

# LOCAL

## Liberty Pumps expansion project under way

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BERGEN — Charles Cook stood outside Liberty Pumps Friday and spoke with satisfaction about the performance of his company.

“We’re very happy,” he said.

Cook made the comments prior to the official groundbreaking ceremony for a \$4 million expansion of Liberty Pumps. About 100 people attended the event, in Appletree Acres Corporate Park on Route 33.

Employees wore T-shirts with “Liberty Pumps, 2008 Building Blow-Out, Expanding for the Future” printed on the back.

Cook recalled that, eight years ago, Liberty Pumps became the first tenant in the newly opened corporate park. At the time Apple Tree Acres was a vacant farm field.

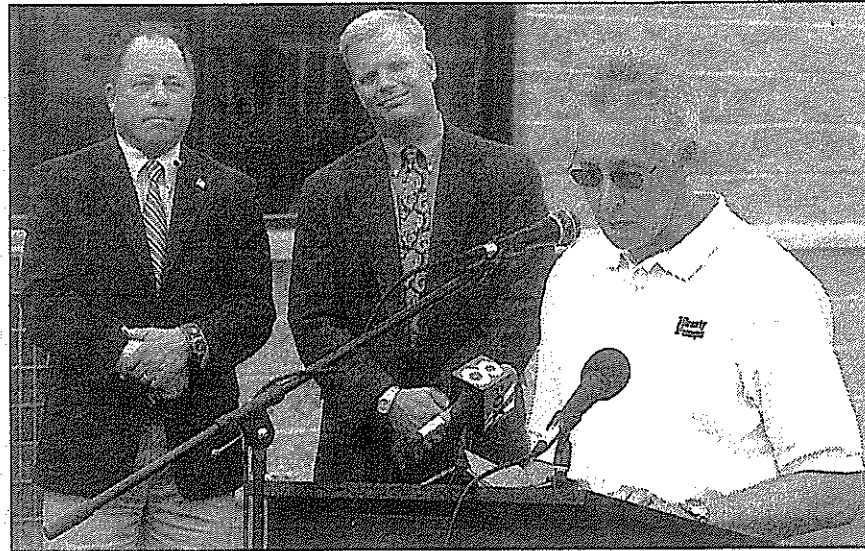
At the 2000 groundbreaking Cook said that he would see everyone in 2012 for the expansion.

“I guess it shows I’m a lousy planner,” he cracked on Friday.

Cook said the project has been in the works for about three years. It includes a 64,000-square-foot addition to increase the company’s manufacturing capabilities and expand its product lines.

Some of the newly built space will also be used for research and development and office space for support staff.

Cook said he hopes the work will be completed by Nov. 1. The expansion



Rocco Laurienzo/Daily News

**EXPANDING:** State Assemblyman Steve Hawley, left, and Genesee County Economic Development Center Executive Director Steve Hyde listen to Charlie Cook, owner of Liberty Pumps in Bergen, Friday at the official groundbreaking ceremonies for the firm’s \$4 million expansion project.

will double the size of the company’s physical plant.

The firm makes sewer, water and effluent pumps and pump systems for residential and commercial use. Liberty sells its products to plumbing supply distributors throughout North America.

Liberty Pumps has 84 employees and plans to create 15 new jobs in the next three years, Cook said.

“This is one of the great examples for a terrific leadership team,” said Steve Hyde, executive director of the

board of directors and his senior management team for helping the company grow and prosper. He also expressed gratitude to The Bank of Castile, for putting together the financing package and to the EDC for laying the groundwork for the project.

“The GCEDC is always our first call whenever we’re going to do anything,” Cook said.

Apple Tree is in the county’s Empire Zone. The designation provides extra financial incentives from the state for companies that wish to expand or locate in the corporate park.

Thompson & Dilcher of Bergen is the general contractor for the expansion project.

Friday’s event took place next to a pile of dirt and large pit on the north side of company’s main building.

“As you can see, the actual groundbreaking preceded the formal groundbreaking by a couple weeks,” Cook said.

Liberty Pumps has been in operation since 1965. The company has almost tripled its business since moving into Apple Tree eight years ago, Cook said.

“For the year we’re up 9 percent over last year,” he said.

Cook said that was good news in a slow economy that has brought the housing industry into a major swoon. He said there is still a market for pumps because people who cannot afford to buy new homes are instead remodeling the ones they live in.

Genesee County Economic Development Center. The GCEDC is providing Liberty Pumps with a \$502,400 incentive package that includes partial exemptions on property, sales and mortgage taxes over a 10-year period.

Assemblyman Steve Hawley attended the groundbreaking.

“It’s very, very heartening to see my good friend, Charlie Cook, continue his saga of excellence,” Hawley, R-Batavia, said.

Cook thanked his employees, his