



WHAT'S BUZZING

World's Only Publication Dedicated to Its Vermin and the Smithereen Employees who hunt them

Smithereen Pest Management Services, 7400 N. Melvina, Niles, Illinois 60714
 "Your Partner for a Healthy Environment!"

Vol. 4, Issue 7, October 2008

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Congratulations to the following employees who celebrated an anniversary with Smithereen or Ragan during July, August or September of 2008:

Bob Wrede	22 years
Jose Sanchez	16 years
Ben Davis	13 years
Gustavo Morales	12 years
Bob Alexander	11 years
Jim Brucker	10 years
Mark Upton	9 years
Emil Claudio	8 years
Austin Henry	7 years
Jaime Joaquin	7 years
Ron Klann	7 years
Willie Smith	6 years
Dwight Thomas	6 years
David Frederick	5 years
Eli Miller	5 years
Devette Saddler	3 years
Dan Wilson	3 years
Linzo Darling	2 years
Jennifer Cook	1 year
James Henry	1 year
Carmen Ziebell	1 year
Robert Rage	1 year
Michael Mirkes	1 year
Dee Lazzarini	1 year
Lance Aarstad, Sr.	1 year
Lance Aarstad, Jr.	1 year
Luis Gutierrez	1 year
Kevin Blackwell	1 year
Edwin Lugo	1 year
Freddie Wright	1 year
John Fonzino	1 year
Leo Rios	1 year
Lance Colon	1 year

We appreciate your loyalty, achievements and hard work. We look forward to your continued service as valued members of the Smithereen team.

We welcome these new employees who joined Smithereen during that same period:

Samuel Viemas	State St.
David Kieffer	South
William Kinsella	North
Jeffrey Looney	South
Marlandon Collins	State St.

Congratulations to the following recipients of the **Jennings Education Fund** scholarships this fall:

Middle School:

Daniella Sanchez

High School:

Ashley Alexander
Lauren Alexander
Amanda Rage

College/University:

Mary Hibdon
Marquis Robinson
Angela Sanchez
Chelsea Strohl
Elizabeth Wrede

Graduate School:

Dana Sheppard

These exceptional students received a total of **\$3,154.00** for books and other school related expenses. To qualify they each had to submit proof of good grades and an

essay about their goals and how they intend to use the scholarship money. We wish them the very best as they continue their academic success and get closer to attaining their goals.

Congratulations to **Matt Clauson** (State St.) and **Lance Colon** (West) for passing the IDPH General Use certification exam in September. As a state certified technician you are even more valuable to Smithereen and your customers. Great job, gentlemen!

In September, our West office received a call from **Laura Lopez** at State Farm Insurance. She had this to say, "I know how often you get complaints and that far too few people take time to let employers know when someone does a good job. I had to call to let you know we were very impressed with **Leo Rios** when he responded to our problem with tiny bugs in the lunch room. His inspection and treatment were very thorough. He was very professional and friendly as he took time to explain to us about the pest and what we can do to prevent another infestation." Thank you for representing Smithereen so well, **Leo**.

Employee of the Quarter—Emily Kluger

Steve Seifert's nomination letter for **Emily Kluger** as Employee of the Quarter reads as follows:

"**Emily** brings to Smithereen and our Sales Team every trait and characteristic that is necessary to be a *highly successful* salesperson. She doesn't just focus on what is happening now, she creatively employs all the facets of what we call *Visionary Selling*, and looks to the future. Emily's consistent application of consultative selling skills thrusts the profession of sales to a higher level of integrity and value. When meeting with her prospects and customers she asks insightful probing questions to discover all their needs and objectives and she listens carefully to detect hidden issues and matches them to Smithereen's services.

Emily's consultative selling approach focuses on the *value* that she and Smithereen brings to the customer and this in turn takes the focus away from price.

Her past experience as a rugby player and competitive swimmer have enhanced her skills as a team player at Smithereen. **Emily** is quick to use all of the resources that are available to her within our organization to strategize and plan her approach to all of her customers.

