

Franklin Bronze keeps strong presence

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

While still working through a global pandemic, Franklin Bronze has maintained a strong presence in the oil and gas, glass, automotive, food processing, metal processing and many other industries that it serves.

Like many local businesses, Franklin Bronze experienced a softening of sales during 2020.

General manager John Hovig Mangoyan took action using a knowledgeable workforce, investments geared towards efficiency and the application of new technology to end 2021 exceeding sales goals for Franklin Bronze.

Customer connections

As a return to a bit of normalcy, industrial sales manager Kevin Weaver and John Mangoyan attended a few trade shows in 2021.

Co-exhibiting with parent company Wall Colmonoy at the MRO show in April, Franklin Bronze featured various investment cast parts specific to the aircraft industry.

Prominently featured were aircraft exhaust parts manu-



Kevin Weaver and John Mangoyan represented FBPC at the Design 2 Part Show last year. Weaver is FBPC's industrial sales manager. Mangoyan is general manager.

factured for sister company, Aerobrazo located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

In October, Weaver and Mangoyan traveled to Ohio to display castings at a Design 2 Part Show.

"It was a breath of fresh air to be back out speaking to customers and making those necessary connections to grow the business," said Weaver.

Investments

Franklin Bronze continues to make investments in the business to achieve greater efficiencies and provide its employees with the necessary tools to do their jobs.

Acquired in 2021 was a new replacement Shell Pre-Heat Furnace.

This furnace improved efficiencies in the foundry by evenly and precisely heating molds to desired temperatures prior to pouring metal.

Additionally added to its in-house machine shop was a new Doosan Puma GT 2600M Mill Drill Turning Center.

With live tooling it allows

the turning and milling of castings in one set-up, saving time.

Locally sourced vendors

The company continues to source services locally whenever possible and offers the following services while using partners in Franklin, Oil City, Meadville, Erie and other nearby locations:

- Heat treating
- X-ray and dye penetrant
- Passivation
- Teflon coating
- Tensile testing
- Glass bead blasting

Employee appreciation

2021 proved to continue to be a challenging year for "essential" workers at Franklin Bronze. With safety measures in place, employees gave it their all and helped Franklin Bronze to get through the year with record-breaking sales.

The 2020 Christmas dinner had been postponed due to COVID so the celebration moved to July. Employees were treated to a meal from Dottie Haggerty Catering. Employees very much enjoyed this overdue meal and team gathering.

Franklin Bronze was able to resume its annual company picnic at Waldameer Park & Water World Amusement Park in Erie this past summer.

Supervisory training

Team members Mark Johnson, cleaning room supervisor; Brian Pratt, shell room supervisor; and Dustin

Waters, maintenance supervisor; graduated from Supervisory Skills Training at Manufacturer & Business Association in Erie.

Additionally all employees were trained in Accident Prevention & Body Mechanics in May.

This training re-iterates Franklin Bronze's philosophy that safety is as much a part of everyone's job as production, service and quality.

Team promotions

2021 brought great opportunity to promote from within for Franklin Bronze. Team member Bryan Wright spent three years in the foundry and three years in the shell room before putting his skills to use as a sales engineer.

Joe Swarm spent close to seven years in Wax Room 2 and has been promoted to Wax Room 2 Supervisor.

Additionally, Brian Pratt brings 11 years of experience on the shop floor in the Shell Room and has been promoted to the Shell Room supervisor position.

Franklin Bronze is very proud to always look from within to promote and utilize the experience and knowledge employees have gained from time already spent learning their processes.

Internships

During 2021, Franklin Bronze provided internship opportunities for two college students. These internships are a great way to expose individuals to the investment casting process and for Franklin Bronze to benefit with improved processes and completed advanced projects.

In the summer, Sarah Cole joined Franklin Bronze as a mechanical engineering intern. She implemented training for the company's 3D printer, created 3D printer models for new product development projects and initiated a dot peen marker. Cole is a mechanical engineering major at Penn State, Behrend in Erie.

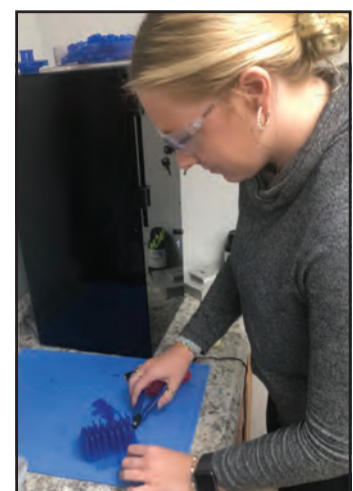
In the fall, Christian Eberly, a mechanical engineering major at Grove City College, joined Franklin Bronze as a mechanical engineering intern. Eberly worked on special engineering projects during his time at Franklin Bronze and contributed to new efficiencies in its investment casting process.

