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Batteries Fuel Curly's Cyber Clydesdale

Australian-made machines for gardens, landscaping, and other tasks are quietly gaining popularity in North America. They're quiet because they're battery-powered from electricity/solar. They're popular because the two-wheeled, thumb-controlled steering is user-friendly.

The Cyber Clydesdale was invented by former Australian construction worker "Curly." He began designing tools when he and his family started market gardening in Queensland. His first invention, the Hand-E, operates like a skid-steer loader powered by lithium batteries with the equivalent of 20 to 30 hp. After that, he invented a simpler version, the Cyber Clydesdale, with about 10 hp. that's less expensive and works well for market gardeners.

With independent drive motors, one for each wheel, it operates like a skid steer. The handlebar has thumb dials for speed and direction and forward and reverse driving modes. There are hitches in the front and back to hook up implements.

"It's a well-balanced machine with large tires (6.00-16). It has a 3 kW battery that provides power on demand. And it's not limited to one tool," Curly says.

Add a deck for mowing, a trailer for towing, or an assortment of digging tools,

for example.

"We started making it for market gardeners, but it's so versatile beyond gardening, from construction to landscaping to vegetation management clearing scrub," he adds.

The battery can last up to 10 hrs. of drive time, but it's easily interchangeable so customers can purchase an extra battery for continuous work.

Some choose to add a solar power attachment that recharges the Cyber Clydesdale while you work.

"You can customize your order to make your own kit," Curly says, including adding a seat. "It's sustainable because you don't have to buy fuel or change oil. There's just the upfront cost, and the lithium battery lasts up to 10 years."

He's working on adding remote and GPS controls to help landscapers working on slopes.

Curly's tools can now also be purchased through dealers listed on the website in Canada and the U.S. through www.et-sun.com and www.mapagri.com where the Cyber Clydesdale lists for less than \$9,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Curly's Ag, 1349 Old Rosevale Rd., Rosevale, QLD 4340 (ph 61 449 268 131; info@curlysag.com; www.machin-e.com).



Johnson used eight coats of linseed oil on the wooden sled.

Sleigh Preserves Part Of Iowa Farm Life

Mark Johnson's restored horse-drawn sleigh preserves a piece of his family's history that could've been lost when the farm was sold. His older brother knew about sleigh runners in the hay loft of their grandfather's Iowa barn for more than 75 years. The turn-of-the-century runners were likely stored there when the farm switched from horses to tractors.

When the farm was going to be sold, Johnson searched through the mow's hay, found the runners, and lowered the three pieces to the ground with rope.

After a good power washing and eight coats of linseed oil, the oak wood regained its deep luster and appeared to be in good condition. The work sleigh has two sets of runners and a section to hold them together.

"It will stretch to about 25 ft. long (with the 12-ft. tongue)," Johnson says. That allowed the sleigh to be used for moving logs. Or a box could be added for hauling grain and other goods.

Johnson built a 38-in. wide by 7-ft. long box to fit inside the runners' pegs and cleats

on the front and back. A couple of the pegs were broken, so Johnson's brother, Gary, turned four new pegs on his wood lathe.

The wood for the box came from ash trees Johnson cut down for a neighbor, then had sawn at a local mill. The tree was big enough to give him 16 to 17-in. wide live edge 1-in. boards for the side walls. He used 2-in. lumber for the seat frame. To preserve the wood's natural beauty, he sealed it with linseed oil.

Last fall, the sled became a vintage yard ornament filled with corn, then sleigh bells, garland, and lights over the holidays.

So far, Johnson has only used his John Deere tractor to move the sleigh.

"I don't have horses," he says. "But a family in town does, and he offered to hitch it up sometime."

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Economical Electric Equipment Is Their Specialty

"Curly's equipment is significant because it has multiple uses," says William Kanitz, co-owner of et-sun in Port Charlotte, Fla. Besides produce farms, the Cyber Clydesdale works well in chicken houses, dairy barns, and on hillsides.

But the two-wheel tractor is just one of many options available for battery-powered equipment, he says. His business is all about battery and solar-powered equipment from manufacturers worldwide. He's also a dealer for Knekt, a Netherlands company that makes 45 and 55-hp. e-tractors with high clearance and long-lasting double batteries on a front hangar system for efficient row crop farming.

"It's all about the software," Kanitz says, and manufacturers are solving challenges to clear the way for battery-powered equipment to compete against diesel equipment.

As part of his business and working with the U.S. Department of Energy, Kanitz compiled a list of electric equipment from around the world, including 51 tractor manufacturers in India. The list includes

robotic equipment, drones, lawn tractors, pickups, and recreational equipment such as UTVs and snowmobiles (www.et-sun.com/BatteryBarns). Kanitz also sells vertical racking systems and solar fence systems that are stationary, movable, and transportable on a trailer.

He's enthusiastic about the future of electric equipment that continues to increase in horsepower and has long-lasting battery systems for up to 12 hrs. of fieldwork.

With incentives from REAP (Rural Energy for America Program), loans and grants are available to reduce customers' costs for electric equipment, making it competitive with diesel or gas equipment that requires further expenses for fuel and maintenance.

Check out the et-sun website for more information.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, et-sun, 23249 Hemenway Ave., Port Charlotte, Fla. 33980 (ph 941-235-8550; info@et-sun.com; www.et-sun.com).



Mini traps can range in price for collectors from \$50 to as much as \$2,000.

Mini Traps Catch Collectors' Attention

One of the best things about collecting miniature traps is that your wife lets you display them in the house, says Douglas Valentine. Collecting them and regular-size traps stored in a shed is a way for the retired Navy/post office worker to relive his time trapping as a youngster.

Because no one else was doing it, he recently created a Facebook page (Miniature Animal Trap Collectors) to connect with other enthusiasts in the U.S. and overseas. The niche group members share information about traps in their collections and how to clean and restore them.

The trap manufacturing company Oneida Community made the first miniature trap to display at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

"The Newhouse miniature souvenir trap—it's the holy grail," Valentine says, noting he has one. "If you can find one, they can go for over \$2,000."

Oneida made a couple more limited productions in 1899 and 1904 (estimated 300 total).

According to museum owner Tom Parr in *Fur-Fish-Game* magazine, in 1925 Melvin Koch used Oneida's parts and tooling to produce another version of the trap with a round plain pan. By the sixth of eight versions, he added V-cut pans. His final model was made as a tie clasp.

In the late 70's, many states sold "mosquito traps" as souvenirs. Many were made, Valentine says, and so they're fairly common.

In 1981, Tom Mitchell created The Trappers Workshop and made novelty belt buckle traps that were numbered. Parr notes they can sell for \$150 each. Mitchell also produced keychain novelty traps, including some imprinted with "I am 4 trapping" when his state, Washington, fought anti-trapping issues.



Quarter shows how small some of the traps are built.

Some companies, such as Sterling Fur out of Ohio, offered China-made miniature models of other trap styles, such as coil and long spring traps.

Traps don't have to be old to have value. Valentine says many collectors prefer new traps made by Edward Hutzel, who sells handcrafted traps through his Hutzel Trap Company. In addition to full-size traps, he makes miniature traps.

"The Hutzel traps are in demand because of the quality and uniqueness of the mini models of old antique traps," Valentine says. Prices can range from \$50 to \$200.

E-bay and shows through the North America Trap Collectors Association are good places to find traps, Valentine says.

He invites anyone interested in learning more to join his Facebook group.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Douglas Valentine (varminttrapper@yahoo.com); Facebook: Miniature Animal Trap Collectors).