



**GOV. PARSON: PLAN IN PLACE FOR MISSOURI TO BE  
MODEL STATE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

By Dennis Dillon (Lafayette Board Member)

A plan has been put in place to make Missouri a model employer for individuals with disabilities, Gov. Mike Parson announced during his visit to Paraquod on Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>.

“Making Missouri a model employer is vital to ensuring we are offering individuals living with disabilities options to pursue competitive employment in the work force,” Parson told a crowd gathered in Paraquod’s Bloom Café. “I’m confident our focus on making Missouri a model employer will make our state a place where individuals living with disabilities are able to achieve their full, God-given potential.”

Parson was introduced by Mark Stringer, director of the Missouri Department of Mental Health, who said that there’s a significant gap between the number of Missourians with disabilities who *want* to be employed and those who *are* employed. Stringer said research has shown that whether an individual has a disability or not, employment “leads to a longer lifespan” and such individuals are “less likely to develop cardiovascular or mental health conditions.”

“There’s no reason that people who want to work can’t work,” Stringer said.

Asked how sheltered workshops like Lafayette Industries fit into the plan to make Missouri a model employer for individuals with disabilities, Parson had this response:

“I think that’s all part of the plan of how you do that, sheltered workshops or whatever it might be. The bottom line is we’re trying to get people into the work force. So whatever that job is — there’s thousands of those jobs out there people can do — we’ve just got to get them matched up together.”

Missouri recently was one of 11 states selected to participate in the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program. Missouri will initiate a series of small working groups which will focus on analyzing, developing and putting into place policy recommendations related to the implementation of Missouri as a model employer for individuals with disabilities. The groups will be comprised of representatives from several areas, including the governor’s office, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Mental Health (Divisions of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities) and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce.

Parson noted that Missouri now ranks fourth in the country in the interactional and development disability services it provides. However, it appears that if the state’s 6,000 individuals employed by sheltered workshops had been included in the numbers, Missouri likely would have been ranked number one.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Libera".

Rob Libera  
CEO & Executive Director  
rlibera@lafayetteindustries.com

**Mission:** The mission of Lafayette Industries is to provide employment opportunities to persons with developmental disabilities and to persons with other disabilities who are 18 years or older.

**Goals:** ♦ To provide a meaningful and productive work experience to persons who are disabled ♦ To maintain a safe and pleasant work environment ♦ To teach and to train persons with disabilities to acquire better work habits ♦ To enhance self-worth and dignity through employment ♦ To provide high-quality business service through packaging, light assembly and commercial mailings ♦ To operate the center in a professional, fiscally responsible manner ♦ To provide fair wages and good benefits

**NORTH'S 2.24.2019 FAMILY MEETING (L@L!)**  
By Fran Jenkins (Lafayette Board Member & Proud Sister)

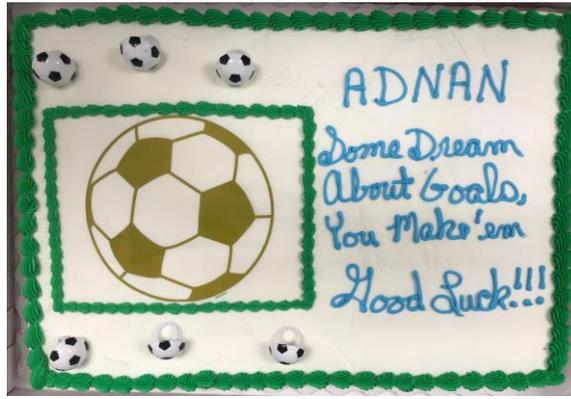


About 50 family members, guardians and certified employees attended the Life at Lafayette (L@L!) Industries North event on Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>. Everyone enjoyed refreshments while Rob Libera, CEO & Executive Director and Stacey Elster, Director of Programs, presented an update on Lafayette's current state of affairs, attendance and transportation.

The meeting covered the state of Lafayette, attendance at North and transportation issues that were discussed at length. A key focus was on attendance and how important consistent attendance is to maintaining and improving the skill levels of the individual, as well as ensuring that we are meeting our customer's deadlines.

Parents and guardians were made aware of the Late Fee policy and had an opportunity to ask questions. The policy can be found in the Lafayette Industries *Policy and Procedures Manual for Certified Employees*, page 13. The policy addresses the importance of timely pick up of employees. A copy of the finalized manual will be given to all certified workers. Parents in attendance were asked to complete and return a mandatory transportation plan for their Lafayette worker. It was also announced that a new Lafayette website was in the works that will eventually provide the ability to update forms on line. Attendees were asked to provide feedback by providing written comments, and that will be shared once those are all assembled.

