

Business

market place

ERB LUMBER has acquired the Welch Lumber Co. in St. Helen, a lumber and building materials dealer. Erb will take over operation of Welch on April 1 and change the name to Erb Lumber. The acquisition is the 35th location for Erb, a Birmingham based lumber and building materials dealer which operates in six states. Erb also acquired an additional 44 percent interest in Erb Building Systems, a Florida supplier of lumber, building materials and carpentry labor to large development companies. This brings Erb's interest to 95 percent.

ACCORDING TO the National Law Journal, not one of Michigan's major law firms ranks in the top 50 nationwide. In the top 10, Houston leads the way with three (3rd-ranked Vinson & Elkins with 279 lawyers; 4th-ranked Fulbright & Jaworski with 266; 10th-ranked Baker & Botts with 205). Chicago followed with two firms (1st-ranked Baker & McKenzie with 512; fastest growing Sidley & Austin which jumped from 15th in 1978 to 7th in 1979 with 231 lawyers). New York (with 2nd-ranked Shearman & Sterling, 288 lawyers), Philadelphia, San Francisco, Cleveland, Los Angeles, each have one. In the top 50, the picture changes. New York leads with six, followed by Chicago with four, Houston with three, Cleveland with two, Los Angeles with two and Philadelphia, San Francisco and Washington with one each. The largest growth firm was 1st-ranked Baker & McKenzie which added 78 new lawyers to its staff.

LENDERS poured a record \$5.27 billion into Detroit area housing and commercial mortgages in 1979, surpassing the previous record set in 1978 by almost \$620 million. The total suggested the higher costs of homes and other real estate more than a boom in sales or construction, since the number of mortgages fell to 93,694 from 97,776 in 1978 with the difference coming largely in a massive in the final quarter of 1979. The annual report by the Lawyers Title Insurance Corp. placed 91,514 mortgages of \$150,000 and under in the home-loan category. These involved \$3.31 billion, up from \$2.98 billion on 94,391 home mortgages in 1978.

HOWARD Emory, treasurer of Fruehauf Corp., will address the Macomb Chapter of National Association of Accountants at Clinton Gables, 100 N. River Road in Mt. Clemens. Cocktails are at 5:30 p.m. with dinner starting at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 20. Call Bob Densmore at 352-9682 for more details.

PETER Kaplan, senior vice president of the Mortgage Bankers Association of America, will address the luncheon session of the Mortgage Bankers Association of Michigan Feb. 21 at the Management Education Center of Michigan State University, 811 Square Lake Road, starting at 11:30 a.m.

THE METRO Detroit Chapter of the American Production and Inventory Control Society will conduct its annual seminar Feb. 16 at the Michigan State University Management Center, 811 Square Lake Road. Registration begins at 7:45 a.m. with the seminar starting at 8:30 a.m. Call Carol Modesti at 536-3535 for reservations. Topic will be "The Master Schedule Today Inputs & Outputs" featuring Dick Ling.

MICHIGAN and Detroit — 1985 — The Economic Outlook will be the topic of Harold Shapiro, president of the University of Michigan, at the Feb. 19 luncheon meeting of the Women's Economic Club. The event starts at 11:45 a.m. in the fourth level Columbus Ballroom of the Detroit Plaza Hotel. For reservations, call Agnes Scott at 873-7200.

FIRST of Michigan Capital Corp., whose principal subsidiary is First of Michigan Corp., announced consolidated revenues for the period ending Dec. 31, 1979 were \$3,586,174 compared to \$2,857,167 for the same period the year before. Net income was \$151,219, equivalent to 33 cents per share versus \$86,776 or 18 cents per share for the 13 weeks ended Dec. 29, 1978. FOM officials said that was a 25 percent increase in gross revenues and an 85 percent increase in net income. FOM Capital Corp. is the largest Michigan based underwriter of common stocks and corporate and municipal bonds.

With top hat, coattails, they're off to work

By KEVIN ROSEBOROUGH

Clad in black coattails and top hat, tall and angular Neal Bartholomew trudged through the snow.

He reached into the back of the covered pickup truck parked in his Rochester driveway and extracted one of the tools of his trade.

In his hands, he held a thick, round bristle brush. At one end of the six-inch in diameter brush was a chain, on the other a rope.

That instrument is virtually indispensable for Bartholomew, one of the area's few professional chimney sweeps.

It has been two years since Bartholomew read about chimney sweeping in Mother Earth magazine. He sent for information, and decided to found the N.E.B. Chimney Sweep Service with his wife Mary.

"I really love this," he said.

Bartholomew, 27, said it was merely coincidence that he got into the chimney cleaning business at the time the energy crisis induced many persons to start burning more wood for fuel.

