

WOOD N YOU LIKE TO KNOW

Elmsdale Lumber Company Limited

January 26, 2018

Issue # 265

Notes from the Editor

Welcome 2018. Except for our shavings hopper fire on November 4th, all in all, 2017 shaped up to be a very good year. We are looking forward to another great year. Our order file is booked to the end of June and we are running full steam ahead.

Immediately following the fire, Warren and his team were spending substantial hours here at the mill in recovery mode. It was early in the game when Warren announced that he probably wouldn't be available to help with our Christmas Parade float. We rely heavily on Warren, Craig Isenor and Jason Molnar when it comes to projects such as this. We quickly decided the "ELCO ladies" were up to the task. We called in the recruits, Dawn MacIsaac (Warren's better half), Sally Molnar (Jason's wife), Dawn Isenor (Craig's wife), and Sonja Daye (Frank's wife). Angie, Chris, Kim and I rounded out the work party. This team quickly came up with a design plan and went right to work. Of special note, Dawn MacIsaac knit hats for all the little people on the float, Sally (and her daughters) made scarves for everyone, and Dawn Isenor made wreaths for the float. Also, Jason and Sally crafted our reindeer. Everyone contributed their enthusiasm, energy and talent into creating a wonderful float. We were extraordinarily happy when the "fire guys" showed up the night before the parade to help put everything together. Thanks to Frank Daye for the use of his truck and flat deck and to Lorraine Burri for supplying beautiful decorations for our tree and float.

The cleanup for this project also requires considerable labour. Once again, the guys and gals were on hand on Sunday morning for the take down. It was fun to see everyone wearing their special scarves that Sally made. Angie is so fond of hers that she wears it around the office.

Until next month, stay warm. I know I will with the help of my comfy, cozy scarf. *Connie*

Notes from the Safety Committee

2017 in Review

Jan	0 lost time	0 medical aid
Feb	0 lost time	0 medical aid
Mar	1 lost time	0 medical aid
Apr	0 lost time	0 medical aid
May	1 lost time	0 medical aid
Jun	0 lost time	0 medical aid
Jul	0 lost time	0 medical aid
Aug	0 lost time	0 medical aid
Sep	1 lost time	0 medical aid
Oct	1 lost time	0 medical aid
Nov	1 lost time	0 medical aid
Dec	1 lost time	0 medical aid

2018

Jan	2 lost time	0 medical aid
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Happy New Year! Let's make 2018 our safest year yet!

The minutes from our last safety meeting are posted on the bulletin boards around the property. Please take a moment to review these and address any concerns with your supervisor.

Our quarterly inspections are due again. That three-month parameter comes around quickly. We'll soon be sending Brian Giddens & Darren Isenor around the property to get these taken care of for us. Thanks in advance guys.

Near misses are the best learning tools out there, if we share the information! We have a strong safety culture here at the mill that emphasizes the shared responsibility of safety. It is everyone's responsibility to work as safely as possible. Let's work together to ensure we all go home safely at the end of the day. We can do this by reporting and learning from near misses to ensure we don't repeat the same mistakes.

Notes from the Safety Committee, con't

And finally, here's your regular reminder to drive for the road and weather conditions. Snow and ice can have a quick impact on driving conditions. Adjust your speed accordingly. Slower is better.

As always, if you see a safety concern or hazard, please report it to your supervisor immediately so it can be evaluated, and the appropriate action taken. We can't fix it if we don't know it's broken.

Until next month, Brian Giddens, Don Isenor, Darren Isenor, Craig Isenor, Mark Wilber, Angie Kainola

Notes from the President

Every now and then, our contributors are given an exemption from contributing to our newsletter. This month, Robin is enjoying an exemption. He and Chris are experiencing a wonderful holiday in Australia and New Zealand. We will be expecting a full report upon their return. These destination points have been on Robin's bucket list for as long as I can remember. We are all wishing them an amazing several weeks.

Before they went on vacation, Robin and I were discussing our 100 years and our employees and just how long we tend to stick around. On January 23, we employed 52 people. On the 23rd, Downey had served just shy of 71 years. If we include him in the statistics, our average length of employment is 18.5 years. Interestingly, if we exclude him (which is something we would never do), our average length of employment is 17.5 years. This number includes a couple of employees who have been here less than three months and several employees who have been here more than 25 - 30 years. I think this number speaks to the culture that we have worked hard to create here at ELCO. Many of our 25 - 30+ year employees came here as young men and will retire here.

ELCO is a great place to work!

Until Robin returns next month, Gennie

Notes from the Sales

Happy New Year and welcome to 2018. It looks like we are going to have another exciting year ahead of us in the lumber business. The demand for lumber has remained strong even through the holidays and we anticipate that it is only going to get busier as we head toward spring. Lumber supply is tight as the mills have not built up any surplus inventory during what are normally the slower months of the year. Prices made a small correction in December but are pushing forward again. Of course, an important factor in all of this is the weather. Other than a couple of bad wind storms, the winter has been quite easy on us. All in all, it makes for a promising demand for lumber.

