



Our Family Tree

A Newsletter For The Employees and Friends Of Wright Tree Service

VOLUME 8
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FALL, 2002

Chairman/CEO John Wright Approves Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP)

New Plan Lets Employees Share In Growth, Success Of Company

For the first time in its 70 year history, Wright Tree Service has adopted an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) that will allow employees to participate in the ownership of the company. The ESOP purchased a major block of stock from Wright Tree Service family members and other shareholders. The final agreement was signed on August 8, 2002, culminating nearly two years of research, to assure that the plan would provide the best opportunity for the continued success of WTS and its employees.

WTS Chairman/CEO John Wright stated, "There are many benefits in our company ESOP plan. Most primary among them is the opportunity for employees to become a financial participant in the success of Wright Tree Service; and to help grow our company both in profitability and in efficiency of operations and customer service." In other words, each participant in the ESOP owns "a piece of the company." Another major benefit is that the money held for the employee in the ESOP will grow, tax sheltered, until it is removed either by retirement, termination from the company or death.

All non-union employees, at least 18 years of age, who have been with Wright Tree Service for one full year

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Four of the principals involved in developing the ESOP are, seated, left to right, Chairman/CEO John Wright and President Scott Packard; standing, Kim Butler, LaSalle Bank, and Joe Pawlosky, Davis-Brown Law Firm.

Senior Vice President Pete Byers Retires

Founder John L. Wright Hired Pete Thirty Years Ago

Pete Byers, a long-time employee and officer of Wright Tree Service, retired at the end of September. At the time of his retirement as Senior Vice President, Pete was in charge of sales and customer communications for the company, a position he had held for many years.

Pete was hired by WTS founder John L. Wright who, after much

persuasion, convinced Pete to come to work for the company, rather than move south as had been his intention. In the early days of his employment, Pete's primary job was to acquire new business for the company and to become acquainted with existing customers.

He was also involved in the sales and purchase of equipment, but as the years



Pete Byers

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News from our

CENTRAL

Water-LOO-LOO!

General Foreman Mike Sanford sent in a commendation he had received from Robert Risse of MidAmerican Energy regarding one of Mike's crews in Waterloo, IA. A MidAmerican Energy customer took the time to call the utility to express his gratitude. The crew did "a fantastic job," according to the customer, and he just wanted to let the crew know how much he appreciated their good work. We send along our thanks, too, to **Foreman Jim Kamp** and **Trimmer Pat McDonald**.

Bouquets From Bruner

General Foreman Jim Bruner wishes to express his deepest appreciation to all the WTS crews in the Quad Cities area for their outstanding performance in Eldridge, IA. The job for MidAmerican Energy involved "line clearing the entire town." According to Jim, the mammoth project was completed in just three days. "Many crews worked through their breaks to complete the job in a timely manner," attested Jim. Jim also reports receiving lots of praise from both MidAmerican Energy and its customers. You deserve a big slice of that praise, Jim, for overseeing this huge undertaking successfully!

"Your Service Can't Be Beat!"

That's how one customer of Kaw Valley Electric summed up her satisfaction with a WTS crew. In her note to Kaw Valley, the customer thanked the utility for "cutting down my cedar tree by the electric pole. Adrian and the other two boys in the Wright truck did an outstanding job." In addition to **Foreman Adrian**

Oliver, the "other two boys" that made up the crew were **Trimmer Danny Copp** and **Groundman Kevin Elliott**. Let's hear it for "the boys!"

Good Tidings From Torpy!

Larry Torpy, committee chair for the 2002 ISA Midwestern Chapter Tree Climbing Championship, wrote **WTS Vice President Bob Myers**, to express his thanks for our company's event sponsorship and participation in the competition in Nebraska City, NE. **Division manager "Steve Pietzyk"** and his crew are always a great asset to the event," Larry wrote. "They are always willing to help when needed. Their time and energy did not go unnoticed. I also want to thank you for getting your employees involved as competitors and volunteers. I realize it is a long day and a long drive to the site. Wright Tree Service was more than generous with its contributions for the day. Without your help we could not have had such a successful event." We thank Larry for these kind words and look forward to next year's competition.

