

Service just a slice of Langhurst's life

Jim Langhurst has spent all but nine months of the last 23 years serving as Territory Manager for southeastern Iowa and western Illinois. Those nine months were his first as a Skarda Equipment Company employee when he worked in central Iowa. Jim had been working for a company similar to Skarda Equipment in an inside sales capacity when he saw an ad for the open position. He interviewed with longtime Skarda employee Chuck Slawson and began work shortly.

As Jim explains, serving as a territory manager really suits his talents. He also appreciates the environment provided by Skarda Equipment Company's family ownership.

He said, "I feel very fortunate to have found Skarda. It has ideas and values near and dear to my heart. It has a unique culture. The company cares about the people—the manufacturers, the customers, the employees. It's about the people."

From Jim's perspective, working with customers and working with others in his community all give him a great opportunity: "I love sharing what I've been given," he said.

Over the years, Jim has found a variety of ways to share. He spent years as a volunteer coach for his children's sports teams. He was a volunteer firefighter, a member of the Ely city council, a church council member and president, and a Thrivent board member. He also volunteered with a prison ministry and made up half of a two man band that played for churches, holiday events, and in assisted living facilities.

Jim's home has even become an extension of his sharing as many people, including customers, have ventured out to his 56-acre property to take advantage of his lake, which people said provides "the best fishing in the state of Iowa."

Jim has recently been sharing his job knowledge with Skarda's newest territory managers, who he is excited to have on the job. As he explains, his 23 years on the job have been educational both in what he has taught clients and what he has learned from them. Jim's enthusiasm for his work could also prove to be a great lesson to those just learning the ropes.

"I have love and passion for what I do, so it's not work, so it's a joy. I look forward to getting up and doing what I do every day," he said.

Jim's interests are numerous and varied. He enjoys tennis, table tennis, and chess. He also has participated in running events and plans to complete RAGBRAI this year. He has competed in "Birkie," the longest cross country ski marathon in America. Thanks to the large amount of snowfall this past winter, Jim was able to train before the ski marathon and dropped his time significantly from the previous year.

And if all that wasn't enough, as Jim is traveling around Iowa to visit customers, he is working on his New Year's resolution: learning to speak French. So hopefully the next time he stops into visit, he'll be able to greet you with a "bonjour," along with his "how many I help you?"



Territory Manager Jim Langhurst at an April sales presentation

Meet Accounting: Barbara Brondum and Pat Minino



Barbara Brondum joined Skarda Equipment Company in 1996 after earning her B.A. in accounting from Bellevue University. She serves Skarda Equipment Company and Controlled Motion Dynamics as Corporate Controller. Barbara's job includes overseeing

the entire accounting operations of both companies.

As Barbara describes it, a day in the accounting department is never same. "It's challenging. Nothing is ever the same from month to month. There are always new things, new jobs, customers, projects, products. There is never a dull moment," she said.

While Barbara isn't out on the front lines of the sales force, she provides an important link between Skarda Equipment and its customers. She points out that good interactions with accounting can let customers know how strong Skarda is economically because it is a "sound, strong company."

Frequently customers need to contact accounting to work out questions with projects. Barbara said the accounting department is available to help. "We have lots of options for customers to help them with whatever their needs may be . . . Communication is key. If we're left in the dark, we don't know where the customer is standing. If we have good sound communication, things run smoother.

Barbara is the mother of four and grandmother of three. Also, she takes time to volunteer as a facilitator at Heartland Family Service with domestic violence victims.

Pat Minino first began working part-time at Skarda Equipment Company in 1989. At the time, she had been working in the school system while her children were in school. She appreciated the opportunity from former president John Skarda to help people get jobs back in the workforce after being at home with children.



Pat's role at Skarda Equipment has changed over time. She began working with Freight, then Invoicing, and Receivables before settling in about eight years ago as Accounting Assistant.

Pat works with Barbara to help keep all the accounting books in order for Skarda Equipment and Controlled Motion Dynamics. She helps with the reconciliations, which she enjoys.

Sometimes the job involves quite a bit of research. Reconciliations are "the most interesting because you have to research everything to make it line up. Barbara and I work well together that way," she said.

Pat also oversees the company's credit card expenses, which involves a lot of work at keeping things in order as well. As Pat explains, she knows how to be "picky" to make sure everything is in order. Even Pat's own personal checkbook is balanced to the penny every month.

Pat enjoys her three children and six grandchildren. She frequently has projects going on at home, and she also enjoys flowers and being outside.



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