



About the Owners

David AvRutick, President and CEO

David AvRutick is not your average kayak company owner—he is a one-time lawyer, was a senior executive in the book publishing industry and even founded a college. David practiced law after graduating from Boston College Law School, but quickly realized that was not for him. Next, he joined HarperCollins Publishers in New York City, rising to Senior Vice President and becoming a member of its international executive committee. He later founded a company to improve the publishing industry's forecasting and supply chain management. After relocating to Charleston, South Carolina, David was the founding President of the American College of the Building Arts. A varsity athlete at Brown University and an active outdoorsman, David was long intrigued by Folbot – which was owned and run by his neighbor, Phil Cotton – and its acquisition is clearly the obvious career path following founding a college. David is excited to help grow Folbot and introduce folding kayaks to the next generations of paddlers.

Tony Mark, Chairman

Tony never thought he would be an owner of a kayak company. Originally from Charleston, after graduating from North Carolina State University (coincidentally in the same year as Phil Cotton) Tony embarked on a path within the computer industry. Beginning as a software engineer and ending with helping take two companies public, this path has taken Tony to Washington, DC, Germany and Boston. While in Boston, with Avid Technologies and Centra Software, Tony was able to help turn small privately held companies into multi-million dollar publicly traded entities. After returning to Charleston, the next logical step was to acquire a folding kayak manufacturer. Fortunately, he discovered the opportunity to fulfill his dreams with Folbot. Tony's favorite Folbot is the Yukon.

Phil Cotton, Chief Designer (and former owner)

After 24 years at the helm of Folbot, Phil finally has a new job in the company. Phil began his career in the textile industry after earning a degree in Product Design from North Carolina State University (graduating the same year as Tony Mark). After serving as a 2nd Lieutenant in US Navy, Phil returned to the textile industry as the Superintendent of Manufacturing with Burlington Industries. He then relocated to Charleston to work as the general manager of a textile plant. Phil purchased Folbot in 1983 and began redesigning the Folbot line using his background in textiles and engineering. Phil introduced the first of the modern generation of Folbot kayaks in 1990, moving away from the original wood design to using polycarbonate and aluminum components. More innovations soon followed. A fortuitous conversation with David AvRutick's wife at a neighbor's holiday party led to the sale of Folbot to AvRutick and Tony Mark. And Phil finally gets to just do what he really wants to do as Folbot's Chief Designer.