And The Winners Are . . .

Foreman Al Garrow, Jr. and **Trimmer Chad Behnke** have been named "Crew Of The Quarter" by MidAmerican Energy. Our congratulations to Al and Chad on this distinctive honor!

Amy's In The Navy

By way of **General Foreman Jim Bruner**, we learned that **Foreman Al Garrow, Jr.**'s daughter, Amy, has just completed boot camp in the U.S. Navy and now is starting her A.I.T. schooling. "She has a wonderful career ahead of her," Jim writes. "Al is very proud of her – and so am I." And so are we!

Happy Anniversary!

A toast to **Foreman Danny McDonald** and his wife Sally who marked their 20th Wedding Anniversary last July.

Stork Stops!

General Foreman Charlie McClure informed us that **Trimmer Nathan Mayeske** and his wife Cindy are the proud parents of a new baby boy, Orlin Justus, born in late August. Our congratulations to Nathan and Cindy!

NORTH

"Pleased With The Performance"

A Peoria, IL customer wrote the home office to express her total satisfaction with a WTS crew. In her letter she admitted she was hesitant about the work because of "the disastrous results from last year's tree trimming company." **Work Planner Mike Price** put her at ease, however, and as her letter stated: "He explained that the crew had knowledge of how to trim trees within the guidelines of utility companies. He also made a note on the work order to have the crew inform us of the exact date of the work." **Foreman William Wallen** followed up Mike's visit and informed the customer of the date of the work. The letter concluded: "The crew kept us informed as to how they would do the tree trimming and they cleared away the debris that had fallen. I am pleased with the performance of your company." We, too, are very pleased with reports like this. William's crew members were **Trimmers Matt Fuelberth, Mike Richardson** and **Ken Pointer**. Their **General Foreman** is **Jerry Alton**.

Branches

“Just Wait Until Next Year!”

It's the same old refrain from **Division Manager Don Heyel** who can never seem to win the North Division Golf Outing. The 10th annual event was held this year on July 20 at the Meadow Springs Country Club in Jefferson, WI. Don did manage to win “longest drive” but the father-son team of **General Foreman Jeff Wood** and Chris shot the lowest score — an even par! Jeff and Chris also won the skins event. Other winners included **Foreman Bill Weber**, “longest putt” and Chris Wood, “closest to the pin.” **General Foreman Jim Bruner, Central Division**, managed to finish in the first flight and Jim's friend, Jake Miller, had the dubious distinction of winning “shortest drive.” Don confided that Chris Wood might attend golf school next year and will probably miss the tournament. Sounds to us that maybe Don should attend golf school, too.

A Halo For Chris!

The pastor of the Praise Fellowship Church, Muskego, WI, wrote the home office to tell us how much he appreciated the work of **Foreman Chris Goral**. Chris volunteered to remove some dead trees and do some cleanup work at the site of the church's annual picnic. “Just needed to express our thanks to you for the equipment usage. Chris did an outstanding job and provided an excellent atmosphere for our annual church picnic,” wrote the grateful pastor. Thank you, Chris, for making the Wright impression!

Good Luck, Chet!

Foreman Chet Fleck retired in late September from WTS. Chet was a 20-year veteran with the company and worked under **General Foreman**

Herb Coy. May your retirement years be filled with happiness, Chet!

Say A Prayer For Jerry

Foreman Jerry Coy, Sr., General Foreman Herb Coy's brother, is recovering at home from triple bypass surgery. We're happy to hear from Herb that Jerry is doing well.

Diaper Duty!

Foreman Jakeb Meyer and his wife Amanda are the proud parents of a new baby girl, Isabella Gabrielle, born in early August. Congratulations!

