

**Editor's  
Notebook**



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**Editor &  
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**He Got "Taken" On eBay**

A Kansas reader who asked us not to use his name called recently to tell us how he got "taken" when he bought a used ATV on eBay.

D.F. bought a used Polaris Sportsman ATV last summer from Power Toys, a Blountville, Tenn., dealer who advertises on eBay. He paid \$4,650 by wire transfer as the dealer insisted. "The dealer offered free shipping which looked like a good deal, but it turned out to be a very bad deal," he says. "I got taken but I also did a lot of things wrong because I didn't read the rules about buying on eBay."

The big buying lessons: eBay has a 45-day limit on providing any help to the buyer and on allowing feedback about the purchased product. And they recommend that you don't wire money. Just use PayPal or a credit card.

The ATV arrived about a month after D.F. wired the money, much later than promised. The ATV was advertised as having 226 miles and in perfect mechanical condition. However, it turned out to have several mechanical problems and was covered with sand and mud, including in the air filter. "The machine had been driven hard and might have been in a flood. It was a trashed-out repo," says D.F.

D.F. called the dealer to take the machine back. But the dealer talked D.F. into having a local shop make all the repairs. Then D.F. was supposed to accept the machine and the dealer would reimburse him for the repairs, adding a "bonus" for D.F.'s trouble. The shop had to order parts, and by the time D.F. got the machine back three weeks later, eBay's 45-day limit for mediation and feedback ratings had come and gone.

Now the dealer won't return his calls.

"I didn't read all the fine print on eBay, but the dealer obviously did," says D.F. "They knew all the rules and how to play the game without getting caught.

"There was a 100 percent positive feedback rating on the dealer, which was one reason I bought from them. If I had bought the machine by PayPal or with a credit card I would've had someone to fight for me. But because I wired the money, I was on my own.

"I paid \$4,650 for a machine that I don't want, and \$289 for unreimbursed repairs. I still have the ATV but I'm not happy with it."

A few weeks ago he filed a case with the Better Business Bureau which took on the case, but at press time nothing had been settled.

**9 Years Of Robotic Milking**

In 2000, Pete and Theo Knigge and their son, Charlie, were the first commercial dairy farmers in the U.S. to install robotic milkers on their dairy farm near Omro, Wis. They have two Lely Astronaut robotic units and say they wouldn't want to farm without them, according to a recent report in *The Country Today*. The systems cost \$160,000 each but the family saved on building costs because they didn't need a separate parlor or large holding area. That's because cows get milked any time they're ready. They also save on labor and all the costs related to milking are fixed because they bought a service contract for the milkers that covers maintenance. The Knigges say it takes a certain personality type to work with a robot, since it takes a while to get used to the way the machinery operates and to learn the computer software that goes with it. The robots don't like teats that don't hang straight or deep udders so breeding decisions and

heavy culling are important. So is hoof maintenance so cows are comfortable enough to walk freely to the robots. Their rolling herd average is 25,000 lbs. in their 178-stall freestall barn. According to the newspaper, there are about 60 robotic milkers in Wisconsin today.



**Wounded soldiers at Walter Reed welcome visits. Just call ahead to make an appointment and then plan to stay all day.**

**A Reader Visits Walter Reed**

Jeff Lang, a frequent contributor to FARM SHOW, recently paid a visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. where wounded veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan receive treatment.

"It was a very humbling experience. I was impressed with the entire facility and the professionalism of all the hospital staff I encountered. Visiting with the wounded soldiers is something I will never forget. I took along a pile of FARM SHOW Magazines, which you sent me, and it was a pleasure to pass them out to the veterans we met. Each and every soldier was very interested and it was nice to see the paper put a smile on their faces. I also had a chance to visit with the mothers and fathers and grandparents of some of the wounded soldiers.

"Any and all visitors to Walter Reed are welcome. You just call the hospital and ask for an appointment. They will give you a date and time over the phone and you give them your name, address and the vehicle license plate number of the vehicle you'll be driving that day. They'll also ask you for a bit of background on yourself, which will be shared with the soldiers, such as if you're from a farm, retired military, etc. The day of your visit, hospital staff will give you reserved parking in front of the hospital entrance with your name on it. The maximum number of people per visit is 5 and each visit is one hour in length. An escort will take you from room to room. There is a medical history museum which is very interesting, and a cafeteria, where further visits can be had with soldiers. Anyone visiting should plan to stay the entire day."

Contact: Walter Reed Army Medical Center (ph 202 782-7634; www.wramc.amedd.army.mil). If you can't visit, you can support the needs of wounded soldiers and their families through the Wounded Warrior Project. Contact: (ph 877-832-6997; www.WoundedWarriorProject.org).