The meeting proved to be a great vehicle for family members, guardians and care-takers to network and socialize! Many thanks to the Board's Worker's Advocacy committee that organized the event. The committee is chaired by Steve Albers who introduced the session, and in addition to myself, committee members in attendance were Kirsten Dietrich (and thanks to Doug Dietrich for helping out as well!), Jim Sparks and Bob Fahey. Thank you for your efforts!



When Becky asked if I could write a brief article for the newsletter about Adnan Ramic and his time at Lafayette, my first thought was, “How do I begin? And how do I sum up Adnan’s time at Lafayette in a “brief article”? Well, here I go.

From the beginning I was very excited to be working with a young person who wanted to do something good with his career. He always saw his position with Lafayette as a great career move. He came to us with so much knowledge, but he was always very eager to learn and accomplish new things. From the time Adnan was hired until his last day there were many changes in processes, computer systems and leadership that he worked through heroically. He was always ready for any change or problem that was presented to him. And always with a smile! He was always working to make sure payroll was completed correctly, bills were paid in a timely manner and this was just a small drop in the bucket of the responsibilities that he handled daily!

Adnan will be greatly missed at Lafayette, but I know that he will be taking with him the skills he learned and achieved at Lafayette. He will be an asset wherever he goes.

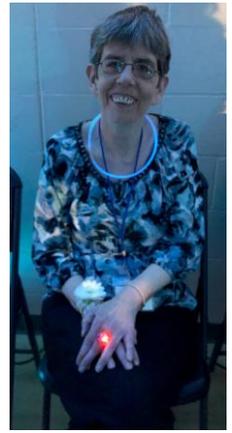
As I told Adnan on his last day, “We always welcome volunteers here at Lafayette!” Do not be a stranger!

Thank you, Adnan, for your service to Lafayette!



**CHESTERFIELD LIONS ANNUAL VISIT**

Every March they came to visit us at Lafayette, their contribution in their hands. Donald Barr, who was the one that used to bring the checks in every year, hadn’t done so in recent years. He was the one this year that brought it on behalf of the Chesterfield Lions. This organization is quiet, effective and service-oriented. For at least 17 years now, this way was the way that they chose to present their contribution to us. We wouldn’t know ahead of time that they were coming, but they would come and go without much fanfare. We appreciate their continuing support over the years. Thank you, Chesterfield Lions, for being Lafayette supporters. Your humanity and your humility are well-documented.



**TIM TEBOW NIGHT TO SHINE**

By Ann Kelly (Proud Mother)

Pictures by Ann Kelly (Proud Mother) and Caroline Owens (Proud Mother)

The 2019 Tim Tebow Night to Shine Prom was held on February 8<sup>th</sup> at various locations around the St. Louis area. And no prom would be complete without Lafayette employees being in attendance. I caught up with a few of them as they enjoyed prom photos, walking the red carpet, limo rides, dinner, karaoke, dancing and getting crowned Kings and Queens for the night. As you can see in the pictures, everyone was having a great time. They are already looking forward to another fabulous prom next year.



**CAUGHT BEING SAFE?!** By Stacey Elster (Director of Programs, Lafayette Industries)

*Caught Being Safe* is Lafayette’s positive reinforcement program designed to increase safety awareness and behaviors for all employees. The program was established in February of 2017. During the last four months alone, 327 employees were recognized for making Lafayette a safer workplace.

**How does “Caught Being Safe” work?** Staff and employees are trained to look for opportunities to positively reinforce one another for working safely and maintaining a safe work environment. Stickers are worn as badges of honor for being “Caught”, and pictures are displayed in the lunchroom for the duration of that month. Each morning we have a quick safety training referred to as our Safety Second. Anyone who was *Caught Being Safe* the previous day is congratulated. The Safety Second is a great way to remind everyone of the many ways we remain safe at work.

The program continues to prove that awareness and recognition are powerful motivators.

**REQUEST FOR LAFAYETTE NORTH EMPLOYEES ONLY:** Lafayette North wants their records to be as complete as possible. To help them out, they are asking all North employees to turn in a list of their current medications to Jerry Phillips *by Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>*. We appreciate everyone’s cooperation.