SOUTHWEST

Praise From Paradise Point

A resident of Paradise Point, a community near Checotah, OK, wanted us to know how much he and all the other residents in his area appreciated the work performance of **Foreman Greg Broadwater** and **Trimmer Paul Bonicelli**. “They did a great job trimming trees away from the power lines,” the customer wrote. “Maybe this will help eliminate power surges and outages. Again, thanks so much for a job well done.” High fives from us, too, Greg and Paul. **Arthur Colbert is their General Foreman.**

MINNKOTA

Xcel-lent Report!

Erica Oreskovich, Xcel Energy Forestry, emailed a commendation to us from a customer in Cottage Grove, MN who phoned in her accolades for **Foreman Darwin Phillips** and his crew, **Trimmers Gerald Heath, Matt Ohr, Aaron Olheiser** and **Walter Power II**. The crew was performing maintenance trimming in the customer's neighborhood and she praised them “for the great work they

did on her property.” Keep up the good work, men!

More Kudos From Xcel!

A South St. Paul couple phoned Xcel Energy to compliment two WTS crews. According to the customer, the crew listened to what they wanted done and they did a great job. Two crews deserve a pat on the back for this commendation: **Foreman Tony Soto** and **Trimmers Arnulfo Flores, Joseph Garcia, Reyes Garcia** and **Ivan Hernandez**; and **Foreman Bob Schultz** and **Trimmers Carlitos Medina, Jose Solis, Arnold Tabora** and **Leonel Tabora**. The proud General Foreman is **Bob Lien**.

Happy To Oblige!

Things looked bad for the annual weekend festival at the Transfiguration Catholic Church in Oakdale, MN. The grounds were a sea of mud. Dennis Fallon, Coordinator, Vegetation Management for Xcel Energy, contacted WTS to see if any chips were available. **Foreman David Diaz** and **Trimmer Joe Tijerina** came to the rescue on a Friday night after work and delivered the chips. A representative from the church emailed his deepest thanks to Dennis, commenting that “the grounds would have been an absolute mess without the chips.” Thank you, David and Jose, for the extra effort and thank you, Dennis, for sharing this experience with us. **Bob Lien** is the **General Foreman**.

The Bells Are Ringing!

Foreman Dave Hanson and **Nicole Goodrich** are planning to be married in late October. We wish them years of happiness and success!



Randy Wins!

Foreman Randy Hake, right, receives the "Overall Champ" award at the Lineman Rodeo.



Juggling Act!

Randy's proud General Foreman, Jim Bruner, left shown here with Randy and his three awards.

Foreman Randy Hake Is "Overall Champ" In Kansas Lineman Rodeo

Central Division Trimmer Randy Hake won two out of the three events at the Kansas Lineman Rodeo in Topeka, KS in August and was named the overall Tree Climbing Champion. Jim, the only competitor from WTS, went up against 14 other contestants. "Randy has been doing tree work for only about a year," commented Division Manager Steve Pietzyk, "but you can tell he is very serious about these events and has worked very hard to get where he's at."



Wright There When You Need Them!

Wright Tree Service supported the Kansas Lineman Rodeo as always with a contingent of employees from the Central Division. Left to right, Foremen Arian Oliver, Tyson Young and Marcus Cornet; General Foreman Roger Farley; Division Manager Steve Pietzyk; General Foremen Mitch Frye and Jim Bruner, Foreman Randy Hake; and General Foreman Charles McClure.



King Has A Queen

Minnkota Division Foreman Marlin "Darnell" King and his wife Renate have a new baby girl, Jessica Desirae, who was born last June.



Safety Reminder!

Thanks to Foreman Terry White (Indianapolis) who reminds us that "squirrels don't know any better but we should – work safely!"



Expert At Work!

Minnkota Division Trimmer Dave Hanson starts to fell a towering Lombardy tree away from a 69 KV line.

