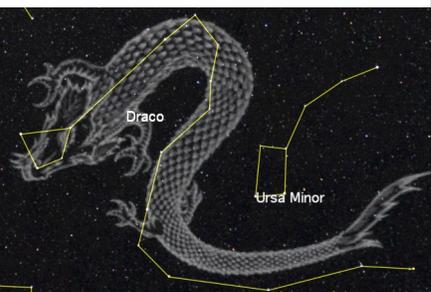


# The Constellation

A newsletter for Answering Service Employees; donated to the industry by TeamSNUG



## Draco

*The ancient story of the Dragon concerns the Golden Apples of the Hesperides and Heracles' Eleventh Labour.*

*The eleventh task of Heracles was to steal the golden apples from the apple tree which Gaia (Mother Earth) had given to Hera, Queen of the heavens.*

*Hera had chosen Ladon, a monstrous dragon with a hundred heads, to guard her precious tree. So Ladon would lay in the garden, coiling himself around the tree to protect it.*

*Heracles shot an arrow over the garden wall, killing Ladon instantly but to retrieve the apples Heracles needed Atlas' help, so he relieved Atlas of holding up the world while Atlas trotted off to retrieve the three golden apples.*

*At his return Atlas found he could go on living quite happily without the weight of the world on his shoulders and did not plan on taking the world back but Heracles begged Atlas to take the globe for a moment while he put some padding on his head. Atlas placed the apples on the ground and picked up the globe.*

*Heracles thanked him very much and walked away with the three apples.*

*As for Ladon, Hera felt miserable over its loss and placed it in the heavens, coiled around the north pole.*

**1st Quarter 2015**



*A Shining Star to Guide the Way...*

Today's Luminary is Ron Wendus -  
Edwards Answering Service

**Submitted By Gary Edwards, President of EASE**

**H**iring Ron Wendus has had a big impact on Edwards Answering Service Enterprises! Back in 2004 the guidance counselor at Ellington High School suggested that working at an answering service would be a great first job for Ron; I agreed. During the interview, Ron explained that he has a form of Muscular Dystrophy called SMA, which restricts the growth of core and outer muscles. At the time of his interview, stairs were somewhat a challenge for him, but that didn't stop him from climbing to the second floor where his interview would take place!

Office Manager, Tammy Cosper, was impressed by Ron's determination and demeanor during the interview. She felt that Ron was a good fit for our company and 10 years later Ron is still a vital staff member. Working after school and on weekends, Ron quickly gained in proficiencies as an operator as well as technical skills with regard to our Computer Assisted Telemessaging System (CATS).

As his answering service skills flourished, his mobility began to decrease. When he had difficulty standing up from the regular work station chairs, we purchased the famous "high chair" to make things a bit easier. While using the chair, he sat above the partitions; it was comical to see just Ron's head (one time wearing his Packers Cheesehead) in a row of partitions!

Ron continued to perform with excellence while attending Eastern Connecticut State University, resulting in his promotion to Supervisor in 2007. He regularly took the Sunday night position (except during football season, Go Green Bay!) I always felt the company was in good hands with Ron in charge.

In 2009, after graduating with a degree in Communications, he became our Director of Sales and Customer Service. He is an exceptional representative of our company and enjoys a high closing rate! He is quite charming, has good communication skills, understands what we can do as an answering service, and how we can meet a potential client's needs. Ron also reorganized and revamped our website; making it much more effective for sales.

He is technically astute, and after successfully completing the level I and II Telescan Technical Certification training in 2014, he was invited to join the TUNe Future Technology Committee. He has a vast knowledge of networking and computers; and both staff and clients depend on him for SMS and technology support. So we added "Company IT guy" to Ron's titles!

Today, Ron uses an electric wheelchair to get around and his van is equipped for wheelchair transportation. He travels to every sales and client meeting independently; and has driven to Telescan's St. Louis location three times for training on the system. Ron's disease is anything but an obstacle.

As an Operator, Supervisor, and Manager, Ron has always been well respected by his peers for his knowledge and fairness. Whether it's sales, computers or customer service, he always delivers more than expected. Edwards is very fortunate to have Ron Wendus!



# The Award of Excellence - Not the Award of Pretty Good!

**T**here are many criteria within each call that are measured for the Award of Excellence. And hundreds of calls are measured over the course of the evaluation period. Just over 3% of those calls are judged as perfect calls with scores of 100%. Are we picky? You bet we are. This is the Award of EXCELLENCE we are talking about. Excellence is never easy to achieve, but it is possible.

