



# PRODUCTIVE ALTERNATIVES

DIVERSE SERVICES • VIABLE WORKFORCE  
INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS



*October is National Disability Awareness Month*

*"Talent Has NO Boundaries; Workforce Diversity INCLUDES Workers with Disabilities"*

**2010**



## ***Successful Work History Makes Great Payoff***

Arnie Robertson of Brainerd, Minnesota is the success story everyone wants to write about. In 1998, Arnie started working for the Wal-Mart store in Baxter with the assistance of Brainerd's Placement Services and Job Coaches. Arnie continues to work there to this day which makes for over 12 years of employment with the same employer! He started out working as a Cart Pusher and Stockman. A job that he says he liked a lot, but states it was "very hectic" early on. Later on in his employment, he accepted a promotion to the Paper Goods and Chemicals Department. His desire since beginning his career with Wal-Mart was to someday become a full time employee and hopefully obtain company benefits. In early 2010, Arnie decided to look into the possibility of transferring to the new Wal-Mart Supercenter in Fergus Falls or the one in Alexandria. He said that he planned to visit both stores and see which one provided the best opportunity for him. This way he could also be closer to his family in the area and transfer knowing he had employment waiting for him if he decided to move. Arnie got the ball rolling on a transfer by talking with his PA Job Coach/Support person, Carol Karl, and his PA Case Manager, Any Van Keuren. Arnie also talked to his Wal-Mart Store Manager and HR person who said they would assist him any way they could once he decided for sure where he wanted to go. Arnie visited both of the Wal-Mart stores and also arranged a visit to Fergus Falls Productive Alternatives for a tour. Arnie said, "He feels more secure knowing that PA can provide him supports on the job" and he wants to maintain his employment supports after his transfer. He says that, "he appreciates all that PA has done for him and the opportunity that Wal-Mart gave him too". After making his visits and thinking things over Arnie decided that he would be accepting the full time job offer as Stockman at the Fergus Falls Wal-Mart Supercenter.

He also will have his case transferred from Brainerd to Fergus Falls PA and receive his work supports through PA Case Management and the PA Extended Employment program there.

Arnie began his new position in August in Fergus Falls.

Productive Alternatives would like to recognize Arnie Robertson for his hard work and dedication to his employer and the Brainerd staff would like to thank him for the opportunity to work with him.



