



# Polk County

## PRIDE & PROGRESS

**A Special Supplement to the Bolivar Herald-Free Press**  
Wednesday, March 26, 2025





# ALL ABOUT PAWS

## Lots of paws!

By Linda Simmons

**T**he last of May in 2017 found Dr. Wendell Stewart, known as Doc to many, retiring from the long-time veterinary practice that he and his wife, Darwina, spent years at. But with the love of animals and still not ready to just ‘get in the rocking chair’ to bide his time it didn’t take long for Doc to decide he wanted to buy a mobile vet clinic and continue to work part-time.

“After we were finished at the clinic we went to Gulf Shores, Alabama for a two-week vacation,” said Darwina. “The fourth day of our trip he asked me what I wanted to do to occupy my time since he was going to buy a mobile unit. That was the first I had heard about this plan but I said that I thought I would open a doggy daycare.”

Doc proceeded to tell her that she was “nuts,” but then went on to tell her that he knew the ‘perfect place.’ He called the owner and found out that it was being auctioned off the following Thursday.

“We got up the next morning and drove back to Missouri,” said Stewart. “We purchased the property at the auction the following evening, ending our retirement after six days!”

After purchasing the property in June they gutted the building and reconfigured the entire facility that summer and opened on Oct. 17, 2017, as a cage-free doggy daycare, boarding, and grooming business.

It didn’t take long to get a steady clientele but like all new businesses, it wasn’t without its challenges. Having a business that is open seven days a week, 365 days a year is a challenge for any type of business, and for All About Paws, there were the usual ones to face and some out of the ordinary ones such as just being able to grow grass.

The days of having 30 dogs per day and only needing two people as attendants quickly grew to as many as 90 dogs a day and needing six people in the yards. “The most valuable resource for this business has been family,” Stewart says, “we usually have only one or two non-family employees at any given time.”

“My two grandsons worked with us in the beginning but have moved on to other careers, my two daughters and two granddaughters now work full time.” It is a full-time position just handling the record keeping, scheduling for daycare, boarding, and grooming.

“We are more than grateful to the staff at the four Bolivar veterinary clinics for making our record keeping easier. They have been easy to work with, know what we need, and inform mutual clients of the requirements.”

Darwina Stewart, owner, covering the phone, computer, walk-ins and keeping everything organized and running smoothly.



Kierra Gannaway (granddaughter), with Zara, Houston and Kano. STAFF PHOTOS/ LINDA SIMMONS

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Working the yards requires a lot of hands on deck. Pictured are Natalie Benedict, Cameron Elkins (granddaughter), Marlaina Elkins (daughter). Not pictured Mallory Havalow (daughter).



“We’ve enjoyed watching so many puppies grow up,” Stewart says. “One of our regulars, ‘Libby’ Payne has been to daycare 1580+ days since starting Aug. 6, 2018. There are another half dozen with more than 1,000 days, including ‘Sooner’ Gilchrist, ‘Belle’ Lake, and ‘Zoey’ Dalton.”

