

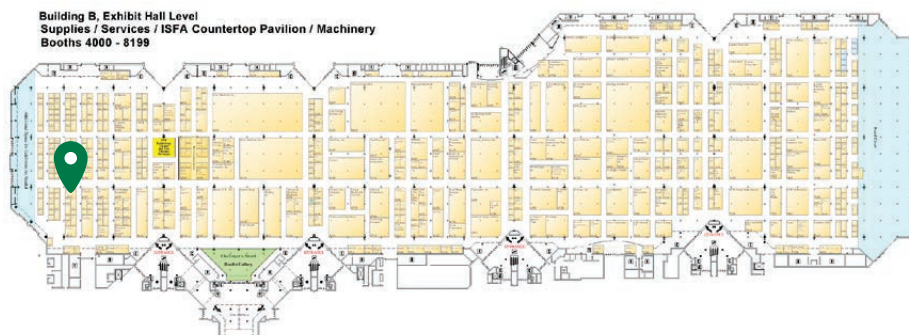
Come Visit us at the IWF in Atlanta



We will be exhibiting at the IWF at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. The show will take place from August

20th through the 23rd. We encourage all of our valued customers, vendors, and contacts to visit us at Booth #4227!

You'll find us in Building B, Exhibit Hall Level, Booth #4227



Remembering Kenny Growcock

June 3, 1958 – May 14, 2014

Kenny Growcock, brother of Kevin and Kent Growcock, longtime employee and friend of many at Banks Hardwoods, passed away May 14th.

Kenny literally was with Steve "before the beginning". The two met in the 1980's at *Tri-State Hardwood Company* where they became friends. Kenny came on board at Banks Hardwoods in the

summer of 1989 when our first machinery was operable at our new yard in Mottville.

For many years, Kenny worked on the green side of our business operating our lumber stacker. He was a key player on our original production team. A master at running the stacker, he helped take production to new levels. In our early years, we only worked a half day on Fridays. Kenny had mysterious powers that could make the stacker run twice as fast on Fridays.

Spencer Lutz by Steve Banks

On a June day in 1989, shortly after graduating high school, Spencer stopped in to inquire about a job. The offices had not yet been built and I happened to be outside working where we met. He was given the shortest interview known to man and agreed to start the following Monday.

Sometime into his employment, his first supervisor informed me he didn't feel like Spence was going to cut the mustard. But I had full faith in the quiet hard working kid.



Whatever you gave Spence to do he did well. Whatever he needed to learn, he learned fast. He was a man of few words but he proved to everyone in a nice way he meant business. He didn't care much for "slack-

ers", a term I think he coined. He had a "Just Do It" philosophy which he adopted from the Nike sports commercials. I still remember the green chain department getting off to slow starts, until he became group leader. Suddenly the saws were screaming at 6 AM sharp! In short order Spence was off to Memphis to become an inspector and back to
(Continued on page 2)

Kenny was a hard working, fun loving friend to all. He helped out on his family farm and in his spare time enjoyed fishing, hunting, watching NASCAR racing and being with friends and family members.

Many of us here at Banks Hardwoods hold countless fond memories of Kenny. He will be truly missed and always remembered.



(*Spencer Lutz, continued from page 1*)

quickly grow his way into plant manager within a few short years. As manager, he reported directly to me. He almost never sat down in my office for fear I would talk too long. He would stand in my doorway pretending he had ants in his pants.

By late 1993, Spence had the Mottville plant well under control. In 1994, in the face of a company crisis in Menomonie, he agreed to transfer to Wisconsin to manage our new facility where he remained for almost ten years. Once again, his leadership skills prevailed. He helped transform a fledgling group of new lumbermen into a well-oiled machine. As soon as the manufacturing was under control, he turned to sales.

As quiet as Spence was, I wasn't sure sales would be a good fit, but he was a natural with our customers. He built many new relationships and sales programs, and turned our regional sales around. He then transferred back to White Pigeon where he became sales manager, vice-president and eventually, president.

Spencer's rise through the ranks has always been steady and sure. From group leader to president, he has excelled all along the way, refining systems, teams and communication, helping us to become one of the best hardwood companies in North America.