***Congratulations Arnie Robertson***

***"Some people dream of success, while others wake up and work hard at it."***

***Author Unknown***



## Presidents Corner:

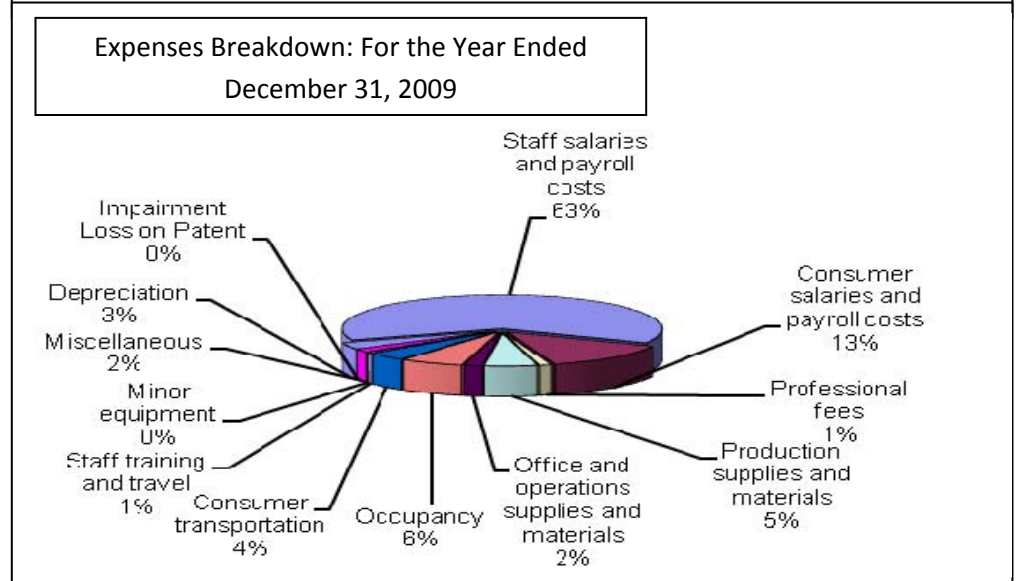
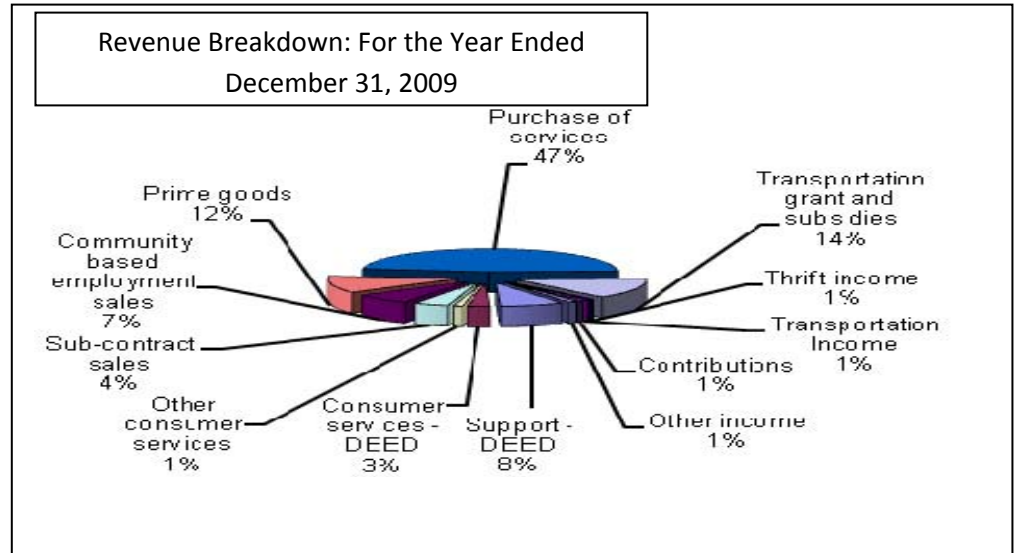
From President, Steve Skauge

In this edition of the PAI Newsletter, you will find a summary of the results of our recently completed 2009 fiscal audit. Fiscal audits are a necessary process that any business must periodically undergo to assess fiscal status, but in the non-profit world an audit tends to serve some additional purposes.

While our primary reason for existence is certainly tied to providing our services to those who need them, we are also a business, and need to operate as such. Annual audits not only demonstrate our current fiscal position, they address our overall business model as well. Our auditors examine our business practices, review our policies and procedures, and make a general assessment of our businesses' health. Their processes go well beyond just looking at our Agency's financial numbers.

The thoroughness of this audit certainly creates more work for our staff (and adds some expense). However, it does give a much better assurance to our funders, and to anyone inside or outside the Agency, of the stewardship of tax and donated dollars that we provide. These audits help us to demonstrate that we are being good stewards of the dollars we have, and that we are also operating under sound business practices.

Productive Alternatives' staff work very hard at having good fiscal audits, and at making good business decisions. Annual fiscal audits help to prove that out. It is always our goal to not only provide high-quality programming, but to do that in a cost-effective, businesslike, and professional manner.



