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Local man won't shrink from business



KENOSHA NEWS PHOTO BY BRIAN PASSINO

Russ Bloom has started Fast Wrap, a business that specializes in on-site shrink-wrapping of boats, furniture, etc.

BY JOHN KROWICZ
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A Racine resident has opened a new Fast Wrap business that covers various items in plastic, typically to protect them from the weather.

The business owner, Russ Bloom, says he researched four franchises for a few years and settled on shrink wrap because it seemed an interesting thing to do. He opened his office Aug. 10, operating from now out of his home.

Company officials said that shrink wrap has been used for years, usually at a site, but their franchisees bring the

NEW BUSINESS

wrap to customers. Boats, barbecues, construction equipment, half-completed homes, pools, furniture and scaffolding could be covered by the wrap, they said.

Bloom said he wrapped battleship radar domes 20 feet tall and wider than 22 feet while in training.

His shop, with a few part-time employees, has done boats, patio furniture, outdoor fountains and collector cars, with about half the work in Kenosha County.

He also offers coverings for industrial and agricultural needs such as wrapping bales of hay or crops and a temporary roof for a building that had a fire as well as tents for weddings, graduation parties and other gatherings.

A wrap for crawl spaces has an anti-bacterial agent that fights mold and mildew, he said. Bloom said the plastic wrap is put on tightly and shrunk using heat guns and special torches.

Bloom owns Innovative Home Improvements in Racine. The building industry has shrunk, too, and company

closings and layoffs often lead to the jobless moving into the home improvement business, creating more competition. However, the wrap business, Bloom said, is growing.

He said he wasn't expecting a lot of business for his first year, saying franchises often take several months before establishing themselves.

Bloom said he was a customer relations manager for a company in Kenosha County for 10 years, starting the home improvement business in 2000.

He can be reached at 877-378-9727 or 224-234-8921; see also www.fastwrapusa.com.

BRIEFS

AutoNation CEO sees sales lag until 2011

DETROIT (AP) — U.S. auto sales should recover a bit next year but will remain at depression levels through 2010 until housing prices and job cuts stabilize, the CEO of the nation's largest auto dealer chain said Monday.

AutoNation CEO Mike Jackson said in an interview that tight credit is holding down sales this year, but they will hit bottom in 2009 and start to increase next year, rising to around 11 million cars and trucks. Sales this year are running at an annual rate of around 10 million vehicles.

Auto sales, he said, won't return to normal levels until job losses and housing prices begin to stabilize. He predicted improvement in 2011 and 2012, and a return to more normal sales after that.

Green M&Ms really go green

HACKETTSTOWN, N.J. (AP) — A New Jersey candy factory that produces M&Ms flipped the switch Monday on a dedicated solar array that's the largest in the nation to serve a single manufacturing complex, according to Public Service Enterprise Group Inc.

The 18-acre field of solar panels in Hackettstown is capable of generating 2.2 megawatts per hour of clean energy.

More job cuts ahead for some employers

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Sprint Nextel Corp. is planning to cut 2,000 to 2,500 jobs, mostly before the end of the year, as it keeps losing subscribers. The wireless carrier, based in Overland Park, Kansas, said Monday it aims to cut labor costs by at least \$350 million per year.

■ The Procter & Gamble Co. is centralizing some research and development operations, affecting some 700 jobs. Most of the jobs will move to P&G's South Boston complex and centers in the Cincinnati area and Bethel, Conn., starting next year and completing by June 2012.

■ The Star Tribune in Minneapolis is cutting about 100 jobs as Minnesota's largest newspaper further trims costs after emerging from bankruptcy protection.

