



Tim Clark proposed to his girlfriend in a corn field with one letter per sign asking: "Danielle, Will You Marry Me?"

Combine Helped Him Pop "The Question" In Corn Field

Tim Clark, forage product manager for Dairyland Seed at West Bend, Wis., has experience putting up hundreds of field signs over the five years he's worked for the company. But he admits he broke a sweat seasons running grain carts on both their parents' Wisconsin farms. Clark managed to pull off the proposal without anyone knowing about it ahead of time except Hammer's parents.

On that Sunday morning, Clark counted 48 rows in and spread the signs out over 200 ft. so the message would be exposed after the fourth pass of the combine. Hammer's father, Charlie Hammer, drove the combine, and her mother, Nancy Kavazajian, was ready with her camera.

"Danielle and I were helping harvest that beautiful October day, as we typically do. I slowly pulled the grain cart to the outer part of the field and hung behind, so as he combined, we could see the signs slowly revealed," Clark says.

Story of the proposal hit the media including a report from agriculture broadcaster Max Armstrong, who called Clark a "sly guy."

The field proposal fits the couple's passion for agriculture. They met at the first Wisconsin Farm Bureau Young Farmers Ball, that Clark, current state chairman, organized three years ago. Since then they've started a cow/calf beef operation.



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As for the signs, after using them for the engagement photo, Clark stored them away — at least for now.

"There are a lot of exciting life events to happen yet," he says. He expects he'll find ways to reuse them in the future.

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Super H Memorialized On Gravestone

When Russell Cunningham's family visits his gravesite, they see an engraving of a Super H Farmall that was and is still a big part of the Cunningham family. Russell's son David says the engraving was only fitting, as his dad bought the tractor in 1956 and continued to drive it until 2 weeks before his death in 2006.

"My dad always said he wanted to be buried out behind the barn with the crank for the H in his hand," says Cunningham.

While that wasn't possible, the family did the next best thing. Cunningham says the company that produced the marker for the family was happy to oblige.

"They'll engrave about anything that isn't illegal," he says. "My sister brought in a die

cast of an H, and they used it for the pattern."

While the tractor is still in great shape, Cunningham says the daily use has taken its toll. So many members of the family have climbed on over the years that the hex nuts that clamp the drawbar to the rear axle have worn down. Cunningham notes they are right where you put your foot when climbing on.

"The tractor has now spent 58 years on this farm, and it's become a member of the family," he says. "It is still being used on a daily basis."

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Joe Rishel built this 22-in. long wooden replica of a Shay 2-truck, 28-ton Class B narrow gauge engine locomotive.

Wooden Replica Of Shay Steam Locomotive

"I recently built this 22-in. long wooden replica of a Shay 2-truck, 28-ton Class B narrow gauge engine locomotive, which was the most widely used gear steam locomotive of its time. It's built in many different pieces and constructed almost entirely from white ash and walnut," says Joe Rishel of Alanson, Mich.

He says that Ephraim Shay, the man who invented the famed locomotive, lived nearby in Harbor Springs, Mich.

The locomotive stands on cherry wood tracks that are fastened to a maple wood base. It has battery-operated headlights on front and back, and a coal box, water tank and sand box on back. "On the real locomotive, sand could be dropped onto the wheels whenever the locomotive was going uphill to improve the traction," says Rishel.

The firebox chamber is made from white ash, and the smokestack that extends up from

it is made from cherry and has inlaid wood made from thin sheets of maple and walnut. A stainless steel screen on top of the smokestack serves as a fire catcher to keep sparks from flying out, just like on the real locomotive.

There's a hitch on front where the locomotive hooked onto railroad cars to move them around in the railroad yard. A pair of "timbers" extend horizontally across both the front and back of the locomotive. Each timber is fitted with a pin box. "You dropped a pin down through the pin box to hook up to the railroad car so you could push or pull the car down the track," says Rishel.

He says he started building the locomotive 2 years ago and still isn't finished. "I don't know how many hours I've spent on it, but it's a lot," notes Rishel.

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Russell Cunningham bought a Farmall Super H in 1956 and drove it until shortly before his death in 2006. Now it's memorialized on his gravestone.