

## Bravo to the holiday bakers



Winners of the holiday bake off, held Dec. 18 in the cafeteria are, for cookies: first, Andrew Madgziarz, toffee cracker cookies; second was a tie between Sandy Hernandez, cranberry pistachio icebox cookies, and Andrea Flohr, pumpkin spice cookies. For other baked items: first was David Denton, caramel chocolate shortbread bars; second was a tie between Ben Feldman, peanut butter balls, and Amanda Leier, banana bars with cream cheese frosting. Congrats to all.

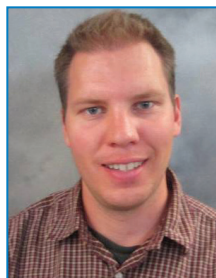
## Employees earn promotions



Jen Guertin



Francis LeMay



Jeremy Erickson

Two employees that work in the customer service/cashiering area in the lobby of the administration building have earned promotions as of Nov. 24.

Jen Guertin was promoted to customer service senior rep. She previously held the title of office assistant III.

Frances LeMay was promoted to office assistant III from her previous title of office assistant II.

In the water quality lab, Jeremy Erickson has been promoted from water quality specialist I to water quality specialist II.

The title change took place on Dec. 8.

Congratulations to all of these employees.

## Managers' Corner

By Steve Gleason

## Dear Santa, Holiday wishes for all SPRWS employees

Dear Santa,

I appreciate being part of an organization that is delivering on its mission of providing reliable, quality water and services at a reasonable cost.

I know you find SPRWS work most meaningful, knowing we are part of providing such a critical resource to life and health.

This year I am asking for even a greater understanding by staff of expanding customer expectations and at the same time customer understanding and support for SPRWS staff who produce excellent drinking water, come out in all kinds of weather to repair water lines, and have a friendly desire to help ensure satisfaction with all aspects of water service.

I know you agree SPRWS employees are the best. The organization is lucky to have such devoted, hardworking, caring employees striving to get better and bringing competency and excellence with them to work every day.

So please do your thing and see to it all SPRWS employees and their loved ones enjoy a holiday that is warm, peaceful, and safe.

In Tiny Tim's words: "God bless us, everyone!"

P.S. We are so grateful to all SPRWS employees for making 2018 a successful year. A happy new year for all is our greatest wish.

Maybe with a little Christmas magic you can keep this great momentum going to ensure SPRWS continued success meeting the challenges ahead in 2019.

Wishing you all the best!

## Stay safe when driving; be aware, take side roads

There are more distracted drivers on the roads these days resulting in more injuries in highway incidents.

Steve Schneider, general manager, recently met with staff to go over some basic actions to take to reduce your chances of injury or further damage to your work vehicle if it is involved in an incident or becomes incapacitated in an area that is subject to high velocity traffic (highway, freeway, etc.).

- Stay in your vehicle and contact dispatch with your situation or call 911 to notify law enforcement of your situation and request assistance.
- When the assistance arrives, work with them

to arrange for your safe exit. This may involve calling our mechanics, getting towed away, or having the police or state patrol assist you so you can safely exit the highway.

- If you drive a commercial vehicle, the CDL holder is required to place emergency reflectors within a certain time frame and should do so as required.
- You can help reduce risk by not using the freeways and highways and sticking to arterials.

Even if you do not drive for work, this information can be valuable to you in your personal vehicle.

## Coni Cassity loses weight, adds years to her life



Coni Cassity

Coni Cassity, office assistant, made a life-style change that resulted in improved quality of life as well as significant weight loss. She was featured in

the Healthy Saint Paul newsletter last month.

With a history of obesity that followed her from childhood, Coni tried a multitude of diets, none of which ever worked for long and often resulted in weight gain.

Over time, she came to accept her weight and tried to keep it stable, rather than the yo-yoing that had accompanied years of dieting.

However, as she grew older, it became increasingly difficult to move around, due largely to arthritis in her knees. In addition, she was pre-diabetic and had high levels of blood pressure and cholesterol. Climbing stairs left her breathless and light headed.

She concluded that knee surgery was in order, but at her weight, it was dangerous. She needed to lose

weight to have the surgery. So, she started physical therapy and soon after enrolled in the Omada program through work.

“While the coaching seemed ‘corny’ and all the lessons were things I’ve heard over the years, it was different this time,” Coni told Healthy Saint Paul. “I wasn’t trying to lose weight anymore, I was just trying to stay alive.”

While it was hard to make changes at first, by starting slowly and building healthy habits and routines one week at a time, it’s no longer a struggle, she says.

In a year, she lost 86 pounds, no longer needed knee surgery, and had healthy blood levels.

“I have added years to my life,” Coni says in the article.” All it took was making the decision to not give up on myself this time. I managed to take control of my self-destructive eating habits.”

She credits her Omada coach, her family, co-workers, and a promise not to let herself down.

She continues to lose weight and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. That includes drinking more water and increasing her

activity level to include walking at least 10,000 steps a day and biking to work 3.5 miles when the weather is good.

Since starting the program, she participated in six 5k runs. She has now lost 115 pounds and continues to eat healthy and remain active. While she will continue to lose excess weight, it is not her goal, but an outcome from living healthier.

You can read the whole story as told by Coni at [healthy.stpaul.gov/coni-cassity](http://healthy.stpaul.gov/coni-cassity)

### **Omada is available to staff**

For those who have not taken part in the Omada program through the city’s Medica insurance program, it is free to eligible employees. Go to [www.omadahealth.com/saintpaul](http://www.omadahealth.com/saintpaul) for more information and to take the three-question survey to see if you qualify. Employees new to Omada qualify to earn 75 points as part of the Healthy Saint Paul well-being program. This program rewards employees for taking part in various activities throughout the year with money for their health account in the following year.

For complete well-being incentive rules, go to [healthy.stpaul.gov](http://healthy.stpaul.gov).