

## **Bretting Face Shields – The Rest of the Story**

17 April 2020

As many of you have read in the paper, seen on the evening news, or viewed on Facebook, Bretting Manufacturing has been helping the community prepare for the COVID-19 pandemic by producing face shields. It's not usually our style to bring these types of things forward to the media, but in these trying times we figured the community could use a feel-good story for a change. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, other constraints don't allow all the details to be published, like the people actually doing the work and making a difference.

While it is 100% true that Randy DeMars brought the idea forward, Bretting has allowed their machines and employees to make these parts on company time, and the crew at Washburn Iron Works has aided in the effort (and they deserve credit and praise for these things), the whole story hasn't yet been told.

There is an ever-growing list of folks that are pitching in and going above and beyond to help the effort, and they deserve credit, too.

Dave Olson and his 14-year-old son Kyle have been printing headbands for the face shields on their own 3D printer at home. The two of them are running quite the operation, producing double digit quantities each day.



*Kyle Olson displaying a face shield and his 3D printer.*



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PJ Westlund has used his superior expertise to help 3D print headbands. Since his printer was a little too small to print the entire headband at once, PJ developed a new style that could be printed in halves and easily assembled to mimic the rest of the headbands produced in whole.

Nikki Bretting has taken working from home to a new level, as she is printing from home as well. We moved one of our 3D printers to her house, so she could help the cause while maintaining social distance. Nikki has been producing an impressive 30 headbands per day!

Ryan Lunn has also taken this cause very seriously and put his own 3D printer into headband mass production. Ryan is on his way to producing triple digit headbands already, with no sign of slowing down.

While Dave, Kyle, PJ, Nikki, and Ryan are pitching in from home, there is also a large list of folks that have aided in this effort from inside the plant as well. Tyler Hudack is one of our 3D printing technicians who operates, cleans, and maintains the printers. Joe Moran is an all-things-technical wizard who has helped set up the printers and processes for mass production. Kraig Trogan did the initial testing to determine the optimum hole spacing and punching technique to set up for face shield production. Earl Schutte and others at the roll bench have been punching out transparencies in large quantities. Alex Doherty has been assisting the roll bench by grouping transparencies and hole punch guides. Finally, Tony Hicks and crew put their skills on display by fabricating eight plexiglass intubation boxes for the hospitals.

With the help of all these folks, and others, we have been able to produce and distribute over 700 face shields to local facilities! We have set a goal of over 1,200 face shields produced to meet the requests of those who need them most. Our hope is that these face shields provide insurance, and assurance, to those on the front lines.

The Bretting family and all of the Bretting employees would like to thank all that helped in this effort

Special thanks to all the doctors, nurses, first responders, grocery store workers, restaurant take out staff, and everyone else keeping us safe and this community going during these unprecedented times.

*"This story still missed some very important individuals. Thanks to our leadership for all they have done to take charge and be proactive with the preparations and implementation that allowed all of us to remain employed. This allowed us to continue to meet the needs of our customers as the country pulls together to beat this! You make us proud to work for this organization! We appreciate all you do."*

- Randy DeMars