

**Editor's
Notebook**



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Completed 11-container building has a row of large windows along the front that let light into the building's open atrium. Photos below were taken during construction.



Photos ©Epic Software Group, Inc.

Shipping Container Office Building

I got an interesting email the other day from a Vic Cherubini, a subscriber in Spring, Texas. He wanted to tell me about a project he'd been working on for more than a year which was inspired by stories in FARM SHOW about farmers using shipping containers as storage sheds.

Vic owns a company called Epic Software that needed a new home. He wanted it to be a place that would be exciting and inspiring to work in. So he drew up plans for a building made from 11 full-sized shipping containers, stacked in a U-shape with a trussed open space at the center. Vic and his group of vendors and contractors spent months planning the job before ever getting started. A concrete foundation was poured and the units – which were purchased for \$2,400 apiece – were thoroughly cleaned and painted inside and out.

Every step of the project has been documented at the company's blog, with hundreds of pics and lots of details about what went right and what went wrong (http://epicsoftware.com/index.php/blog/list_by_category/41/). Epic Software moved into the building this summer.

Farm Now A "Natural" Cemetery

Dick Gallien is looking forward to being buried on his own farm someday. Nearly 80, the wiry, creative farmer isn't in a hurry to die, but when he does, he knows his body won't be going far. He has designated a three-acre field as The Meadow, a natural cemetery. It sits on the 175-acre farm Gallien bought in 1954.

The idea of natural burial is to place the body in a shallow grave, wrapped or enclosed only in a biodegradable material like cotton cloth, cardboard or even a wood box. As the materials break down and get absorbed into the soil, so does the body.

When Gallien approached his local town board with the idea, they asked his neighbors. Two supported him, saying they would like to be buried there. Only one had any concern and that was that the site not be near his property. Since The Meadow is surrounded by woods, a stream and fields, that neighbor's concern was satisfied.

"I did it all without a lawyer and with the township board's full support," says Gallien. "It had to be surveyed for \$2,500. Total cost was only \$3,000."

For Gallien and the township board, the burial site also represents a protection against the nearby city of Winona, Minnesota annexing the farm and the township.

"One board member said, 'I wish we could have one of these on every farm in the township,'" recalls Gallien. "My farm was already protected because I signed up for a conservation easement with the Minn. Land Trust, but they can trade properties if they want. The natural burial will give it double protection."

Because the easement prohibits operating any non-farm business on the land, Gallien won't charge for burial in his cemetery. However, he can and will accept donations.

Gallien plans to build a gazebo overlooking a nearby stream and share it and nearby trails with families. Body placement will be in rows. Each burial site will be marked by GPS coordinates and magnetized nails that surveyors use. The Meadow has full approval, but is waiting for its first burial.

"I only received approval in late May, so the word is just getting out," he says. "I've already had a number of people tell me they want to be buried here."

Gallien's wife, Susan, raises Gypsy horses and has ordered a carriage to transport family members to The Meadow and back after burial. There will also be a horse-drawn wagon for transport of the body.

No markers will be allowed; however, native wildflower and grass plantings above each burial site will be encouraged.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The Meadow, 22501 East Burns Valley Rd., Winona, Minn. 55987 (ph 507 454-3126; themeadow@winona-mn.us; www.themeadow.winona-mn.us). *Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor*



Gallien worked with his township board to establish cemetery.

Liberty Quotes

"Capitalism and communism stand at opposite poles. Their essential difference is this: The communist, seeing the rich man and his fine home, says, 'No man should have so much.' The capitalist, seeing the same thing, says, 'All men should have as much'." *Phelps Adam*

"If we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it at all." *Virginia Woolf*

"Law never made men a whit more just."
Henry David Thoreau

"The vices of the rich and great are mistaken for error; and those of the poor and lowly, for crimes"
Lady Marguerite Blessington

"Government should not tell you what to do unless there's a compelling public purpose." *Michael Bloomberg*

"Public schooling often ends up to be little more than majoritarian domination of minority viewpoints."
Robert B. Everhart

"No power but Congress can declare war, but what is the value of this constitutional provision, if the President of his own authority may make such military movements as must bring on war?" *Daniel Webster*

"Wars are caused by undefended wealth."
General Douglas MacArthur

"For as long as one hundred of us shall remain alive, we shall never in any wise consent submit to the rule of the English, for it is not for glory we fight, or riches, or for honor, but for freedom alone, which no good man losses but with his life." *Robert Bruce*

Dogs . . .

