During that down time, management met weekly and created a 59-page document on the protocols to re-open the plant. TG Missouri is the parent plant in North America, so when they created the COVID-19 protocol it was shared with all of their plants. Incorporating these protocols was quite an undertaking. We had to provide distance for 1,700 plus employees, install sanitizing stations, procure enough sanitizer spray containers, and keep everyone safe,” said Fred Duchsche, Ventilation. “If an employee becomes sick, their workstations is immediately sanitized. More than 2,600 bottles of spray sanitizer was purchased to get the plant back open. Protocols were put in place for the 42 restaurants and the spacing of work stations. The lunch room went from a full service lunch room to a “fresh market” it is self service, and purchased items are paid with an app on employees phones and all lunchroom tables have dividers. During the shut down, TG took care of their employees by making sure they still had their health insurance. TG is deemed an essential business. “Our original thoughts were, where we opened back up in May that things would essentially be slow” said Duchsche, but that’s not what happened. “We ramped up to last, and we have stayed ramped up ever since. The majority of our workforce returned, in May and June 2020.”

Annual August management discovered that more people were working, since the start of the plant. “They increased the production at the level it needed to be. They determined they needed 180 new employees. TG has been on a hiring campaign since and is still looking to fill around 30 more positions.

LONGEVITY EQUALS LEGACY

TG Missouri’s new 70,000 square foot plant expansion is now complete and the first specially exterior paint booth began operation Jan. 1, 2021. The specialty exterior paint booth went operational Jan. 1, 2021. A second booth is ordered and the third one is till waiting for approval.
Business

From Page 3B

The Perryville plant has been so successful with it that the management teams oversee three other TG plants to help them successfully implement the program as well.

"JUST IN TIME MANUFACTURING"

On any given day there will be 100 to 120 tractor-trailers leaving from the shipping warehouse. That is a lot of product moving in such a short time.

TG has a highly functional manufacturing philosophy, "Just in Time Manufacturing." TG has taken 11 employees from another Perry County employer, so the amount of employees moving from any single local company is limited. They believe it doesn’t serve the community if it hurts other local companies.

"CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS"

Customers of TG order their product and it is delivered in one to two days. What makes this so remarkable is there is typically less than six months of demand on the workforce, and it can be difficult at times, but the team members consistently meet these requirements.

"EXPANSION"

The company is mindful of taking too many employees from another Perry County employer, so the amount of employees moving from any single local company is limited. They believe it doesn’t serve the community if it hurts other local companies.

On any given day there will be 100 to 120 tractor-trailers leaving from the shipping warehouse. That is a lot of product moving in such a short time.

"IMPROVEMENTS"

The new 70,000 square foot building is now completed and will house three paint booths. Tests with the first paint booth began in December and became fully operable Jan. 1, 2021. The second is on order and the third is one in still waiting for approval.

The demand is now for specialty exterior products, which has replaced the demand of adding additional floor space to the chrome department. Some productivity improvements were made that allowed the chrome department to stay in its current location.

TG is seeing a trend in the business, turning from interior products to exterior products, grills, fascia, etc.

"LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS"

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"LOW COST"

The philosophy from the Toyota Gosei charter is community involvement. "They want their plants to be places where requests can be made from the company, and they also have programs that are initiated from the top, like the 5K path to move into managing the company, and has them on an accelerated learning program. "There are senior managers involved heavily with their community, both through supporting local business and through volunteerism," Ducharme said.

A lot of volunteer projects originated from the employees, which is how these programs initially got started.

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Chamber of Commerce inducts new board members

By JoAnn Hipler jhipler@perryvillenews.com

The Perryville Area Chamber of Commerce had to do things a little differently when it came to inducting their newest members on the Board of Directors. The Chamber had to cancel their annual dinner that was originally scheduled for this Thursday, so the newly elected board members, which would have been inducted at that meeting were inducted on Jan. 21 at the Chamber of Commerce instead.

"To have more than 300 people inside the Legion on that night did not make sense with the current situation," Chamber Director Jackie Wengert said. "It was a tough decision for us because there are a lot of people who look forward to that meeting."

The board members were elected back in October 2020 and this year Alexandra Leuders, Chris Horrell, Amy Hager and Cynthia Naumann.

Leuders is the closer and Chamber President. Leuders has served on various committees including Mayfest, Expo Women’s Leadership Conference. She welcomes the opportunity to serve on the board for the next three years.

Horrell has been an accountant at ESH Advisors, LLC for 13 years where she specializes in tax, payroll, and accounting services. She is also a certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor. Hager enjoys being involved in non-profit organizations and has been a member of the Perryville Rotary Club since 2007, and previously served as board president. Hager helped form Impact 100 Perry County in 2016, where she served as treasurer for three years.

