

**Editor's
Notebook**



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Doing Corn The Hard Way

A friend of ours stopped by the office recently, excited about the pending arrival of a brand new Deere combine. He had ordered the biggest and the best, with custom \$5,000 flotation tires and a Gerringhoff chopper cornhead. Total bill: somewhere north of \$350,000. After I gave him a hard time about how much money he was spending, he showed me on paper how the purchase makes sense when you spread the cost over 3,000 acres and figure in the high resale value of a well-maintained machine.



In 1932, a cheering crowd of 50,000 people watched Carl Seiler, shown here, win the National Corn Husking Contest. An even larger crowd of more than 125,000 attended the 1938 cornhusking contest.

After he left, I started thinking about how corn was harvested before such monster machines came on the scene. I went to my computer and spent the next hour or so reading about the history of corn harvesting. I got sidetracked into reading about the "sport" of cornhusking.

In the 1930's and 40's, as machines took over the business of picking corn, huge corn husking contests were held all over the Midwest. For example, in 1938 more than 125,000 people showed up at a farm near Dell Rapids, S. Dak., to watch 21 contestants compete. There were brass bands, parades, parking for 35,000 cars, and NBC Radio carried a nationwide live broadcast of the contest. Ted Balko of Redwood Falls, Minn., won the contest husking 22.64 bu. of corn in 80 min.

Cornhusking contests are still popular today. You can read more at www.cornhusking.com.

Time Banks Catch On

Hundreds of "time banks" have sprung up across the U.S. over the past couple years, says founder Edgar Cahn (www.timebanks.org). Here's an example of how they work:

Doris Feldman, 82, teaches English to another Time Bank member, a recent immigrant to the U.S. For every hour she works, a "time dollar" is deposited at the bank, and it can later be exchanged for services from another Time Bank member. For example, if Doris needs a home repair, it's all covered.

Typical services provided by Time Bank members include sewing, meal preparation, child care, dog grooming, massage, mowing grass, and just about any other task you can think of. No actual money is ever exchanged.

To set up a local Time Bank, go to the website (www.timebanks.org) and order a \$49 startup kit.

My Best, Worst Buys

We ask readers to tell us about their "best" and "worst" buys in every issue of FARM SHOW, so I thought maybe I'd put together a list of some of the buys I've made over the past few years. I'm an editor, not a farmer, so don't expect to see any big 4-WD tractors or fancy bale handlers!

Amazon.com: This is not just a book store anymore. It's where I buy everything from pressure washers to whisk brooms. When I need something, I go here first because it's fast, easy, priced right (usually), and I can order with just one click. Best of all, if you sign up as an Amazon "Prime" user for a fee of \$79 a year, you get free 2-day shipping (or

overnight shipping for just \$3.99). Some of my recent purchases include light bulbs, copy paper, tools, vitamins, blank CD's. Whatever we need around the office at FARM SHOW, we order from Amazon.

Apple Computers: For the average user, who just needs to use spreadsheets, word processing, and the internet, Macs are the way to go. We run FARM SHOW on Macs, and I also use them at home. There are no virus issues to worry about, and they're not constantly "updating" themselves like your average PC. For sheer ease of use and hassle-free internet surfing, you can't beat Apple. And yes, we buy them at Amazon.

Porter Cable 5500-watt generator: I bought this portable generator at Amazon as a backup for our FARM SHOW offices. Amazon was having a sale a while back so I got it for \$699 with free shipping - about a \$300 savings. It arrived in 3 days, along with a lot of peace of mind. The generator has enough juice to provide power to our compact offices for a few days, if we ever need it.

Deere LT166 garden tractor: There's a 3-acre field out behind our office building. We bought this mower 12 years ago to mow it and we've definitely gotten our money's worth. However, there have been a few problems. For example, a couple years ago the tilt-up hood broke off because the plastic hinges broke. In my opinion, NO hinge should ever be made out of plastic. The drive pulleys on the deck needed replacing earlier this year, and it seems like the front tires are always going flat - even though the field we mow is all grass. I hope tires on Deere's newer models have a bit more rubber in them!

CC Radio: This am/fm/tv/weather radio, which is widely advertised as having the best reception you can get, has been on my desk for about 10 years. It was not cheap, at \$125, and I wouldn't buy another one. Reception has never been better than the \$15 radio it replaced. And recently the control buttons started falling off. I guess when I buy a \$125 radio, I expect it to last forever!

Canon SD1100IS digital camera: This is the best little camera I've ever owned, and I've had quite a few. Retail price is \$250 but I bought it on Amazon for \$159. Picture quality is nearly indistinguishable from the \$700 Nikon digital that I use for work. If you need a shirt pocket camera, you can't go wrong with this one. You can pay more for a small camera, but they won't be any better than this one.