Additional highlights

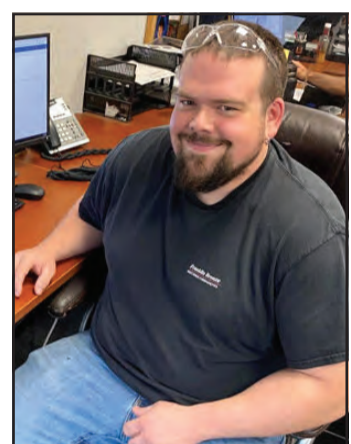
Continuous improvement is a commitment Franklin Bronze makes to its customers and that commitment was achieved through ISO 9001:2015 recertification in early 2021.

Franklin Bronze rounded out the year by continuing its winter clothing donations to Venango County Human Services to help youths in Venango County. Although this year looked a little different with monetary donations in place of items, Franklin Bronze employees were still able to help many youths in the area stay much warmer this winter.

Employees at the Franklin firm were big fans of William, a billy goat that was found wandering through the city's Third Ward last fall. At one point, William found his way into the Franklin Bronze machine shop.



Sarah Cole spent the summer as a mechanical engineering intern at FBPC.



Bryan Wright was promoted to FBPC sales engineer last year.



Franklin Bronze employees enjoyed a Christmas dinner — but it was held in July. The event from 2020 had been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Seneca Printing has change in ownership, adds equipment

► **Jeff Steigerwald Jr. takes on sole ownership after the retirement of Brad Phelps in 2021.**

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Seneca Printing Express and Label is located in the Venango Area Industrial Complex, at 191 Howard St., Suite 302, Franklin. It is a full-service commercial print shop specializing in cut and stack label printing with a full Flexography printing division.

Seneca Printing Express and Label began as the Express division of Seneca Salem, and was bought in 2005 by co-owners COO/Vice President Ernie McCain and President Jeff Steigerwald Sr.

From 2005 until late 2012, it operated under the name of Seneca Printing Express.

Gearing up for future growth of the company in the cut and stack label business, in December 2012, the company name was expanded to Seneca Printing Express and Label.

In 2014, both Steigerwald and McCain retired, selling the business to Jeff Steigerwald Jr. and business investor Brad Phelps, who relocated to this area from Rochester, New York, to take the position of vice president of the company. Steigerwald Jr. and Phelps were co-owners until August, 2021, when Phelps retired and moved back to New York. Jeff Steigerwald Jr. is now the sole owner and president of the company.

Company growth has been steady.

To be more competitive, a full Flexo division has been added, allowing the company to expand its capabilities into the area of self-adhesive and roll-fed labels. This division is growing consistently.

A third guillotine cutter has been purchased for the bindery department.

Additionally, a bloomer was purchased from Switzerland in 2021, streamlining some of the finishing of cut and stack labels.

Since 2014, sales have

steadily increased, with 2021 being a stellar year.

With so many businesses struggling the past few years, this local printing business has been able to adapt and been blessed with strong growth year after year.

In addition to the large businesses nationwide who order frequently, the firm also manages many orders from local businesses, colleges, organizations, doctor's offices, and advertising agencies, and its printed products are distributed worldwide. Shipments go out daily from the Franklin facility to destinations in New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Florida, California, and other locations nationwide.

Its printing portfolio includes pressure sensitive labels, cut and stack labels, and print material as varied as brochures, catalogs, flyers, tags, annual reports, multi-part forms, newsletters, business cards, letterhead, calendars, pocket folders, training manuals, yearbooks, floor mats, posters, envelopes and more.

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Feldman Jewelers marks 150 years in Franklin

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Feldman Jewelers and Something Clever, two stores on Liberty Street in downtown Franklin, are owned by Niki and Doug Volmrich.

Feldman Jewelers opened in 1871. It is the oldest continuously operating store in Venango County, and it celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2021.

Looking forward in 2022, the owners have expanded their major lines including Lafonn, John Mederios and Marianna, and increased the store's inventory of fine, modern and estate jewelry. In addition, the store offers distinctive giftware, in-store jewelry repair, watch repair and custom design.

Something Clever, a ladies fashion boutique, opened in 2003 and offers the area's largest collection of ladies designer clothing, including Tribal, Ethel and Clara Sun Woo, along with shoes and accessories from Myra Bag, fashion jewelry from Brighton and Spartina and other "clever" gifts from Brumate.



Staff members at Feldman Jewelers and Something Clever include (front, from left): Lisa Anderson, Niki Volmrich, Chrysanne Corsetti, Susan Emerson and Karen Koyack; and (back): Erin Leccia, Jennifer Huff, Lynn Cummings-Wilson and Francine Jackson. Both Franklin stores are owned by Niki and Doug Volmrich.