

DIRECT

Hit

The **SUCCESS** Spotlight



NAME TO A GOOD LOOKING FACE: Karla Hodges

Karla Hodges started at Midwest in November of 2011, and is currently a Customer Service Representative for our Digital Print division. She is always working hard, whether at her desk or out on the production floor, to make sure things stay organized and run as planned. Thank goodness we have Karla as part of the Midwest Family!

Tell us about your family.

I have three children (Bethany 36, Philip 27, and Hannah 20), a son-in-law (TJ), two grandchildren (Brooklyn 8, and Blake 3) and a fur grandbaby, Benny. They all currently reside in Ohio. I have 2 sisters and brothers-in-law, 5 nephews, 3 great-nephews, and 1 great-niece who all reside in Western New York.

Editor's Note: We interviewed Philip in November! Check out his issue on our website. This is a family affair!

What is your dream vacation?

My dream vacation would be to spend at least two weeks in England, Ireland and Scotland.

What is your favorite family memory?

Camping in the Adirondack Mountains! We went to the "North Pole" and saw Santa's village, rode a train, went swimming in Lake Placid, visited museums, cooked over an open fire in the fireplace (bears were roaming outside the cabin, so grilling was out of the question). Just a wonderful time with my family!

What is your favorite food?

Anything from Western New York! Roast Beef on a Weck roll with horseradish from Charlie the Butcher's. Pizza Logs, which are wonton wrappers filled with pizza toppings. Usually deep fried, but I use an air fryer. Chicken Wings (wings in Western New York from reputable eateries are always fresh, NEVER frozen) with Blue Cheese. Loganberry, Perry's Ice Cream, Flavor – White Lightening (dark chocolate ice cream with streaks of white peppermint fudge) (Perry's Ice Cream is now sold at Speedway locations across OH - woohoo!)

Editor's Note: Okay, we're hungry now...

Do you have any tips on keeping warm in the cold Ohio months?

Don't let it stop you! Keep moving and before you know it, spring will be here. The older I get, the more I HATE the cold, but you have to deal with it when living in Ohio.

What's your favorite movie or TV show?

My favorite movie is The Wizard of Oz and The Godfather. I can't pick just one! My favorite TV show is The Big Bang Theory (I still watch the reruns!)

Please take us through your journey here at Midwest.

I have worked in the Customer Service department since I started. The overall scope of my job is the same as when I started. The company has grown and my job has gotten much busier. At Customer Service, we spend most of our days away from our desks! We are often out on the production floor asking and answering questions, checking inventory levels, and assisting where needed.

Describe what a typical day is like for you at Midwest.

There isn't a typical day at Midwest, and that is a GOOD thing! I can go from order entry to fulfilling jobs. We all do whatever it takes to get the job done.

What is one recent success that you are proud of?

We have started processing and printing ballots in the past few years. That was probably the biggest success I have seen since I started. When it is ballot season, everyone pitches in and helps out where and when they can. If you aren't directly working on the current ballot job, you are covering for someone who is.

What changes have you seen in the company in your time here?

Throughout my time here, I have seen new equipment, new technology, increase in staffing, and the addition of CTRAC, our data department.

What parts of your job do you find challenging?

Keeping things organized and on track. There are always so many variables and if one of them is out of sync, it can cause the best made plans to go awry. I dislike disorganization and it is known to make me a little (just a little) grumpy!



Team Treats



BABY BLT BITES

It's no secret that BLT's are a favorite among many. Here is a recipe from All Recipes for baby BLT bites that are the perfect party side or Friday night treat!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1lb of bacon cooked and crumbled
- ½ cup of mayonnaise
- ¼ cup of green onions, chopped
- 24 cherry tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons of fresh chopped parsley

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place bacon in a large, deep skillet. Cook over medium high heat for 6 to 8 minutes, or until evenly brown. Once cooled, crumble and set aside.
2. In a bowl, stir together the mayonnaise, bacon, green onions, and parsley until well blended. Set aside.
3. Cut a small slice from the top of each tomato. Using a melon baller or small spoon, scoop out the inside of each tomato and discard. Fill each tomato with the bacon mixture, and refrigerate for 1 hour. Serve chilled.

