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## X Force 2024: Orlando



Darin Hand, Nicole Bustillo, Mo Morrison, Jason Sodano, Adam Troyer, Michael Murcay, Gerald Sodano, and Steve Jacobs at the SourceAmerica national conference in Orlando, FL.

Orlando, Florida is about as far as you can get from Oak Harbor while staying in the continental United States. You'd have to travel 2573 miles as the crow flies, or 3166 miles as the car drives, to get there. Yet in the first week of May this year several New Leafers left our familiar confines and made the long journey southeast.

Why? New Leaf is part of an umbrella organization called SourceAmerica which includes roughly 575 non-profits dedicated to creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Of the many thousands of employees who work in those companies, each year SourceAmerica chooses a small handful to recognize for exemplary achievement. Among this year's award winners is our very own Jason Sodano!

# X Force (continued)

From SourceAmerica's award announcement:

*Jason Sodano has been awarded the William M. Usdane Award, which celebrates an AbilityOne Program employee with a disability who has exhibited outstanding achievement and exceptional character.*

*Sodano has worked for New Leaf for more than 13 years in various roles, and has become a standout employee for his award-winning perfect attendance and his dedication to performing his duties.*

*Currently working as a janitor at the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Sodano focuses on in-depth cleaning and sanitation in the base gym that serves up to 1,700 military personnel in a day.*

*During his time at New Leaf, Sodano has received multiple company awards, consistently exceeds quality control standards in his department, and is known for his willingness to advocate for himself, his coworkers and his position.*



Above: Jason Sodano is recognized as the winner of the 2024 William M. Usdane award.

Below left: Jason and his father at the X Force Conference.

Below right: Jason and New Leaf CEO/ED Steve Jacobs at the conference.

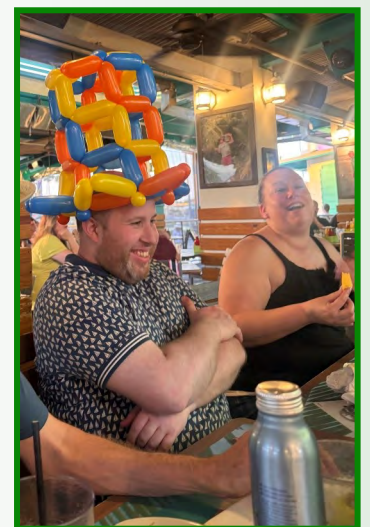


## X Force (continued)

Accompanying Jason on the trip were his father, as well as New Leaf CEO/ED Steve Jacobs, QC and Safety administrators Mo Morrison and Adam Troyer, Day Janitorial crew lead Nicole Bustillo, president of the Board of Directors Darin Hand, and Michael Murcay, the 2001 winner of the William M. Usdane award, who was invited as a legacy speaker. Michael's speech at the conference was part of a larger recognition of New Leaf as the holder of the country's first federal service contract under what today is the AbilityOne Program, the federal program under which SourceAmerica NPAs operate.

New Leaf extends gratitude and appreciation to SourceAmerica for their recognition of our employees and our NPA mission.

During downtime the team was able to get away and check out some of the local attractions.



# X Force, continued



# Staff - Board Dinner: Year in Review

The New Leaf admin and supervisory staff met at Rustica restaurant earlier this spring to recap the year that was 2023. Executive Director/CEO Steve Jacobs ran down the highlights, and there were many.

## Company awards and recognition :

- ◆ Non-Profit of the Year, 2022 (Oak Harbor Chamber, announced in March 2023)
- ◆ Business of the Month, November 2023 (Oak Harbor Chamber)
- ◆ Washington State Medium Non-Profit of the Year (Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment)
- ◆ Yes Vets Challenge Coin (Skagit Worksource)
- ◆ Appreciation Challenge Coin (Fleet Readiness Center Northwest, Department of the Navy)

