



ILICA

NEWS

Land Improvement Contractors Of America • Illinois Chapter

September/October 2003

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ILLINOIS MEMBERS ATTEND NATIONAL LICA SUMMER MEETING

The National LICA Summer Meeting was held in Niagara Falls, New York. There was a good turn out of fellow LICA Members and great

representation from the Illinois Chapter. Pre-tours were fantastic and meetings and educational sessions were informative and educational.

At the Region IV Meeting, Barney Flueger, Region IV Vice President resigned his position and Region IV then appointed Iowa LICA Member Doug Egeland to finish the term. Doug will now represent the states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin at all National Meetings. We thank Doug for stepping in and we're sure he'll do a great job for our Region.

There will be another LICA raffle this year and the winner will take home a brand new Chevy Pickup. Tickets will only be \$50 this year in hopes of selling more. Details and list of all prizes will be out soon!

See the next issue of the LICA News for LICA Committee Reports and information on the Board Meeting.



One of LICA pre-tours was to "The Falls".

WE'VE MOVED . . .

Effective immediately our new address is:

Illinois Land Improvement Contractors

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by Dwight Dunbar,
Consultant to ILICA

In these tight budget times, the appointment of a \$120,000 assistant to the governor seems just a little extravagant to me. Never the less, the Governor did just that yesterday; naming a former Pawnee schoolteacher as the Education Assistant to the Governor.

STATE FAIR LESSONS

Well the State Fair is behind us, and the major lesson we've learned is that all past year attendance figures were probably grossly inflated. The Blagojevich administration will level with the public in reporting on this year's fair. The other apparent lesson is not so readily apparent making things happen later in the day may boost fair attendance. That's likely to require extensive capital investment in lighting and such to brighten the grounds for nighttime activities. The odds of that being approved are 50-50 at best.

NEW FACES?

Larry Woolard (D-59, Carterville) resigned his Senate seat to accept a high level job with the former DCCA agency. Gary Forby (D-Benton) was named to fill the remainder of Woolard's term. John Bradley, Williamson County attorney was named to replace Forby.

Senator Pate Phillip retired from that Chamber at the end of Spring Session. Ray Soden was named to complete that term, but is not interested in seeking the seat permanently. Carol Pankau (R-Roselle) recently announced she would be a candidate for the 23rd Senate District seat.

Mary Kay O'Brien (D-75, Watseka) has already announced she will try for an appellate judgeship. The Republicans believe they have a chance to win the 75th seat in next year's election with their candidate Morris Police Chief Doug Hayse.

The Third House District is shaping-up as a Latino battle between incumbent Bill Delgado and the Berrios powerhouse backed Jose Alvarez. However, Delgado is one of the hardest working legislators I know.



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I'll try to keep you updated as more races develop.

ON SAFARI

I will let everyone know now that I am planning to be out of the country for about 12 days in mid October. I'll be on safari in East Africa, returning after early 30 years when we lived there. I hope they don't call a special session for October.

"Every man owes part of his time and money to the industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is doing good." —

President, Theodore Roosevelt, 1908



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Where has the summer gone? Seems like only yesterday we were working in front of the planters and soon we will be following the combines. The time goes faster every year.

The picnic and golf outing was very enjoyable and the rain held off until we were inside for lunch and the business meeting. Thanks again to Steve and the sponsors for a great day.

The summer national meeting was great. Niagara Falls is a beautiful place. I did not go on the pre tours but heard good things about them. Hazel and my mother and myself toured the falls area before the convention, and we did attend the dinner cruise and the skylon tower dinner, both were very good. The educational/informational meetings were very good and well attended, as were the committee meetings and the business meetings.

The Illinois group at the summer meeting looked into and decided to go ahead with the web site company that New Jersey is using. The site looks very good and will be a very good asset to the association if we use it.

Here at home the Certification committee met mid August to hammer out final questions for a testing system to try and have it up and running by the first of the year, no

pressure Dave. The show committee is trying to decide on a show site, and we will have that set by the November board meeting. The insurance committee is looking into the insurance program Iowa is in. They are having great luck with it. The membership committee is running a campaign until the 2004 convention, and we need to find some new members! If you have any ideas to help get and retain members please contact me or bring them up at a board meeting.