Pete Byers Retires

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progressed and the company grew, it became more important for Pete to focus on continuing communication with our large customer base to assure their full and ongoing satisfaction with Wright Tree Service.

Pete traveled extensively with John L. Wright in the early years of his employment and has many fond memories and stories to tell about John. One of his most vivid recollections concerns John's penchant for driving extremely fast on the road, very often steering with his knees as he prepared his pipe for smoking. (The family has strong recollections of those occasions, as well!)

"Wright Tree Service's reputation far exceeds that of any other utility company in the industry today," according to Pete. (A small indication of that reputation and customer satisfaction is reflected in the many letters we receive from individual customers and utility clients. We print as many of these as possible in the Newsletter each quarter.)

Pete and his wife DeeDee live in Frisco, Colorado and have two grown sons and two granddaughters. One son lives in Vail and is a whitewater and fly fishing main instructor. The other son lives between Alma and Fairplay and is a builder of log homes.

DeeDee is very active in the Frisco/Summit County community. She is part owner of a gift shop/antique boutique in Frisco, on the Board of the local Hospice, president of the Garden Club, a member of PEO and has been president of the Homeowners Association there for several years.

And Pete, after retirement from WTS? "I'm not going to retire," says Pete, emphatically. He is currently looking at other business

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Our Local Wright Tree Care Flooded With Calls When Storm Hits Des Moines

The early morning hours of August 23rd won't soon be forgotten! A storm with rain and high winds up to 70 mph skipped across Des Moines, causing serious damage. Not all residents of the metro area were caught in the storm's wake; those who were awakened to sounds of trees falling on their homes, garages and automobiles. According to **Linda Wright, Wright Tree Care President**, calls began coming at 1:15 a.m. and continued non-stop for two weeks. Over 500 calls were received within the first 24 hours; total calls attributed to the storm easily reached over 1,000.

As this newsletter goes to press, there are still approximately 100 requests for estimates remaining that were directly related to the storm. Field employees and office staff worked long hours seven days a week for several weeks (nothing new to WTS employees) and their efforts have paid off. There have been dozens of calls complimenting the crews - wonderful service, great cleanup, friendly and courteous - the list goes on.

The greatest satisfaction to WTC comes from the calls that tell of neighbors' trees coming down all around them, but theirs did not - thanks to the previous work of WTC crews. An added benefit comes from all the calls requesting cabling and rod installation, and pruning services to lessen the possibility of tree damage ever happening to them. According to WTC management, this is the best group of employees they've ever had.

Here's a sampling of the comments:

"I want to tell you that the two men who did the work were efficient and thorough. They both were very kind and tolerant of a 'little ol' lady.' They left my yard neat and tidy. Please tell them how pleased I am with their work."

Sandra McCallister

"I was very pleased with the crew you sent to my house. These guys had very good ideas. Ralph said that 'the people we have are people that you would be proud to have on your lawn' and he was right."

"I just wanted you to know that Jeremy and Jeff did a terrific job working with the trees, working with me and working with my neighbors. Their care and skill were great fun to watch and they did have an audience. Not only that, the trees look beautiful and artful. It was a big job - a challenging job. I worried when they went non-stop for eight hours. Thank you for working with me on a Saturday, and tell them again that I appreciate the skillful, artful, professional way they have with the trees and with people." Julie Powell

"Great job - two fine young fellows."

Tom Fay, Southwick Townhomes

"Josh, Steve and Randy did a hell of a job! The park is thrilled and we are, too."

Bob Nandell

"Josh and Matt did a wonderful job!

