

Working at home is a privilege

The chief executive officer of Yahoo stirred up a bit of controversy this week after laying down the law about working from home.

Marissa Meyer was appointed CEO in July and has the challenging assignment of making sure Yahoo doesn't go the way of Magellan or Infoseek or AltaVista. (For younger readers these were search engines in prehistoric Internet times that have gone the way of the pterodactyl.)

The boss of Yahoo pulled the plug on "working from home" or telecommuting arrangements. By June all Yahoo employees who work from home need to get to the office.

This notion that Yahoo employees should be required to go to the office has been criticized as "crusty," "antiquated," "janked up." Work-at-home proponents say flexibility promotes a more stress-free life, that it's good for families, the environment and pajama sales! Sorry, that last thing is a stereotype typically associated with working at home. You also can wear yoga pants.

The internal memo, leaked to a Web site called All Things D, explained that being in the same place with your co-workers promotes collaboration, innovation and showering! Sorry that last thing is a stereotype associated with working at home. Going into the office is no guarantee that everyone has showered.

First off, where was I when they were handing out work-at-home jobs? I've got skills, I'm internally

motivated, I'm busy with family crap, and I have a wireless modem. Pick ME.

Before I go any further, I understand that working at home is a thing and that some people do it well. I tip my hat to them. I could never find a company willing to let me do the same. I am jealous.

That said. Shut the heck up. So many creative, hard-working and qualified people have no work at all. Say what you will about CEOs but Ms. Meyer's plan to put the best minds in one place to give Yahoo a fighting chance seems pretty smart to me. No one will be working at Yahoo from home or otherwise if she fails.

This one time I had a baby, the next day my husband went back to work. The next week I did. Why, because the luxury of working at home wasn't an option and make no mistake, it's a luxury. One that, right now, Yahoo can't afford.

And, yes, I wrote this column from home, I have on yoga pants and I'm supervising one of my kid's attempts at making lasagna. I wrote it after an eight-hour day at the office, the one with the health benefits. Am I asking for pity? No, I'm saying suck it up Yahoo work-at-homers — you have a job.

Finally just because one company institutes a moratorium doesn't signal the end of working at home. Technology means that working at home is an increasingly more viable option. Working at home isn't going away.

As the controversy boiled up, Yahoo issued this statement: "We don't discuss internal matters. This isn't a broad industry view on working from home — this is about what is right for Yahoo!, right now."

Right on.



Rebecca Regnier

Making connections

Traveling box links families of children with rare disease

BY PAULA WETHINGTON
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In a few days, an Ohio family will get a traveling care package from Monroe.

It will include a little girl's play dress, a bright green tie for a boy, cards, photos and other messages meant for families whose children have been diagnosed with a spontaneous genetic disorder called cyclin-dependent kinase-like 5, which is usually abbreviated as CDKL5.

Last Friday, the package was delivered to Jakob Cooper, 9, a student at Monroe County Intermediate School District, and his family: parents Robert and Tammy Cooper, brother Jayce, 7, and sisters Sarah, 19, and Stefanie, 23.

"I got kind of emotional when I opened the box," Mrs. Cooper said Tuesday.

The project, which started in summer, 2011, is called Little Green Dress, and is coordinated by International Foundation for CDKL5 Research. Each family is invited to enclose a picture of their daughter wearing the green dress and accompanying wreath or their son wearing the green tie, sign a traveling journal, pick up a gift and supply a small gift to the next child such as a stuffed animal.

The Coopers are the 21st family on the list. The box so far has been in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Illinois and Minnesota. The next family lives in Ohio, another that is on the list lives in Japan.

Mrs. Cooper said one of the things that amazed her, upon inspection of the pictures and stories, was "how different all



— Evening News photo by KIM BRENT

Tamara Cooper and her son, Jakob Cooper, 9, are the most recent recipients of a package containing photographs and journal entries from families around the world with children affected by CDKL5, a rare disease that was only discovered early in the 21st century.

these kids are!"

Jakob was about a month old when his mother started to become concerned about his situation.

"He was my third child, so we knew something was wrong," she said.

Over time, they noticed his conditions include uncontrolled seizures and severe visual impairment. It took a year to get the first diagnosis: mitochondrial disease complex IV deficiency.

But that was rewritten after Mrs. Cooper realized her son was not following the expected path of children with that condition.

About a year and a half

RARE DISEASE DAY

Today is the Sixth International Rare Disease Day, with organizations in more than 60 countries campaigning to bring attention to conditions that affect only a few people.

The goal is to encourage and support coordination and cooperation among research teams whose expertise may be scattered across multiple countries.

For more information, visit www.cdkl5.com and www.rarediseaseday.org.

condition was not picked up on at first is that it is extremely rare. Even a year ago, there were only about 200 children known to have it. Shortly after Mrs. Cooper posted on her Facebook page that was the diagnosis, she got a message from a mom who is involved with the foundation and started to make friends online with others in the situation.