DOLLAR-GOLD

NEW YORK (AP) — Key currency exchange rates Monday, compared with late Friday in New York:

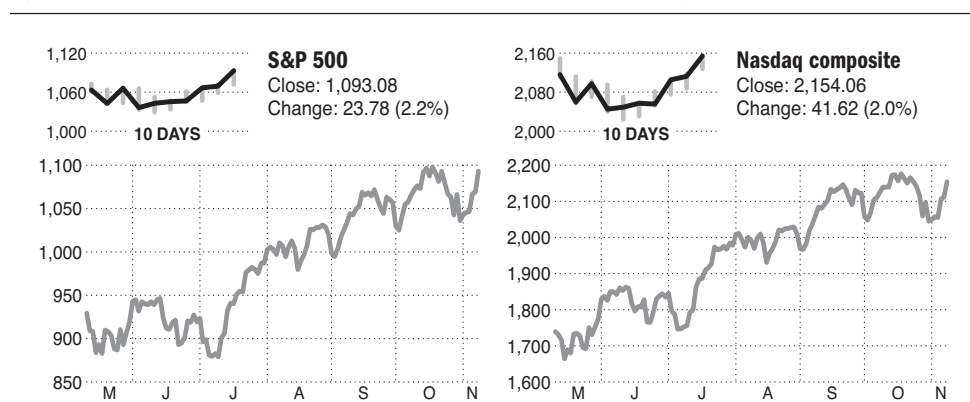
Dollar vs:	Exchange Rate	Pvs Day
Yen	\$89.99	\$89.93
Euro	\$1.4999	\$1.4835
Pound	\$1.6752	\$1.6602
Swiss franc	\$1.0079	\$1.0179
Canadian dollar	\$1.0544	\$1.0768
Mexican peso	\$13.3060	\$13.3780

Metal	Price (troy oz.)	Pvs Day
NY Merc Gold	\$1100.80	\$1095.10
NY HSBC Bank US	\$1101.50	\$1096.00
NY Merc Silver	\$17.470	\$17.365

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DOW	NASDAQ	S&P 500	EURO	GOLD	CRUDE OIL
10,226.94	2,154.06	1,093.08	1.4999	\$1,100.80	\$79.43
+203.52	+41.62	+23.78	+0.0164	+5.70	+2.00



StocksRecap	DOW	LOW	CLOSE	CHG.	%CHG.	WK	MO	QTR	YTD
Vol. (in mil.)	4,615	1,970							
Pvs. Volume	4,291	1,800							
Advanced	2574	1882							
Declined	507	812							
New Highs	223	109							
New Lows	1	26							

