

## LT. GOVERNOR MIKE KEHOE VISITS LAFAYETTE



Celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness month (NDEAM), it was a record-breaking day at Lafayette, as Missouri Lieutenant Governor Mike Kehoe handed out Lafayette's 100<sup>th</sup> gold watch celebrating 25 years of employment! Missouri State Representative Cyndi Buchheit-Courtway delivered State of Missouri Resolutions recognizing all six Lafayette employees that celebrated 25 years at Lafayette this year. Also there to congratulate our workers was Manchester Mayor Mike Clement. Thank you all for recognizing our employees and their hard work and dedication.

**Pictured above are:** the Lt. Governor, Rep. Cyndi Buchheit—Courtway, Manchester Mayor Mike Clement, and Lafayette Board President Bill Florent with 4 of our 25-year Gold Watch recipients; CEO & Exec. Dir. Rob Libera showing off our clean-room assembly area; Jerry Ring from Lafayette North showing the challenge coin he received from Lt. Gov. Kehoe; and the bottom row, photos from the tour of the workshop at Lafayette West. The Lt. Governor gave each of Lafayette's gold watch recipients a special challenge coin from his office, "challenging" them to work another 25 years!

Thank you Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe for your continuous and constant support of Missouri Sheltered Workshops!



Rob Libera  
 CEO & Executive Director  
[rlibera@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto: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

## **SHE'S GETTING WAIGAND WHEELS READY TO ROLL AGAIN**

By Dennis Dillon (Proud Board Member)

Inside a windowless office at Lafayette Industries West, Sam Waigand has been planning the relaunch of Waigand Wheels, a non-profit delivery business that will provide employment and volunteer opportunities, as well as community access, for individuals with developmental disabilities.

On a wall behind Sam's desk is Waigand Wheels Past: a clocklike arrangement of eight pictures featuring Sam's brother, Lance, making deliveries in the company's Gem car, a street-legal, electric vehicle that tops out at 35 mph. On the wall across from Sam is Waigand Wheels Future: a whiteboard with notes that include strategic planning, potential business partners and marketing ideas.

"My goal is to break down what we had before, rebuild it, and make it sustainable," says Sam.

The idea for Waigand Wheels was hatched in 2018 during a somber time for the Waigand (pronounced: WAY-gen) family: Sam; her father, Rich; her mother, Theresa; and her brother, Nathan. Lance, who was born with Trisomy 4Q, a chromosomal abnormality that results in developmental delays both physically and mentally, went into the hospital for surgery to help correct his scoliosis. While there, he developed a lung infection and had to be put into a medically induced coma.

While doctors discussed the best- and worst-case scenarios for Lance, the Waigands brainstormed ideas for how they could help Lance now that he had graduated from high school. They knew what Lance loved most was sitting in a car, whether it was traveling down the street or sitting in the driveway, engine on or engine off. They also knew, from his time volunteering at the Kirkwood Farmers Market, that Lance loved being out in the community and engaging with people.

They started Waigand Wheels later that that year, and by the end of 2019, Lance and more than 60 other volunteers (a.k.a. "Wagoneers") were delivering produce, holiday gifts and other items to businesses, schools, and homes in Kirkwood and surrounding communities.

Then came Covid-19. Safety measures had to be implemented to protect the health of the volunteers. Sam and Lance's grandparents became sick and moved in with the Waigand family. Everyone went into a serious quarantine period and Waigand Wheels stalled.

"It was pretty much shut down," Sam says.

Now, Waigand Wheels is back - due primarily to Sam, 25, who has been working since August on the re-launch, taking advantage of how Lafayette can help and partner with Waigand Wheels.

"I recognized very early that by coming here I would have access to a huge well of resources," Sam says.

Sam's first step was to look into various potential business partners and marketing strategies. Now, she is starting to hire volunteers to deliver the goods. Although she gets help from both her father, a CPA for SFW Partners, LLC and the treasurer on the Lafayette Board of Directors, and her mother, who helped with deliveries at the start, Sam is the driving force behind the Waigand Wheels revival.

For openers, Waigand Wheels will partner with Pioneer Bakery in Kirkwood, which will make up box lunches for delivery. As Waigand Wheels expands operations, it will incorporate deliveries from other local, mission-driven businesses. Sam wants to focus the Waigand Wheels on community involvement. One of her goals is to hold regular social events such as boxed lunch-and-bingo for Aberdeen Heights, a retirement facility in Kirkwood.

