

New territory manager named for western Kansas

Experience and knowledge of the region are important priorities for Skarda territory managers, and newly hired Jonathan Farris possesses both of these skills. Farris, of Liberal, Kansas, has been named as territory manager for western Kansas and Wichita, effective November 29, 2004.

Farris and Tim Pohlenz, also newly hired, are taking on the territory formerly serviced by Skarda's Sales Manager, Lynn Nordquist. Farris will be working out of his home base in Liberal, which is just five miles north of the Kansas-Oklahoma border.

A long time citizen of Kansas, Farris knows much about his home area, including two important claims to fame for Liberal. As he explained, Liberal is home both to Dorothy's house from *The Wizard of Oz* and to the international pancake day race. Farris described this as a great day of fun, watching women from both Liberal and a city in England race around flipping pancakes.

Farris' knowledge though extends beyond local lore as he brings a tremendous amount of expertise about hydraulics to Skarda's customers in Kansas. Farris comes to Skarda already certified as a fluid power specialist, with particular knowledge as a hydraulic specialist. Formerly a hydraulic specialist for one of Skarda's customers, Farris now looks to extend his knowledge of fluid power and motion control.

"I am learning my duties as we go," he said. "There are a lot of product lines to know about; I'm learning a lot and trying to absorb it all."

Becoming an outside salesperson for a motion control company is a goal Farris set when he first became fluid power certified in November 1999. He is especially excited to be working for Skarda, a company in which he expressed great confidence.

"Skarda has always backed what they sold me. If I had a problem, I knew I could go to Skarda and get an answer. You get a solution with Skarda, not just a part."

Since Farris had much interaction with Nordquist in a salesperson-customer relationship, one of his goals is to build on the tradition of excellent customer service he experienced.

"The goal is to build a good relationship with customers. Tim and I have big shoes to fill. I hope to continue that excellence and build on it and be the customers' 'go-to-guy' like Lynn was," Farris said.

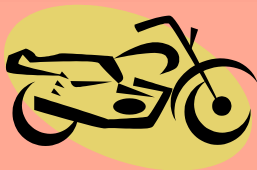
Farris and his wife of two years, Rhonda, live with their two Blue Heelers, Auggie and Dallas. In his spare time Farris enjoys some hunting.

One activity he really enjoys is tinkering with his Harley Sportster motorcycle; he actually enjoys the tinkering more than riding. One day he hopes to build a motorcycle from scratch.

Farris is looking forward to providing great customer service to all of Skarda's customers in his territory and Skarda is excited to have him.



Jonathan Farris



Hitting home runs for Skarda, Ann Wood follows through in customer service

When Customer Service Administrator Ann Wood isn't working for the Skarda team, she is busy cheering on her sons' baseball teams. An avid baseball fan, Wood saves her vacation time each summer to accompany her sons on baseball trips. As she says, "I like watching it; I like playing it."

Wood first came to Skarda in 1999 as a customer service representative. She and her husband Dave, along with sons Jason and Matt, had just moved to Omaha as a reassignment from the military. Originally from Salina,

Kansas, Wood has lived in Germany, Bahrain, Florida, California, and South Carolina as part of her husband's military service. They chose to retire in Nebraska, though

Wood said living in Florida with the warm weather and numerous activities was probably her favorite.

Although her previous experience working on military bases was in jobs such as purchasing agent and travel agent, Wood embraced the opportunity to learn about fluid power and motion control.

"When I first came, I didn't know customer service and didn't know what to do," she said. Her supervisor explained that "it didn't matter if I was here twenty

years, I would learn something new everyday. I have, even if it is sometimes something little."

After working as customer service representative for five years, Wood was named Customer Service Administrator in June 2004. She explained that her job entails helping to make the customer service job easier, which includes tasks such as contract pricing, paperwork distribution, and loading price cost overrides. Additionally, Wood serves as the sole customer service representative for Controlled Motion Dynamics; she is the liaison between CMDI and Skarda.

She finds her new position very challenging and said, "I'm still learning and still working on my own system. I've made some minor changes to make things work better for me and worked out some bugs."

She identified one particular area of improvement. "I found I've learned how to expedite a lot better than I did when I was a customer service representative. I've really honed my skills at double checking with factories, making sure everything is on schedule, and following through on the process more."

Wood said she enjoys her job at Skarda, especially the people with whom she works. "It is fun to work here. You know we have our moments. There are so many different personalities; you need that in this industry—some technical, some quick."

In her spare time, Wood spends time doing cross-stitch, which she finds relaxing, playing pool, and doing all sorts of puzzles. When she plays baseball she likes to play catcher, and when she watches baseball her sons play either third base or pitcher. In past summers, Wood has traveled with her son's team to Hutchinson, Kansas and Detroit, Michigan. This summer they look forward to spending a week of baseball time in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.



Ann Wood, right, assists customer service rep, Connie.

Skarda employees meet customer needs . . . success stories



Bob W. helped a customer with specific valve needs. The customer used stackable banjo fittings that just could not be found anywhere but were needed for a valve. Bob identified the item through a factory al-

though the item was not catalogued, which made finding it so difficult. The valve was delivered to the customer freeing them of quite a tricky problem.

Diane H. had a customer whose plant was in a breakdown situation. She helped to track down a pump, but it was needed that same day. The customer sent a plane to an Omaha airport, and Skarda got the part to the airport. The customer received the part that same evening so production was able to resume.



Kevin R. worked with a concrete company on a cylinder order with a special rod material. Initially, no rush was placed on the order, but then the customer needed the product much sooner than anticipated and the factory couldn't immediately supply the needed 16 cylinders. Kevin was able to look into Skarda's special stock of cylinders, typically held for regular customers, and find the needed mount material. The cylinders were overnighted from the factory to Skarda, and Skarda installed the special mounts for the customer, meeting the rush order without problem.



Stewart W. had a customer seeking a valve, which the factory supplier said would take 14-15 weeks to deliver. By further inquiring to the customer's need, Stewart learned that only the pressure vessel was needed, not the entire valve. He was then able to contact the vendor for the pressure vessel only, and the vendor located a part with the same pressure valve that could be removed and sent to the customer immediately.



Sandy B. worked with a packing house using valves that could have been over thirty years old. The plant went down and getting the replacement valve would have taken two months to supply from the factory. Sandy helped the customer locate the body of a valve that would work though it didn't have a handle. The plant found a way to fabricate the handle, and the valve that could have taken the plant out of service was replaced the following day.



Steve G. also helped a customer trying to meet a deadline. The needed part shipped out of Georgia and was not scheduled to be to the customer for a week. By making several phone calls to freight terminals in Tennessee and Wichita, Steve helped the customer receive the part in only three days, much sooner than the anticipated week.