Thank you Spencer for 25 years of leading by example. You help bring out the best in all of us.

Rob Nilsen *by Steve Banks*

In 1989 I bought my first guitar and took my first guitar lesson. Little did I know at the time that my first guitar teacher would stay with me 25 years and become the master of all things computerized.

But that's what happened.

At that time, Rob was working at *Instant-Copy* in Goshen using a Mac computer designing newsletters and flyers. He enjoyed the technology, which was in its infancy, and he was artistic. He also worked part time giving guitar lessons. Rob played lead guitar in his high school rock band and remains to this day a fantastic guitarist and teacher.

We hit it off immediately. I told him that I was building a small lumber business and he could check it out if he wanted. He did.

His initial assignment was to help build our first three kilns with Vern and his band of merry men. Soon he was summoned into the office to run trucks, and then sent out into production to get a taste of the hardwood business. He worked on the green chain, laying sticks and doing all the basics. With a good understanding of what we were doing



Steve Banks and Rob Nilsen

with lumber, he came into the office where we had four small computers running MS-DOS, a small *Novell* server with *SBT Accounting* on it, and a fax machine.

Rob liked all these new fascinating gadgets, and he very naturally proceeded to take over that end of the business; purchasing new equipment, keeping things running smoothly, teaching others how to operate, troubleshooting and eventually, learning to write code. He became our Champion of IT.

Perhaps the most laid back, even keeled dude at Banks Hardwoods, Rob has been wonderful to work with over the years and has helped facilitate our growth in business immensely. A shining example of what can happen when you hire the right people (or take guitar lessons from the right teachers).

To Rob – a wonderful husband, father, friend and co-worker; thank you for 25 beautiful years of dedicated service! Cheers!

Scott Ransburg and Kent Growcock



From day one, Scott Ransburg and Kent Growcock have been a package deal. Best of friends and best of coworkers, they have put their stamp on our business success, playing some very big roles in their 25 years of service. There was nothing better than to

see Kent, Scott, Kevin and Kenny squeeze out of Kenny's little S10 crew cab pickup every morning for work. What a treat!

Scott's career started as a forklift driver that fed the trim saw and stacker, as well as tallying lumber on the green side. This lasted for about two years until Scott found his calling.

Twenty-three years ago Scott was introduced to the Kiln department, helping to operate the 7 kilns we had at the time. Little did he know how things would change! He's gone from operating kilns with manual adjustments to managing the latest in

automated technology. Now Scott is responsible for 35 dry kilns and monitors them 7 days a week!

A sometimes sleepless job with loads of pressure, Scott helps produce some of the best kiln dried lumber in the nation!

I first met Scott when he was loading a dry kiln on a Saturday night. I drove away thinking, "man that is one dedicated employee." Years later, Scott's dedication is still strong. He spends countless hours keeping a close eye on our drying process.



When not at work, Scott enjoys watching his Cubs get beat, NASCAR races, hanging around the pool, and spending time with his family. Scott we commend you on your service and dedication throughout the years!

Kent took the path on the dry side of the lumber business. He was our lead piler and trainer of new employees for many years. While piling the lumber and becoming familiar with defects, Kent caught on to the grading gig quickly. In fact, he pretty much taught himself.

With his mechanical background, he was always interested on how our planers worked and functioned. Kent was sent to North Carolina for 382 planer training by some of the nations best planer techs. From there he took our planers to a new level of quality.

Even today, other techs can not believe the tolerances we expect and the finish we can produce. There have been many head scratching bumps in the road with our planers, but Kent has always been the guy that can figure it out. He not only trouble shoots planers here, he also goes to our other yards in a minute's notice to help them out.

Beyond the grading, planing and training, we're most impressed with how Kent treats others, a trait he makes sure to pass on to our young blood. Kent is the type that would give you his last dollar if you were in need.

Two employees, two different paths and one company they have served for 25 years! Scott and Kent thank you for your years of service and your dedication to making sure our new employees understand what it means to be a part of the Banks Hardwoods team!

 **Banks
Hardwoods, Inc.**