Work safe and enjoy the warm weather while it lasts.

Stuart Anderson
President

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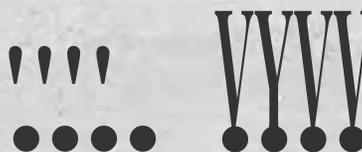
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The Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association Newsletter is the official publication of the Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association, Inc., 801 N O'Bannon, P.O. Box 101, Raymond, IL 62560-0101, telephone 217/229-4224.

Subscription price \$1.00 per year, issued bimonthly: January-February; March-April; May-June; July-August; September-October; November-December.



**ILICA BOARD MEETING
WILL BE HELD AT
NORTHFIELD INN, SUITES &
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SEPTEMBER 6, 2003**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS
10:00 AM - Education
1:00 PM - Membership
1:00 - Insurance
2:00 PM - Convention
2:30 PM - Rodeo

Upcoming Meetings -

ILICA BOARD MEETINGS

September 6, 2003
November 1, 2003

2004 Annual Convention
January 15-17, 2004
Brandywine Holiday Inn
Peoria

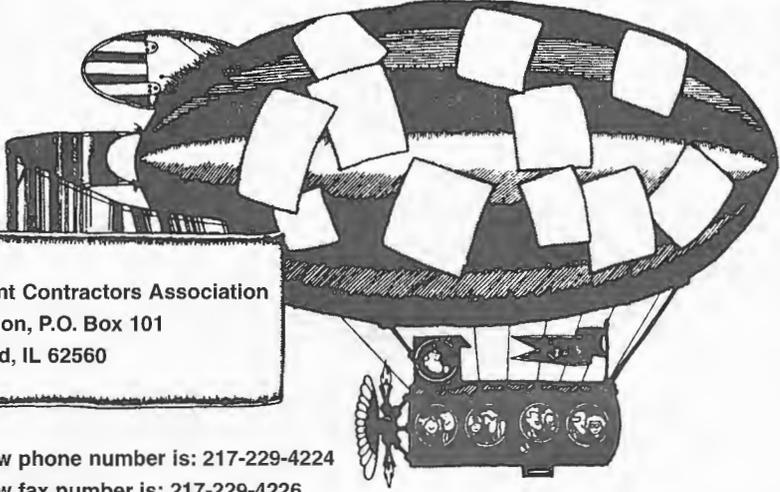
LICA MEETINGS

July 15-19, 2003
Niagra Falls, New York
Holiday Inn Select

February 17-20, 2004
Lexington, Kentucky

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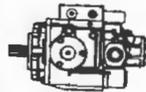


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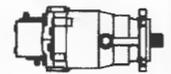
PLEASE MAKE NOTE.

A New York boy was being led through the swamps by his cousin when he asked, "Is it true that an alligator won't attack you if you carry a flashlight?"

The cousin smirked and replied, "Well cousin, that really depends on how fast you carry the old flashlight."



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FROM THE U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Putting an End to Runaway Health Care Lawsuits –

States across the country are experiencing a health care liability crisis. Due to multi-million dollar jury awards and large settlements, medical liability insurance premiums are skyrocketing. As insurance becomes unaffordable or unavailable, increasing numbers of physicians, hospitals, and other providers are curtailing their services, relocating to other states, or simply ceasing to offer medical services altogether.

Unchecked, the current crisis in malpractice coverage will have a serious and detrimental long-term impact on the economic development of our communities. Without access to practicing physicians and quality medical facilities, communities cannot attract businesses to their area. The fear of being sued drives up costs for malpractice insurance and risk management, including treatments or tests done "just to be safe," and then those costs are passed on to employers and employees in the form of higher health care costs.

With this in mind, the U.S. Chamber strongly supports H.R. 5, the "Help Efficient, Accessible, Low-Cost, Timely Health Care (HEALTH) Act of 2003." This legislation will take significant steps toward stabilizing the medical liability system by both safeguarding patients' access to care and helping to address skyrocketing health care costs.

