

the latest

GOSHEN

3-D print festival draws crowd to fairgrounds

More than 100 printers were on display at the 2014 Midwest RepRap Festival.

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GOSHEN — A 3-D printing festival brought visitors from across the country to the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds this weekend.

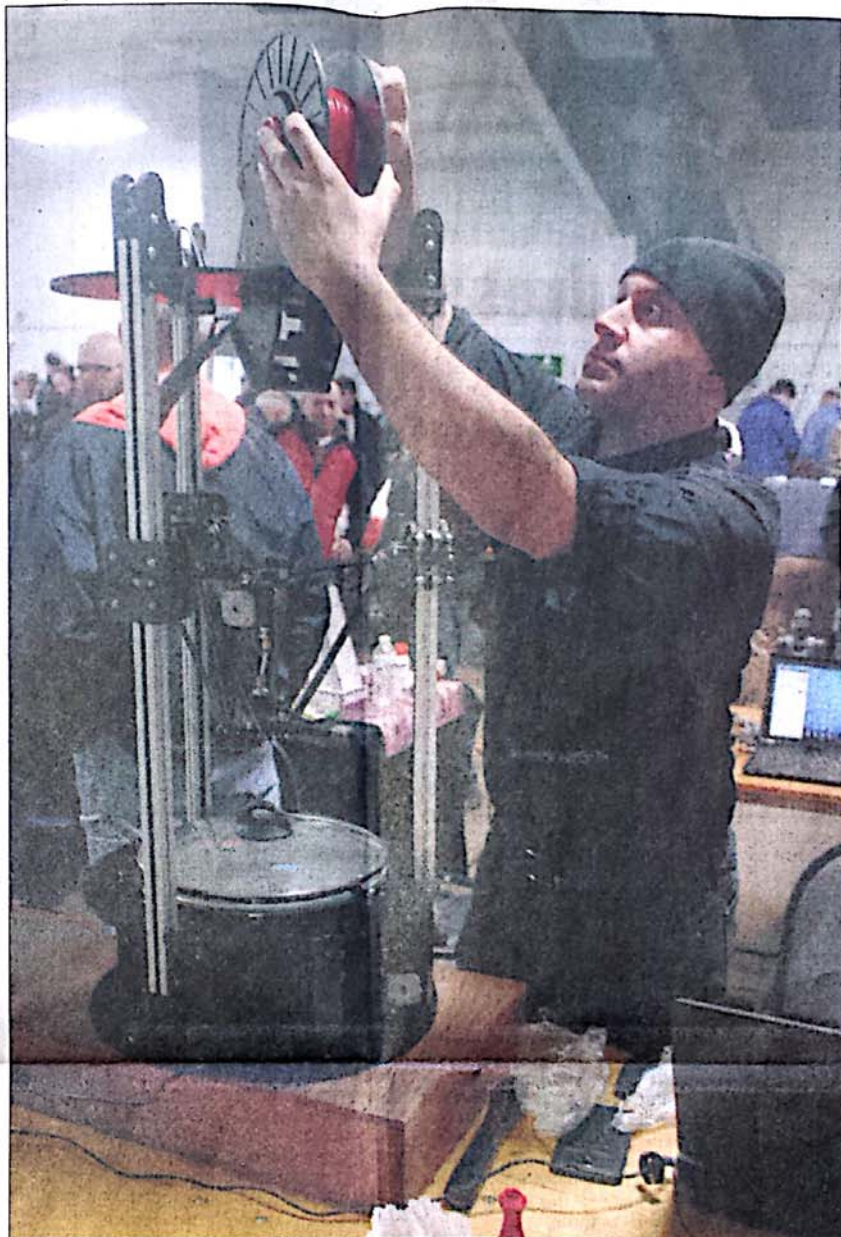
The 2014 Midwest RepRap Festival — with RepRap referring to 3-D printers that are made using free plans and software available online — was Saturday, March 15.

More than 100 3-D printers ranging in size, shape and capability were on display in the main exhibit hall, many of them busy printing objects. Some booths featured established companies in the business that brought along their own printers, while others showcased hobbyists and the printers they've built in their spare time.

Most printers work by building objects layer by layer with heated filament that comes out of a nozzle. The technology has been around for decades but has only become affordable enough for the public to experiment with in the last several years.

Printed objects on display included miniature human replicas, prosthesis and mythical creatures.

Alex VanDiepenbos was there representing Trick Laser, a family-owned Goshen business that provides 3-D printing and engraving accessories. He's



J. Tyler Klassen / The Elkhart Truth
Phillip Briski, Elkhart IN, loads ABS plastic build material into a 3-D printer at the Midwest RepRap Festival at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds on Saturday March 15.

also part of Makerspace: Goshen, a local group of hobbyists that often uses technology to create new things.

He said people don't think about the Midwest as being a hotbed of up-and-coming technology, and he

wants to see that change.

"We're trying to remake the image of the Midwest as a tech center. It's not just California; it's not just New York. The Midwest has it too," VanDiepenbos said Saturday.

The event was hosted by

SeeMeCNC, a Goshen business that sells 3-D printer kits. Owner Steve Wygant said Saturday that festival attendance had far surpassed his expectations.

The event wraps up at the fairgrounds at noon Sunday, March 16.