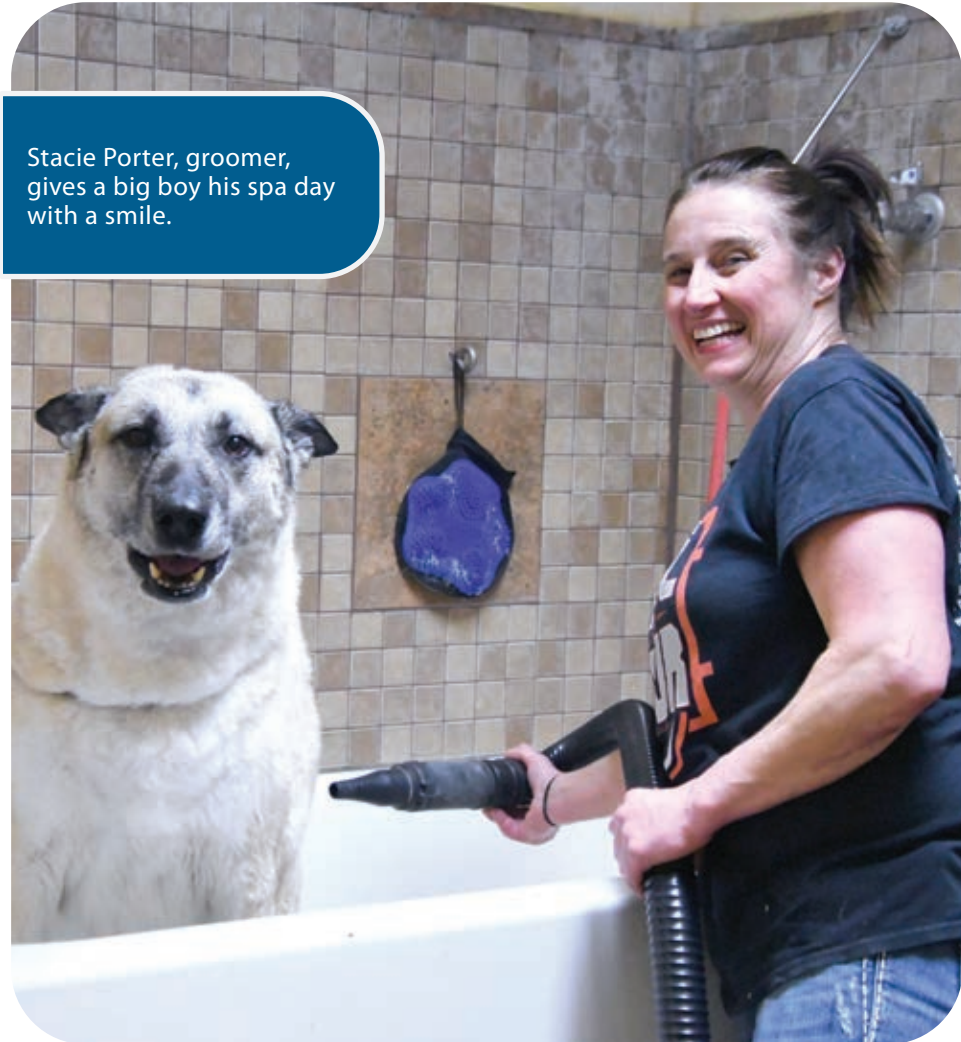
“Currently there are four new Christmas puppies that attend daycare and are creating controlled chaos,” says Stewart. All About Paws is a home-away-from-home, providing lots of freedom to play, get exercise, take naps, and make friends, all in a controlled and safe environment.

Time always has a way of changing things in life, as a business grows there is no way to avoid ‘growing pains’ but for Stewart, the biggest change has been not having Doc there to be her cheerleader. “He was so proud of how everything turned out and would often tell people how wrong he was when he told me, ‘People aren’t going to bring their dogs to play with other people’s dogs. That’s just nuts’”

In October of this year, All About Paws will celebrate its eighth year of providing a place for lots of pups to socialize and spend their day having fun rather than sleeping the day away. Whether they are coming to spend the day playing, getting groomed, or spending a few days as boarders, it is easy to see that this was a service that both canines and their owners alike, have enjoyed and are happy to have available.

“The most valuable resource for this business has been family...”

Stacie Porter, groomer, gives a big boy his spa day with a smile.



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# COUNTRYSIDE SMALL ANIMAL CLINIC

## For the love of animals and medicine

By Linda Simmons

Bruce Hood was eight-years old when his dad, Dr. Dennis Hood, also known as Doc Hood, opened Countryside Veterinary Clinic in Bolivar.

Doc Hood graduated from MU College of Veterinary Medicine in 1974. Straight out of school Doc Hood, along with Dr. Wendell Stewart, also fresh out of MU, opened a clinic in Bolivar. Doc Hood then opened Countryside Veterinary Clinic in 1976, offering a full range of veterinary services to pet owners as well as farm animals and cattle.

Bruce Hood worked at the clinic all through high school, so his path to becoming a veterinarian was formed at a very young age. After high school, he also went to MU College of Veterinary Medicine, continuing to work at the clinic while in undergraduate and graduate school. Then, in 1994, after graduation, he joined the practice, exactly 20 years after his dad had graduated from veterinary school.

The father and son had gone full circle. Dennis Hood had gone to MU to become a veterinarian, gotten married, and started a family in the 1970s. Fast forward to the 1990s and his son, Bruce Hood, also had gotten



Pup Hazel gets some special attention.

