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"Everything To Build Anything"



New 21,120 sq. ft. Building



Fire destroys Diebolt building

Other structures saved; store reopens; new building springs up

A fire destroyed Diebolt Lumber and Supply's largest storage building Tuesday evening, January 27, 2009. Fire crews from LaHarpe, Iola, Humboldt, Moran, Elmore and Savonburg fought the raging fire through bitterly cold temperatures late into the night to prevent it from spreading elsewhere in the sprawling Diebolt complex southeast of LaHarpe. Firefighters were called back to the scene the next morning after the fire reignited. There were no injuries.

Despite the fire's ferocity — the glow from the blaze could be seen from Moran — Diebolt was able to reopen for business the next morning, store owner Don Diebolt said.

"It was a bad fire, and it was our biggest storage building, but it was just one of seven," he said. "Had it spread to our showroom, then we obviously would have been shut down."

Five delivery trucks and five forklifts were inside the building as were shelves fully stocked with drywall, molding, insulation and bags of cement. "We might not have any dry-

wall and molding for a day or so," Diebolt said, "but we can replace that." The 16,200-square-foot building also contained Diebolt's Lifetime Surfaces production area, which specializes in Corian and other solid-surface countertops; and an area dedicated to building storage sheds.

The fire started sometime after the lumberyard closed for the day at 6 o'clock.

A fire alarm sounded at about the same time passing motorists noticed smoke coming from the building. Flames broke through the building's roof at about the time the first firefighters were on the scene. The fire spread quickly, engulfing the building within minutes. "The fire crews did a great job to keep it from spreading," Diebolt said. "That could have gone from one building to the next pretty quickly."

Immediately, plans were made for a new and better building to be constructed. This more efficient building was completed within two months after the fire. The 21,120 sq. ft.

structure allots 15,740 sq. ft. for building materials and a drive thru, 2,880 sq. ft. for a Corian fabricating shop, a 1,500 sq. ft. storage building fabricating shop plus a 1,000 sq. ft. repair shop for delivery trucks, fork lifts and rental equipment. The building boasts a loading dock, 20 ft. ceilings and a heated storage area.

The fire of 2009 was the first at Diebolt since a December 1977 fire destroyed the lumberyard's main headquarters. Another fire in 1951 actually played a role in Diebolt's opening. A fire destroyed a barn owned by the late Lawrence Diebolt in 1951. After rebuilding the barn with native oak lumber, Lawrence sold the remaining lumber by placing an ad in the newspaper. When the lumber was sold, people continued to ask for more supplies, so Lawrence decided to order more wood. Requests quickly spread for nails, bolts and other supplies.

Diebolt Lumber was born.



The hard-working Diebolt crew, eager to serve you: front row from left, Robert Thompson, Zach Knight and Kevin Jones, second row from left, Art Chapman, Phil Ebert, Penny Ebert, Joel Sprague and Jimmy Bolinger, third row from left, Don Diebolt, Jay Herder, Rick Crowell and Steve LaRue, back from left, Roland Sutterby, Richard Miller, Kent LaRue and Dwight Hawkinson. Not pictured is Ashley Cole, Beverly Pinneo, Brad Lea, Bryan Clay, Cassidy Weatherbie, Cody Sanford, Dakota Sigg, David Sims, Denton Decker, Doug Neudeck, Ed Foster, Gary Turley, Jerry Smith, Jim Maloney, John Fursman, Joseph Boyd, Katelyn LaRue, Kurt LaRue, Lane Steiner, Lori Stryker, Mark Messmore, Marla Hough, Matthew Weller, Mickey Gibson, Nancy Adams, Ralph Matias, Richard Tomlinson, Sam Fishman, Sean Clay, Terry Towne, Tim Gibson and Zach Edgerton.



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