



Greg Williams, owner of the new downtown aquarium and pet shop Just Ponds and More, let the store pet Sunny, a yellow sun conyar bird, perch on his shoulder while he made phone calls. Sunny's cage is behind Williams' desk. He said that keeping her quiet can be difficult, but she is a good pet and likes children.

Photo by Kathryn Gurfinkel/The Goodland Star-News

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star-News

The small watery eyes staring from the other side of a pane of glass, a slightly fishy smell and the exotic hairy pets near the back make downtown Goodland's newest business, Just Ponds and More, a likely hangout for animals lovers.

The Just Ponds name may be familiar to Goodland residents, since owner Greg Williams said, they have been in business installing and supplying ponds for almost four years.

The new downtown location replaces the old Luci's Aquarium, he said, and it gives the business the opportunity to offer more than just ponds.

"It just made more sense to have a storefront for our business," he said.

And more is for sale, from the hairy eight-legged monster tucked safely behind lock-and-key, to

birds, lizards, snakes, hamsters, rats and more. The store also carries food, cages, dog beds, treats, nets, pumps, filters and other accessories for the animals they sell.

The south side of the store is lined with aquariums filled with over 150 kinds of fish.

Williams said that the Just Ponds portion of the business has been affiliated with fish suppliers since the beginning, so he can get almost any type of fish a customer wants.

"With us," he said. "It's pretty much being able to supply ourselves with fish."

Just Ponds is a family business, he said, and his brother-in-law farm Matt McBride's fish farm in Oklahoma is their fish supplier.

The family owns all parts of the business, he said, from the fish farms to the trucks which haul the fish.

Williams said he gets blue gill, grass carp, large- and smallmouth

bass and all types of goldfish for stocking ponds and selling in the store.

The family extends to another of Williams' contacts who builds the custom ponds that they install.

"We build ponds," he said. "We call it 'from the backyard to the back 40.'"

Just Ponds' work can be seen right here in town, throughout the state and in Oklahoma and Colorado. Williams said he will go anywhere for customers, private or commercial, even if it is outside of the state.

He said they build 6 to 8 ponds per year and they stock, clean and maintain ponds.

"We do anything on the ponds," he said, "from putting them in, to taking them out."

Although Williams is not from Kansas, he moved here to in 1991 and has been a part of the community ever since. He said he loves his

job and works around ponds and fish because it is familiar.

"I've been raised with fish farms all my life," he said. "There's not much in (the store) that I haven't had growing up."

This past summer, Williams lost his wife, Christine, a teacher and lifelong Goodland resident, in a car accident. He said opening the store was her idea and realizing that goal is a testament to who she was.

"It's fulfilling a family dream," he said. "I wish she could have seen it."

For the future, Williams said they are thinking of bringing fish closer to Goodland within the next five years by putting in a hatchery near the state line. He would also like to put a bait store inside of the building.

Williams said he and his two children, 6-year-old Caylee and 8-year-old Garrett, want to thank people for their support already.

Buffalo meat praised

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star-News

The large pair of buffalo horns mounted on the wall, an environmentalist point of view and the excitement when he describes his new product, all natural Buffaloaf, makes Ken Klemm's success with the Buffalo Guys seem natural.

In his one-room office Klemm, founder and managing partner of the Goodland-based online buffalo meat sales company, works alongside the company's only employee, Leigh Field.

"We direct everything from here," he says.

The company that Klemm and Peter Thieriot, his Wyoming-based partner, started four years ago has taken off, said Klemm, with more sales following a spot in a national magazine.

"The article's been very good for business," he said.

The magazine Bon Appetit touted the Buffalo Guys' all-natural buffalo hot dogs as a "fit frank" in its "Top Picks" section. It said the hot dogs were a "peppery lower-

calorie alternative to classic beef and pork dogs."

"That says a lot for a little business in northwest Kansas," Klemm said.

He started the business after he moved in 1999 to a small ranch, running about 100 buffalo, on Beaver Creek 18 miles northeast of Goodland. He said he started a ranch here because this is the area where buffalo roamed years ago.

"It's the heart of buffalo country," he said.

The Buffalo Guys started as a way to market the two men's bison, and it has grown into an organization that has several other growers and employs slaughtering, processing and shipping services.

Klemm said the success of the company's meat is because of the all-natural ingredients. The buffalo are raised without the use of growth hormones or antibiotics. He said the animals run in open pastures and they are not fed animal by-products.

"Our meat is the finest of the finest," he said.

Buffalo Guys' products offer

consumers a healthy choice, Klemm said.

In information from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, bison is listed as the most healthy meat, containing even less fat, saturated fat, calories and cholesterol than skinless chicken.

