social workers for the clinic in addition to running the medical lab. In 1979 she obtained her Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Oklahoma and worked in the oncology department at Mercy Hospital. Several years later she opened a private practice in Mercy Towers and provided psychotherapy to families, couples and individuals. During that time she also consulted with the CP Center and the Center of Family Love, which also serve individuals with developmental disabilities. Nancy retired from private practice in 1997, and she continues to consult at the Center of Family Love, as well as the Nova Centre.

When Nancy is not working, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, digging for crystals in Mount Ida, Arkansas, exercising and traveling. She currently is studying Healing Touch and will hopefully be certified at the end of 2009.

Submitted by: Molly Randel, Nova Centre Administrator

Thrift Store – Shopper of the Month:

EARC Thrift Store's Shopper of the Month is a **Sweetheart Deal!** Everyone that shops the Thrift Store has a **chance to win** the drawing of a **\$25.00 Gift Certificate**. November's Shopper of the Month was Stacy Hatcher and December's Shopper of the Month was Norman Nelson. Come on, you could be our next Shopper of the Month!!!

Thank You:

EARC Thrift Store and Processing Center Management would like to express our appreciation to all of the hard working employees that helped us make it through the toughest time ... **the last week of the year!** This is when our largest volume of donations come into EARC. Thanks to Suzy, Matt, Lou Ellen, Sandy, Chris, James, Andre, Anthony, Shannon, Patrick, Jimmy, Marcy and all of our Job Coaches and enclave crews for your dedication to doing a Great Job !!! **TEAM – Together Everyone Accomplishes More!**

Submitted by: Kim Pittman, Thrift Store Manager

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Nova Centre 20th Anniversary Celebration:

The first four residents admitted to The Nova Centre came to call it home between January 14th and 19th of 1989. These four individuals are still enjoying the stable environment and all the rest of the pluses of long-time friends, a caring staff and close access for family visits. The icy weather caused a detour for the originally scheduled January 2009 date of the Nova Centre's 20th Anniversary Party. The four original residents will be recognized on February 3rd with a plaque bearing their names that will



go on display at the Centre. Also honored at the Anniversary Celebration will be former and long-time EARC Executive Director, Nova Cox. Nova's vision for this beautiful, home-like facility and dedication to research the project, raise the funds needed and all of the preparation required to complete this massive undertaking, made the Nova Centre a reality in January 1989.



Nova Cox

Nova even got then President of The United States, Ronald Reagan, involved through her fund-raising efforts. Reagan sent a personal check for his contribution to the project. An enlarged copy of the check is on display at The Nova Centre, along with a picture of Reagan with some portraits of his beloved horses. We are so thankful today for Nova Cox's diligent efforts that resulted in the wonderful 16-bed facility that our residents, with the greatest need for health care assistance, now call home.

**Submitted by: Bonnie B. Wells,
Executive Director**

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EARC Thrift Stores - Appreciation Award:

EARC Thrift Stores is to receive a community appreciation award to honor our educational, environmental and vocational contributions to Central Oklahoma. This recognition is being given by Mindscopes Production Company. Mindscopes tribute is to provide public recognition for EARC Thrift Stores contribution to educating people, providing jobs and enriching lives through the recycling of life products. Mindscopes intention is not only to show community appreciation, but to offer EARC Thrift Stores as an ongoing model for people who want to incorporate recycling, mentoring and life-long learning into their careers.

Submitted by: Kim Pittman, Thrift Store Manager

Employees of the Month:

Marcy Guest is our **Vocational Employee of the Month for December 2008**. Marcy has great communication skills and is very caring and compassionate with the people she works with. Marcy gives 100% to every task she takes on and is able to see the big picture and not just what's in front of her. She loves her job and is always willing to take on more. Marcy is a great asset, and we are proud to have her on our team at EARC. Congratulations Marcy!

Submitted by: Kim Pittman, Thrift Store Manager

Todd Noel is another **December 2008 EARC Employee of the Month**. Todd has been with EARC for a long time, since February of 1996, and he is always pleasant to be around. Todd has successfully completed all tasks put out in front of him and has learned to ask for more work. Todd is always at his work station and ready to work on time and that is why he was selected to be Employee of the Month. Congratulations Todd!

Submitted by: John Adame, The Trails Floor Supervisor

Paula Woodard is our **Residential Employee of the Month for December**. Paula came to EARC with experience working in this field. When Paula first came on Board with EARC back in October, she took the time to get to know the residents in the group home where she is assigned. Paula's interest in and knowledge about the individuals she works with helps her provide better support to assist each of them achieve their individual goals. Paula also has been willing to help out and fill in as needed in staffing crunches. Congratulations Paula!

Submitted by: Calvin Wright, Director of Community Residential Services

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Human Resources News:

The momentum for the **attendance bonus** is still growing, as evidenced by the bi-monthly list that keeps getting bigger. This month the winner of the 1/15/09 **\$50 prize** was **Jacob Muriithi**, a certified nurse aide from The Nova Centre. January's end of the month attendance bonus price goes to **Marissa Davis** of our Administrative Office Staff. Everybody wants to be a **Winner**, especially with a twice a month chance to win a **\$50 prize!** Congratulations to Jacob and Marissa and all of the eligible competitors listed below, especially those repeating (*) their perfect attendance records almost every pay period.

Eligible for 1/15/09 Bonus

Deb Bethel
Anthony Burns*
Chris Combs
Thelma Crow*
Marissa Davis*
Janice Eckroat
Kenisha Kimani*
Patricia Kinuthia
Jacob Muriithi*
Debra Pennington
Irene Pickard
Lou Schlegel*
Phyllis White*

Eligible for 1/29/09 Bonus

Anthony Burns*
Thelma Crow*
Marissa Davis*
Kenisha Kimani*
Jane Muiruri
Jacob Muriithi*
Adrienne Newsom
Mari Sanders
Lou Schlegel
Suzy Sestak
Demetro Stevenson
Phyllis White*