Emily's dedication, knowledge, enthusiasm, relationship building and persistence have positioned her in "winner's lane" as one of the most successful salespeople in Smithereen's long history."

Jack Jennings provides us with some of **Emily's** achievements through the end of September 2008:

- Her total sales are over \$350,000.00!
- Her \$335,000.00 in contract sales is the highest ever achieved by a salesperson at Smithereen!
- She won back McCormack Place and Navy Pier using account planning and a successful presentation to an audience of more than ten of their top management personnel.
- Along with **Brian Brophy** she has become an industry leader in selling and promoting green pest management.

With two months left in our fiscal year, who knows what **Emily's** final annual sales figures will be. One thing is for certain, she will have her work cut out for her to equal or beat those record figures next year. But with her tremendous energy and enthusiasm we certainly would not bet against her.



Emily with Smithereen's "green" mascot in its habitat...



...and presenting an up close and personal view of our chameleon.

Smithereen Family News

On August 16th, **Freddie Wilson** (State St.) and his wife, **Sarah**, welcomed into the world beautiful little **Sidney Rose** who weighed in at 6 lbs. 9 oz. We hear she just missed an August 15th birthday by two minutes so now she will have to wait an extra day each year for her birthday celebration. Congratulations and best wishes to the **Wilson's**.

Ron Klann (Wildlife) underwent gallbladder surgery on August 28th. We are happy to report that thanks to the new, less invasive surgical technique he was back to work after a very brief recovery.

On September 15th, **Lenworth (Lenny) Kirlew** (North) and his wife **Nicole** became the proud parents of beautiful little **Nia**. She has one older sister, **Akili**. We send our congratulations to the

entire **Kirlew** family!

Congratulations and best wishes to **Andy Novinger** (State St.) and his wife, **Anna**, on the birth of beautiful little **Emma Jayne** on September 19th. She arrived four weeks ahead of schedule at a weight of 4 lbs. 9 oz. and **Anna** had some medical complications but we are very pleased to report that she and **Emma** are home and both are doing fine.

Our deepest sympathy to **Jim Brucker** (North) on the death of his brother, **Kenneth**, who died of natural causes at his home on September 22nd. Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Jim** and his family.

Congratulations to **Leticia Fink** (Corp.) and her husband, **Andy**, on their adoption of beautiful little two-week old **Diana** on September 26th. They

waited a long time for this happy event and we know how fortunate they feel. Soon **Diana** will realize that she is fortunate to have responsible, loving parents like **Leticia** and **Andy**. Our best wishes to the **Fink** family.

Our deepest sympathy to **Jose (Joe) Diaz** (West) on the loss of his older brother, **Luis**, who died on September 27th in Chicago after an extended illness and fatal infection. He was laid to rest in his home town of Caguas, Puerto Rico. Our thoughts and prayers are with **Joe** and his entire family.

Our deepest sympathy to **Pat & David Harris-John** (Corp.) on the death of **Pat's** mother. The pain of losing a parent goes very deep no matter how long we have them with us. and our thoughts and prayers are with **Pat** and her family in their time of grief.

We are happy to report that **Forrest Sheppard** (Corp.) is back to work after arthroscopic knee surgery. Another example of the benefits of less invasive techniques.

On Sunday, October 19th, **Brian Johnston** (West) suffered not one but two heart attacks. At the hospital angioplasty was used to relieve the blockage and a stent was installed to keep the artery open. Had he arrived just an hour later there would be no good news to report. But **Brian** is recovering and has returned to very light duty. The bad news is that this 41 year old smoker and double bacon cheeseburger kind of guy is facing some serious lifestyle changes. We are betting on you, **Brian**, and you are in our thoughts and prayers. (Read more about **Brian** on page 4.)

Great American Smithereen Summer Outing

There was a survey of Smithereen employees again this year to find out where they would like to hold the summer outing and on August 23rd, 174 employees, family members and guests attended the winning location at the Six Flags

Great America amusement park in Gurnee, Illinois.

