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think

January

Live your life as an exclamation, not an explanation.

4000 Years of Resolutions

The earliest recorded New Year's celebration (then observed in the spring) was some 4000 years ago in Babylon. The ancient Babylonians also get the credit for making the first New Year's resolutions, vowing to repay debts and return any borrowed farming equipment to its rightful owner. In that way, they believed they would find favor with their gods and start the year with a clean slate.

Fast-forward to 2012...what's your resolution for the coming year? Let's give a nod to the Babylonians and all make a commitment we plan to keep. At BrightKey, we resolve to make this the year of the customer.

Here's to a fantastic 2012!



BrightKey Rings in the New Year with New Seniority Awards Program!

One of BrightKey's most valuable—and certainly most appreciated—assets is our staff. Many employees have been with BrightKey since the company's early days in the late 1980s, when self-correcting typewriters and dot matrix printers graced the mauve-and-gray-colored offices of what was then Professional Mailing and Distribution Services (PMDS).

BrightKey's most senior employee, other than its president Rita Hope Counts, is Langston Ray. Ray was hired as BrightKey's second employee in 1988, and has remained with the company ever since. Recognizing employees like Ray, who is on the front lines every day supporting our clients, is important to BrightKey.

A large number of BrightKey's staff has been with the company for more than ten years—with responsibilities ranging from assisting members on the phones, to packaging and delivering time-sensitive shipments, to providing onsite meeting support, and everything in between.

BrightKey has come a long way since its start. The mauve and gray company colors have been replaced by today's bright blue and gold. Technology, service offerings, and new facilities have dramatically extended our reach. And, although we have many more employees,

one thing remains the same—their dedication and loyalty to BrightKey and our clients and partners.

Beginning in the first quarter of 2012, fifty-five BrightKey employees will be recognized for their outstanding service over the course of ten or more years. Rita Hope Counts and chief operating officer David Elam will host a series of luncheons to honor these employees and present them with a service award and plaque.

At BrightKey, we know our employees are the key to our success. Their team spirit and dedication gets communicated every day to each member and customer they touch. Join us in congratulating them.



Langston Ray, BrightKey's second employee hired in 1988, is still with BrightKey today.

B-Strategic

Tell the Truth.

The interplay of eight critical success factors leads to a brand that resonates in the marketplace.

Fifth on the list: ***It must be true.***

Your company needs to make sure its product or service actually delivers what people want. There must be no disconnect between the brand and experience.

The brand is a company's promise to its constituents, the assurance that the

company will act, and the product or service will perform, in a certain way. Meeting those expectations fulfills the brand promise, instills confidence, and grows brand equity.

*Want to know more? Email Jeffrey Bass at jbass@brightkey.net for Sally Roffman's article: *What's in a Brand?**

BrightKey Supports the SPCA at 2011 "Puttin' on the Dog" Annual Fundraising Gala

When the SPCA of Anne Arundel County hosted its 19th annual "Puttin' on the Dog" Fundraising Gala at the Westin Hotel in Annapolis, BrightKey staff members, including SPCA board member Rita Hope Counts, joined more than 200 other guests in celebrating and supporting the fundraising efforts.

This year's Gala raised \$115,000 through sponsorships, donations, ticket sales, and a silent auction, and will help benefit the SPCA's Betsy Medical Fund. Created in memory of Betsy, a beloved beagle who passed away in 2003, this fund assists the SPCA in providing emergency medical care for homeless animals.

Congratulations to the SPCA of



Anne Arundel County for a successful fundraising event and thank you to those BrightKey staff members who contributed to the achievement.

(Clockwise from top left) Jim and Diane Kelly, Don Dilks and Rita Hope Counts, Maha and George Abunassar, Carol and Dave Elam, Ken and Sally Pfabe— "putting on the dog" at the SPCA Gala. (Photo courtesy of Kelly Brown, President of the Anne Arundel County SPCA.)

Spreading Holiday Cheer for the Troops!

The holiday season is particularly hard on the members of our armed services, deployed to other areas of the world. They're in dangerous lands fighting for our freedom, with little to remind them of the comforts of home, all the while missing their families waiting behind in the United States.

Sheri Smith, a BrightKey operations manager and mother of US Army Staff Sergeant Andrew Smith, decided to rally the BrightKey troops to brighten the holidays of employee family members serving overseas. Her idea to put together personalized boxes of goodies has become a new BrightKey tradition: "Holiday Cheer for the Troops!"

Beginning in November, donations of popular holiday treats and specially requested items like beef jerky, Hot Tamales, coffee, Gatorade, socks, and much, much more, began pouring in through the doors of BrightKey. Items were collected

through December 1, and then prepared for shipment to family members deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Turkey.

In addition to SSG Andrew Smith, other Holiday Cheer recipients included SFC Eric Vaughan, US Army; SPC Darian Senior, US Army; TSgt Randy Barron, Air Force; and LCPL Miles Bishop, US Marine Corps.

The Holiday Cheer gifts were packed in USPS boxes specifically designed for shipping to military destinations and included a "We Support You" message. With BrightKey donating the postage and cards signed by BrightKey staff, the care packages all arrived in time for Christmas.

Thanks to Sheri Smith for organizing this effort and starting a new BrightKey tradition. And thanks to all who donated items to our troops abroad, who are supporting our

freedom here at home and the freedom of those around the world.



(Top) BrightKey's Mary Anne Rice joins Sheri Smith in assembling care packages for the troops. (Bottom) Proud Army mom Sheri Smith packs up some holiday cheer for our troops overseas.