



2008 Annual Report

Published April 2009

Mission Statement

In partnership with the community, provide people with disabilities opportunities to achieve the highest level of independence.



What BRI Has To Offer...

- Sheltered Employment—Work Services
- Community-Based Supported Employment
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Supported Apartment Program - Residential Training
- Transportation Services
- Commercial Sewing
- Confidential Shredding
- Collating & Mailing Services
- Light Assembly
- Packaging
- Lawn Care
- Day Services/Community Integration Program
- Food Services -
 - Congregate Dining & Meals on Wheels
 - Corporate Catering
- Custodial Services
- Wayside Maintenance

Working Partnerships

- Taylor County Human Services
- ICAA/Headstart Program
- Taylor County Commission on Aging
- IROW
- Fiskars
- Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Council
- Weather Shield
- B&B Engineering
- Hurd
- Colby Metal
- Phillips Plastics
- Regal-Beloit
- State of Wisconsin
- Hedlund Agency Inc.
- National Guard Armories
- HealthView Eye Clinic
- TBK Manufacturing
- Many other businesses on an as-needed basis



New in 2008

In 2008, BRI received a grant for *Lean Manufacturing training* from the North West Manufacturing Outreach center (NWMOC) at UW-Stout. This enabled us to better utilize space in our production area and ultimately increased our production capabilities. Our leads are able to spend less time doing projects that our clients can do, and our projects are completed before their expected due date.

In response to the escalating gas and utility prices last summer, BRI moved to a *four-day workweek* in July. This enabled us to save 20% on these costs as well as labor, and bring our budget into line by year's end. The change was fast and extremely well accepted by our staff and clients, as well as their families and caregivers. By lengthening the workdays Monday – Thursday, we were able to capture the same amount of funding we had previously. This could not have been accomplished without the support and cooperation of Taylor County Human Services.

BRI was *awarded funding for two new accessible buses* by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The funded amount for these vehicles was nearly \$80,000. They will arrive in 2009 and 2010.



Black River Industries is affiliated with
Catholic Charities Bureau, Diocese of Superior



Letter From the Board President

It is my privilege to again address the BRI staff, its clients and families, area business and industry leaders, and the many communities we serve with comments relating to the past year.

In many ways 2008 was a year of celebration. Paul Thornton has settled well into his new Director role

with BRI and continues to exhibit tremendous energy and enthusiasm in his work. We can all rest assured that Paul's leadership skills and commitment remain focused on BRI's mission of providing people with disabilities the opportunities they deserve.

Many of you were privileged to be a part of BRI's 35th Anniversary celebration in November. It was very enlightening to read the historical perspectives that Paul provided in the weeks leading up to the celebration, and to hear of the many stories that folks shared around how BRI personally enhanced their lives over that 35-year span.

That said, undoubtedly 2008 has not been without challenges. Our Board of Directors has been faced with the daunting task of making difficult decisions to help protect BRI's financial future. The change to our four-day workweek is certainly an example of altering the realm of normalcy, but clearly proved beneficial in reducing our overhead and operational costs. The year ahead will require us to step back, think "outside the box" and carefully manage our assets and operations.

In recent months, our Board has evidenced unprecedented change – much in part to the economy and continued budget deficits at the state and federal level. The "business as usual" comfort zone no longer exists. While change is never easy or comfortable, it is usually necessary and often times critical.

It is also important to acknowledge the area businesses and industries who present BRI and its clients with work opportunities – keeping our clients focused on a sense of purpose and accomplishment can only be done with the support of those who are willing to allow BRI that chance.

President Obama often refers to our nation's future with "guarded optimism" – I believe the same holds true for Black River Industries. With gratitude and vision, I welcome the challenge to help navigate BRI through these turbulent economic times. It is my hope that together, with a shared sense of responsibility and perseverance, we will be witness to many great accomplishments yet to come.

Thanks for your continued support.

Peggy A. Dietrich

From The Director's Desk



2008 was indeed one of the most challenging years in BRI's 35 years of existence. As most of you know, I have worked at BRI and with Catholic Charities Bureau (CCB) for almost all of those years. I can say this with total confidence: the spirit that drives us will endure no matter how hard the adverse economic winds may blow. We have a great and dedicated staff who have hung in there with us through the uncertainties of 2008 and into 2009. Many of these same staff have worked with me for 10-15 years and longer. They know and believe in our mission, and as a result, life continues to offer promise and fulfillment for our program participants.