Delta 2400 psi pressure washer: I bought this Honda-powered pressure washer at Sam's Club for \$250 or so. I've used it for 3 years now to clean decks and blow off old paint jobs. Haven't had a single problem. Works great.

Tivo - This has to be the biggest advance in home entertainment since TV first came on the scene. It's also the most consumer-friendly product I've ever come across. It lets you watch programs when it's convenient for you (that's late at night for me) and I almost never have to watch commercials anymore - which I was extremely grateful for during this election year.

Got a "best" or "worst" buy of your own? Send it to me: Editor@farmshow.com, or mail to: FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

Quotable Quotes

- The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.
- The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight, because by then your body and your fat have gotten to be really good friends.
- He who hesitates is probably right.
- Did you ever notice: When you put the 2 words "The" and "IRS" together it spells "Theirs".
- One of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.
- Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth. Amen.

The Senility Prayer

Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

After church, Susie tells her parents that she has to go and talk to the minister right away. They agree and the pastor greets the family. "Pastor," Susie says, "I heard you say today that our bodies came from the dust." "That's right Susie, I did." "And I heard you say that when we die, our bodies go back to dust." "Yes, I'm glad you were listening. Why do you ask?" "Well you better come over to our house right away and look under my bed 'cause there's someone either comin' or goin'!"

Great Gift Idea For Christmas

If you've got a hard-to-buy-for farmer or rancher on your Christmas gift list this year, why not do your shopping right here?

Many readers who gave FARM SHOW for Christmas last year wrote to tell us they've never given a gift which generated so much response from appreciative recipients.

If you like, you can give the "First Gift" to yourself as a one-year extension of your own FARM SHOW subscription, entitling you to give reduced rate gift subscriptions to friends, relatives, business associates, students, or others.

Use the order form inserted elsewhere in this issue to order your Christmas gift subscriptions, or go to www.farmshow.com. You can also call us at 800 834-9665.



Liberty Quotes

"We know that peace is the condition under which mankind was meant to flourish. Yet peace does not exist of its own will. It depends on us, on our courage to build it and guard it and pass it on to future generations. George Washington's words may seem hard and cold today, but history has proven him right again and again. 'To be prepared for war,' he said, 'is one of the most effective means of preserving peace.' Well, to those who think strength provokes conflict, Will Rogers had his own answer. He said of the world heavyweight champion of his day: 'I've never seen anyone insult Jack Dempsey!'" *Ronald Reagan*

"The difference between a politician and a pickpocket is that the pickpocket doesn't get indignation when you tell him to keep his hands to himself." *Joseph Sobran*

"Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature. Nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing." *Helen Keller*

"If you see a man approaching you with the obvious intent of doing you good, you should run for your life." *Henry David Thoreau*

"Dissent... is a right essential to any concept of the dignity and freedom of the individual; it is essential to the search for truth in a world wherein no authority is infallible." *Norman Thomas*

"We are so concerned to flatter the majority that we lose sight of how very often it is necessary, in order to preserve freedom for the minority, let alone for the individual, to face that majority down." *William F. Buckley, Jr.*

"Truth resides in every human heart, and one has to search for it there, and to be guided by truth as one sees it. But no one has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth." *Mahatma Monhandas K. Gandhi*

"History teaches us that men and nations only behave wisely once they have exhausted all other alternatives." *Abba Eban*

An elderly couple was driving cross-country and the woman was driving. She got pulled over by the highway patrol. The officer says, "Ma'am, did you know you were speeding?"

The woman turns to her husband and asks, "What did he say?" The old man yells, "HE SAID YOU WERE SPEEDING."

The patrolman says, "May I see your license?" The woman turns to her husband and asks, "What did he say?" The old man yells, "HE WANTS TO SEE YOUR LICENSE." The woman gives him her license.

The patrolman says, "I see you are from Arkansas. I spent some time there once, and had the worst day of my life."

The woman turns to her husband and asks, "What did he say?" "HE THINKS HE KNOWS YOU," the old man yells.

A pastor, known for his lengthy sermons, noticed a man get up and leave during the middle of his message. The man returned just before the conclusion of the service.

Afterward the pastor asked the man where he had gone. "I went to get a haircut," was the reply.

"But," said the pastor, "why didn't you do that before the service started?"

"Because," the man answered, "I didn't need one then."

Little Davie watched, fascinated, as his mother smoothed cold cream on her face.

"Why do you do that mommy?" he asked.

"To make myself beautiful," replied his mother, who then began removing the cream with a tissue.

"What's the matter?" asked Little Davie. "Giving up?"