Health & Safety Tip of the Month: EAT MORE CHOCOLATE!

The Marketing Department at Midwest Direct likes to keep “emergency” chocolate close by for those stressful moments or momentary sugar cravings. Did you know that chocolate actually has health benefits? We’re not talking about Reese’s Pieces or M&M’s, but dark chocolate. Since Valentine’s Day is this month and we could always use more reasons to eat chocolate, we have listed some facts about the health benefits that dark chocolate provides:

- **Dark chocolate with a high cocoa content is very nutritious.** It contains a decent amount of soluble fiber and is loaded with minerals.
- **Dark chocolate is a powerful source of antioxidants.** It contains organic compounds that are biologically active and function as antioxidants.
- **Dark chocolate may improve blood flow and lower blood pressure.** The bioactive compounds in cocoa may improve blood flow in the arteries and cause a small but statistically significant decrease in blood pressure.
- **Dark chocolate may reduce heart disease risk.** The compounds in dark chocolate appear to be highly protective against the oxidation of low-density lipoprotein. In the long term, this should cause much less cholesterol to lodge in the arteries, resulting in a lower risk of heart disease.
- **Dark chocolate is a great alternative to painkillers for migraines.** Cocoa contains stimulant substances like caffeine and theobromine that can help treat migraines sometimes better than painkillers.



Communication Tip:

WORDS YOU NEED TO ELIMINATE FROM YOUR PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

Being perceived as professional is important when communicating in or outside of the workplace, so you need to make sure you are aware of what words you are using. Here are six words you need to eliminate from your professional vocabulary:

- **Honestly.** Beginning a sentence this way can make your previous responses look dishonest.
- **Just.** This word detracts from your credibility and confidence and negates from the importance of your message.
- **Things.** This word is frankly unnecessary and can be replaced with more descriptive words. For example, instead of saying “there are many things that make me a great candidate for this job,” try saying “here are the skills that qualify me for this position.” Then list the specific skills.
- **Sorry.** It is better to stop apologizing for anything you are not really sorry about.
- **Hopefully.** Do not hope in the workplace - deliver.
- **Speech Disfluencies.** Everyone has these phrases or words that are used to fill up dead air and end sentences like um, ah, and right. However, they distract from the credibility of your message.

Print Puzzles:

INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODES

An Intelligent Mail barcode (or IMb) contains the barcode ID, service type and mailing class, the mailer ID, serial number and routing code. An IMb is required in order to participate in automation discounts. One of the benefits of mailing with an IMb is that you get answers to these questions:

- When the USPS first handled your mail piece
- When the delivery is expected
- How long the delivery took
- If the address was correct
- How many mailpieces are being returned due to wrong addresses

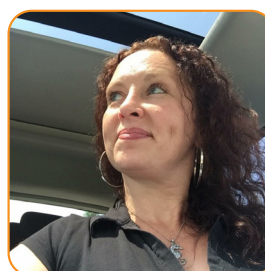
At Midwest Direct, our team of experts can help you answer all of these questions and more. Contact us today at 1-800-686-6666 to get started!

FUN FACTS:

SWEETHEARTS CANDY

Sweethearts conversation hearts are one of the most popular Valentine’s Day candies. Our all time favorite phrase on the candy hearts is “be true.” Here are some fun, and true, facts about the sweet treats:

- They date back in some form to 1866, not long after the Civil War ended, with the heart shape taking off in 1902.
- One of the first messages was “Please send a lock of your hair by return mail.”
- They were originally shaped like scallop shells, then like baseballs and horseshoes before the popular heart shape came to be.
- They were popular wedding treats before becoming a Valentine’s Day staple.
- The messages change on them every year.
- They are good to eat for up to five years.



Melinda's

MOTIVATIONAL MOMENT

Melinda's favorite quote for this month is: “The key to success is to focus on goals, not obstacles.”

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Inside This Edition...

Baby BLT Bites!

Chocolate!

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Did you know February is nonprofit month at Midwest Direct?

Read about it on mw-direct.com/blog

Tell us what you think. Email your comments and give us
your feedback on what you enjoy about Direct Hit!



Questions or comments?
Email us at marketing@mw-direct.com.