

ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21



2020



MADE US



STRONGER

*"Congrats and thanks for the work you and your team did with the Moe Government. **Nice to see tangible results!**"*

*"I just wanted to say that out of all the virtual shows I have done in the last year, the WRLA one is the nicest and most user friendly. And I like the magazine this year. **Good job.**"*

OUR PURPOSE

Serve the needs and promote the common interests of the Canadian lumber, building materials and hard good industry in Western Canada.

OUR VISION

We aspire to act as an **innovative leader** and connecting force in the building industry of Western Canada and for every member to recognize the WRLA as a strategic and collaborative partner in their business prosperity.

OUR ROLE

Advocate / Connect / Educate

WE STRIVE TO:



Provide timely, **relevant and quality** programming, services and products to support and enhance the role of our membership within the industry.



Represent, support and protect the interests of our membership and industry to government, agencies and the general public.



Provide **fellowship opportunities** that enhance member relationships.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ACTING & ADAPTING

While 2020 was supposed to be a year of celebration as the WRLA planned its 130th anniversary, it turned out to be quite the opposite. Early in the year, our goal became surviving the fifth pandemic the WRLA has encountered in its 131-year history.

Like many other organizations, when the pandemic was announced last March, we could choose from two very different paths – either we could act and adapt to the best of our ability, or we could sit back and wait to see what happens.

We chose to act and adapt, which meant that some of our plans had to be put on the back burner for a later date, while others needed to be fast tracked. Meanwhile, urgent new initiatives needed to be implemented to ensure relevance and value were being delivered to our members.

EDUCATION GRANTS

Looking back, we were fortunate to be able to host education classes in person and that two of our four planned golf tournaments were able to proceed as well. The golf tournaments are critical to raise funds for the education grants program and we are pleased to report that we can award **14 grants in the amount of \$1,300 each.**



RESILIENT INDUSTRY

We appreciate the resiliency of the industry and know firsthand what a difficult year it was. Our ability to plan was severely hampered as we couldn't project or predict what the future would hold with any certainty. **We simply did not know what each day would bring.** As a result, our budget scenarios changed regularly and the overall experience was hard on our entire organization.

I want to express the immense feeling of gratitude I feel for our members and our industry.

It was due to your support that we were able to keep our team intact. I have never experienced that kind of unconditional support in a business context before and thank you all for the support that enabled us to continue working on your behalf.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we continue to progress through this unusual time, we also are hopeful that we will be able to connect with you in person very soon. We look forward to getting back to in-person events and kicking 2022 off with the first of three years of our new and improved Showcase event in Winnipeg next January!

Liz Kovach,
President, WRLA
lkovach@wrla.org

THE YEAR IN SUMMARY

VOLATILE, DIFFICULT YEAR MADE US ALL **WORK HARDER**

There are many words that can describe 2020: **challenging, volatile, difficult and unsettling** come to mind.

Back in January 2020, very few people could have predicted the state the world would be in just a few weeks later. It is safe to say that few of us have ever endured an experience that has created so many uncertainties. We have all had to ride high waves of emotions as we faced a perfect storm of issues that continue to challenge us daily.

In all that emotion however, gratitude continues to shine through. Whether it be gratitude for being in good health, having the ability to carry on and support our families or just recognizing that we can overcome most of the challenges that we faced in the past year.

Last year, we learned that our industry is essential. Most of us already knew that, but as the country faced lockdown after lockdown, it became abundantly clear that the building and lumber supply industry is vital for Canadians.

Despite all the challenges that are still present and all the new ones that continue to crop up, we continue to work together to overcome them.

2020'S PERFECT STORM



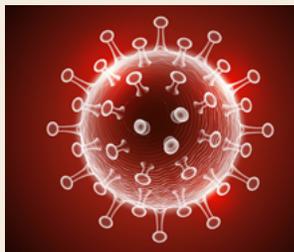
MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLES



FOREST FIRES



TRANSPORTATION ISSUES



PANDEMIC



EXTREME WEATHER



RISING HOUSING DEMAND

"We faced a perfect storm of issues that continue to challenge us daily."

INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

As our fiscal year comes to an end, we are currently faced with the following realities:

- **Supply chains are broken.** Our global economy means self-sufficiency is not an option as countries and regions rely on each other for raw materials and finished goods.
- There's a general **lack of understanding** of supply chains and how disruptions can create issues throughout multiple industries. *(Just look at what happened to N95 masks! Last year, they were suddenly unavailable for tradespeople as medical personnel desperately needed personal protective equipment.)*
- We need to recognize the **extreme impacts** on pricing, mobility and human relations during times when demand outpaces supply.

OUR FOCUS

The WRLA, like most member-based, not-for-profit organizations, maintained its focus to support its members. To do that, we focused on:

- **engaging** with members to ensure key issues were top of mind,
- **establishing** ourselves as a credible voice and resource to both government and media as well as other stakeholder groups,
- **communicating** relevant and important information to support member businesses, including vital information about government support programs,

- **adapting** our programs and services to ensure that we were able to continue to educate and connect with our members.

IMPORTANT MILESTONES

By concentrating on our members, we achieved some important goals and milestones together such as:

- **Being deemed an essential service** when members responded to our call to action and supported our letter writing campaign with the government.
- **Compiled an economic impact study** and report, which provided credible backup to our asks and led to meaningful conversations with government representatives.
- **Kept the industry informed** on resources and business supports available to them throughout the pandemic.
- **Successfully catalyzed** the implementation of a Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC) in Saskatchewan.
- **Adapted** the annual WRLA showcase to a virtual event.
- **Hosted** several successful webinars to help support members in various areas of their business operations.
- **Educated** the media and public on supply chain issues to help manage emotions and expectations.



WRLA ADVOCATES

ADVOCACY WORKS!

Advocacy can sometimes seem like it is a black hole that leads to nowhere, but if you do not speak up it is impossible to influence government policy.

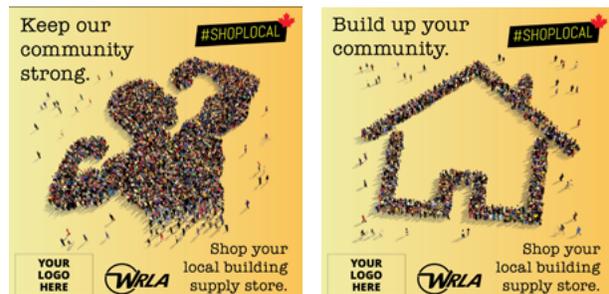
URGENT POLICY INFLUENCE

THE KEY AREAS WE FOCUSED ON IN 2020 WERE TO ENSURE THAT:

- 1 We could speak credibly to government. We invested in an economic impact study, which helped governments understand the importance of our industry.
- 2 Economic recovery strategies needed to be presented after the economy fell off of the pandemic cliff.

HRTC ADVOCACY

Prior to 2020, we focused time and energy on asking for a Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC) to be implemented. We had trouble gaining traction for those efforts because we didn't have the necessary evidence. **Last year's crisis made it clear that we need to be able to speak with more authority on this topic.**



As a result, we undertook an economic impact study. It was one of the best investments we could have made as it provided so much insight we never had before. It was **a crucial piece of the puzzle** that helped persuade the Saskatchewan Party to make a campaign promise to bring in a HRTC, which they did after they were re-elected to office.

We are ecstatic about this program and know that it has been well-received by not only our members, but also by consumers who see the great value in the program. *(We were sure to let Minister Bronwyn Eyre know that had our first annual political power hour been in person, she would have received a standing ovation!)*

