

# Young employees drive company

by Erin Brown, Chamber communications intern

Insurance is not the typical industry that draws young people, but Nixon & Lindstrom has decided to change that stereotype as it moves into the 21st century and celebrates 50 years in business.

Nixon Insurance was founded in 1955 by Jerry Nixon, a Springfield native and graduate of Missouri State University. After 30 years in business, Roger Lindstrom joined the firm and the name was officially changed to Nixon & Lindstrom Insurance.

It is an independent insurance agency offering a variety of products including business insurance, health insurance, personal insurance service, long-term care, life insurance and bond services. Nixon & Lindstrom is a locally owned and operated insurance company that generates approximately 85 percent of its revenue from the Springfield area while serving a four-state area.

Mark and Luke Nixon took over the company in 1995 after the death of their father, Jerry. Together, they agreed to make major changes in the company as they confronted changes in the insurance industry and with many companies experiencing mass consolidation nationwide.

At the time of his father's death, Luke was only 31 so it was natural for him to look at people of his generation.

In the last eight years, young people have become the driving force behind the company.

According to Luke, "The body of the company is much younger than 50."

The process of recruiting young people was slow and took a lot of faith, but they were able to foresee the long term outcome.

"It took six years to really see change," said Luke. "There were no blue-prints or models of businesses taking this approach and others in the industry said, 'You're crazy to try it.'"

Today, Luke Nixon is the president of the company. He has continued to implement the strategies he and his brother developed in recruiting young people. They do not have a recruitment goal per year nor do they seek out new staff.

According to Luke, "Young talent often comes our way with prospective employees who want to join our team and show persistence in getting my attention."

Also unique in the insurance industry is the vision statement of Nixon & Lindstrom insurance that states "a company's worth is

found in the quality of its personnel."

"The insurance industry entails serious work and the employees do take it seriously, but happiness in the job takes away the stress."

Last year, when the company broke its sales goal, Luke closed down the business for the day and everyone went bowling to celebrate.

Nixon & Lindstrom Insurance's belief is that young people are worth the investment because they add an energy and an enthusiasm that after a period of time, a business desperately needs.

In the past 50 years, the overall strategy is to change with the times because there are changes in business cycles and technology as well as insurance.

*Erin Brown graduated from Missouri State University in May 2005.*

## Spotlight

### Nixon & Lindstrom Insurance

- **Phone:** (417) 881-6623
- **Address:** 1444 E. Sunshine, 65804
- **Years in business:** 50
- **Products/Services:** Independent insurance agency offering a variety of products including business insurance, health insurance, personal insurance service, long-term care, life insurance and bond service
- **Website:**  
[www.nixonandlindstrom.com](http://www.nixonandlindstrom.com)



One of the Chamber's five finalists for 2005 Small Business of the Year, Nixon & Lindstrom Insurance is celebrating 50 years in business. Luke Nixon is president of a staff of 34.