



6-5 Bulletin board

August 29, 2008

Internal Weekly Announcements
for Grant Wood Area Education
Agency Staff and Board

Mark Your Calendars

Aug. 29 Deadline for insurance special enrollment of dependent children

Sept. 1 Labor Day Holiday - Agency Closed

Announcements

•The Agency will be closed on Monday, September 1 in observance of Labor Day.

•Attached to this issue:

- Vacancies
- EAP Frontline Newsletter
- Mileage claim scenarios

GWAEA Publishes RFP for Construction of a New Pre-Cast Data Center

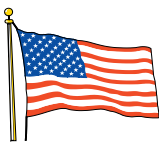
“This summer’s flood drove home to us the need to upgrade our server and computer infrastructure at Grant Wood AEA,” says Dave Brouard, Director of Information Technology. After recognizing how close the agency came to losing its servers this summer, the agency has published a request for proposals (RFP) to have a pre-cast concrete data center built on the east side of the Sixth Street office facility. Cost of such construction would likely be incorporated into any refinancing the agency will seek in its reconstruction of the Sixth Street office.

“Experts tell us that the current location of our servers does not provide the protection needed given the data we store and use,” says Trace Pickering. In presenting the idea to Grant Wood AEA’s board of directors last week, Pickering reviewed all possible options for how to better protect the servers. Options included moving the servers to the 33rd Avenue facility, which would require extensive rewiring, and the building would still not be fully tornado proof. The Staff Distribution area was considered, but the roof would need to be revamped and the floor raised several feet to make the area disaster proof. Even moving to an off-site “server farm” was considered; however, the annual cost of leasing space for off-site servers approached six figures, which far outweighed the cost of building an addition adjacent to the current Sixth Street facility.

Pickering told the board “We have a need for a well-secured space for our servers because we deal with payroll and track personal information.” Security for the agency’s servers, therefore, needs to be at a high level, Pickering concluded.

“What we need is a compact, stand-alone facility that could withstand a direct hit from a tornado, safe from the worst of floods, and fire proof,” says Pickering. “We never want to be in the position of having to explain to clients that we cannot meet their payroll and other mission-critical data needs because we failed to provide an appropriate level of security for their data and our operations.”

In reviewing the agency’s flood response this summer, Pickering praised the agency’s technology staff in its efforts to save equipment and then to restore service. The group was able to produce payroll for all 58 of the school districts we serve, and only one district’s payroll was delayed by a day throughout the entire disaster and recovery period.



Professional Development Opportunities

- 9/2/08** Medication Administration
- 9/8/08** An Introduction to the IEP for New Special Education Teachers
- 9/8/08** CBE: Reading
- 9/9/08** Starlab as a Learning Environment
- 9/13/08** Starlab as a Learning Environment
- 9/15/08** A Review of IEP Documentation & Processes for AEA & District Staff
- 9/16/08** An Introduction to the IEP for New Special Education Teachers
- 9/24/08** Crisis Prevention Intervention Certification
- 9/24/08** iPods in Education
- 9/24/08** iPods in Education
- 9/25/08** Quick Clicks & Tips
- 9/26/08** Social Cognitive Deficits Across the School and Home Day: The ILAUGH Model of Social Cognition
- 9/30/08** Instructional Practices Inventory: A Process for Analyzing & Improving Student Engaged Learning

For location, more information, or to register, go to the Professional Development web page.

Thank You!

I wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has, in one way or another, assisted my family and me and our Agency colleagues impacted by this summer's flood. People and organizations often throw around the words, "we are a family" without really understanding or believing it – looking back, I was one of them.

This summer's events demonstrated to my family and me that Grant Wood AEA truly is a family who rally around one another and take care of one another. Like families, we agree and disagree, argue and make up, please and irritate one another on a regular basis. But most importantly, a family steps up to defend, protect, and care for each other in times of need and you have done that for us and others this summer.

So, for all of you who stepped up to do some of my work I couldn't do in June and July, who gave me the space to focus on my family, who showed up at our house (and others) and dove into the muck to help, who tirelessly worked to keep Grant Wood AEA operating during its own flood issues, who gave up their summer to join the CISM team to monitor the mental well-being of Grant Wood AEA employees and families, who contributed to the relief fund, who inquired into our well-being, who shared a kind word, and who simply had us in their thoughts – THANK-YOU!!! I've never been more proud to say, "I work for Grant Wood AEA!"

