



AEG 1EARTH NEWSLETTER | Q4 2017

Q&A WITH BETH STEELE - SR. MANAGER OF CLIENT SERVICES, SIGN LANGUAGE



What are your roles and responsibilities at Sign Language?

I oversee the client services and account management departments as well as the office manager. My team is responsible for funneling all work from the customer through the art department, and production and accounting teams, but I touch a little bit of each department throughout the day!

You recently led a new recycling initiative, can you share some details?

We partnered with one of our local material vendors to start participating in a free recycling program to recycle all plastic-based material waste. Both press operators and finishers are now able to recycle plastic-based material waste. Material scraps are picked up from our vendor several times a month, and sent back to a manufacturing plant to be extruded down to their raw form and recycled into new material. Previously, we only offered an office recycling program for copy paper and cardboard, but our new initiative allows our production facility to get involved too. We're also hopeful that recycling more will help reduce our costs for trash pick-up.

How do you think environmental initiatives resonate with your customers? Are you seeing a demand for these services?

The print industry has a large environmental footprint due to ink and substrate usage. Both employees and customers take comfort in knowing we are taking additional steps to reduce our footprint wherever possible. Many of our customers are looking for better alternatives to lessen their environmental impact, whether that be with recycled and recyclable materials, or finding centers to recycle their materials after an event. Our local partner is working with us to find drop-off centers where our customers can drop off material themselves at no charge. We also recycle all plastic-based material for our customers; they just have to drop it off or send the product back to us when they are finished with it.

Any other sustainability-related projects we can expect from Sign Language in 2018?

Definitely! We are continuing to look at options both big and small to help reduce waste. We're hoping to move to a paperless workflow for all new orders in 2018, keeping all work orders, client documentation, and invoicing digital. This will help reduce waste and save cost on paper, document folders, and ink. We are also continuing to work with our partners on additional materials that can be recycled, as well as providing alternative products to customers who want to use recycled and recyclable products.

THE MOUNTAIN WINERY LAYS DOWN THE LAWN



Recognized as a California Historical Landmark, The Mountain Winery welcomes over 110,000 guests annually and hosts over 65 live events from June through September every year, in addition to hosting weddings and corporate events year-round. With sweeping views of the Santa Clara Valley, it's no wonder why this venue is the premier location to tie the knot or host a team building event.

"When we took over the operation of the Mountain Winery, I was obsessed with trying to create a more pleasing atmosphere in the plaza," states Karen Schneider, General Manager for Mountain Winery. "My stage manager knew I was looking for turf to help set the mood. He saw that the high school close to his house was removing its football field and offering the field to anyone on that opportunity, but it got us thinking to contact other schools in the area to find old turf that would otherwise end up in a dumpster."

The team ended up partnering with a company that removes and hauls old fields from high schools in the local region. "We sent our truck and a stagehand to pick up a slightly used field. We cut some of the turf into 8' X 8" pieces to build out a park. The fact we were able to give an old football field a new life was just what the doctor ordered, and the price was just what I was looking for," states Karen.

The Mountain Winery plans to utilize the rest of the turf for additional projects like incorporating a portable aisle for brides or creating a bocce ball court for non-concert events.

BEE ON TARGET



Target Center home to the Minnesota Timberwolves and Minnesota Lynx, is now also home to native bee colonies.

The idea first came about when 14-year-old Nikolas Liepins, who also happens to be son of Aaron Liepins, Director of Security for Target Center, challenged Target Center to help promote biodiversity in the community by placing two native bee houses on the arena's green roof. Aaron is a student at St. Paul Academy and Summit School, and Founder and COO of BEE Kind MN, a non-profit organization that aims to provide homes for the rapidly declining native bee populations.

"It is truly an awesome feeling to watch Nikolas achieve success motivated by his own vision and passion," explains Aaron. "He has put literal blood, sweat, and tears into his organization and we could not be more proud of his accomplishments. By including urban spaces like our green roof in his initiative, Nikolas has shown that we all can play a part in conserving our native bee populations."

Nikolas was recently honored by the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) by receiving the United States "2017 Pollinator Advocate Award." The award was bestowed at a special reception and ceremony held at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C. Nikolas Liepins is the first Minnesotan and youngest-ever recipient of this prestigious award.

Great job, Nikolas!

SYDNEY RAISES A GLASS TO DITCHING THE BOTTLE

ICC Sydney is saying goodbye to plastic water bottles! The Centre recently announced a new sustainability partnership with Sydney Water, which will help reduce the venue's environmental footprint by swapping out plastic water bottles for reusable glass pitchers topped off with tap water. The Centre has already eliminated over 520,000 plastic bottles in the first ten months, indirectly reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 245 metric tons, the equivalent of removing 58 cars off the road for a year.

"ICC Sydney is pursuing a number of progressive partnerships to create impactful sustainable models and by serving tap water, we're reducing our overall direct environmental impact," states Geoff Donaghy, ICC Sydney CEO.

"We've looked to Circular Economy concepts around the globe which provide waste solutions to keep products, components, and materials at their highest utility and value at all times. With over 480 billion plastic bottles produced globally in 2016, we know that less than half were recycled and only seven per cent were reused as drinking bottles."

To ensure the quality water was not compromised, ICC Sydney organized a blind taste test hosted by a panel of expert judges, including William Wilson, Beverage Operations and Cellar Manager at ICC Sydney. The panel was challenged to taste the difference between two well-known bottled waters and the tap water. The results? No one could taste the difference between the three water samples!



BRIZZY STUDENTS WAVING TO SAVE WILDLIFE!



For the second consecutive year, the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) teamed with the Tangalooma EcoMarines (TEM) to help develop Tangalooma EcoMarines amongst students in the local community.

Tangalooma EcoMarines is a non-profit, Brisbane-based organization committed to the protection of local marine wildlife. Participating schools appoint four students as "EcoMarines Ambassadors" to lead various environmental activities within their school and community. TEM provides each school with a kit full of activities, ideas, and resources to encourage and facilitate action by the students.

BCEC nominated six employees as TEM Ambassadors who promote TEM as a charity of choice. In addition, BCEC again hosted the TEM end-of-year celebration, dubbed "The Wave." During the celebration, students presented on issues like waste reduction and land conservation to a room full of sponsors, teachers, community organizations, and dignitaries. Presentations included photos, videos, speeches and one school even wrote a short book titled "Tony the Turtle and the Perilous Plastic Bag." Each school received an award on stage for all their efforts throughout the year.

"BCEC & TEM first partnered in June 2016 and since then it has been an amazing experience to work with such a fantastic program that is reaching far and wide throughout our schools in Queensland. We've previously connected due to our location in the Brisbane River, which meets with our precious Moreton Bay. Our main goal is to create a healthy environment for marine and wildlife within our community through collaborative community action," explains Sam Shearer, Building Services Administration & Environmental Support for BCEC.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL AMERICA RECYCLES DAY AT AEG

This November marked another successful America Recycles Day at AEG. Over 35 AEG venues and businesses nationwide celebrated America Recycles Day, a nationally-recognized event organized by Keep America Beautiful to promote recycling in the United States. AEG venues hosted a variety of events, from cell phone recycling drives to promoting awareness campaigns, to encourage guests, employees, and community members to make recycling a part of their lives.

Here are few of our favorite recap moments:



Have a story for an upcoming AEG 1EARTH newsletter?

Contact Sunny Sohrabian (ssohrabian@aegworldwide.com) for more information.