

Editor's Notebook



Mark Newhall

Editor & Publisher

Got A Question?

What do you do when you have an unusual mechanical problem or you need a rare part or service manual? How can you find out if you're getting a good price when negotiating on a new piece of equipment? Where can you find a good salvage yard specializing in a particular type of equipment?

The internet is a great way to get answers to questions like these. You can find many good sources of information by going to Google and searching up "farm machinery talk sites". There are sites for both modern machinery and antique farm machinery. My favorite for general ag questions is at www.agtalkplus.com. Just go to the home page and click on "Forums". Questions like those above, and many other topics come up as well. What I like about the site is that it's easy to navigate and you can tell at a glance what topics are being discussed. Best of all, there's no advertising cluttering up the pages.

I recently got in touch with the founder of AgTalk, David Orr. He told me he started AgTalk in 2000 and built traffic steadily by word of mouth. The site is not affiliated with any publisher or organization and there are no plans to commercialize it in the future.

Another site I like for questions about antique farm equipment is www.yesterdaystractors.com.

FARM SHOW Fan In China

Before heading out to the recent World Ag Expo in California, we got an email from a woman in China who reads FARM SHOW and wanted to get together at the show. Wu Dawei is managing director of KEFA Technology and Trade Co. located in the city of Shenzhen. She told us she was at the show looking for new products to import to China. She said she has plans to follow up on many of the ideas in FARM SHOW and was also planning to travel to other farm equipment shows around North America.



New Service Tells You When It Rains

Remember the good old days when you walked out into a field, looked up into the sky, and if your face got wet you knew it was raining? You don't have to do that anymore.

An email service that costs \$10 per month per field will monitor rainfall and tell you when it rains and how much comes down. MyRainReport.com is headquartered in Alabama but covers the entire U.S. and is no doubt geared to big farmers or farm managers who have farms scattered across a wide area. The company claims that using patent-pending technology and "proprietary algorithms" they can give you a more accurate reading than a good old fashioned rain gauge. But reading about the service, this old editor couldn't help but get a little nostalgic for the days when most "back 40's" were actually out behind the barn.

When an elderly man's grandson asked him how old he was, he teasingly replied, "I'm not sure."

"Look in your underwear, Grandpa," he advised. "Mine says I'm 4 to 6."

Contacting Us

It's easy to get in touch with FARM SHOW to renew or take out a new subscription, change your address, or ask us a question. We're available 24/7 at our website (www.farmshow.com) or by email (circulation@farmshow.com). You can also call us during office hours (toll-free 800 834-9665 7:30 to 4:30 CST). If you call after hours or on weekends, we have a phone answering system where you can leave us a detailed message and we'll get back to you the next business day.

Liberty Quotes

"If the highest aim of a captain were to preserve his ship he would keep it in port forever." *Thomas Aquinas*

"Honor, justice, and humanity, forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity have a right to receive from us." *Thomas Jefferson*

"Mental slavery is mental death, and every man who has given up his intellectual freedom is the living coffin of his dead soul." *Robert G. Ingersoll*

"The jury has the right to determine both the law and the facts." *Samuel Chase*

"A society that will trade a little liberty for a little order will lose both, and deserve neither." *Thomas Jefferson*

"Everybody is in favor of free speech. Hardly a day passes without its being extolled, but some people's idea of it is that they are free to say what they like, but if anyone says anything back, that is an outrage." *Sir Winston Churchill*

"He who will not economize will have to agonize." *Confucius*

"The use of force to achieve equality will destroy freedom, and the force, introduced for good purposes, will end up in the hands of people who use it to promote their own interest." *Milton Friedman*

"There is no security on this earth; there is only opportunity." *Douglas MacArthur*

"Civil libertarians must often remind government officials (and others) that if the First Amendment only protected the expression of popular and agreeable ideas, it would be totally unnecessary since those ideas would never be threatened by our democratic form of government. Our society's commitment to free speech is tested when we encounter the expression of ideas that are disagreeable – or even offensive." *Timothy Lynch*

"We now have so many regulations that everyone is guilty of some violation." *Donald Alexander*

The State Of Diesel Power

Diesel technology is changing. If you want to know what's coming next, look at heavy industry and the military, says Jason Thompson, an editor at Diesel Power magazine. Thompson closely follows new diesel designs and aftermarket add-ons. He recently shared his thoughts with FARM SHOW.

"We do lots of stories on heavy diesel engines and new products like bypass oil centrifuges and heaters that circulate coolant, keeping it at 150 degrees," says Thompson. "There are new products coming out of the desert wars, like the nano filters being used on cruise missiles. Amsoil, for example, now offers a nano filter."

Thompson recommends keeping an eye on DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency). DARPA carries out innovative and futuristic military research, including new materials and devices such as hydraulic actuators.