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NEW TAX CHANGES

Contractors need to look at the new tax changes for businesses:

Additional First Year Depreciation Increased from 30% to 50%. In 2002, in order to stimulate purchases of business assets other than real estate, Congress enacted a new first year 30% additional depreciation deduction for the cost of "qualified property" purchased after September 20, 2001 and before September 11, 2004. This additional depreciation deduction is allowed for **both regular and alternative minimum tax purposes**. Under the 2003 Act, this first-year depreciation deduction is increased to 50% for qualifying property **acquired after May 5, 2003 and before January 1, 2005**. However, even if you acquire the property after May 5, 2003, it will not qualify for the 50% deduction if the purchase is pursuant to a **binding written contract** in effect before May 6, 2003 (Although it may qualify for the 30% bonus depreciation). This 50% bonus depreciation deduction is instead of, not in addition to, the 30% depreciation. **Planning Alert!** To qualify for this deduction, you must satisfy various requirements summarized below.

Qualifying Property. Like the 30% deduction, the 50% deduction generally applies only to MACRS property that has a MACRS depreciation period of 20 years or less. Most tangible personal property (e.g., machinery, equipment, cars, trucks, etc.) will qualify as well as certain types of depreciable real property (e.g., sidewalks, roads, fences, farm buildings, etc.).

"Used Property" Generally Does not Qualify for the Bonus Depreciation. You will qualify for the additional 50% depreciation deduction **only if** your business is the first taxpayer to actually use the qualified property.

Additional First Year Depreciation on Passenger Automobiles. The maximum annual depreciation for passenger automobiles used in a business is capped at certain dollar amounts. For example, for 2001 and 2002, the maximum first year depreciation on a business automobile was originally capped at \$3,060. Under last year's tax legislation, for passenger automobiles purchased after **September 10, 2001**, the first year depreciation cap was increased by \$4,600 if the additional 30% depreciation was taken for the auto. Consequently, the maximum first year depreciation on a qualifying passenger automobile placed in service after September 10, 2001 was \$7,660 (\$3,060 plus \$4,600). Under the 2003 Act, for business automobiles **purchased after May 5, 2003 and before January 2, 2005**, and for which the 50% bonus depreciation is taken, the first-year depreciation limitation is increased by \$7,650 (rather than \$4,600).

§179 Deduction Increased to \$100,000. For 2002, you could take an up-front deduction of up to \$24,000 for the cost of qualifying §179 property (e.g., machinery, equipment, furniture, fixtures, etc.). This deduction was phased out dollar for dollar to the extent the total purchases of §179 property exceeded \$200,000 for the year. **For tax years beginning in 2003, 2004, and 2005**, the 2003 Act increases the §179 deduction to \$100,000 (and the phase-

out level begins at \$400,000, not \$200,000). The deduction will be reduced to \$25,000 for tax years beginning after 2005.

25% of Corporate Estimated Tax Payments for September Delayed. The 2003 Act provides that 25% of any corporate estimated tax payments that would otherwise be due in September 2003 will not be due until October 1, 2003. The purpose of this provision is to shift revenue from the fiscal year of the federal government ending September 30, 2003 to the year ending September 30, 2004.

TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER COST PAYMENTS

NRCS has released the payment information they have developed for the Technical Service Provider Program. You can access it by going to: <http://www.tsp-rite.nrcs.usda.gov/step1.asp>

Then click on the state, county, land use and conservation practice you are interested in. Then enter the number of units of measure for the practice you intend to install. (The units of measure are shown, such as feet, acres, etc. for each practice.) (waterways are in acres).

You will then be able to read under "Application" the maximum payment available for each step, i.e. design, layout and checkout for the number of units of measure you have entered.

Contractors should make a practice run at checking out these cost figures.

A first grade teacher, trying to teach the concept of distance to her pupils, asked them whether they lived close to the school, or far away. The first to answer was an overly energetic little boy with red hair and ample freckles in the back row.

"I think I must live pretty close, because every afternoon when I get home my Mom says, 'Good grief, are you home already?'"