The condition also is more likely to happen in girls than in boys, although Mrs. Cooper said boys who are affected have far more serious disabilities.

As she looked through the pictures of children whose families are participating in the Little Green Dress project, she pointed out that the boys were more likely to be seated in wheelchairs than the girls.

And she felt connections to those families, regardless of where they live.

"Thank you for letting us be part of this terrific journey of this beautiful green dress," she wrote in the traveling journal. "Hugs and kisses, Tammy Cooper."

STATE LEGISLATURE

Lawmaker proposes lead testing for children

LANSING (AP) — One Michigan lawmaker wants young children in the state to be screened for lead poisoning.

Democratic Rep. Thomas Stallworth of Detroit introduced a bill Wednesday that would require primary health-care professionals to screen all 1- to 2-year-old patients for lead poisoning.

If a child meets certain criteria, he or she would also be given a blood lead diagnostic test.

Parents who object because of religious beliefs can opt out.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention says lead-based paint and dust that has been contaminated with lead are the primary sources of lead poisoning among children.

It says children are particularly susceptible to poisoning because they are more likely to touch objects contaminated with lead and then put their hands in their mouths.

march THE MONTH AHEAD

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 BOOK ONE COMMUNITY OF MONROE COUNTY	MARCH 18 One Book, One Community kickoff, 6-8 p.m., Monroee County Community College	1 BOOK ONE COMMUNITY OF MONROE COUNTY Featured Films	MARCH 20 One Book, One Community film, "Crash" 6 p.m., Ellis Library	MARCH 25 One Book, One Community film, "Monsoon Wedding" 6 p.m., Bedford Branch Library	1 Home and Lifestyle Show, Fairgrounds, March 1-3	MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM HOME LIFESTYLE SHOW
3 Collage Concert, 2:30 and 7:30 p.m., MCCC Travel with Friends: Spain, Bedford Branch Library	4 Grand Mondays: Kevin Burke, 6:30 p.m., Carleton Branch Library	5 Michigan Chillers author Johnathan Rand, 6:30 p.m., Monroe High School auditorium Women in Ragtime, 7 p.m., Bedford Branch Library	6 MICHIKAN	8 The Tartan Terrors, 7:30 p.m., MCCC Neil Diamond, Barbra Streisand tribute dinner show, 5:30 p.m., Monroe Center for Healthy Aging	9 Maple Syrup Day, 1-5 p.m., Navarre-Anderson Trading Post Maple Sugaring Through the Ages, 10 a.m., Oakwoods Metropark	
10 Daylight saving time begins The Makem & Spain Brothers, 3 p.m., RRCA	11 Grand Mondays: Samantha Bartley, 6:30 p.m., Carleton Branch Library	12 "For the Love of Water," 6:30 p.m., Summerfield-Petersburg Branch Library	13 Open Mike Night, 7-9 p.m., Lighthouse Coffee Co., Milan	14 "For the Love of Water," 6:30 p.m., Bedford Branch Library "When a Rose Is Not a Rose," 7 p.m., Ellis Library	15 "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," presented by Monroe Community Players, MCCC, March 15-17	16 Easter egg hunt, 10:30 a.m., Dorsch Memorial Branch Library "Elizabeth Bacon Custer," 1 p.m., Monroe County Historical Museum Bedford Trade Fair, Bedford High School, March 16-17
17 St. Patrick's Day Travel with Friends: Canadian Rockies, 2 p.m., Bedford Branch Library	18 Grand Mondays: Sabrina Braunlich, 6:30 p.m., Carleton Branch Library "For the Love of Water," 6:30 p.m., Ida Branch Library	19 One Book, One Community lecture, 7 p.m., MCCC	20 One Book, One Community Women Storytellers History Fair, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., MCCC MB&T home buying seminar, 6 p.m., Mortgage Center	21 One Book, One Community brown bag discussion, 12:30 p.m., MCCC World Poetry Day reading, 6 p.m., Bedford Branch Library	22 "Peter Pan" ballet, RRCA, March 22-24 "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," presented by Monroe Community Players, MCCC, March 22-24	23 Easter egg scramble, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., Willow Metropark Easter egg hunt, 11 a.m., Munson Park
24 Palm Sunday	25 National Quilting Day open sew, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Bedford Branch Library Grand Mondays: Carol Sieb, 6:30 p.m., Carleton Branch Library	26 One Book, One Community Cultural Night, 6:30-8 p.m., Meadow Montessori School	27 "One Amazing Thing" author Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, 7 p.m., MCCC MB&T home buying seminar, 6 p.m., MB&T Lambertville office	28 Last Supper re-enactment, 7 p.m., River of Life Community Church One Book, One Community brown-bag discussion, noon, MCCC Whitman Center	29 Good Friday	30 Easter egg hunt, 11 a.m., Monroe Center for Healthy Aging Garage sale and flea market, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Fairgrounds
31 Easter						

The Month Ahead runs each month and details a variety of events, announcements and news items for the area. For complete calendar listings with further details about these and other events, see the Community page every day in The Evening News.