

Beacon **TIMES**

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEACON GROUP

SUMMER 2010



Betty Stewart, H.R. Specialist and Bryan Durrett, Director of H.R. Safeway, Phoenix Div (center), accept the Business Award from Bob Chamberlin, President and CEO and Greg Bender, Chairperson of NISH during their recent Training and Achievement Conference in Anaheim, CA.

On Monday, May 24th, at their annual Training and Achievement Conference, NISH, a national organization that works with over 600 nonprofit organizations to train and employ people with disabilities to provide goods and services to the federal government, presented SAFEWAY, Phoenix Division, their first ever Business Award. Beacon Group had nominated SAFEWAY for this award in recognition of the extraordinary record they have of hiring people with disabilities, and for their generous support of our programs in Arizona. Before this year, NISH has only recognized businesses and individuals involved in federal AbilityOne contracts. The award to SAFEWAY is the first time a non-AbilityOne business has been honored.



SAFEWAY wins national award from NISH

Three years ago, SAFEWAY established a business partnership with Beacon, that has resulted in exceptional vocational training and dozens of job placements for people with disabilities. These achievements also have helped to educate a growing number Tucson and Phoenix residents about the valuable contributions made by

people with disabilities in the workplace and the pressing need for additional job opportunities. Because these jobs are highly visible, they are helping change our culture and make people more accepting and used to seeing people with disabilities in the work place.

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People have known forever about the importance of planning. The Roman Statesman, Cicero, said, “*Before beginning, plan carefully.*” But people also know the best laid plans can — *and do* — go awry. As the very-unstatesman-like Mike Tyson put it, “*Everyone has a plan... ‘til they get punched in the mouth!*” Much like his style of boxing, it’s brutal, but to the point. I think it’s also pretty true.

We learned back in 2008 (the last time we did a Strategic Plan for Beacon) how right Mr. Tyson was. Even though I’m sure he was just talking about boxing, he nailed it — so to speak. You can have a grand plan, like we did in 2008, but when it reaches the arena of reality, it can be sorely tested. Our plans in 2008 were ambitious and bold. They were aggressive and far-reaching. And they were designed to take advantage of several years of successful growth.

“...We needed to regroup and clear our heads.”

We never saw it coming. The recession that hit us all in the fall of ‘08 was quite a blow. By early 2009 we had already dropped a half a million dollars in revenues. Then, the state started making budget cuts that directly affected fees paid for services we provide our clients. We lost another half a million by the spring. Businesses started cutting back on the sub-contract work we do for them. Donations dropped. Job openings for people with disabilities — or anyone else for that matter — dried up. Just last

month we had *another* \$240,000 state cut.

You could say it was our “*punch in the mouth.*” Our plans for growth, increasing income and serving more people met the cold fist of lost revenues, belt-tightening and an uncertain future. No doubt about it, we needed to regroup and clear our heads. And, we obviously needed a new plan or, at least, put that one on hold.

A couple of months ago, we started meeting again to craft a new Strategic Plan for Beacon. Our budget has been stable this year, even with the latest round of cuts. So, we have begun the process again to look at the next three years and see if we can’t make plans to get even better. Less ambitious and with fewer new ventures to be sure... We can always *try* to improve. Any new proposal will have to come with cost savings or new revenue attached.

This time, as we look at these goals and try to develop strategies to get us to them, we also need to look at ideas like utilizing volunteers and forming partnerships with other organizations as ways to lessen the financial impact. And, if you have any thoughts or suggestions for us, please feel free to contact me.

Even in tough times, a *plan* is still a valuable thing. Of course, you want it to be *meaningful*, and you want people to take it *seriously*. You don’t want it to be just a punch line!



STEVE KING, President/CEO



The four key goals in the plan are:

-  **Moving toward financial independence**
-  **Developing a skilled, stable staff**
-  **Expanding employment opportunities**
-  **Better utilizing technology available in the marketplace**



The first-ever Beacon client hired by Safeway, Brian Westover, is pictured here with his store manager, Marion Huber in 2006.

The partnership began in September of '06. In just over three years, SAFEWAY has now hired a total 61 individuals with severe disabilities in Tucson and Phoenix. It is the highest number of clients placed at any local business by Beacon. Especially during a down economy when we have had a hard time placing people with disabilities in competitive employment, SAFEWAY has continued to hire!