*The Pickerings:
Trace, Kim, Samantha, & Shelby*

Building Updates

Thanks!

On behalf of the management, maintenance and custodial staff, we wish to express our appreciation for the prompt and tireless effort displayed by all staff during the move out of the second floor at 6th Street and 33rd Avenue buildings.

We realize this large-scale displacement at the beginning of a new school year and the uncertainty of it all is stressful and uncomfortable.

The grace, professionalism, and "get-it-done" attitude and actions of everyone during this process make us proud to be partners working and serving with you. Thanks again for all you do!

Facilities team: Mike, Ken, Mark, Tim, Doug, Ann, Connie, and Trace

Program Materials Access

During the week of September 1, materials marked for program access will be moved and set up on the first floor of the 6th Street facility. These materials will be available for pick-up and return during the building hours.

This may be subject to change during construction and we will work with the Construction Manager to make sure there is prior notice posted on any changes.

September Blood Drives

Give the gift of life by donating blood. Call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit www.givebloodgivelife.org for more information or to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are welcome at the following blood drives:

Sept. 3: St. Mary's Hall, 11:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m., 102 East Penn St, Williamsburg

Sept. 4: Coe College Dance Team, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., 1220 1st Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 6: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 7-11 a.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 8: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 11:30-5:30 p.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 8: First Presbyterian Church, 1-6 p.m. 2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City

Sept. 10: Kirkwood College Student Senate, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 6301 Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 13: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 7-11 a.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 15: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 11:30-5:30 p.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 16: Bethany Lutheran Church, 2- 6 p.m., 2202 Forest Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 17: Berndes Center, 12:30-5:30 p.m., 766 Maple St, Monticello

Sept. 19: IBEW Local 405, 1-6 p.m., 1211 Wiley Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 19: St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1-6 p.m., 600 5th Ave S, Mount Vernon

Sept. 20: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 7-11 a.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 22: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 25: Vinton Skate & Activities Center, 1:30-6 p.m., 1703 C Ave., Vinton

Sept. 26: Our Saviors Lutheran Church, 1-6 p.m., 3634 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 27: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 7-11 a.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Sept. 29: Grant Wood Area Chapter, 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., 6300 Rockwell Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids

Our Sympathy...

•to **Nancy Dearborn, School Psychologist**, whose father, Frederick Madison Dearborn, passed away August 17.

•to **Cathi Timmerman, School Social Worker**, whose father, Harold Bell, passed away August 22.

2008 Light the Night Walk

Support The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's 2008 Light The Night Walk, Saturday, September 20 at The Antique Car Museum of Iowa, in Coralville at The Iowa River Landing. Family festivities begin at 5:30 p.m. with the walk beginning by 7:30 p.m.

Last year, over 3,000 walkers participated in the Iowa Walks and raised over \$318,000 to support the Society's mission: *to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families.*

You can walk and receive pledges or you can sponsor a walker. Register online at lightthenight.org or call 1-877-ltn-walk.

Buy, Sell, Trade...

WANTED: Gently-used front-facing toddler car seat (20+lbs.). Contact Melissa at mgrennan@gwaea.org or leave a message at voicemail box 6629.

WANTED: Girl's twin size daybed with trundle. Contact Glen Schmitz at Ext. 6290 or GSchmitz@aea10.k12.ia.us.

FURNISHED HOME: Two miles south of GWAEA on 6th Street, for two, non-smokers, to live in and look after from October 15, 2008 to May 1, 2009 while I am in Florida for the winter. Call Leonard after 4 p.m. at 364-3069.

HAVE A SAFE LABOR DAY WEEKEND!

Bulletin Board is published and distributed weekly to all GWAEA staff and Board members.

Buy, Sell or Trade items will be run for 2 weeks.

Staff wishing to submit items should do so by Wed. of the week they wish the item to be printed. Send to Karen Michalec, Editor.

When submitting news, please remember that agency staff work in a variety of locations, and it may take two weeks to reach them with printed material.