**Statement of Activities for the Year ended December 31, 2009**

Revenues		Expenses	
DEED Support	\$716,236	Salaries & Payroll Costs	
Consumer Services	277,115	Staff	\$5,557,056
Other Consumer Services	107,832	Consumer	1,175,032
Sales		Professional Fees	105,638
Sub Contract	396,967	Supplies & Materials	
Community Based Employment	668,507	Production	476,206
Prime Goods	1,116,249	Office & Operations	158,313
Purchase of Services	4,360,578	Occupancy	562,996
Transportation Grant & Subsidies	1,305,357	Consumer Transportation	350,700
Thrift Store	67,547	Staff Training & Travel	44,150
Transportation Income	70,673	Minor Equipment	19,874
Contributions	50,504	Miscellaneous	145,390
Other Income	106,220	Depreciation	282,359
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Support</b>	<b>\$ 9,243,785</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 8,877,714</b>
		<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 366,071</b>

## PA Tournament & Fundraiser Success #4

How do you measure success? Combine eleven Men's Softball teams, PA consumers, families, friends, staff, community supporters made up of businesses and organizations, plus a beautiful day, and it equals success. Several hundred people converged on Parkers Prairie for the event. The teams that played were a fine group of athletes who played highly competitive softball to make for a great day of entertainment, but it was the great humanitarian and community spirit that made this event shine. The day brought together people that PA serves with the teams and community members in a fun and enthusiastic way, all working for the same cause. Congratulations to Diamond Jims who remain Champions, Bitzan Machine took 2<sup>nd</sup> while the Lumberjacks took 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Thanks to the many donors, volunteers, friends and staff as the event raised \$8400 for Productive Alternatives Development Fund. It was a great community event and fundraiser combined. See you all next year for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tournament in August.



Tate Jerome of the Lumberjacks congratulates Andy Struthers on his hit



## Production Produces Prime Products, Provides Meaningful Work

Productive Alternative's Production Department is continually seeking ways to provide meaningful work to the individuals it serves. One of the ways work is generated is through the manufacture and marketing of Prime Products, which are products that we own.

Products currently being produced include:

- All **Weather Rain Gauge**- marketed through the National Weather Channel, the Internet, major retailers, such as, Cabela's, and used as a promotional item by several companies.
- The **Insulvent Sewer Vent Insulator** - marketed through distributors to hardware and plumbing stores, and major retailers such as Mills Fleet Farm and L & M Fleet.
- Video Rockers - marketed to Schools and Libraries nationally and through furniture stores.
- A wide variety of **Signs** are produced for Insurance Companies, Seed Companies, and Political Campaigns. The materials used include magnetic, coloplas, metal, vinyl banners, and others.
- **Wood Products** produce primarily stakes and lath for the construction industry, and it also produces Specialty Crating for domestic and overseas shipments.
- Raking, a job we all look forward to is made easier with the **Rapid Rake**. It is produced through PA, and is marketed through hardware stores and direct to users.
- Minnesota and Ice Fishing accompany one another, and PA Production markets the equipment that every fisher person wants and needs. **Rattle Reels, Fish Alerts, Slush Inhalers, Buddy Lights, Groove Holders, Big and Little Dippers** to name a few. These items are marketed through major retailers, such as, Mills Fleet Farm, L & M Fleet, Cabela's, Gander Mountain, Runnings Fleet, and distributors for local bait shops.

Most of the PA Products have been developed from ideas that have been brought to us by individuals in our local area. PA evaluates and tests the idea, and if the product is found to be marketable, a contract for the rights to the idea with the individual is drawn up.

So, the next time you are buying that ice fishing equipment for that new fish house, or purchasing a rain gauge, take a look at the tag and see if it is produced by P.A.I.



### Upcoming Events

October 26<sup>th</sup>-Consumer Recognition Banquet-Broadway Ballroom-Alexandria

November 16<sup>th</sup>-Give to the Max Day-[GiveMN.org](http://GiveMN.org)-you may donate on line by going to the PA website [www.paiff.org](http://www.paiff.org) & clicking Giving Opportunities. Your support is appreciated!

December 4<sup>th</sup>-“Win the Dream” Ice Castle Fish House Fundraiser-Prairie Christmas-Parkers Prairie.

Tickets are available at all PA Locations or by calling 218-338-2691. Only 1000 tickets available.