It is estimated that there are about 2700 telephone answering services in the US. About 700 of those owners take part in industry organizations and many of us belong to several organizations. We have two lead organizations, ATSI in the United States and CAM-X in Canada; both are international organizations dedicated to educating and promoting the answering service industry. Both of these organizations sponsor an Award of Excellence Program for the agents of member companies.

If you are reading this newsletter it is likely that the company you work for is enrolled in ATSI or CAM-X. The Association of TeleServices International (ATSI) is the organization that distributes the Constellation to its members. If the owner of your company is a member of ATSI or CAM-X they can also take part in the Award of Excellence Program (AoE).

Not everyone in these organizations takes part in the AoE, but it is a wonderful program and a good way to see how we “measure up” against our peers. It is also a fantastic way to help everyone in our company understand what makes us so much better than the average service. By earning the AoE we show the world that our agents have scored a minimum of 80% on the calls that the judges have randomly placed to our company. The test company places 10 calls to our service; these calls are recorded and judged by two different judges (who must agree). Those services that earn 80% or higher are presented the Award of Excellence. There is also recognition for being in the Top Ten and for having the Top Call.

As we become more involved in earning higher scores many of our services have begun to do in-house monitoring of calls taken from our call loggers. Using the same criteria as the awards judges, we help our agents critique their calls and learn how to improve their call taking abilities. There are times when an agent might say that the judges are “too picky”, but that just isn’t true. We want our customers to experience the very best service possible and when we earn the Award of Excellence we know we are providing them with very high standards. Most of our companies score in the very high 80’s to mid-90’s on every call. Only 3% of our agents score 100% on a call, but remember we are striving for excellence! Excellence is a rare commodity but SO worth striving for when you have the joy of reaching the summit.

**ONLY 3%  
GET 100%!**

# Healthy...

**J**ust Add One – Topping that is. Whether it is baked potato, steak or ice cream – we add toppings! And we add calories.

Just add one topping, not several, to truly enjoy the taste. It will save on the calories and might help with weight loss.



# Wealthy...

**I**t's all about the interest. If you have credit cards on which you carry a balance, add up the interest charged for each card every month. Keep a record so that you know if you are paying more or less interest.

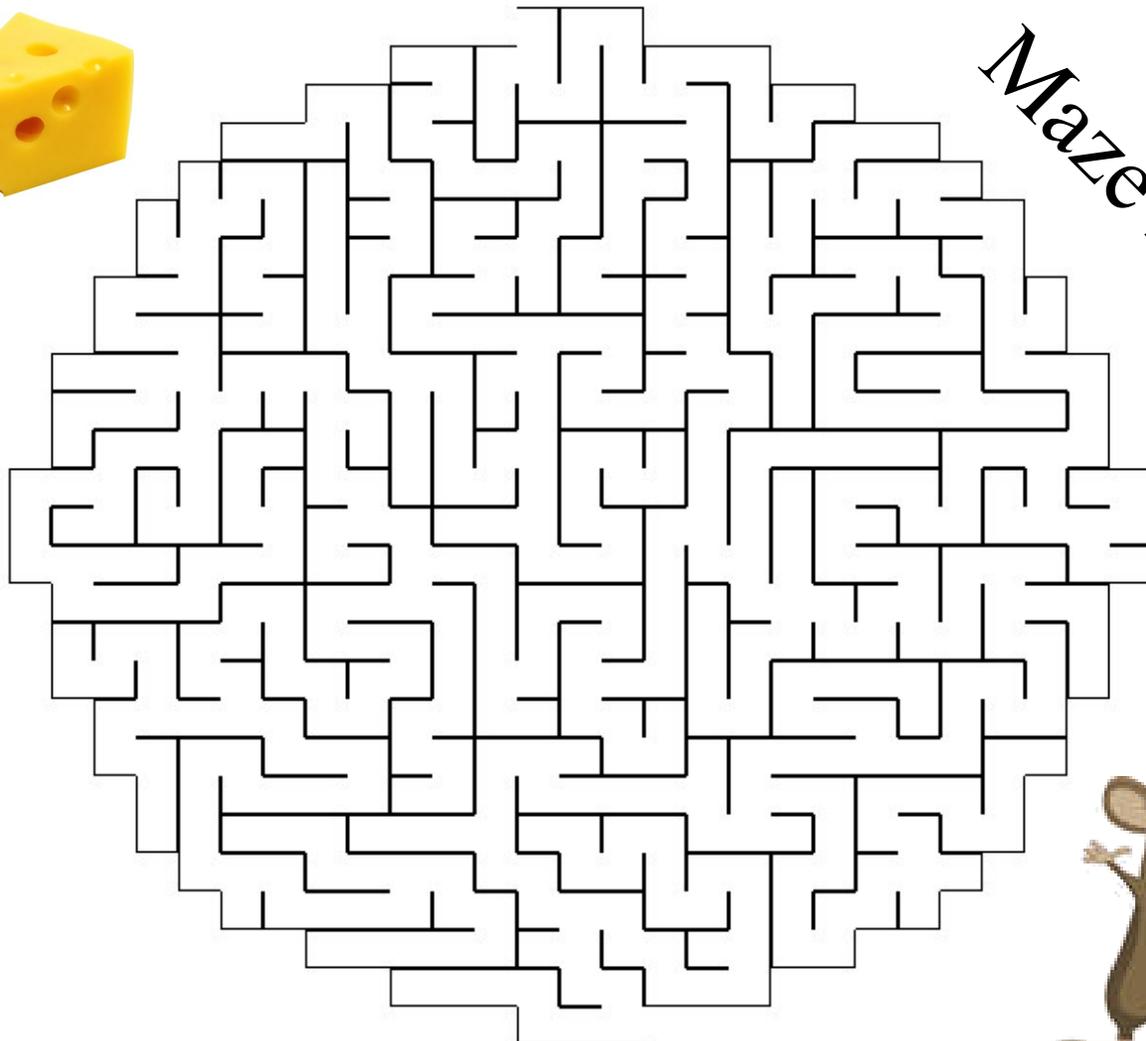
The cost of “buying” money can be very high; make sure you are aware of how much you add to your total indebtedness every month.

