



Pen City Current

Monday, February 12, 2018 | 6 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 50



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

A worker from Seither and Cherry works on the iron framing of the new 12,000 square foot addition at Huffman Welding and Machine that will hold a new Lucas CNC mill that can turn out projects weighing close to 20 tons. Below is a photo of the incoming mill.

Huffmans bringing in monster mill

New equipment will get its own 12,000 building

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A new pneumatic programmable mill will become part of a local manufacturing company's repertoire this spring. And the piece of modern tech is so big - it needs its own building.

Huffman Welding and Machine, a family-owned corporation nestled on the city's west side that provides commercial and industrial welding services to a wide variety of enterprises, is in the middle of the construction of a building on the property's southeast corner. The building will house a new state-of-the-art mill that will expand the company's offerings to clients.

Bob Huffman, Jr. said the building just started with red metal framework. The concrete for the base of the building was poured in December and now Seither and Cherry is crawling over beamwork getting the building ready for the enclosure.

"We were getting tight on space in order to do some of the things we wanted to do to increase our ability," Huffman said. "But once we decided to add this piece of equipment it absolutely created a need for a new building because we had no place to put it."

Mike Huffman, Bob's brother, said it's always been the company's philosophy to try to grow each year.

"Even in the lean times of 2009-10 we didn't layoff a single person. Our number one goal is to keep our employees working and we've been able to do that. This addition will allow us to offer another service and expand our reach. Which in turn should create more business and then hopefully, at some point, additional employees," Mike said.

The company will also move several large metal lathes into the new structure to create additional space in the main working areas. The new building will include a 10-ton mobile crane. Employees currently utilize two 5-ton cranes to move heavy equipment in the current buildings.

The new mill is fully programmable and can be operated by one person. Huffman said the programming can be done from a central office or at the mill itself. He said one of the benefits is that if a job is repetitive, the pro-

See **EXPANSION**, page 4



EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



Mink shows its true colors

I opened the hen house door to a troubling sight. There were a lot of feathers and, in the corner of the hen house, a dead hen—Red, one of our "adopted" hens. Her neck had been partially chewed off. In the same corner was a hole gnawed through the flooring. Whatever critter it was that had killed Red, had tried to pull the body through the hole.

The other hens were quiet. It had no doubt been a harrowing night.

What to do? And what kind of varmint was it? The hole was pretty small. Was it a mink, or weasel?

I found a cement block and placed it over the hole, then retrieved my live-animal trap from the barn, baited it with lunch meat, and placed it close to the hole. I said a little prayer. "Please, God, protect my hens." I felt like I had let my hens down by not safeguarding them. They're such pets. It hurt to lose one of them.

The next morning—same thing. Another dead hen in the same corner, this time with its head chewed clear off. I found the head in the straw bedding. Gross!

Now I was really upset. Two hens in two days! If this keeps up, they will all be gone in short order. I could see where the varmint may have been able to slide in under the cement block. Dang!

My mind whirled. The varmint had bypassed the live-animal trap and gone straight to the hen house. What to do? Ah, ha! Bait the trap with the dead hen. By golly, it likes chicken, I'll give it chicken!

That night I went out and checked the hen house three times before going to bed. All hens were safe and accounted for. They were roosting high. That was a good thing. I wasn't sure if the mink or weasel, whatever it was, could climb or not. What was I going to do if I lost another hen? We were down to 11. Maybe I could sit in the far corner of the hen house at night with a .410 shotgun and flashlight and wait. That would do it. Blow a hole clear through the hen house and scare the chickens half way to thunder! Please, God, protect my hens.

I normally get up real early in the morning to read and write. At 2:00 a.m. when I got up, I put the coffee

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Obituaries/Lottery Numbers



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OBITUARIES

WENDELL LEE THOMPSON

Wendell Lee Thompson, 75, of Niota, Illinois, passed away at 3:15 P.M. Saturday February 10, 2018 at his home.

Born May 3, 1942 at Fort Madison, Iowa the son of Wendell V. and T. Faye Cooper Thompson. On December 8, 1963 at the Appanoose Faith Presbyterian Church he married Betty Kathryn Herzog.



