



# retirements



## Jerry Robertson • Orgain Components

After more than 33 years of contributing to the truss industry, Jerry Robertson of Orgain Components in Clarksville, TN, retired on December 31, 2005.

In 1972, following three years of training as a carpenter's apprentice, Robertson went to work for Old Hickory Lumber. He set up "dealerships" for roof trusses and other lumber, acting as a broker for truss manufacturers to sell to lumber yards. After three and a half years, Robertson left Old Hickory Lumber to become a dealer for Kirkpatrick Components in Nashville, TN. There he sold components to lumber dealers, one of which happened to be Orgain Components. In April 1978, Jerry became an estimator for Orgain, a position that he would hold for the next eight years.

In early 1986, the owner of Orgain asked Robertson if he would be interested in helping to open a new truss plant. Robertson accepted the proposal and began researching and visiting potential suppliers. The plant was built and truss production was up and running by October 1986. Jerry recalls the early days of the new plant: "We started with one truck, one table and five employees and totaled \$250,000 in sales in our first year." Since then, Orgain has grown to three roof truss lines, a floor truss line, a fleet of five trucks, 40 employees and now totals over \$5 million in sales.

Robertson feels it is beneficial to be involved in state and regional chapters of WTCA, and actively participated in his local chapter, the Tennessee Truss Manufacturers Association (TTMA). "My involvement with TTMA has really helped me in the past when I've needed advice about an issue," he remarked. Robertson was vice president of TTMA for two years (2001-2003), and then served as president from 2003-2005. "One of the things I was able to help with was improving the quality of meeting locations and speakers. I felt that really improved turnout at the meetings," he stated. Bobby Tomer will be Orgain's new representative to TTMA. The new TTMA president is Ted Kolanko of 84 Components.

Even though Jerry is retiring, there will still be two Mr. J. Robertsons at Orgain. Jerry's two sons, Jeff and Jeremy, have both worked at Orgain for twelve years. Jeremy is taking over his father's position as Component Division Manager after starting in the saw shed and working his way up through each department. Jerry's other son, Jeff, is Orgain's head designer. As for Jerry, he is looking forward to having more time for his favorite hobbies, which include traveling cross-country on his Harley, seeking refuge on his 60-acre farm and spending time on his house boat. "[They] say I'll be bored, but for now I'm enjoying my freedom."

That isn't to say that he won't miss his work. "I was lucky to be with Orgain for as long as I was," Robertson said. "I'm going to miss the friends I've made through my involvement in WTCA and TTMA."

## Calvin Bole • MiTek Industries, Inc.

On December 31, 2005, after 18 years of contributing to MiTek's success, Calvin Bole, director of business development, retired.

Cal's primary focus has always been gaining new accounts for MiTek. Since starting with the company in 1987, Cal has ushered more than 150 new customers into the MiTek family, which is a company record. Over the years Cal has also closed numerous machinery deals with the company. Prior to becoming director of business development, Cal was a regional sales manager with responsibility for nearly 150 existing customers in addition to the many prospects that he was always working on. Prior to discontinuing it, Cal had received the "Salesman of the Year" award for four consecutive years.

Known for his tireless, customer-sensitive work ethic and large geographic territory, Cal has a passion for cold-calling and developing relationships with MiTek customers. "I'm proud to have brought in new accounts, both big and small," he said. "My specialty was making cold calls to gain more customers."

Cal's philosophy on sales was also a highlight of his career. The salesperson holds a very fundamental place in a company, he said, a responsibility he took very seriously. "I enjoyed working above and beyond eight-hour days and five-day weeks to serve my customers," he said. "During my career, I understood that the customer was ultimately paying the check."

Beyond his career with MiTek, Cal greatly enjoyed getting to know manufacturers and suppliers involved in WTCA, and at various times helped at the BCMC show.

Although Cal has retired from MiTek, he is looking forward to pursuing part-time work as a consultant for new operations. In addition Cal is eager to develop new hobbies in retirement, after an intense career of serving the industry. "All I have ever done is work, so I'll have to learn something else now," he said. Cal and his wife Donna plan to continue to make the Phoenix area their home base. They are looking forward to more of the vacation-type traveling that they have enjoyed together and will be getting a bit more serious about the elusive game of golf. Cal is also involved in his local church as a deacon. **SBC**

*Thanks to Tom Manenti of MiTek for contributing to this piece.*

## submissions:

*Retirement submissions can be emailed to [editor@sbcmag.info](mailto:editor@sbcmag.info). Photos are encouraged and will run as space allows. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length and clarity.*

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