NAME	TICKER	52-WK RANGE	CLOSE	HI	CLOSE	CHG	%CHG	WK	MO	QTR	YTD	1YR	VOL	P/E	DIV
Abbott Labs	ABT	41.27	57.39	52.35	+82	+1.6	▲	▲	▲	▲	-1.9	-1.2	5185	15	1.60
Acco Brands Corp	ABD	0.65	7.76	6.79	+48	+7.6	▲	▲	▲	▲	+96.8	+140.8	300	dd	...
Associated Banc Cp	ASBC	8.92	21.80	12.70	+22	+1.8	▲	▲	▲	▲	-39.3	-35.3	1073	47	0.20
Baxter Intl	BAX	45.46	62.50	56.29	+17	+2.1	▲	▲	▲	▲	+2.0	-3.3	4096	16	1.04
Briggs Stratton	BGG	11.13	23.34	19.06	+40	+2.1	▲	▲	▲	▲	+8.4	+30.1	227	33	0.44
Brunswick Corp	BC	1.82	13.43	11.51	+59	+5.4	▲	▲	▲	▲	+173.4	+239.6	882	dd	0.05
Cardinal Health	CAH	19.93	29.82	29.97	+47	+1.6	▲	▲	▲	▲	+21.1	-21.6	3349	13	0.70
Fortune Brands	FO	17.68	46.77	40.58	+130	+3.3	▲	▲	▲	▲	-1.7	+12.8	763	dd	0.76
Gen Electric	GE	5.73	19.39	15.85	+52	+3.4	▲	▲	▲	▲	-2.2	-11.9	100669	14	0.40
Grainger WW	GWV	58.86	98.50	98.50	+174	+1.8	▲	▲	▲	▲	+24.9	+35.2	591	17	1.84
Harley Davidson	HOG	7.99	29.08	27.07	+134	+5.2	▲	▲	▲	▲	+59.5	+27.4	3865	26	0.40
Hewitt Associates	HEW	22.78	38.33	38.25	+74	+2.0	▲	▲	▲	▲	+34.8	+38.7	574	16	...
Honeywell Intl	HON	23.06	40.55	38.44	+74	+2.0	▲	▲	▲	▲	+17.1	+37.7	3694	13	1.21
Hospira Inc	HSP	21.21	48.23	47.47	+88	+1.9	▲	▲	▲	▲	+77.0	+55.1	804	17	...
JPMorgan Chase & Co	JPM	14.96	47.47	44.35	+87	+2.0	▲	▲	▲	▲	+42.4	+15.0	38342	28	0.20
Johnson Controls	JCI	8.35	27.90	26.62	+39	+1.5	▲	▲	▲	▲	+46.6	+56.8	4669	dd	0.52
Johnson Outdoors	JOUT	3.89	10.20	8.99	+34	+3.9	▲	▲	▲	▲	+61.3	+19.9	3	dd	...
Kohls Corp	KSS	24.28	60.89	56.97	+29	+0.5	▲	▲	▲	▲	+57.4	+69.8	3888	20	...
Ladish Company	LDSH	5.21	17.90	12.57	-07	-0.6	▼	▼	▼	▼	-9.2	-18.7	110	22	...
Manpower Inc	MAN	22.61	63.00	51.35	+118	+2.4	▲	▲	▲	▲	+51.1	+75.1	832	79	0.74
Marshall & Ilsley	MI	2.98	17.44	5.53	+33	+6.3	▲	▲	▲	▲	-59.5	-65.9	9694	dd	0.04
MeadWestvaco Corp	MWV	7.53	25.01	25.67	+106	+4.3	▲	▲	▲	▲	+129.4	+93.4	1651	63	0.92
Modine Mfg	MOD	0.73	11.50	10.25	+17	+1.7	▲	▲	▲	▲	+110.5	+45.2	258	dd	...
RPM Intl	RPM	9.09	19.74	18.98	+61	+3.3	▲	▲	▲	▲	+42.8	+42.2	752	20	0.82f
Rockwell Automation	ROK	17.50	45.12	43.30	-02	...	...	...	...	...	+34.3	+80.4	3196	20	1.16
Sanmina-SCI Corp	SANM	1.08	9.15	8.39	+19	+2.3	▲	▲	▲	▲	+197.5	+92.5	960	...	...
Snap-On Inc	SNA	20.51	41.65	38.91	+92	+2.4	▲	▲	▲	▲	-1.2	+12.2	387	14	1.20
Supervalu Inc	SVU	8.59	20.38	17.00	+48	+2.9	▲	▲	▲	▲	+16.4	+24.0	2996	dd	0.70
Teleflex Inc	TFX	37.21	54.61	52.18	+112	+2.2	▲	▲	▲	▲	+4.2	+5.9	75	22	1.36
Twin Disc	TWIN	4.02	15.23	11.45	+61	+5.6	▲	▲	▲	▲	+66.2	+74.0	35	19	0.28
Ult Technologies	UTX	37.40	66.36	66.73	+166	+2.6	▲	▲	▲	▲	+24.5	+31.6	3710	16	1.54
Walgreen Co	WAG	21.39	40.69	40.04	+47	+1.2	▲	▲	▲	▲	+62.3	+70.5	7794	19	0.55
Wisconsin Energy	WEC	36.31	46.50	45.23	+62	+1.4	▲	▲	▲	▲	+7.7	+14.8	949	15	1.35

Stocks are those that affect the local economy. Kenosha Area Business Alliance contributed to the list.

