

**FAITH**

**Seeing the Entire Elephant....**

We live in a world that is so politically correct. The highest ideal that is raised up is to "not offend someone" with your beliefs. This type of mentality leads to a what is called the "marketplace of ideas," where many different spiritual paths are presented, but it is considered incentive or intolerant to claim that one is "more true" than another. In this format, faith and religion are treated like a smorgasbord or an a la cart menu, from which you can choose what you want and leave the rest.

In John 14:7, Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." In our modern sensibilities, this seems narrow-minded at best, and bigoted at worst. How can someone claim to be the sole source of truth in this world? Those who are exploring the many faiths in the world have found themselves caught up on Jesus' exclusive claim to truth and connection to God. Could Jesus really be the only way to God?

There is an ancient Indian parable that likens truth to six blind men feeling an elephant. These six blind men were asked to determine what an elephant looked like by feeling different parts of the elephant's body. The blind man who felt a leg says the elephant is like a pillar; the one who felt the tail says the elephant is like a rope; the one who felt the trunk says the elephant is like a tree branch; the one who felt the ear says the elephant is like a hand fan; the one who felt the belly says the elephant is like a wall; and the one who felt the tusk says the elephant is like a solid pipe.

All six blind men were partly right, but no one individual captured the whole truth. The point of the parable is to convey that all faiths capture some sort of truth, but not all of it. This seems to express the mentality of the modern world we live in. But here's the problem with that story: how could we possibly know that the six blind men only got it partially right, if someone did not know what the entire elephant ACTUALLY looked like? Would it not require someone who could actually see the ENTIRE elephant to reveal to the blind men that they were only seeing part of the truth?

This was the claim Jesus was making. Whereas others may have made true and good claims in the past, Jesus declared in John 14:9, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." Jesus was making the claim that his life demonstrated to the world the fullness of what God was actually like. He not only claimed it with his words, but demonstrated the truth of it by dying and rising from the grave three days later.

It feels good and peaceable to say that all faiths and their teachings are basically the same, but such a claim is not intellectually honest. Some faiths claim there is one God. Some claims there are millions. Others say there is NO God at all. Can all of them be right? That's the tricky thing about truth. Something can't be true AND untrue at the same time. This where the element of choice comes in. Each person has to decide what they are going to do with the claims of Jesus, or any other faith tradition for that matter. Do I believe it or not? Is it true or false?

Jesus made the claim that if you wanted to "see the entire elephant," and know God for who He actually is, Christ was the one who could open your eyes. Our job is to determine whether we believe what he said is true or not. Because it can't be both.



Donation to Make-A-Wish foundation  
on 11/20/13



Donation made on 11/13/13  
to Wounded Warrior Project.



**Letter from the President**

As we look back at 2013 I am very thankful for two things; 1) zero injuries and 2) most of our projects were completed ahead of schedule. As with any year, there have been lessons learned, changes to be implemented, **BUT** most importantly the year was **injury free**. Thanks to all of our crews and their foreman for making this happen and helping to create the safety culture that has made this possible!

A short recap of the year below shows a commitment to our motto; **Quality and Safety. Always.**

- Vegetation Control - Zero Injuries. Only a 8% re-spray (acreage) was needed. This is a great number given the weather conditions in the spring.
- Right of Way Clearing - Zero Injuries. Well over a thousand miles completed with no major issues.
- Bush Hog Mowing - Zero Injuries. On-schedule all year.

I look at customer feedback, safety audits, and quality audits from our management team as key factors in making sure our crews are delivering a service better than our competition. In 2013, our feedback from customers has been excellent, I can honestly say there were no major complaints. All of our safety audits found our safety policies being administered/ followed. Also, the feedback/lessons learned from these audits and near misses was constructive and was followed by the crew. The safety culture was evident. We began requiring our foreman to send in before/after photos of work for quality purposes. I review these items frequently and have given nothing but praise. I have found the same quality when I am on site and reviewing previous work. Our motto remains....**Quality and Safety. Always.**

I had two goals for 2013, first was a major effort to create a safety culture and second was to continue to develop higher quality standards.