**Liberty Quotes**

"Absolute freedom does not exist: what does exist is the freedom to choose anything you like and then commit yourself to that decision." *Paulo Coelho*

"Nothing is more responsible for the good old days than a bad memory." *Franklin P. Adams*

"A State which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands – even for beneficial purposes – will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished." – *John Stuart Mill*

"I would rather be exposed to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than to those attending too small a degree of it." *Thomas Jefferson*

"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 L. Wilkie*

"The conventional view serves to protect us from the painful job of thinking." *John Kenneth Galbraith*

"Whenever you have an efficient government you have a dictatorship." *Harry S. Truman*

"I believe that all government is evil, and that trying to improve it is largely a waste of time." *H.L. Mencken*

"Agriculture, manufacturers, commerce, and navigation, the four pillars of our prosperity, are then most thriving when left most free to individual enterprise." *Thomas Jefferson*

"I don't want my children fed or clothed by the state, but if I had to choose, I would prefer that to their being educated by the state." *Max Victor Belz*

"Once the government becomes the supplier of people's needs, there is no limit to the needs that will be claimed as a basic right." *Lawrence Auster*

"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.L. Mencken*

"The Framers of the Bill of Rights did not purport to "create" rights. Rather they designed the Bill of Rights to prohibit our Government from infringing rights and liberties presumed to be preexisting." *Justice William J. Brennan*

**New Ethanol Rule Worries Small Engine Manufacturers**

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, boaters and small engine industry groups are worried about a new ruling from the EPA that might allow as much as 15 percent ethanol in the nation's gasoline. Many groups have already been complaining about problems with 10 percent ethanol mixes in boat motors and other small engines. The problem is that most government testing is done on car and truck engines so there's less research into the effects on small engines.

The EPA has delayed the ruling until later in 2010. The ruling will not require a 15 percent mix - it will only make it possible.

**George Washington, Inventor**

I recently read a book called *George Washington, Pioneer Farmer* and it's pretty clear that if he were alive today, he'd be an avid FARM SHOW subscriber and contributor. He was always looking for a better way to farm.

As early as 1760, Washington wrote in his diary, "Spent the greatest part of the day in making a new plow of my own invention."

For the next 26 years he continued to experiment with tillage and planting methods until July 26, 1786, when he completed what he called a one-pass planter.

A wooden barrel hung off the rear of a wheeled plow. Directly behind the plow was a brush harrow, and behind that was a roller. As the ground was plowed, the harrow would break up the clods. The barrel turned as the plow rolled along so that corn or other seeds in the barrel would drop through holes that had been drilled in it and down through tubes to the ground. Then the roller would pass over the seed, pressing it into the ground. After making improvements through the summer, he wrote a friend that the planter performed well on corn, wheat, barley, peas or other "tolerably round" grain.

Another Washington invention was the "treading barn". On other farms, grain was placed on packed ground and horses walked over it to separate it. His 16-sided barn was built into the side of a hill, so grain could be hauled to the second floor and horses brought onto the floor to tread the grain. The floor was designed with 1 1/2-in. spaces between the boards, allowing grain to pass through, but the straw left on top. Washington's grain was cleaner and kept in better condition, thanks to his innovative barn. *Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor*

**The graveside service for the farmer's wife** had just barely finished when there was a massive clap of thunder, followed by a tremendous bolt of lightning, accompanied by even more thunder rumbling in the distance.

The old farmer looked at the pastor and calmly said, "Well, she's there."

**Ole, the owner of a new car**, was somewhat reluctant to allow his wife, Lena, to drive his prize possession – even to the supermarket which was a few blocks from the house.

After she insisted, Ole finally relented, cautioning her as she departed, "Remember, if yew have an accident, da newspaper vill print your age!"

**"Anyone with needs to be prayed over**, come forward, to the front at the altar," the Preacher says.

Leroy gets in line, and when it's his turn, the preacher asks: "Leroy, what do you want me to pray about for you?"

Leroy replies: "Preacher, I need you to pray for my hearing."

The preacher puts one finger in Leroy's ear, and he places the other hand on top of Leroy's head and prays and prays and prays, he prays a blue streak for Leroy.

After a few minutes, the Preacher removes his hands, stands back and asks, "Leroy, how is your hearing now?"

Leroy says, "I don't know, Reverend, it ain't til next Wednesday!"

**One evening after dinner, my 5-year-old son Brian** noticed that his mother had gone out. In answer to his questions, I told him, "Mommy is at a Tupperware party."

This explanation satisfied him for only a moment. Puzzled, he asked, "What's a Tupperware party, Dad?"

I figured a simple explanation would be the best approach. "Well, Brian," I said, "at a Tupperware party, a bunch of ladies sit around and sell plastic bowls to each other."

Brian nodded, indicating that he understood this curious pastime. Then he burst into laughter. "Come on, Dad," he said. "What is it really?"