BOARD OF TRADE

CHICAGO (AP) — Agriculture futures advanced Monday on the Chicago Board of Trade. Meanwhile, beef futures rose and pork futures traded mixed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

■ Wheat for December delivery surged 22.75 cents to \$5.20 a bushel;

■ December corn jumped 19 cents to \$3.86 a bushel;

■ Oats for December delivery gained 4.5 cents to \$2.585 a bushel;

■ January soybeans added on 17 cents to \$9.72 a bushel;

■ December live cattle slipped 0.05

cent to 84.95 cents a pound;

■ January feeder cattle fell 0.37 cent to 95.7 cents a pound;

■ December lean hogs inched up 0.1 cent to 55.8 cents a pound;

■ February pork bellies lost 1.5 cents to 84.6 cents a pound.

Recall warns baby strollers can slice off kids' fingertips

WASHINGTON (AP) — About a million Maclaren strollers sold by Target and Babies "R" Us were recalled Monday, after 12 reports of children having their fingertips amputated by a hinge mechanism.

The recall includes all nine models of single and double umbrella Maclaren strollers, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which announced the recall after an investigation.

The amputation risk occurs when a child's finger is placed in the hinge mechanism of a stroller while it is being unfolded. When the opened stroller locks into place, it can cut off the tip of the child's finger.

The recall includes the following stroller models: Velo, Triumph, Quest Sport, Quest Mod, Techno XT, TechnoXLR,

RECALLS

Twin Triumph, Twin Techno and Easy Traveller. They have been sold at Babies "R" Us, Target and other stores around the country since 1999. Prices for the strollers ranged from \$100 to \$360.

The company is offering free hinge covers to prevent future incidents. The covers should not be removed unless the stroller is being cleaned, according to the CPSC.

"Our message to parents, grandparents and all caregivers is to make sure that you stop using these strollers until you get the repair kit, which zips the covers in place," said CPSC's Patty Davis.

The strollers were manufactured in China and distributed by Maclaren USA Inc of South Norwalk, Conn.

Kraft's \$16.4B Cadbury bid starts takeover tussle

NEW YORK (AP) — Kraft Foods has gone hostile in its bid to buy Cadbury but didn't sweeten its first bid, drawing an immediate rejection from the British candy maker in what is likely to be a lengthy takeover struggle.

Taking the same offer directly to Cadbury shareholders likely means that Kraft is betting no competing bids will emerge for the maker of Dairy Milk and Creme Eggs. The early gambit also leaves the company room to take the bid higher.

Kraft made the offer, worth about \$16.4 billion, just hours before a Monday deadline imposed by Britain's takeover law that required the company to make a formal offer or back off for six months. Kraft now has 28 days to file a prospectus, which will then trigger more deadlines that could last months.

Now it's up to Cadbury's shareholders to decide.

Most likely, they'll hold out for a higher offer, analysts say. Kraft put a maximum value on the deal of \$17 billion.

LIVESTOCK

REESEVILLE (AP) — Monday's Milwaukee Stockyards report:

Cows: no-roll cows 42-47; high-yielding cutters and utility 35-40; cutters 30-35; canners and shells up to 30.

Holstein steers: high choice and prime Holstein steers 1,400-1,650 pounds 71-74; choice Holstein steers 65-70; select and unfinished Holstein steers up to 65.

Beef cattle: prime Angus beef 1,200-1,450 pounds up to 77; choice steers and heifers 73-76; select beef steers and heifers up to 70.

Bulls: premium beef bulls 1,600-2,050 pounds up to 55; common to good bulls 48-54.

Replacement calves: premium bulls 90-120 pounds 45-60; common to good bulls 80-120 pounds 30-45; premium heifers up to 250; common to good heifers 100-200; boning calves up to 30.

Today's estimated receipts: 500 cattle and 30 calves.

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