



# HIRSHFIELD'S HERALD

Issue #27, MAY 15, 2025

Company culture can make or break an organization. At Hirshfield's, our share of typical challenges is met head on by a truly remarkable team of people who genuinely serve our customers and each other. As we enter the busy summer season, please remember we're all on the same team!



## CORE VALUES

### Spotlight

## IN MINOT, THE LEGACY LIVES ON

It's been over a year since we lost our friend and Minot store manager, Mike Trowbridge, and the challenges of the many days since have revealed exactly what the Minot team is made of: grit.

When we asked store manager, Alex Albright, how his team started the seemingly impossible task of picking up the pieces after Mike's passing, he began with a list of names of everyone who stepped in to help...and that list is long: Pete, Heath, Mark, Eric, Corey, Pete, Jim and so many others who showed up, called, or offered help without being asked. From his years in the paint business, Alex knew to call "immediately, early and often" for assistance. He credits our company culture for the guidance his team received to help them shift into their new roles.

The first week after Mike passed started with the team making phone calls to our customers and telling the story over and over. It was terrible. And the team sucked it up and worked through the lists. Interspersed with sadness were moments when our customers showed up with food or lots of stories and inside jokes. Mike's sense of humor was unique; for example, he would sing loudly, offkey, and then ask, "Did you think that was the radio?" This is now in regular rotation among the team, just one of many "Mike-isms" that keeps the wonderfulness of Mike with us.

Alex notes that he was fortunate to have a close crew that was "eager to get along." He incorporated an open and honest communication style where everyone is encouraged to speak up and to tackle problems directly. They continued Mike's practice of giving compliments and being thankful. They decided on things together: schedule, store layout updates, coffee brand, radio station...all of it. And the team took ownership of getting through. Everyone knew the transition would be difficult, but they all wanted to be there.

**Read more about how Alex, Josh, Kristi and Austin moved forward this past year on Page 4.**

Customer  
Experience  
Innovation  
Trust  
Ownership

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Scan Here  
for MORE!



meet the team:  
**MINOT**



**Kristi Miltenberger - 2 yrs**

**Austin Jensen - 1 yr**

**Alex Albright - St Mgr - 3 yrs**

**Josh Snyder - 8 yrs.**

"People are unique, and we live in a time when the mindset can be 'Everything is replaceable.' Mike was irreplaceable and special. We are all special, but Mike carried something with him that you could sense by just being around him; he was genuine, thankful, and cared for people. I don't know the best way or a word to describe it, but there was a sort of 'peace' that he carried. That's what we all miss."

• Heath Hinz



Andrew Simon: Rochester  
Anika Monroe: Aero  
Carina Nypen: Aero  
Carson Ketterl: Detroit Lakes  
Chris Monyhan: Sales  
Debra Schramel: Shop at Home  
Jake Schmidt: Savage  
Jean Haukaas: Design Resource  
Jeff Kask: Savage  
Jeff Peterson: Edina  
Josh Rohlfing: Apple Valley  
Julie Bothern: Marketing

Kathy Basil: Design Resource  
Lisa Gardner: Woodbury  
Marcy Plucker: Aero  
Mark Baumiller: Bismarck  
Michael Truax: Sales  
Mike Adochio: West St Paul  
Noah Leintz: St Cloud  
Robert Meggs: Plymouth  
Russell Miller: Sioux Falls  
Steven Hoffa: Hopkins  
Tedd Petrich: District Manager  
Troy Taucher: Ramsey

# CONTRACTOR APPRECIATION EVENTS



Hey Blake,

Thank you for putting it all together! I believe it was a successful morning learning about the new pumps, guns and spray equipment.

Josh and Alex did a great job presenting the spray equipment that Graco has introduced in the last year or so. Many of our employees found great value and was a definite learning environment. The electronic guns will be a great addition and have much value and we are excited to try out the new pumps!

Having Hirshfield's and Graco in our corner has helped us complete many successful projects and we look forward our continued partnership.

Thanks again!  
Lee Andres, Gary's Painting Inc.

## VENDORS • PRODUCT & EQUIPMENT DEMOS • FOOD • GIVE-AWAYS

Our teams have been working extra hard to host successful in-store contractor appreciation events with some of our wonderful vendors: Benjamin Moore, Graco, Wooster, General Finishes and Seal-Krete, to name a few, and have had great attendance and participation!

Blake Eller recently coordinated an event at one of our customers facilities: a Graco Demo/Training at Gary's Painting in Brainerd. Graco reps, Josh and Alex, gave a demonstration on new equipment and showcased best practices that involved cleaning equipment and safety. Gary's had about 25 employees participate - awesome turnout! Check out the feedback from Lee Andres below - he had some nice things to say!

