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Linc Service technician Frank Foster (left) attaches the air return on an adaptor, which had to be custom made to fit the new heating and cooling unit, atop the old mount on the Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center in Westover Park last week. At right, technician Ray Houser of Staunton guides a crane with more adaptors.

Activities Center Leads City's Greening Efforts

Federal Grant Improves Energy Efficiency

By JEFF MELLOTT
Daily News-Record

HARRISONBURG — A large crane boom swung over Harrisonburg's Community Activities Center on South Dogwood Drive on Wednesday as work progressed to help make the building more energy-efficient.

The improvements included the placement of solar collectors on the outside and changes to the lighting system inside.

The work at the activities center is expected to help reduce heating and cooling costs by \$150,000 over the next 15 years, according to Jeff Buennemeyer, Linc Service's mid-Atlantic vice president.

Federal Grant

The city hired Linc Service, a national company with headquarters in Pittsburgh, to develop an energy efficiency study of some government buildings, including the center, and then contracted with them to make improvements.

The city paid for the study, center improvements, and other new equipment with a \$206,200 federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funded the grant.

The changes at the center include the replacement of equipment that

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Colleges, Communities Going 'Green'

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had nearly outlived its usefulness, Buennemeyer said.

Going Green

Harrisonburg, of course, is not alone in seeking ways to cut energy costs. The region's universities and colleges, and several town and county governments also have made strides in going "green" with solar panels, alternative fuels and other environmentally friendly changes.

Awareness about energy usage is growing, said Buennemeyer, a 1984 Harrisonburg High School graduate.

"Today more than ever," he said, "there is more pressure on building owners and managers to be more efficient and consume less energy."

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The Linc Service works to install new heating and cooling units and a solar panel atop the Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center in Westover Park in Harrisonburg.