## Community Involvement:

- ◆ Holland Happening
- ◆ Fourth of July
- ◆ St. Patrick's Day parade
- ◆ National Night Out
- ◆ Military Appreciation Picnic
- ◆ Chamber Luncheon Sponsor
- ◆ Earth Day
- ◆ Hydros for Heroes
- ◆ Main Street Halloween
- ◆ Community Cares Mental Health fair
- ◆ Rotary Down Hill Challenge Series
- ◆ Main Street Toy Soldier
- ◆ Music Fest
- ◆ North Whidbey Soccer Club
- ◆ Adopt a Street (Fidalgo Ave)
- ◆ Whidbey Marathon
- ◆ Big Brothers Big Sisters
- ◆ Special Olympics
- ◆ Main Street Easter egg hunt
- ◆ Ryan's House
- ◆ Boys and Girls Club of Island County
- ◆ Resource and Transitions Fair
- ◆ Community Resource Fair



ED/CEO Steve Jacobs addresses the board-staff assembly.

# Staff - Board Dinner: Year in Review (Continued)

## Company Highlights, 2023:

- ◆ New Leaf's Mission to people with disabilities saved the government an estimated \$392,187.98 through reduced public benefits.
- ◆ We initiated a housing project and made tremendous strides toward our goal of being able to offer housing to qualifying employees.
- ◆ New Leaf achieved improved accessibility due to HRVS specialist Brent Bowden's efforts to partner with the Hearing Loss Association of America to acquire assistive listening technology and Accessibe on website accessibility.
- ◆ New Leaf participated in Leadership Whidbey panel on Equity; CEO Steve Jacobs was a panel speaker.
- ◆ We expanded our payroll services and functionality through our provider Pay Northwest.
- ◆ We retained all of our grounds employees during the off season by keeping them on or offering them employment on other crews. Everybody kept their job, which is great.
- ◆ We purchased new equipment, including a new pickup truck for admin and a new boom mower for grounds.
- ◆ We received over \$35k in SourceAmerica grants funds. The grants covered several ventures like helping to offset the cost of the new boom mower, SA training, and non-SA training.
- ◆ We had a successful financial audit for 2022.
- ◆ We rented out our 1121 Dock St. property on a three-year lease with Bayshore chiropractic.



# Staff - Board Dinner: Year in Review (Continued)

Company Highlights, continued:

- ◆ New Leaf issued dozens of employee awards in acknowledgement of hard work, sincere effort, great attitude, and excellent teamwork.
- ◆ \$12,000 in scholarships were given out to deserving college-bound students.
- ◆ New Leaf employee Matthew Thomason was selected by SourceAmerica to attend their national Grassroots Advocacy conference in Washington, D.C. and speak with our legislators. Matt was accompanied by HR Specialist Chelsea Johnson and CEO Steve Jacobs.
- ◆ We compiled over 260 hours of community services by our staff.
- ◆ We suffered some growing pains with new Performance Area Representatives (PARs) on our Grounds and Janitorial contracts, but also experienced learning, adapting, and overcoming.
- ◆ Every employee in the company was awarded a special year-end longevity bonus.



Big thank you to our **2023 Board of Directors!**

- ◆ President – Darin Hand
- ◆ Treasurer – Chris Wiegenstein
- ◆ Secretary – Evett Morgan-Mueller
- ◆ Past President – Steve Talmadge
- ◆ Members:
  - ◆ Jan Hayes
  - ◆ Dallas Viall
  - ◆ London Cook
  - ◆ Steve Jacobs (Member Ex-Officio)
- ◆ **Jan Hayes retired from our board in August after serving since 2001!**

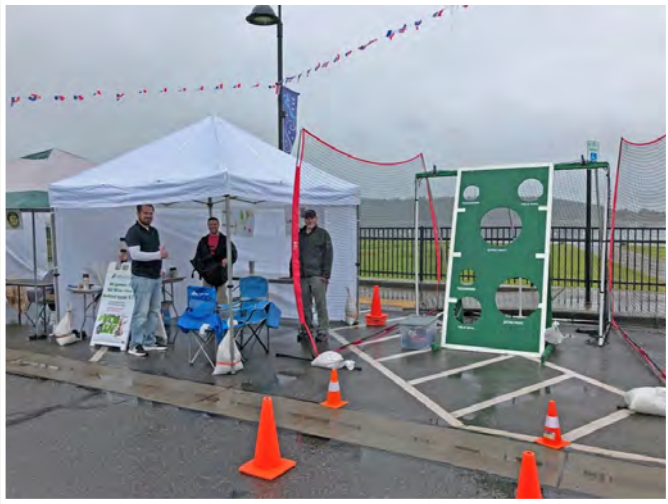
- ◆ Among many notable work anniversaries in 2023, several employees celebrated 15 years or more at New Leaf!

