

Editor's
Notebook



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All States Ag Parts has 7 state-of-the-art salvage yards across the country, like this one near Salem, S. Dak.

**Salvage Yard Pioneer's
Legacy Continues To Grow**

I was watching my son play in a Little League baseball game several years ago when I struck up a conversation with one of the other dads. John Dyke, it turned out, was the son of David Dyke, who virtually invented the modern tractor salvage business nearly 50 years ago. Since that accidental meeting at the ballfield, the Dykes have become good friends of my family and I've learned a lot about how the modern farm equipment salvage business developed.

"My dad started Worthington Tractor Parts in the mid 1960's as a one-man operation," says John Dyke. "At that time, salvage yards were mostly junk yards. They sold a few parts, which customers would usually pull themselves, but mostly they sold scrap metal. However, my dad got into the business to sell parts, an idea that helped launch an entire industry of salvage yards that now sell used parts, rebuilt parts, and remanufactured parts."

Worthington Tractor Parts started as a one-man operation in Minnesota and went on to become the largest tractor salvage yard in the nation. When Dyke sold the business 22 years later, it consisted of seven yards across the U.S. It's still one of the premiere farm equipment salvage operations in the country.

After dabbling in other industries for 10 years or so, David Dyke got back into the farm equipment business and, with the help of his sons John and Paul, launched All States Ag Parts, which now has seven state-of-the-art yards across the country, and a large mail order operation headquartered in Des Moines.

All States Ag Parts has millions of parts in inventory. As equipment is disassembled, each piece is assessed for resale. If a damaged part can be repaired, it is. If an engine or hydraulic system requires parts to be replaced, they are, or are taken apart to be sold as parts.

"That was something my dad introduced to the business," recalls John, who is company CEO. "He believed in reus-



David Dyke, left, with one of the thousands of trailer loads that brought equipment to his salvage yards over the years.

ing and recycling from the beginning. He started asking for the broken part when selling a new or salvaged part to a customer. He knew he might be able to fix it and recycle it back into use."

David Dyke was also the first to sell after-market new parts as part of his salvage yard business. It was part of an effort to make sure he always had what a customer needed. John says his father was the first to go outside his own trade area to buy equipment and to negotiate for fire and storm-damaged equipment from insurance companies.

How parts are sold has changed a lot since David Dyke started in the business. He was one of the first salvage operators to offer toll free 1-800 numbers. He also was an early adopter of microfiche and, later, computer technology.

John says his father, being a farmer himself, never forgot that equipment can break down just as easily after hours as during the business day. "He started keeping staff on for extended hours during busy times, especially at harvest," he says. "We still do today."

David Dyke, now battling cancer, no longer is involved directly in the salvage business. But his ideas still have a big influence on the business. Many of his former yard managers and employees now manage salvage yards for themselves or others.

"We all learned from him how to handle parts, store them and sell them," says John. "He always looked at it as adding value, but it takes skill and experience to do that efficiently. He developed many of the processes the industry uses today."

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Liberty Quotes

"It was self-serving politicians who convinced recent generations of Americans that we could all stand in a circle with our hands in each other's pockets and somehow get rich."

Paul Harvey

"Education is a weapon, whose effect depends on who holds it in his hands and at whom it is aimed."

Josef Stalin

"The study of history is a powerful antidote to contemporary arrogance."

Paul Johnson

"Socialism in general has a record of failure so blatant that only an intellectual could ignore or evade it."

Thomas Sowell

"What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The purpose of the Bill of Rights was to limit what the federal government could do. Any interpretation of a provision of the Bill of Rights as a grant of federal power is ipso facto wrong."

L. A. Powe, Jr.

"Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

Abraham Lincoln

"Man will ultimately be governed by God or by tyrants."

Benjamin Franklin

"It were not best that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion that makes horse races."

Mark Twain

"It is thus necessary that the individual should finally come to realize that his own ego is of no importance in comparison with the existence of the nation; the position of the individual is conditioned solely by the interests of the nation as a whole."