Wengert said. "I’m excited to be elected to the Board of Directors," Horrell said. "I have seen a benefit to being a part of the Chamber and enjoy being in Perryville and want to be a part of its success."

Naumann is the owner and operator of Timberland Land Title in Perryville. Naumann and her husband moved to the area in January 2019 and was surprised that she was elected to the Board of Directors, despite not being in the area as long as other candidates.

"We haven’t been in Perryville too long, but I hope to do a good enough job," Naumann said. "I’m excited to get to know and see how I can help."

The outgoing members of the board are Dalton Buscher, Kelly Brown.

"They served the board well and they will be missed," Wengert said. However, she is looking forward to what the new newly-elected members of the board will bring to the table.

"I believe that the new members will do well.,” Wengert said. "I can’t wait to see the ideas that they have to help improve the community and make Perryville the best it can be.”

Perryville Area Chamber of Commerce outgoing board members were, from left, Dalton Buscher, Danielle Hoeckle and Alex Leuders. Not pictured is Kelly Brown.

Perryville Area Chamber of Commerc board members were recently inducted at the Chamber office Jan. 21. From left, are (Board President), Jacob Ritter, Chris Horrell, Cindy Naumann, Jamie Robinson (Secretary/Treasurer), Amy Hager, Brandie Nute (Vice President), Melissa Busha, Justin Pyland, Alex Leuders (Past President), and Kaitlyn Wendeusmeyer. Typically, the board is normally inducted at the annual Chamber dinner held this week in January. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the dinner did not take place.
Lonnie Johnson, aka Superman, holds the American flag outside the Perryville Park Center during the 2021 comic con event. Heroes for Kids is planning to host the event again at the Park Center later this summer.

Lonnio Johnson, center, appears as Superman with a group of his friends at a children's event. Johnson, who has been employed by the Perry County Sheriff’s Office since 2001, started the Heroes for Kids organization several years ago. Johnson was named the 2021 Citizen of the Year. Others in this photo, from Dec. 13, 2020, are, from left, Jennifer Merideth (Dr. Strange), Jody Merideth (Captain America), Chelsea Lane (Harley Quinn) and Jessica Johnson (Catwoman).
Lonnie Johnson strikes a pose in character as Superman with a few children while his friend and fellow Heroes for Kids director Dennis Manning (Batman) joins him at a Perryville event.

“The world had just been attacked. It’s anybody that you look at—a doctor, school teachers, first responders, law enforcement, firefighters, military, these are the heroes we want the kids to realize are the real heroes.”

Johnson often attempts to downplay his role as Superman, instead focusing on everyday heroes. “The word hero is not just someone wearing a cape. It’s anybody that you look at...doctors, school teachers, first responders, law enforcement...these are the real heroes.”

His first appearance as Superman was at the 2015 Cape Comic Con. John Wesley, the original Flash from the short-lived television show from 1940-92, was the special guest. I walked in the door and struck the Superman pose, stand tall, hands on the hips. I took about half of the kids and some of the adults from his line,” Johnson said.

“The thing that really got me doing Superman was once it started walking around the aisles, checking things out was an older lady that was working one of the booths and could tell she had been crying. She wasn’t sad. I went over and asked her if everything was alright. All she told me was, “Thank you...you brought back my childhood...you made me believe in Superman again.”

For Johnson, bringing a smile to someone’s face, no matter what their age, is always a good thing. “I have three things I am passionate about...law enforcement, my family and Heroes for Kids,” Johnson said.

Larry Riney - Alderman Ward I

A well-deserved award. Thank you for your commitment to the Perryville community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO citizen of the Year
LONNIE JOHNSON

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Lonnie Johnson, right, presents a check to Lucas Fritzsch at Robert Miget Memorial Park in support of the Lucas & Friends Backyard Adventure, an all-inclusive playground which will be completed later this year.

Lonnie Johnson said he was shocked by the announce- ment of being named Citizen of the Year.

“It’s definitely a surprise...I was not expecting it. You never expect something like this. I’ve been honored. Heroes for Kids wouldn’t have happened without the trials and tribulations that I’ve had in my life, the support of my wife and kids, my friends, and the community. Good Lord willing, we can keep going and make this even bigger. I’ve thankful for the opportu- nity to get to do this.”

Johnson grew up in St. Louis before moving to Fredericktown, graduating in 1997. His wife’s family has ties to Perry County. Her grandparents lived here for nearly 30 years. The couple ended up moving to Perryville to be closer to family.

In addition, other appearances as Superman have led to opportunities to introduce kids to real life superheroes, according to Johnson. “What better way to reach that gap than to get the superheroes out there and while we are getting the high...