- A safety manual uploaded to ISNetworld is not safety, it's a requirement. Living and breathing safety every day....that's a safety culture. Thank you to Krystal West and the management team for helping to bring safety to the forefront at Lanracorp, Inc on a daily basis. In 2014 our focus will be on making safety personal. Brent Hoerig and Krystal will be working together to take safety to a more personal level. I'm excited about this new safety campaign.
- Quality is what keeps customers coming back. Quality can be in the customer service experience to the work in the field. In 2013 we have more than quadrupled the amount of in-field audits by management personnel. Along with this has been more feedback from the crews, better implementation of the safety policies, and has helped to drive home the point that management is 100% dedicated to ensuring safety and quality are the focus at Lanracorp, Inc.

As you will see in the newsletter, there are several exciting changes coming in 2014. I am a solid believer in reviewing the past, realizing lessons learned, and implementing "fixes". Continuous improvement is key in our business climate....and I'm excited about 2014! From new customers, to our revised training programs, new quality audits, new mileage/acreage tracking programs, and performance tracking, we will continue to make improvement in 2014.

Respectfully,  
Brent Oberlink, President  
Lanracorp, Inc





## ANNOUNCING BRENT HOERIG AS LANRACORP, INC. OPERATIONS MANAGER



I was originally hired with Lanracorp, Inc. in January 2011. The last few years I have worked primarily at the BP Husky refinery in Toledo. During this time I also taught chemistry and biology for two years but decided it wasn't for me. I talked with Mr. Oberlink this spring and he offered me a job as Operations Manager in Ohio. Things went great this year in Ohio. We renewed almost all of our contracts, solidified our presence in the area, and have added more work for next year. This was a great step forward for Lanracorp, Inc. As good as things went in Ohio, things went even better in Illinois. Our continued expansion and growth has been amazing and for us to continue this into the future, we need to build an even stronger management team in Illinois. Starting in January, we will change up our current management team and I will become the operations manager in Illinois.

I'm extremely excited about taking on my new position. We have a vision of where Lanracorp, Inc. wants to be in the next 10 years and I want to do my best to help contribute to this. I want Lanracorp to be synonymous with companies like Asplundh, Nelson, and Davey. In order for us to get to this point, there are many goals that we first need to accomplish and I will work very hard to accomplish them. My goals for next year are to focus on communication, efficiency, compliancy, customer relations, and safety. There are a lot of areas that we can become more efficient and we are already looking at becoming more efficient. Next year we will be unveiling new software that is currently being developed for scheduling crews and projects, tracking equipment and progress, and helping us calculate efficiency. With this we are also going to work on better ways to keep track of equipment, maintenance, and repairs to make it better for our crews. Having more of a management team and help with scheduling, we should be able to communicate much better with crews. Also with this, we will be able to have much more face to face time with our customers. Lanracorp, Inc has always had great customer relationships and we want to continue this as we continue to diversify and grow. The next year is going to be very exciting and we have a great opportunity at Lanracorp to continue to grow and expand. I am looking forward to my future with Lanracorp and where we are going.

*Written by Brent Hoerig*



Tony Anderson

## EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Tony was a unanimous decision for Lanracorp Employee of the Year. He has spent half of the year traveling with one of our Right-of-Way crews; his dedication to our company is incredible. He communicates well with the Management staff on a daily basis. He is a hard worker to achieve all goals that are set for his crew and adapts quickly to any changes that come his way. When we look at our motto of "Quality and Safety. Always" we want all employees to adhere to this standard. Tony does, and he does it every minute of every day. He works in our right of way clearing division, running one our bucket truck/chipper crew. This crew faces a lot of safety hazards due the their scope of work. Tony works diligently to ensure all crew members are not just taking part in safety BUT are engaged in safety. His crew has worked incident free all year. Along with this focus on safety, Tony has also proved an excellent quality record. Looking back at his before and after photos, there are no flaws to be found. Along with all of this Tony has also proven to be a positive leader and motivator while also being loyal to the company. He is diligent at doing all that is asked of him and then some. We appreciate his dedication, work ethic, and his steadfastness to our principles.



