



# Inside **IPI**

## *Spring Forward, or Fall Back*

No doubt there are days when you wish that PIMS would just disappear like the winter snow. Ahhh, the warm rays of spring sunshine will surely make this management fad melt away...

Alas, I'm sorry to report that the phrase "Continuous Improvement" does in fact contain the word "continuous". It is The Way We Work, both now and into the future.

But as we develop ourselves into better employees and better work teams, we will begin to see that there is less need to exhaust ourselves fighting the same fires over and over, less frustration with the same broken organization, and less friction with our co-workers due to the same problems that occur again and again. We will also find that we can make our workplace safer and more secure using tools such as 5S.

I grant you, PIMS is not easy, or even always pleasant. In a way, lean is like walking with a stone



in your shoe – you're never quite comfortable. But ask any champion athlete, accomplished musician, or top scientist – "did you get to where you are by being comfortable? Or did you have to stretch yourself?" We may not like it, but we all know the answer to that one.

Every month I'm lucky enough to have the opportunity of visiting with each of you, and I am very proud to see what you are accomplishing. We have lots of challenges of course, but we have lots of amazing people stretching themselves to take them on!

Thanks for walking with that stone in your shoe,

*Dan*

# Customer Spotlight

## Cambridge Memorial Library

At the beginning of February, the Cambridge Memorial Library opened its doors to the town's patrons in a brand new library space! IPI Sales Representative Tammy Nielsen had been working with the City of Cambridge staff to plan furniture for the new space for about six months.

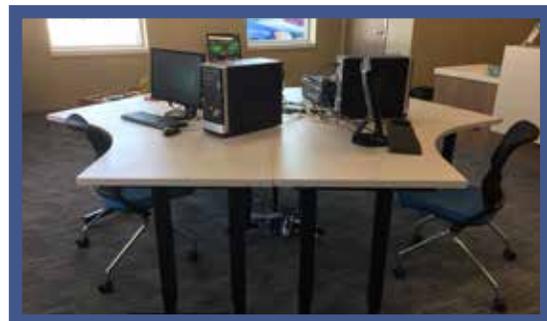
Together, Nielsen and the staff planned and picked pieces for the new library. The furniture update resulted in an inviting, open and cozy space for Cambridge residents to enjoy.

The project was a collaboration of furniture pieces from several IPI furniture shops. Metal Furniture in Anamosa supplied the bookcases and several tables for the library.

Mission lounge furniture was produced in the Anamosa Custom Wood shop. Other chairs were upholstered and assembled at the Panels & Seating shop in Mitchellville. The Des Moines Move & Install team installed most of the furniture.

IPI is currently building additional furnishings including more seating, tables and bookcases for the library. Nevertheless, Cambridge patrons are already welcome to enjoy the updated space.

IPI would like to thank Cambridge City Council Member Tricia Todd, City Clerk Deb Thompson, Public Works Director Dale Hennick and Former Mayor Scott DeYoung for supporting our offender work training programs.



# Shop Highlight

## A Day In The Life Of An Offender Employed At The IPI Showroom

The IPI Showroom houses IPI's sales, customer service and marketing staff along with five Mitchellville offenders. Each day, these women are transported to the showroom in Des Moines.

The offenders training in the IPI Showroom are near the end of their sentences, and they are housed in ICIW's minimum live out unit. Their jobs at IPI allow them to be away from the prison and engage with society in a supervised environment. This is an excellent step for these women in their reentry process.



***"Things that people in everyday life take for granted, we don't know anything about, so it's like we're constantly playing catchup," one offender said, "And I think you're given opportunities here to learn those things that you wouldn't anywhere else being locked up."***

Up until December 2016, the offenders at the IPI Showroom performed tasks such as cleaning and office assistant jobs. Since then, the Showroom has re-vamped its reentry efforts to provide as much value to these offenders as possible. Today you can find the offenders at the IPI Showroom answering phones, performing campaign calls and entering data on the computers.

***"I've learned everything from how to use a tool to how to put furniture together. I've learned a lot about my computer. Every day I learn something new," said an offender.***

When a customer calls the IPI Showroom, it is likely an offender answers and directs the call to the appropriate staff. Offenders are learning professionalism, patience, customer service, conflict resolution and overall communication skills that are extremely important in society jobs.

While performing calling campaigns, the women memorize scripts, reach out to current and potential customers, and record information in the call center software. They learn Windows 10 and Microsoft Office and were recently given limited email access to allow them to share files and correspond with the showroom staff. In January, they started calling on all orders placed with IPI to confirm delivery information and other details. Soon, they will start reaching out to customers after orders are delivered to ensure the products meet the customer's expectations.