- Rachel Johnson - 16 years
- Michael Hamernik - 16 years
- Tyler Olson - 17 years
- Jerry Deaver - 19 years
- John Trindle - 19 years
- Mathew Johnson - 19 years
- Mo Morrison - 20 years
- Mona Laverdure - 22 years
- Keith Harrel - 24 years
- Steve Jacobs - 25 years
- Gordon Carswell - 28 years
- Glenn Kincaid - 34 years

CEO/ED Steve Jacobs summed up the year thus: We came through self-imposed austerity, and our positive financials reflected it, even after factoring in buying new equipment. Challenges are an opportunity to test you and rise to the next level. We met all challenges, and New Leaf leveled up!

# Holland Happening 2024

It was a cool and wet weekend for Holland Happening, but it was great to see so many people come out and brave the late April weather. The admin crew set up the football toss and raised \$150 each for Hearts and Hammers and Island County Habitat for Humanity.

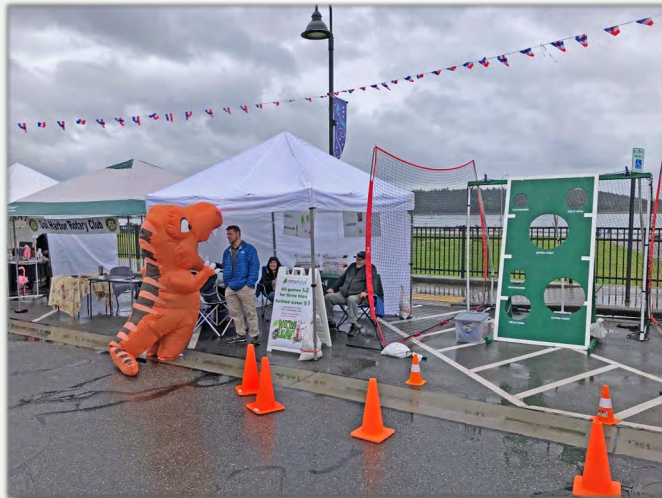




# Holland Happening 2024

## Part 2: Journey of the Dinosaur

On a blustery late spring morn a lonely dinosaur sought directions, company, and a little bit of reptilian sympathy.



Props to Payroll/Benefits Manager Melissa Nuanez. Shout out to Christopher Myers of the Galley crew for the cameo.

# New walkway

The New Leaf admin building has a new and sharp-looking walkway thanks to our awesome grounds crew. No more treading on the grass and muddying up the path and dragging in dirt for us. Thanks grounds, and way to go team!



# Chamber Member of the Year

The Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce held their Awards Banquet and Second Chance Prom this past March. Among the award categories were Employer of the Year, Large and Small Businesses of the Year, Customer service Award, Quality Award and Member of the Year. All of the winners are pillars of the community. Guess who won the Member of the Year award.



Above: Teri Mendiola of Regency on Whidbey presents ED/CEO Steve Jacobs with the Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce Member of the Year Award. Congrats Steve!

Below: Day Janitorial crew member James Sane, a photography enthusiast, was appointed the official photographer of the awards banquet. Way to go, James!



# Earth Day 2024

Did you know that the one of the largest oak tree savannahs in the world is right here in Oak Harbor? Check out the top of the hill on Seaplane Base or Smith Park just a couple of blocks west of the New Leaf admin building, and you'll find Garry Oak trees over 400 years old.

New Leaf was on hand for annual Earth Day tree planting at NASWI. Thanks to PM Jacob Bevill and the New Leaf grounds crew for helping out Captain Hanks and Allie from Base Environmental. The crew helped plant several trees and clean up the grounds.



# Marathoning

The Whidbey Island Marathon was a success with big turnout for the Full Marathon, Half Marathon, 10K, 5K and 1K. What a beautiful day!



Left: Chelsea Johnson, Ileshia Miller, and Melissa Nunez of the admin crew with some stellar home-made signs encouraging the runners.