	MANITOBA	SASKATCHEWAN	ALBERTA	PRAIRIE PROVINCES
 TOTAL NUMBER OF RETAIL STORES	271	293	785	1,349
 RETAIL SALES (2019)	\$ 1.6B	\$ 1.2B	\$ 4.4B	\$ 7.2B
PROVINCIAL GDP CONTRIBUTION	\$ 618M	\$ 375M	\$ 1,876M	\$ 2,869M
 EMPLOYMENT & INCOME				
EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTED	8,029	6,033	21,995	36,057
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT INCOME	\$ 332M	\$ 218M	\$ 1,051M	\$ 1,601M
 TAXES GENERATED FROM OPERATIONS¹				
PROVINCIAL & LOCAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 76.3M	\$ 46.4M	\$ 185.4M	\$ 308M
ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT	\$129.0M	\$ 79.0M	\$ 351.4M	\$ 559M
 HOUSEHOLD SPENDING (GENERATED BY EMPLOYMENT INCOME)	\$ 240M	\$ 162M	\$ 762M	\$ 1,164M

¹ Sales taxes generated from the sale of goods and services was not estimated.

Pre-budget submissions have been given to the Saskatchewan and Manitoba governments with industry recommendations. **We will continue to keep members in the know** and will always be looking for more participation and engagement.

KEEPING UP THE PRESSURE

While we achieved this win, we know that we have more work to do to connect with the other prairie governments in a similar fashion. **We will keep doing our best to promote policies that will benefit our members and the economy as whole.** In the words of Babe Ruth, "yesterday's home run doesn't win today's ball game," which means that we will continue to engage with members and push forward on advocating for the best interests of the industry.



WRLA CONNECTS

YOUR NETWORK IS ONE OF YOUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCES & WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU EXPAND THOSE CONNECTIONS.

We took advantage of the short windows available to us to gather last year with member visits and small networking events. Eager members also participated in two golf tournaments we were able to host.

Our digital events (aka webinars) were well attended and provided opportunities to connect our members across the country with relevant information. These virtual gatherings helped ensure that the barrier of distance and public health lockdowns did not impede our ability to provide relevant information to members throughout our region.

Over the course of the last fiscal year, 1,002 members registered to participate in 20 WRLA webinars. **Our average registration was 50.**



THE TOP 5 WEBINARS WERE:

-  **Networking** & Creating Connections While Social Distancing
-  Restoring Your Customers' **Confidence:** Tools to Drive Sales
-  **WRLA Panel:** The Perfect Storm - Issues Impacting the Lumber and Forestry Industry
-  Inventory **Optimization**
-  **Communicating** to your Staff & Customers During the COVID-19 Crisis

Webinars continue to present opportunities for members to sponsor and create brand awareness and the WRLA will continue with this program into the 2021/22 fiscal year. These sessions are intended to support our members and their staff so let us know if there are topics that will be of value to you! Send us your ideas for topics to jessicac@wrla.org.

WRLA SHOWCASE!

THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO SUPPORTED THE 2021 SHOWCASE WITH A TWIST!

We couldn't host this event in person this year, but understand the importance of the timing of our event to kick off the year and that this event represents a significant annual business event for many of our members.

As an association, we could not afford to cancel the event entirely. We also knew that our members were looking forward to an event that would help them connect with members, provide product knowledge, launch new products and ensure there was a buying/selling component to the event.

The event was built into three elements, which included the Showbook, app and Zoom lunch sessions sponsored by Sexton Group and PK sessions that were facilitated by vendors.

TOTAL REGISTERED:

468 Retail Dealers
509 Exhibitors
25 Buying Group Reps
TOTAL = 1,002

-  We hosted **22 PK sessions** with a total of **825 individual viewers**
-  We hosted **10 education sessions** with a total of **303 individual viewers**

"Hi Jessica, thank you so much for providing all of these free webinars to us! I enjoyed today's quite a bit. As a one-person team, I never really considered creating Social Media Guidelines for our businesses but after today I have decided to make it a priority for the near future."



WRLA EDUCATES

ONE OF OUR MAJOR GOALS AS AN ORGANIZATION IS TO CONTINUE TO PROFESSIONALIZE OUR INDUSTRY THROUGH **EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS.**

We have continued to evolve our program offerings. While our ability to offer in-person classes was hindered by the pandemic and public health regulations, **we were proud to bring both virtual and in-person events to our members.** We were the only building supply association that was able to proceed with in-person classes. We felt fortunate to do so.