THOMPSON

Survivors include his wife Betty, sister Letha Howell of Luray, Missouri. three sons Curt (Becky) Thompson of Niota, Illinois, Bryan (friend Jana) Thompson of Argyle, Iowa and Andy (Kristi) Thompson of Carthage, Illinois. One daughter Brenda (Jeff) Forquer of Williamstown, Missouri. Grandchildren: Michael Thomes of Burlington, Iowa, Aaron (fiancé Marisa Graham) Thompson of Mooresville, North Carolina, Abby (friend Andy Menke) of West Point, Iowa, Candi (fiancé James Youngblood) Thompson of Niota, Illinois, Joel (friend Cassie Carter) Thompson of Iowa City, Iowa, Brad Forquer and Kelsey Forquer both of Williamstown, Missouri, Kate Thompson and Addison Thompson both of Carthage.

Also surviving is one great grandson Jeremiah.

Lee was preceded in death by his parents, brother Lynn Willis Thompson 1992 and one brother-in-law Allen Howell in 2006.

Lee was a member of the last graduating class of Nauvoo High School in 1960. The majority of his life he farmed and operated Thompson Agri Service of Niota and Basco, Illinois. He enjoyed the Western Illinois Old Threshers where he and his family owned and operated the Pony Power Threshing Machine for 34 years and the Clark County Mule Festival where he and his family owned the sled and organized the Mule Pulls. He was also a member of the Argyle Gas Engine Association in Colchester, the Three Rivers Tractor Club, the Fort Madison Elks Lodge, the Appanoose Faith Presbyterian Church. In his earlier years he served on the Nauvoo Fire Department and he held various offices in the Appanoose Church and Appanoose Township. Lee loved his family and he loved his friends.

His body has been entrusted to the Schmitz Funeral Homes for cremation.

Friends may call after 1:00 P.M. Wednesday at the Appanoose Faith Presbyterian Church near Niota where the family will meet with friends from 4:00 to 7:00 P.M. Wednesday evening.

A memorial service will be held at 10:30 A.M. Thursday February 15, 2018 at the Appanoose Faith Presbyterian Church with Pastor Dave Poland officiating.

Burial will be in the Appanoose Township Cemetery near Niota, Illinois.

In lieu of flowers the family requests stepping stones or memorials to the Appanoose Faith Presbyterian Church or the Donor's Choice.

Schmitz Funeral Homes are assisting the family with arrangements.


Online condolences may be made to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.



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Lotto America [™]	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
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Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



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2/11 EVENING
4 8 0



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8 9 3 3

2/11 EVENING
7 7 8 9

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Area News/For the Record



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

ISU Extension names officers

DONNELSON - Four officers were elected during the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Lee County extension council organizational meeting January 3, 2018. The nine-member county extension council annually elects officers to comply with Iowa law.

Chris Lindner, Keokuk, is the newly-elected chairperson. Lindner will preside at all meetings of the county extension council, have authority to call special meetings and perform duties as performed and exercised by a chairperson of a board of directors of a corporation. Vicki Kokjohn, West Point, was elected vice chairperson.

Tricia Knipper, Donnellson, was elected secretary and has the responsibility of keeping the minutes of all county extension council meetings and signing required papers for the council.

The council elected Rick Tebbs, Fort Madison, to the treasurer position. The treasurer has charge of all of the funds of the county extension council; receives, deposits, pays and disburses. The treasurer insures an accurate record of receipts and disbursements and submits reports to the county extension council.

As elected officials, the county extension council is the governing body of ISU Extension and Outreach. The county extension council hires county staff, manages the county extension budget of approximately \$300,000 and helps determine programming.