“We are blessed to be able to serve our great community...”



Dr. Bruce Hood with wife, Tonna, daughter Rylan and Hazel. STAFF PHOTOS/ LINDA SIMMONS

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### Our Family Working For Yours!





Rylan, Bruce and Tonna.



Rylan and Hazel love helping out around the clinic, the love for animals is a family affair.

married and started a family while attending MU.

In 2002, Bruce bought the small animal clinic portion of the practice from his dad. While his dad specialized in large animals, Bruce specializes in small animals. In October 2018, the Countryside Small Animal Clinic moved into their new location at 4163 Hwy 13.

“I became a vet partly because of my dad being a vet, but also because of my love of medicine,” said Hood. “The most rewarding part of being a veterinarian is being able to see a sick or injured pet become healthy again. We are blessed to be able to serve our great community and lucky enough to be able to call many of them our friends.”

Over the years practicing veterinary medicine has changed a great deal, especially when it comes to the small animal world and the love that people have for their pets. There was a time when dogs and cats were just animals on the farm or to have around, today they are more than that in most cases. They are like family and keeping them healthy is very important to the owners. Keeping up with vaccinations, dental health, surgeries, chemotherapy, acupuncture, all areas that were once never associated with a pet are now available and encouraged. Hood, along with his wife, Tonna, and the staff at Countryside Small Animal Clinic, wants their patients to be taken care of from their first round of shots throughout their senior years.



W.H. Hood - “Papa Hood”

◀◀ The love of animals goes back through the generations. In the 1970s, W.H. Hood, grandfather to Bruce, was the FFA advisor for Pleasant Hope High School. Affectionately known as “Papa Hood” by his students and the community, W.H. Hood helped prepare many vocational agriculture students for the roles they would play throughout their lives. In 1976, Hood’s dairy judging team won the national contest which took the Pleasant Hope team to represent the U.S. in the International Dairy Cattle Judging competition in Europe. In 1977, they won the World Dairy Judging contest at the Royal Welsh Show in the United Kingdom.



Tonna, Rylan with Hazel and Bruce Hood, proud of the clinic that they moved into in 2018.



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# Generations of Bolivar dedication

Jesse Ankrom is a fourth-generation Bolivarite and a second-generation lawyer at his family’s law firm. He has obvious ties to the community he serves as both he and his wife are Bolivar High School graduates. His love for his hometown means he proudly raises his kids in the same lifestyle he experienced.

Ankrom Law, with its old-charm location on the square, was started over three decades ago when Jesse’s father, Charles Ankrom, began practicing defense law. After earning his degree from the University of Missouri Columbia School of Law, he started his career in Bolivar in 1982 as the Polk County Prosecutor. He held that position for 16 years before focusing on defending people instead of prosecuting them and he currently specializes in criminal defense.



Charles Ankrom began the law firm after 16 years as a prosecutor.



Kevin Fick joined the Ankrom firm, transforming it to Ankrom Fick Law.



Jesse Ankrom began working with his father as soon as he graduated college. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



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Working with great people in an environment you love is important, but work cannot be everything. The younger Ankrom knows there has to be harmony in what you do and who you do it with, “Invest in finding your healthy hard work/family life balance, and do work that you love,” he said.

This love of the law and justice pulsed in the younger Ankrom’s veins, “Having grown up around law, I’ve just always loved it.” With his mind set on following in his father’s footsteps, he began his journey to becoming a lawyer after getting his law degree from the University of Missouri Kansas City School of Law. He opted to focus his work on Estate planning, probate, and business law, providing dedication to those he serves. “After graduating from law school, I came home and joined [his father’s] firm to create Ankrom and Ankrom Attorneys at Law, and have been focused on helping my clients since day one,” he said.

Being part of the community he serves is key to his success and happiness. He understands that it is the residents of his hometown that make his business special, “My hometown has provided family-life and professional opportunities I couldn’t dream of elsewhere.”

