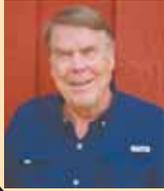


Editor's Notebook



Mark Newhall
Editor & Publisher

A Combine Pretty Enough To Eat

A photo appeared in *Green Magazine* recently of a birthday cake shaped like a Deere S690 combine, complete with a draper header, auger, and catwalk. It was a big hit for Maverick Reiber's 11th birthday.



Fireman Eric Reiber's hobby is making detailed equipment cakes.

The cake was baked and decorated by his father, Eric Reiber, a fire department captain in Pullman, Wash. The big cake has an 18-in. header and it took 15 lbs. of sugar to make. He makes large amounts of sugar frosting to form the combine parts. In the past he also made a Deere excavator complete with a bucket, thumb, and hydraulic cylinders. A Case field cultivator he made for his own birthday took 6 weeks and "was the monster that overtook our life," Reiber laughs.

"It's not a hard thing to do and the results are impressive," Reiber says of the "heavy equipment" cakes he is known for. His son's cake was a hit and easily fed 12 people. The first cut was the most painful. "My wife made me cut it. She said 'I'm not destroying that thing,'" Reiber laughs. "In seven minutes it was a pile of crumbs."



This house is part of a homestead that includes a grain bin, barn, fence, and gate, all made out of ears of corn.

House Built Out Of Ears Of Corn

Have you ever visited the Corn Palace in South Dakota? What about the Corn Cob Farmhouse in China?

A farmer in northern China used 30,000 ears of corn to build a house surrounded by an ear corn fence, barn, and grain bin. The house measures 13 by 39 ft. Each ear of corn is attached to the frame of the building by string.

The house has attracted hordes of tourists, according to press reports and, we figure, lots of chipmunks and squirrels.

Hydrogen Plant Powers His Home

I've been writing stories about hydrogen power for most of my 40 years working at FARM SHOW. So I was interested to hear about Mike Strizki, who has powered his house and car with hydrogen power since 2006. The "Joule Box" portable hydrogen power plant that he developed for his own use is now on the market. It uses solar and wind power to supply the electricity needed to produce hydrogen.

"The Joule Box is the most energy dense piece of equipment

on the planet," says Strizki. "It contains an off-grid inverter, charge controller, hydrogen fuel cell, electrolyzer, ultra capacitors, a battery bank, and hydrogen storage cylinders."

Solar panels and a small wind generator charge batteries. Once the batteries are charged, the energy is directed to an electrolyzer, which produces hydrogen gas to be stored in nearby propane tanks. When the solar cells can't produce sufficient energy to keep the batteries charged, electricity is produced by the hydrogen fuel cell to charge the batteries and the ultra capacitors. "I can plug in my car and have it fully charged in 2 hrs.," says Strizki.

The compact Joule Box fits on a 4 by 4-ft. pallet. Its footprint expands to 6 by 6-ft. with a total height of 16 ft. when the 120-watt solar panel and small wind turbine are attached. The solar panel sits on a rack that automatically aligns with the angle of the sun.

"It captures 33 percent more sunlight than a static array," says Strizki. An underground tank holds uncompressed hydrogen. A compressor can be added, turning the system into a hydrogen refueling station.

"The system is scalable and can be configured to meet the needs of any home or business," says Strizki.

The entire installation costs \$135,000, but between energy credits and avoiding buying energy, Strizki estimates a 5 to 7-year payback.

He notes that unlike hydrogen friendly California, his state of New Jersey is very unfriendly. They don't pay him much, just 2¢ per kW versus the 30¢ per kW they charge him. It's why he prefers to use the hydrogen and electricity himself.

Strizki has been working with hydrogen fuel cells for the past 30 years and holds 6 patents on hydrogen generation. He has converted a zero-turn mower and an off-road vehicle to run on hydrogen. There's a video of the Joule Box at FARMSHOW.com.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, H/Cell Energy Corporation, 97 River Rd., Flemington, N.J. 08822 (ph 908 837-9097; www.hcellenergy.com; www.hydrogenhouseproject.org).

Easy Way To Send Us Ideas

How often do you see an idea when you're out and about and say, "Hey, that should be in FARM SHOW"? Next time that happens, just take out your phone and send us a photo or two. Just text them to us at 952-465-5019. You can also email to editor@farmshow.com. If you want to leave a voice mail explaining what you're sending, this phone is dedicated to FARM SHOW stories so it's on and available 24/7. No need to worry about disturbing anyone. Call or text day or night with your ideas, comments, or suggestions. We'd love to hear from you!