**WELL DONE** to everyone who was involved in helping our customers learn more about our products and services at these events!



## ANNIVERSARIES

*Help us recognize and thank the following team members who are celebrating an employment anniversary this month!*

David Anson: HPM-43  
Andrea Mandel: Shop at Home-38  
James Stoffel: Roseville-29  
Jeff Toftum: Lakeville-21  
Diane Handeland: Shop at Home-19  
Jon Rognlie: Fargo-16  
Mark Baumiller: Bismarck-15  
Derek Stormoen: Wayzata-14  
Felicia Moddes: Baxter-12  
Daniel Harthan: Rochester-11  
Cole Bothern: HPM-11  
Amanda Larson: Baxter-9  
Sam Hirshfield: Corporate-8  
Jacob Ewald: Roseville-7  
Nick Siemers: Chaska-6  
Jeff Watson: Maplewood-6  
Andrew Peterson: Hopkins-6  
Hunter Hirshfield: HPM-6  
Alex Albright: Minot-3  
Cody Justice: Monticello-3  
Chester Haagsman: IT-3  
Lucas Jorgenson: Alexandria-2  
Faith Hensel: Baxter-1

*Congratulations!*



**PROJECT:** Stella Residences (178 Luxury Condos)  
**PAINTER:** Briggs Painting  
**SERVICING STORE:** Chaska & HPM  
**SALES REP:** Steve Gifford  
**PRODUCTS:** 1258 Primer, MHB, Premiere Select Low Gloss Eggshell

**DETAILS:** Drums are an incredibly efficient & effective option for our painters. The savings to the customer on the project is twofold; no Paint Care fees as well as reduced price per gallon with factory tinting and packaging in drums. The Paint Care fee is normally \$2 per 5 gallon pail, and even though we're only part-way through the project, the savings are already at \$688.00 and expected to be around \$1,400 at completion. Not too shabby!

Totes were considered, but were too heavy for the elevator. The 600 lb drums are lighter than totes and can be maneuvered with a drum dolly. Our secret weapon is HPM, who tints in batches and reuses all the drums. Each drum has a plastic liner that can be pulled out when the drum is almost empty and the remaining paint can be squeezed out the snipped corner of the liner, much like a cake frosting tool. Almost no waste! Painters can hold back 10-15 gallons from each batch for the painter to use during touch-up, which makes for an easy blend on the existing paint.

**Mark Eimers, the Rochester store and Innovated Painting** are having similar success with drums of Pro Performance on their projects - it's an option to consider for larger projects to increase painter efficiency and save \$ on Paint Care Fees.



*Hirshfield's*

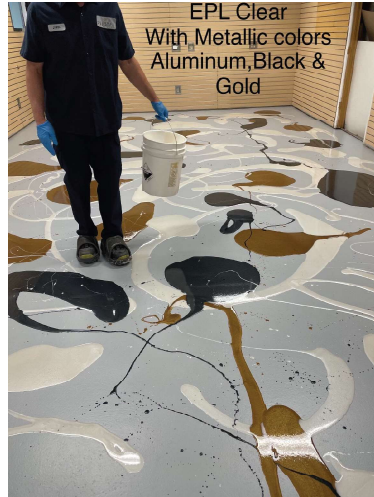
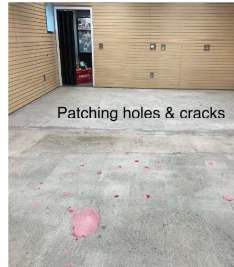
Harrison Hinz  
FARGO

Jason Doll  
ST CLOUD





**PROJECT:** Federal Cartridge Company Store Floor  
**PAINTER:** Federal Cartridge Internal Painter  
**SERVICING STORE:** Ramsey  
**SALES REP:** Corbin Schreiner  
**PRODUCTS:** Epoxy Shell 550 Primer, EPL Clear with Metallic, Clear



## The History of Hirshfield's PART 4

**1980s:** Hirshfield's first Contractor Service Center was opened in 1986 along with the consolidation of our wallpaper distribution warehouses and general offices into the J.R. Clark Company building just outside of downtown Minneapolis. Fun Fact: the building is on the Minneapolis historic register.

The late 1980s were turbulent times for the wallcovering distribution business. The smaller independent distributors, like Hirshfield's, who provided excellent service to a regional geographic base of dealers, were facing increasing competition from mega-distributors and the 1-800 numbers. Hirshfield's hung on as well as they could, offering the best possible customer service, while watching the sales erode.