As many generational businesses do, Ankrom is open to change as the younger son focuses on the future. “My passion has always been helping people I know and grew up with, to protect their families and futures through estate planning,” he said, “but that hasn’t provided me to provide as many legal services in other areas.” These “other areas” are family law, general litigation, personal injury, and workers’ compensation cases. To cover these, they needed a little help. “The firm’s addition of Kevin Fick, plus a growing team of wonderful paralegals, will enable Ankrom Fick Law to serve our clients and Polk County with new strength and energy.”

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# THE FLOWER PATCH AND MORE



Kelly Coffey and Pluto are great working companions.  
STAFF PHOTOS/ LINDA SIMMONS

**Nicole Emmons**  
nicolee@bolviarmonews.com

The Flower Patch and More, Bolivar’s quaint little floral shop on Springfield Avenue, first opened its doors in the 1970s. Since then, it has established itself as a quality shop for arrangements that say “I love you,” “I’m sorry,” or “You’re in my thoughts.” In the 1990s, it provided arrangements for the Clinton inauguration, giving a touch of local fame to the Polk County community. The business has changed hands a couple of times. The current owner is Kelly Coffey, who got her start as a floral designer at The Flower Patch. Coffey first moved to Bolivar in 1992 when her then-husband wanted to be closer to his family. She was a Kansas City girl in her early twenties selling insurance at the time. After the move, she searched for a new avenue to travel. She had an artistic side she needed to explore so when someone recommended floral arrangements, she decided to look into it. She went to the library and read about proper techniques and what flowers go with what greenery. However, this didn’t help her much, initially. She checked with each of the flower shops in Bolivar - The Flower Patch is the only one now, but there were a few in the area when Coffey began her career. She ran into the typical catch-22, she needed experience that working would provide, but everyone already



Ema Wells displays a colorful and unique creation - one of many that can be found in the shop.



Here, Coffey shows the “More” aspect of The Flower Patch and More. If cut flowers aren’t your thing, maybe a houseplant or a birdhouse will entice you.



wanted that experience.

As luck would have it, she was able to convince Carol Smith, the then-owner of the business, to give her a shot as long as she was willing to go to classes.

Coffey enrolled in Stuppy’s Floral Academy in Kansas City and received her AIFD certificate. AIFD is the American Institute of Floral Designers and it signifies that a person has a professional knowledge of the craft. It is a pretty prestigious certification to have and it meant Coffey was ready to take on her new career.

From there, she began doing floral design competitions at various shows and conventions. In Joplin, at a four-state convention, she won first place for her creation. She has also been designated as the Ozarks Area Designer of the Year and has won at the Missouri State Competition.

Eventually, The Flower Patch changed ownership when Dixie Barbar bought the business, providing Coffey with a new mentor for a while. At one of the conventions, she met a couple named Pat and Tanya Phillips, who would lure her away to work with them.

However, life took the florist in a different direction and she eventually left the

trade. She began working in radio around 2008 and started a job with the Boy Scouts. Her life had also gone through alterations throughout the years including a divorce, remarriage, moving, then returning, and the raising of two boys.

Yet, the job that she has worked on and off since 1992 called her back. She felt that the new career path she had chosen meant too many absences from home.





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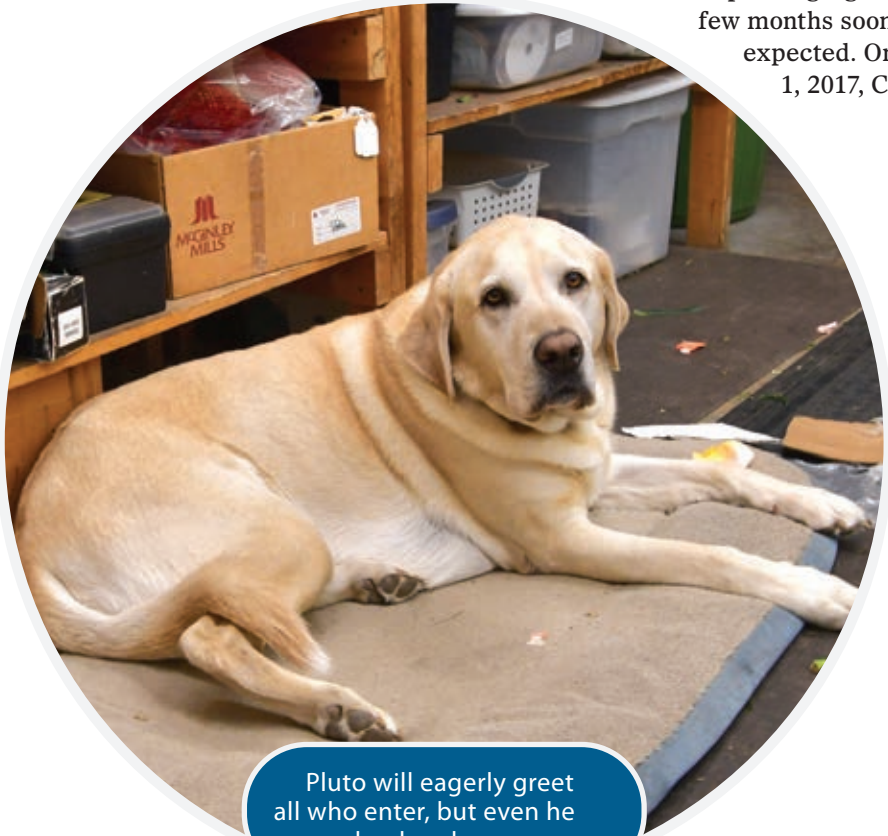