Please note: the **Bulletin Board** is posted on the agency's Web site. We recommend you use your office or voice mail phone number instead of your home telephone number for any items listed in this newsletter.

Grant Wood Area Education Agency extends equal opportunities in its employment practices, educational programs and services, and does not discriminate on the basis of color, gender, race, national origin, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status or as otherwise prohibited by law. If you believe you or your child has been discriminated against or treated unjustly, please contact the Agency's Equity Coordinator, Maria Cashman, at 319-399-6647 or 1-800-332-8488 or TDD 319-399-6766, Grant Wood AEA, 4401 Sixth St SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

**VACANCIES
2008-2009**

CONTRACTED

Early Education Specialist (Northern Facility/Agency-Wide)	(Closed to applications; interviewing)	(1.0)
Curriculum Consultant Reading (Northern Facility/Northeast Region)		(1.0)
Curriculum Consultant Science (33 rd Ave/Northeast Region)		(1.0)
Parent Education Outreach Specialist (33 rd Ave/Cedar Rapids Region)	(Recommendation Pending)	(up to 1.0)
Physical Therapist (Northern Facility/Northwest Region)		(.2)
Speech-Language Pathologist (Agency-wide/Southwest Region)		(1.0)

CLASSIFIED

Paraeducator (Off-Site/SEAD)	(Closing date: September 8, 2008)	(.72)
(Off-Site/AWARE)		(.72)
(Off-Site/Behavior Learning Center/Iowa City) (37.5 hours/week; school year)		(.72)
Secretary (Southern Facility/Southwest Region)	(Recommendation Pending)	(1.0)

ASSIGNMENT OPENINGS

In addition to the vacancy posting, assignment openings may also be available to contracted staff members for a period of five days. For a listing of those assignment openings, staff may call voicemail box x6302. (In-house: 6555, x6302; Cedar Rapids calling area: 399-6555, x6302; WATS line: 1-800-798-9771, x6302). Staffs wishing to be considered for a change in assignment are to submit the request in writing to both the identified Regional Administrator and the Associate Administrator. (For further information regarding assignment requests, please see Article 10, Paragraph D, of the Master Agreement for Contracted Staff)



FrontLine

Wellness, Productivity, & You!

Employee

St. Luke's Employee Assistance Program (319) 369-8152

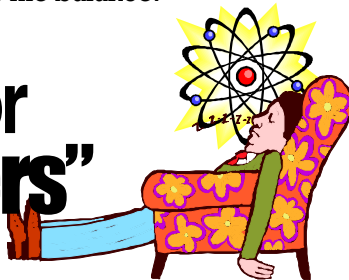
Mastering Open-ended Job Interview Questions

Count on being asked open-ended questions at job interviews to not only evaluate your skills, but predict your future behavior, abilities, and (most important) whether you're a "fit" with the work culture of your prospective employer. An open-ended question has no definite answer. An example might be, "Can you please describe a situation when you took a risk professionally and its outcome?" Preparing for open-ended questions isn't easy, but you can think beforehand about the most important subjects of these types of questions. They include willingness to take risks, persuasion skills, teamwork, ability to learn from mistakes, communication skills, awareness of strengths and weaknesses, conflict resolution skills, demonstrating creativity, handling stress, goal achievement, confronting obstacles to goals, personal work ethic, and work-life balance.



Nap Time for "Left Brainers"

Studies show that a short 20-minute snooze can stimulate/turn on the right side of your brain. This is the creative, emotion-laden, and more abstract thinking part of your brain. This can be a great way to kick-start outside-the-box thinking, especially for those who are more left-brain dominant. Are you a "left brainer"? Left-dominant people tend to be more analytical, structured, linear in their thinking, mathematical, and likely to view things sequentially to understand the whole.



If You're Stalked

Stalking is a crime of harassment. It's not a "personal problem" that you should keep quiet about. If you fear someone is stalking you, find out what the law in your state says about stalking and then talk with your EAP and/or human resources representative about the situation. Some organizations include steps for addressing stalking within their workplace violence policies and procedures. Your safety may also require letting the police, co-workers, and workplace security staff know about the threat.



