

Hometown Service ... Hometown Pride!

Thoughts From the President



Bill Wallace

A couple of issues ago I reported on the lack of affordable housing in the US and wanted to give some context to that statement.

For several years we have documented market conditions by tracking the price of a home using the exact same product list. While the list may be somewhat outdated, it is at least consistent and provides us with a benchmark from month to month and year to year.

Comparing the numbers of the last 15 years, there have been some dramatic changes. Starting with 2010 as we were coming out of the worst housing recession most of us have witnessed, the price of this house totaled \$28,500. It floated around that number plus or minus 1-5% for the next several years until the pandemic hit. When the pandemic started in early 2020 that house totaled around \$41,000. As the pandemic persisted, we struggled to get and keep products in stock and prices soared simply because of supply and demand. Money was being distributed and earned, but there was nowhere to go and spend it, so many dumped it into their homes. People wanted products that we struggled to get because most manufacturing plants were shut down or had to curtail production. During those tumultuous couple of years, we hit our all-time high in April of 2022 at almost \$75,000 for the same exact list of material!

Since April of 2022, the price has drifted down and leveled off for the last 18 months to around \$55,000, almost

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A Summer of Outings

Summer is officially over for the 2024 season, but we had several events for both our customers as well as our employees to take advantage of that warm summer air before it ran out.

On July 19th, many employees and their families joined at Four Winds Field in South Bend to watch the South Bend Cubs play against the Quad Cities River Bandits. This year set the record for most tickets purchased for our employees with 530 tickets being dispersed. We hope to see even more of the Big C family out next year!

On July 26th, employees from several of our locations joined at Pokagon State Park in Angola, IN for our annual Big C Lumber camping trip. This is a tradition that we have held for over ten years to bring people together that might otherwise not see each other day to day, much like the Big Scene does with our communication across the company. "Getting together with employees and their families to go camping lets everyone get to know each other in a relaxed environment." says our East Regional Manager Scott Foley. "I personally have made many good friends through work who regularly attend activities outside of the work place. I think this is the case with many families at Big C. It is a big part of our culture having that sense of family and friendship with those you work side by side with."

For our valued customers, we held two events: our Schoolcraft event was on September 12th and our Shipshewana event on September 18th. These events are exciting for us because we have the opportunity to see more of our customers at once and they get to speak with representatives of the products they purchase. Vendors include Lumbermen's, Palmer Donavin, Diablo, Milwaukee, Wincore, and many more. We would like to thank everyone involved for taking the time to make this event happen.



Former employee Laurie Mills and her family enjoying the game



Brandon Magor, Kevin DeMaegd, Lisa Laskowski and family sitting by the campfire



Customers speaking with Diablo representative at Schoolcraft



We'd like to welcome the following new associates to the Big C Lumber team: **DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS:** Greg Pitchford - Production, Hunter Underwood - Production, Matthew Wenning - Estimating

We're glad to have you with us!

ELKHART

Beth Danley has announced her retirement after 38 years of working with Big C Lumber. Since 1986, Beth has seen Big C evolve from a few store operation to the company you know today. In her eyes, the biggest changes are the evolution of computers and phone use. "They had giant cell phones after I started, but we had radios in the trucks to contact drivers 'WNHT627 clear!' Old timers here will know that line for sure!" she said. Fun fact: Big C Lumber first implemented a computerized inventory system in 1981 which revolutionized how we did business.



Beth Danley posing with her retirement trophy

Now that she is retired, she says "I look forward to not having to be anywhere at any specific time! Also spending time with my grandkids and traveling." We thank Beth for her decades of dedication to serving our customers and wish her a relaxing retirement!

Speaking of the Danley family, Beth's grandson Knox recently won his 2nd Mini Wedge racing championship

on August 25th at the Plymouth Motor Speedway. Mini wedge racing is designed for children 5-14 years old and emphasizes teaching safety and sportsmanship on or off the race track.



Knox Danley and his family celebrating his win!

