

# WHAT'S BUZZIN'



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## Introducing the Pied Piper Champion's Belt: A Tech Incentive Program!

The management team at North Office is excited to announce the launch of our new program to recognize and reward the hard work and dedication of our technicians!

Each month, we will select a "Tech of the Month" based on outstanding performance across key metrics, including:

- Unservice and cancellation
- Appearance, vehicle, and equipment maintenance
- Number of positive customer reviews or compliments
- Production and Efficiency
- Reduced customer complaints/callbacks
- Best tech sales and route ownership

The "Tech of the Month" will receive a \$25 gift card and the prestigious "Pied Piper Champ Belt" - a symbol of excellence within our service team!

The technician with the best monthly score will keep the belt until the next winner is crowned.

# Outwitting Mice at MSI

Written By: Jovanni Espinosa

In this industry, we accumulate a bunch of stories that I think we should take a moment to reflect back on from time to time. After 15 years in this industry, one story that stands out most for me is the time that I went on a long “mice hunt” at the Museum of Science and Industry. I remember Orlando calling me right before my transition back over to State St. as a Service Manager, telling me that these house mice were very intelligent. They were not falling for the traps, nor were they taking the bait. The way he explained it was almost unbelievable, because in my head he made it seem that these mice were feeding off the exhibit literature instead of actual food. When I finally transitioned over, Orlando, Matt Clauson and I started to implement an after hour mass trapping session. Sure enough, after several unsuccessful attempts I realized what Orlando said was true. I couldn’t believe how bait shy and trap shy these mice were. It wasn’t until we started seeing them run freely from exhibit to exhibits, that Matt decided to chase one of them resulting in a gruesome stomp. Which opened the idea to start doing more detective work, and allowing them to run out from their harborages so we can have a “stomping party.” Or whatever the techs decided to use as a weapon. If you sat back and watched us chase these mice, you probably would’ve had a good laugh. At first, we were bumping into each other, tripping over our own feet, as the mice ran off mouthing off something like, “Later Suckers!”



After a while, we started getting good. Sitting still, clocking them, and when the time was right the chase was on. We even started getting competitive, counting how many fell under our boots. Raising them up, and taking pictures. Some may call us heartless, but there are times when you have to get into a certain mindset to get results. These after hour sessions went on for a little over a year. I mean, if you have been to MSI you’d know how big it is. More so behind the scenes. We finally got the population down to zero. Stayed that way for some time, and since then I think one straggler here and there would make its way in. This is a memory that I hold as one of the top stories because with failure, we learned to become more knowledgeable.





# ANNIVERSARIES

October - December 2024

- Rob Lang (105) - 25 Years**
- Yvonne Govea (109) - 24 Years**
- Troy Lewis (103) - 22 Years**
- Darwyn Smith (102) - 18 Years**
- Orlando Hernandez (103) - 10 Years**
- Nestor Fuentes (101) - 9 Years**
- Edgar Gibson (103) - 9 Years**
- Troy Messner (401) - 7 Years**
- Jovanni Espinosa (101) - 7 Years**
- Greg Teig (201) - 6 Years**
- Dave Gussie (101) - 6 Years**

- Jason Martinez (201) - 5 Years**
- Brandon Runner (301) - 5 Years**
- Patrick Philbin (109) - 4 Years**
- Chris Miller (102) - 3 Years**
- Alex Meikel (201) - 2 Years**
- Dylan Klawuhn (201) - 2 Years**
- Jeremy Vazquez (101) - 2 Years**
- Samuel Opsal (302) - 1 Year**
- Patrick Ferguson (302) - 1 Year**
- Daniel Robinson (103) - 1 Year**
- Victor Benitez (103) - 1 Year**

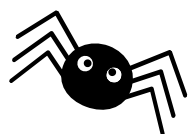


# NEW HIRES

October - December 2024

- Luis Rivera (103)**
- Malcolm Williams (103)**
- Cleo Griffin (201)**
- Derrick Sickler (201)**
- Shawn Rakestraw (302)**
- Thomas Wilson (401)**

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!