**WAIGAND WHEELS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

## **WAIGAND WHEEL CONTINUED:**

Sam is an alumna of Kirkwood High School, where she ran cross country and was a competitive swimmer. In 2020, she earned a B.J. degree in convergence journalism from the University Of Missouri School Of Journalism. There, she took courses in writing, broadcasting, photography and videography, and worked on the school newspaper, at a radio station and in other communication venues.

“I spent a lot of time breaking out of a very introverted shell,” she says. “I was a very shy person, so taking those courses and doing all that hands-on work helped me a lot.”

Sam’s avocations include photography (“a huge interest”) and swimming. She loves being around water of any kind.

“It’s my happy place,” she says. “It’s always where I’m most at peace.”

These days, Sam finds it challenging to find time to swim. That’s because she is deep into the new iteration of Waigand Wheels, trying to make it a happy place for Lance and other “Wagoneers.”



## **HEFFERNAN INSURANCE BROKERS**

**Immediate left – left to right:** Michelle Dimmick, Audrey Toppmeyer, Linda Huber, Christine Flynn, Diane Gibbs, Vicky James, Brian Billhart

Heffernan Insurance provided our Free Lunch at West today. We dined on turkey breast on whole wheat bread and American cheese. We also got chips, a dill pickle, an apple and a mint. We were so glad to have all the extra help. Not only did they carry most of the load, but they helped out anyone who asked for help. They interacted with our folks, and were all-around great helpers. A great big thank you to you from the Lafayette staff.

Hope you enjoyed meeting our employees as much as

they enjoyed meeting you.

## **FILING TAXES WILL BE OFFERED AGAIN IN 2023**



Dick Kallemeier, who was the one that began the free tax filing program for Lafayette families and staff years ago, moved up to Iowa earlier this year to be closer to his family there. Many asked if the tax program would be offered again in 2023, or would we have to return to paying for our tax preparation with a commercial tax group like H&R Block? As those of us who know, there was another man who helped Dick out with preparing and filing the taxes online. Peter LaSalle was as hard-working as Dick was, and he brings an in-depth working knowledge of taxes to the task. He will be one of our preparers, along with his partner, Ellen, and both have been

doing taxes in a number of venues for years. Anyone who brings their taxes in to be done will not notice a difference except in personnel. The short answer to any who asks: Are we offering free tax filing? Yes, we are. Peter has been at Lafayette doing taxes for several years now, and Ellen is a person who has experience doing taxes for a number of years for folks. Peter and Ellen: Thank you for taking on this task and helping out our folks who need your expertise in filing their taxes.



## SIX PEOPLE AT WEST AND NORTH RECEIVE THEIR 25 YEAR GOLD WATCHES

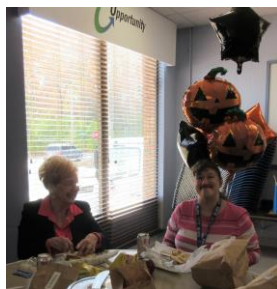
The gold watches themselves were originally handed out at the Employees Family Picnic back in September. Five of the six gold watch recipients were present at the picnic, and their picture is below. Thank you to everyone who made this day a magnificent one. Everyone had a great time!!



**Immediate left:** Jerry Ring, Mikhail Chikin, Pam Gardner, Shelly Albers, Craig Marek.

Suzie Covington was unable to make it to the picnic to get her gold watch. However, on October 27<sup>th</sup> we had Free Lunch, and that's when we celebrated her receiving her watch. Her mother came down to be part of the ceremonies

and to support her daughter. Congratulations to all of our 25 year gold watch recipients!!



## **BE WELL WORK WELL**

By Stacey Elster (Proud Lafayette Staff)

Lafayette's fitness program, Be Well Work Well, is about to wrap up an eight-week boot camp. The program is funded by a one-time grant from the Productive Living Board. Lafayette collaborates with TASK in Fenton to provide this Life Enhancement program to eligible employees. The group of twelve leaves for TASK directly after work using a valued transportation provider also funded by the grant. Look for future enrollment opportunities in 2023!



**Above – left to right:** Joyce Klipsch, Angela Gentile and Austin Combs

## **THE CITY OF MANCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS ANNOUNCEMENT**



We just got word yesterday that the City of Manchester is going to resurface Gaywood Drive from Manchester Road to Howard George Road starting Tuesday, November 8th through Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. Gaywood will not be shut down, but it will be restricted to one lane. We will post a sign on our door, send out an alert the week of and distribute flyers to parents who pick up. Please also note that since we are restricted to one lane only on Gaywood, we need to leave the entrances and exits to the parking lots of both Lafayette and Academy clear, not stop in the road and exercise patience.





