

Smörgåsbord



Harold Johnson
Publisher and
Editorial
Director

**Swindles That Bloom
In The Spring**

If you should happen to get a certified letter announcing that you're the lucky winner of a fishing boat and motor — or some other valuable merchandise — don't get hooked into believing this too-good-to-be true offer is for real. It's not.

The letter will read something like this: "You've been selected to receive a Clearwater Sports Fishing Boat and Motor in the Printer's Clearing House Spring Extravaganza premium in exchange awards program. Congratulations!

"For complete details on how to claim your Clearwater Sports Fishing Boat and Motor, you must personally call our company. Ask for Don Johnson, Director of Awards. He will be expecting your call."

Now, here's the catch. When you call the listed number, Mr. Johnson will ask you to buy 75 engraved ball point pens for \$190. In appreciation for the order, you're told, the company will send you the "free" boat and motor.

The pens and a certificate for the boat and motor will be shipped COD. But there's a hitch. You'll be asked to pay a postage and handling charge of \$60 before the merchandise can be delivered. Furthermore, the pens are cheap plastic — the kind you could buy locally for no more than about \$25. An even bigger ripoff is the "free" boat and motor. It turns out to be a virtually worthless inflatable vinyl 2-person raft with a small and equally worthless electric motor.

So, here's fair warning. Don't get ripped off by this scam which, because it arrives in an impressive looking certified envelope, looks legitimate. It's nothing more than a sneaky attempt to use the mails and phone to peddle misrepresented products — one of the many swindles that bloom every spring.

In the last issue of FARM SHOW, (Vol. 9, No. 1), Phillip Pudwell, Medicine Hat, Alb., reported on his worst buy, a seed cleaner ordered from JSX Rebel Industries which he paid for but never received. Since then, the attorneys general in Minn. and Iowa have filed lawsuits against the company and people involved.

The Minnesota attorney general's office filed suit against Rebel Industries, Inc., JTI Corp. and JSX Corp. (all have the same Minneapolis address) and against Steven Olson, Litchfield; Phillip Bourasa, Minneapolis; Paul Grosz, Brooklyn Center; and James Thornberg, Minneapolis.

The defendants allegedly took orders for seed cleaners, grain cleaners and truck accessories, requiring full pre-payment. However, in most cases, the equipment was never delivered, or was in shoddy condition.

Hubert Humphrey, Minnesota Attorney General,

cites in affidavits filed with the lawsuits that Thornberg and Olson controlled similar businesses several years ago.

FARM SHOW has learned that Thornberg continues to offer seed cleaning equipment and truck accessories through two other Minnesota companies — Advenco and Telepros.

The Minnesota Attorney General's office reports that it has received more than 130 complaints against the defendants. If you've had a problem with the above-mentioned companies not delivering merchandise, phone the Minnesota Attorney General's "consumer complaint line" at 612 296-3353.

Air-Powered Car Still In Development — Lee Rogers, Ft. Meyers Beach, Fla., is still working on a production model of his kit that converts conventional internal combustion engines to "air-power". Rogers claims — and many FARM SHOW readers who've had a look at it confirm — that his unit recycles compressed air as it comes out of the cylinders, and runs it back through the engine again, providing an almost continual source of power. "It's as close as you can get to perpetual motion,"



says Rogers, who's had two cars running on his patented air system for several years and has converted other vehicles and machinery. "We recently converted a Ford 9600 tractor to air. That's one of Ford's largest models," he states. Rogers has been in consultation with all of the major U.S. auto manufacturers as well as other manufacturers throughout North America and Europe. His wife even flew to Japan to talk to interested businessmen there. He says he'd like to maintain control of the air-car conversion kit himself, however, if possible. Development of the unit has been slow because his resources are limited. Rogers has no information to send to readers at this time.

"Bitter Harvest" Update — "The phone is ringing off the hook and the letters are pouring in. Some of the letter writers tell of their own problems, many of which will bring tears to your eyes," Missouri farmer Raymond Hirst, of Unionville, told FARM SHOW just before this issue went to press. Hirst and his wife Hazel are raffling off their 476-acre farm by selling "Bitter Harvest", a book of 14 poems penned by Hazel that tells the joys and sorrows of farmers and farming. The book also contains a raffle ticket good for a chance at their farm.