Text photos to us at this number: 952-465-5019

Liberty Quotes

"It is not the function of government to keep the citizen from falling into error. It is the function of the citizen to keep the government from falling into error." *Justice Robert H. Jackson*

"It is much more important to kill bad bills than to pass good ones." *Calvin Coolidge*

"There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity and the freedom of man and mind is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American Dream." *Archibald MacLeish*

"Congress has not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but only those specifically enumerated." *Thomas Jefferson*

"Love your country but fear its government." *Daniel Webster*

"Government does not cause affluence. Citizens of totalitarian countries have plenty of government and nothing of anything else." *P.J. O'Rourke*

"The most dangerous man, to any government, is the man who is able to think things out for himself without regard to prevailing superstition or taboo." *H.S. Mencken*

"It is incumbent on every generation to pay its own debts as it goes. A principle which, if acted on, would save one-half the wars of the world." *Thomas Jefferson*

"The main vice of capitalism is the uneven distribution of prosperity. The main vice of socialism is the even distribution of misery." *Winston Churchill*

"The United States was supposed to have a limited government because the founders knew government power attracts demagogues and despots as surely as horse manure attracts horseflies." *Rick Gaber*

Radical New Semi-Tractor

Two 25-year-old inventors are shaking up the trucking industry with a new electric-powered semi truck. Dakota Semler and his partner, Giordano Sordoni, debuted the slick-looking ET-One in December. Powertrain options range from 300 to 700 hp. Built on a Navistar commercial chassis and using heavy-duty Dana axles, it's fitted with a big TM4 electric DC motor mounted between the cab and rear hitch plate. The prototype is powered by a pack of 21,700 battery cells.



Electric-powered semi trucks have a range of 100 to 300 miles, depending on load.

Semler, who was raised in a multi-generational family of fleet operators, says the trucks will haul full loads in a range of 100 to 300 miles between charges. Prices for the big rigs, which will hit the road in 2019, start at \$150,000 for the 100-mile version and \$250,000 for the 300-mile version. The prototype can pull 60,000 lbs. of cargo. They're working on a bigger model.

In some states Thor vehicles will qualify for up to \$110,000 in zero-emission incentives for heavy-duty trucks. Semler says the trucks lower fuel costs 70 percent and require 60 percent less maintenance.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Thor Trucks, Inc., 11347 Vanowen St., Los Angeles, Calif. 91605 (www.thortrucks.com). *Lorn Manthey, Contributing Editor*

Points To Ponder

"Few things are more irritating than when someone who is wrong is also very effective in making his point." *Mark Twain*

"Time is free, but it's priceless. You can't own it, but you can use it. You can't keep it, but you can spend it. Once you've lost it, you can never get it back." *Harvey MacKay*

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." *Aesop*

"Those who are lifting the world upward and onward are those who encourage more than criticize." *Elizabeth Harrison*

"The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"He who learns must suffer. And even in our sleep, pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart. In our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God." *Aeschylus*

Ole complained to his landlord. "Da people upstairs are so annoying! Last night dey stomped and pounded on da floor till almost midnight."

"Did they wake you up?" asked the landlord. "No, no," said Ole. "Tank goodness, I was playing my tuba all night."

Ole applied for a job at a watch company that paid \$500 a week. But after talking to the manager about the job, he said he would have to demand \$1,000 a week to work there.

The manager asked, "Have you ever done this kind of precision work before?" "Nope," said Ole.

"Well, then," said the manager, "why do you want twice as much money to take the job?"

"Because it's harder to do da job when yew don't know how ta do it," Ole replied.

Young Lars was always getting into trouble, causing trouble all over the neighborhood. One day his father, Ole, came home with a brand new bicycle for him.

"Vell, Ole," said his wife Lena. "Why did yew dew dat? Lars is such a terror! He's a bad boy all da time. Dew yew tink a new bike vill improve his behavior?"

"No," said Ole. "But I figured maybe it vill spread it out over a vider area."

Lena fell asleep at the beach and got a terrible sunburn. Her doctor told her to soak in a bathtub full of milk to soothe her skin. So Lena called the local dairy and explained that she needed enough milk to fill a tub.

The man at the dairy asked, "Do you want that pasturized?" "No," said Lena. "Up ta my neck vill be yust fine."

The worst airplane disaster in the history of the United States occurred recently in Minnesota when a small 2-seat Cessna crashed into a Norwegian cemetery. A pair of local search and rescue workers, Ole and Sven, have recovered 826 bodies so far. "Ve're still digging so ve expect dat number to go up," reports Ole.