## **DEBBIE WALKER RETIRES**

**Far left:** Debbie gets signed card from her team and friends.

**Middle:** Debbie's staff and Lafayette's staff gather round to wish Debbie farewell.

**Immediate left:** Debbie poses with Lafayette staff member to say goodbye to everyone.

## **JESSE BROOKS RETURNS FROM TRIP TO MICHIGAN**

By Jennifer Brook (Proud Mother)



First three pictures were taken on the beach of Lake Michigan.

The picture taken of Jesse in a green raincoat was taken on the Betsie River watching the salmon run upstream, and jumping over the dam.

## **WEST – CAUGHT BEING RESPECTFUL AND CAUGHT BEING SAFE – OCTOBER 2022**



## **RESPECTFUL**

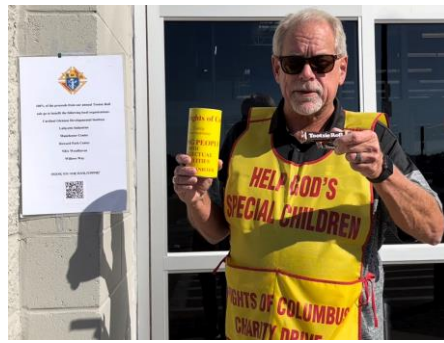
Far left: Ann Morrissey, Carl Berger

Immediate left: Shad Burnett

## **SAFE**

Immediate right: Petra Bauer, Mary Klevorn, Carl Berger

## **ST. JOSEPH KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MARIAN COUNCIL #9522 AND ST. CLEMENT KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #13604 FINISH UP TOOTSIE ROLL DRIVES**



**Far left:** Grace Quinn collects for St. Clement at Sam's Club in Des Peres.

**Middle:** Rob Libera collects for St. Joseph at Walmart in Manchester.

**Immediate left:** Alli Hanners donates to the Tootsie Roll Drive (Thanks, All!).

**Below:** Becky S. collects for St. Clement at Schnucks in Des Peres.

Our two most faithful supporters – St. Joseph in Manchester and St. Clement in Des Peres – recently finished their Tootsie Roll drives. The numbers of Lafayette people that were helping out with collecting during the two hour shifts were down again from last year. But spirits were still up as folks went out to give people their best smile, and hopefully lure them with a tasty Tootsie Roll to take home. These two busy Councils then turn around and designate the money for several agencies. They have a long-standing tradition with Lafayette, and they always think of us. Thanks, Grace and Rob, for being among those who lent the Knights a helping hand, who then in turn lend us a helping hand. Thanks, Alli, for donating to help out. St. Joseph and St. Clement have been with us for many, many years and we don't take them for granted, ever. Thank you to our two great Knights of Columbus groups!!



# FELICE CUORES PARTY TIME



***A dance party for special needs adults age 18 and older***

Masks are optional

When:

Saturday November 12, 2022

7PM to 10PM

Where:

St. Clare of Assisi School Cafeteria

15642 Clayton Road

Ellisville, MO 63011

Cost:

\$5 fee includes a professional DJ/snacks/soda & water/door prizes.

**Questions or want to know more, call Bill at 636-537-9801 or 636-226-6822**

**PICTURE FROM LAFAYETTE'S HALLOWEEN PARTY.10.21.2022** By JoAnn Bagley (Proud Mother)



Ian Bagley and Angela Gentile had a wonderful time at the West Halloween party.

Ian went as a Punk Rocker and Angela went as a Hippie Girl!!

**Editorial note:** If you took pictures of our employees attending Lafayette's Halloween Party on October 21<sup>st</sup>, please be sure and send them to [bstillwell@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:bstillwell@lafayetteindustries.com) . We'd like to see what everyone looked like all dressed up in their scariest outfits! Thanks to Ian for showing me his pictures and to JoAnn for sending them.



## WEST ART CLASS

Wednesday, November 9, 2022 – 3:00-4:00p



Register today for November! ***You have to register each month for each 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 S. by Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>.**

Questions: Call or email Vicky James at [vjames@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:vjames@lafayetteindustries.com) 636.227.5666, ext. 1118

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

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

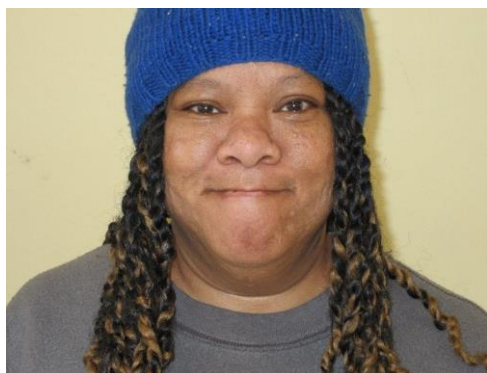
Preferred Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name / phone number of person picking up art student at 4:00p:



### CECE BROWN READY FOR HALLOWEEN

**Immediate left:** CeCe Brown of Lafayette North was ready to go to her Halloween party.



### NORTH – CAUGHT BEING RESPECTFUL – OCTOBER 2022

**Far left:** Thile Bryant

**Immediate left:** Morgan Williams

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR NOVEMBER FOLKS!**



### **NORTH**

Cynthia	Behan	2
De'Marco	Bean	6
Kadie	Gallo	9
Jerry	Ring	12
Michael	Warbington	12
Pamera	Burton	14
Justin	Simmons	14
Samuel	Sullivan	14
Gary	Arnold	17
Marchelle	James	19
Chris	Wiseman	19
Gary	Killiebrew	23
Anton	Jones	24
Alice	Gibson	26

### **WEST**

William "Sam"	Williams	1	Claire	Gardiner	16
Carmen	Dockett	2	Dan	Libera	16
Kate	Gregor	2	Michelle	Watson	16
Todd	Thornberry	2	Jon	Munoz	17
Suzanne	Myers	6	Jason	Rice	17
Mary Ellen	Witte	8	Andrew	Rossel	17
Cynthia	Jackson	10	Joe	Wombacher	18
Timothy	O'Leary	10	William	Taylor	20
Andrew	Furrer	11	Hazel	Owen	21
Logan	Weber	11	Tod	Lomax	22
James	Esther	12	Michelle	Albers	26
Timothy	Gregerson	12	Kristin	Kallansrud	29
Yvonne "Cherie"	Maloney	12	Twana	Blue	30
George	Schicker	13	Loretta	Jackson	30
Ed	Zigrye	13			



## **SAFETY THOUGHTS FOR NOVEMBER 2022**

by Tom Heitert (The Safety Guru)

### **IS IT SAFE TO SHOWER DURING A THUNDERSTORM?**

A thunderclap happens when lightning strikes, heating the air around the bolt to as high as 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit, 5 times hotter than the surface of the sun. Immediately after the flash, the air cools and contracts quickly. This rapid expansion and contraction makes the sound wave we know as thunder.

Needless to say my friends, lightning deserves our respect. It has killed in many ways, the direct hit almost always being fatal. Blunt trauma, skin lesions, burns, and brain, muscle and eye injuries have happened.

Stating the obvious, most lightning injuries take place outdoors during summer months. 105 of the people struck by lightning die each year, with Texas and Florida leading the way. If you are caught outside, do not lie on the ground. Electric currents can travel along the ground for up to 100 Feet. Get indoors.

Which leads to our original question. Is it safe to shower during a thunderstorm. The fact is electric can travel through plumbing. Nowadays PVC pipe makes that unlikely. I used to worry about getting caught in there and the power going out. Now I must be concerned with the power coming in! Perhaps the shower can wait.

Finally, stay off the balconies and porches, steer clear of the doors and windows, and don't lean up against concrete walls. Hey folks, that couch looks that much more inviting.

All the information for this article came from the CDC and the National Weather Service.

**SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT** - **MORE LATER!**



**Editorial Note:** We are kicking off two columns this month and next month. One is Waigand Wheels, and the other is STEPUP. My hope is that they'll use these columns, if they choose, to let you know about what's happening and what's coming. We thank them in advance.

## Stronger Together

Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup> was a celebration of community; the friends, family and neighbors that have supported Waigand Wheels and its mission. Gathered around lively music, a bounce house, food, washers and cornhole, the Waigand Wheels team said thank you to everyone who has helped make our dream a reality and celebrated the beginning of a new chapter for our small organization. The Waigand Wheels picnic was the first of many community social events to come. Waigand Wheels announced the launch of our new pilot program in mid-November.



Over the past few months, we have spent hours creating business plans, strategy and budgets – but the Waigand Wheels picnic was the our first glimpse of what we aspire to for Waigand Wheels: a place where people of all abilities feels a sense of inclusion, purpose, and joy.



*A few of Lances teachers and aids in attendance gather with him for a photo after the graduation ceremony.*

In 2018, Lance Waigand graduated from Kirkwood High School. Every teacher, aid, friend, neighbor, and family member that had been a part of Lance's life tightly gathered in a conference room for a private graduation ceremony after his 3 month stay in the ICU. The roar of cheers that erupted when his principal handed him a diploma filled me with the greatest sense of gratitude. Lance spent his entire life participating in the community, not in the closed off walls of specialized programs. Looking at all of the elated faces in that room, I quickly realized how many people Lance has touched over the years.

