



A Message From The General Manager/CEO

By Dan Laws

“...life is a repetitive cycle of renewal.”

As I write these words, a cold front is moving this way and temperatures in the 30's are expected by nightfall. A recent study released by two Canadian scientists states that another ice age is coming and may only be 100,000 years away. Here in Brackettville today, it is a balmy 60 degrees, breezy, with clear blue skies. It has been said that if you don't like the weather in Texas, just wait a minute and it will change. Although that statement is often offered as a negative, I must confess that I see it as a positive.

The change in seasons and weather patterns is refreshing to me. In fact, change of all types, positive and negative, helps to keep us as individuals, fresh and vital. I am one of those people who are more than ready to take down the Christmas decorations the day after Christmas and pack them away. As I am putting decorations in storage, there is one thought uppermost on my mind, "That was great, but I am ready to move on." Yet, almost one year later, on the Saturday following Thanksgiving, I am just as ready to decorate our house for the Christmas season, which for us, by the way, is the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas (no matter how early Wal-Mart begins selling Christmas decorations).

I have come to the realization that my life is a repetitive cycle of renewal. I revolve from strained relationship to strengthened relationship, always with the commitment that I will be a better friend, husband, brother or father; from periods of low activity to high activity, always interested in maintaining higher energy levels; and from feelings of despair to a sense of hope, always with the desire to hold fast to hope. I also find a common chain running through every aspect of my life. . . God. He draws me along through the cycles of my life. You see, almost 37 years ago, my wife Darlene and her family taught me that on the first Christmas, God chose to become God and man; live as we live, hurt as we hurt and at the appointed time, to die in my place. The lesson was so irresistible that I surrendered and received Jesus as my Savior.

For my family, this Christmas season will again be a time of renewal, as we celebrate His birth. As for me, I will return to the basics of life. Retracing the path my life has taken this past year, I will find two sets of footprints reminding me that I was never alone. I will enjoy quiet moments in front of the fire with my wife; you know, the kind where volumes are spoken without words.

I will spend time with my three sons and daughters-in-law listening to their dreams and trying hard not to offer too much advice. I will spend time with our grandchildren Jadon, Joah, Carys, and Jonathon. I will always be thankful that I get to be their dad and granddad. Friends will drop by to share the holiday cheer. It's hard to say what my life would be like today, had Darlene never shared her faith with me, but as I look back, I am satisfied it could not have been better.

On behalf of the board of directors, the employees and myself, let me wish you a very blessed and Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.

Have a Happy & Safe Holiday Season!