ADRIAN

David (DJ) Boehmer Jr. and his wife Christina recently welcomed the birth of their twins Juniper and Kapri. Both David and Christina are doing well, and we wanted to congratulate the Boehmer family on this exciting news!



Juniper & Kapri Boehmer

MISHAWAKA WINDOW & DOOR

Joe Leichtman recently celebrated 40 years working with Big C Lumber.

Over the years, Joe has held several positions including being our first boom operator to his current position as the General Manager of our Window & Door facility in Mishawaka. Reflecting on his past accomplishments he said, "Just being able to perform in the positions that have been given to me, and help the



Bill Wallace & Joe Leichtman

company in any way I can."

Many members of the Big C family have been here for decades, and that shows a testament to the opportunities that you can gain from being here. "Having done so many different jobs at Big C has been rewarding as a person. I have learned a lot over the years about this industry and about myself. I have enjoying working for a family owned business that also has become like family to me." Joe said.

Also celebrating a work anniversary is Dave Long with 25 years at Big C Lumber.



Dave Long

During his time here, he has always been a teamplayer and willing to take on additional responsibilities to ensure his location remains successful. For any employee that has worked with Big C for 25 years, they are awarded a commemorative plaque as well as an engraved watch. Thank you Dave for your loyalty to serving our customers!

SCHOOLCRAFT

In partnership with Owens Corning, we were glad to have been able to sponsor the Southwestern Michigan Home Builders Association golf outing on August 14th. This took place at Lake Michigan Hills in Benton Harbor and 108 golfers attended.



Golfers at Lake Michigan Hills in Benton Harbor, MI

Birthdays

Best wishes to the following people who will celebrate birthdays in October & November!

ROSELAND

Ashley Smittendorf	October 16
Tommy Foster	October 19
John Chapman	November 1
Anne Feirick	November 10
Jeff Carroll	November 29

ELKHART

Rodney Evans	October 24
Brett Griggs	November 3

THREE OAKS

Glen Togtman	October 26
Jeff Keller	November 4
Chris Nemitz	November 12

COLOMA

Thomas Otte	October 28
Jordan Burrell	November 5

MISHAWAKA

Cliff Williamson	October 22
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EAU CLAIRE

Hunter Williamson	October 9
Bruce "Slim" Bodtke	November 6

GRANGER

Scott Dudeck	October 20
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CROMWELL

Jennifer Baker	October 11
Tim Sheets	November 13
Frank Parker IV	November 28

MISHAWAKA WINDOW & DOOR

Fabian Rodriguez	October 30
Jeff Bultinck	November 15

SHIPSHEWANA

Hunter Dolson	October 3
Jade Bashore	October 29
Steve Christian	November 30

SCHOOLCRAFT

Cameron Genther	October 2
Dakota Dunn	October 3
Chris Perez	October 13
Steve Waldron	November 13

FORT WAYNE

Darrin Radke	October 1
Mike Spratt	October 31

DELTON

Bob Brown	October 1
James Reed	October 21
Alison Hawk	October 28
Chad Potter	November 6

KENDALLVILLE

John Wagner	October 4
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DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS

Chris Conn	October 4
Isaiah Cosey	October 8
Wendall Whitaker	October 9
Jeannette Bergman	October 14
Isaiah Jones	October 15
Aaron Morgan	October 25

Birthdays

DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS

John Morales	November 1
Dale Killarney	November 4
Shawnee Roy	November 4
Dallas Austin	November 5
Mike Dorman	November 6
Joe Rafacz	November 13
Hunter Underwood	November 13
Bryan Younger	November 14
Delmur Phillips	November 17
Mark Martin	November 19
Emily Luthringer	November 24
Roberto Overton Jr.	November 30

GRANGER CORPORATE

Chris Cook	October 2
Cathy Dudeck	October 4
Jeff Mast	October 10
Lon Wennger	October 17
Ben Chambers	November 27

