

EZ Access plans new production line

Advocate Staff Report news@ucadvocate.com

The plant manager of Union County's most talked about new industry said the firm has met with such immediate and enthusiastic success that EZ- ACCESS has started a new division— ACCESS 1.

Plant Manager J. D. Kramer told the Morganfield Lions Club Friday that ACCESS 1 will produce a new line of steps and platforms mostly for the construction industry, which uses them to gain access to trailers.

The soft-spoken, personable Kramer gave a detailed account of what's going on at EZ-ACCESS, which has set up shop in the old Ferrocraft Building on Popcorn Road. The area is surrounded by the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Academy, the Breckinridge Golf and Country Club and not far from Uncle Mark's Popcorn.

Kramer noted that business at EZ-ACCESS has really been popping with orders and interest, with over 400 job applications on file!

Kramer, who was the first person hired by the Seattle-based Homecare Products, Inc., previously worked at Gibbs in Henderson and brought with him a wealth of experience "in managing people and setting up production lines." EZ-ACCESS is a division of Homecare Products.

The Waverly-area resident said there are now six people working for the new firm and all are Union County residents. That workforce should double when EZ-ACCESS begins production of the step-platforms this week.

Homecare Products has also hired an architect and plans have been drawn for the "finishing-out" of the Morganfield speculative building, which Homecare has agreed to lease-purchase from the Union County Industrial Development Authority. Kramer did report that an office complex will be added along with several dock doors. He predicted the facility will be ready for full occupancy in six to eight months and soon there after the EZ-ACCESS workforce should hit 136.

According to Kramer, the pay scale of workers will be in the \$10-\$18 an hour range. Those hired will work as welders, saw cutters, assemblers, shippers and packers.

EZ-ACCESS is shipping its current line of its high-quality and popular ramps and platforms out of the Ferrocraft Building, which measures some 45,000 square feet. Kramer said a UPS trailer is filled each day with overnight shipments of the products. Kramer noted the step-platforms will be shipped by a truck line.

The steps are made from aluminum and galvanized material and were designed by Kramer. The steps use slides and locks to range in height from 36 inches to 48 inches. He said production of the item will start at ten a day and will greatly increase as workers are hired and the move is made into the permanent facility.

Homecare decided to locate in Union County for two main reasons: the county's Middle America location makes it easy to provide next day shipping to customers, many of whom are in Florida, and, because of competition from Seattle aircraft industry, a ready workforce is not available; qualified workers can be found here.

According to Kramer, Homecare Products' human resource officials were amazed that EZ-ACCESS easily and quickly gathered 400 job applications. Kramer said he is leaving the hiring of workers to the Seattle human resource department. And, he noted, applications are again being accepted at the Popcorn Road location.