Below left: Chelsea, Nancy Lawson, and Melissa

Below: Steve Jacobs of the admin crew takes part in the race.

Bottom: The cheer squad does their thing.



# Big Orange

The New Leaf grounds crew is responsible for mowing hundreds of acres on and around NASWI, and they do such a good job that they have been given additional work! The new task order from NASWI greatly expands the mowing area around taxiways and runways on the airfield, almost doubling the total acreage of the Grounds Maintenance service area.

Given this turn of events, there was only one proper response: get a new tractor.

Check it out!



# Big Orange (continued)

The new tractor, a Kubota M7 (affectionately dubbed “Big Orange”) will pull a twenty-foot Land Pride batwing rotary cutter. Those blades will slice some grass!



Big Orange dwarfs the old New Holland.

# Electric Toro

New Leaf's ubiquitous John Deere Gators are a mainstay of New Leaf's daily efforts to move people and equipment to where they need to be to get the job done. They're good machines but like everything else they get old, so it was time for an upgrade to an EV Toro Workman utility vehicle. Grounds also got some new push mowers.



Top left and left: The new electric Toro Workman utility vehicle.

Above: One of the old JD Gators being used at a community event. (For the curious: Holland Happening 2022. Driver: Gene Pulu of Grounds. Passenger: Glenn Kincaid of Admin.)



Below: BONUS! New Leaf received an awesome little Lego model of the MowerMax boom mower we purchased last year. MowerMax provided some new blades and this little keepsake in thanks for New Leaf's demoing of the vehicle for potential customer.



Lego model



Original



# New Van from Island Transit

New Leaf was gifted a 7-passenger Dodge Caravan transit van from Island Transit's Community Surplus Vehicle Program. This van will be used by our CDC and Admin crews for transporting people and supplies. Thanks so much to Island Transit for their generous support of local NPA's!



# Pet Photos!

The humans of New Leaf discussed among themselves in their human language and decided that their non-human companions deserve a little bit of fame, however dim the limelight and however fleeting the celebrity. So without further ado, here are photos submitted by New Leafers of their pets.

Which are the favorites? Who wins a gift card? Read on.



Tenor Waltz, age 3  
Pet parent: Jacob Bevill



Allegro, age 8 months  
Pet parent: Jacob Bevill



Jonah and Lizzy, age 4  
Pet parent: Jacob Bevill



Sebastian, calf. Age 2 days  
Pet parent: Samantha Groves



Soren (age 6) and Bandit (age 8), ferrets  
Pet parent: Samantha Groves



Gigi, pug. Passed away 2023  
Pet parent: Nancy Lawson



Penta, Luna, Oona, pugs  
Pet parent: Nancy Lawson



Oona, Luna, Penta

# Pet Photos! (cont.)



Luna, Oona, Penta, pugs. Pet parent: Nancy Lawson



Q, 6 years old  
Pet parent: Charles Gillet



Whidbey (passed away)  
Pet parent: Gordon Carswell



Harlem  
Pet parent: Ieshia Miller



Van Halen and Cypress, tuxedo cats, 2 years  
Pet parent: Kaitlin McGregor



Luna  
Pet parent: Steve Jacobs



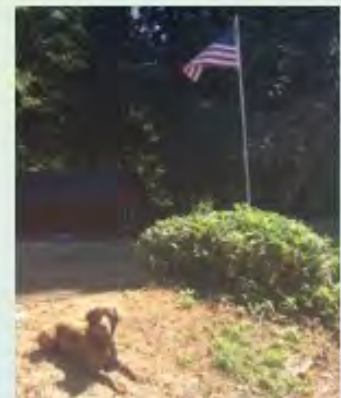
Drake  
Pet parent: Steve Jacobs



Not actually a New Leaf pet.



