



IPC explains expansion

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

After a whirlwind trip to Tokyo, Japan, that began on June 17 and ended June 20, Indiana Packers Corporation President Ed Nelson and Vice President of Human Resources Jim Hardison were ready to speak to the public about the newly announced \$43 million expansion at the Delphi plant.

"We are looking to expand into ready-to-eat products, such as fully cooked hams and lunch meats," Nelson said in a June 21 interview with the *Comet*.

Nelson said the current expansion project, with a price tag of approximately \$69 million, is between 30 and 40 percent completed. It is expected to be finished by the fourth quarter of 2006.

He said the first project naturally led to the second one, which includes internal changes to the plant only. Those changes will allow for "further packaging and value added marketing."

"Our industry is changing dramatically," Nelson said. The expansion would eliminate

packaging work done by smaller grocers to get meat ready for sale, unless a custom cut is requested, he said.

"Everyone (grocers) who competes with a store such as Wal-Mart will become more of a specialty store," he said.

Hardison said the projected 270 new jobs created by the expansion project are expected to be filled by the fourth quarter of 2006.

The most recent expansion announced will bring an additional 125 new jobs to the plant. Hardison said the majority of those workers are expected to be brought onboard in the first and second quarters of 2007.

He advised the goal is for all new hires to be completed by the end of the fourth quarter of 2007.

Nelson said the Delphi plant is one of the leaders in the industry as determined by the American Meat Institute in conjunction with the National Safety Council.

He attributes that rating to positive workforce retention and a superb safety program at the plant.

Flora to purchase Brethren Home by end of week

By Susan Scholl
Editor

By the end of the week, the Town of Flora expects to own the former Brethren Home property at the west edge of Flora. Council president Josh Ayres and clerk-treasurer Joretta Tinsman will represent the town at the closing, to be held in Indianapolis.

The property has been under court-ordered receivership by GB Management.

The town made the decision to try and purchase the old Brethren Home at a council meeting in December 2004.

"The main reason the town pursued the purchase is to create jobs and retain a large utility customer," said Tinsman. "When BHC closed in 2000, we were billing them for \$8,400 worth of utilities (electric, water and sewage) a month."

The town had expected to close on the deal in December 2005, but a lien holder filed an objection to the price the town offered. A judge ruled late last month that the town's offer of \$55,000 was viable and he ordered that the sale be approved.

Town officials have been working with attorney Mike

Oyler of Louisville, Ky., and Tim DeBruicker, owner of a nursing home management company that is interested in reopening the facility as a healthcare center. Both Oyler and DeBruicker spent all or part of their growing up years in Flora.

Tinsman said that Indiana declared a moratorium on Medicaid beds last December. The next hurdle will be to find out if the facility falls under the grandfather clause because it was previously a healthcare center.

According to Tinsman, prior to the sale the property underwent two environmental studies. Phase I was paid by the town and Phase II was paid by a Brownfield grant. The studies revealed that no lead-based paint was found; there was no asbestos except in some floor tile; a buried tank needs to be removed (the town is applying for a petroleum remediation grant to pay for it); and there is mold, which will need to be removed.

The facility, a concrete block building, has been determined to be structurally sound, she added.

Tinsman said if the Indiana Department of Health will not allow the facility to be reopened as a healthcare center, then the town may pursue remodeling the facility for a new fire station.

4th of July in Flora, Delphi & Burlington

Flora has a day of activities planned for the Fourth of July at the Community Park.

The 1834 cabin at the park has been repaired and refurbished by Stephen Siwinski of Flora, and he is holding an open house from noon until 6 p.m. During the same hours, Linda Fife will demonstrate spinning at the cabin.

The Delphi Trolley will take two scenic trips to Adams Mill and

Mailing label goes here

back, leaving from the parking lot near the cabin. Departure times are noon and 1 p.m.

Flora First Christian Church will present a Gospel Fest from 6 to 10 p.m.

Featured performers will be Jennifer Holcomb, Riley Kelley, Malachi Jagers, Vickie Maris, Susie Gustafson, and more.

Bringing blankets or lawn chairs is suggested.

Picnic food will be available from the Flora Ministerial Association.

The town fireworks will follow the Gospel Fest.

Delphi

A 4th of July fireworks display, sponsored by Delphi Chamber of Commerce and City of Delphi, will begin at dusk at Delphi Community High School's Berto Field. Rain date is July 5.

Burlington

Burlington's 4th of July fireworks celebration will begin with a hog roast. Serving will be from 5 to 8 p.m. Entertainment will start at 7 p.m. and the fireworks display at dusk, sometime after 9:30. All events are held at Burlington Community Park. Bring blankets and lawn chairs. Burlington Community Club sponsors the annual celebration.



Good test
A chemical reaction occurred Monday at Carroll Jr.-Sr. High School when pool supplies were mishandled. The district hazmat team helped with clean-up efforts. A haz-mat team member is pictured being decontaminated. The team's specialized trailer is seen below. Comet photos

Poisonous gas causes evacuation at Carroll

By Susan Scholl
Editor

A chemical gas mishap at Carroll Jr.-Sr. High School Monday morning turned into an opportunity for a training exercise for the newly formed district hazardous materials team.