The outing included a full day of fun on the rides and in the new water park with a very nice picnic lunch in The Grove.

As usual at these events, **Andy McCormack** held a

drawing after lunch for some very nice attendance prizes.

Each person attending received a Smithereen T-shirt with termites on the back this year. It is always fun to stroll around the amusement

park and observe the "infestation" of Smithereen employees with their families and guests, not to mention the look on the faces of other people staring at the insects on their backs as they wait in line behind them.

What a “Sweet” Sentiment!

Brian Johnston (West) received a poster from the appreciative mother of one of his bed bug customers. It had candy packages strategically taped to it and Brian was finally able to decipher the following message:

When my daughter's life was falling to (Pieces) you were the (Life Saver). Thank you for not (Snickering) at our misfortune with the (Mounds) of bed bugs she endured. You went the (Extra) mile and performed magic (Twix) to get rid of the bugs. It might cost me (100 Grand) but thanks!

A card attached to the poster read:

All joking aside... Thanks for your patience, your assistance and your time. I truly appreciate your calm expertise.

Sincerely,

Penny Brown

A unique customer response for an equally unique Smithereen service manager.

Thanks for the great job, **Brian!**

Photo (right) is **Brian Johnston** holding his “sweet” fan mail.



First Annual Smithereen Food Drive

Smithereen Company is sponsoring a food drive this year to help the Greater Chicago Food Depository restock feed the hungry.

On November 3rd, boxes will be placed in each of our four offices for the collection of non-perishable food items (boxes, cans and Jars). The boxes will be collected and transported to our Corporate office on November 17th to be picked up by the food pantry the next day.

Knowing the generosity of our employees, we are sure the boxes will not be large enough to hold all of the food items for those in our community who are less fortunate.

As the holidays approach the need is always greater, but the number of people turning to pantries, soup kitchens and shelters has gone up 30% over last year. One reason for the increase are soaring food prices that make it harder for working families to make ends meet.

The depository feeds more than 500,000 hungry men, women and children annually. They distribute more than 46 million pounds of food each year but they are having a lot of trouble keeping up with the community needs.

Most of the local food pantries sponsored by churches and community groups in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs get their food from the Greater Chicago Food Depository. So as they experience much greater demand and their shelves become bare,

even more pressure is placed on the depository to keep up with their needs.

There are always isolated stories of extreme poverty about children whose only meal of the day is a school lunch or seniors trying to survive on pet food. But the vast majority of recipients are working families that are having trouble putting enough nutritious food on the table and that is a need to which we can all surely relate. Thank you in advance for your contributions to this worthy cause.

Free Credit Reports and How to Use Them

Free Credit Reports:

Each American is entitled to a free credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, TransUnion & Experian) once a year. These reports normally cost about \$10.00 each. The catch is that there are only two ways to get your free credit reports.

1. Call this toll-free #: **1-877-322-8228** or
2. Go to this website: **AnnualCreditReport.com**

You can request all three at the same time, but then you won't be able to check on your credit no charge for a whole year. If you spread out your requests you can check on your credit every four months. For example, you could ask for your Equifax report in October 2008, your TransUnion report in February 2009 and your Experian report in June 2009. You would then be able to start over by getting your Equifax report again next October.

Why is it important to check your credit reports on a regular basis? The most important reason to keep an eye on them is to make sure the information they have is correct and that no one else is using your credit illegally. Each of the three bureaus uses the FICO rating system, but they each have a different name for it and their

scores may be different because they don't share the same information. That is why it is very important to monitor your ratings with all three of the bureaus.

You may run into a lot of false information about credit reports. Even honest lenders misunderstand the system. For example some may tell you that accessing your reports on a regular basis will lower your score. It will not. Even the mass inquiries by companies trying to offer you pre-approved credit cards will not lower your score. Accessing your report will only have an effect if you accept a credit card offer or authorize a lender to check your credit for a loan quote and several of those types of inquiries in a short period of time will count as only one inquiry, so if you are shopping for a car loan or mortgage it is good to get all of the quotes within a week to ten day period.

