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Advance Design expands in Pine City

By Mike Gainor

Advance Design & Systems, LLC is expanding on its property at 325 Airport Road NE in Pine City, and owner Dave Crawford said he is excited for the opportunities that more space will give his business.

“We’ve grown over time here,” Crawford said. “We have a big automation project coming through, and I need the assembly space.”

Crawford said the project will also allow them to bring in new manufacturing equipment, and that the front of the building will be added onto for the engineering department as well.

Crawford said he had considered starting the expansion earlier. “I took a look at it last year,” he explained. “We had the work, but I wanted to hold back and see what the rest of the economy was doing. I kicked it off this year after the first quarter. It’s better to be cautious than to be overextended.”

The expansion will mean more jobs for the area, Crawford said. “After we get it up and going, we’ll potentially be hiring another five to seven employees,” he stated.

Crawford added that Advance Design jobs are on the higher end of the wage scale for the area. “They’re not your minimum-wage job,” he said. “It’s equivalent to what you’d be making in the Cities.”

Advance Design specializes in building manufacturing and assembly machines for fields where exact work is a requirement.

“We build precision automated equipment for the medical and aerospace arena,” he said. “We’ve branched off into 3M, GE – companies like that. But our mainstay is the medical arena with high tolerances.”

The business can handle every part of the process. “We design, manufacture, assemble and integrate everything that we do,” he said. “We’re basically a one-stop shop.”

Crawford said his business’ focus is unlike many other manufacturers. Advance Design often creates just one machine for a business to use in the research and development of its own products. “We’re doing a one-off combination all the time,” he said. “We’re not doing production or mass quantities. That’s what makes us different,” he said. “We’re trying to develop a process with a customer so they can produce their

product.”

This is the sixth year of Advance Design. Crawford said he had been working in the medical industry, but was interested in starting his own business. He saw the opportunities in the Pine City area for Advance Design, and got to work.

“I lived up here,” he said. “I saw some talent up here, and knew that there were a lot of people traveling to the Cities – and what better place to live, work and play, all together?”