"We're about a quarter of the way to our goal of selling 50,000 books. I think that we'll go over that figure as we've hardly scratched the surface," says Raymond. Plans are to conclude the raffle, which started in July of 1984, with a drawing in the Unionville town square on July 4th, 1985.

National media coverage has helped the Hirsts' efforts. The Wall Street Journal, Time magazine, ABC television's Nightline show and numerous other newspapers, magazines and radio and tv stations have also picked up on the story since it appeared in FARM SHOW (Vol. 9, No. 1, 1985).

One unique reply was from Control Data, a Minneapolis company, which sent a check for \$10,000. However, the company asked that the raffle tickets be given to local organizations. The Hirsts gave the tickets to local 4-H and FFA groups and the local school board.

The Hirsts decided to raffle off their farm as a

means to raise the money to pay off their farm debts. If they don't raise the needed money, the contest will end and the book purchase money be refunded. To comply with lottery rules, even those who don't buy the book can compete by sending the couple a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Bitter Harvest sells for \$8, plus \$2 for shipping. To order a book and enter the contest, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Raymond and Hazel Hirst, P.O. Box 176, Unionville, MO 63565.

Putting your money where your mouth is — A restaurant in Warrendale, Pennsylvania has come up with a novel idea you may want to pass on to the proprietor of your favorite eating place.

At Juliano's Family Restaurant, diners pay whatever they want for their meal — no questions asked. "Here at Juliano's, we trust in the Lord to meet our needs," reads the menu. "For this reason, there are no prices on the menu. You may place your order and, when you are finished, you will decide what the cost should be."

According to a recent report in the Wall Street Journal, owner Jerry Juliano is encouraged by the response thus far to his unique "honor system". It has transformed his 34-seat restaurant into a regional curiosity. Business is up a booming 25%.

So far, only a few people have been guilty of crass underpayment. Patrons have paid from \$4.50 to \$10 for chicken parmigiana, which listed at \$6.30 on the old menu. Juliano keeps it stashed away behind the cash register for customers interested in the accuracy of their guesswork.

Dead flowers for dead romances — In San Diego, Calif., 28 year old law student Kevin Milmoie has started the Dead Rose Co. For \$25, he'll put together a bouquet of badly wilted roses — wrapped in black tissue and tied with a black ribbon — and deliver them black, limp and ugly to the recipient. The sender — usually a jilted lover — gets the satisfaction of venting his or her troubled emotions without doing something violent or nasty.

"Green Machine" — "If there ever was a subject big enough to need its own newsletter, it's Deere tractors," says Nebraska farmer Richard Hein who has launched Green Machine, a newsletter for lovers of the long green line. The new bimonthly will deal with antique Deere tractors, toy tractors, and Deere literature and memorabilia. A year's subscription is \$6 for six bimonthly issues.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Green Machine, P.O. Box 11, Bee, Neb. 68314.

Fordson Tractor Club — "We're dedicated to the restoration, preservation and exchange of Fordson tractors," says Jack Heald, director of the Fordson Tractor Club which boasts close to 1,000 members throughout the U.S., Canada, Australia, England, Ireland and other foreign countries.

The Club distributes and collects books, parts manuals and literature, and has a parts exchange program to assist anyone attempting to restore old Fordson tractors. Heald also publishes a newsletter for club members.

He notes that the Fordson was the brainchild of auto manufacturer Henry Ford who was interested in developing a farm tractor long before he produced his first motor car.

In 1913, Ford decided to build a tractor based on the principles of the Model T, thus allowing the use of interchangeable parts. In the fall of 1915, Ford announced plans to set up a family-owned corporation apart from the Ford Motor Co. It was that firm which was to manufacture the Fordson tractor, says Heald. By October 1917, the first Fordsons rolled off the production line and, within two months, 356 tractors had been turned out. By 1928, the firm had manufactured 747,583 tractors in the U.S. and, by 1952, the number reached 1,216,990 tractors.

For more details on the club, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Fordson Tractor Club, 250 Robinson Road, Cave Jct., Oreg. 97523.