SAFEWAY's supportive corporate culture, opportunities for promotion, friendly customer service and daily interaction with the public make it a highly desirable and effective employment opportunity for Beacon clients. As employees with disabilities they can achieve independence and respect by working and becoming part of the team at SAFEWAY.

To facilitate their hiring process, SAFEWAY has donated two 'mini-stores' to Beacon that provide clients with real-work training opportunities. These mini-stores are equipped with actual check-out stands and shelves stocked with hundreds of products. Beacon clients are trained and evaluated in the mini-stores and the training process has been highly successful in pre-qualifying individuals for competitive employment. It is a very visible way — when we are



giving tours of our facility — to show the public the concept and process of how we prepare people with disabilities for employment.

The SAFEWAY-Beacon Group partnership equally benefits both parties. Beacon clients stay in their jobs at SAFEWAY longer than average. The lower turnover rate has cut the annual cost of hiring new workers for SAFEWAY. Through the training, clients have learned how to bag, place items back on the shelf and read price tags, so by the time that they get to SAFEWAY they already have some essential training and clearly understand what the job entails.

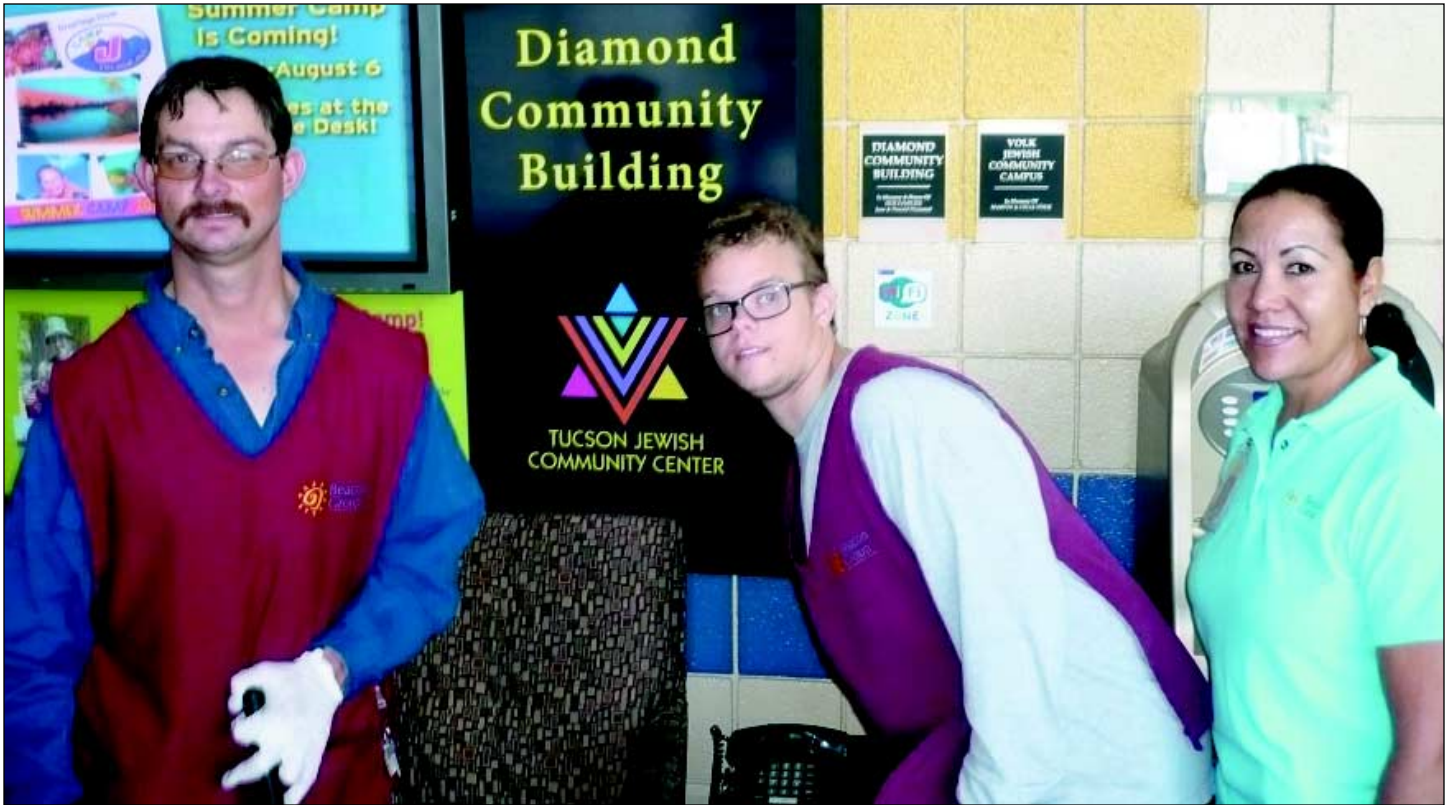


Beacon's success with competitive placements through the partnership with SAFEWAY has enhanced our reputation with local referring agencies, which, in turn, send many more clients to our program for services. Since

SAFEWAY and other stores are located virtually throughout our service area, we are able to accommodate clients with mobility and travel challenges by finding jobs close to them.

