



Stepping Up When the (Wood) Chips are Down

Once again the dedication and tenacity of our employees was evident when the chips were down. Scott Meyer, Shane Bingaman, Rob Rogers, Mike Middleton, and Scott Ransburg answered the call to duty on the morning of Monday, October 26th when the auger shaft twisted off the gear box inside our primary silo. Unfortunately, the silo was full at the time. There was approximately 26' of shavings on top of the auger with only one way to move it, through a 3' x 4' hole in the side of the silo.



After some brainstorming, our repair crew got a small auger in the side of the silo to start the process of unloading. The boys worked through the night, a couple even 32 hours straight with nothing but a quick nap here and there. The process was working, but very slowly. To increase the speed, Scott called our friendly farmer neighbor

Phillip Miller to see about renting a larger tractor. When Phillip pulled in with a semi, a tractor, and some extra man power, he declined payment for his services, saying that he was our neighbor and was here to help (this was in the middle of corn harvest mind you).

Tuesday was a new day with many setbacks and tired eyes. The auger did a good job cleaning out the silo, but with only a 3' x 4' hole to work through, many wood shavings were beyond reach. Our crew came up with a new plan; after ensuring the conditions were safe to enter, it was time for some man power to start digging and get to the gear box the old fashioned way. It took a good day to get all the shavings out of the small hole. Keep in mind we had a call list of employees each day that we sent home in the mornings to be on call
(Continued on page 2)



2010 is a special year for Banks Hardwoods; 25 years ago Steve and Holli Banks started a small hardwood lumber wholesale business in Elkhart, Indiana.

Since then, Banks Hardwoods has grown to be a premier hardwood lumber company with two lumber production facilities in Michigan and Wisconsin, and an import and distribution business in Florida. We thank all of our employees, vendors and customers for helping to make Banks Hardwoods a world-class company!



Midwest Trade Shows

As part of our annual marketing program, sales representatives from Banks Hardwoods will be attending the following up-coming shows: The *Buckeye Expo* February 19th and 20th in Dalton, Ohio; the *Northern Indiana Tool Auction & Expo* March 12th and 13th in Shippshewana, Indiana; and the *Central Illinois Woodworking Tool & Supply Expo* April 9th and 10th in Arthur, Illinois.



Matt Kuester - Wisconsin



Matt put forth extra effort all year long. No matter what the situation was, he was always willing to do whatever it took to get the job done. He volunteered

for overtime every single time it was needed. His attitude and attendance were excellent all year. Matt is a great leader and role model for all employees.

Rob Rogers - Michigan



Rob has done just about everything in his 15 years at Banks; kilns, piled lumber, forklift, driven semi, and has recently added maintenance to his resume. Rob starts

his shift on Sunday at 3:00 am to check chemicals for the boilers and finishes his week by coming in at 3:00 am to keep up with our preventative maintenance. His attitude is what set him apart this year. Rob is always willing to help the team out in all departments with NO fuss and many weeks working in 3-4 departments.

(Continued from cover)

as soon as the auger was ready. We have some incredibly dedicated employees!

On Wednesday the new main silo auger that just arrived presented a new problem; the new gear box frame was not the same as the old one. Scott Meyer went to work doing what he does best and fabricated new holes and alignment. They worked all through the night to get it all put back together again.

On Thursday morning, after three grueling days the silo was finally repaired and the boiler was up and running again. The whole time that these events were taking place not one order was shipped late. As a testament to their dedication, our employees worked long hours, odd hours, different departments, and were on call 24/7 to make sure that our customers felt no effects of our problem. Thank you guys (and farmer Phillip) for all that you did and continue to do!

Why the Shortage in Some Hardwoods?

As many of our customers have recently noticed, the past few months have brought a distinct shortage in many hardwood lumber items. This is the result of a combination of factors including low levels of hardwood sawmill production, low inventories of kiln-dried lumber at concentration yards, slower dry kiln turn times due to the cold weather and an increase in orders late last year.

Low prices for standing timber have encouraged many landowners to wait on selling their timber. Sawmills in turn are having a tough time bringing logs into their yards.

As the economy starts to improve and consumer demand starts to come back, manufacturers, distributors, and primary producers will need to stay in regular communication to deal with spot items and primary items in tight supply. Programs and lead times are going to be important to insure availability and consistency in quality of products delivered.

Banks Hardwoods has maintained a high level of dedication to all of our regular program customers for many years. Our partnership approach has been the foundation of our relationship with our customers. We have followed the markets in pricing our materials over the years while maintaining the highest value for our customers.



Over the past 25 years, in good market conditions and in times of economic adversity, we have worked diligently to develop and maintain our customer-driven program business. The evidence of our efforts has been in the many long-term customers whom rely on Banks Hardwoods to deliver quality products, on-time with a high level of service. We will continue to maintain our commitment to our customers, and keep our motto of “Quality Everything” at the forefront of doing business this year and in the years to come.

Dollars & Sense Conference

On November 19th and 20th our President, Spencer Lutz, CFO Jim Clarke and salesperson Scott Dickerson attended the second annual *Dollars & Sense*



of Going Green Conference held at the Renaissance Hotel Schaumburg in Schaumburg, Illinois. Jim Clarke gave a presentation titled “Experiences with FSC Certification”, where he described our company’s FSC certification process and some of the hurdles necessary to the completion of our certification.



69937 M-103 • White Pigeon, MI 49099
Ph: 800-221-7776 Fax: 269-483-2483
www.bankshardwoods.com