

Country Blacksmith

Offering custom design and repairs

By Randy Olson

When the CNN Television Network needed a special trailer to pull a generator behind their TV truck in Washington, D.C., they contacted Country Blacksmith Trailers in rural Johnsonville to custom design and manufacture a trailer for their needs.

While not all their customers are as high profile as CNN, every order is treated very meticulously by the craftsmen at Country Blacksmith, who build each trailer by hand.

The business was founded in 1995 as a trailer repair shop by Jeffrey Cooley. He began building customized trailers in 1998. Neil Kurtz started working at the business in 1999. Cooley sold Country Blacksmith Trailers to Kurtz in 2001, and Cooley moved away to Pennsylvania. Since 2001, Kurtz has expanded the business, which now has six employees. They currently manufacture between 150-200 customized trailers each year.

"Most of our customers are not first-time trailer buyers," said Kurtz, "they usually come in and tell us what they want and we work through the details together to customize the unit to their individual needs."

Country Blacksmith recently manufactured a specialized trailer for Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative to enable linemen to handle large spools of wire more efficiently.

In addition to building custom trailers, Kurtz and his staff offer trailer repair on any make, model or type of



trailer, regardless of the manufacturer. They can repair the floor, wiring, lights, sandblast, repaint or completely rebuild or modify any unit for any purpose. They are also very competitive on retail trailer parts, offering many parts in stock and 24-hour turnaround on just about any part for any trailer.

Many of their customers are repeat customers, and while they do some advertising in statewide publications, word-of-mouth has been their best form of advertising to date. "Our goal is to hear the customer say, 'that's exactly what I need,' when they come in to pick up their trailer," said Kurtz. That word of mouth is exactly how they got the job order from CNN. A representative of the generator company told CNN officials about Country Blacksmith

when they were searching for a solution to their trailer needs.

Another unique trailer that they have built is the double-decker design pictured above, which hauls an SUV on the bottom and a boat on the top. It is hydraulic-driven to lower the boat and form a ramp for easy launching and loading. "It's a one-of-a-kind unit," said Kurtz, "but we could build another one if somebody were to request it."

While every order is manufactured by hand to each customer's needs, Country Blacksmith also supplies two dealers with trailers. One dealer is located in New Jersey, and the other one is in Indianapolis. "We are their customization source," said Kurtz, "we work with them to build a specialized trailer to meet their customers' needs."

Electricity to Country Blacksmith Trailers is supplied by Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative. "Our service is rarely interrupted," said Kurtz, "and when it is, they usually have it back on within an hour, which is very important for a business like ours. We appreciate the outstanding service that the cooperative provides to us."

For more information about trailer repair, parts, or a new customized trailer design, you can contact Country Blacksmith Trailers in Johnsonville at (618) 835-2771. They are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Country Blacksmith Trailers is where Innovation, Dependability and Quality meet.



Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative

www.WayneWhiteCoop.com