The company also offers convenience for customers, Klemm said, with buffalo patties, steaks, hot dogs, jerky, ribs and more sent directly to customers. Klemm said Buffalo Guys products are available in restaurants and natural food grocery stores in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

"From the Atlantic Ocean all the way to the Pacific Ocean," he said.

The trademarked Buffaloaf, he said, is a convenient precooked microwavable meal.

People interested in trying the hot dogs can stop at the Stage Stop Sinclair station at the east Goodland exit off I-70. The buffalo products also are available online at www.TheBuffaloGuys.com or by calling (888) 330-8686 or 899-9274.



Ken Klemm, founder and managing partner of the Buffalo Guys, a Goodland-based buffalo meat sales company, unloaded a box of the all natural buffalo hot dogs featured as a "Top Pic" in Bon Appetit magazine. Klemm said the dogs are available here by calling his office, and he will offer a special local rate.

Photo by Kathryn Gurfinkel/The Goodland Star-News

Lot becoming grain office

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

A vacant lot is getting a makeover, allowing a Goodland grain dealer to move its administrative office closer to its elevators.

Mueller Grain Co. hopes to move into its new office, on 17th Street across from its elevators, in October. The former site of Dairy Queen, across the street from the Cowboy Loop, has been vacant since the building was torn down in August 2001.

General Manager Lynn Hoelting said the company has owned the land several years and decided it was time to move down there. It will be a better use of the property, he said, and a more efficient use of personnel, a consolidation of operations.

The new office will serve the same functions as the current site at

1204 Main, Hoelting said. The company can serve farmers from either location, but it should be a convenience for customers to just walk across the street after delivering grain.

"The comments I've received from the community have been positive," Hoelting said. "We'll help dress up a vacant corner."

United Brokerage, currently at 1202 Main, also will move into the new building. They are a separate business, Hoelting said, but will occupy space there.

Mueller Grain's administrative offices have been at the current location since 1997, Hoelting said, renting the space from the McGinley family. The company has been happy with the location, he said, and the landlord has treated them well.

When the company moved in, he

said, the office fit well with how the business needed to operate. Now it seems like a good idea to consolidate operations, he said.

Nationwide Homes is the general contractor on the project, Hoelting said, and they are subcontracting to other area firms.

The building will be a Universal Building Code modular construction, Elizabeth Adams, a salesperson at Nationwide said, meaning it is built for the specific site and meets the same codes as it would if built on the site and meets all zoning regulations.

The office is being built now in Plainville by Schult Homes Corp, she said, and the basement is being done by Dick Morton.

Justin Burgess, sales manager at Nationwide, said the building may be delivered to the site the week of Sept. 20.

son to do it."

The group's managers sent its CD to Armed Forces Entertainment, he said, and the group was approved to perform for the troops.

The mission isn't just the music, Fairbanks said; it's hand-shaking, morale-boosting and bringing a little bit of America to the soldiers.

Fairbanks is a 1994 Goodland High School graduate. He went on the Kansas State University, where he met Hopkins, Marron and Davis. Fairbanks and Marron began putting the band together in the summer of 1997 and added Hopkins and Davis by the winter of 1998.

Leslie was added after the group's second CD, "Cocoon Club," became a success. Their third release is "Identity."

Band going to entertain troops

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

A Goodland native will take his rock band on tour overseas to entertain the troops in Iraq.

David Fairbanks, son of Jerry and Annette Fairbanks of Goodland, will be going on a three-week, six-nation tour, with his Kansas City-based band Pomeroy, to entertain U.S. and allied troops in the Middle East.

The group will perform Saturday at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson before leaving Sunday on the USO tour. They will go to Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Pakistan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, performing for the men and women on the front lines in the war on terror.

Fairbanks is the band's lead vocalist and percussionist. The band also includes Matt Marron, guitar/vocals; Chris Davis, drums; Tyson Leslie, keyboards/guitar; and Dean Hopkins, bass.

He said the group was eager to play a part in a modern legacy to Bob Hope's famous tours.

"It's pretty simple why we're down with the cause," Fairbanks said. "We wake up every day and worry about playing our next show while there are thousands of people our age and younger waking up and worrying if they are gonna get ambushed or hit by a suicide bomber on their next patrol. If the P-Crew sound can give these folks a minute to forget the threat and have a good time, then that's a good enough rea-

for helping at the Hamburger Shack at the Northwest Kansas District Free Fair. The fair board actually got \$1,000. This was a reporting error.

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corrections

The article "Kiwanis Club gives back to kids" on the community page of the Friday, Sept. 10, issue of *The Goodland Star-News* said the Sherman County Fair Board received \$100 from the Kiwanis Club