

Smörgasbord



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**Iowa Farmer Wins
Case Against PCA**

An Iowa jury's recent decision in favor of a farmer who sued his PCA for "unwisely lending him money in the 1970's and then foreclosing on those loans in the early 1980's" is being hailed as a landmark case by other farmers and attorneys around the country with similar suits pending. The jury crossed off Peter Graber's entire debt of \$645,000 and awarded the Crawfordville farmer \$1.5 million in compensatory damages. PCA did not appeal cancellation of the loan debt but was granted a new trial on \$1.2 million of the damage settlement, claiming that the amount of damages had not been adequately proved.

Graber operated a large diversified grain and livestock operation until November, 1984 when the PCA foreclosed, repossessing his livestock and machinery. He claimed in court that the PCA foreclosed when crop prices tumbled and land prices began to deflate, despite previous assurances of continued credit.

"Every case is different and the PCA has improved its procedures in many ways since they handled my case. But there are still hundreds of similar cases pending against the Omaha regional office alone," says Graber, whose attorney, Peter Riley of Cedar Falls, Iowa, is handling many of the PCA disputes. "I firmly believe many of these cases could be successfully negotiated without going to court if everyone involved would realize they'll have to take a loss. If all lenders foreclose on everyone in trouble, they won't get anything paid back," Graber told FARM SHOW.

His troubles are not over, however, as he still faces foreclosure proceedings by the Federal Land Bank. Action in that case has been delayed pending final resolution of the damage suit against PCA. Meanwhile, the Grabers continue to farm the land using borrowed equipment.

**Get Ready For
4-Wheel Steering**

Your next new car just might be equipped with 4-wheel steering. It's coming soon, according to a report in Popular Science (Feb. 1986). Nissan already offers 4-wheel steering in its flagship Skyline sedan in Japan. Mazda promises to offer the system in a production car in two years. And Honda, Mitsubishi and Mercedes-Benz are all working on 4-wheel-steering systems that radically improve handling and stability. For faster, more controlled turns and lane changes at high speeds, the rear wheels turn in the same direction as the front wheels. For tighter turns and low-speed ability, the rear wheels steer in the

opposite direction of the front.

The idea certainly isn't new, Popular Science points out. "A Frenchman built a steam-powered four-wheel-steered prototype in 1876. Other efforts were made in 1915, and in the '20s and '30s. Michel Thompson built an Indy car with four-wheel steering in 1967. Later, Thompson converted an Oldsmobile Toronado to four-wheel steering."

Update on Rural Singles of America — "We've had tremendous response to FARM SHOW's article," reports Dean Budde, Mankato, Minn. He's the originator of "Rural Singles of America," a newsletter specifically geared to single people living in rural areas (featured in Vol. 9, No. 1).

"This newsletter is a communications link for rural singles," notes Budde, who started the newsletter after reading stories about the troubles rural singles have in meeting other eligible singles who like rural living.

His idea's really taken off. Since his first issue last year with its 42 listings, each newsletter has grown. His latest issue had 272 listings from men and women throughout the country. Budde notes that "singles" listed in the newsletter range in age from 19 to 76. He adds that more and more women are now joining the service.

Singles are listed by first name, phone number, city and state, along with a short description which includes likes and dislikes. Interspersed throughout the newsletter are helpful hints for the first meeting, colorful quips and advice for building relationships.

Cost for the service is \$20 for two monthly listings. Each two month renewal costs \$15.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dean Budde, Rural Singles of America, Rt. 2, Box 126, Mankato, Minn. 56001 (ph 507 947-3714).



Established 1842

J.I. Case Collectors Organize — The J.I. Case Collectors Association, a new organization open to all persons interested in the restoration and preservation of machines bearing the name of Jerome Increase Case, is seeking members worldwide. The non-profit group honors the memory and heritage of one of America's foremost

inventors and producers of farm engines and machinery during the last half of the 19th Century.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Case Association; Bruce Davis, Treasurer; 14377 Sharp Road; Sidney, Ohio 45365.