The county extension office is located at 414 North Main Street in Donnellson. To learn more about ISU Extension and Outreach in Lee County, visit www.extension.iastate.edu/lee.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

02/08/18 - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 6100 block of Reve Court
02/08/18 - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2400 block of Avenue G.
02/08/18 - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5200 block of River Valley Road.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

02/08/18 - no time reported - Lee County sheriff's deputies arrested Matthew Lawrence

Spring, 22, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office, on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
02/08/18 - 3:28 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Kimberly Ann Barrows, 42 of Mt. Sterling, at the Van Buren County line, on a warrant for failure to appear. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on a promise to appear.
02/08/18 - 3:31 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Shane Michael Phillips, 18, of Carthage, Ill., on a warrant for 2nd degree theft. He was released upon citation.
02/08/18 - 5:32 p.m. - Lee

County Sheriff's deputies arrested Tracy Dean Terry, 48, of Keosauqua, at the sheriff's office on a judgment hold. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
02/08/18 - 7:46 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident in the 300 block of 260th Avenue. A vehicle driven by Julie Beth Paschon, 53, of Fort Madison slid through the intersection on icy roads and struck a county sign pole and then slid into a ditch. No injuries or citations were reported at the scene. Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

CURRENT-LEE

Pheasants Forever raffle tickets available now

LEE COUNTY - Raffle tickets for Lee County Pheasants Forever 25 Gun Raffle are available from any club member or at the banquet. Tickets are \$10 each and are limited to 3,000. The raffle will be held during the chapter's annual banquet on February 24, 2018. Proceeds from the raffle are used to support the Tri-State Young Guns and Fort Madison Clay Crushers High School Trap Shooting Teams. For more information about the raffle, go to <http://www.leecountypf.org/raffles/>.



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Pen City Current

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From the Front/Classifieds

New mill will expand customer base

EXPANSION - Continued from Page 1

gramming can be done one time and then be stored in the system which will save programming time.

He said the mill will run 10 feet across and then 8 feet up and down from the job enabling the company to work on a piece of equipment that weighs up to 45,000 lbs.

"This is the biggest machine we've ever purchased," Bob said. "It's 16-feet tall and it has x capabilities of over 10 feet. The spindle will have z capability of eight feet."

Mike said his father started as a machinist for area fertilizer plants, machining was done at x and y, or right angle capabilities. Those early days lead

their father Bob Sr., to start his own business in 1971 and to say the business has grown from there is an understatement.

"Now, with all the new mills, we can do z capabilities which allows us to do "S"s and circles and those kind of capabilities," Mike said. "This machine will allow us to do that on a very large scale."

The mill is a Lucas CNC mill, which stands for computer numerical control, which in non-tech terms means its a pneumatic piece of equipment which allows for high precision jobs with shorter project times. The mill itself is set to be delivered toward the end of March

and Mike said it should be functional at some point in April.

The new building is a 12,000 square foot addition. Mike said that equates to the expansion that was completed in 2017, which at the time, was the largest expansion in the company's history, bringing their total square footage of the welding and machine facility to 65,000. The company also owns several retail Farm and Home outlets in Iowa and Illinois.

The Huffmans also installed a solar panel field on the south side of the property that generates over 300,000 kilowatt hours.

Attack on chickens makes for long winter's night

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

on, filled Buddy's bowl, and read the daily devotion. "You make me glad by your deeds, O Lord; I sing for joy at the works of Your hands," Psalm 92:4. I felt it strong, my prayers had been answered.

So, at 2:00 a.m., my footsteps muffled in the fresh snow, I traipsed out to the hen house, club and flashlight in hand. All the way out I repeated, "By your hands, O Lord." The newly layered snow reminded me of white cake frosting.

The beam of the flashlight picked up the live-animal trap. I could see the dead hen inside and a little dark spot on the chicken. Probably a shadow. But the trap door was tripped. Back to the dark spot. Two little eyes. There it was, looking at me. A mink! "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" I had never seen a mink before. Growing up in Iowa, there were none.

But it was a cute little thing, twitching

its nose and staring at me, seemingly unafraid, staying warm on the dead chicken. How could something so cute be such a vicious killer? I felt a twinge of compassion for the little guy, or gal.

I went back in the house and woke Ginnie up. I told her I had caught the mink in the live-animal trap. It was over. Our chickens were safe. Hallelujah! Just to be sure, I Googled "mink." Yep, it was a mink all right.