In 1993, Hirshfield's made the difficult decision to abandon its dealer sales distribution business. This meant closing a division and turning the page on a major chapter in the company's history. The decision was an emotionally painful event, and yet a wise business decision.

**1990s:** Hirshfield's store expansion continued with stores added outside the metro area in Rochester, St. Cloud and the Brainerd-Lakes area.

**1994:** Hirshfield's celebrated its 100th Anniversary, a landmark few family-owned and operated companies ever reach. Bud's son, Frank "Hans" Hirshfield, took over the helm of the company as his dad retired.

Under Hans, more store locations were soon added in Eden Prairie, Woodbury, Maple Grove, Apple Valley and Ramsey.

*Read Part 5 of our story in the June newsletter!*



Thanks to Steve Handeland for the link to these photos!

## MINOT LEGACY, continued.

"Mike said..." was the beginning of so many conversations with customers and the Minot team needed to decipher which products Mike had provided and how he created his unique formulas for many customers. Building customer confidence was important and thankfully we had an ace in the hole: Josh Snyder. "Josh is observant, has a fantastic memory, saw what Mike did and didn't miss a beat," said Alex. "Josh, almost without fail, could remember what Mike did or who had painted a building or what the formula was for a custom color of putty." Josh is consistent, keeps excellent records of the formulas and, bonus, knows where to find them! Because of Josh, hardly anything was lost – pretty incredible.

Austin Jensen began his employment two months after Mike passed and had to learn a lot of product lines quickly (Minot sells wood coatings, flooring, epoxies, etc. in addition to paint.) "He was willing to learn," notes Alex, and to continue to show up, to work long hours and make the effort to fit into our culture and team.

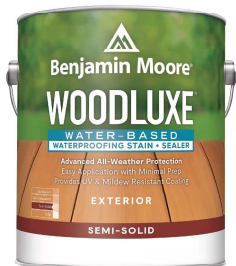
Kristi Miltenberger played an important role in keeping the store looking great. Kristi gave birth to a sweet boy, Caspian, this April, so in late 2024, she had to shift away from the solvents and heavy lifting portion of the job. This left the super-glamorous jobs of sweeping, moping, organizing & color chip restocking to her, but she took ownership of the tasks, and our customers noticed. "Having the store look good helps with customer confidence and creates a good vibe," says Alex, "She's an unsung hero!"

Mike's legacy left a large impression on each member of the Minot team; there was a sense of family, community and care that everyone wanted to see continued. "Alex has done a great job not only for Hirshfield's, but also for his team and community," notes Heath, "he kept the group together and they pushed forward during a very challenging time. That not only takes hard work and leadership, but also commitment and dedication. Alex and his team bring modesty and humbleness to Hirshfield's culture. They are just fantastic members of our family."

We couldn't agree more. Mike, you are missed, remembered fondly and your legacy lives on in a special group of people.



## Product Spotlight!



Woodlux is available in:

- 7 translucent ready-mix colors
- 75 semi-transparent stain colors
- 75 semi-solid stain colors,
- More than 3,500 solid and ultra flat solid stain colors.

Each opacity allows a different amount of the surface's grain pattern and texture to show through.

Translucent • Semi-Transparent • Semi-Solid • Solid • Ultra Flat Solid

Meet Rochester's pallet jack.... **CHAZ!**

Special Trait:  
**Always Being in the Wrong Place**

Let us know about your store's "special" piece of equipment!



## WOODLUXE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECKS

### NEW DECKS or Younger Wood in Good Condition:

#### TRANSLUCENT

- Translucent stain allows for the full beauty of the wood to show through.
- Ideal for hardwoods like mahogany, teak and Ipe.
- COLORS: Available in 7 ready-mix colors, Water-Based and Oil-Based Options

### Decks That Are a FEW YEARS OLD and in Need of New Stain:

#### SEMI-TRANSPARENT

- Semi-Transparent stain allows most of the grain pattern & texture of the wood to show through.
- COLORS: Available in 75 ready-mix colors, Water-Based and Oil-Based Options

### OLDER DECKS or Wood That Needs a Slight Touch-Up to its Natural Color and Appearance:

#### SEMI-SOLID

- Semi-Solid stain allows the texture and some of the grain pattern of the wood to show through.
- Ideal for softwoods like cedar and pine.
- COLORS: Available in 75 ready-mix colors, Water-Based and Oil-Based Options

### WEATHERED DECKS and Wood Where Hiding Imperfections is Needed:

#### SOLID

- Solid stain allows the texture of the wood to show through.
- A great choice if you want to change your deck's color. Suitable for all wood types, including pressure-treated lumber, cedar and redwood. Perfect for painting wood furniture.
- COLORS: Available in 3,500+ Benjamin Moore colors