The result has been more persons burning wood in stoves and fireplaces for heat and to cook. Consequently, there is a burgeoning need for the cleaning of chimney flues.

BARTHOLOMEW, HOWEVER, chooses to look at the greater number of dirty chimneys as a safety hazard as much as a source of business.

"Large amounts of creosote, a highly flammable substance, are in the soot that lines a chimney," he explained. "Creosote can easily catch fire if allowed to build up."

Bartholomew, member of the Rochester Fire Department, said he was concerned about the public's ignorance or the dangers of a dirty chimney.

"The main thing is educating the public," he said. "They should be aware."

Still, Bartholomew has some amusing tales about the methods of "do-it-yourself" homeowners who decide to tackle the problem themselves.

"I once went to a house to clean the chimney and I found a bag of rocks wedged in the middle of it," he recounted. "Apparently, the person living there had tried to clean it by dropping the bag down the chimney."

Bartholomew is a little more business professional than that. He said he can usually tell by sight if a chimney needs cleaning. If it does, Bartholomew will spread drop clothes around his work area to assure cleanliness.

WORKING FROM both inside the house and on top of the roof, Bartholomew scrapes the soot from the sides of a chimney, and extract any other debris. The brush weighted with the chain is lowered into the chimney, and he uses brushes on poles inside.

Then, the unwanted substances clogging the chimney are disposed of for the customer. Bartholomew also offers to install a variety of screens and flue caps for added protection against rain, down drafts, and other unwanted visitors.

Bartholomew said he had found dead birds, bats, raccoons, squirrels, and mice in the course of his job. "Never found a possum, though," Bartholomew is a popular depository for balls as well, he said.

About 70 percent of Bartholomew's workload is comprised of cleaning fireplace chimneys, the remainder divided between wood-stove and furnace flues.

The usual charge for a complete chimney cleaning is \$40.

Bartholomew got started in the chimney sweep business with an investment in cleaning equipment of about \$2,000. However, that initial outlay didn't cover ladders, his truck, advertising, and an answering service.

Bartholomew said he has a large service territory. "The work I do is mostly north of Eight Mile," he said. Eight Mile Road is the southern border of Oakland County.

THE CHIMNEY sweep said he has worked in Macomb and Oakland counties, and as far north as Lapeer and Ortonville. Mary, who handles the bookkeeping and scheduling for her husband, said Neal often does between three and five jobs per day.

The Bartholomews rely mainly on word of mouth to land new business, although they advertise in several area editions of the yellow pages.



Dressed in their work clothes, Neal Bartholomew and Jeff Nordlund ready to clean another chimney. (Staff photo by David Frank)

Constant reminder

Calendars boom as promotional freebies

By LAURI DAILEY

There is no such thing as a free lunch.

But there is such a thing as a free calendar.

And that business is booming. Businesses around the nation are distributing more than \$350 million worth of free calendars to their customers annually.

Wall hangers, desk calendars and pocket reminders are among varieties available to established and potential customers each year.

Used as company promotion, these calendars are a constant reminder to customers: "Purchase our goods, visit our office, use our services."

Although companies offer these calendars to established and potential customers free, the money often comes from individual pockets.

At various Chamberlain Realtors' offices in Oakland County, for example, the decision to give out calendars is left entirely up to the salesperson.

"Fifty percent of our salespeople

give out small desk calendars and the other half don't," Chamberlain's Birmingham office reports. "The salespeople pay for the calendars themselves."

In addition to the Chamberlain logo that appears at the top of each calendar, is the name, address and phone number of the individual salesperson.

Another local real estate agency, Schweitzer Real Estate, has the same policy. Agents have the option to give calendars to their clients. The wall-hanging calendars also have different agents names on them along with other information.

AMONG BUSINESSES which continue to distribute calendars are area banks.

A personal pocket diary is available to all customers at Detroit Bank in Southfield. Two calendar years are printed on this pocket reminder and the bank name appears at the top.

"We have a mailing list to businesses, but any customer can have a calendar," the Southfield branch manager says.

Liberty State Bank in West Bloomfield Township offers a small daily reminder calendar complete with a vinyl cover, a page of metric equivalents and a personal information page.

In this day and age, everything is more compact, faster and easier to use and the most popular compact calendars for 1980 are desk calendars.

Perhaps one of the more unusual variations in compact calendars is the plastic laminated card put out by Reynolds and Reynolds Co. of Southfield.

The card measures slightly larger than a 3-by-5 notecard. Each salesman orders several hundred calendars which include the company name and three calendar years. Money for these publications comes from company funds.

A second type of calendar available at Reynolds and Reynolds is a desk or ganizer, a larger calendar. These are purchased by individual salesman and are sent out to specific customers.

