

**Editor's
Notebook**



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Photo at left shows editor Mark Newhall testing the SkyRide prototype 6 years ago. Photo above shows the first SkyRide to be installed on a Carnival Cruise Line ship.

SkyRide Invention Finds A Home

Six years ago we told you about FARM SHOW reader Scott Olson's amazing pedal-powered SkyRide (Vol. 35, No. 1). At the time, the Waconia, Minn., inventor was looking for a market for the "flying bicycle", after having failed to land a deal on the TV show Shark Tank. Scott's not one to give up, having already made a fortune with his invention of Rollerblades a couple decades ago. The SkyRide consists of an overhead monorail with fiberglass pods hanging beneath, powered by pedals and reaching speeds of 15 to 20 mph.

Well, Scott recently made news when Carnival Cruise Lines outfitted one of their newest ships with the SkyRide. It runs around the perimeter of the ship, so riders are hanging 150 ft. above the ocean (you can see a video of the Carnival SkyRide at FARMSHOW.com). Scott isn't stopping with cruise ships. He's negotiating with the Minnesota State Fair, the Mall of America, and other venues about installing SkyRides.



This "room" rents for \$210 a night in the Swiss Alps. Would the same idea work on a U.S. farm or ranch?

"Hotel Room" Has No Walls

When I saw a report online recently about a Swiss hotel with no walls, my first thought was, "That idea would work in farm country!"

The Null Stern hotel opened last July high up in the Swiss Alps and is already fully booked through the end of 2017. The rooms have no walls, roof or bathroom - only a queen bed with a pair of nightstands and lamps. A public bathroom is about a 5-min. walk down the mountain. A butler comes with the room, delivering breakfast and dinner in bed. Fortunately the hotel has a last-minute cancellation policy in case bad weather rolls in (<http://www.null-stern-hotel.ch>).

How about setting up wall-less rooms on a cattle pasture in South Dakota? Or on a hill overlooking a cornfield in Iowa? Or maybe in the High Plains ranch country of Colorado?

Drive-Thru Chicken Dinner

Here's a fund-raising idea I've never heard of before. Calvary United Methodist Church in North Lima, Ohio, held a drive-through chicken dinner in February.

The dinner consisted of a stuffed chicken breast, mashed

potatoes with gravy, green beans, and a brownie. The cost was just \$7 and you could either reserve a dinner or just take your chances and drive by the church. Workers brought food out to the cars as they rolled by. Proceeds from the dinner went to mission projects.

The story goes . . . that when NASA started sending astronauts into space, they quickly discovered that ballpoint pens would not work in zero gravity. To solve the problem, NASA scientists spent a decade and more than \$165 million to develop a pen that writes in zero gravity - upside down - on almost any surface, even at extreme temperatures.

In this case, the Russians had a better idea. They just used pencils.

Cow Sets World Record

A Wisconsin Holstein owned by the Kestell family in Waldo, Wis., set a new 365-day record of 77,470 lbs. of milk in 2016, breaking a world record set just the year before of 74,650 lbs. By comparison, the average production for Holsteins in the U.S. is 24,958 lbs.

The record cow, "My Gold-ET", comes from a remarkable family. Her dam held the national single-lactation record from 2010 to 2015. Kestell told *Farmshine* newspaper that they have been working with this line of cows for more than 30 years. In fact, 6 out of the 8 age divisions of milk production records are held by Kestell-bred Holsteins. The Kestells milk 94 cows with a rolling average of 44,122 lbs., 1,680 lbs. of butterfat, and 1,362 lbs. of protein.



Fog that condenses onto mesh nets set up on hillsides is piped up to 5 miles away for use by local villagers.

Harvesting Water From Fog

In a rural southwest region of Morocco, rainfall is unpredictable and underground aquifers have been largely depleted. Average annual precipitation is only about 5 in. However, the region does have one precious resource. Because of its unique climate, heavy fog appears an average of 143 days a year, caused by warm air driven inland by ocean currents. As the humid air rises, it hits the barrier of the Anti-Atlas mountains and turns into thick blankets of fog. Over the past 10 years, a non-profit organization called Dar Si Hmad has set up the largest fog-harvesting project in the world. Huge mesh nets capture water particles, which then condense and drip into collection trays. Roughly 1,600 gal. of water are collected daily and pumped through 5 miles of pipes to reservoirs where it's filtered for use by about 400 people living nearby.