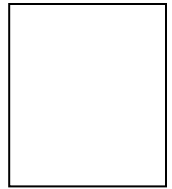
*Productive Alternatives, Inc.*

*1205 North Tower Road*

*Fergus Falls, MN 56537*

[www.paiff.org](http://www.paiff.org)

*If you wish to be removed from this newsletter listing  
please email [judyh@paiff.org](mailto:judyh@paiff.org) or call 218-338-2691*



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## Productive Alternatives-“Getting to Know You” Staff

**Staff Name:** Jan Retka

**Location:** Brainerd

**Position:** Site Coordinator

**Length of Employment:** March 1997-present

**What is your Educational/Professional Background?** Associate in Child Development

**What is the favorite part of your job?** The consumers, the coaches and the staff I work with on a daily basis. And smiling a lot!

**What keeps you coming back each day?** The true enjoyment of doing what I love. I see individual potential develop and grow! This career path is interesting, exciting and sometimes very humorous!!!

**What do you see as a priority for this agency to continue providing quality services?** To be forward thinking, continue to teach and train staff and be diversified and open to options.

**What are your goal(s)?** Maximize the potential of all consumers and enjoy each of them.

**What are your hobbies?** MEGA gardening! Shade garden, sunny flower gardens, vegetables and a wonderful evergreen feature with special trees! My husband and I have planted over 30,000 various trees on our land! I like taking pictures of my gardens I like pitching horse shoe, trap shooting, and I really love hunting deer! I also love all types of music!!! I collect old things and interesting rocks, Is raising 2 daughters a hobby? That was enjoyable!

**Where did you grow up?** Little Rock, Minnesota..... and a bit of Royalton!

**Any comments or suggestions?** Life is short... laugh hard! Somewhere it says “Do what you like and like what you do!” I so do! Thank you PAI for being the Agency you are and giving me the opportunity to get paid for this most interesting and humbling position that I return to daily for another dose!

