



## JOE STRINGER RETIRES

By Rob Libera

Joe Stringer retired from Lafayette at the end of the month. Joe worked with Rob at TUMS, and when he saw Rob on a KSDK news feature, he called him the next day to say he was available to do some work for him, as he had retired from TUMS. One thing led to another, and Joe moved his machine shop to the back of the workshop. He was going to work a few more years before he permanently retired. Joe played a critical role in making us a factor in high-speed packaging, as well as knowing how to fix just about everything in our facility. Our employees fell in love with Joe, and Joe them, and a “few years”



turned into 17. Joe wanted to leave us in good hands before he left, so he stayed on another year until we found a good replacement for him.

Ironically, Joe completed exactly 17 years with Lafayette, having started on May 1, 2008, and finishing on April 30, 2025. He received a farewell card from all the staff and employees.



Joe—thanks for all your hard work, comradery, and all you did for Lafayette!



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

## **ROB RECEIVES STATE-WIDE “LEGACY AWARD”**

By Vicky James

Our own Rob Libera, CEO & Executive Director, received the Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers “Legacy Award” at the State-wide convention this past week. The Association comprises 87 workshops totaling just under 5,000 employees and plays a significant role in working with State legislators, DESE, SB-40 Board, and the general community in Missouri as well. Only the 2<sup>nd</sup> award given by the Association, the award is, “In recognition of their life-time dedication and support to people with disabilities and Sheltered Workshops”. Rob has served the Mission of Sheltered Workshops, as well as ensuring Lafayette’s Mission is heard and understood, for over 20 years, taking on various roles within the MASWM, culminating in being President and guiding the Association through COVID from 2020-2024. Rob supported people with disabilities when he was in private business, having contracted work out to workshops whenever he could for 2 decades, prior to joining Lafayette. Currently serving as the Immediate Past President of MASWM, Rob was presented by Tim Poepsel, current President, with these words: “This award is presented to an exceptional individual who has devoted a lifetime to supporting people with disabilities, especially in Sheltered Workshops”.

We couldn’t agree more. Congratulations Rob, --and THANK YOU!



## JEFFCO SPECIAL OLYMPICS

A few of our Lafayette JeffCo employees recently got to showcase their skills at the Special Olympics. We are always happy to see our employees shine and this occasion is no different, Congratulations to all the participants!!



Left to right. Dallas Griffin, Eli Clouse, Paul Burnett, Scott Shelton (staff)



Left to right Judy Summers, John Burnett, Richie Dowdell, Cathy Schmidt, Dirk Williams, Scott Shelton (staff)



Left to right Dirk Williams, Paul Burnett, Eli Clouse, Judy Summers, Cathy Schmid, Dallas Giffin, Richie Dowdell, John Burnett, Scott Shelton (Staff)



Left to right Norman Woolridge, Scott Shelton (staff)

## MANCHESTER UNITED METHODIST CHECK PRESENTATION



Manchester United Methodist Men (from left to right) Cliff Hackmann (Knight), Vicky James (staff), Dean Schumacher (Knight), David Kendall (employee), John Klos (Knight) and Rob Libera (staff).

Manchester United Methodist Church has a tree lot that they open over the Christmas holiday to supply Christmas trees to those that need them. The proceeds from this go towards Lafayette and helps us continue to thrive. We thank them for their generous contribution.

## BLUES BANNER



The St. Louis Blues have made the playoffs, and Lafayette is supporting the Blues by using this special banner for the duration of their quest for the Stanley Cup. Here we see Lafayette's own Bradley Jandro with our banner. We at Lafayette wish the St. Louis Blues the best in bringing the Cup back home to St. Louis. Let's Go Blues!!

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #9552 CHECK PRESENTATION



**Front Row – Left to right:** Grand Knight Peter Bitzer, Kate Gregor (staff), Scott Carron (employee), Alyssa Hilderbrand (staff), Angela Gentile (employee), Pam Gardner (employee), Mary Klevorn (employee) and Beth Goodwin (employee).

**Back Row – Left to right:** Rob Libera (Knight and staff), Bob Hoffmann (Knight) Denny Pezanni, (Knight) Nate Kahl (Knight), Tom Will (Knight), Matt Freeman (Knight), Tom Landzaat (Knight), John Dobrynski (Knight).

Knights of Columbus is an organization that helps us by holding a Tootsie Roll Drive every year and helps us organize fun events for our employees throughout the year. Lafayette is thankful to them for their continued support over the years and their important role in helping us continue to thrive.

## WEST CAUGHT BEING SAFE AND RESPECTFUL MARCH 2025

### CAUGHT BEING RESPECTFUL



**Top:** (from left to right) - Diana Hemkens (staff), Cory Owen, Makenzie Carr, Carter Nagy, Jimmy Poppell

### CAUGHT BEING SAFE



**Immediate Left:** Diana Hemkens (staff), Jon Munoz, Will Bolster, Nolan Woodall

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR MAY FOLKS!!

