

# News & Views

December  
2010

Volume 6, Issue 1

## Coming Up

- December 10 — MEE closed for staff training.
- December 17 — Consumer holiday party.
- December 20-24, 31 — MEE closed for holidays.

*Have a great  
holiday season!*

## Inside this issue:

- Executive Director's Column **2**
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### Main Campus

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## MEE planning for future

### Despite financial situation, agency looking ahead

Where do we go from here?

MALCOLM EATON *Enterprises* constantly focuses on that question. With an ever-growing backlog of unpaid state bills, the organization is not only seeking ways to succeed financially but is facing an unrelated and state-mandated program restructuring.

"We at MALCOLM EATON know we are here for the long haul," said Sue Swanson, MALCOLM EATON executive director. "That's the reason we — like so many others in the not-for-profit community — have lines of credit to supplement our operations while we await payments from the state of Illinois."

As of November 15, the state owed MEE

\$2.45 million. That total fluctuates because the state usually pays some money weekly and MEE bills about \$400,000 monthly to the state for program services and its Spirit bathroom tissue.

Revenue from manufacturing contracts, retail sales of Spirit, grants and donors comprises MEE's remaining regular income.

More than \$575,000 has been cut from MEE's budget over the past two years however programs have remained relatively untouched until last month.

"MALCOLM EATON Enterprises faced what proved to be a major funding decision earlier this year when the state offered it the opportunity to convert

many of the individuals it serves to Medicaid waiver funding for day services. MEE chose to convert these individuals. Organizations that did not convert, did not receive any funding. The funds come with a price.

The Medicaid funding requires MEE to reclassify many of its programs, which means four additional staff must be hired to ensure the more stringent regulations are followed. Of course, more money is not allocated to pay the new staff wages.

"This is a classic example of an unfunded mandate, which really stings when it is coupled with the backlog of unpaid bills,"

See Illinois, Page 3

# A real reason to give thanks

## Community support helps sustain organization

This holiday season started with a very special gift to MALCOLM EATON Enterprises. Our Thanksgiving dinner, which had been canceled due to budget cuts, was reinstated.

The generosity and hard work of the Dakota Servant-Leadership Group with assistance from the Highland Servant-Leadership Group returned this tradition to MEE. The youth organized the dinner and raised the money needed to pay for the meal. Their efforts ran the gamut: from selling Spirit Bathroom Tissue at athletic events to serving the food. They worked hard and created a great day for our organization. We, our consumers and their families are ever so grateful.

Special thanks go to the Dakota group's mentors Leanne Reidelbaugh and Dean Balbach, and caterer Steve Tenley of Steve's Catering — all of whom donated large amounts of time. We also are



**My Perspective**  
Sue Swanson

touched by the donors such as Lincoln Mall and the businesses and individuals whose gifts made the dinner possible. This special celebration — given truly by the community — was a wonderful way to begin the holidays! Festivities continue at MALCOLM EATON with a holiday party for our consumers in mid-December. The event includes movies, bingo, dancing, Wii bowling and a pizza party. It promises to be a great time, enjoyed by all. The month concludes with MALCOLM EATON Enterprises closing December 20-24 for its annual holiday shutdown and on December 31 for the New Year's holiday. This time away allows

staff and consumers to take a break with their families and also coincides with closures at many manufacturers with whom we do business.



As we continue to evaluate our expenses, we have determined that a special activity, one of those little bonuses that we have always liked to do, must end this year for the sake of fiscal conservancy. I regret to say that MALCOLM EATON will not be sending holiday cards this year. We wish all of you the very best this season and in the coming year. However, we felt it prudent to save the more than \$1,000 the cards cost us to buy and mail. We hope you understand. We also hope that you can please be generous when you receive our annual appeal mailing. Scheduled to be sent soon, the annual appeal is yet another way we are combating the effects of late state payments on our organization. If you would like to give a gift to the annual appeal now, an envelope is enclosed. We appreciate all your support. Happy holidays!

### Become a MALCOLM EATON Enterprises Advocate

Want to know how you can become an advocate for MALCOLM EATON Enterprises, someone we can count on to stand up on our behalf and tell our story to those in state government?

MALCOLM EATON Enterprises is currently building an army of advocates and would like you to join. Please call us at 815-235-7181 to indicate your support or e-mail Julie Hilliger at:

[jhilliger@malcolmeaton.org](mailto:jhilliger@malcolmeaton.org)  
If you think the work we do is important, please be willing to let others know that.