**2019 LAFAYETTE NIGHT AT THE BALLGAME**



Lafayette Night at the Ballgame will be earlier this year than in previous years. The game is scheduled for Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. Game time will kick off at 7:15 p.m., and the Cardinals will be playing the Angels. While we won’t be getting a give-away this year, we will get to see our beloved Albert Pujols. Arguably one of the most beloved Cardinals ever to play, some of us haven’t seen him in person since his departure from the Redbirds. ***We won’t begin selling the tickets until the first part of April.*** When you see the order blank in the newsletter, then that’s your signal that we will start taking your ticket requests

and your money. We will be sitting in much the same location as last year. Our seats will be in Section 228, Section 229 and about 25 seats in Section 231. We have 12 wheelchair spots available this year in two different sections. All together we have 400 seats – first come, first served. Costs for the tickets will be as in years past. It’ll still be \$5 / each for the first four tickets and full price of \$15 /each after that. More information will be forthcoming in the next few months.



**ANATOMY OF A STAFFER’S ANNIVERSARY**

Congratulations on your 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Lafayette, Dan. Everybody who is on staff at Lafayette gets recognized, usually by Rob. He makes an announcement, they come forward, shake his hand and receive applause as recognition from the Workshop as someone who’s celebrating a special day. This time it was extra-special and personal. Dan Libera, Rob’s son, is celebrating his

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the workshop. He is one of the hardest working men that you’ll ever meet. We want to let him know that we appreciate him for all he does for our employees and staff. As you can see, employment longevity at Lafayette is not uncommon. People come and stay longer times on their jobs at Lafayette because there is something special about this place that draws you in to staying for longer than you originally meant to. Thanks to all of our employees and staff that make this place a special one to work.

## KAREN VAN BERKEL – FIRST-TIME GRANDMOTHER

Karen Van Berkel got a chance to be by her daughter's side as Megan had her first baby, and Karen became a first-time grandmother. Devak Patel was born on February 20, 2019. He weighed in at 7 lbs., 12 ozs., and was 20 inches long. His parents are seen in the first picture – Megan and Prayash Patel. They look tired, but very proud. Picture #3 is our own Karen, showing the first signs of being a grandparent – she looks tired, but that baby already has her wrapped around his little fingers at not even a week old. Congratulations to everyone!



## SAFETY TIP FOR MARCH 2019

By Tom Heitert (Safety Guru)



**Pallets** are a part of life at Lafayette, or most production plants for that matter. They are indispensable to moving product around the production floor, onto trucks and into the stores we all frequent.

They bring with them their own unique problems that can cause numerous safety concerns.

The first is from tripping and falling. This is the #1 injury in sheltered workshops in all of Missouri. We mark the empty pallets clearly on our shop floor.

The wood itself can be problematic due to splintering, large pointed pieces coming loose, nails that are protruding and even the chemical properties of a previous use.

Many of these concerns are taken care of by the employees through the “Caught Being Safe” program.

It has been and will continue to be a focus of our safety plan.

**SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT!**

- **MORE LATER!**

## TRIVIA NIGHT WINNER!

By Marilyn Wombacher (Proud Mother)



Joe Wombacher's team took first place at Lafayette's third annual Trivia Night this past Groundhog's Day. Joe asked his family to join his team, Matt & Emma Wombacher, Judy Erslon, Dan & Dianna Kempf, Jessica Kempf and mom, Marilyn. A good time and good food was enjoyed by all.



**WEST MARCH ART CLASS – THURSDAY, MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup> – 3:00-4:00 P.M.**

Don't forget to register for the March Art Class.

Volunteers will give personal instruction for each project. Everyone attending the Art Class will have the chance to participate in each Art Station, including Poetry. You may attend one Art Class or both classes. **Please turn in your registration to Becky by March 11<sup>th</sup>.**

Questions: Call or email Alesia Roccia at [aroccia@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:aroccia@lafayetteindustries.com) or (636) 227-5666, x1118

Name of participant \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name / phone number of person picking up Art Student at 4:00 p.m.:

\_\_\_\_\_



**9TH ANNUAL MOUSE RACES**

**Saturday March 23, 2019**

*\$25/person ~ \$20/employee* includes snacks, soda, beer & wine



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone : \_\_\_\_\_ *Tables of 8 available*

*Tickets* \$25 x \_\_\_\_ (person) + \$20 x \_\_\_\_ (employee) = \$ \_\_\_\_ (A)

*Sponsor a mouse for* \$25 each \$25 x \_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_ (B)

Mouse Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Sponsor a race for* \$100 each race \$100 x \_\_\_\_ race = \$ \_\_\_\_ (C)