## NORTH

Roosevelt	Ore	3
Keith	Muldrew	7
Laird	Simpson	7
James	Campbell	8
Terrance	Williams	14
Janiah	Sanders	17
Charles	Young	19
Tim	Stemper	19
Lamont	Jackson	21
Michael	Kelly	22
Chris	Lott	24
Corey	Schaffer	24
Adrian	Robinson	26
Matthew	Knipshild	27
Mark	Bowman	28
Catherine	Schwarztrauber	29

## JEFFCO

Robert	Harrison	1
Alyssa	Wadlow	19
Michael	Niemczyk	21
Jennifer	Craig	28

## WEST

Caroline	Kijowski	1
Ryan	Preston	4
Ryan	Dillon	5
Martha	Sanderson	5
Luke	Mraz	6
Robert	Gregg	9
Tim	Sitek	10
Thomas	Mondello	12
Kim	Lamb	16
Debra	Draper	17
Wendy	Johnson	17
Ian	Bagley	19
Katie	Sears	19
Logan	Coffman	20
John	Hardcastle	21
Elizabeth	Eilers	25
Joyce	Klipsch	26
Casey	Florent	28
Jacquelynn	Wainz	28
Ryan	Zimpfer	28
Brad	Davis	29
Carrie	McKaskel	29
Richard	Hardcastle	30
Valerie	Shaw	31



## LOW TECH TOOLS

By Bill Taylor (Proud Lafayette Staff)

Once a month on Thursdays, I get to sit in on meetings with a group of people to discuss adaptive equipment and how it helps to make our lives better at home, in the workplace and everywhere else you can think of. This month, we discussed inexpensive low tech devices people can use to make their lives easier. For example, there was a device that helps people get in and out of a car if they are having trouble called a Handy Bar. You can attach it to a car door to act as an extra assist to help you get in and out. There was an adapter that you can use to operate devices via remote. Some devices could even help detect falls and alert people to them to help keep you safe. Most of what was shown was in the \$20-\$30 price range and a few devices were even cheaper than that. If you need some technology that you think may be able to help you, reach out to me at [frontdesk@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:frontdesk@lafayetteindustries.com). I will have a list of resources mentioned at the monthly meeting.

## **KATE'S TRIP TO BELIZE**

By Kate Gregor (Proud Lafayette Staff)

We arrived in Belize on a Wednesday, ready to dive almost as soon as we dropped our bags. The highlight of our visit was undoubtedly the legendary Great Blue Hole—a bucket-list destination we'd both heard about for years. From Thursday to Saturday, we managed 9 dives each, exploring colorful reefs and swimming with nurse and reef sharks. Snapping a video of one of these sharks was definitely a high point. (picture included). 10/10 would dive Belize again!

Pics (in order)

Kate and school of fish

Matt diving selfie

Our friendly shark



## **MISSING BIRTHDAY FROM NORTH JUST IN TIME**

For those who have received the West Just in Time already, we realized too late that we missed the birthdays of Caroline Kijowski, Elizabeth Eilers and Tim Stemper. Their birthdays are reflected here in the main newsletter. We apologize for the oversight. Hope you enjoy your special day!!

## **NEWSLETTER REMINDER**

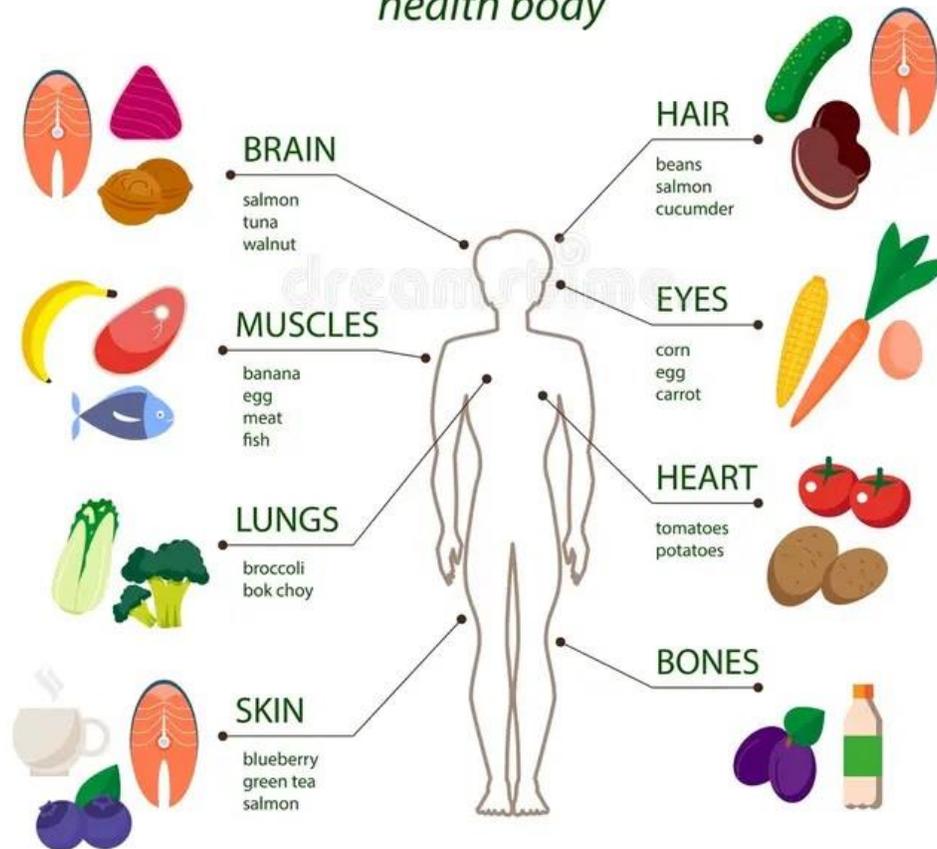
If you would like to submit something for the newsletter, please send your article to Bill at [frontdesk@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:frontdesk@lafayetteindustries.com). Becky S. will be retiring.