# HOLIDAY PARTY 2024!



# HOLIDAY PARTY 2024!



# KC HOLIDAY PARTY 2024!



MAVERICK (CCM)



MALAKAI (CCM)



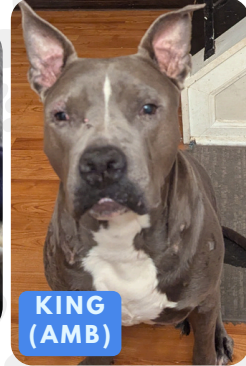
BUCKLEY (BPP)



OZZIE (LRC)



PELUCHE (JIQ)



KING (AMB)



DIXIE (BPP)



PIP (MMW)



PRINCESS (JIQ)



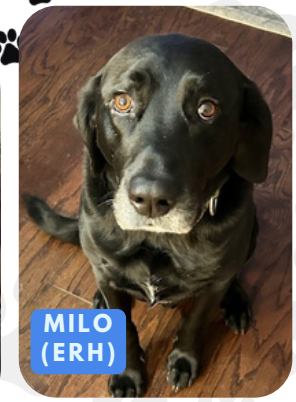
SHELBY (SAC)



BANDIT (LRC)



MARA (CCM)



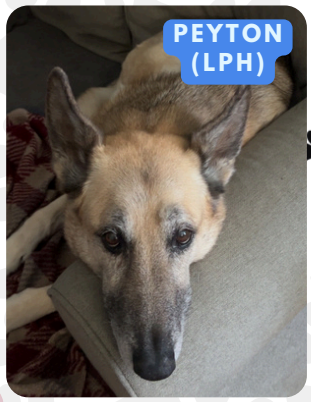
MILO (ERH)



MANDY (JSE)



WYATT (MSM)



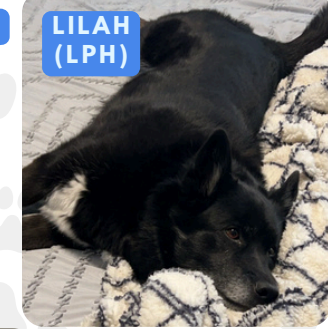
PEYTON (LPH)



LUCY (JIQ)



GEORGE (CAK)



LILAH (LPH)



BELLA (MMW)



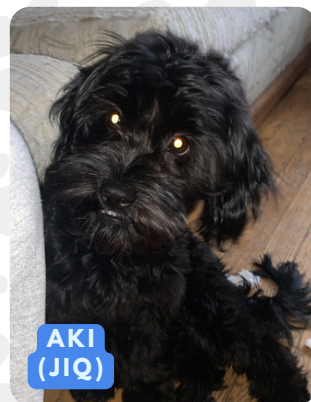
CLYDE (SAC)



JINXY (MMW)



SASSY (AMB)



AKI (JIQ)



KONKY (MSM)

# NEWS & UPDATES



**BOWEN CELUS**  
BORN 1/11/2025  
7LBS 9OZ 19IN

CONGRATS TO DEWAYNE STUBBS ON HIS PROMOTION TO SERVICE MANAGER FOR OFFICE 102!

CONGRATS TO DARWYN SMITH ON HIS PROMOTION TO OPERATIONS MANAGER FOR OFFICE 102!

CONGRATS TO JOSE SANCHEZ ON HIS PROMOTION TO FIELD TRAINER!

CONGRATS TO MARK JURADO ON HIS PROMOTION TO SERVICE MANAGER FOR OFFICE 103!

CONGRATS TO KELSEY CELUS ON THE NEWEST ADDITION TO HER FAMILY A BABY BOY BOWEN CELUS!

CONGRATS TO CHRIS MAGNUSON ON HIS PROMOTION TO TRAINING DIRECTOR!

## PRESIDENTS CORNER

### 2024 HIGHLIGHTS:

- \$197,000 IN TECH & ADMIN BONUSES
- \$85,500 IN JEF SCHOLARSHIPS
- NEW OFFICE IN INDIANAPOLIS
- 8 PROMOTIONS
- 10% GROWTH FROM 2023
- 375 ATTENDEES @ THE HOLIDAY PARTY
- 15 SELECT EVENTS

“THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR EFFORTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2024! LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025!” - JACK



# EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER



\*Drum roll please\*



**MONTY LEE**

I nominate Monty for Employee of the Quarter due to his exceptional performance in managing his route. He maintained a 0% unserved rate and demonstrates a deep understanding of his route and customer constraints. Monty proactively communicates changes, reschedules promptly, and ensures that no customers are left behind. When issues pop up, he always has a well-thought-out plan before reaching out to his service manager. Additionally, Monty has taken on a leadership role with a recurring after-hours service for the Kansas City Transportation Authority. When the contract changed to require a late-night service on Fridays, Monty was the first to volunteer, leading 2-3 technicians each month through the service ensuring we met our customer needs. His dedication, proactive problem-solving, and leadership make him a standout

candidate for Employee of the Quarter.

