

# Broadcaster refurbished old family farm tractor

By Ron Wilson

Director

Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University

The farm boy drove the tractor across the field, working the land. As he drove, he listened to the radio and started to entertain himself by emulating the voices of the radio announcers. That experience on the tractor marked a connection with this family's rural roots as well as the beginning of a wonderful career.

Dave Lewis is a Riley County Commissioner and professional DJ and broadcaster. His father is Don Guthals. Don shared with me the history of this old tractor and its connection with his family.

Don was born south of Abilene in the rural community of Elmo, which isn't even on highway maps anymore. Today it has a population of perhaps 25 people. Now, that's rural.

But when Don was born, Elmo was an active community. It had lots of businesses, including an International Harvester farm equipment dealership and hardware store operated by Don's uncle and his father Louis. The business was known as Guthal Brothers.

"The key was that (Dad and my uncle) would help farmers get the equipment set right. Then Dad would go out to the farm and fix 'em when they needed it," Don said. That type of service made a big difference in growing the business.

According to a history of Elmo, during the 1930s, Guthal Brothers sold more tractors in one year than any other dealership in Kansas. One spring, the company sold 30 grain binders. Eventually the brothers went into farming full time.

Don grew up on the farm and went to McPherson College where he met his wife Helen. He later took counseling classes at Emporia State. They taught school for two years before coming back to Elmo to farm. Don spent the rest of his career farming and teaching at Hope High School. They were active in church and the Elmo community.

In 1948, Louis bought a new Farmall H tractor for \$1600. "We used it for practically everything, from haying to cultivating to sowing

crops," Don said. "We even used it to check cows that were calving at night because it had a spotlight."

Don and Helen had four children, of which the youngest son is David Louis Guthals. Dave used that Farmall H tractor around the farm, and even drove it to go fishing.

While working the fields, Dave started listening to the radio on the tractor and then emulating those radio voices.

His voice developed into a rich, mellifluous tone. He started doing radio and DJ work when he went to Cloud County Community College and went on to a career in radio at stations around Kansas, using Dave Lewis as his on-air name.

In 1991, Dave joined Manhattan Broadcasting as an announcer and

program manager, just in time for the 1993 flood. His tireless work in keeping the community informed through radio earned him numerous awards from the community. Dave is now the public address announcer for KSU football and basketball.

Meanwhile, Don and Helen retired from the farm. Dave asked for the old H tractor which he refurbished.

In November 2007, Don and Helen moved to a senior apartment complex in Abilene, but it is always tough for a farmer to leave the farm.

"We got our final load of stuff in the car, and I cried as I drove away from the farm," Don said. "So I turned on the radio and the first thing I heard was a K-State football game

where they were saying, 'Now Dave Lewis will introduce the graduating seniors.' It made me feel better," Don said.

I only got to meet Don Guthals one time, on August 2, 2011. Exactly one week later, Don passed away from a sudden heart attack.

We commend Dave Lewis and his father Don Guthals for making a difference with their community service. In fact, Dave was so active in the Manhattan community that he was asked to chair the Manhattan-Riley County Sesquicentennial Committee. The committee put on a big parade to celebrate the event, and the sesquicentennial float was pulled by none other than Dave Lewis on his refurbished Farmall H tractor. Don had to be proud.

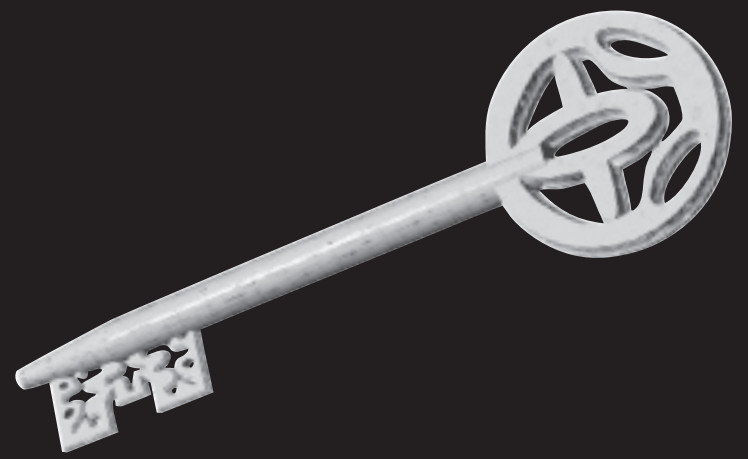
## The Goodland Star News Service Directory

### 785-899-2338

### Your KEY to business success.

Have your name up front when a customer needs you. Repetitive advertising is the key to opening the door to new customers.