They were very conscientious." Tom and Amy Donnelly

"The guys did an excellent job. You have a great one in Andy." Steve Hensley

"Please thank the crew for the good work. Rick knew just what to do with the crabapple tree to 'fix' it. It's beautiful now and I enjoy looking at it from my kitchen counter." Ida Ruth Miller

"You guys came out and trimmed our trees about a month or so ago - trimmed about seven of them. We thought your bill was slightly high, \$800. But I want to congratulate you guys. You did a good job! A lot of the trees around us are blown over or have downed branches. Ours are clean as a whistle. I knew you guys would do a good job. I want to thank you for what you did." Harold Lindstrom

BENEFITS

Your Last Chance To Enroll For Medical And Dental Benefits Without Conditions

After This Enrollment Period, You Have To Meet Certain Qualifications To Get Coverage

For many years, Wright Tree Service has held an annual open enrollment period for our Medical and Dental benefits. During this open enrollment period, employees who had previously waived coverage could enroll.

In order to better comply with recent changes to the employee benefit laws, the open enrollment period held this year will be the LAST annual open enrollment period held at Wright Tree Service.

If you are currently not enrolled in Wright Tree Service's medical and/or dental plan, you will be able to enroll for coverage effective January 1, 2003, during the open enrollment period in November, 2002.

If you are currently not enrolled, and do not enroll during the November, 2002 open enrollment period, you will only be able to enroll in Wright Tree Service's medical and/or dental benefits in the future IF you have one of the following Special Enrollment Events:

1. If you currently have other medical and/or dental coverage and you involuntarily lose that coverage (due to divorce, or your

spouse stops working, loses eligibility or is terminated), you may enroll for coverage under Wright Tree Service's plan within 31 days of the date you lose your other coverage.

2. If you are currently continuing coverage under a prior employer through COBRA, and your COBRA continuation period expires, you may enroll for coverage under Wright Tree Service's plan within 31 days of the date your COBRA coverage expires.



3. If you gain a dependent by marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption, you and each of your dependents may enroll for coverage under Wright Tree Service's plan within 31 days

of the date of marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption.

4. If you are currently not enrolled in the plan, but receive a Qualified Medical Child Support Order (QMCSO) which requires you to provide insurance for a dependent child, you may enroll yourself and the named dependent child(ren) for coverage under Wright Tree Service's plan.

In order to be eligible for any of the Special Enrollment Events listed above, Wright Tree Service must have a signed Waiver of Coverage form on file. If you do not wish to enroll during this final open enrollment period, it is still very important that you complete an enrollment form and sign the Waiver of Coverage section. If this form is not on file, Wright Tree Service may require that you provide proof of the Special Enrollment Event prior to approving your coverage under the plan.

As stated above, Wright Tree Service's final open period for our medical and dental benefits will be in November, 2002. Please start thinking about how this might affect your personal situation. If you have any questions please feel free to call Michelle at 1-800-882-1216.



The Bruner Brood

Central Division General Foreman Jim Bruner, right, gives his new baby boy, Colton Thomas, a squeeze. Left, Jim Bruner's wife Trisha with son Hunter and new baby boy Colton.





Happy New Fiscal Year!

By Lois Ward, S.E.T.

Wishing someone "Happy New Year" on the first day of October might seem a bit strange; however, October 1st is the beginning of the Wright Tree Service "New Year."

Just as we celebrate the traditional New Year on January 1st, the business New Year is very similar, in that we start all over again. This is an excellent time to review the year that has just passed and a perfect time to make those resolutions that will help make Fiscal 2003 a banner year.

As an employee, it is your chance to participate and get involved in making it a better year by thinking of positive changes you can make. Such changes and commitments might be in working more safely or simply keeping a positive attitude. If everyone would try do his or her very best, there is not doubt that this will be the best year yet.

By the time you receive this issue of Our Family Tree, the 2002-2003 "Thanksgiving Challenge" will probably just have concluded. We hope your division remained accident-free for the two-week period from October 7th to October 18th. Winning a free Thanksgiving turkey is a great prize – but thinking safety at all times provides even a greater reward – maybe your life!

FROM THE Kitchen

Autumn is here once again. It seems to come quickly and leave all too soon. But while it's here, we can enjoy one of the season's most popular and prolific crops: Apples. And there are literally dozens of recipes using apples. We've selected two favorites (and they're delicious - we've tried them!) to take advantage of THE APPLE.

