



**GARIN COOPER** was enjoying the spring temperatures on Tuesday and keeping the dogs happy while his mother, JaNan Cooper, did some shopping.  
*Herald staff photo by Karen Krien*

## Sainty man sells business

By Karen Krien

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Pete Jensen has sold St. Francis Sand and Redi-Mix to Darrel and Pamela Ritchey

Pete has been in the concrete business for 44 years. He started working for Goodland Redi-Mix. He took a couple of years off in 1968 and 69 to serve his country in Vietnam.

When the company moved the business to St. Francis in 1970, he moved with it. His wife, Kay, joined him two years later. The company poured a lot of cement for the city of St. Francis and Pete was busy.

However, Mr. Jensen had thought he wanted to drive a semi truck. In 1975, he bought his truck but found out that this wasn't what he wanted at all!

He came back to St. Francis and continued to run the plant along with overseeing plants in Sharon Springs, Burlington, Goodland, Liberal and Colby with the main office still in Goodland.

It was fun, he said, moving the plants from town to town for different jobs. The furthest he traveled to do a job was Illinois.

The biggest job he took on was overseeing the concrete pouring of the elevator in Deerfield. They

started in May and finished the job in September. During that time, they poured cement 24 hours a day for seven days a week. It was constant, he said, and we poured 12,000 yards of concrete. If someone didn't show up for work, Jensen said he had to fill in.

Today, he said, the tubes on elevators are poured in sections instead of pouring continuously.

The concrete business has changed a lot in the last 44 years. He said the first truck he drove was not the best.

"I had to pump the brakes 14 times to get it to stop," he said. "I wore out the toe of my boot pulling the brake up each time.

"The good thing was, the truck didn't run very fast!"

In 1983, Mr. Jensen purchased the St. Francis business. He said it was a good move and he liked what he was doing. He especially liked being able to hire the younger kids. Even today, he said, they will visit me when they come back to town.

However, regulations today makes it almost impossible to hire kids. They have to be 21 years old, he said.

He has seen a lot of changes, especially in the price of concrete. He said the first load of ready-mix he sold in 1967 was \$13 a yard

and 25-cents per loaded mile and the truck only held 6 yards.

Today, a yard of ready-mix is \$100 a yard and \$4.50 per loaded mile.

For years, the plant's loader didn't have a cab. He was finally able to purchase a new loader with a cab. He was out of town when one of the employees laid it over on the side. After it was set back up, there was hardly any damage. He thought that it was probably a good thing he was out of town, even though, most of the time he is pretty easy going. However, he has a huge photo to remind him of the day.

The new owners of the St. Francis plant also own Ritchey Redi-Mix in Wray. They took over the plant March 1.

"They are going to be good for the town," Pete said.

They plan to keep the business running and with their fleet of trucks, they will be able to take care of the concrete business in the area.

Mr. Jensen plans to stick around for several months and help the Ritcheys. His hobbies include restoring old vehicles and he has a shop that he can do some of that work. He is pretty sure he will find something to do.

## 100,000th

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the Bracelins and Jon, who had actually sold the tractor, flown to Winnipeg.

The tractor, Dave said, is a one-of-a-kind tractor. The tractor and Yost Farm Supply is now recognized around the world on Facebook and YouTube. There have been numerous sites and comments worldwide, he said.

The three generations of Bracelins farm approximately 10,000 acres raising wheat and corn along with cattle. Rodney and Ken grew up farming with their father, Harold Bracelin. The Bracelins have owned more than 20 Versatile-built tractors.

They reported that they have used Versatile tractors because the Yosts always treated them well.

Yost Farm Supply has been around since 1966 when Bob and Arnita Yost purchased the business from Rex and Sylvia Daniels. They started selling Versatiles in 1967. The very first Versatile they sold was a Model 145 to Keith Loyd southeast of St. Francis. Since then, Dave said, there have been hundreds of Versatiles sold through the Yost dealership.

Once people own one, Dave said, they come back, because of the simplicity and reliability of the tractors.

Dave was a sophomore in high school when his parents bought

the business.

I was always working in the shop after school and in the summers, he said. After he graduated, it was natural that he went into the business.

Jon joined the business after graduating from college in 2001. Yost Farm Supply sells farm equipment as far away as Australia, Kuwait and Jordan, just to name some.

The business advertises in "Tractor House" on the internet. This, Dave said, is a big advantage and he urges people to type in [www.yostfarmsupply.com](http://www.yostfarmsupply.com). They have also advertised in The High Plains Journal since 1967.

## PHARMACY

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drugs. When they took over, there were more gift items than today. We have replaced these items with more health items, he said.

A year ago, they put in "The Flower Shop," which, he said, has been well received by the community.

One of the biggest obstacles Dr. Krien sees in pharmacy is the federal government regulations. The government creates lots of hurdles and it is difficult for small businesses to survive, he said.

Recently, they delivered some equipment to New York and Minnesota. To make these deliveries, he said, we have to have better trucks and trailers, which gives better service. We also get many good used trade-ins.

Dave also noted that the smoothly-run operation would not be possible if it were not for his wife, Pat, mother, Arnita, and all the other family and crew that work in the businesses.

The tractor toured various farm shows during the winter and was delivered to St. Francis last week in time for the Bracelins to start their spring farming.

In the future, Dr. Krien said he would like to move to a different building or location.

"I would like to have a building that is handicapped accessible and maybe install a drive through. While a drive-through is handy for many, Dr. Krien still thinks it is good to be able to talk to the customer.

We think it is important to give good service to our customers.

People are urged to stop by, see what the pharmacy and flower shop has to offer and take advantage of the 10 percent discount.

# Congratulations are now in order



## Anderegg Lee Waite Jr.

was born on Wednesday, March 7. Congratulations to his parents, Betty Harrison and Anderegg Waite.

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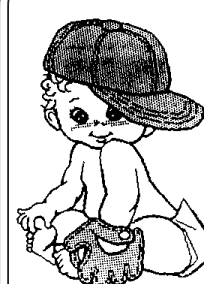


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(Log on to see pictures of the babies)



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**THE FIRST BABY OF 2011** was Shelby Lynn Hartman, daughter of Janna Brooks and Christopher Hartman.