

Hometown Service...Hometown Pride!

Thoughts from the President



Bill Wallace

Happy Spring everyone! We have had an amazingly mild winter; I just hope the “in like a lamb out like a lion” doesn’t pertain to 2024.

First, I want to wish Laurie Mills a happy retirement. As featured in our last issue, Laurie has decided to retire at the end of March after 36 years with Big C. Her contributions to our company are many and could easily fill up this entire issue. She was the one that usually got the tasks that no one else wanted to do, and always did them with perfection. She will be sorely missed but wish her and her husband Greg, who is also retiring, nothing but the best in this next well-deserved chapter of their lives.

Also retiring after 36 years at the end of April and featured in this issue is Alan Town, our Director of Marketing. As you will read in this issue, marketing times sure have changed and I want to give credit to Alan and acknowledge that you can teach an old dog new tricks. To say marketing has changed in the past 30 years would be an understatement and most recently Alan has helped drive us into the online and digital age. Marketing encompasses so much more than advertising it would take this entire article to comment on what he has been involved in. We will surely miss him and his contributions to building the Big C brand but wish him and his wife Lisa well as they happily drive, with the top down, through the rest of their lives.

As I write this, we just returned
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Alan Town announces retirement

Director of Marketing (and former Big Scene author) Alan Town has announced his retirement after 36 years with Big C Lumber.

Alan started in 1988, where at the time, only three Big C locations existed. Alan worked in the Purchasing department, but also was handling advertising duties & co-op activities. It wasn’t until 1999 when our rapid growth called for the creation of a new role: Director of Marketing & Public Relations. Alan says, “We advertised heavily with monthly (usually eight months out of the year) sale flyers that were distributed in the newspapers ... At one point we distributed over 150,000 flyers per month.” The art of newspaper advertisement is unfortunately declining in today’s world. The next big avenue would be on the screen in front of you, digital marketing. “A little over eight years ago we decided to take that leap.” Alan recalls. “At first it was daunting, but I cannot imagine being without it now. The big question in advertising has always been, “how do we know it’s working?” Now we have a way to measure it, and best of all direct our message only to people who are interested in our products and services. Thirty-six years ago I never dreamed we’d have the advertising capabilities we now enjoy!”

Advertising is a large part of what marketing entails, but the role requires many more one-off moments that keep the job fresh. “One of the best things about my position is there are so many different responsibilities in this department, and each day is different. A new challenge or project always kept things interesting.”

As for his plans in his retirement, he says “We recently bought a convertible for our retirement and are excited to start enjoying it and will be planning some road trips. We also enjoy exploring historical sites and museums and there are a lot of things in this country we haven’t seen yet. We’ll now have the time to do that!”

Career Development helping Five Star Life

On March 2nd, members of our Career Development program assisted in the demolition of a dilapidated deck on Five Star’s campus. When this group first visited the campus in Union, MI back in August, they noticed a deck built over their go-kart track was in bad shape. At this time, there isn’t a plan for rebuilding this, but due to it being a safety hazard, it had to come down. Part of our message at Big C Lumber is to give back to our communities in which we serve, and these wonderful employees did just that. Thank you to all of those who participated!



Alan Town



Pictured (left to right): Brandon Magor, Garrett Baumann, Alan Skrzypiec, Olley Wise, Jayson Strozewski, Jeff Carroll, Brayden Baumann, James Taylor, Hunter Dolson, Paul & Jayne Moyer, Caitlin Stone, Josh Johnson, and Chris Roelandts



We'd like to welcome the following new associates to the Big C Lumber family:

ROSELAND: Jennifer DeMeyer - Cabinet Sales, Jennifer Deniger - Cabinet Sales, Thomas Foster - CDL Driver
THREE OAKS: Jake Denham - Yard & Warehouse, Anthony Sanchez - Yard & Warehouse
LAPORTE: Justin Brown - CDL Driver
MISHAWAKA WINDOW & DOOR: Jonathan Hernandez Cruz - Driver, Mason Lehman - Driver
SCHOOLCRAFT: Kirsten Smith - Cabinet Sales
KENDALLVILLE: Matthew Herendeen - Driver, Noah Shepherd - Yard & Warehouse
EDGERTON: Nya Lovejoy - Office
DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS: Roberto Overton Jr. - Production, Maxwell Weaver - Estimating, Joshua Cowley - Yard & Warehouse

We're glad to have you all with us!

CROMWELL

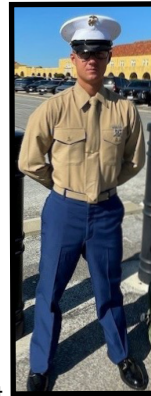
Outside Sales Coordinator Jennifer Baker announced the birth of her first grandson, Gabriel Mark on February 11th. He is in good health, and Jennifer and him can't wait to spend quality time together.



Gabriel Mark

For another exciting piece of news in the Baker family, her son Kade graduated from Marine Boot Camp on December 1st after 3 months of training in San Diego.

From the time he was 12 he wanted to become a Marine, and now that dream is closer to being a reality. Congratulations Kade!