APPLE KUCHEN

1 pkg. yellow cake mix
1/2 cup butter or margarine
1/2 cup coconut
1 slightly beaten egg
Peeled, sliced apples (enough to cover mixture)
1/2 cup sugar

2 tsp. cinnamon
1 cup sour cream
1/2 to 3/4 cup sugar

Combine cake mix and coconut and fold in the butter. Press into 11" X 15" glass dish or jelly roll pan. Bake 10 minutes at 350. Cool slightly. Cover crust with peeled, sliced apples. Combine sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over apples. Combine sour cream and remaining sugar and egg and pour over fruit. Bake at 350 for 20-25 minutes.

BAKED CINNAMON APPLES

9-10 apples, partially peeled, cored and halved,
or cut into thick slices
1/3 cup flour
1 cup sugar
1 cup water

3 Tbsp. butter
4 oz. cinnamon

Butter a 9" X 12" pan and fill with apples. Mix flour and sugar and spread over apples. Pour water over mixture and dot with butter. Sprinkle cinnamon over top. Add nuts if desired. Bake at 350 for 35 minutes or until done.

Pete Byers Retires

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opportunities, and will no doubt be "on the road again" before too long.

Whatever he does, we wish him and DeeDee the best of luck and good wishes in their future. It will not be the same for Pete Byers' name to be missing from the Wright Tree Service roster.

Tragic Loss In Minnkota

Foreman Jesse Strese, 31, passed away in his sleep on July 31, 2002, of a brain aneurysm. Jesse had worked in the Minnkota Division for eight years. He made work enjoyable, always there to help. Whatever needed to be done, you could count on Jesse. He will be truly missed by his family and all his friends.

The Minnkota Management
Division Manager Wade Myers
Division Supervisor John Sanford
General Foreman Jeff Harris
General Foreman Bob Lien
General Foreman Scott Schweistahl
General Foreman Dale Venske
General Foreman Ken Venske

We join the Minnkota Management in expressing our deepest sympathies.

The Results Are In!

711

EMPLOYEES QUALIFIED FOR
THE SAFETY INCENTIVE AWARD

During Third Quarter Of
This Fiscal Year
(4/01/02 - 6/30/02)

Family Clippings

News From The Home Office

Love Bug Abuzz At Home Office!



Stacey (Peters) Kies, WTS Accounts Payable/Receivable, and Jeremy Kies exchanged vows in August in Bouton, IA.



WTS Senior Accountant Wendy (Weber) Eckhart and her husband Brian Eckhart were married last April.



Johnathon Tyler Ward

Ain't Life GRAND?

Three home office employees celebrated the birth of grandsons recently. Lois Ward, S.E.T., has a new grandson, Johnathon Tyler Ward, left, born in September. The parents are David and Diane Ward. Johnathon has two sisters, Jessica and Samantha. Promotional and Safety Purchasing Coordinator Judy Hiatt and her husband Mike are spoiling Colton Robert Hiatt. Colton was born in June to Todd and Laura Hiatt, who also have a daughter, Rileigh. Keith Sheriff, S.E.T. Director, and his wife Linda welcomed a new grandson into the world in September. Zachary David's proud parents are Philip and Michelle Sheriff and joins two sisters, Samantha and Madison.

Wright Approves ESOP

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(over 1000 hours in a 12-month period) can take part in the plan. Entry dates into the plan are October 1st and April 1st; the plan's year runs from October 1st through September 30th.

It is anticipated that statements will be sent out to all eligible employees soon after January 1, 2003. These

statements will provide detailed information about each employee's ownership. A summary plan description is also being prepared and will be mailed to all participants after January 1.

If you have any questions about the ESOP program, you may call either Terry McGonegle, WTS Chief Financial Officer, or Scott Packard, WTS President.

If you have access to the Internet, you can visit us at: <http://www.wrighttree.com>

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