You may also have heard that closing accounts will help your credit score. That also is not true. Closing an account can actually lower your score by reducing your available credit and making the total amount you owe appear larger. Because they use the age of credit in your rating, if you close an old account it may make your overall credit appear younger and lower your score.

Improving your score:

Here are some ways to improve your credit score:

Correct all errors in your credit report. Even a typo could affect your score so all corrections should be reported immediately to the bureau issuing the report. They must respond to your request to correct your record, but they may investigate the accuracy of your correction first.

Pay all of your bills on time. Late payments can cost you more than a late fee. They will have a very negative effect on your credit score.

Pay down your debt as quickly as possible. This is especially true of credit card balances. It will save you a lot more in interest fees than you can earn from a savings account and reducing your debt will have a direct and positive affect on your credit score.

Apply for and use credit sparingly. One of the chief causes of our country's current economic crisis is the unwise and overuse of credit by government, by corporations and by individuals. Maintaining available credit and high credit scores is not always easy but it is extremely important for your financial well-being.

Call

1-877-322-8228
to get a free annual report from each of the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, TransUnion and Experian).

HR Corner by Cheryl Kronon

There isn't a lot of new information to share with you this issue, but I want to take this opportunity to remind all employees and family members to get an annual check up from you physician.

Early detection is very important in the treatment of any medical problem and symptoms are not always present in those early stages. When you see your primary physician for an examination on a regular basis, he or she will often be able to detect even minor changes in your

health and run further tests if necessary.

The \$20.00 encounter fee for those of you in our group health plan could be the best investment you make all year—even if it simply confirms that you are as healthy as you feel.

Some Back-to-School advice from EAP:

“School's back in session. Establishing good habits now is the best way to ensure a successful school year. Start with enforced homework and bedtime

rules. Teens need about nine hours of sleep a night (tough to get), but discourage super-late nights and sleep-ins on the weekends. Sleep deficit has a cumulative effect and can make Monday morning a grueling chore. Limit extra-curricular activity, if possible, until this structure is in place. Watch for signs that your child is being bullied, having trouble fitting in, or struggling with homework. Ask questions about the school day and read between the lines if you don't get a direct response and contact a teacher if you sense trouble.

Send Your Human Resource Questions or Comments to Cheryl Kronon at our Corporate Office.

From the Editor's Desk

We try hard not to repeat articles, but the one on page 5 about the free annual credit reports may seem familiar to some of you. We ran a very similar article a few years ago. Since then I have received several calls asking if I could dig through the archives and find the phone number for them so I thought it would be worthwhile to update the information and present it to you again. I hope you find it useful.

It is no accident that listening to the customer's concerns and responding to them is one of the factors in **Emily Kluger's** sales success. Paying attention to the concerns of our prospective and current

customers has always been a vital part of our business.

If you would like to make a cash contribution to the Greater Chicago Food Depository in addition to your food donations to help cover the cost of perishable items, please mail your check to **Greater Chicago Food Depository, 4100 W. Ann Lurie Place, Chicago, IL. 60632.** You can also contribute on line at www.chicagofoodbank.org.

I cannot read Smithereen Family News without being reminded of the miracle of birth, the inevitability of death and the stages of human life that connect them.

We begin as a helpless, vulnerable infant, then 10 to 11 years of growth and development are spent as a child. During the next 8 rebellious teen years we go through the difficult metamorphosis into adulthood's 3 stages (young adult, middle-ager and senior). Each stage of human existence has it's own advantages and challenges to keep life interesting throughout. Luis Armstrong was right on target when he sang, "What a wonderful world!"

A Word to the Wise:
"To profit from good advice requires more wisdom than to give it."

Customer Service Wisdom:
"There is never a traffic jam along the extra mile."

Items for the January issue must submitted no later than January 5, 2009.

If your article is used, you will receive a \$25 gift certificate!