Kade Baker

LAPORTE

If you have been inside of our Laporte location recently, you may have noticed something different about its showroom: there is a whole building inside of a building! The creation of this is to help our customers visualize the symphony of components needed to build and update their home. We can't wait to see the end result!



Current progress of interior mock building

Our Laporte location was at Blue Chip casino for the Builder's Association of Laporte County Home & Lifestyle Expo on March 2nd & 3rd. This is the 10th year in a row that this event has been held, and working the Big C booth was Mike Padgett of the Laporte store & Jayson Strozewski of Mishawaka.



Mike Padgett at the Big C booth

GRANGER

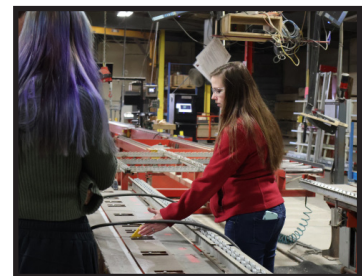
The Clay Fire Department located in South Bend has awarded their Clay Fire Partner Program to Big C Lumber. This partnership goes to the businesses in the area that help promote safety in their communities. It was awarded after our Granger location donated the land for a fire well installation that will allow emergency access to water for local businesses.



President & CEO Bill Wallace with Clay Fire Chief Timm Schabbel

DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS

On February 20th, our truss plant conducted tours of its facilities to students of Van Buren Tech Construction Trades. Their program focuses on hands-on learning of various trades, and this tour gave a chance for them to ask questions in a real life setting. These tours were led by General Manager Dallas Austin and Employee Development Specialist Shawnee Roy.



Shawnee Roy demonstrating the wall panel building table during tour

Birthdays

Best wishes to the following people who will celebrate birthdays in April & May!

ROSELAND

Mike Kieffer
Kevin DeMaegd
Scott Bunkelman
Nolan Smith

ELKHART

Zach Mounts

THREE OAKS

Nick Woerdehoff
Brenda Zeiger
Ted Zebell
Andy Lozmack

COLOMA

Bruce Hillard

MISHAWAKA

Andy Williams
Brandon Snider

ADRIAN

Danny Vansickle
Alex Cramer

EAU CLAIRE

Ty Mickiewicz
Shawn Williamson

GRANGER

Ryan Beck

LAPORTE

Randee Radloff
Wendy Church

MISHAWAKA WINDOW & DOOR

James Taylor

SCHOOLCRAFT

Nico Kronewetter
David VanOss

FORT WAYNE

Drew Hart
Dora Knuth
Jason Allen
Ron Childers

DELTON

Josh Johnson
Dave Bilek
Brett Seagle
Kelly Parker

KENDALLVILLE

Chad Ihrie

EDGERTON

Kim Binder

DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS

Jacob Beach
Emily Whitaker
Katelyn Owensby
Justin Vandenburg
Tim Craig
Michael Berry
Jonah Brethauer
Devon Killarney

GRANGER CORPORATE

Brandy Cox
Holly Oshinski
Mike Jurgensen
Jenny Szucs
Chuck Goethals

Birthdays

GRANGER CORPORATE

Brandon Magor
Roger Foley

May 21
May 31

FORT WAYNE MILL

April 5 Donna Miller
April 6 Steve Strole
May 16
May 31

May 11
May 22

Anniversaries

May 31 Congratulations to all who will be marking their anniversaries with Big C Lumber in April & May. Those with at least five years of service are recognized.

ROSELAND

April 18
May 22
April 14 May 31

Mike Schwartz 22 Years
Kevin DeMaegd 5 Years
Chris Baker 21 Years

ELKHART

April 11 April 30

Dewayne Gangwer 32 Years

COLOMA

May 27 May 1
April 5 May 31
May 3

Forrest Loihle 7 Years
Jackie Pudell 13 Years

MISHAWAKA

April 22

Sean Wood 29 Years

ADRIAN

April 17 May 2
May 6
May 29

Alex Cramer 5 Years
Calvin Deline 9 Years

April 18 May 29

Josh Edinger 9 Years

May 8 May 29

Brian Follis 9 Years

May 31 May 29

Rich Keene 9 Years

May 29

David Noffsinger 9 Years

April 5 May 29

Randy Stewart 9 Years

May 29

Aaron Stewart 9 Years

April 25 May 29

Rufus Tovar 9 Years

May 6 May 29

Manuel Valdez Jr. 9 Years

EAU CLAIRE

April 15 April 15

Emily Feirick 5 Years

April 19 May 6

Slim Bodtke 22 Years

April 29 May 31

Mark Demski 29 Years

GRANGER

May 1

Scott Dudeck 45 Years

April 2

Mark Manuszak 35 Years

May 7 April 19

Cyle Milewski 20 Years

May 9 May 7

CROMWELL

May 14

Brent Yoder 5 Years

LAPORTE

May 26 April 8

Travis Coleman 5 Years

MISHAWAKA WINDOW & DOOR

May 14

Tiffiney Sweezey 10 Years

April 14

Alan Guerra 28 Years

April 22 May 24

Kurt Gibson 25 Years

SCHOOLCRAFT

April 26

Cameron Genter 8 Years

April 27 April 4

Tom Klutts 11 Years

April 27 April 8

Chris Maze 9 Years

May 3 April 13

Steve Waldron 20 Years

May 11 May 10

FORT WAYNE

May 12

Steve Torrez 12 Years

KENDALLVILLE

May 22 April 30

Jason Wehri 7 Years

April 6 May 15

EDGERTON

April 9

Eric Culler 14 Years

April 11 April 13

April 21

May 19

Continued on back page →

Thoughts from the President (cont.)