Beyond the business partnership, SAFEWAY donated \$12,500 to Beacon in 2009. The funds were raised by area stores. SAFEWAY also saves Beacon hundreds of dollars annually by donating food and drinks for special events.





Beacon clients Josh Milnes (left) and Richard Rhynard pause with their Job Coach, Maria Martinez at Tucson's Jewish Community Center

Beacon's Custodial Crews Take a Shine to Their Work!

Officially, Beacon's Janitorial Services is ranked as 6th largest in Tucson, based on square footage cleaned. **Beacon's nine daytime and nighttime custodial crews now clean over one million square feet of office space** for over twenty different businesses or government agencies! They clean the largest office building in Tucson — the DeConcini Federal Courthouse, and the Border Patrol offices. They clean the USDA, ADOT and DES. They clean the Arizona Industrial Commission and CARF International. And they also clean one of the busiest nonprofit organizations in town, the Tucson Jewish Community Center.

Last fall, the Jewish Community Center (JCC) gave Beacon a chance to bid on the custodial contract to clean just under 100,000 square feet of their facility's office space, classrooms, workout rooms, gym and common areas. We were successful in getting that contract to provide daytime and overnight custodial services. Our crews work closely with Dale Green, the Director of Building Services, and with his staff of twelve to make sure everything is clean, while also being eco-friendly. Beacon provides "green" service which is very important to people and businesses. We also provide service that brings a smile.

Hiring people with disabilities has a profoundly positive affect on the lives of people who routinely face a 70% unemployment rate. It can also have an extremely positive affect on the other employees at a business. Seeing people who face daily challenges with acceptance, mobility, health as well as employment, and then seeing how well and how hard they work, can inspire those who don't have a disability to contend with. Glad to have a job and a chance to show they can contribute, workers with disabilities — even severe ones — can put others to shame with their dedication, their hard work and their longevity.

Dale has nothing but good things to say about the two Beacon clients who make up the day crew at JCC. He says Richard Rhynard and Josh Milnes are “very good employees. They do a good job for us. Their work is on a par with people who don’t have a disability.” He makes it clear, even though he is very appreciative of the JCC hiring people with disabilities, “if they weren’t doing the job we expect, they wouldn’t be here.”

Richard Rhynard came to Beacon last June. His first six months he worked at many jobs inside Beacon as well as out in the community. Despite some major challenges, Richard is high functioning, hard working and motivated. He was born with *Occipital Epilepsy* with

Cone Dystrophy. This affects Richard’s vision, movement and speech, as well as his breathing and heart function. It also causes seizures so severe, he has technically “died” — *twice!* Because of his poor vision and learning disabilities, doctors said he would never read or write. But they underestimated Richard. He has graduated from high school and loves working on his computer, buying things on eBay and texting with his friends.

Richard also spends a lot of his free time buying and collecting memorabilia of Roy Rogers, the old cowboy star. He has always been a big admirer. He managed to even meet the “*King of the Cowboys*” and they became good friends up until Roy’s death in 1998.

Richard’s crew partner is Josh Milner. A near drowning as a baby has left Josh with limited use of half his body and mild mental retardation. He has great difficulty speaking and falls a lot. He started at JCC last September after working at Jim Click Ford and on another custodial crew for Beacon. And like with Richard, you would think his level of disability would keep his options in life pretty limited. But that is not the case. Last fall, Josh *bought his own house!* He has two roommates who pay him rent. Josh works out regularly and volunteers as a coach’s assistant for his old high school football team. He also has a second job at Pantano Horse Stables.