Eaton and General Motors have both announced projects that use hydraulic actuators to capture and store braking energy. When the driver takes his foot off the gas pedal, engine torque drives a hydraulic fluid pump. This fluid in turn compresses nitrogen gas while the process brakes the vehicle. When power is needed, the process reverses, and hydraulic fluid is pushed back through the pump to drive an axle hydraulic motor. The system is similar to hybrid electric vehicles without the limitations of storage batteries and is three times more efficient at capturing braking energy.

Another area where he expects to see considerable advances is in pollution control. "Emissions equipment on diesel trucks is an inefficient way to get cleaner emissions. Why use an EGR valve when emissions could be controlled on the inside if we could control valves better?"

Thompson points to Fiat's claims for a valve system that can knock emissions down by 80 percent. He also cites an innovative digital hydraulic valve-based fuel system from Sturman Industries based on technology originally developed for NASA.

Other newer diesel efficiency enhancements that Thompson likes include a "filter minder" that measures vacuum to tell you when filters need changing (www.filterminder.com); coolant preheaters that eliminate cold starts (www.hotstart.com); coolant filters that filter a little at a time to keep system free of contaminants (www.dieselsite.com); and reusable magnetic filter "wraparounds" that capture metal fragments before they can return to cause problems in the engine (www.shopfiltermag.com).

Thompson notes that diesels have a lot of room for improvement. "Diesel engines are only 30 percent efficient," he says. "Rudolf Diesel suggested that 70 percent efficiency could be had just with greater compression. It is interesting that we haven't gotten there yet."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jason Thompson, Diesel Power Magazine, 831 S. Douglas St., El Segundo, Calif. 90245 (ph 310 623-0531; Jason.Thompson@sorc.com; www.dieselpowermag.com). *Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor*

How To "Talk Auctioneer"

I got an interesting note from reader Damon Carson in Denver, Colo., asking if I'd like to learn to "speak auctioneer". He then proceeded to give me a little short course. Try it. It works!

All you have to do is string together unintelligible, staccato syllables. You can make up your own words. For instance, take the words "who will bid a 2" and use the syllables "oo" "da" "bid" "da" to create the word "oodabidda". Say "Oodabidda" a few times, each time increasing the speed. Then add in the number 2 at the end – "oodabidda2" and say it faster.

Now put it into a chant: "1 dollar bid, oodabidda2, now 2, now 2, oodabidda 2? 2 dollar bid, oodabidda 3, now 3, now 3, oodabidda 3? 3 dollar bid, oodabidda 4, now 4, oodabidda 4?"

Practice by conducting auctions in the car when driving around. Each telephone pole you pass can represent a higher bidder. You can create other phrases, too, such as turning "he will bid a 2" to "ee da bid da 2". Once you have it mastered, you can volunteer to be guest auctioneer at fundraising auctions in your community. It's just a fun, unique way to give back.

110-Year-Old Bulb Still Burning

As far as retired Livermore, California firefighter Lynn Owens is concerned, you can keep your newfangled light bulbs. They can't hold a candle to the incandescent bulb that has been lighting up Livermore's firehouse for 110 years.



You read that right. The same light bulb has been helping firemen respond to nighttime calls since the days of horse-drawn water wagons.

The bulb was donated to the city by a local power company in 1901 and has burned continuously ever since. A website, www.centennialbulb.org, includes a live webcam picture of the bulb.

A second grader came home from school and said to her grandmother, "Grandma, guess what? We learned how to make babies today."

The grandmother, more than a little surprised, tried to keep her cool. "That's interesting," she said. "How do you make babies?"

"It's simple," replied the girl. "You just change 'y' to 'i' and add 'es'."

A grocer put up a sign that read, "Eggplants, 25¢ each or 3 for a dollar."

All day long customers came in exclaiming, "Don't be ridiculous! I should get four for a dollar!"

Meekly the grocer capitulated and packaged four eggplants. The tailor next door had been watching these antics and finally asked the grocer, "Aren't you going to fix the mistake on your sign?"

"What mistake?" the grocer asked. "Before I put up the sign no one ever bought more than one eggplant."

When my young daughter said her bedtime prayers, she would bless every family member, every friend, and every animal (current and past). For several weeks, at the end of her nightly prayer, she would add, "And all girls."

This soon became part of her nightly routine. My curiosity finally got the best of me and I asked her, "Why do you always add the part about all girls?"

Her quick response, "Because everybody always finishes their prayers by saying 'All men!'"

Little Johnny and his family were having Sunday dinner at his grandmother's house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served.

When Little Johnny received his plate, he started eating right away. "Johnny! Please wait until we say our prayer," said his mother.

"I don't need to," the boy replied. "Of course you do," his mother insisted. "We always say a prayer before eating at our house." "That's at our house," Johnny explained. "But this is grandma's house and she knows how to cook!"