Prices in 2017 have pushed some fairly high levels compared to the past 8-10 years. Certainly, this is good news and the industry is experiencing a much-needed reprieve from a few devastating years. Of course, everyone else has their eyes on our successful markets. We are now experiencing increased shipments of European lumber into the United States. As most Canadian sawmills now paying duty on US lumber shipments and trying to push prices high enough to cover the duty, it leaves the door open to outside competition. However, things don't always happen that easily. It has been reported that there has been a large claim on wood that has been shipped from Europe into the United States that does not meet grade. Reports are indicating that there could be 6-10 million board feet and even up to 40 million board feet of European off-grade 2x4 on the ground in the US. This is a lot of wood! Think about it, ELCO produces 32 million feet per year. This wood is a long way from home and the only way to settle such a claim is through negotiating a price or shipping it back.

Both options are very expensive for those overseas mills. Just maybe, our friends south of the border will appreciate Canadian production a little more. We will keep watching that story and I will report back if I hear any news

Notes from Sales, Con't

Here in our world, the order file is full for the next couple of months and everything should fall into place for another positive year. We have changed things up a little this year, but we still have our needle pointed north. We have a strong relationship with our customers and will continue to support them as they supported us in the tough times.

Until next month, let's keep the stars aligned! Derek

Notes from Woodlands

I hope everyone had a joyful holiday season and it is nice to be back writing to you in a brand-new year. We have seen some changes since the last time we reported at the end of November. For instance, at that time we were still monitoring a relatively high log inventory to maintain comfortable levels. A couple months later, and we find ourselves now actively building up a low log inventory to maintain comfortable levels. When wood flow started to change, Stephen quickly shifted gears and we are now starting to see increased deliveries. Our log suppliers have stepped up in response and we really appreciate their loyalty. This time last year we were not so concerned with the looming spring weight restrictions, as our inventory was already high. This year, it will be necessary to build up to be prepared. Circumstances can often change fast in this industry for one reason or another and therefore things like I will explain in the next paragraph are important to keep on our radar.

Late last summer, our Nova Scotia Government announced that an independent review on how Nova Scotia Forests are being managed would be conducted over the next few months with conclusions and recommendations presented to our government by the end of February. The job was tasked to William Lahey, a former Deputy Minister of Environment and Labour, who is currently the President of the University of Kings College. During this investigation, some aspects of timber harvesting on Crown Lands were put on hold. It was decided that until the report was finished, the approval of any new harvesting activity on Western Crown Lands would be suspended. Harvesting activity was permitted on previously approved blocks, however, this presents some challenges with a reduced basket for operations logistics.

Notes from Woodlands, con't

As most of you know, the fiber allocation we receive from crown land is managed by Westfor Inc. which represents all the mills acquiring crown wood from the western part of the province. The manager of Westfor, Marcus Zwicker, is dealing with these challenges and delivering fiber to each mill the best he can with what he has to work with. We are unsure what is going to come out of this report and how this will affect us going forward but we are hopeful that our government recognizes the important role industry plays in forest management in Nova Scotia. The crown portion of our wood supply is an important part of maintaining our fiber needs and we hope that we will continue to be able to count on this for our future success. For now, our industry is no stranger to change and I am confident we will adapt and work with the parties involved to continue to thrive going forward.

Until next time, we will keep you posted as this

Notes from Stephen Molnar's Corner

By now, everyone knows in 2017, we set a new sawmill production record for ELCO. Each week it seemed as if we were setting new weekly records. I just wanted to acknowledge that it takes an entire team to reach these landmarks. In 2017, we also had several new employees who were learning the ropes. Our more experienced guys were helpful in training these new guys. Also, we work with the Woodlands Department to make sure we are getting the quality of logs we need to keep production up. The outside team plays as important a role as does the inside team. I know that our guys have heard from other voices that we have impressed them with our ability to set records. I want to go on record that I really appreciate all the hard work and dedication we get from everyone on the team. Until next time, Stephen Molnar

Notes from Peter Dillman's Corner

You're the Best

Well, with 2017 behind us, it's time for me to hand out my annual "Employee of the Year" award for the Planing Mill. Upon reflection, there were a lot of worthy candidates. First to come to mind is Slink. With a bad hip and all, he slugs and lugs, day in and day out. He never complains. He goes up into the "Crow's Nest" whenever we cut 16' to 8'. This past year, while we were cutting 6" X 6" X 16' in half, he walked off the "Crow's Nest" platform and fell to the floor. According to Slink, he landed on some 6" X 6" on the bottom chain (which broke his fall), then he rolled onto the floor. Undaunted, he got up, dusted himself off and climbed back up.

