



**MADE IN MICHIGAN**

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# LogJaw logs local suppliers

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SARANAC — After Beth McDonald observed her father-in-law using a tool invented by his family to haul pulpwood, she thought it screamed out as a great device to help a lot of people.

McDonald, a Saranac resident who works in water quality for the **Macatawa Area Coordinating Council**, formed **McRansom LLC** to develop, manufacture and market a new tool called LogJaw. She is committed to manufacturing the product in West Michigan and is currently working with three lakeshore companies on the new venture.

Her father-in-law, Dan McDonald, a native of Kalkaska, used the metal tool — which had been in his family for years — to carry big pieces of wood out of the forest.

"He spent some time coming up with a crude prototype made out of metal, and it has been something I witnessed him using over the years," McDonald said.

The LogJaw builds on the vintage version with a nicer-looking design. It is a patented steel hand tool that helps its users grip, manipulate, move, and carry logs. The product is designed for anyone who works with logs or wood such as loggers, firewood cutters, tree trimmers and landscapers. LogJaw is about 12 inches by 3 inches tall, made of cast steel, weighing three pounds



**Beth McDonald is developing and manufacturing LogJaw, a log/wood carrier invented by family members. She is working with several lakeshore companies to produce the metal tool designed to move wood at the cut end of the logs.**

and selling for \$59.95.

McDonald said although there are log carriers that carry or move logs by the bark side, LogJaw is the first that strictly uses the cut end of the log.

"We realized there is no other tool like it, and it would certainly be worth the venture of developing and manufacturing the tool in a mass production," McDonald said.

Manufacturing is in her blood as her father, Rich Ransom, owns **B&K Machine Products** in South Haven. The family spent many evenings working on metal parts in the basement. She consulted with her father about manufacturing the wood hauling tool before determining it needed to be cast in metal.

LogJaw is manufactured through one of the oldest metal forming techniques, called investment casting or lost-wax casting.

"It's a process where they use wax to create the tool. It's a precision process versus a sand casting," McDonald told *MiBiz*.

Though LogJaw would likely be cheaper to make in China, McDonald has a desire to

keep it local in West Michigan. Her company is working with West Olive-based mold maker **S.S. Technologies**, **EPS Foundry** in Spring Lake for the casting and production, and Holland-based **Techno-Coat Inc.** for powder coating.

Stuart Siegel, owner of S.S. Technologies, said he made the mold to produce the casting for LogJaw and will provide any needed design changes. Although products like LogJaw are all unique, the process is typical.

Siegel has helped some other local inventors on a wide range of products, the most successful being a floor-scrubbing machine sold to schools and commercial businesses.

McDonald said Siegel is also a relative and was selected because they knew he was a well-qualified mold maker and because he took an interest in the tool. EPS Foundry was chosen because of their low competitive bid and the quality of their product.

LogJaw has received a lot of attention in the market and at woodcutting shows.

"It certainly has been an enjoyable process for me to witness their reaction to the tool," McDonald said.

The first lot of 100 tools has been produced, and McDonald is in the initial marketing stages and looking for potential wholesalers and retailers. A provisional patent has been approved by the U.S. Patent Office with the patent pending.

To develop her venture, McDonald worked with counselors from SCORE at the **Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce** and attended the chamber's small business workshop. She has also been inspired by Grand Haven Township resident Kim Lavine, who wrote "Mommy Millionaire" and is the now nationally known developer of the Wuvit corn-filled therapy pillow.

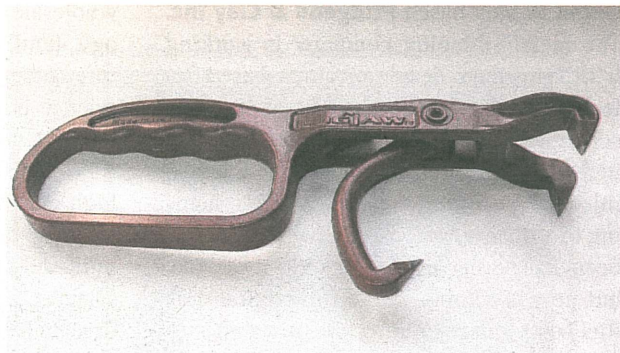
McDonald said she hopes to serve as an inspiration for her two young daughters with LogJaw. She recognized that it is "certainly a different niche for women to be involved in." **MIBIZ**

## Made in Michigan

LogJaw is a patented steel hand tool for moving and carrying logs being developed by McRansom LLC. The tool of cast steel is locally developed and manufactured with S.S. Technologies in West Olive, EPS Foundry in Spring Lake and Techno-Coat Inc. in Holland.

The product is designed for anyone working with logs or wood, like loggers, firewood cutters, tree trimmers and landscapers.

LogJaw is made through investment casting, where wax is used to create the tool — the wax is melted and then replaced with metal through this precision process.



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