Kelly and Ema work at creating one of The Flower Patch's signature arrangements.

She did what so many do when they feel uncertain, she prayed. That's when she got an answer, "God said call Dixie about the Flower Patch." Being an obedient Christian, she did just that, and as fate would have it, Dixie was thinking about calling her with the same idea - it was time for the shop to have a new owner. The wheels began turning and the business, which was meant to be purchased about a year from their conversation, ended up changing hands a few months sooner than expected. On Sept. 1, 2017, Coffey

became the proud owner of the business that gave her a chance so many years ago. Ironically, three other florists opened businesses right after she bought the store. Coffey admitted she "panicked a bit." However, the Flower Patch, with its long history and quality products, has outlasted them all. Coffey thinks it is because of their mentality when it comes to floral arrangements, "We consider ourselves artists." Stating it really is a talent and not as easy as it often seems. Coffey does not take her work home with her and admits she is not much of a gardener. She says her husband does beekeeping, so he will do a little planting, but she is usually too tired to mess around a garden too much. It is not surprising she is tired when one considers the flower-demanding events she has to cater to. Christmas is a busy time in the store, not just because of the greenery, but the home decor items are a draw for many. Valentine's Day is always hectic as is Mother's Day. They also provide flowers for funerals and weddings.

For these arrangements, she tries to keep things local when she can. Some tropical plants come from exotic places like Ecuador. She also gets shipments from California and Canada, and Holland is a world-renowned supplier of tulips. Yet, she gets some plants from local Amish and Mennonite communities as well. The Flower Patch and More remains the place to go for Bolivar's floral needs. With an owner who takes pride in her creations and refuses to settle for sub-par products, it is no wonder the business continues to thrive. Plus, Pluto, her big yellow lab, is one of the best door greeters around, adding to the charm of the small-town florist.



Pluto will eagerly greet all who enter, but even he needs a break.



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# C&C FARM AND HOME



*Keeping it all in the family*

Paul, JoAnn, and Donald Coleman keep C&C running with a little help from JoAnn's great-granddaughter, Katherine Magnuson.

Nicole Emmons  
nicolee@bolivarmonews.com

Fifty-five years ago in Clinton, Missouri, a partnership was created that would change the way Bolivar thought about shopping. That is when Robert Coleman decided to open C&C Farm and Home with Richard Carney, owner of Carney Farm & Home.

For the past five-plus decades, JoAnn Jackson & Sons has been a cornerstone of the community. Son Donald Coleman expressed his thoughts, describing his family as, "A testament to hard work, dedication, and the enduring power of family."

Today they maintain two locations in Bolivar and Lebanon, with the sons taking an active role in the daily machinations of the stores. All of JoAnn's sons and a majority of her grandchildren have played a role in C&C's success. Ultimately, it comes down to what's important, as JoAnn stated, "We are big into family, here."