Lemon Laws Catch On Nationwide — Until a few years ago your only recourse if you bought a lemon car or pickup was to sue the manufacturer in court. Thanks to new lemon laws, which have been passed in 39 states, lawyers are no longer necessary in many cases. The only states which haven't passed lemon laws are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and South Dakota.

Most laws state that if during the first year or 12,000 miles your vehicle develops a serious defect, which the dealer cannot fix in four attempts (or if it has been out of service for 30 days), you can get the vehicle replaced. Some states allow 18,000 miles and two years and others say the problem should be fixed after 3 trips to the dealer. The problem parts must be covered under warranty and be such that the value and safety of the vehicle is threatened.

Once you've decided to file under the lemon laws, you submit your complaint to either the arbitration program specified by the manufacturer

of your vehicle or — in some states — to a state sponsored arbitration board. In any case, if you are not happy with the ruling in your case, you can still sue in court. According to experts, manufacturers often refund only the purchase price, not including sales taxes, and can deduct for mileage you drove after the problem first surfaced. If you decide to arbitrate, you should always keep good records of your problems.

The Center For Auto Safety will send out a free information sheet that summarizes all state lemon laws. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope and request the lemon law chart. The center also sells a 236-page manual that details everything you need to know about handling lemon laws. The book costs \$10.65, including first class postage.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Center For Auto Safety, 2001 "S" Street N.W., Suite 410, Washington, D.C. 20009 (ph 202 328-7700).

Ford Tractor Enthusiasts Launch Newsletter — "Ford produced more than 800,000 9n, 8n and 2n tractors and it's estimated that more than half are still in service. We want to work together with owners to help keep them running," says Gerard W. Rinaldi, Stamford, Conn., who recently launched a new publication aimed primarily at owners of the Ford "N-Series" tractors.

(Another publication, "The Ford Fergie Farmer" published by Todd Miles in Massachusetts, serves many Ford tractor owners but recently ceased publication.)

The N-tractor newsletter will concentrate on service tips, a buy-sell swap parts exchange, book and service manual reviews, and will have other general tractor-related articles. "These tractor were efficiently and beautifully designed and are very even-tempered and forgiving. They're simple to operate and maintain and do exactly what they were meant to do," notes Rinaldi.

A subscription to the quarterly newsletter sell for \$6 per year. For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, 9N-2N-8N NEWSLETTER, Gerald W. Rinaldi, 154 Blackwood Lane Stamford, Conn. 06903.

The Passing Parade — This farmer hadn't spent much time in really big cities, so he looked forward to being a delegate to a meeting in Chicago. He made sure that he had his room key in his pocket before leaving the room in the evening, but unfortunately he forgot to transfer his wallet from traveling clothes to his city-wear suit.

After riding a few blocks in a taxi, our hero suddenly discovered the oversight. But a lifetime of working with employees and buyers had taught him a lot about people. So he leaned forward in the dark cab and said to the driver, "Please stop at the next drugstore for a minute. I want to get some matches so I can look for a fifty-dollar bill I've lost back here."

When he came out of the drugstore, the taxi was gone! (American Agriculturist).

"City Slickers" Help Out On The Farm — Some "city slickers" in a rural Northern Minnesota community, anxious to help local farmers get through a difficult harvest last fall, started "Operation Harvest", an effort to match city volunteers with farmers needing help.

According to a report in the Minneapolis Star & Tribune, everyone from local doctors and teachers to the newspaper publisher took on a variety of jobs ranging from tractor driving to hauling grain. Organizers got publicity in their local newspaper and then fielded phone calls from both farmers in need and city volunteers. One of the organizers said Operation Harvest not only helped farmers get in their crops during a year when harvest time had been greatly shortened due to heavy rains, but also promoted better city-rural communication.