

renew



by Kayla Schlechter

>> 'Fred' of the Month

Based on Mark Sanborn's best selling book, *The Fred Factor*, team members at POET Biorefining in Corning, Iowa, are taking a new approach to recognizing their peers. They are nominating the 'Fred's' of their facility and showing their appreciation for the extra effort.

An optimist by definition, the basis of Sanborn's book, the real Fred, was a mail carrier who went out of his way to make sure all his customers were taken care of. As a result, he found complete satisfaction in not only his job, but also in his life.

Greg Olsen, General Manager at POET Biorefining – Corning, thinks this is a concept to live by. Good

deeds are a frequent occurrence, and with the 'Fred' of the month program, the act of gratitude is not forgotten.

"Implementing the 'Fred' of the Month program has brought our team closer," Olsen says. "We're working together as a team and focusing on the positive actions of each other."

The program has been exceedingly favorable at the facility. The team members enjoy letting someone else know they appreciate the effort. And in return, are being rewarded for their good deeds.

Olsen adds, "And who doesn't like a little recognition for a job well done."

Come one, come all

Nearly two years ago, the historic school house in Hudson, S.D., most recently used as a community gathering center, met an unfortunate fate as flames shot through its core. Sixty-eight years of memories were soon lost amongst the smoke.

As the fire burned on April 21, 2007, fire departments from several communities joined the effort to control the fire. Nearby POET Biorefining provided a water source for departments to quickly fill their water trucks to prevent damage to other buildings in the area, but they were not able to save the school house.

"Alumni came from far and wide and many tears were shed," Barb Homandberg, Weighmaster at POET Biorefining - Hudson says.

The school house served a purpose for everyone in the community. After a consolidation with the Alcester school district in the mid-1980s, the Hudson school house lay vacant for academic purposes, but became

a common gathering place for community activities. Soon after the fire, it was realized that a replacement was needed.

"Many community functions were held [at the school house]," Homandberg says. "Family get togethers, bridal showers, alumni reunions, meetings of all types and the list goes on. The kids in the community lost their means of practicing in the gym." It had even previously held the business office for POET Biorefining – Hudson.

According to Homandberg, to raise money for the new community center, several fundraisers are being held and a pledge card has proved highly successful. The new facility is slated to break ground this spring. It will be spacious enough for wedding receptions, large parties and meetings. It will also include a gym, exercise room and kitchen.

Out of the ashes, this new center will provide the people of Hudson with new memories and again, the small community will have a place to gather.



Poetry As Pure as Ever Penned

Inspired by poet.com, the poem below was written about POET and submitted to the site.

by The Poet

I sat there awed ... my heart was light At what had just transpired in sight I didn't even notice eyes were wet That's when my "still small voice" inside Grew meek and mild ... and simply sighed Content in knowing we've a future yet	'Cause what we ask ourselves is this: Can we receive some blessed kiss Miraculously turning things around? And you have answered, "Yes, for sure!" If we are willing to endure And keep our visions on that higher ground
That what I dreamed so long ago Could really be ... could touch and grow Developing in other hearts a care 'Bout how we each do things we do An earth and us that's truly new Combining both our spirits 'cause we share	For that's how all things come to be A formula for destiny That works no matter who or what we are The visions held ... the actions took That write today, tomorrow's book In firm belief that we can get that far
How, somehow, we have known this truth It spoke to us when in our youth Creating hopes, and promises, and dreams And formulating visions which When joined with spirit's driving touch Can make this world much greater than it seems	Your film promotes this inner peace A knowledge that if we won't cease Our ev'ry goal can be accomplished then And more than goals ... an inner plan That someday touches ev'ry man And brings together words like "soon" and "when"
And all this from a video A little website's corp'rate show But poetry as pure as ever penned It's, oh, so true ... the things that count Are what help heart and mind surmount The nagging disbelief about The End	So, I congratulate your work And also what amazing quirk Made you choose "Poet" 'stead of just your name For it all fits "the poet's" mind Where freshness is the greatest find That forms a free, fantastic, future frame

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a simple gift of time

Under the guidance of a mentor, a child can succeed where they may not have thought possible. Kari Cook, Quality Manager at POET Biorefining – Alexandria, knows this first hand.

“Growing up, I was influenced by many people, including teachers,” Cook says. “I volunteer to give kids the same chance I had.”

Cook volunteers at the Alexandria-Monroe School District one night per week. She meets with the student one on one to assist with homework, help set goals, be a source of encouragement and be a positive role model for the student.

“A simple gift of time, effort and affection can go a long way,” Cook says. “I’m helping one child, and by doing so, maybe I can make an impact and help make that child’s life a little better.”



From foe to friend

When POET first proposed building an ethanol plant near North Manchester, Ind., hesitation ensued in the surrounding community. Neighbors of the proposed plant site were concerned that an increase in traffic and the noise from the plant might change their way of life.

One of the neighbors, Dave Cummings, now a Plant Technician at POET Biorefining – North Manchester, admits he had concerns.

“I am an old country boy,” he says. “My entire life I have lived surrounded by cornfields. If an ethanol plant was built across the street, it wouldn’t be the country anymore.”

While POET continued the effort to bring the facility into the area, they addressed issues such as the noise level – which at the edge of the plant, compared by decibel, is slightly louder than the hum of an operating refrigerator.

Mike Roth, Director of Site

Development for POET, also met one-on-one with each of the neighbors to address their concerns.

“We go to great efforts to meet with the neighbors most affected by the plant,”

Roth says. “We want to provide them with a better understanding of our facility while focusing on any questions or comments they have. We are always upfront and honest in all of our conversations.”

Cummings adds, “He assured me that [POET] would do everything they could to guarantee our happiness. And they’ve kept that promise.”

As the construction phase began, the economic crisis that our country is facing hit North Manchester. Cummings along

with others in the community lost their jobs through layoffs.

The 65 million gallon per year facility provided the community with the economic boost it needed. Of the 40 jobs available, 90 percent were hired locally - one of those being Cummings.

“It was the automation at the facility that really impressed me,” Cummings says. “It was just unreal.”

On September 11, 2008, the plant opened its doors for a grand opening celebration with Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels in attendance.

“Today is about the revitalization of a great community and county,” Governor Daniels said during his speech at the event. “It’s about our stepping forward into a new future.”

And Cummings is stepping toward that future as an ethanol supporter.

“We want to provide them with a better understanding of our facility while focusing on any questions or comments they have. We are always upfront and honest in all of our conversations.”

President Obama

“We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. ... All this we can do. And all this we will do,” said U.S. President Barack Obama, during his inauguration speech on January 20.

Safety First

POET Biorefining always puts teammate and visitor safety before all else.

- POET in Coon Rapids will host the Safety Task Force meeting for the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association.
- POET Biorefining – Alexandria sponsored an ethanol fire safety training workshop for local Madison County firefighters in participation with the Alexandria Fire Department.