



Show cows were the bridesmaids at this recent wedding held in a pasture. The bride and groom come from Pennsylvania dairy families with show-winning cattle, so they wanted to include them in the festivities.

Dairy Cows Walked Down The Aisle At This Pasture Wedding

FARM SHOW reader Damian Lakatos has helped set up electronics and sound systems at a variety of venues, but he thought readers would be especially interested in an unusual farm wedding he recently helped set up.

"The bridesmaids were show cows," he says. "The wedding was in the middle of a farm field without electricity."

He explains that the bride and groom come from Pennsylvania dairy families that have show-winning cattle, so they wanted

to include them in the festivities. Instead of the bride coming down an aisle, she and the "cowgirls" leading her bridesmaids, walked into the pasture from the barn.

Lakatos agreed to help his friends with the sound system so they wouldn't have to run a noisy generator to provide power.

"We put 4 tractor batteries under a table with a true sine wave inverter," he explains. "Cheaper inverters will work, but sometimes they make a loud buzz."



FARM SHOW reader Damian Lakatos set up a sound system that did not need a noisy generator to provide power.

The setup provided plenty of power for a few mikes and a mixer with an amplifier.

"Sometimes people use portable PA systems, but with this they can have full power and great coverage, so everyone heard everything very well," he says.

For individuals considering using a similar system, he emphasizes the importance of grounding.

"For safety, pound a ground rod in (the ground), and connect the inverter ground to

it to avoid shocks from the microphones and instruments," Lakatos says.

Despite a rain the day before, the wedding, the system and ceremony turned out perfectly. Guests enjoyed the quiet sounds of nature in the field - and an occasional "moo" from one of the bridesmaids.

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Rare Sleigh Collection Continues To Grow

Dan Bussey's horse-drawn sleigh and wagon collection is up to 120 pieces and growing. The wagons are work vehicles and delivery trucks of their day, but the sleighs that comprise the bulk of his collection are all kinds. They include work vehicles, luxury sleighs, singles and a sidewalk snowplow. After more than 35 years, he continues to find new and different sleighs.

"People who know me will tell me about a neat sleigh to check out," says Bussey. "I recently picked up a closed body sleigh called a Rockway from Rockway, N.Y. It was the family station wagon of its time, with a roof over the top to give the driver some protection."

Another recent acquisition was a Portland-style sleigh in the shape of a swan with a curved neck in front and a back cut out like wings. His first sleigh belonged to his grandparents.

"They sold the family farm in 1961, but left the old sleigh in the rafters of a machine shed," he recalls. "The understanding was the family could have it when we wanted. It wasn't until 1978 that we decided to pick it up. We got it just in the nick of time as the shed collapsed 2 days later."

Not yet out of high school, Bussey was hooked on the workmanship. He started going to farm auctions, picking up a few here and there, as well as old catalogs and other materials.

"I enjoy the marvelous designs and appreciate the workmanship," he says. "They were as fancy as any car ever made. There were different styles for different parts of the country. I love the locally made ones. We had marvelous builders all around the area."

Bussey, who now lives in Iowa, grew up in Wisconsin, where he did much of his collecting. Around 3,000 makers of horse-drawn vehicles were in Wisconsin alone. They operated from 1865 to 1919 when the last one closed.

That hasn't stopped him from finding sleighs elsewhere. One is a taxi sleigh from

Newfoundland. It looks like a couch set sideways on runners with a seat for the driver at one end. A unique style popular on Long Island was called a Booby Hut. It was a plush velvet coach body mounted on sleigh runners.

"I have a 2-seater and a 4-seater, both with a seat outside for the driver," says Bussey. "My fanciest sleigh is the child's hearse. It has 4 posts holding up the roof and carved like angels. It was hand carved in Rochester, N.Y. and sold to a funeral home in Brooklyn."

While Bussey still finds an occasional sleigh at a farm auction, the best opportunities are specialty auctions. Twice a year he heads to Pennsylvania for Martin Auctioneers' horse-drawn vehicle sales (ph 717 354-6671).

"It's the best known of its kind," he says. "Going there is like going to a museum to look and appreciate how wonderfully made the sleighs are, from plain to fancy."

Bussey says average sleighs can still be had for as little as \$50 to several hundred dollars. The most expensive ones may go for as much as \$20,000.

"You can get a pretty nice sleigh for \$3,000 to \$5,000," says Bussey. "The most expensive one I have was about \$12,000."

Most of Bussey's sleighs need restoration. "I was going to wait until I retired and do a few each year," he says. "I realized I would never live that long, so I've started now."

In addition to collecting, Bussey is on the board of directors of the Carriage Museum of America, Lexington, Ky. He suggests visiting there to get an appreciation of sleighs and other horse-drawn vehicles.

"People think about buggies and wagons, but sleighs have been under appreciated," he says. "If any readers have questions about sleighs, I'll be glad to help if I can."

Bussey admits he might even be in the market for the right sleigh.

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After more than 35 years Dan Bussey continues to find new and different horse-drawn sleighs for his collection, including this 2-seater model.



His collection includes different styles of sleighs from different parts of the country. Shown here is a sleigh used for meat delivery.



This sleigh was used for baking deliveries. "I enjoy the marvelous designs and appreciate the workmanship of these sleighs," says Bussey. "They were as fancy as any car ever made."