In addition to the in-person classes, we have been working with Saskatchewan Polytech's School of Construction to help us deliver new opportunities. The Building Science and Energy Efficiency Course was added in 2020 in response to member feedback and we will continue to consult with our members on this.

As we wrap up this fiscal year, our newly formed Training & Development Advisory group has met to identify gaps, including staffing roles that members find difficult to fill. **Our goal is to develop solutions so that we can secure government funds to help develop these programs.** We are hopeful our efforts will help create a funnel of well-trained employees for our members.

"Liz you and the entire WRLA org are crushing it. Keep up the good work, congrats on a successful 2021 WRLA show with a twist, and stay warm! You are evolving the WRLA into something great and exciting."

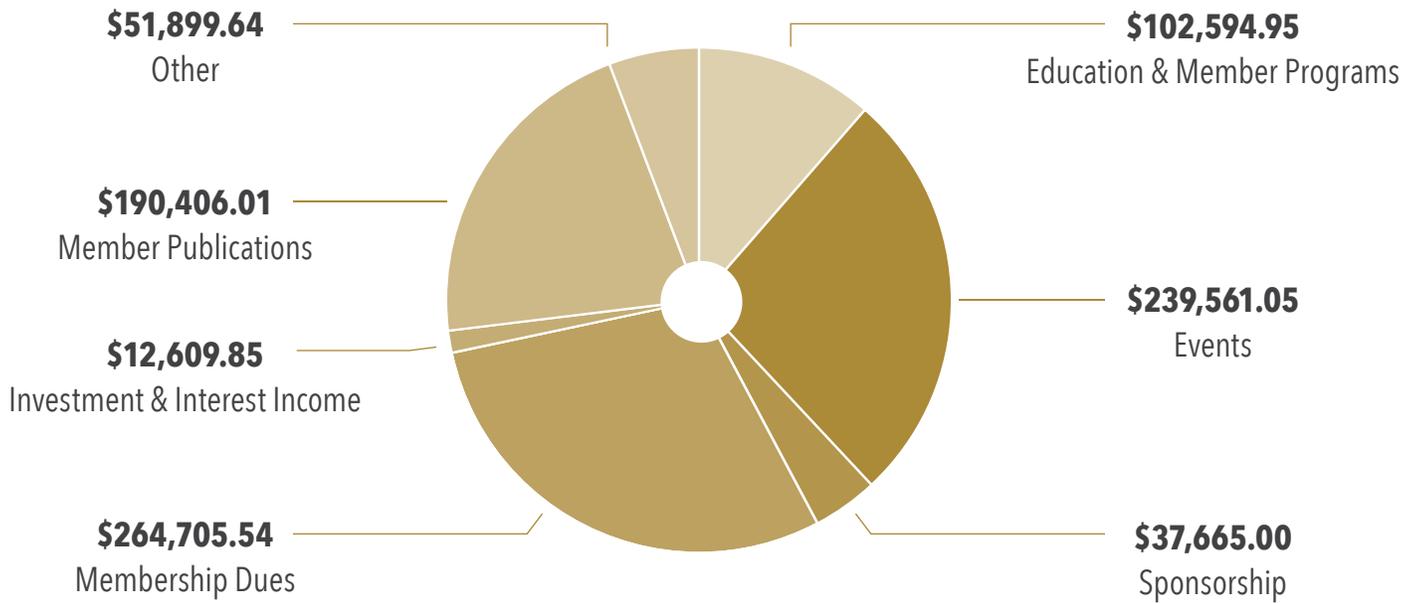


As a result of our discussion, the WRLA will be working with governments, educational institutions and sector councils on curriculum development as well as identifying skills gaps and needs to ensure the LBM industry is not forgotten.