Thanks for signing up!!

# A year on job and going strong

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## Man finds hard work, good attitude keys to success

Determination, hard work and a good attitude are rewarded. That's the essence of Joe's story. The young man has experienced great growth in his three years at MALCOLM EATON Enterprises ... and this is just the start.

The 2006 Freeport High School graduate came to MALCOLM EATON in May 2007 and entered the Community Employment program five months later. After working some smaller jobs and polishing his skills, Joe was hired at Wal-Mart in November 2009 as a stock and cart clerk. Three months later, he was the store's Employee of the Month.

"When Joe was hired at Wal-Mart he gave his best effort right from the start," said Dixie Sampson, MALCOLM EATON Enterprises employment specialist. "Joe's

supervisors all agree that he does a wonderful job. He also gets along well with his co-workers." Joe credits the Community Employment Program for helping teach him the skills needed for workplace success.

"I practiced interviewing questions and it helped me a lot," he said. A job coach assisted Joe for a few weeks until he became comfortable and continues to check on him today.

"I like my job," Joe said. "I feel very proud to be earning a living."

Joe's family includes his parents and two brothers. He lives with his family in Freeport. His hobbies include



Joe works in the MALCOLM EATON Enterprises Production Center on his days off from his community employment job at Wal-Mart.

going to movies and hanging out with friends. He also is a member of the MALCOLM EATON Board of Directors and the Finance Committee. His long-term goals include living on his own and driving his own car. "Joe is very motivated and is determined to do well," Sampson said. "Working with him has been a pleasure, and his eagerness to do well makes us all proud."

## MEE planning, continued from Page 1

though we were not required to convert the program funding, it was a safe bet that monies would be withheld if we chose not to. Organizations that made the unfortunate

decision to forgo Medicaid waiver funding are now closing or barely staying afloat."

MALCOLM EATON has renamed several of its programs in the

wake of the funding change. Many of the same services still are being offered while other, more enhanced features are also available.

A program listing with descriptions is at left.

### MEE Program Descriptions

**Developmental Training I:**  
Individuals with severe and/or multiple disabilities learn practical life skills at MALCOLM EATON'S West Campus. Job training at Main Campus supplements studies for some.

**Developmental Training II:**  
To prepare individuals with disabilities for the community workplace, staff provide training through hands-on experience with commercial production contracts at the Main Campus. This was formerly known as the Regular Work Program. In addition, standard courses such as math and money lessons and pre-employment classes are now offered as well.

**Community Employment Program:**

Staff assist individuals with disabilities who are either actively seeking work in the community or who have already secured community jobs. We teach interactive classes to help people intensively hone their skills to meet or further their community employment goal. In addition, we coach at the jobsite plus build and maintain relationships with employers to ensure workers get off to a good start and stay on track.



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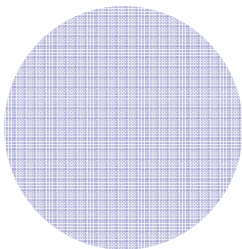
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**Fall a bountiful season for fund-raisers**

**MALCOLM EATON**  
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- Linda Swalve

From baseballs to ice cream cakes and brats, various fund-raisers proved fruitful throughout the late summer and fall for MALCOLM EATON Enterprises.

“Traditionally, MALCOLM EATON conducts its major fund-raisers in the early summer,” said Julie Hilliger, director of MALCOLM EATON Communications and Marketing. “This year, we had the opportunity to hold three smaller fund-raisers in the late summer and fall which

netted more than \$8,500 for MEE. A huge thank you goes to all the individuals who supported these events.”

MALCOLM EATON first participated in the Little Cubs Field Charity Challenge in August, which made \$2,620. The DQ Cake Sale followed in late August and September, with \$1,720 going toward Xtreme Xpeditions Summer Camp. Then, in October, MALCOLM EATON volunteers worked the Cub Foods brat stand and earned

\$1,200 for exercise equipment at the West Campus. In addition, Texas Hold 'Em fund-raisers in late July and September boosted the total by \$3,400.

“With the tight funding situation, we are beginning to count on these smaller fund-raisers to supply the extra items the organization requires,” Hilliger said.

What's next? “Soon, it will be Pork Chop Dinner & Car Show time again,” Hilliger said. The event is set for May 22, 2011.