We can be thankful to the Taylor County community for its support of our fundraising efforts, especially in these times of economic hardship. Revenues from our fourth annual golf outing at the Black River Golf Club last June exceeded the previous year by nearly 25%. Our fundraising drive in December resulted in an outpouring of generosity that far exceeded our expectations. I continue to appreciate the support of grant programs sponsored by companies and agencies as varied as Kraft Foods; the Wisconsin Department of Transportation; the state and local Knights of Columbus chapters; local Lions and Kiwanis clubs; and the AnnMarie, Mid-Wisconsin Bank, and Weathershield Lite Foundations. BRI cannot do it alone; we cannot live in a vacuum.

We also could not have made the changes necessary to retain fiscal solvency without the support and encouragement of our main funding sources: Taylor County Human Services and the Taylor County Commission on Aging. Working with these agencies and their Boards has been, as always, truly rewarding and enjoyable.

I'd also like to thank BRI's Board of Directors for its tireless dedication and hard work in what was at times a very challenging year. And finally, thanks go out to CCB for its support and guidance, both to our agency, and to me personally in what was certainly a year of growth.

I would echo Peggy's final words: thanks for your support, everyone. We look forward to working with you again in 2009.

Paul Thornton

Program Updates

Representative Payee Program

BRI served as Representative Payee for 31 individuals during 2008.

Supported Employment Program

BRI's Supported Employment Program, in collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehab, assists individuals with disabilities to secure and maintain employment in the community. Four individuals were successfully placed in community employment during 2008.



Supported Apartment Program

BRI's Supported Apartment program provides skills training and education to adults with disabilities who reside independently in the community. The goal of the program is to foster/facilitate the individual to attain and maintain independent living status. The Supported Apartment Program served 19 individuals during 2008.

Day Services Program

The Day Services Program is a multi-faceted program offering adults with severe and profound disabilities and special needs a broad range of individualized training, personal cares and activities that enhance daily life. In 2008 ten individuals participated in this program which included one high school student attending during school breaks. Over the past year a strong staff team has developed which includes a team leader and two regular part time people. Each staff member is a certified nursing assistant. Community integration was enhanced in 2008 when BRI acquired a new bus which has the capacity to hold three wheelchairs.

Client Advisory Council

In October of 2007, the Client Advisory Council was established to provide input to the Administration of BRI in regard to policies and procedures that affect the participants. The council consists of seven individuals receiving services at BRI and one staff consultant. The council meets a minimum of twice a year. In 2008 the council met four times offering input on client activities held throughout the year and helped with the transition to a four day workweek.

State Use Contracts

Our contract with the Department of Corrections to sew buttons and emblems on uniform shirts and jackets employed 26 employees with disabilities in 2008. They not only sew but also trim, fold, and package the clothing. Last year we shipped 13,576 pieces to the Waupun Central Warehouse. In addition to the sewing contract, we also have four additional State Use contracts: RAM (Roadside Area Maintenance: Taylor County waysides), custodial contracts at both the Medford and Abbotsford armories, and lawn care at the Medford armory. These projects employed 16 employees with disabilities in 2008.

Transportation Services

In 2008, BRI's passenger fleet extended services to over 250 disabled and elderly passengers, and 65 children; and logged 200,000 miles. Our totally accessible fleet now consists of eight buses with wheelchair lifts, and two vehicles without lifts. We will be

adding one new bus later this year.

We received two new buses in 2008 with grant monies that were awarded to us from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WIS-DOT) competitive Section 5310 Grant Program. BRI continues to have representation on WIS-DOT's Specifications Committee, a group that works

with manufacturers to design safer, more user-friendly vehicles that are offered to non-profits through WIS-DOT grant programs.

In addition to our passenger services, we utilize 4 trucks, one van, and a catering truck for our work services and food service programs. These vehicles accrued over 40,000 miles in 2008.



WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

- Confidential Document Shredding
- Packaging
- Light Assembly/Inspection
- Collating & Mailing
- Custodial Work
- Corporate Catering

LET US HELP YOU GET YOUR JOB DONE.

