Thermo-Kool®

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ISSUE NO. 5

# TURTLE TRACKS

THE COMMERCIAL REFRIGERATION SPECIALIST

## A legacy that keeps building forward.

Inside this issue: remembering Randolph W. McLaughlin, a first look at what's coming to NAFEM 2027, a 26-year journey from the Metal Department to Vice President, our September and October Employees of the Month, and the words our leaders are living by.

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THERMO-KOOL REMEMBERS

# Randolph W. McLaughlin

**OWNER · ENGINEER · INDUSTRY LEADER**

Longtime owner and industry leader, he helped shape the company's legacy of engineering, innovation, and service.

***Thermo-Kool** announces with sadness the passing of **Randolph W. McLaughlin** on August 17, 2026. He was 88.*

| 1970 | 50+ years | 2 patents | 7 years |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acquired Thermo-Kool | Of leadership | Related to Thermo-Kool products | NAFEM Board of Directors |

**McLaughlin** acquired Laurel, Mississippi-based **Thermo-Kool/Mid-South Industries, Inc.** in 1970 and led its growth from a regional manufacturer into a nationally recognized supplier of walk-in coolers, freezers and cold-storage systems. During more than five decades of leadership, he expanded the company's sales reach, strengthened its manufacturing capabilities and maintained a deep commitment to product quality and customer service.

An engineer and entrepreneur, **McLaughlin** held two patents related to **Thermo-Kool** products and developed proprietary command-and-control technology for the company's systems. His emphasis on practical engineering and continuous innovation helped establish the foundation on which **Thermo-Kool** continues to serve the commercial foodservice industry.

Before acquiring **Thermo-Kool**, **McLaughlin** served as director of acquisitions for **Standex Corporation** and later as executive vice president of **United Service Equipment Company**, a **Standex** division. His experience evaluating and managing manufacturing businesses shaped the disciplined approach he brought to **Thermo-Kool**.

**McLaughlin** also gave back to the broader industry, serving seven years on the board of directors of the **North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM)**. He received Mississippi's Small Business of the Year honor in 1985 and participated in the White House Conference on Small Business in 1986.

His legacy continues through **Thermo-Kool**, now led by his son, **Rand McLaughlin**, president and CEO, and through the employees, customers and industry partners influenced by his leadership.

**WITH GRATITUDE FOR A LIFE THAT BUILT OURS**

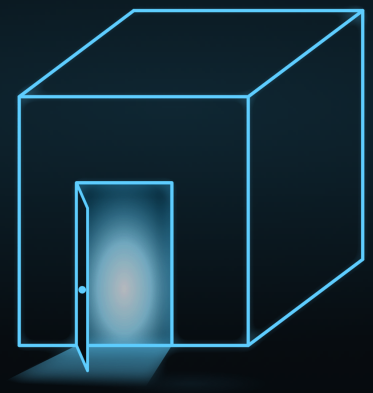
THE NAFEM SHOW 2027 · ORLANDO, FL

# Come see what's changing inside the box.

Something new is taking shape at booth 1635. We're keeping it under wraps until the doors open, and revealing it piece by piece.

**Booth #1635** February 11–13, 2027 Orange County Convention Center

NOT JUST A WALK-IN | BUILT DIFFERENT | NOTHING TO HIDE



## A walk-in isn't just a walk-in.

In February, **Thermo-Kool** heads to Orlando for **The NAFEM Show 2027**. Booth 1635 is a 30×50 peninsula on the main aisle, and what goes inside it stays under wraps until the doors open.

Everyone on the floor will talk about four-inch panels and polyurethane. We all use them. Booth 1635 shows what comes after the box: construction you can inspect up close, and a team that builds to the customer's space.

That last part is all of us. The work customers will judge in Orlando is the work that happens in our **Laurel** plant every day.

- One reveal a week. Everything in person, February 11.

INSIDE BOOTH 1635

## Five things worth the walk.



REVEAL 05 · REVEALED

### A seat at the table

Bring your project, drawings or questions. Our team has space set aside to sit down and work through them with you.