Rocco, German Shepherd age 5 years  
Pet parent: Michelle Leach



Rex, Chocolate Lab Age 14  
Pet parent: Michelle Leach

# Pet Photos! (cont.)



← Carniolan Honey Bees: Berry, Vanessa, Adam, Ken, Layton, Janet, Mooseblood, Martin, Ray, Sting, Buzzwell, Trudy, Lou, Bud, Jackson, Splits, Hector, Andy, Freddy, Buzz, Bob, Uncle Carl, Mark, Cameron, Christina, Jerry, Aleera, Aly, Becky, Cathy, Sandra, Bonnie, Nadia, Sara, Corrine, Betty, Willma, Patty, Kelin, Marria, Conner, Alison, Lucy, Holly, Yuki, Michelle, Nancy, Mona, Malisa, Ieshia, Sherry, Chelsea, Mary, Barbera, Daloris, Toni, Patricia, Treasa, Debbie, Linda, Judy, Brenda, Monica, Karen, Charlie, Clarrissa, Fallon, Sally, Ava, Evelyn, Mia, Olivia, Clara, Delia Emma, Darcy, Jenna, Luna, Jane, Bella, Abigale, Bridget, Isabella, Amelia, Sofia, Emily, Violet, and Camila.

Age: 1 to 38 days

Pet parent: Joe George



Merlin, Maine Coon cat, 2 years  
Pet parents: Joe and Cathy George



Callie  
Pet parent: Cathy George



Odyn Johnson  
Pet parent: Chelsea Johnson



Odyn Johnson  
Pet parent: Chelsea Johnson



Grrr.



Rose, 6 years old  
Pet parent: Chloe Foster



Sweet Pea, leopard gecko, age 1 year  
Pet parent: Chloe Foster



Angel, leopard gecko, age 1 year  
Pet parent: Chloe Foster

# Pet Photos! (cont.)



Wi-Fi, miniature English bulldog / Chihuahua mix, age 15 years  
Pet parent: Chloe Foster



Name: Malligator. Species: Malligator. Age: Malligator. Pet Parent: Malligator Kincaid.



Pet parent: Glenn Kincaid



Pet parent: Glenn Kincaid



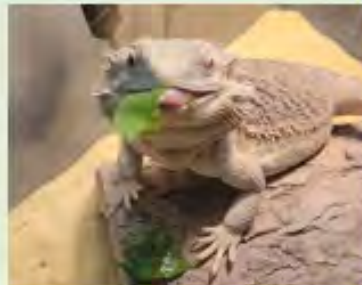
Pet parent: Glenn Kincaid



Pet parent: Glenn Kincaid



Pet parent: Glenn Kincaid



Rocky, bearded dragon, age 1.5 years  
Pet parent: Sherry Stark



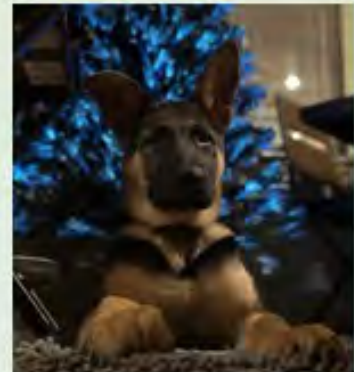
Gilly, Axolotl  
Pet parent: Sherry Stark



Obi Wan Kenobi  
Pet parent: Mona Laverdure



Obi Wan Kenobi  
Pet parent: Mona Laverdure



Obi Wan Kenobi  
Pet parent: Mona Laverdure

Congrats to Chloe Foster, Sherry Stark, and Chelsea Johnson on their winning photos!!!!  
Chloe, Sherry, and Chelsea will receive gift cards. ☺

# Employee Awards

Congratulations to these New Leaf employees on winning awards for their great work: Mike Hamernik, James Sane, Sebastien Coonce, Yvette Sparks, Christine Westman of the Day Jan crew, Julia Rolph of the Shelf Stocking crew, and Mike Harris, Michelle Leach, Adam Troyer, and Nancy Lawson of the admin crew, and congratulations to Mike Johnson on FIFTEEN YEARS AT NEW LEAF!