# ...and Wise

**D**on't drive and text goes without saying. But don't walk and text either – thousands of people are seriously injured every year because they walk into something when they are not paying attention.



ARE YOU CERTIFIED? ASK ABOUT ATSI AGENT—SUPERVISOR—SITE CERTIFICATION TODAY!



Maze Fun!



# Anger is Destructive

**T**here is an old, old proverb that says,

*“He is a fool who cannot be angry;  
but he is a wise man who will not.”*

Anger is the most useless, destructive emotion of all. It consumes our energy, controls our mind and destroys our relationships. We have trouble concentrating on anything else when we are angry. It steals our happiness, it threatens our health, it blurs our judgment - anger can consume us.

When you allow someone’s words or actions to make you angry you have given them control of your mind. Being angry at someone else means they are pulling your strings, you are simply reacting to their tugs, they have become the puppet master and you have become the puppet. Resolve not to give in to feelings of anger, make it your goal to remain positive, to remain in control.

You cannot control the actions of others but you can control your reaction. In truth other people can’t “make” you angry; only you can do that by allowing others to have that power over you. Don’t let anyone have that kind of control over you.

Most of us can identify several conditions that will cause us to become angry. Take the time to isolate those thoughts and conditions that you know will push your hot buttons. If you know you will be angry when someone treats you with disrespect, envision it happening and think of a response that will help you control your thoughts in a positive way. Plan that response beforehand. Practice it. Whether you plan to walk away, or change the subject, or determine a calm reply, try to remember how you are going to react in a different manner rather than becoming angry.

Use every bit of your self-control to overcome the anger you feel. Take yourself out of the situation; occupy your mind with other thoughts. Distract yourself, think about other things. Read, listen to music, watch television, get involved in a game. Do something, do anything, to concentrate on the distraction rather than that which made you angry.

Resist the urge to “vent” to someone else. Anger can be contagious; there is no reason to upset someone else, someone you probably like and care for, in the attempt to release your anger. It won’t achieve your desired affect and will cause distress for them. You are also more likely to increase your own anger in the telling than you are to lessen it.

When you are calmer, ask yourself why you became so enraged by the words or action. Is this something you can discuss with the person who was a part of the incident? Is it something that you can have some control over? Was the incident intentional? Can you avoid it in the future? The more you understand the situation the better you can react the next time something similar happens.

Whatever you do, learn to forgive. Only when you forgive someone can you stop the anger you direct at them. The anger that is hurting you.

