

HMF and Formrite join forces

HMF Innovations has acquired Formrite Companies, a leading provider of formed steel tubing for hydraulic and structural applications. Formrite's markets include the construction, mining, agriculture, furniture and lawn-equipment. With the acquisition of Formrite, HMF Innovations along with its sister company, Heavy Metal Fabricators, will be able to provide their shared markets an expanded range of steel fabrication, assembly and automation services.

"Our shared customer base is always looking for suppliers that can provide an increasing range of products and services including complete parts and assemblies direct to an assembly line," said David Wage, President and Owner of HMF Innovations and Heavy Metal Fabricators. "Together Formrite, Heavy Metal Fabricators and HMF Innovations can now provide our customers with complete machined fabrications from six pounds to 60-tons along with steel tube assemblies and complex sub-assemblies, all manufactured using the latest automation technologies."

In addition to his ownership of HMF Innovations and Heavy Metal Fabricators, Wage is currently Formrite's President and Chairman of the Board. Under the purchase agreement, Wage will acquire a significant controlling interest of Formrite's outstanding stock. Together, Formrite, Heavy Metal Fabricators and HMF Innovations plan

- to work with their key customer base to find new and creative ways to fabricate sell components including fabricated tube assemblies.

- As part of the acquisition, HMF Innovations will move its engineering and manufacturing operations to Two Rivers; Heavy Metal Fabricators will remain located in Manitowoc. Financing for this relocation will be assisted by a \$350,000 working capital loan to HMF from the City of Two Rivers Revolving Loan Fund.

- Wage expressed optimism that Formrite will continue to see a recovery in its business as the national economy rebounds, allowing the company to recall some or all of the 50-plus employees currently on layoff. HMF anticipates growth in its workforce as manufacturers begin to invest in automation and robotics.

- The EDC of Manitowoc County worked actively to seek new investment in Formrite. "The EDC Private Investment Committee did an excellent job in recruiting potential new investors for this project," said EDC Executive Director Kenneth Stubbe. "But without the help of David Wage,

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Our New Look



You may have noticed that things look different! The Economic Development Corporation of Manitowoc County has updated its look coinciding with its completion of five years of providing free and low cost expert consultative support to existing and new businesses in Manitowoc County -- growing businesses and creating jobs.

Along with the brand change, the EDC has upgraded its web page to include a more streamlined entry point as well as created a Facebook page.

The new brand incorporates the New North regional brand developed in 2003 that seeks to showcase the 18-county northeast Wisconsin region's assets.

Our brand was developed with the help of 6TSix Studios. The the website and Facebook page were built with the help of graphics and web design intern Trista Clemens with content developed by the Economic Development Corporation of Manitowoc County.

Running the last farm with animals on the Sheboygan County Lake Michigan shoreline, just south of Manitowoc County line and one mile from Whistling Straits golf course, Nate and Mary (Wunsch) Calkins knew they needed to diversify their farming operations as increased environmental regulations made expanding their farm difficult.

Building upon the 9-hole, 3-par rated golf course that Mary's father developed in 1999 and the burgeoning tourism industry in Manitowoc and Sheboygan Counties, the Calkins thought in 2007 that adding a bed and breakfast would be the next logical step. But they didn't know where to start.

"When we decided to look into this venture we were blind as to where to

- start," says Nate Calkins. "I have
- a construction/engineering and
- farming background and Mary has
- a teaching background."
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- One thing they knew for sure was
- that it was very important to keep
- the farm in the family for future
- generations including their two-
- year-old son Marcus. Since 1848,
- the founding year of the State
- of Wisconsin, the Wunsch family
- has owned land along the Lake
- Michigan shoreline. Previous
- generations have carefully added
- acres and uses to sustain the farm.
- The farm is now nearly 295 acres
- and a ½ mile of Lake Michigan
- shoreline.
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- During the E-Seed Entrepreneurs'
- Course, Nate and Mary were able
- to develop a vision for the Lake



Mary, Nate & Marcus Calkins
Lake Orchard Farm B&B

Orchard Farm Bed and Breakfast that was respectful of the past, but was always looking forward to the future.

"We appreciated the E-Seed Entrepreneurs' Course just for opening our eyes," said Nate. "It created a focus

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Lake Orchard Bed & Breakfast Open House

Nate, Mary, and Marcus Calkins invite you to attend an open house for Lake Orchard Bed and Breakfast.

When: Sunday, May 23, 2010 from 2-6PM

Where: N9214 County LS, Sheboygan

What: Come for tours and refreshments.

For more information: Contact Mary Calkins at 920-693-8336, mary@lakeorchardretreat.com, or visit www.lakeorchardretreat.com.



Formrite employees, the City of Two Rivers and Bank First National, this company could have been gone.”

Businessman Mark Ring, who serves on both the EDC Board of Directors and the City of Two Rivers Business and Industrial Development Committee, credited Wage for stepping forward as the new, local owner of Formrite. “This project is an excellent example of a collaborated effort between many people that stepped up to ensure that we keep Formrite a locally owned business with 50-plus jobs in our community. I am convinced that if this cooperation had not transpired we could have seen a much less favorable outcome,” said Ring.

Two Rivers City Manager Greg Buckley described the HMF/Formrite deal as “economic development done right.”

- Buckley noted that there were many parties involved in the transaction, including Wage, the Formrite board, EDC and the Two Rivers Economic Development Office.

- “The City of Manitowoc also deserves credit, as they indicated no objections to HMF Innovations relocating to Two Rivers, recognizing that the continued growth at of HMF Innovations, combined with a resurgent Formrite, is good for the entire community. We all have to take that broad, area-wide view of economic development,” Buckley commented.

- Formrite previously received a \$250,000 working capital loan from the City of Two Rivers

- Revolving Loan Fund in July of 2009.
- That loan will be repaid prior to the disbursement of the \$350,000 loan to HMF Innovations, according to City of Two Rivers Economic Development Supervisor Dan Pawlitzke.

- HMF Innovations expects to complete its move to Two Rivers by early summer of 2010.

- “The old days of pitting supplier against supplier in hopes of driving down prices are coming to an end. Leading manufacturers recognize that in today’s world customers and suppliers need to work together cooperatively to drive down cost and improve quality. Combining a wide range of steel fabrication capabilities with 40-years automation expertise puts us in a much better position to work cooperatively in this new business environment,” said

Project Mini-Chopper rumbles to 2010 finale

More than 300 business leaders and families applauded the efforts of 5 local high school teams as they unveiled their Project Mini-Choppers for the first time on April 23rd. Project Mini Chopper is a collaborated effort between the EDC and The Chamber. A special thanks to the Ant Hill Mob M.C. for hosting this great event and to all of our wonderful sponsors!

Upper Left: Lincoln High School/Heavy Metal Fabricators

Upper Right: Lincoln High School/MTM

Center: Manitowoc Public School District - Lakeshore Technical College

Lower Left: Mishicot High School/Manitowoc Ice

Lower Right: Valders High School/Baleigh Industrial



