

ATTRACTS 2,000 VISITORS

Farm Auction Boosts Rural Town's Economy

Auctions with their rows of tractors, combines and other equipment are common sights in rural areas, but how many lines of equipment have you seen set up and auctioned off on your local town's Main street?

In Drayton, N. Dak., population 1,100, such a sight is an annual event held in early April. This year's auction attracted 2,000 visitors from four different states and Canada into town.

"The idea for the auction on Main street, started about 3 years ago," says Ross Landowski, Drayton farmer and organizer of the event. "I was in the bank one day and the Chamber of Commerce was wondering what they could do to get people into Drayton and bring some business to the merchants. I told them that if they gave me the streets for three days I'd bring people in."

"When people come in for the auction they not only buy equipment but they also

help bolster Drayton's economy by eating at cafes and shopping at the local stores.

"This year we had more than 200 pieces of equipment lined up along Main street and side streets including 29 tractors, 8 combines, 8 drills, pickups, boats, plows cultivators and much more which was brought in by local farmers and implement dealers.

"All together we had 911 bidders and about half a million dollars in equipment sales. The city receives a 5% commission on sales, with a maximum of \$500 per piece of equipment, to pay for advertising, auctioneers and other costs. All profits from the event are then used by the city. In past years, the money's been used to repair the city hall roof, build a small park and other city improvements. In 1986 the auction brought in \$6,200 profit," Landowski notes.

If you're thinking of holding an auction



Photo courtesy Grand Forks Herald

More than 200 pieces of equipment were lined up along Drayton's streets at this year's auction.

in your town, he points out that the keys to success are advertising and making personal contacts with area farmers to line up equipment.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ross Landowski, Box 178, Drayton, N. D. 58225.

READILY ADAPTS TO MOST TRACTORS

Tractor Chairlift For Handicapped Drivers

"The Purdue 'Chairlift' allows a paraplegic to get in and out of a tractor by themselves. With it, he or she can transfer from a wheelchair into the lift chair, raise up to the cab entrance, then transfer to the tractor seat by means of an overhead hand-grip bar and swing into the tractor," says Hubert Von Holten, president of Round Grove Machine, West Lafayette, Ind., who teamed up with Purdue Professor Emeritus, C.B. Richey to develop the device.

"We can tailor it to fit most any tractor—even the big articulated models. We're also looking at adapting it to combines," notes Von Holten.

The Chairlift main frame attaches to the

tractor frame. The chair mounts on parallel linkage, made of 3-in.-square, 1/4-in. wall steel tubing. It pivots off of the main frame and lifts the chair and passenger up to the tractor cab. Power's provided by an electro-mechanical ball-screw linear actuator which is in turn powered off the tractor battery.

A reversible toggle switch on the seat arm rest, and one on the tractor dash, controls raising/lowering and pivots the seat 100° to each side. In the transport position the chair sits in the raised position just outside the tractor cab.

The assembly automatically swings 60° toward the tractor as it lifts the 40 in. from



"Chairlift" allows paraplegics to transfer from wheelchair seat up into tractor cab.

ground level to cab level.

The basic Chairlift, designed for do-it-yourself installation, sells for \$2,500.

For more information, contact: FARM

SHOW Followup, Round Grove Machine, Hubert Von Holten, 345 Burnett Road, West Lafayette, Ind. 47906 (ph 317 423-4192).

BUILT FROM A SALVAGED DC-3 AIRPLANE

Shuttle Look-Alike Big Hit At Parades

A space shuttle look-alike that started out as an "airplane mobile" home might be just the attention-getter your town needs in its next parade.

Built by Robert and Heike Pfeiffer, the "Smile Shuttle", as it's called, makes appearances throughout the U.S., Canada and even Europe at parades, carnivals, conventions, trade shows and other events. It's shown up on Good Morning America, Real People, and other TV shows as well as in national newspapers and magazines.

The shuttle started out as an airplane mobile home built from the entire fuselage of a 1944 Douglas DC-3 that had been mounted on a bus chassis. When the Pfeifers purchased the rig from the original owner, it was "almost ready for the junk

heap," according to Heike. "We rebuilt it 99.9%, adding side panels and rear 'rockets' as well as an authentic paint job so it closely resembles the space shuttle. The entire fuselage of the DC-3 still remains intact."

The inside of the shuttle, done in black carpet and naugahyde, consists of a large lounge area for use as a hospitality suite at conventions and shows. The ceiling is painted with a "spacescape" of the solar system. The "cockpit" contains all the gauges of a real airplane as well as a functioning state-of-the-art navigational system that shows the driver where he is at that moment by displaying a map of streets on a video screen. The shuttle is also fitted with an audio system that's powerful



"Smile Shuttle" is powered by a 440 hp. engine and has a top speed of 55 mph.

enough to simulate the sound of rocket engines taking off.

The shuttle measures 40 ft. front to back, which is less than a third of the size of the actual shuttle. It's more than 8 ft. wide and 13 ft. high. It carries two 55-gal. fuel tanks.

The Pfeifers rent the shuttle out to parades for \$500 per day, not counting

transportation price which varies depending on how many events can be booked at once in a particular area.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Smile Shuttle, P.O. Box 87, Cardiff-By-The-Sea, Calif. 92007 (ph 619 753-2705).