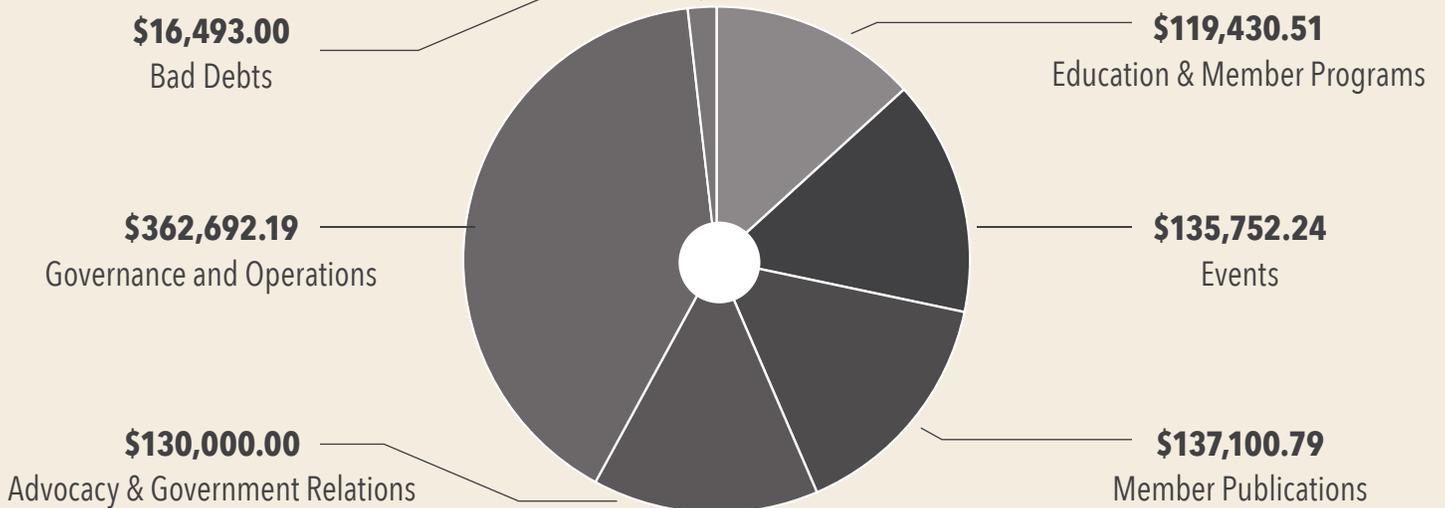
Cervus Equipment continues to partner with the WRLA and offer deep discounts to WRLA members for their training. We have confirmed that this partnership will continue into 2021. Information on pricing for 2021 and programs available can be found on our website.

FINANCIALS

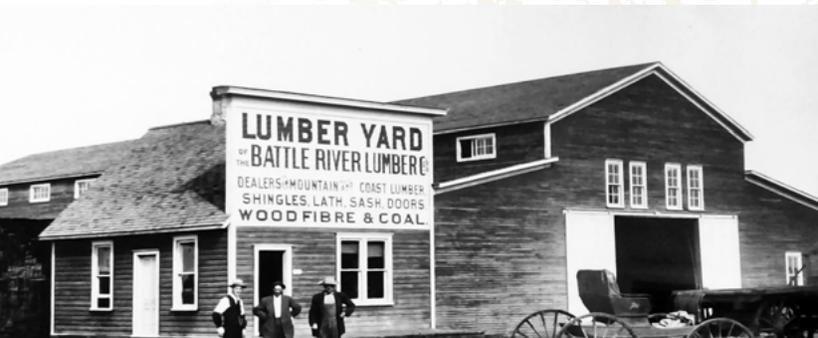
REVENUE DISTRIBUTION



EXPENDITURE DISTRIBUTION



OUR 130TH YEAR



2020 WAS OUR 130TH ANNIVERSARY, SO WE WANTED TO SHARE A FEW IMAGES FROM OUR PAST.

Our forebears had to deal with a lot of hardship as they built our industry. **We think they would be proud of how all of us responded to the pandemic.**

CONTACT US

204-953-1698
1-800-661-0253 (Toll-free)
wrla@wrla.org
WRLA.org
@wrlainc



Suite 300-95 Cole Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2L 1J3