JoAnn Coleman examines some inventory. STAFF PHOTOS/ LINDA SIMMONS

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		6	Country Days
		11	Networking@Noon
2025	May	2025	October
3-10	Missouri Beef Days	9	Networking@Noon
8	Networking@Noon	31	Trick or Treat on the square
2025	June	2025	November
1	Bolivar Night at the Springfield Cardinals	13	Networking@Noon
12	Networking@Noon	14 & 15	Christmas Open House
		23-30	Light the Park
2025	July	2025	December
4	Celebration of Freedom	1-30	Light the Park continued
10	Networking@Noon	6	Christmas Parade
		11	Networking@Noon



Though the dedication of the entire family keeps the business grounded and focused on the important stuff, it originally was not an easy journey.

In 1970, they opened their store on Jackson Street in Bolivar. The modest farm and hardware store had a simple mission: to provide quality goods and honest service for everyone. About six years after their opening, they moved into their Springfield Avenue location.

Unfortunately, not long after the move, the family faced a major setback - personally and business-wise. Cancer took Robert's life in 1982, just 12 years into their venture.

JoAnn and her sons understood that they had to continue moving forward. They then got the opportunity to buy out their

Donald Coleman has a friendly conversation with a man in the toy aisle.



C&C has a bit of everything, including dirt for outdoor projects.

Clinton business partner, Richard Carney. Now C&C was no longer Carney & Coleman, it represented something more, a reinvigoration of their business and family bond.

Then, twenty years ago, they decided to add another branch to their business. The Lebanon store opened in 2004 and is still thriving today.

Donald explained the family's success, "What started with a single storefront and a handful of loyal customers has grown into a thriving enterprise, still wholly owned and operated by the Coleman family."

Over the years, C&C has received its share of accolades. It was named the Small Business of the Year in 1991. Then, after acquiring the additional stores, they qualified as a big business, which allowed them to win Large Business of the Year in 2006. These awards are due to the work ethic and commitment to craftsmanship. Traits that, just like the family business, are passed down through the generations.

Today, C&C is run by JoAnn and three of her sons, Marty, Donald, and Paul. It hasn't always been easy, but they have a special secret to their longevity, "It's about trust," said JoAnn, "Our customers know we're not just a business - we are neighbors, friends, family."

This dedication to hard work and family will keep the business enduring for the foreseeable future. The connection to the community has kept JoAnn and her sons thriving for decades. As they look back on the past 55 years, they feel pride and look forward to the future with hope, ready to write the next chapter in their enduring journey.

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Marty Coleman is a common sight at the Lebanon C&C. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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## Over a century of law in Bolivar

Nicole Emmons  
nicolee@bolivarmonews.com

Since 1912, Douglas, Haun, & Heidemann has been a place for legal advice to Bolivar residents. It all began when Thomas “T.H.” Douglas, a graduate of Missouri Law School, opened his practice at 111 W. Broadway. Since then, the law firm has been passed down the family line for four generations.

In 1932, Douglas’ practice became Douglas & Douglas, when Elvin Douglas, the oldest son, joined his father. T.H. practiced law for over five decades then Elvin took the reigns in 1964. In 1970, Kerry joined his father, who passed away in 1979. Kerry’s son, Pat, began his career there in 1999. Today, Kerry is the senior member of the firm and Pat is a shareholder in the namesake business.

Pat Douglas is the fourth generation of lawyers to serve the region, but will he be the last of his line? “As to the next generation, Josie has been clear that she is NOT going to be an attorney. The jury is still out on Cy, but he seems to have some interest in exploring the possibility of becoming an attorney,” Pat said.

Josie and Cy are Pat’s children, the product of a marriage that occurred between him and his wife, Gelin, 26 years ago. His family’s roots in Bolivar run as deep as their law practice, starting when T.H., moved to Bolivar to open his business in 1912.

It seemed a forgone conclusion that Pat would take part in the family heritage. He stated, “I grew up hearing from my teachers what a great attorney I would be.” Of course, being told one would be good at something does not necessarily mean that is where their heart lies. However, the younger Douglas seemed blessed in that aspect, “[Law] fit my interests well.”

The family business has accepted some non-Douglasses into their fold over the years, altering the landscape a little. In 1976, Gary Lynch became the first non-family member, with a focus on personal injury cases. His addition turned Douglas & Douglas into Douglas, Douglas and Lynch. When Elvin died, Kerry and Gary began to expand and added associates.

