



## [Carver Equipment Company](#)

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### **Lou Sauer and Pro Biz Help Steve Carver**

#### **Carver Equipment Has New Owner**

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**Reporter**

Well-known Dunn area tractor and equipment dealership Carver Equipment Co. is under new ownership.

Located at 1600 S. Clinton Ave., Carver Equipment is a leading dealer of Kubota tractors, mowers and recreational vehicles as well as the Kawasaki Mule product line.

The company was sold to new owner Craig Sanford of Richmond, Va., by former owner Steve Carver, after nearly 50 years of service in the area, according to a news release received last week.

"It's been a good transition," Mr. Sanford said. "The people of Dunn have been very cordial and welcoming and all is good.

"I look forward to doing business here," he said.

Mr. Sanford comes to the business after 11 years as the vice president of a Caterpillar subsidiary in Virginia with approximately 1,300 employees and 25 locations.

Earlier in his career Mr. Sanford worked as a general manager with both John Deere and Hertz Equipment Rental.

With Kubota's huge market share in the United States for equipment under 100-horse power and a personal respect gained through his experience with the brand, Mr. Sanford said he was actively looking for a Kubota dealership when he left Caterpillar in 2007.

The choice lay between the only two Kubota dealerships on the East Coast: One in Tennessee and Carver Equipment in Dunn.

"I knew that for me to own it, I had to respect it ... and want to sell it, frankly," Mr. Sanford said. "And then my family has vacationed in North Carolina many times and Dunn was an area my wife and I wanted to live in with our children."

## Background

Established in 1959 by J. Alvis Carver as an Allis-Chalmers tractor dealership, Carver Equipment Co. has been owned and operated by his son, Steve Carver, since 1981.

Mr. Carver said he decided to sell the business because Mr. Sanford made him an offer at a "very attractive price" that would allow him to stay in the tractor business, "only with a lot less stress."

Mr. Carver will continue to work closely with the company as its senior sales consultant, both Mr. Carver and Mr. Sanford said.

"I'm going to enjoy staying in close contact with the customers in the area," Mr. Carver said. "I'm planning on helping the business as long as they want me around."

Mr. Sanford said when he started researching the company, he was impressed not only with the way Mr. Carver ran his business, but his innovative use of the Internet, an aspect of Mr. Carver's business acumen he said was "way ahead of his time."

Mr. Sanford said with that kind of successful business history, he planned on changing little about the essential business, except for a facelift to the building and some expansion.

## Future Outlook

"We hope to grow. We will be looking to acquire more locations and will be adding and expanding new product lines," Mr. Sanford said. "Right now our plan is that nothing is being jettisoned, everything will be retained, including all the employees."

"We're only looking to add to and compliment," he said.

Mr. Carver said he wanted to thank area customers for their patronage over the years and that he is confident Mr. Sanford will continue to serve the area with the same quality of service and equipment customers have come to expect.

"Thank you for the 50 years, and I'm sure (Mr. Sanford) will make it another 50 years," Mr. Carver said.

Footnote: Lou Sauer and Pro Biz worked with Steve Carver for over one year to help him find the right buyer. After 50 years in business finding the "right person" was even more important than the ultimate sales price. "Although price is always important, the right fit matters even more. In today's market this was a very challenging transaction, but Pro Biz was up to the challenge!" Lou Sauer