CALL 715-748-2950 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Black River Industries: Putting people with disabilities to work for 35 years.

www.blackriverindustries.org



Production Quick Facts:

Pieces Completed in 2008 :	
Phillips Plastics (Parts loaded)	2,405,235
Fiskars (Quilt Rulers)	17,985
Weather Shield (Bagging)	72,760
Waupun Central Warehouse (Sewing)	13,576
(shirts and jackets combined)	



Feeding The Community

BRI's Food Service Industries served over 51,000 meals in 2008. The majority of those meals are provided for the Taylor County Commission on Aging at six Senior Centers throughout the county, including the Meals-on-Wheels program in Medford. In addition, our passenger routes routinely deliver meals to many homebound seniors in outlying rural areas who would otherwise not be able to access the congregate meal sites. Last year we delivered over 37,000 meals to 663 seniors in Taylor County.

We also provided over 4,400 meals for 34 children at the Medford Headstart program last year. In addition, BRI utilized its catering license. to provide over 2,300 meals to civic organizations and area businesses. We also provided over 7,500 hot lunches to our clients and staff in 2008.

Golf Outing Update

BRI's fourth annual golf outing was held at the Black River Golf Course last June 23rd. 18 teams competed, and we had five corporate sponsors: Catholic Charities Bureau, Schierl Tires, Hurd Doors & Windows, TDS, and Kraft Foods. The event Chairperson, Kathy Lemke, did a very admirable job pulling it all together to make it another rousing success. The food was tremendous, the weather again cooperated, and a great time was had by all.

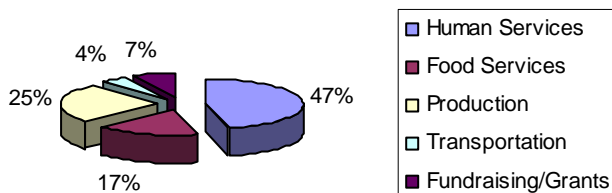


This year's event will be held on Monday, June 22nd, again at the Black River Golf Course. We have raised half the cost of replacing the walk-in cooler/freezer in our Food Service Industries component. We hope to raise the remaining half with the proceeds from this year's event. If you would like information on being a corporate sponsor or a hole sponsor, or if you would like information on registering a team, please call our business office. See you on the links!

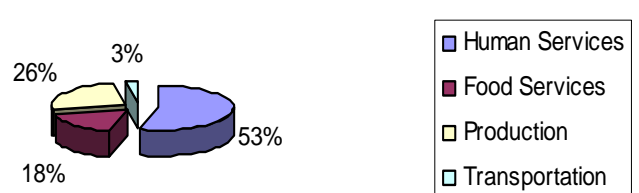
Rest Area Maintenance Recognition

In 2008, BRI was honored as a Featured Service Provider on the Rehabilitation for Wisconsin, Inc. (RFW) website, www.rfw.org. BRI provides custodial services to the waysides in Taylor County. The recognition comes from positive site inspections, comments received from visitors, as well as comments from Wisconsin Department of Transportation staff.

2008 Income Sources



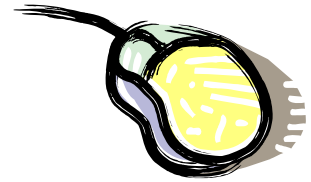
2008 Expenses by Program Area



*Visit our website for up to date information,
including the following:*



- *Program Descriptions*
- *Staff & Contact Information*
 - *Weekly Newsletter*
 - *Services We Offer*
 - *Events/Photos*
- *Employment Opportunities*



www.blackriverindustries.org

Your gift to BLACK RIVER INDUSTRIES, INC. will help support the enrichment of the programs for Taylor County clients and help assure long-term financial security for the agency. Black River Industries, Inc. is a 501(C)(3) Charitable Organization servicing special needs adults in Taylor County.

Enclosed is my/our check to BLACK RIVER INDUSTRIES, INC.

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ \$500 _____ Other: _____

Please make your check payable to BLACK RIVER INDUSTRIES, INC.

This gift is made:

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

On Occasion of _____

My Information:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Black River Industries, Inc. thanks you for your contribution!

The Black River Industries Board of Directors and staff thank you for your support.

We invite you to review this Annual Report for updates around our exceptional programs, services, production summaries and upcoming golf outing.

2008 Board of Directors:

- Peggy Dittrich - President
- Jim Tracey - Secretary/Treasurer
- Brad Erickson
- Brian Hedlund
- Bob Deetz
- Laura Lundy - Vice President
- Kenneth Schmiege
- Tim Klingbeil
- Rev. Pete Warmanen

Paul Thornton, Director

Black River Industries ... proudly serving Taylor County for over 35 years.

Black River Industries
650 Jensen Drive
Medford, WI 54451

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