

Home & Garden

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Frankes 'blessed' with Conklin



Ken and Myra Franke have been working with and selling Conklin products for over 30 years. The couple agrees they have been "blessed" working for Conklin.

**By Alyssa Schauer
Staff Writer**

Ken and Myra Franke of Plato never imagined the blessings they would receive when they first started selling Conklin products in their auto repair garage in 1981.

The Frankes married and built a house together all in one year, 1959, and later purchased the mechanic business Ken was working for, where they were first introduced to Conklin products.

"We had a farmer stop into the shop in 1981, and he showed me some Conklin products and told me I should be selling them in my shop. And that's how we got into the Conklin business," Ken said.

Conklin is a manufacturing and distribution company that provides "green" products for your home, lawn, vehicle, healthcare, farm, animals, and the like.

He said once the city knew he and Myra sold Conklin products, women in carloads would show up to the shop, waiting to buy, and men would call in, looking for the "best" agriculture products.

"They really have superior products. Myra and I especially used their lawn products when we had our lawn spraying service," Ken said.

In February of 1983, the Frankes had an auction at their repair garage and sold the business, and that year, they started up their own lawn business.

Ken said he noticed a lawn-chemical truck roll through Plato then, coming all the way from Minneapolis, and realized the potential for their own business in lawn care.

"After the auction, I always had it in my mind to do lawn care. I like nice lawns," Ken Franke said.

He and Myra purchased lawn spraying equipment, started advertising their business, and he took lawn care courses to get certification, while Myra took care of the paperwork and secretarial duties.

That first year, the Frankes had 28 clients and their reputation grew. Seventeen years later, in 2000, they had 952 lawns to service in four months, and over 1,400 clients in their database throughout the Glencoe, Stewart, Brownston, and Hutchinson area.

Ken said he and Myra used Conklin products in their business, and promoted their services with various demonstrations, including the time he used Conklin lawn fertilizer to write "Hi" in the city park.

"That was a good demo. The fertilized grass was so green, and the Mayor said, 'You should have sprayed the whole park!'" Ken laughed.

He tested every two years to keep up his certification in lawn services, earning a class E license.

"The kinds of things we test on include general ground characteristics, safety, applying the right products, and whatnot," Ken said.

He also shared some ways to keep a "beautiful lawn," including:

- Water deeply and infrequently.
 - Stay away from excessive amounts of quick-release fertilizer.
 - Use a flexible rake. Do not use garden rakes on lawns.
 - Kill dandelions in the fall. That is the best season to rid of the weeds.
- "You've got to feed the plant, not the soil, and you don't want to cut your lawn too short either," he said.

Ken said a lot of companies only rid of the hazardous waste instead of promoting growth in the plants.

This year is the first year in 30 years Ken is not recertifying his license.

"We sold most of our clients to Kurt Bussler in the area. He is doing really well for himself, and Myra and I, well, we will keep selling Conklin products and focus on sponsoring new dealers. It'll be a good retirement for us," Ken said.

"It's such a great company to work for. It's Christian-based. They remind you that 'God is your partner.' And the fact that their products are 'green' is really great," he added.

Myra agreed. "We have been blessed, and continue to be blessed."

"We really enjoy it. We have been able to go on trips and pay off debt working for Conklin. We've been to Hawaii twice and to Cancun. And the company paid for it! I encourage anyone looking to start their own business to get into Conklin. They change lives. They changed our lives," Ken said.

The Frankes are looking for interested people to "catch the vision" of Conklin. If interested in being a Conklin dealer, contact the Frankes at 320-238-2370.

"You could say we live, eat, and sleep Conklin. As long as we can walk and talk, we'll do this. We enjoy it, and we really love being able to help other people. To be able to help them solve their problems," Myra said.

CONKLIN DEALERS NEEDED!

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Conklin® professional strength cleaners – Customer favorites for over forty years

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- Mox® cleans circles around other multi-purpose cleaners
- Sanox® will go toe-to-toe with any hospital-strength disinfectant
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- Probiotic Support™ Next Generation — five probiotic strains plus five enzymes.
- His Defense™ and Her Defense™, Next Generation -- Vegan formula ... designed especially for male and female health challenges
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MOUNTAIN STREAM – Mountain Stream Distilled Water

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