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PK USA honors veterans with special, local wall

Factory, employees, families celebrate Veterans Day

By Nick Cusack
Staff writer

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Local factory PK USA unveiled a "Wall of Honor" for veterans working at the Shelbyville plant Thursday, just days before the country will celebrate Veterans Day on Sunday.

The car parts manufacturer on Northridge Road wanted to honor those on staff who have served in the military.

The wall displays photos of the veterans from their service days next to recent photos taken by local photographer Jeff Sponsel. The plaques were made by Vernon Sharp.

"This is the first company I've worked with since I retired that really, truly honors the veterans. It gives me chill bumps," said Brad Jenson, who spent 21 years in the Navy as a submariner.

He said he is surprised by the number of veterans working at the plant.

"I had no idea," he said.

It brought on mild ribbing between members of the different branches, Jenson said.

"This is cool," Jenson said. "This is very cool."

Veterans invited their families to see the wall. It has 19 plaques, with four more to be put up. The service times of the veterans on display go as far back as 1965.

"It's a great honor," said Gary Baker, who served in the Army for 12 years. He's worked at the plant 14 years.

He said that in years past the company gave veterans a pen or something similar.

"I think it's great," said Serena Baker, Gary's wife. "A lot of places don't think about it and don't care."

Karen Moore looked at a photo of her husband, Jerry Moore, an Army veteran.

"I think it's wonderful, very impressive," Karen Moore said. "I don't think they do enough for veterans anymore. They're a forgotten breed and we should be proud of them."

Bill Kent, vice president of corporate relations at PK USA, said it was a way to thank veterans.

"It's one of the ways we can say thank you for what they've done through the years," Kent said.



Shannon Daniel looks at photos of veterans at the wall at PK USA. His son, Corey Daniel, served in the Army and is part of the display. "It's nice that they did it," Corey Daniel said. "I appreciate it." Nick Cusack photo

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