**Staff Name:** Becky Fronning

**Location:** Fergus Falls Corporate Office

**Position:** Payroll Clerk

**Length of Employment:** 4 years

**What is your Educational/Professional background?** AAS degree in Accounting

**What is your favorite part of your job?** Interacting with the consumers

**What keeps you coming back each day?** My Paycheck

**What is priority for this agency to continue providing quality services?** Teamwork

**What are your goal(s)?** Keeping the same job for the rest of my life just like my hero, *Marcia Dufty!*

**What are your hobbies?** Riding Horse

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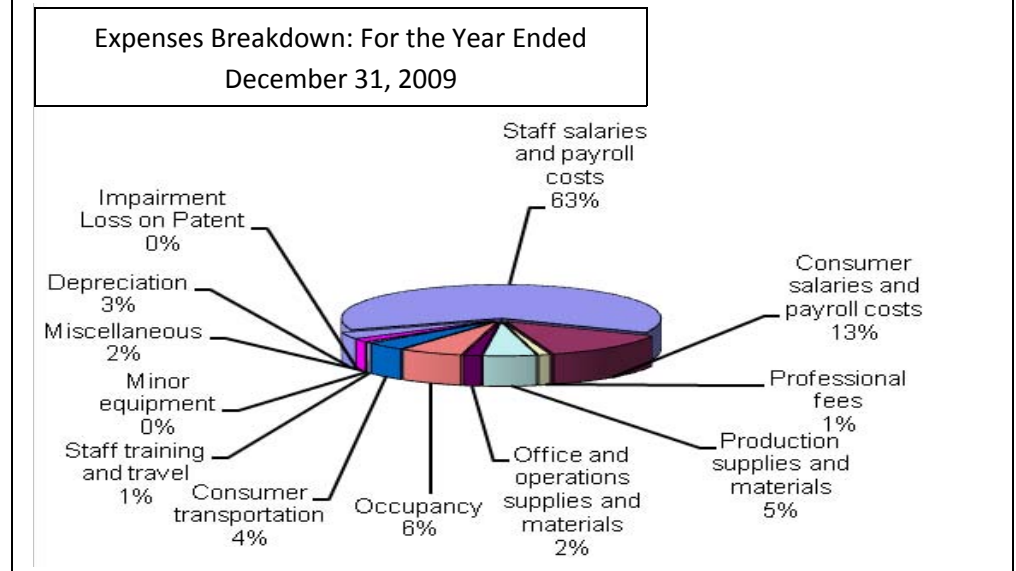
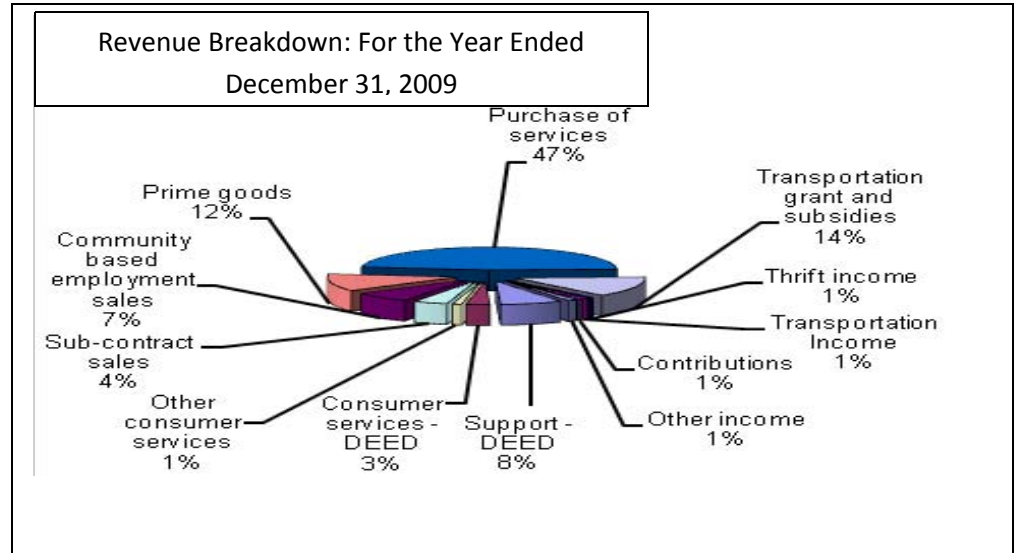
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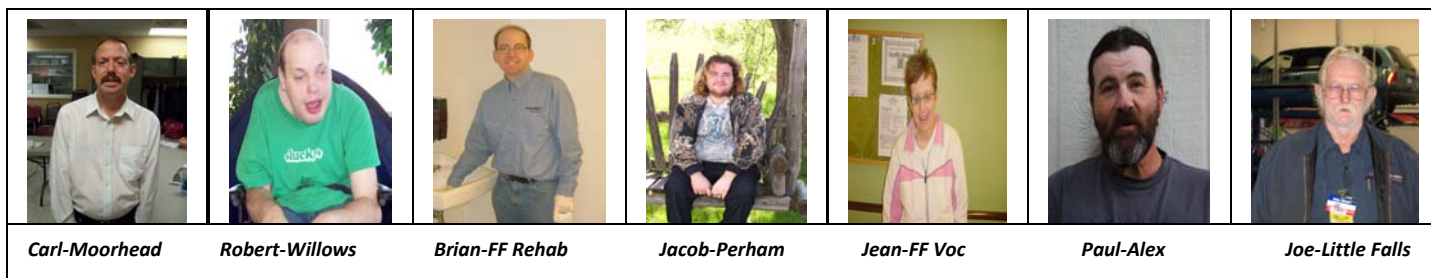
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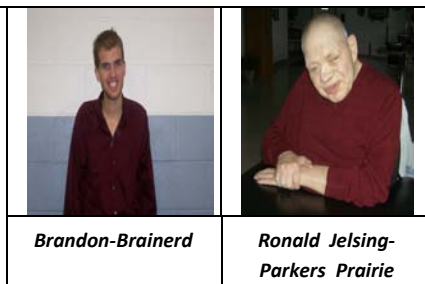
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