- Jason Martinez (Operations Manager Office 201)

★★★★★ CUSTOMER REVIEWS ★★★★★

Ricky did a very thorough job. He is friendly and professional, with a can-do attitude. I really appreciated his time and effort. Happy he will be servicing our building!



Nestor is the absolute best! Whenever there is an issue he jumps to it with eco friendly solutions. He goes above and beyond with his kindness, explanations and expertise. We are so grateful for him!!



This company provides amazing service! Chris did an amazing job with getting rid of the bed bugs I had.

We have 728 units with two towers and large common areas. We could not be happier with the service we receive from Luis Lozano at Smithereen. Luis does a great job at keeping me updated on what is needed for our building. He is very knowledgeable, professional and thorough with a great attitude. He's always on time and great with the residents. Luis is reliable and dependable and his customer service is top notch! It's nice to have the peace of mind, knowing everything is done correctly.

I'm so happy with Smithereen pest control company because David who comes to our home every time is the absolute best!

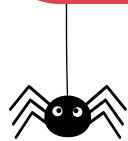
Nick Henry  
Lake Shore Schools

Excellent service!  
Nick was here bright and early. He was very friendly and kind. He worked really fast and got all areas treated in a timely manner. He asked questions and told me what to anticipate after the treatment. He made recommendations and suggestions on next steps. Really happy with the services he provided.

This company is fantastic! We had a dead squirrel in our attic and called for service - they were not sure they could get out to see us the same day (which is understandable) but said they would try. We got a call within 5 minutes and Mark was here within 10 minutes and took care of everything! Mark was so thorough and great to work with. I highly recommend this company for any wild life removal needs!!!

I had Victor come to my apartment. Truly really friendly, very handy, and knows what he's doing. Could not ask for better service!

James Shaffer is a true professional and very knowledgeable. He took the time to answer any questions and at the same time explained thoroughly what the issues may be and what he was planning on doing to prevent. I learned a lot and felt reassured that James had the issue under control.



# HR CORNER:

**Open Enrollment is March 1, 2025 - February 28, 2026**



## WHAT'S NEW & CHANGING IN 2025 - 2026?

Blue Cross Blue Shield will be our Medical, Dental, Vision, Life Insurance, Long/Short Term Disability, & Critical Illness/Accident carrier.

## WHAT IS OPEN ENROLLMENT?

Open enrollment is the one time each year when employees can make changes to their benefit elections. Once selections are made for the period of March 1st, 2025 - February 28th, 2026, they will be locked in for the next 12 months—unless a qualifying event occurs.

### Qualifying events include:

- Marriage or divorce
- Adoption or birth of a child
- Death of a covered dependent
- A spouse's loss of coverage
- A spouse's open enrollment period

If you experience a qualifying event, you must contact Cheryl within 30 days to make any necessary changes.

Otherwise, your elections will remain in place for the full year. Please take the time to carefully review your options and make the best decision for your benefit needs.





### **A TRIBUTE TO A SPECIAL COLLEAGUE & FRIEND**

**Our dear friend and colleague, Stephanie Wilson, passed away in October 2024 at the age of 41 after bravely battling cancer for three years. Stephanie became a member of the Smithereen team on January 2, 2019, and those of us who had the pleasure of knowing her feel fortunate to have had her in the Customer Service Center (CSC) for over five years. Throughout her time with us, Stephanie held the position of Bedbug Coordinator, a role she approached with great dedication, ensuring that every customer was properly addressed, scheduled, and informed about Smithereen's bedbug protocols.**

**Stephanie was the heart of our team, always bringing joy and laughter, and inspiring us to embrace life fully, regardless of the challenges we faced. She refused to let cancer diminish her spirit. As one of our most valued team members, she was always ready to lend a hand, even during the busiest times for bedbug service requests. Over the years, she became more than just a colleague; she became family.**

**The void left by her passing is deeply felt by all who had the privilege of knowing her. Despite her time with us being brief, she embodied life, love, laughter, honesty, and an unwavering belief in finding the good in every situation. Today, and every day, we honor her memory, celebrating the remarkable individual who played a unique and significant role in our lives.**

**We bid you farewell on your journey to eternity, Stephanie. You will forever remain in our hearts and memories. It was a true privilege to have shared in Stephanie's life. Though her time was short, it was filled with meaning, and we take comfort in knowing you are now an angel watching over us.**

**LOVE YOUR SMITHEREEN FAMILY**