Couples Counseling: When Only One Will Go

In marriage, it takes two to tango, but when problems within the relationship require professional counseling, don't be afraid to go solo if your spouse chooses to sit out. Attending marital counseling alone doesn't mean admitting that you're "the problem." Even without your spouse, a professional counselor can provide tools and strategies that you can use within your relationship. It's also a good way to discover your own inner workings and learn to be happier. Just because your partner balks at counseling today doesn't mean he or she won't join you in the future. In the meantime, why not take some positive steps right now?



Negotiation Skills for Everyone



The ability to negotiate is an important life skill, but you may be surprised to learn that you don't have to be aggressive or pushy to be good at it. Effective negotiation leaves both parties feeling satisfied with the result. Try your hand at negotiating with a simple technique called "reframing." Reframing involves two people placing their focus on what they are *trying to accomplish* (the need) rather than their "positions" (the demand). For example, let's say that a wife wants her husband to stay home for the evening, but her husband wants to spend time playing cards with his friends. These positions tell you nothing about the true source of the conflict between the husband and wife. Reframing the issue may reveal that the wife needs companionship because she's felt unusually lonely that week, while the husband may be looking for some downtime to blow off steam accumulated from a stressful work project (or vice versa.) By addressing *the needs* instead of the positions, a new range of solutions becomes possible. When you are faced with conflict, try zeroing in on the other person's needs by asking effective questions. Listen carefully without interruption, and follow up by restating the answer back to the other person to make sure that you understood correctly. By reframing, you have shifted from being combatants to partners in finding a solution that satisfies both parties' needs.

Lazy Ways to Improve Creativity



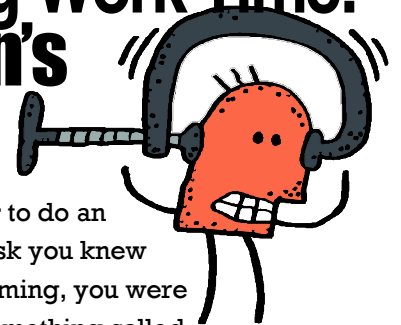
Creativity is the ability to imagine new ideas, possibilities, and solutions. Put simply, it's the ability to think and act in new ways. If you don't think that you are naturally creative, you may not be giving yourself permission to be inventive. Try these lazy ways of turning on your inner innovator: 1) Daydream: Your teacher may have scolded you for it, but letting your mind wander freely will allow it to leave the beaten path and explore new territory. 2) Brainstorm: Take an idea and bounce it around with several coworkers. Don't worry about getting off topic. Have fun and relax. 3) Play: Toss a ball around; grab some LEGO bricks and build a castle. 4) Sit quietly and try meditation. Reflect and contemplate the problem needing a creative solution in total silence.

Be an "Entrepreneur" for Your Employer



Take an entrepreneurial approach to your job by looking for ways to spearhead the creation of new products, systems, processes, or technology. Keep your eyes open for opportunities, but start with small projects first. Always start by outlining your ideas in a written format. Your initial document should identify all the arguments for or against a proposal. There is no guarantee your employer will accept an innovation, but know this: The missing aspect of most proposals offered by employees involves a lack of details. Including them will advance the possibility of their acceptance. Never let "no" kill your entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurialism is a state of mind. View your potential value to your employer in terms of how you can improve and add value to the organization's mission. This is called "enhancement," and people and organizations are drawn to those who know how to offer it.

Squeezing Work Time: Parkinson's Law



If you took too long to do an unpleasant work task you knew was not time-consuming, you were probably a victim of something called Parkinson's Law. Parkinson's Law states, "Work expands to fill the time available to do it." The phenomenon combines procrastination and busywork (or distractions) to avoid an unpleasant task until a deadline forces you to finally complete it. The more time you have, the more likely it is that you will substitute unimportant and sometimes unnecessary tasks for those that are undesirable. Here's how to conquer this:

- 1) Tackle unpleasant work first.
- 2) Compress time by promising completion of tasks to others sooner.
- 3) Try using a kitchen timer and break tasks down into 45 minutes segments. Work intensely without distraction. Then break for 15 minutes. Repeat with 45 minute work segments and breaks until finished.