Wisconsin Steel Co., located in Birmingham, also puts out desk calendars complete with the product line and

names and phone numbers of marketing headquarters and district offices.

Insurance agencies also promote services by mailing calendars to clients and New York Life Insurance Co., located in Bloomfield Hills, orders different types of calendars, ranging from pocket size to wall hangers.

Picturesque scenes for each month are the highlights of wall calendars given to clients at Birmingham Insurance Agency. There is no mailing service, but clients can pick up calendars at the various offices.

IF YOUR place of business does not offer a calendar, search no longer. Birmingham, Southfield, Farmington and West Bloomfield are several Oakland County municipalities which offer desk and wall calendars free of charge.

All three calendars contain explanation of city services, emergency phone numbers and information on events and happenings in the city.

The Birmingham calendar is delivered to all residents. City Manager Steve Schwartz says.

"We also give them to the Chamber of Commerce so they can distribute them to businesses," he adds.

Southfield also offers a wall-hanging calendar, available to all residents and businesses.

The calendar contains an annual report calendar, the city budget and general information on the city. Barbara Bartos, spokesperson for the Community Relations Department in Southfield says.

West Bloomfield offers residents and businesses a desk size calendar and service directory which can save residents time and energy in looking up names and phone numbers.

Community meeting dates, emergency numbers and names of city employees are included. Photographs of city department members and a street map and index are highlights of this calendar.

"These days, it is hard to find anything cost-free, but the next time somebody says, 'There is no such thing as a free lunch,' tell them all about calendars."

Business Trends

Base for future growth is now in place

By JAMES LAGOWSKI

Logowski's projections for 1980 center around new jobs and tax base. He believes it's a priority for Michigan in 1980.

For many years, Michigan's economy has not grown at the rate of other states, such as those in the south and west.

The state's heavy dependence on the car and truck industry is certainly no secret with the Chrysler near-disaster fresh in mind.

Michigan's assets, however, can help sustain and improve the job and tax base in the 1980s. This is vital if the state is to realize a full slice of the national economic pie.

The foundation for Michigan's economic future is now in place — a powerful set of assets for reasoned growth in the 1980s. These assets include:

• Leadership recognition of the need for new job and tax base.

• New tax and financial incentives to encourage industrial and commercial development.

• A superb transportation system, including toll-free expressways, three major air terminals, six rail centers and an international waterway.

• Human resources, which include not only skilled labor, but the technical, scientific, administrative and other professional skills required to operate a business or industry.

• Low-cost access to markets for every conceivable product and service. About one-third of the North American population can be reached from Michigan in one day or less by truck.

• An established manufacturing/industrial and growing service industry base.

• Fresh water and land in abundant supply for new development — and for recreation of all types in all seasons.

Another asset of rapidly growing importance is Michigan's excellent energy supply, both electric and natural gas.

The electric energy supply is based almost entirely on coal and nuclear energy — not on foreign crude oil. More than 80 percent of Detroit Edison's electric energy comes from coal.

THIS BACKGROUND prompted state and local governments to enact new tax and financial incentive laws and begin using these new economic development tools to help keep existing companies in the state and to attract new commercial and industrial development.

Michigan's universities, such as the University of Michigan and Wayne State University, are playing an increasing role in identifying new job and tax base opportunities. The chemical industry, for example, is one targeted for relatively high growth and one which can be expanded in and attracted to Michigan.

Private industry is playing an increasing role in encouraging industrial development.

For example, Michigan's four major utilities — Detroit Edison, Consumers Power, Michigan Bell and Michigan Consolidated Gas — are funding a three-year economic development education program at the University of Michigan.

This program involves economic development seminars for elected and appointed officials throughout the state. The program is aimed at helping local communities help themselves by providing detailed information on the various aspects of industrial development.

Detroit Edison is now distributing a brand new "Economic Development Education Manual" prepared by the University of Michigan Industrial Development Division to the 400 plus communities in southeastern Michigan.

INFORMATION ABOUT the state's many assets is now being communicated to industry leaders, inside and outside Michigan, to help them reach decisions favoring new job and tax developments in Michigan.

Detroit Edison's new area development advertising program is telling Michigan's story in many local, regional and national publications,



James Lagowski is director of area development for the Detroit Edison Co.

on radio and person-to-person in speaking engagements.

A growing recognition of the long-range importance of Michigan's assets will provide the basis for new job and tax base developments.

Without these developments, our sons and daughters cannot look forward to a secure economic future in Michigan.

Each Michigan citizen can help in this process by recognizing the importance of helping improve the climate for business in our state and the quality of life in our communities. Without an active role by us all we cannot fully succeed.