The mishap occurred around 7:30 a.m. in the CJSHS pool pump room when one of the custodians poured chemicals into the wrong tanks.

The chemicals, lithium hypochlorite and sodium bisulfate, are used to treat the pool water, said Carroll Superintendent John Sayers. They each have their own separate tank and are not to be combined. The chemicals reacted, producing a poisonous chlo-

rine-like gas.

With summer school in session, Sayers said their first concern was to evacuate the building. Students and staff were instructed to go to the nearby elementary school.

School staff worked to correct the problem, but ended up calling in help.

Carroll County Emergency Management Director Justin Darling said that his office was contacted at 10 a.m. Flora Police Dept., Carroll County Sheriff's Dept., Flora Volunteer Fire Department and haz-mat team members from Lafayette and Frankfort also responded. A recovery station was set up by the Tippecanoe County Chapter of the American Red Cross

After neutralizing the product, they pumped it into a container for disposal, said

Darling, finishing around 4 p.m.

During the recovery effort, Flora VFD was called to a garage fire and Camden VFD assisted with needed water and mutual aid.

According to Darling, approximately 40 emergency personnel were at the scene. "It was a good test for our district haz-mat team," he said. "Everything went well and I'm confident that this is the kind of response we can expect district-wide."

Sayers, too, said he was impressed with how well everyone worked together and the spirit of cooperativeness that was shown.

The building was aired out and students were back in class Tuesday morning. The custodian was also back at work after being taken to the hospital for observation.



The prosecutor's race is on!

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Although he admitted he has been thinking about running for Carroll County Prosecutor since the day after the May Primary, local attorney Jim Huffer didn't file for candidacy with the state until 2 p.m. on Friday.

"When (Rob) Ives was beaten, I examined the qualities of his opponent," Huffer said. "I thought...I can do better than that!"

He has 20 years of experience in the prosecutor's office, Huffer said. "You must use experience and training to evaluate evidence in making decisions," he said.

Huffer said he plans to meet with county prosecutor Ives, who lost his election bid in the May primary, to discuss the office workload and to find out "why he got beat."

Although he has not met Trish Thompson, the attorney who will be his opponent in the November general election, he said he is willing to debate her.

"More than once, the more the better!" he said. "I'm a pretty good debater. I'm good on my feet. I'm good in front of a jury."

Huffer said he believes in using plea agreements, which may be an area where the two do not agree totally.

"I'm in favor of plea agreements.

They have a useful place in the administration of justice," he said. "It's been my experience that a person who is not willing to be rehabilitated will violate probation."

Huffer explained that sanctions can be very stringent for offenders who violate the terms of their probation, therefore harsher punishment is meted out after they fail at the chance to comply with court orders.

Huffer said that he makes his home in Clinton County, but he owns "a lot of property in Carroll County."

"You don't have to be a (county) resident to run," he said.

He gave the example of former Carroll County Circuit Court Judge Joseph Carey, who was not a county resident when he ran for judge, but moved to the area upon election.

"I intend to comply with the residency law to take office," Huffer explained.

Huffer spoke candidly about an OWI conviction in 2004. He said he pled guilty and was sentenced to a 30-day suspension of his driver's license and held a probationary license for another 180 days.

He said he also attended approximately 24 hours of drug and alcohol education at Wabash Valley.

"I learned that you can't trust the way you feel to judge blood alcohol content," he stated. "If you're going to drink at all, you can't drive."

"I learned a lot from that experience," he said. "I think I can be a better prosecutor because of it."

Huffer stated experience leads a prosecutor to recognize high-pro-

file cases. He said it could be prudent to call a grand jury in a case that many people in the community would be intensely interested about what charges would be filed and how the case was handled.

If elected, Huffer expects to be a part-time prosecutor. He said in 2002, when he was last in that office, he made all the filing decisions and ran the office on a part-time basis.

Huffer said he expects the prose-

cutor's office to comply with the county personnel policy, including the nepotism clause, if at all possible.

However, before Huffer does anything in the prosecutor's office, he must first overcome an opponent who has already surprised him by her ability to unseat the incumbent.

"I was surprised that Thompson beat Ives," he said. "I will not underestimate her campaign."

Munson, Sprinkle charged with crimes against children

By Dee Dellenbach
Staff writer

Keith O. Munson of Delphi and Leon C. Sprinkle of Camden were charged Monday in Carroll Circuit Court for felony crimes against children.

Munson, 28, was charged with child molesting and four counts of child exploitation. He is charged with having performed

deviate sexual conduct with a child who was nine years old; and creating a digitized image of a performance of sexual conduct.

Delphi Police Officer Brandon Endicott was one of the investigators. In the Probable Cause Affidavit, he reported that Munson admitted he had touched and photographed the child. Munson also said he provided

Continued on page 10A

EARLY DEADLINES NEXT WEEK
Due to the July 4th Holiday
ALL ADS, NEWS & CORRESPONDENTS DUE BY:
Friday • 12 Noon
Closed Tuesday July 4th
The *Comet* will be published on Wednesday