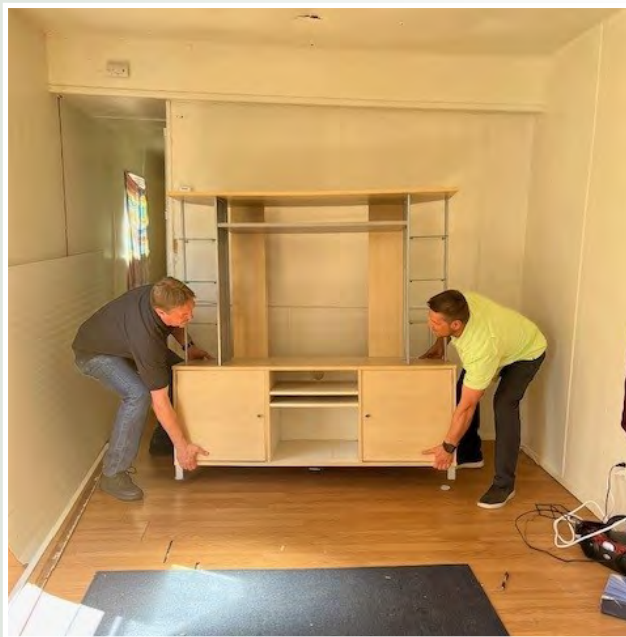


# Around New Leaf



Above: Team Whidbey Special Olympics basketball squad took home the gold! This past February the Team Whidbey Hoopsters, featuring former New Leaf employee Michael Murcay and current New Leaf employee Jaime Aston, as well as HR/VS specialist Brent Bowden's brother-in-law Lance Malley won their regional championship and moved ahead to the state finals. Way to go Team Whidbey!

Below: New Leaf veteran Rachel Johnson moved to a new home! Some of the admin crew helped her get settled.



# Views of New Leaf



Winter turns to Spring.



# Employee Spotlight

## Jason Sodano, Night Janitorial - Gym Crew

### **You just returned from Florida. How was X Force?**

It was hot, but fun. I am very grateful for the award I received and the opportunity to go to X Force. It was overwhelming but it was a great experience.

### **What were some highlights of the trip?**

Besides the conference itself, going to Universal Studios was a lot of fun. I enjoyed taking the Harry Potter Express and being immersed in the Hogwarts world.

### **How long have you worked at New Leaf?**

About 14 years. I worked at Wal-Mart for a month but otherwise I've been at New Leaf. I worked on the Galley crew for a few years, and then after I got my driver's license I joined the Night Jan crew. Since then I've mostly worked in the Gym. Working routes is alright but I prefer the Gym because it's one location. It's more predictable.

### **Where are you from originally?**

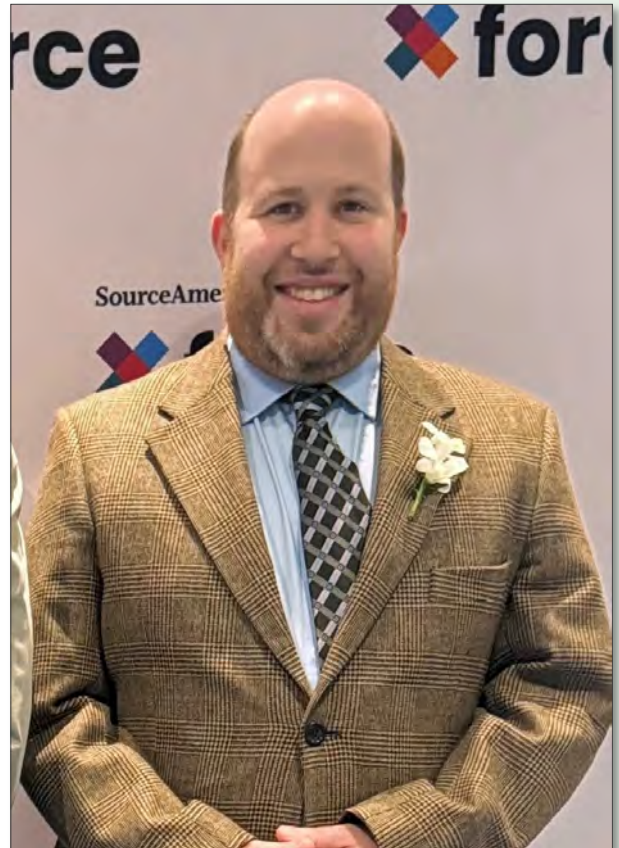
I was born in Maine, but I was a Navy brat so I grew up in lots of different locations, including Virginia, California, Maryland, and Puerto Rico. I spent four years in Puerto Rico. We were there during Hurricane George in 1998. The winds were incredible; they completely flattened trees and structures all around us. Our property also suffered damage but fortunately we were not hurt. The main thing I remember about Puerto Rico though was the constant, unceasing heat. I was glad to move back up north. I've been here in Oak Harbor since 2005.