returned from another awesome contactor trip to Secrets Maroma Beach in the Riviera Maya area. This is where both customers and many Big C employees can earn the opportunity to go on this all-inclusive rewards trip. These trips are strictly for pleasure, and employees are told that unless our customer wants to talk business, we do not bring it up.

Over the 30 years we have been doing these trips, many relationships have been formed that last long after we return. We have seen competitors become friends because they got to know each other on a personal level, and they realize we are all pulling on the same side of the rope. Business practices have been shared, subs have been shared, even projects have been shared if unable to get to them. Just goes to show you that sometimes helping and befriending your biggest competitor can prove to be a good business decision.

Continuing our 20th anniversary of the Value Statement, the next two values are:

Safety: We will do our work safely. The safety of our employees, customers, and the public will always supersede the need for expedience.

Profitability: We will charge a fair price for our products and services. We will place the value of long-term relationships above that of short-term profits.

Until next time, think warm thoughts....

Anniversaries

DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS

April 3	Mike Dorman	18 Years
April 19	John Morales II	11 Years
April 20	Justin Vandenburg	9 Years

GRANGER CORPORATE

April 16	Holly Oshinski	9 Years
April 18	Randy Huff	8 Years
April 23	Mike Jurgensen	17 Years
April 29	Chris Cook	9 Years
May 7	Matt Magor	42 Years
May 9	Laurie Mills	36 Years
May 9	Jenny Szucs	6 Years
May 20	Bill Wallace	22 Years
May 21	Blake Upham	6 Years

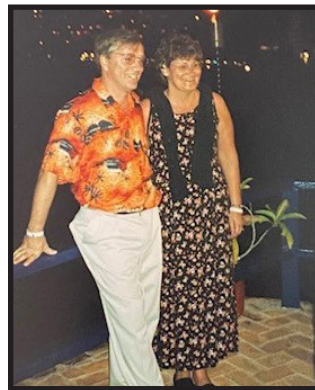
FORT WAYNE MILL

May 19	Chris Huffman	21 Years
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“The Shirt” from our Contractor Trips

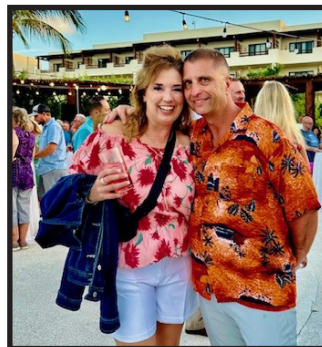
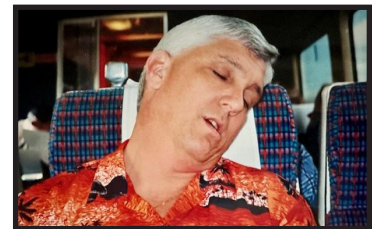
As our customers and salespeople return from beautiful Riviera Maya, a story came up that many may not know. Legend has it, in 1998 on Big C’s Cancun trip, Dale Devon (Devon Custom Homes) brought “the shirt” on the trip and it caught the interest of Scott Dudeck (Outside Sales, Granger) which Dale then gave to Scott to wear the next day. The shirt then was then passed around to others during the duration of that Cancun trip. That turned into a yearly tradition where it is given to a customer or employee to wear at the farewell party.

Usually, a Hawaiian style shirt would blend into its tropical environment, but Bill Wallace was the recipient in 2003 when he was given the shirt to wear on an early morning train ride, not in the land of palm trees, but going from Dublin to Killarney, Ireland! And so, for over 25 years, this tradition has continued. I wonder who will be the lucky recipient of “the shirt” in 2025.



2001: Customer Dale Devon and his wife Chris in Puerto Vallarta

2003: President Bill Wallace dreaming of a warmer place than Ireland!



2024: General Manager Ted Zebell & his wife Danielle in Maya Riviera



Photoshoot outside in Granger yard for Women's History Month

INDIANA

CROMWELL • ELKHART • FORT WAYNE • GRANGER
LAPORTE • MISHAWAKA • ROSELAND • SHIPSHAWANA • KENDALLVILLE

MICHIGAN

ADRIAN • COLOMA • EAU CLAIRE
SCHOOLCRAFT • THREE OAKS • DELTON

OHIO

EDGERTON

MANUFACTURING

CUSTOM MILLWORK & CABINET FACILITY
WINDOW & DOOR FACILITY
STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS FACILITY

NEXT ISSUE IS SCHEDULED FOR

**May 31st,
2024**

The Big Scene is a bi-monthly publication. Contact Alec Evans at the corporate office with comments or news stories.

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