Sponsor Name \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PAYMENT (A + B+ C) \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Pay by check and mail to:**  
Lafayette Industries Attn: *Mouse*  
179 Gaywood Dr.  
Manchester, MO 63021

OR

**Pay by credit card online at:**  
[www.lafayetteindustries.com](http://www.lafayetteindustries.com)  
Click on *Donate Now* and  
use *Comments* section for  
your reservation information

*Questions: Call Alesia Roccia at 636.227.5666, ext. 1118 or [aroccia@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:aroccia@lafayetteindustries.com)*



**LAFAYETTE INDUSTRIES  
PRESENTS**

***9th Annual Mouse Races***

**Saturday, March 23**

**Doors Open 6:30pm**

**First Race 7:00pm**

**Trinity Lutheran Church  
14088 Clayton Road**

***\$25/person ~ \$20/Lafayette employee***

***Sponsor a Mouse for \$25***

***Sponsor a Race for \$100***



***Ticket price includes snacks, soda, beer and wine.  
You may bring your own food. Tables of 8 available.***

***This event sells out quickly!***

***Contact Alesia Roccia  
636.227.5666, ext. 1118  
aroccia@lafayetteindustries.com***

***www.lafayetteindustries.com***

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR MARCH FOLKS!**

**NORTH**

Timothy	Cagle	1
Jason	Doss	3
Debra	Coleman	8
Anton	Hicks	9
Stefanie	Taylor	9
Leona	Shadwick	11
Stephen	Bindbeutel	19
Michael	Terry	19
Eric	Klein	22
Travis	Carter	24
Jason	Boedicker	26
Donna	Love	28
Charlie	Weaver	29

**WEST**

Timothy	Black	7
Travis	Nichols	7
Dalton	Brown	12
Linda	Hantak	12
Courtney	Guenther	14
Christopher	Brock	15
Marla	Dehahn	16
Mark	Becker	19
Peter	Johnston	20
Petra	Bauer	22
Brian	Bradshaw	23
Adnan	Ramic	24
Dennis	Palmisano	25
Meri	Rohan	25
Jennifer	Schweiss	29
Ben	Kaufmann	30



No matter how old you get, there's usually someone around who's older.  
Thank goodness!



**LAFAYETTE WEST -**

**CAUGHT BEING SAFE -**

**JANUARY 2019**

**Immediate Left – Left to right:** Curtis Sharpe, Lola Boyer, Carli Binek, Shad Burnett and Rob Libera.

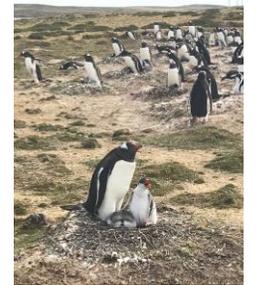


**THE TAX MAN COMETH!**

**Immediate Left – Left to right:** Chuck and Bonnie Udell (Chuck is our former Board president) have some tax returns prepared for their family. Peter LaSalle (farthest from camera) and Dick Kallemeier (closest to camera) are finishing up a busy day of preparing and checking taxes. Thank you, guys, for the valuable service that you provide to lots of Lafayette folk, including the Editor (Nickname: The One Who Is Mathematically Challenged).

**ANNIE WALTERS' CRUISE AROUND SOUTH AMERICA** By Trish Walters (Proud Mother)

Annie Walters, her parents and friends took a 30 day cruise from Los Angeles to Buenos Aires, Argentine, going around Cape Horn in South America. Then they visited Iguazu Falls, and stayed a few days in Buenos Aires. Her favorite part was the train and boat rides. She also loved walking around the penguins on the Falkland Islands. Iguazu Falls were amazing!



**Editorial comment:** The Walters had a fabulous cruise and a great time, and we thank them for sharing their journey with all of us. A reminder that if you have had or are going to have a great trip, we'd love to hear about it. It gives us a little glimpse into the world both inside of and outside of the United States, and we hope that you enjoy reading about the different places that Lafayette folks travel.

**MARCH 2019**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5 Mardi Gras	6 Ash Wednesday	7	8	9 7-10p – St. Clare of Assisi School Cafeteria – K of C Dance
10 Daylight Savings Time Begins	11 PAY DAY	12	13	14	15 North Free Lunch 6:30-9:00p – K of C Dance – at Valley Industries	16
17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 6:30p – Board Meeting First Day of Spring	21 West Free Lunch	22	23 Mouse Races at Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road, Chesterfield, 63017 6:30p – Doors open 7:00p – First Mouse Race
24	25 PAY DAY	26	27	28	29	30
31						