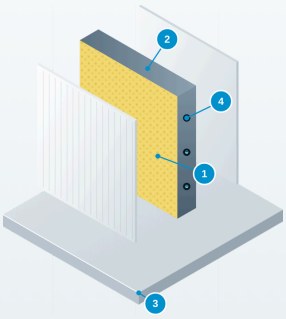
Next

REVEAL 01
**Drops Jan 7**
Under wraps

REVEAL 02
**Drops Jan 14**
Under wraps

REVEAL 03
**Drops Jan 21**
Under wraps

REVEAL 04
**Drops Jan 28**
Under wraps




CONSTRUCTION YOU CAN INSPECT

## Built to last.

1. **Foamed in place** A seamless, rigid insulated core.
2. **Hard rail panels** A framed edge that holds its shape.
3. **Floor systems** Built for carts, racks and daily traffic.
4. **Cam lock & doors** Built to seal tight, open after open.

SEAM STRENGTH

**1,500 psi**

| | |
|---|---|
| Thermo-Kool | 1,500 |
| Typical competitor | 300 |

CUSTOM SIZING

**To the inch**

Sized to the space, not rounded to a stock box.

12′ 7½″

MADE IN USA

**Laurel, MS**

Engineered and built in our own plant.

31.69° N · 89.13° W

# #1635

**Once you're in the hall, follow the light.**

More reveals are coming before the show. Know a customer who's headed to Orlando? Point them to booth 1635.



**Donnie Carpenter**
VP OF OPERATIONS & ENGINEERING

PROMOTION ANNOUNCEMENT

# Built from the floor up.

**Thermo-Kool** is proud to announce the promotion of **Donnie Carpenter** to Vice President of Operations & Engineering.

**Donnie**'s journey with **Thermo-Kool/Mid-South Industries, Inc.** began on August 16, 2000, when he joined our team as a Machine Operator in the Metal Department. Since that first day, he has shown a strong work ethic, dedication, and a commitment to growing both personally and professionally within our organization.

Throughout his career, **Donnie** has continued to take on new challenges and responsibilities, advancing through roles including Production Design Technician, Production Design Supervisor, and Manufacturing Support Manager. His 26 years of service have given him a wealth of knowledge and experience across many areas of our company.

Please join us in congratulating **Donnie** on this well-deserved achievement. We appreciate his years of hard work and commitment, and we look forward to his continued leadership in this new role.

DONNIE'S TURTLE TRACKS · 2000 – 2026

**2000**
**Machine Operator**
Metal Department

**Production Design Technician**

**Production Design Supervisor**

**Manufacturing Support Manager**

**2026**
**Vice President of Operations & Engineering**

> ***"Each step in Donnie's career has reflected his willingness to learn, adapt, lead, and contribute to the success of those around him."***
>
> **— Rand McLaughlin, President & CEO**

# EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Alex Johnston

Machine Operator I · Foam Department

WITH THERMO-KOOL SINCE NOVEMBER 2024

**SEPTEMBER 2026**

**Alex** was nominated for consistently going above and beyond with initiative and a strong commitment to the work. **Alex** stays focused on the task at hand, takes pride in producing quality work, and can be relied on to work independently. Just as important, **Alex** readily assists coworkers, helps train new employees, and shows a genuine willingness to learn and contribute wherever needed. Excellent attendance and a dependable, team-first work ethic make **Alex** a strong asset to the Foam Department.



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Ace Lunsford

Door Technician · Door Department

WITH THERMO-KOOL SINCE JULY 2023

**OCTOBER 2026**

**Ace** was nominated by his supervisor for his dependability, positive attitude, and willingness to take on new challenges. He consistently takes pride in the quality of his work, actively seeks out opportunities to learn, and steps up to support other departments whenever he's needed. His initiative, strong work ethic, and commitment to teamwork make him a deserving choice for Employee of the Month.

## ONE WORD

*Each year our team chooses a word to live and work by — displayed in every office as a reminder of our shared commitment.*



**Carol Hathorn**
Scheduling Supervisor

**UNITY**

*"I see a growing need for people to come together in everyday life, work, and church. Unity means supporting one another, working as one team, and pulling in the same direction toward a common purpose."*



**Erin Harrison**
Sales Supervisor

**EXTRA**

*"Matthew 5:41 says, 'If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.' Extra means going beyond what's expected, even when it's inconvenient: excellence over entitlement, service over self."*



**Justin Pugh**
Accounting Supervisor

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

*"I want to lead by example for my team, family, and co-workers, remembering someone is always watching. We all make mistakes, but taking responsibility is how we grow."*