### **What is something you like about your job?**

The work is very straightforward, so it provides order and stability. I like having other people on the crew so we can be productive and the work is done efficiently. I can clean the gym by myself, and I have many times, but it's nice to have help. I like making sure the job is done right.

### **What is something you like to do outside of work?**

I enjoy playing role playing games like Dungeons and Dragons. I like the fantasy and the creative elements of gaming. You can really bring in your imagination and your spirit into gaming. It's great to get together with friends who can create and shape game worlds with you. It's a lot of fun.



## Happy Anniversary

Steve Jacobs	26 years
Keith Harrell	25 years
Mo Morrison	21 years
John Trindle	20 years
Jerry Deaver	20 years
Michael Johnson	15 years
Melinda Soliman	14 years
Jason Sodano	14 years
Jessica Zook	11 years
Zachary Boatman	10 years
Jacob Davis	10 years
Gene Pulu	7 years
Jorden Szypula	7 years
Robert Dallas	7 years
Donald (Mitch) Mitchell	6 years
Timothy Murphy	6 years
Matthew Thomason	6 years
Ryan Brooke	4 years
Jacob Bevill	3 years
Wesley Worrel	3 years
Jason Park	3 years
Sebastien Coonce	3 years
Wesley Worrel, Jr.	3 years
Kennadyi Chapel	3 years
Dawson Cook	3 years
Chase Kast	3 years
Sean Edwards	3 years
Chloe Foster	2 years
Dave Jacobsen	2 years
Jaime Aston	2 years
Katherine Hancock	2 years
Colin Stewart	2 years
Kerima Bowden	1 year
Nancy Gutierrez-Hernandez	1 year

## Happy Birthday

Brent Bowden	February 3	Jacob Bachman	March 24
Mackinzee Street	February 3	Samantha Groves	March 28
Carol Ishizaka	February 7	Sebastian Coonce	March 30
Keith Glass	February 11	Gordon Carswell	March 30
George, Joseph	February 14	Andrew Navarro	April 01
Evelyn Holt	February 15	Jessica Zook	April 04
Vernados Barber	February 18	Kassandra Kast	April 4
Jennifer Cheatham	February 18	Sparks, Yvette	April 9
Maria Chastain	February 20	Michael Hamernik	April 11
Amber Williams	February 21	Gregory Greene	April 14
Kirk Snowden	March 5	Violeta Soliman	April 15
Aila Kinker	March 5	Noah Brimeyer	April 20
Jacob Clavette	March 10	Charles Gillett	April 24
Jacob Davis	March 11	Nathan Dymond	April 26
Chelsea Johnson	March 11	Randall Rapp	April 27
Wehr, James	March 15	Carrie Johnson	April 27
Dave Jacobsen	March 16	Dawson Cook	April 29
Zachary Glovier	March 18	Stacy Jappert	April 29
Melinda Soliman	March 20	Scott Taylor	April 30
Robert Corley	March 22		

## Welcome new employees!

Closson, Pablo	Grounds	Farrell, Jared	Night Janitorial
Hancock, Cody	Grounds	Wilder, Nicholas	Night Janitorial
Palbicki-Hover, Jacob	Grounds	Brimeyer, Noah	Shelf Stocking
Wise, Jack	Grounds	Corley, Robert	Shelf Stocking
Costello, Timothy	Grounds	Mikulec, Nathan	Shelf Stocking
George, Joseph	Grounds	Gonzales, Jaydon	Shelf Stocking
King, Thomas	Grounds	Langman, Edward	Shelf Stocking
Hakiel Waite, Rebecca	Night Janitorial Gym	Navarro, Andrew	Shelf Stocking
Kretchman, Keiran	Night Janitorial Gym	Velazquez, Natalia	Shelf Stocking
Elliott, Blake	Night Janitorial	Morgan, Jazmine	Galley
Wehr, James	Night Floor Care Supervisor	Marshall, Alexis	Commissary Supervisor