When my family and I started Waigand Wheels later that year, our goal was to fill a need in our community. We wanted to provide individuals with disabilities a place where they could feel a sense of purpose and pride in their work, regardless of their degree of independence. Moreover, we wanted to provide an opportunity where these remarkable people could engage with and make a difference in their community. The impact Lance has on every person he meets is a

**Continued on next page**



## Waigand Wheels continued:

testament to how people with special needs are not incapable. But rather, are so uniquely gifted at making our community a better and brighter place.



By the end of 2019, Waigand Wheels provided over 60 “Wagoneers” with purposeful work in their community. Unfortunately, Waigand Wheels was not immune to the COVID-19 pandemic. We largely reduced deliveries for two years before we had the opportunity to start operations again.

In August of 2022, I signed on to be the newest executive director for Waigand Wheels. My first order of business was to partner with Lafayette Industries to benefit from their wealth of resources and experience. I have been committed to deconstructing our previous business model and re-building a more sustainable and encompassing program.

Waigand Wheels is now dedicated to supporting mission driven businesses, making it *more convenient than ever to create change in your community*. This begins with Pioneer Bakery, an amazing business dedicated to helping individuals with disabilities in partnership with Lafayette Industries STEPUP Program. We will begin taking orders for boxed lunch for event catering. As we expand operations, Waigand Wheels plans to incorporate deliveries for other local, mission driven businesses and expand to home/single delivery options.



Waigand Wheels also is drastically expanding community engagement. In addition to the personal contact of deliveries, we have plans for regular social events in the community. Whether we have parties, trips, or events, Waigand Wheels will give our participants opportunities to enjoy the community they serve.

- Sam Waigand  
Executive Director of Waigand Wheels Delivery



## **JIM EPPEL RETIRES**

In July 2007 we ran several little mini-profiles of all the new hires from earlier in the year. The Editor was the one that put the information all together, and was fairly new to what was quite a job. But each person was charged with writing up their own little bio. Guess who was among those new hires? Jim Eppel was to be found there along with about 4 other people. Here is how he presented himself back then: *“Jim Eppel, purchasing / inventory control supervisor, is originally from Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He received his Bachelor’s degree from the University of Northern Iowa. He moved to the St. Louis area in 1984. Jim comes to Lafayette with purchasing and inventory experience from previous employers. Prior to accepting the position at Lafayette, he worked for a Direct Mail company for five years. Jim is married to wife, Jane, and they have two sons, Jacob (age 11) and Lucas (age 14). He enjoys baseball, football and mostly any outdoor activity.”* In 2022 he celebrated 15 years with Lafayette, but he also decided to retire. The call of retirement was strong, and after talking to his wife for a while, he and his wife decided together that retirement was a good idea. While we congratulate his successful career here, we will miss him and his set of unique talents that he brought with him. Jim, come back and see us periodically, and keep us posted every now and again about what you’re up to.

## **IT’S OKAY NOT TO BE OKAY**

By The Editor

Ever had anyone ask if you’re okay? What was your answer? I talked with two employees recently at Lafayette who were not okay. One of them surprised me by saying they were not okay, “... and that’s okay.” It really is okay not to be okay. There are times things happen like when we don’t feel good or someone has said or done something to upset us. You’re not okay. What do you do? When you’re not feeling okay you don’t yell at the other person or try to get back at someone, physically or otherwise, who has upset you. I like what I saw today. One person was sitting alone, earbuds on, and trying to work through their feelings. But should you remain not okay? Definitely not. In order to turn it around, we need to have some ideas about doing something definite that we have in mind. Watching a favorite movie, doing a fun activity, talking to our best friend, talking to our family, playing with our pets, singing along with our favorite song – all these are definite, concrete ways to turn things around and make ourselves feel better. Okay not to be okay? Sure, then you get up, dust yourself off and start moving in the right direction – feeling okay. Have you seen the word okay enough in this article? Well, that’s okay.



## NOVEMBER 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Daylight savings time ends – fall back!	7	8 General Election Please vote!	9	10 PAY DAY	11 Veterans Day	12 K of C Dance – St. Clare of Assisi School Cafeteria – 7:00-10:00p – Thanksgiving
13	14	15	16 6:00p – NO Board of Directors meeting	17 NORTH FREE LUNCH  WEST FREE LUNCH	18	19
20	21	22	23 North dismisses at 1:00p for holiday  West dismisses ½ hour early for holiday  PAY DAY	24 Both Workshops closed for the holiday!  Happy Thanksgiving	25 Both Workshops closed for the holiday!  <i>Shop till you drop!</i>	26
27	28	29	30			