Since then, Vera Haun joined in 1984, John Kallenbach began in 1994, and Craig Heidemann started in 1996. With these additions, the business acquired the name it holds today as both Haun and Heidemann became shareholders. The Lynch moniker was removed when he left the firm to begin a career as a judge in 2003. From there he moved on to being a Judge of the Missouri Court of Appeals.



It’s a welcoming atmosphere inside the law office. The firm can help with almost any type of case. Pat Douglas focuses on estate planning, real estate, and business law. STAFF PHOTOS/ LINDA SIMMONS





No matter who else joins the business, it is the Douglas aspect that ties it to Bolivar and lends it that hometown feel. Those ties are something Pat Douglas seems to understand and appreciate. “The best thing about being a business owner in Bolivar is definitely the amazing people you deal with on a regular basis. There are so many great people that I would have never come across if it wasn’t for my business relationship with them and I have learned that there are many, many truly admirable people in Southwest Missouri,” he said. “I feel a bit sorry for people who haven’t been exposed to the same types of local people that I have because they wouldn’t necessarily know how many amazing people are all around them.”

Of course, when practicing law, there are downsides. It can be difficult to see sad cases or things that make someone question their choices. Being a new attorney, dealing with people you grew up around in difficult situations, would take a toll on anyone. However, just as with any job, one learns to cope and adjust to find their footing. As Pat explained,

“Once you go through [tough cases], they become easier to manage, but it is a lot to deal with when you first come out of law school.”

As many businesses can attest, Douglas, Haun, and Hiedemann is not content with being stagnant. They have a vision in place, “Growth!” said Pat, “As we grow the business it allows us to serve clients better because we can each become more focused in our practice area.” If the concepts of expansion are daunting, he doesn’t show it, “Prepare well and do it,” he said, “Bet on yourself.”

Though it has not always been an easy choice, it seems that for the youngest Douglas lawyer, it has been the right one, “If I had it to do over again, I’d still choose the same path. Although I don’t enjoy everything in my job, I enjoy most of what I do, and much of the enjoyment is made possible by the people I am surrounded by.”

In 2012, Douglas was the Springfield Business Journal 40 under 40 honoree. Here he displays a plaque showing an AV Preeminent rating from Martindale-Hubbell.



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Firm founder T.H. Douglas in his office 1927. Firm founded in 1912.



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Home & Subdivision Lots  
Bolivar, MO



**SOLD**

**\$259,000**

Home on 7+ Acres  
Halfway, MO



**SOLD**

**\$220,000**

Commercial Property  
Nixa, MO



**SOLD**

**\$335,000**

4-Bedroom Home  
Bolivar, MO



**SOLD**

**\$233,000**

200+ Acres  
Buffalo, MO



**SOLD**

**\$1,025,000**

Warehouse, Lots & Land  
Bolivar, MO



**SOLD**

**\$1,917,500**

200+ Acres  
Buffalo, MO



**SOLD**

**\$1,900,000**

90+ Acres  
Eudora, MO



**SOLD**

**\$300,000**

Home & Shop on 37+ Ac.  
Halfway, MO



**SOLD**

**\$341,000**

3-Bedroom Home  
Concordia, MO



**SOLD**

**\$240,000**

Large Custom Home  
Adonis, MO



**SOLD**

**\$475,000**

4-Bedroom Home  
Springfield, MO



**SOLD**

**\$308,000**

**...AND WE CAN SELL YOURS TOO!**

**PLUS: FARM & CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT • ESTATES  
FIREARMS • AUTOMOBILES • AND MUCH MORE!**

## 30th Annual Farm & Ranch Equipment Consignment AUCTION

Held at 6500 Scenic Ave.  
Bolivar, MO

**— SATURDAY • APRIL 26, 2025 • 9:00AM —**



Rain Date: May 3rd

**Large Selection of Tractors • Hay Equipment • Skid Steers & Construction Equipment  
Bulldozers & Heavy Equipment • Semi Trucks & Trailers • Pick-Ups & Automobiles  
Very Large Selection of Trailers • Farm Implements of All Types • Mowers & Lawn Equipment  
ATV's & UTV's Boats & RV's Livestock Equipment • & MUCH MORE!**

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