**HEALTHY FOOD, HEALTHY BODY**

# HEALTHY FOOD

*health body*



Taking care to protect us at work doesn't help much if we don't take care of our bodies when we are not there

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

**WEST - ART CLASS - WEDNESDAY, MAY 14TH- 3:00-3:45P**



Register today for May 14<sup>th</sup>. 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. **Please turn in your registration to Becky S. by Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.**

Questions: Call or email Vicky James [vjames@lafayetteindustries.com](mailto:vjames@lafayetteindustries.com) 636-227-5666, ext.1118

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**WEST - ART CLASS – WEDNESDAY, MAY 14th – 3:00-3:45p**

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Contact name/phone number of person picking up art student at 3:45p:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**COME JOIN OUR CREATIVE GROUP – SHOW YOUR INNER VAN GOGH!!**

## **THE LAFAYETTE ARCADE: MANAGE YOUR TIME**

By Bill Taylor (Proud Lafayette Employee)

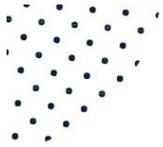
It's easy to get involved in a video game you enjoy. I know what it's like to feel like you are on a roll in a game, and you don't want to stop playing. However, there are some things in life that are more important. Always take care of yourself first. Eat when you need to eat, sleep when you need to sleep and don't forget to do other things. If you take time away from gaming, especially when going through a real tough section, that can help to make you better because you gave yourself the time to come up with a new plan which will help to keep you calm for the next time you are able to sit down and play Manage your time wisely. After all, it's just a game.

### **2025 MOUSE RACES RECAP**



Thank you to everyone who came out to participate in the Mouse Races!! We hope you all had a wonderful time. It's always a good time watching our little friends race for first place. (Becky S. thanks you for not cheering on her mouse.) Whether you sponsored a mouse, donated or watched on from the stands as a spectator, we appreciate you all very much for helping us to make this event a success





# BASEBALL BUDDY

Become a

for \$39

Lafayette Industries, a non-profit social enterprise, is Missouri's single largest *full-time* employer of adults with developmental disabilities, located right here in your community.

**Baseball Buddy** provides a Cardinal's experience for the employees. Sponsor a Lafayette employee for a BBQ at work, a Cardinals game ticket and a commemorative t-shirt.

Help us meet our goal of 375 Sponsors!  
You will receive a personal thank you from your *Baseball Buddy*!



## DONATE ONLINE USING QR CODE

*Or Mail form below to*  
**LAFAYETTE INDUSTRIES**  
**179 GAYWOOD DRIVE**  
**MANCHESTER, MO 63021**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ Baseball Buddy(s) @ \$39 per person

Check total: \_\_\_\_\_

*Business only:* check here to receive recognition plaque



## AUSTIN'S TRIP TO FLORIDA

By Shannon Combs (Proud Lafayette Mother)

Earlier in the year, Austin Combs and his family took a vacation to Florida. Austin enjoyed some time on the beach and had some time on the beach. He even enjoyed a St. Louis Cardinals spring training game against the Miami Marlins. No word on whether the Cards won but it looks like a fun time was had regardless. The following pics are some highlights from Austin's vacation. We hope you have had a wonderful time, Austin.



# May

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 North Free Lunch	2 PAY DAY (JEFFCO)	3
4	5	6	7	8 West Free Lunch	9 PAY DAY (North/West)	10 K of C – St. Francis of Assisi School Cafeteria – 7-10p Patriotic Celebration- Wear your Red White and Blue
11 Mother's Day	12	13	14	15 North Free Lunch  West Free Lunch	16 PAY DAY (JEFFCO)	17 Employee Celebration Picnic
18	19	20	21	22	23 PAY DAY (North/West)	24
25	26 Memorial Day <u>All Workshops are</u> <u>CLOSED</u>	27	28	29	30	31