

Big Paul

Adapted from article by Paula Schutt

Paul Ranum came to Janesville in the winter of 1957 with his family. While attempting to get hired at General Motors, he found work in several places, one being with Bennett Tree Service. Paul said that he decided to go to work for himself when he was promised a raise by Mr. Bennett if he stuck it out through the winter. However, spring came, and the raise turned out to be a nickel an hour.

So Paul talked it over with his wife and decided, at age 30, he wanted to be in control of what kind of money he earned. Although it was a risk, he decided to strike out on his own. He worked night jobs and part time jobs to supplement his income in the beginning, and shoveled snow in the winter. His wife, Leona, answered the phone and did the bookwork. Together, in 1958, Leona and Paul established LP Tree Service (named after the initials of the two), what is now the largest locally owned tree business in Janesville.

As the business grew, so did Paul and



Leona's children. His two youngest sons began to work with him as soon as they became old enough. One summer in the early 1980's his youngest daughter, Paula, worked for him as well. His son Chris now runs the business and works alongside Paul's grandson, (Chris's son) Jon Ranum. Paul taught his sons to pay attention to detail and stressed safety and taking care of their equipment. LP has developed an excellent reputation for fast, efficient work.

Paul turned 80 in April of 2009 and his children held an open house in his honor. He has passed along a legacy to his children of hard work, not giving up, and taking pride in what they do.