Adolf Hitler

Our Favorite New Magazine

The fastest-growing hobby in the country is garden tractor collecting. They take up less room than farm tractors and cost a lot less, points out Brandon Pfeiffer, publisher of a fun new magazine for collectors - Lawn And Garden Collector, or LAGC for short. The glossy bimonthly publication is packed full of stories on rare and beautifully restored tractors of all brands. It's fun to read, which must be why it always seems to end up at the top of my reading pile. Pfeiffer also co-owns HAPCO, Inc., which reproduces parts for vintage Deere lawn and garden tractors (www.hapcoparts.com).

A subscription to LAGC Magazine sells for \$27.95 per year. Call 812 490-3607 or go to www.lawnandgardencollector.com to subscribe. You can also read a free sample issue at the website.

You should also check out the company's other magazine, Vintage Tractor Digest, which focuses on all types of equipment from the 1800's up through 1985. A subscription for 6 issues costs \$22.95. Call 812 490-3607 or go to www.vintagetractordigest.com.



**Reader Questions Story
About High-Mileage Dodge**

Shortly after our last issue came out, I got a thoughtful letter from a mechanical engineer in Georgia who basically said he thought we'd been scammed into running the story in our last issue on a 10-year-old Dodge pickup with 1.7 million miles on it. He pointed out that at an average speed of 50 mph, Howard Clayton would have had to drive 9.3 hrs. a day for 365 days a year to reach the 1.7 million mile total. That would have left no time for servicing equipment or for bad weather, not to mention rest for the driver.

The math was hard to argue with so we contacted Clayton for his side of the story.

For one thing, he notes, his truck is an early edition 2001 model that he put into service April 1, 2000, so he's been driving it for 11 years. Another factor is that he delivers empty trailers for a manufacturer and comes back without a load. "I travel mostly through western states with high speed limits," says Clayton. "I travel 75 mph on my returns and average 64 mph and 11 hours of driving a day on my trips out."

Divide 850,000 miles by 64 mph, 11 hours per day and 11 years of use, and trips under load would eat up approximately 109 days a year. Do those return trips at 70 mph (and higher) for 11 hours per day (conservatively) over 11 years, and another 100 days are gone from the year. While 209 days of travel a year are possible, it's still a lot of time away from home for a retiree. Clayton says his wife doesn't mind because she travels with him.

"We'll be on the road for two months at a time," says Clayton. "We'll stop in Las Vegas for a night or somewhere else to see the sites for a few days."

Our letter writing critic also questioned Clayton and his mechanic's claim that no major work had been done on the high-mileage Dodge. He pointed out that in his job as a diesel mechanic on over-the-road semis, the longest interval he had ever seen between major overhauls was 400,000 miles.

However, Clayton's mechanic, who sees the truck every 10,000 miles, is sticking with his story. He says Clayton takes extremely good care of the truck, using the highest quality synthetic fluids and filtering systems.

When questioned about the unusual extended life of his engine, Clayton admitted that his run of unusual luck ran out shortly after our story came out 2 months ago.

"The engine had a blown head gasket," says Clayton. "We did a complete overhaul, and found two broken piston rings. My mechanic, Forest, said he had never seen broken rings that stayed in place like those did."

During the overhaul Clayton replaced the pistons, cranks and bearings. While he doesn't know if the rebuilt engine will make another million miles, he plans to give it a try.

Ole goes into the doctor's office and says that his body hurts wherever he touches it.

"Impossible," says the doctor. "Show me."

Ole takes his finger and pushes his elbow and screams in agony. He pushes his knee and screams, pushes his ankle and screams.

The doctor says, "It's not as bad as you think."

"No?" Ole inquires.

"Your finger is broken," the doctor says.

Lena was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar.

During her struggle the phone rang, so she asked her six-year-old daughter to answer the phone.

"My mommy can't come tew da phone tew talk tew yew right now. She's hitting the bottle," the daughter explained to the caller.

Ole walked into a bar and, after staring for some time at the only woman seated at the bar, walked over to her and kissed her.

She jumped up and slapped him silly. He immediately apologized and explained, "I'm sorry. I tought yew vere my wife. Yew look exactly like her!"

"Why you worthless, insufferable, wretched, no good bum!" she screamed.

"Funny," he muttered, "Yew even sound exactly like her."

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend.

The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

"Reverend," said the young man, "I'm so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip."

The minister chuckled, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business!"