Whether they are at home or at work, both Richard and Josh are just looking for the chance to be productive and happy just like anyone else. Whether they are playing or working, they just want their *chance to shine!*

In January of this year, Beacon’s Custodial Crews were recognized by the General Services Administration (GSA) for their contributions at the Tucson Federal Buildings during a recent MARS Review (*Management Analysis Review System*). According to Robert Blanchard, Senior Property Manager with GSA in a letter to Beacon, “*Because of everyone’s hard work and dedication, the review of our Building Services and Recycling Programs, which you and your staff are responsible for, revealed a high level of expertise. The review team was impressed with your programs and level of building cleanliness.*”



Josh and Richard are proud to make the JCC building shine!



Special RECOGNITION

Beacon has now been in our “all-new and improved” facility for a year and a half. The new building is proving to be as functional as it is beautiful.

In January of this year, our new building was a finalist for a *Cornerstone Building Award* from the local construction industry. And just recently, our facility was honored by the 2010 VP Building Hall of Fame as the *Best of Retro-Fit Category*. This recognition for “Excellent Craftsmanship and Construction” was presented to the J.R. Tuttle Company who provided the metal structure for our building. Seaver Franks Architects designed the structure as an external element that reduced costs and also gave the building its unique modern appearance.

NOT
just
ANOTHER
pretty!
FACE!



Allison Lombard, Sales and Marketing Manager with J.R. Tuttle Company, holds their well-deserved award.

Besides honoring Safeway (see Cover Story), NISH has recognized Beacon with a Certificate of Achievement for 2009. The certificate recognizes “high standards of performance maintained throughout the past year in providing a product/service for the Federal government under the AbilityOne Program.”

U.S. Representative Raul Grijalva (below, second from right) recently visited Beacon’s AbilityOne Custodial crew at the courthouse in Tucson.



In the **COMMUNITY**



One of the 27 Community Work Sites that utilize Beacon clients is Prestige Vending. Our clients help clean and service vending machines at almost forty different locations in Tucson, including those at KVOA Channel 4. The owner of Prestige Vending, Wayne Miklojewski, allowed our clients to take time recently to tour the station and meet news anchors Josh Benson and Martha Vasquez.



These words meant something very different to B.C. Robinson back when he served in the military. Now, as General Manager of a car washing and detailing business, B.C. puts much of what he learned in the Air Force to daily use running a small business. *Super Shine Detail and Hand Wash* provides professional detailing and eco-hand washing here in Tucson. Another thing B.C. learned when stationed at Davis-Monthan AFB, was how well people with disabilities work. "I've watched the Beacon workers at D-M," says B.C. "and I was well aware of the crew you had washing cars at Jim Click. They did things in a professional manner and their attention to detail impressed me."

Rise & Shine!

As the G.M. of *Super Shine*, B.C. decided to "team up" with Beacon and called to see if they could become a Community Work Site for Beacon. In March of this year, *Super Shine* became the 27th and newest Community Work Site for Beacon! They are located behind *The Specialists* at Fairview and Wetmore near the Auto Mall.

Beacon has two clients on the crew at *Super Shine*. Carlos Landeta has been with Beacon since 2001 and has previous experience in the "car prepping" business at both Royal Buick and Jim Click Nissan. Luis Corella is new to Beacon with just a month on the job.

B.C. has established a bonafide training and apprenticeship program for Luis and Carlos. The aim is to certify them as professional car detailers, at which point they will be hired full-time by *Super Shine*. Again using his military background, B.C. has performance measures and benchmarks designed to advance Beacon clients through the training process.

As they learn one set of skills and responsibilities, they are given greater challenges and expectations. Depending on a client's level of challenge and motivation, B.C. expects the process to become certified to take from three to six months.

Beacon's crew at Super Shine Detail and Hand Wash includes (from left) Luis Corella, Carlos Landeta, and Job Coach Alex Errico



As a special incentive to visit the Beacon Crew at Super Shine, B.C. is offering a 10% DISCOUNT for the Beacon family with this coupon.

Gifts and MEMORIALS

Beacon gratefully acknowledges the following gifts for the following individuals.

IN MEMORY OF...

MAGGIE CLICK

Jason & Lisa Wedman

PATRICIA HUTHER

Burton & Margie Kinney
Dorothy S. Soland

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IN HONOR OF...

ELIZABETH DWAN

Colonel Robert D. Dwan

ALAYNE GREENBERG

Benjamin Greenberg

EVA MILLER

Lois Carpenter

Gifts and memorials honoring family, friends and Beacon clients may be made online at www.thebeaongroup.org or by US Mail. Please include your contact information as well as the party you want notified of your gift.

For more information, please contact Patrick McCarthy at (520) 622-4874 ext 166

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