Combined rates are available to feature your services in the Goodland Star-News and The Country Advocate.



The Key to Saving on Your Insurance.



Talk to us about our Companion Policy Discounts. Insure your home and cars with Shelter and you could qualify for additional discounts.

It's never been easier to keep all of your keys together and save money at the same time.



**Jim Alcorn**  
1624 Main  
Goodland, KS 67735  
785-899-2553



We're your Shield.  
We're your Shelter.

ShelterInsurance.com



**Scheopner's Water Conditioning, Inc.**

904 Main, Goodland  
(785) 899-2352

- \* Drinking Systems
- \* Water Softeners (Sales & Rentals)
- \* Water Coolers
- \* Salt Sales & Delivery



577 W. 31st St., Goodland, KS

785  
899  
5770



It's Hard To Stop A Trane®

### Hendricks Realty, Inc.

Farm, Ranch, Residential & Commercial  
Phone: (719) 346-7187 • 1401 Rose Ave., Burlington, CO  
Mike Hendricks: (719) 340-0217 (cell #)  
Broker & Certified General Appraiser  
Debra Miller-(719) 340-0345 (cell #)  
Broker Associate

[www.hendricksrealtyinc.com](http://www.hendricksrealtyinc.com)

Cleaning Northwest Kansas one house at a time!

### Pro Floor Care

Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning Specialists Commercial & Residential

- \* Advanced cleaning methods
- \* Affordable Quality Service \*Spot & Spill Service
- \* Water Damage Restoration \* VCT Tile & Ceramic Maintenance

Colby, Kan. (785) 462-8313 Toll Free (800) 473-4138  
[www.profloorcareandsupply.com](http://www.profloorcareandsupply.com)

Free Estimates  
Proudly offering wide variety of cleaning products for Commercial and Residential

We don't cut corners  
We Clean Them



Subscriptions make great gifts!

### Windy Plains Bike Shop

Professional bicycle repairs since 1978!  
Parts, accessories and service for all makes. Pick up and delivery available in Goodland!

**TIRED OF FLATS?**  
ASK ABOUT OUR NO FLAT GUARANTEE!

**Harold Snethen**  
6085 Rd. 17  
(785) 899-4786 • (785) 899-5858 (home)  
Same day service on most out of town repairs!

Committed to serving the Goodland area since 1972!



The Genuine. The Original.



Weathercraft Roofing & Overhead Door

716 W. Highway 24, Goodland • (785) 899-3064



### DAN BRENNER FORD-MERCURY, INC.

222 W. Hwy. 24, I-70 BUSINESS LOOP  
GOODLAND, KS 67735  
(Toll Free) 800-636-8770  
(Business) 785-899-2316 (Fax) 785-899-2317

### PLAINS HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING, INC.

FREE ESTIMATES! **Scott Sitzman** FREE ESTIMATES!  
Residential & Commercial HVAC  
New Installations-Replacements-Service  
Phone: (719) 775-2914 Toll Free: (800) 678-2914  
E-mail: plahtg@co-isp.com  
976 Main Street, Limon, CO 80828

"Serving Eastern Colorado for 35 years, and now serving Western Kansas!"  
Discover the comfort of a Mendota Fire!  
[www.plainsheating.com](http://www.plainsheating.com)



### The Decorating Co.



Interior Design Consultants  
**Irene Smith and Rochelle Kling**

There's no limit to our imagination  
1011 Main Avenue, Goodland, KS 67735  
(785) 890-5441  
E-mail: decorco@st-tel.net

Call The Goodland Star-News today to find out how this space could work for you!

785-899-2338

### NEW SYSTEM PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANING

Serving Northwest Kansas & Northeastern Colorado since 1992!

(785) 462-6995 OR (800) 611-6735  
egriffith@st-tel.net

[www.mywindowcleaner.net](http://www.mywindowcleaner.net)



Eldean and Janet Griffith 155 E. 5th, Box 692, Colby, KS

### Brandon's Carpentry

Drywall • Painting • Flooring • Roofing  
Doors • Windows • Siding • Decks • Ramps  
Small Building Construction • Garages and More

**BRANDON LEE** (785)332-3370  
St. Francis, KS 67756 Cell: (785)332-5264

Serving the tri-state area.

### Truck Lettering 800-886-2423

AWARD WINNING SIGNS AND PINSTRIPING SINCE 1974

### Hot Brush

204 W. 4th Box 309  
Bird City, Kan. 67731



902 W. Hwy. 24  
Goodland, KS

Dance & Tumbling  
Yoga & ZUMBA®

Check us out at:

[www.rightcombinationdance.com](http://www.rightcombinationdance.com)