Mr Mink or Ms Mink got a nice little ride miles south where there is a gravel pit, plenty of timber, and no farm buildings.

Never a dull moment on the Empty Nest Farm!

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at curtswarm@yahoo.com or find him on Facebook. Curt's stories are also read at 106.3 FM in Farmington.

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Education/Weather

Holy Trinity releases 1st semester honor rolls

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - Holy Trinity Catholic middle and high schools have announced their honor rolls for the 2017-2018 1st semester. Pen City Current joins our family of advertisers in congratulating these hard working students for their dedication to their education.

4.0 Honor Roll

7th Grade
- Laura Mehmert, Brianna Wright
8th Grade
- Michael Hellman, Abby Holtkamp, Cassidy Randolph, Anna Sobczak
9th Grade
- Taylor Crabtree, Katherine Denning, Bailey Hellweg, Claire Pothitakis, Maria Rauenbuehler, Chandler Rung, Annabelle Scheetz, Rose-lynn Strickland, Jason

Thurman, Vasin Thurman
10th Grade - Reed Fehseke, Reagan Garrels, Ashlyn Haas, Nicole Pothitakis, Samantha Pothitakis, Elle Rashid
11th Grade
- Sam Avery, Emily Box, Elyse Pothitakis, Kyle Scheetz, Katie Scoville, Jorie Whitaker
12th Grade - Ben Abolt, Aden Alfred, Kayleigh Biegler, Grant Ellison, Sabrina Fullhart,

Austin Haas, Conrad Hellman, Samantha Hoenig, Madison Mohrfeld, Maya Rashid, Brett Schneider, Collin Thornton
A Honor Roll
7th Grade
- Emily Boeding, Kayla Box, Abby Denning, Alexa Dingman, Elle Dostalek, Rachel Menke, Brooke Mueller, Jacob Pothitakis, Paige Wasielewski

8th Grade - Jackson Blint, Lucy Graham, Jack Malinski, Ace Meierotto, Mitchell Pothitakis, Ava Rashid, Mya Schmitz, Raquel Schneider, Alexis Stalcup, Jackson Van Hamme
9th Grade
- Cassandra Campbell, Danny Caruso, Ava Peitz, Alison Robu, Emma Torgler, Tori Vincent
10th Grade - Blake Crabtree, Brandon Delaney, Abby Dingman, Ambrosia Dustin, Evan Ellison, Claire Graham, Matthew Hellige, Wyatt Hellman, Mason Holvoet, Avery Hopper, Jacob Mohrfeld, Ryan Otte, Maille Sheerin, Jayde Watznauer
11th Grade - Eryn Anderson, Joshua Barr, Taylor Boeding, Kyle Bredemeyer, Mya Lawlor, Alec Mehmert, Adam Rauenbuehler, Carson Schroeder, Hannah Torgler, Yulu Zhang

12th Grade
- Joseph Hummel, Bradley Sporkman
B Honor Roll
7th Grade
- Mary Hellige, Anayi Navarro, James Scheetz
8th Grade
- Cody Briggs, Claire Brock, Mikey DiPrima, Tessa Gendron, Phillip Goldie, Blake Hemann, Kelli Meierotto, Jackson Morris, Tyler Snaadt
9th Grade - Colby Bredemeyer, Elizabeth Ebbing, Garrett Hannum, Kadin Medland, Sara Roth, Anna Schroeder, John Stinson, Mia Vradenburg
10th Grade
- Caleb Denning, Rhett Fullhart, Quentin Schneider, DaYeong You
11th Grade
- Ryder Brune, Audrey Campbell, Connor Holvoet
12th Grade
- Emily Dingman, Zander Schweiss



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5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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TUE 13 Feb	Light Snow High - 21.2° F Low - 19.8° F
WED 14 Feb	Clear Skies High - 39.0° F Low - 37.8° F
THU 15 Feb	Light Rain High - 33.4° F Low - 15.0° F
FRI 16 Feb	Clear Skies High - 29.3° F Low - 25.1° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

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