



The all-time record for cricket-spitting is 28 ft. 10 in.

Cricket-Spitting Contests Catching On Fast

Jessica Klumpp has been surprised how many people sign up for the Cricket Spitting contest she started three years ago at the Florence County Fair in Wisconsin.

"It's a really low cost event for us that provides a lot of fun," Klumpp says, noting that interest has grown every year.

"The first year we had 30 participants. This year we had 60. For us that seems pretty good," Klumpp explains.

The contest is simple. Cricket-spitting competitors are divided into three age groups. Each spitter selects a frozen cricket from a silver platter, places it on their tongue and uses their best spitting technique. There are only three rules. The first is reasonable: Keep your feet in the circle. But the other two rules make you question who would want to break them.

"You can only keep it in your mouth for 10 seconds," Klumpp says. "And it can't be chewed up. The cricket has to be intact when it hits the ground."

This year a father and daughter won gold medals in two of the categories. Shane McLain broke his old record by propelling his frozen cricket 28 ft., 10 in.

That's pretty amazing, Klumpp says, since crickets are so lightweight.



Contestants select a frozen cricket off a silver platter and spit it within 10 seconds before it thaws.

Klumpp receives requests for information from other fair coordinators and has put a list together on where to get medals and crickets (donated from a pet store) and how to organize the contest. She's willing to share information with anyone interested in starting a similar contest.

And in case you're wondering, yes, Klumpp has taken her turn in the spitting circle.

"When I took my cricket this year, the leg fell off," she says. "I was a little grossed out."

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FARM SHOW



Grenville steam carriage was built way back in 1875. It's believed to be the oldest, self-propelled passenger vehicle in the world.

1875 Steam Car Still Runs

What is believed to be the oldest, self-propelled passenger vehicle in the world, the 135-year-old Grenville steam carriage can still run down the road at up to 20 miles per hour. In 2000 it did a 90-mile run in under 8 hours at just over 6 mph.

The carriage was designed around 1875 by Robert Neville Grenville, an engineer trained on railroad locomotives. With the help of a friend and fellow engineer, he came up with a 236-cu. in. side-valve twin cylinder.

A coal-fired boiler supplies the steam. On the 90-mile run in 2000, the Grenville used 500 lbs. of coal and 200 gal. of water. At 10,000 btu's/lb., it was the equivalent of 40 gal. of gasoline.

The 4,500-lb. machine rides on three solid wood wheels. Overall length is 11 1/2 ft. with a width of 5 ft. 7 in. and a height of

ft. 3 in.

The boiler is designed to raise steam quickly and provide it steadily to the pump. It produces 120 psi and has a 35-gal. capacity. The water tank holds 50 gal.

As gas engines came into common use, the original owner of the car lost interest and it was used as a stationary engine at a cider mill. The Grenville was completely overhauled in 1936 and modifications were made to its boiler in 1970. Today it's demonstrated at various car shows and special events and on display at the National Motor Museum in the U.K.

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"It has 150 hp so it'll really go," says Pat Prom, who repowered his Deere 110 garden tractor with a Buick 6-cyl, fuel-injected engine.



150 Hp Deere Garden Tractor

Pat Prom replaced the original 10 hp engine on his Deere 110 garden tractor with a Buick 6-cyl., fuel-injected engine. "It has 150 hp so it'll really go," says Prom.

He installed a right angle gearbox behind the engine to drive the tractor's rear end.

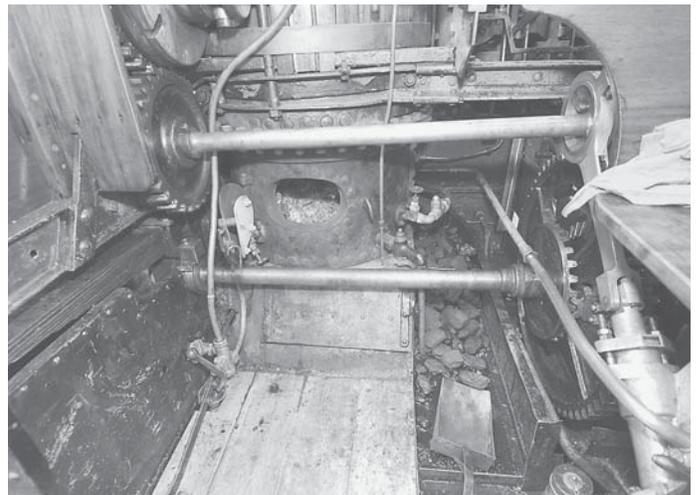
"I built it mainly for parades and for showing off," says Prom. "The big engine was a very tight fit. I had to stretch the tractor's frame 5 in. and raise the hood 4 in. I also had to move the gas tank back under the frame and move the battery back behind the tractor's rear end.

"I call it my Big Bad John. I installed a pair of straight pipes off a Harley Davidson so the engine isn't all that quiet. It actually sounds like an airplane."

The Buick alternator wouldn't fit under the hood so he installed a smaller one. He also installed a heavier 1 by 10-in. flywheel on the car's flex plate to give it more weight. And he installed 9 1/2-in. wide wheels on front and 14-in. wheels on back - twice the width of the original tires - for added traction.

"The rear wheels are off a Jacobson utility vehicle. I had to make an adapter for them to go from a 5 to 6-bolt wheel pattern. I kept the original front wheel rims but I cut and widened them 3 in. to make the new tires fit," says Prom.

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Coal-fired boiler powers steam engine.