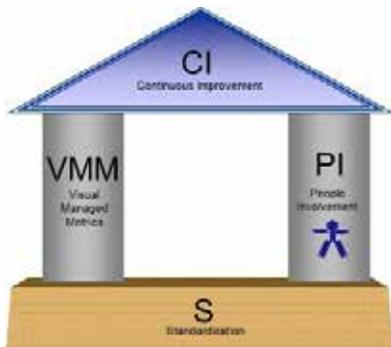
***Another offender said, "This has taught me that I can be a real person no matter where I am. As long as I know what I am doing and I put my full potential to what I am supposed to do."***

The women at the IPI Showroom are encouraged to put the skills they have learned on their resumes. Once hired by the Showroom, offenders are often employed until release. Their IPI jobs give them a time management structure similar to that of society jobs. Most importantly, the offenders at the IPI Showroom are developing confidence and self-worth.



# Lean Highlights

## The Journey... Remember WHY We Started



It's shocking to me that we are already into March of 2018! Time is just flying by this spring! I'm excited to report that more than ever, people are asking for help and starting to use the tools of PIMS to improve their processes. This will help their operations meet the definitions in the PIMS assessment tool that will progress their team to the yellow level of the PIMS assessment and then on to the orange level by the end of the year!

Whenever I work with the various groups across the state, I try to remind everyone WHY we are working so hard to achieve this goal of becoming an orange level operation by December 31, 2018. It isn't so much about the color of the belt. Every operation can be at a slightly different level depending on many factors. We are starting to understand that these variables not only help us move forward but also challenge us to sustain our efforts from sliding backwards. Things like new products, new people, new processes and new customer expectations can impact what level your operation is on the PIMS assessment tool. The important part of our progress is to remember WHY we spend the time, effort and resources we do on PIMS. Those reasons are:

### 1. To make everyone's job safer and more efficient!

Safety must always be in the front of our thinking as it is the most important part of our operations. Not only in how we think, but in our culture and what we do. Nobody wants to be put at risk or be injured so we must always focus on safety first. When jobs are safer and more efficient, we enjoy a much better work day and our operations will show it!

### 2. To teach and develop skills for everyone!

As I have shared with many groups across the state, lean and continuous improvement skills are highly sought after skills in anything you do. Manufacturing, health care, banking, insurance, and even state government jobs benefit from these skills. Not only are lean skills something to use in your work, but any activity or process you engage in can be made better by exercising these skills. At a higher level, the skills we are trying to teach and develop are key in creating teams of highly skilled problem solvers!

### 3. To become a better supplier for our customers!

The reality is, in today's world, there is always the threat of someone else doing what you do safer, better, faster or at a lower cost. Generally, it is because they have helped their teams develop and master the problem solving skills of lean and continuous improvement. We have demonstrated that if we build a solid foundation starting with the organizational tool of 5S, we can make jobs better. When we have good documented standard work, we can reduce defects, train new people quickly and we can eliminate a lot of barriers regarding getting our goods and services to our customers on time. Recently, we have started to introduce TPM (total productive maintenance), the third part of our strong foundation. TPM will help our processes become more predictable and consistent.

As we continue on our journey in 2018, I challenge you to keep these three reasons of WHY PIMS close in your minds. Continue to focus on using your daily huddles and team's metric board to identify challenges and to help the organization to meet IPI's overall goals.

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# Lean Highlights

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Looking at the PIMS assessment, the white level discusses INTRODUCTION to the tools. At the yellow level, the team becomes FAMILIAR with the tools. At orange, our teams have KNOWLEDGE of the tools and performance in their area.

For example, in my thinking an orange level team would ask...

- **Safety**...Has our team had a recordable injury? Has our location had any injuries? What were they and what did we do to correct the root cause? How is IPI doing in safety overall?
- **Quality**...What are our customer complaints? How are we addressing them?
- **Delivery**...Have we meet the promise date to the customer on all our orders? What are we doing to change the processes that caused us issues in the past?
- **Cost**... Is our shop sustainable? Are we making enough profit with the goods and services we sell to cover our costs?
- **Engagement**...What does our team need to do to meet the yellow level on the six categories of the PIMS assessment? What is next for our team to get to orange level?

I'm lucky that in my job I regularly get to visit all the different locations and operations across the state. I'm happy to share that I can see all the efforts that are being made to move each location, each team, and often each individual along to the next step in our PIMS journey!

I'm excited to have the PIMS assessment tool to help us measure each team's progress, because as we have learned, we cannot improve what we do not measure!

