

Bauernfeind Office Equipment

Bauernfeind Office Equipment began in 1955 when former-marine Joseph Bauernfeind purchased the sales/service department of Marshfield Book and Stationery, where he had been working as a manager since 1946. Owner Ralph Webster offered him the typewriter segment of the business after his wife's death. Joe initially paid him \$18,000. Ralph returned three \$1000 bills to Joe three days later - he felt he had been overpaid.

Joe moved the business from above Marshfield Book and Stationery's 355 S. Central location to 345 S. Central. Joe's first big account was the Molinee High School contract. The little typewriter shop grew with additional contracts, along with increased sales and service of typewriters and calculators. Summers became so busy that local high school students were hired just to help clean machines. One of those students, Jeff Schulte, eventually became the current president of the company.

The business became incorporated February 19, 1960, It relocated twice more. In the mid--1960's it moved to 113 E. Third. In 1974, the company moved to its present location at 606 E. Third, which it is also rapidly outgrowing.

Summers continued to be busy. Though Joe's wife, Isabelle, was busy teaching at St. Joseph's School of Nursing, she began helping out with the bookkeeping. Joe and Isabelle's six children, (Joseph, Bonnie, Mary, Janis, Clare, and Tom) also helped. Upon his 1977 retirement, Joe entrusted Jeff Schulte with becoming President and Manager. Joe's sudden death in November 1981 shook his family, friends, and employees, especially Jeff, who had grown very close to Joe over the years. Joe's youngest son, Tom, immediately left college and came back to full-time work at the shop. He soon became an experienced service technician and is currently Vice President.

Bauernfeind's began servicing an area within a hundred-mile radius of Marshfield. In response to the community's needs and changing technology, the company added copiers, fax machines, digital duplicators, and related equipment and supplies to its line.

A mere service department for typewriters and calculators forty years ago, Bauernfeind Office Equipment has grown into a multi-faceted office machine dealer/distributor serving 23 counties. This growth is a direct result of the company's ability to adapt the community's changing needs, its reputation for dependable service, and

top-quality, state-of-the-art equipment.

Bauernfeind Office Equipment's personnel: Jeffrey Schulte, President, Manager, Stockholder; Thomas Bauernfeind, Vice President, Principal Stockholder; Isabelle Bauernfeind, Corporate Secretary, Principal Stockholder; Stephen Nowicki, Sales Manager; Richard Bloczynski, Service Manager; Steven Cain, William Becker, and Leonard Folczyk, Senior Service Technicians; Michael Guldán, Joel Jurgensen, Scott Knodle, Scott Kelnhofer, Jeff Pescinski and Steve Schultz, Service Technicians; Eric Schulte and Ted Tracanna, Sales Representative; Ann Weyer, Office Manager; and Kim Bauernfeind, Accounts Payable/ Accountant.

Submitted by Kim Bauernfeind for the Marshfield History Project, Book 1, "The Marshfield Story, 1872-1997: Piecing Together Our Past", pp 241-242.

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