FORT WAYNE MILL

Alex Diller	October 7
Nate Bradtmueller	November 8

Anniversaries

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

ROSELAND

October 26	Scott Bunkelman	9 Years
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ELKHART

October 1	Eric Freedline	17 Years
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THREE OAKS

November 7	Tim Shott	30 Years
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GRANGER

November 13	Kerry Snyder	7 Years
November 18	Bridget Patzer	5 Years

MISHAWAKA WINDOW & DOOR

October 6	Kory Shedd	10 Years
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SCHOOLCRAFT

November 17	Dave Kronewetter	21 Years
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DOWAGIAC STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS

October 8	Bryan Younger	17 Years
October 13	Lucas Sanders	10 Years
October 26	Jared Jewell	9 Years
October 31	Ben Townsend	13 Years
November 11	Chris Conn	5 Years
November 11	Jeannette Bergman	5 Years
November 11	Yasmin Escamiroso Nanco	5 Years
November 27	Tim Craig	7 Years

GRANGER CORPORATE

October 15	Rob Sherman	17 Years
November 25	Peyton Nierzwicki	5 Years

FORT WAYNE MILL

October 30	Alex Diller	7 Years
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Thoughts from the President (cont.)

double that of 2010 but \$20,000 off the all-time high. Keep in mind these are just the basic products that we would supply like framing lumber, shingles, siding, windows, drywall, doors, and trim. Many other items that we do not supply have also gone up, and while they may have retreated from their all-time highs, they too will likely stay far elevated from the pre-pandemic numbers we once saw.

That all said I think it is safe to say that there is more upside potential in price than downside. Interest rates of around 7% have prevented home buyers from jumping into the market and home builders from having too many specs sitting. They just announced the beginning of interest rate reductions so we can expect supply and demand to once again take over and the price of products will begin to increase, how much is anyone's guess.

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

Relationships: We will befriend those customers and suppliers who will welcome our friendship.

Impression: We will present ourselves in a way that inspires confidence. This includes our greetings, personal appearance, driving habits, job site behavior and every situation where we interact with the public.

Until next time -

Employee of the Year Dinner

On May 18th, our 2023 Employee of the Year winners celebrated their accomplishments at The Morris Park Country Club in South Bend. Congratulations once again to all of the winners!



(left to right): Josh Edinger, Kevin Mertz, Tom Klutts, Mike Jurgensen, Neil Ackerson, Bridget Patzer, Shawn Williamson, Yasmin Escamirosa, and Jeannette Bergman

Missing: Dale Killarney and Adam Freyenberger

Caught in the Act

In this issue, we would like to showcase Garrett Baumann's submission for Roseland driver Mike Kieffer. "While I was training new hires yesterday, Mike had pulled in to pick a transfer. Mike instantly came over and introduced himself and welcomed both of them into the Big C family. Mike offered great advice and some recommendations in our brief encounter. He spoke on how great Big C is and emphasized the importance of safety. Mike could have easily just walked by and did what he had to do, but that is not who he is. In fact, this is not the first time Mike has done such a selfless act like this. Mike, thank you for everything you do, I greatly appreciate you."



Mike Kieffer

History of "The Jingle"

"THINK BIG, BIG C!!!!" is something many remember hearing from our old TV commercials. When we first started airing them in 1987, the music that accompanied had a more "twangy" country sound. To broaden our appeal to customers, we started creating a new jingle with the help of an outside agency in late 2001. This is also around the same time we adopted the motto "Hometown Service, Hometown Pride!" that you see on the first page of The Big Scene and is also in the jingle. While we haven't used this jingle for some time, it is still a defining trait of Big C that many of our customers and employees still sing to this day.



Screenshot from commercial shot in 2005



Truck unloading windows into a new construction house.

INDIANA

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

MICHIGAN

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

OHIO

EDGERTON

MANUFACTURING

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

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The Big Scene is a bi-monthly publication.
Submit stories to news@bigclumber.com or contact Alec Evans at the corporate office.

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