And finally, I am excited to have a very booked calendar as people are planning activities, events and training for their teams and to help them make changes to achieve their team, location and overall IPI goals not only in the engagement goal of being at orange level by December 31, 2018, but in all the categories!

Keep up the good work! And as always, let me know if and how I can help!

**Steve Forbes**  
*IPI training Specialist*



# Employee Highlights

## New Employees



### Liz Wilson

The IPI Showroom welcomes Liz Wilson to the team as a Graphic Design Intern. Liz will be helping keep our marketing materials such as the website and catalogs up-to-date. Liz will graduate this spring from DMACC with AAS Degree in Graphic Design. When she's not busy with classes and homework, Liz enjoys playing card games, swimming at Big Creek State Park, and watching movies.



### Brenda Ackerman

Brenda Ackerman joins the Mitchellville team as a State Industries Technician overseeing the Textiles Shop. Previously, Brenda was a senior lecturer at Iowa State University. For the past five years, Brenda and her classes have collaborated with IPI on several different textiles projects. Brenda holds a BS in Apparel Merchandising, Design and Production and a Masters in Textiles and Clothing. In her spare time, Brenda enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and working her home business producing Native American dance regalia. Welcome Brenda!

## Employee News



### Jared Ash

Congratulations to Jared Ash on his promotion to Senior Technician in the Sign Division, effective January 12. Good luck in your new position!

## Work Anniversaries

### March

- 3 – Mike Kuper (AN), 21 years
- 4 – Bryce Bartholomew (Farms), 3 years
- 24 – Ann Baughman (DM), 15 years
- 26 – Ann Noska (AN), 25 years

### April

- 15 – Dan Clark (DM), 7 years
- 17 – Laura Mendez (FM), 20 years
- 20 – Tara Dietiker (AN), 3 years
- 26 – Julie Olinger (DM), 2 years

### May

- 1 – Mark Hollenback (AN), 20 years
- 5 – John Lynch (Farms), 10 years
- 13 – Ruthanne Mosser (AN), 13 years
- 20 – Tammy Luchtenburg (AN), 30 years
- 21 – Jamey Klostermann (AN), 19 years
- 23 – Tammy Nielsen (DM), 1 year
- 24 – Robert Carlson (Farms), 33 years
- 24 – David Welshhons (DM), 1 year
- 30 – Sara Schnotala (DM), 1 year

## Retirements

On December 29, 2017, IPI's Anamosa location saw the retirement of two long-time employees.

Pat Fowler started his career in Corrections in 1986 as a Correctional Officer. He's worked several positions with IPI during his career, but ended in the Anamosa Sign Shop as a Senior Industries Technician.

Similarly, Tim Diesburg entered Corrections as Correctional Officer in 1982, transferring to IPI in 1988. Tim worked in several shops throughout his time at IPI including several years as the Supervisor of Metal Furniture, License Plates, Housekeeping & Laundry and Filters. In 2015, Tim became the Statewide Apprenticeship Coordinator.

Tim and Pat impacted the lives of countless offenders training in IPI's work programs at Anamosa during their combined 65 years of service. IPI cannot thank them enough for their dedication to the missions of the DOC and IPI during their tenure. We wish them both the best in their retirement.



Left to right: Pat Fowler, DOC Director Jerry Bartruff & Tim Diesburg.

# New Products

## New Classroom Ball Chairs

IPI is pleased to introduce a new line of ball chairs designed for schools that want to incorporate movement into their classrooms. Three styles are available in a variety of vibrant colors. These new products will be assembled in the Mitchellville Panels & Seating shop.



Zenergy Swivel Chair:  
\$189



Zenergy Ball Chair:  
\$139



Runtz Ball Chair:  
\$129

## Dry-Erase Board Cleaner & Restorer

Thanks to a new vendor relationship with Natural Soy Products LTD in Brooklyn, Iowa, IPI now offers a soy-based Dry-Erase Board Cleaner & Restorer. The spray and wipe formula has no toxic fumes and is biodegradable, making it a great choice in schools and libraries. The product sells for \$45/case of 12-22oz bottles.



## Expanded Dorm Line

Fort Madison Furniture worked with the sales team to expand the Iowa Line of dormitory chests and desks to offer more options to colleges and universities across Iowa. Now, three styles of drawer pulls are available on 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 drawer chests. A new study desks offers a smaller and less expensive desk option.



2-Drawer Chests (Stackable), shown with Wire Pulls



5-Drawer Chest, shown with Wood Inset Pulls



4-Drawer Chest, shown with Integrated Pulls



Study Desk