Liberty Quotes

"There are incalculable resources in the human spirit once it has been set free." *Hubert H. Humphrey*

"Freedom is not something that can be given. Freedom is something people take, and people are as free as they want to be." *James Baldwin*

"Historically, much of the motivation for public schooling has been to stifle variety and institute social control." *Jack Hugh*

"Education is a private matter between the person and the world of knowledge and experience, and has little to do with school or college." *Lillian Smith*

"I am concerned for the security of our great Nation; not so much because of any threat from without, but because of the insidious forces working from within." *General Douglas MacArthur*

"Government's view of the economy can be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it." *Ronald Reagan*

"It does not require many words to speak the truth." *Chief Joseph*

"The most exhausting thing in life is being insincere." *Anne Morrow Lindbergh*

"In the whole history of law and order, the biggest step was taken by primitive man when the tribe sat in a circle and allowed only one man to speak at a time. An accused who is shouted down has no rights whatever." *Curtis Bok*

"Whenever we take away the liberties of those whom we hate, we are opening the way to loss of liberty for those we love." *Wendell Wilkie*

The Problem With Wetlands

Iowa Farmer Today recently reported on Illinois lawyer Kurt Wilke of Springfield about a client he represented who bought 80 acres of cropland, setting in motion a 5-year battle with the NRCS over a wetland designation. The case resulted in more than \$100,000 of legal expenses.

Before buying the land, the farmer consulted with the land's drainage district in central Illinois and with the USDA to confirm that there were no wetlands on the property. After buying the land and finding a couple wet spots, he decided to put in new drainage tile. That's when he got a visit from NRCS informing him that the 80-acre plot had 22.4 acres of wetlands that could not be farmed. They noted that by law, any farmland converted from wetlands after Dec. 23, 1985 cannot be farmed or drained.

To be designated a wetland, 3 conditions must be present: hydric soils (such as Drummer, Pella, Peotone or Lena); wetland plants such as foxtail, sedges, willow, smartweed, milkweed, thistles or rushes; and ponded water for 7 days or more or saturated soil for 15 days or more. The legal battle hinged on that definition of a wetland. However, critics say those criteria can be subjective and both sides brought in experts who disagreed.

In the end, the farmer won the case because the judge determined the land had been converted to farming before 1985. He is now working with his attorney to be reimbursed for legal fees.

Steven Wright Says . . .

- Borrow money from pessimists - they don't expect it back.
- 82.7 percent of all statistics are made up on the spot.
- I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize.
- Hard work pays off in the future; laziness pays off now.
- I intend to live forever . . . so far, so good.
- Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.
- The hardness of butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.
- A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.

Words of Wisdom

"Drawing on my fine command of the English language, I said nothing." *Robert Benchley*

"Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm." *Sir Winston Churchill*

"Anything that is in the world when you're born is normal and ordinary, just a natural part of the way the world works. Anything that's invented between when you're 15 and 35 is new and exciting and revolutionary. Anything invented after you're 35 is against the natural order of things." *Douglas Adams*

"Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all." *Hellen Keller*

"If we don't change direction soon, we'll end up where we're going." *Professor Irwin Corey*

"Without losers, where would the winners be?" *Casey Stengel*

Lena was making a breakfast of fried eggs for Ole. Suddenly, Ole burst into the kitchen yelling, "Careful. CAREFUL! Put in sum more vater! Yur cooking too many at once! TOO MANY! Turn dem! TURN DEM NOW! Dey're going to STICK! Don't burn dem!"

Lena stared hard at Ole and said, "Vhat da heck is wrong vit you? You tink I don't know how to fry a couple eggs?"

Ole calmy replied, "I jüst vanted to show you vhat it's like when I'm driving and yur in da car!"

Ole told his doctor that he wasn't able to do all the things around the house that he used to do.

When his exam was complete, he said, "Doc, tell me da truth in plain English. Vhat is wrong wit me?"

"Well, Ole," the doctor said, "the truth is that you're just lazy." "Okay, I got dat," said Ole. "Now, yust give me da medical term so I can tell my vife."

Lena went to her doctor for her annual checkup. After checking her over and running some tests, the doctor said, "Lena, I guess you just have to realize you're not getting any younger."

"I don't vant to get any younger," retorted Lena. "I yust vant you to fix me up so I get older!"

"You know, I got a real good reference from de boss at my las job," said Ole.

"Oh yeah?" said Sven, surprised.

"Ya," said Ole. "Da letter said, 'If you can get Ole to verk for you, you will be lucky!'"