



# FRUITPORT Area News

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The purpose of this paper is to be beneficial to the community it serves in every way possible.



## How Sweet It Is!

The workers at the North Pole Ice Cream came up big by donating over \$500 to the Fruitport Fire Department #2 with the Sunday night cotton candy sales this summer. Rick Leifer said they will use the money to buy Christmas trees that they will be selling at the North Pole this season, then all the money will go to Toys for Tots. Great job, ladies!

From left: Rick, Elle, Kylie, Jenn, Marina, Anna, Drew, Tim, Maddie, Sydney, Kayla

## Sethco Lumber Celebrates 25 Years



by Lisa Middlecamp-Lowder, Ph.D.

Everyone who knows Seth Middlecamp knows there is lumber in his blood. Our Grandfather, Mitch Lappo, started Lappo Lumber, the largest family owned lumber company in the state, in Fruitport in 1950 and Seth worked there 25 years before opening Sethco Lumber.

Seth started working for Grandpa in 1971 for 75c an hour picking up metal bands that came off the piles of lumber, sweeping floors and whatever else needed to be done. You couldn't be idle working for Mitch Lappo. As the years went by, Seth took on more and more responsibilities until he learned

every aspect of the business and became Grandpa's right hand man.

When Grandpa was killed in a car accident in Mexico in December of 1989, we were all devastated. Seth took over as President of the yard and ultimately increased sales by 50%. He remained at the helm until January of 1995 when the company Board, elected after Grandpa's death (in his Will) to determine the fate of the yard, voted to sell to the chain Wickes Lumber. There was no way Seth was going to run the family lumber business any way other than how Grandpa taught him - with an emphasis on customer service.

Because of the legal agreement with Wickes, Seth was not able to continue with the Lappo name so Sethco Lumber was chosen. Contractors and fellow lumbermen could immediately identify who owned the new yard just by the name. His first location was the former Coopersville Lumber where he built his business for about a year before returning to Muskegon in 1996. At that point Seth and eight other Lappo Lumber employees took over the former Waste Management facility at 4566 E. Apple Avenue. Many of those same building supply specialists still work at the yard.

May 2020 marked the 25 year anniversary of Sethco Lumber.

Seth had built his business catering to professional contractors but has expanded his business to the general public and weekend do-it-yourselfer. The staff, with over 200 combined years of experience, prides themselves on offering the expert service you can't find at the big box suppliers.

The years have had their challenges. Over 150 lumber companies in Michigan closed during the recession of 2008, but not Sethco. When asked, Seth said his philosophy on "The success of Sethco Lumber is from relationships. From employees that have worked here for 20+ years to customers who have been buying from us since we opened to suppliers that I have 40 years of relationships. We are like family - employees and suppliers. Sethco would not be here without those relationships. I could not have done this by myself."

Sethco Lumber carries a complete line of lumber and building materials. Over the last year or so, Sethco has had a major remodel, both outside and inside. Seth welcomes everyone to come on in, meet the family and check it out.