



TFB's Curt Lancaster brings ag news to you

The woman on the air at the radio station needed to get to the hospital. And quick. She was having a baby.

The emergency gave birth to the broadcasting career of Curt Lancaster.

It was 1966 at KPOS-AM in Post, Texas. Lancaster was 15 years old and at the station preparing to record that night's high school football game. The station's owner asked Lancaster to take over the studio board while he rushed his wife to the hospital.

"I knew I was meant for that when I sat down in that studio," Lancaster said.

Now, 50 years later, Lancaster manages the Texas Farm Bureau (TFB) Radio Network, the latest stop in a distinguished career.

He has worked at seven radio stations, as well as at three radio networks, two of which he launched. He also worked at three television stations for voice work and writing and directing their talk shows and newscasts.

"Between flying airplanes and wanting to be on the radio, that's about the only thing I really wanted to do. Well, you know, I wanted to be a rock'n'roll musician, and I still kind of have that," he said. "I turn up the amplifier and play the guitar real loud."

Lancaster prepared for his studio debut in Post by reading aloud Associated Press wire copy in his family's barn in Garza County. He started practicing around eight or nine years old. The barn sounded like a radio station because of the reverberation from the tall rafters.

"The excitement level of being on their air doesn't change," he said. "There are a lot of voices out there to choose from. I just try to be myself."

The industry and his colleagues noticed. Lancaster served as president of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting in 1994.

And he's remained connected with farm broadcasters across the state and nation. Always looking for the next story to tell on the TFB Radio Network.



TFB Radio Network celebrates 14 years on air

Seventy affiliate stations in 52 markets.

It's a long way from Jan. 7, 2002, when the Texas Farm Bureau (TFB) Radio Network opened its mic for the first time. It began with just six network stations.

"KPET-AM in Lamesa, with my friend Don Sitton, was the first station to join the network," recalled Curt Lancaster, manager of the network. "I remember looking at the big map of Texas that was in my office when the network was launched. Just a few red dots were on the map

then for stations. It's gratifying to see how far we've come."

The success of the network is measured in the number of affiliate stations and in the popularity of its programs.

The network's 70 stations represent an all-time high. And the TFB Radio Network of stations rates highest among Texas farmer and rancher all-day radio listening. It's a distinction the network has enjoyed for three consecutive market studies of Ag Media Research Farmer Radio Listening.

TFB Radio Network programming is heard in more than 200 Texas

counties. At any given time, between 35,000-40,000 farmers and ranchers are listening. The only metropolitan area of the state not currently covered by network programming is El Paso.

Lancaster said the network prides itself in allowing people to tell their story.

"We don't rip-and-read, which can sometimes happen at networks when you're scrambling for news material. We let people tell their story, tell what's going on," he said. "We ask the questions. They tell the story. It's an approach that's made us different,

and I don't see that changing. When you have a recipe that works, you don't change a thing."

The network began with Lancaster and Don Kyser producing and hosting its programs. Kyser retired in 2014 after 12 years on the air. Lancaster, Tom Nicolette, Gary Joiner and Dr. Bob Judd, DVM, of Hewitt produce and host the network's eight current daily programs and one weekend program. The TFB Radio Network features three recording studios in the TFB headquarters office in Waco.