Then there's our Safety Officer, "B". Upon seeing his Uncle Jimmy step off the grate backwards at the press and fall to the floor, "B" ran to Jim and asked if he was okay. Wait, that's not actually what he asked. He asked, "What did you do that for?" Hey "B", you never know, he might have a reason.

Another candidate is Theresa Morash who has been filling in here, there and everywhere, plugging the holes, if you will.

Then there is Whitey, who has been seen laughing and smiling several times.

These were all given a lot of consideration and deserve to be recognized. However, I must go with an employee who hasn't been with us a full year yet. I believe he started in March. Roland Murray has never missed a day since he started. He's never been late, and he's never left early for any kind of appointment. He has a perfect attendance record. He gets along with everyone. He can do many things and he brought with him past mill experience. Therefore, Roland is the recipient of the "2017 Employee of the Year at the Planing Mill Award", as voted by me! Congrats Roland!

Notes from Peter Dillman's Corner, con't

Black Friday

Black Friday started in the United States years ago and then worked its way up to Canada. We had our own version of Black Friday, January 5th. Arriving at work, we were in the dark. We weren't sure how long this would last. We knew our problem and we knew it would be a fairly quick fix once we got Nova Scotia Power on site. But like I said, we had to get them on site. We waited and waited and waited. The worse thing for me while waiting was the fact I had 2 cups of coffee and no way to heat them up. Hour 5 and they were on site. Won't be long now! I can almost taste the coffee. Hour 6 and I am not feeling well. I think I am having withdrawal symptoms. I am standing in front of the microwave asking, "What the \$%#% are they doing?" Finally, word comes to standby, we we're close. Once the power comes on, it will take 5 or 10 minutes to reboot the computer. Great, my coffee is placed in the microwave. I'm ready. Flip the switch already! The lights come on and my coffee is turning in the microwave. What a beautiful sight. By 1:30 p.m. we were in business. To say it was a long day wouldn't be justice to how most of us felt. But we persevered and made it through!

Take Care

Just wanted to give a shout out to our friend, John Ashley. Hope you are feeling better soon and take care.

Sick Bay Update

I had to revise this story. With Frenchie's return on December 1, 2017, it looked like we were going to have our entire gang back at work but unfortunately, that was not the case. Nick Miller had some eye surgery. He is recovering nicely but he is off for a few weeks. Tara is off with another finger injury. Hopefully, they will both be back by the end of the month.

Notes from Peter Dillman's Corner, con't
Here We Go!

For the past 2 or 3 years, Maggie has been telling me she wants to go somewhere other than the grocery store. I finally relented and said we should go somewhere where, but where? She told me to think it over and she would do the same. We even saw a travel agent who gave us some ideas and answered our questions. We knew we would have to take our trip in the winter as Maggie returns to work in the spring and I didn't want her to miss any time! I half-heartedly looked at places, but nothing seemed to excite me about going until one day I found a place where I wanted to go. I was ecstatic. Maggie came home, and I told her I knew exactly where I wanted to go. She told me she also knew where she would like to go. "You first", she said. I want to go to the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas on March 24th for a week. Kid Rock is giving a concert on the 24th. Wow, this is going to be a blast, I thought! She said she wants to go to Mexico. Mexico, what the heck is in Mexico? Kid Rock is not in Mexico. I showed her his tour schedule on my laptop. We were at an impasse. Anytime this happens, we have a vote. I vote, Kid Rock in Vegas. Maggie votes Mexico. We are tied. I don't know how it came to be, but it's been this way for as long as I can remember. Whenever there is a tie, Maggie gets to cast the deciding vote. And wouldn't you know it, she voted Mexico again! Tie breaker 2 - 1. Mexico here we come. However, she did throw me an olive branch. We are leaving on March 24th.

Notes from the Fire Recovery

I am pleased to report we are back into full operation. We still have a few cosmetic items to complete. If we could turn back the clock, we would. As a result of the smoke and fire damage, we did a complete cleaning and painting. The place looks better than ever. Thanks to everyone for their commitment getting us up and running as quickly as we did.

Hopefully, the next time you read an article from me, we will be installing a new boiler. Warren Hirtle

December/January 50/50

Greg Grant	Dec 1
James Sawler	Dec 8
Shawn Preeper	Dec 15
Phillip Isenor	Dec 22
Gordie Beaman	Dec 29
Rob Himelman	Jan 5
Don Isenor	Jan 12
Warren Hirtle	Jan 19
Rob Himelman	Jan 26



January/February Birthdays

Brian Giddens	Jan 3
Gennie Himelman	Jan 29
Brian Myers	Jan 15
Chad Giles	Feb 11
James Hennigar	Feb 17
Theresa Morash	Feb 11



December/January Anniversaries

	<u>December</u>	
Brian Myers		19 years
	<u>January</u>	
Jason Casey		17 years
Leslie Isenor		28 years
Tara Isenor		8 years
Stephen Mombourquette		20 years
Theresa Morash		2 years
Robin Wilber		49 years

