



HEY NEIGHBOR By Frank J. Buchman

'Bluestem Farm & Ranch Supply Has Got It, And If We Don't, It's Probably Not Around'

"We can get it at Bluestem."

That's been the common comment and philosophy of folks for 50 years.

Everybody in eastern Kansas, and beyond, depends on Bluestem Farm & Ranch Supply at Emporia for just about whatever they need for the farm, ranch, home and rural lifestyle.

Not necessary to say any more than

"Bluestem," and others know what is meant. On any trip to Emporia, many have to stop, even if nothing is needed. It's a nostalgic visit to see what's new and rub shoulders with all of the friends, neighbors and congenial workers who're there.

One of the longest continuing advertisers on AM 580 WIBW, and more recently The BIG 94.5 Country FM, Bluestem Farm & Ranch Supply was started a half century ago by Lee and Marjorie Nelson, pictured courtesy of Matt Fowler at the Emporia Gazette.

Their daughter, Ann Bruner, manages Bluestem which has always been backed by well-informed, dedicated, longtime staff with rural backgrounds.

Nelson started Bluestem in a small downtown Emporia location, soon moved to another, and in 1969 "went West" to a new building on Highway 50.

Expansion has continued, so now Bluestem encompasses more than 62,000 square feet. "Basic stock of farm and ranch equipment and supplies gradually grew into more of an all-purpose store with almost everything families might need," said Nelson.

"Bluestem Farm & Ranch Supply has got it, and if we don't, it's probably not around," according to the WIBW AM-FM radio jingle that appropriately describes the business.

"We don't have everything, even though sometimes it seems that way," said Bruner, who grew up working in the store with her siblings, Kay, Tom and Jim.

She joined the store as a career three decades ago, and her husband, Kenneth has been there a dozen years. Bluestem now employs more than 80 people including additional managers Bruce Burenheide and Lonnie Standifred, who work with Team W on WIBW advertising.

Besides being an important place to shop for whatever is needed, Bluestem is a strong supporter of community activities including making fair live-stock purchases in many counties every year.

Appreciation was expressed to Bluestem when the firm was recognized in its golden anniversary year as one of the Best of Kansas in the farm store category.

Indicative of the farm family friendliness, "the coffee pot is always on" at Bluestem Farm & Ranch Supply, and it's free. Plus, there's free popcorn every Saturday. "Bluestem truly is a one-of-a-kind store."



**94.5
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Padre says:

**"Jesus is the
ultimate gift to
the world. Mer-
ry
Christmas"**