## EMPLOYEES OF THE QUARTER



Brandon Donoho

Brandon has been with the company for 5 years and in that time has had many different roles. Beginning as a weed spraying technician, then moving into our right of way clearing group, he has been extremely versatile and has proven his skills in both areas. He has one of the lowest re-spray percentages in our company and can also operate all of our equipment safely and efficiently. Brandon is loyal, honest, and always early to work. When a job is designated to Brandon, there is no worry about whether or not it will get done with quality in mind and safety at the forefront. Brandon has always been willing to travel and his biggest attribute in this regard is that he stays until the job is complete.

Kerry Henson

We can depend on Kerry to travel the distance to complete any job. Henson is punctual, reliable, thorough, and has great reputation with our customers. He is very passionate about his work and is always looking for new ways to improve our work practices. Kerry has been with the company for 4 years and in that time has served various roles. One of his biggest attributes is how thorough he is in all aspects; quality, safety, and paperwork. Everything is documented, photos taken, and the story is built. If he is asked to complete something, you can check it off your list now because it will get done. Just like Brandon, Kerry has a very low re-spray percentage as a weed spraying technician, but he also serves our right of way clearing group well. Kerry provides excellent feedback on our right of way crews in the areas of safety, productivity, and is always looking for ways to help the company improve.



## SAFETY

Lanracorp, inc employees have had an outstanding year. In 2013, our employees worked over 83,000 hours on the job without injury. I applaud each and every one of our employees for a job well done and staying safety minded each and every day.

Looking back at our January 2013 newsletter, we were focused on new changes for 2013. Most of the changes incorporated technology from DOT Electronic Driver Logs, personal company website for online trainings, to completing daily Job Safety Analysis (JSA) forms electronically. Our employees surpassed our expectations with the ease of use of all these systems and have reported that having these tools available helped save time and paperwork handling and housekeeping. This year we are going to continue improving these programs to increase efficiency and productivity.

The future path of 2014, Lanracorp, inc is going to focus on making Safety Personal. We work hard to create working environments where safety is the top priority every day. This year the goal is to take that one step further. We want to make safety personal by reminding our employees of what motivates each one of us to work hard and return home safely every day; whether the reason is family, finances, or just themselves. The same reasons could easily lead to distractions and complacency on the job, and we want to avoid those hazards and remind every employee of their drive daily, so that safety is always on the mind and task at hand.

Over the holidays, we performed our annual company training. With our crews traveling to job sites daily, we do not get a lot of time where our employees come together in one setting to communicate besides our weekly safety meetings. This was a great time for everyone to interact together, gets to know one another better and shared the excitement of the holiday season. Communication is key in safety and it was great to take time to communicate together as one company. We all took something away from that time; we are not just working for our family and ourselves but we are looking out for our brothers and their family.

*Written by Krystal West*



## DEMOS

As a leader in our industry, we are constantly trying to improve and get better. One way we do this is by having the best equipment for the job. With the increase in equipment restrictions where we work, we are always looking for improvement. In 2012 we tested Ventracs and implemented them at our Ohio refineries in 2013. This year we have looked at even more equipment to make our job even better. In November we demoed a Kut Kwick slope mower. These are powerful, heavy duty mowers built for slopes up to 40 degrees. We were impressed by the demo and may implement these in the next few years. We have also researched many other pieces of equipment that we would like to demo in the next year including Loftness forestry heads, Kershaw side trimmers and clearing equipment, and Rayco products. This shows our dedication to providing our customers with the best service and our employees with the safest equipment possible.

*Written by Brent Hoerig*



## TCIA Expo 2013

In November, Brent O, Andrew, and I visited the TCIA expo in Charlotte, North Carolina. TCIA develops safety and education programs, standards of tree care practice, and management information for companies around the world. At the expo, multiple tree care companies and experts gathered for three days to share information and learn about the industry. The expo consisted of a product floor. Here, we were able to look at new equipment, try out equipment, and get information on new equipment. This was very exciting and we received a lot of valuable information. Along with the product floor, multiple classes were offered from industry leaders. We attended multiple classes and learned information from workers compensation to safety culture. This expo was extremely helpful and we plan on implementing what we learned over the next year.

