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.”

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 programming can be written 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 programming can be written by one person.

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 programming can be written by one person.

See EXPANSION, page 4

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 a.m. when I got up, I put the coffee
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- Place all recyclable products loose in bins.
- Do not recycle wrapping paper.

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2/11 MID-DAY
1 1 5
2/11 EVENING
4 8 0

2/11 MID-DAY
8 9 3 3
2/11 EVENING
7 7 6 9

Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.

Obituaries/Lottery Numbers

OBITUARIES

WENDELL LEE THOMPSON

Wendell Lee Thompson, 75, of Nioita, 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.

Survivors include his wife Betty, sister Leatha Howell of Luray, Missouri, three sons Curt (Becky) Thompson of Nioita, 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 Thomas 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 Nioita, 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 Nioita and Raso, 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 Nioita 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 Nioita, 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.
ISU Extension names officers

DONELLSON - 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, Kossuk, 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.

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 disbursesments 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 disbursements and submits reports to the county extension council.

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.
New mill will expand customer base

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

en, filled Buddy’s bowl, and read the daily devotions. “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 tramped 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 Ginna up. I told her I had caught the mink in the live-animal trap. It was over. Our chickens were safe. Hallelujah!

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

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School Age Care Program Supervisor Wanted
Holy Trinity Early Childhood Center has an opening for a School Age Care Program Supervisor. This is a full-time (benefits eligible), year round position that requires the following qualifications:

- Associate’s Degree in Education or Early Childhood; Bachelor’s Degree preferred
- 2+ years experience working in a youth program or education
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Able to pass a background check and complete training as required by Iowa DHS
- Enthusiastic and patient in working with children

Holy Trinity Early Childhood Center is also seeking substitute associates for our preschool and childcare programs.

Please contact Stefanie Drollinger at stefanie.drollinger@holytrinityschools.org or 319-372-6428 for application information.

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If so come join our team! Our next production supervisor will be responsible for directing production associates to execute tasks, emphasizing safe behaviors and quality measures to meet the production needs required to package liquid consumer products. This is a salaried leadership role that leads a team of approximately 50 people.

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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 Holkamp, Kassidy 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 – Bred Feheke, Reagan Garrels, Ashlyn Haas, Nicole Pothitakis, Samantha Pothitakis, Elle Rashid
11th Grade – Sam Avery, Emily Box, Elyse Pothitakis, Kyle Scheetz, Katie Scoville, Jorie Whittaker
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 Thronston

A Honor Roll

7th Grade – Emily Boeding, Kayla Box, Abby Denning, Alexa Dingman, Elle Dostakle, Rachel Menke, Brooke Mueller, Jacob Pothitakis, Paige Waisielewski
8th Grade – Jackson Blint, Lucy Graham, Jack Malinski, Ace Meierotto, Mitchell Pothitakis, Ava Rashid, Mya Schmitz, Raquel Schneider, Alexi Stalup, Jackson Van Hamme
9th Grade – Cassandra Campbell, Danny Caruso, Ava Peitz, Alison Robs, Emma Torger, Tori Vincent
10th Grade – Blake Crabtree, Brandon Delaney, Abby Dingman, Ambrosia Dustin, Evan Ellison, Claire Graham, Matthew Hellige, Wyatt Hellman, Mason Hoelvot, 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, Yulo Zhang
12th Grade – Joseph Hummel, Bradley Sporkman

B Honor Roll

7th Grade – Mary Hellige, Anayi Navarro, James Scheetz
8th Grade – Cody Briggs, Claire Brock, Miyo 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 Hoelvot
12th Grade – Emily Dingman, Zander Schweiss

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Got a news tip?
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Clear Skies
High – 13.0º F | Low – 6.0º F

TUE 13 Feb
Light Snow
High – 21.2º F | Low – 19.8º F

WED 14 Feb
Clear Skies
High – 39.0º F | Low – 37.8º F

THU 15 Feb
Light Rain
High – 33.4º F | Low – 15.0º F

FRI 16 Feb
Clear Skies
High – 29.3º F | Low – 25.1º F

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