"If you get to thinking you're a person of some influence, try ordering somebody else's dog around." *Will Rogers*

"If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man." *Mark Twain*

"Dogs feel very strongly that they should always go with you in the car, in case the need should arise for them to bark violently at nothing right in your ear." *Dave Barry*

"If your dog doesn't like someone you probably shouldn't either." *Unknown*

"I spilled spot remover on my dog. He's gone now."
Steven Wright

"No matter how little money and how few possessions you own, having a dog makes you rich." *Louis Sabin*

"No one appreciates the very special genius of your conversation as does the dog." *Christopher Morley*

Defending Texas Teeth Floaters

Over the past couple years I've become a big fan of a legal defense group called the Institute for Justice. The 20-year-old organization, headquartered in Arlington, Va., provides legal power to people who have run into business-killing or rights-violating government roadblocks. I wrote about one of their cases earlier this year (Vol. 35, No. 1) when they successfully defended a Minnesota farm family against a local ordinance that said they could not sell out-of-state produce at their on-farm greenhouse operation.

They recently took on the Texas Veterinary Board which made it against the law in 2007 for non-veterinarians to "float" horses teeth (horses teeth need to be filed down periodically). The move instantly put hundreds of Texas teeth floaters out of business and required horse owners to use much more expensive veterinary services. Acting on behalf of teeth floaters and horse owners, who didn't appreciate the government telling them who they could hire to take care of their horses, 11 lawyers filed suit and won after a 3-year battle.

The Institute for Justice often challenges licensing and permitting laws which are designed not to protect the consumer, but to protect an industry from new competition. They also get in involved in land use disputes. For example, in many parts of the country it has now become almost routine for local governments to take private land by eminent domain to give to another private party which plans a "higher use" for the land. It happened here in Minnesota when a local city took over a car dealership to give it to a Fortune 500 company that wanted to put up a new headquarters.

For more information, go to the Institute's website at www.ij.org or call 703 682-9321.

The recession is hitting everybody . . .

- I got a pre-declined credit card in the mail.
- CEO's are now playing miniature golf.
- I saw a Mormon polygamist with only one wife.
- If the bank returns your check marked "Insufficient Funds", you call them and ask if they meant you or them.
- McDonalds is selling the 1/4 ounce.
- Parents in Beverly Hills are firing their nannies and learning their children's names.

Ole died. So Lena went to the local paper to put a notice in the obituaries. The gentleman at the counter, after offering his condolences, asked Lena what she would like to say about Ole.

Lena replied, "Yew yust put 'Ole died'." The gentleman, somewhat perplexed, said, "That's it? Just 'Ole died'?" Surely, there must be something more you'd like to say about Ole. If it's money you're concerned about, the first five words are free. We must say something more."

So Lena pondered for a few minutes and finally said, "Okay. Yew put 'Ole died. Boat for sale'."

Sven and Ole worked together and both were laid off work, so they went to the unemployment office.

Asked his occupation, Ole said, "Panty stitcher. I sew da elastic onto ladies cotton panties."

The clerk looked up panty stitcher and found it classified as unskilled labor, so she gave him \$300 a week unemployment pay.

Then Sven was asked his occupation. "Diesel fitter," he replied.

Since diesel fitter was a skilled job, the clerk gave Sven \$600 a week.

When Ole found out he was furious. He stormed back into the office to find out why his friend and coworker was collecting double his pay.

The clerk explained, "Panty stitchers are unskilled and diesel fitters are skilled labor."

"Vhat skill?" yelled Ole. "I sew da elastic on da panties, and Sven puts them over his head and says, 'Yah, diesel fitter!'"

Ole wasn't feeling well so he went in for a check up. "Nurse, I keep seeing spots in front ov my eyes."

The nurse asked, "Have you ever seen a doctor?" "Vell, no," said Ole, "Yust spots."

Ole and Lena went to the hospital so Lena could give birth to their first baby. As Ole waited in the lobby, the doctor came out to inform him that he had some good news and some bad news. "The good news is that you have a healthy baby boy. However, the baby was delivered Caesarian."

Ole started crying. "Vell, I'm glad it is a healthy baby, but I vas kinda hoping it would be a Norwegian."

Ole walked into the psychiatrist's office with a cucumber up his nose, a carrot in his left ear, and a banana in his right ear. Ole asks, "Vhat's da matter vit me, Doc?" The psychiatrist says, "You're not eating properly."