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In Memorium

Max Norris

Polo – Max H. Norris, 72 of Polo died Friday, August 1, 2003 at St. Anthony Medical Center, Rockford. He owned and operated N & L Construction Co., Polo for 28 years and Max Norris Insurance Co., Dixon for 12 years.

Max was a member, friend and Past President of ILICA and our sympathy goes out to his family and friends.

B. Marie Litwiller

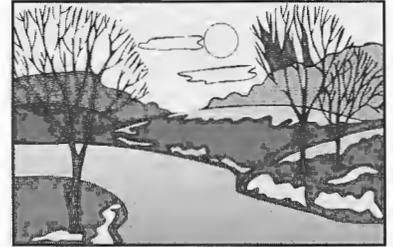
Hopedale – B. Marie Litwiller 92, of Hopedale died on Monday, August 11, 2003 at Hopedale Nursing Home. She was the mother of Wayne Litwiller and our sympathy is extended to Wayne and his family.

If it weren't for obstacles in life,
we'd never know whether we want
something or merely think we do.

DROUGHT MITIGATION AND WATER CONSERVATION FUNDS RELEASED

USDA has announced that 17 states will receive \$53 million to help farmers and ranchers implement technologies and practices to conserve water and mitigate the long-term impacts of drought. The number of states to receive funding for this national program is up this year from eight states in FY'03. This money is available from NRCS through the Ground and Surface Water Conservation provision of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill. States that receive these funds will provide cost-share and incentive payments to conservation activities, including irrigation improvements, conversion to less water intensive crops and dryland farming.

The USDA press release containing a state-by-state list of 2003 GSWC funding can be viewed at <http://www.usda.gov/news/releases/2003/05/0148.htm>.



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FY '04 APPROPRIATIONS ON THE MOVE

Both the House and Senate continue to move with relative speed in setting fiscal year 2004 spending levels for major private and public lands conservation programs. On July 14, the House approved a \$74.7 billion funding measure for the Department of Agriculture, including a little more than \$1 billion for NRCS discretionary spending. Much of the bill — about \$57 billion — is mandatory spending with about \$1.5 billion for the Farm Bill conservation programs, including \$975 million for EQIP. The \$1.5 billion does not include estimated outlays for CRP, which will add close to another \$2 billion to the total. The House bill prohibits spending any funds on the Conservation Security Program. The Senate Appropriations Committee adopted its \$77.5 billion agriculture spending bill on July 17 with floor action still to come. Discretionary spending for NRCS conservation programs is a little under \$1 billion, with mandatory Farm Bill conservation funding of about \$1.5 billion, not including the CRP and CSP. The Senate bill does not place limits on the CSP.

The House adopted a \$19.6 billion Interior Department funding bill, which includes Forest Service spending, on July 17. The Senate Appropriations Committee adopted a similar \$19.6 billion measure on July 10. In addition to the Forest Service, the Interior appropriations bill funds the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service. Both House and Senate Interior bills provide increases in key Forest Service wildfire suppression programs, but cut funding for similar initiatives in the Bureau of Land Management.

On Monday, July 21, the House Appropriations Committee adopted a 2004 funding package for the Environmental Protection Agency. The \$8 billion EPA measure is part of a larger appropriations bill that also funds the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development. The committee bill increases state grants by \$37 million, providing \$1.2 billion for state environmental program grants, which fund Section 319. It also includes \$1.2 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, a decrease of \$150 million from the current level, and \$850 million for the Drinking Water SRF, the same as '03.

Please see NACDnet.org for additional details and status of these funding bills. So far the actions taken are reasonably close to the NACD Board's funding recommendations that have been transmitted in various statements and letters to the respective appropriations committees.

WILDFIRE LEGISLATION ON FAST TRACK IN SENATE

The Senate Agriculture Committee adopted its version of a "Healthy Forests" bill, H.R. 1904, on Thursday, July 24. An earlier jurisdictional dispute with the Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee, which generally oversees wildfire issues, was settled when the Senate parliamentarian referred the draft of the Agriculture Committee in May. The bill, introduced by Senators Crapo (R-ID) and Lincoln (D-AR), chair and ranking member of the forestry subcommittee, would authorize expedited approval of forest thinning and cleanup projects on 20 million acres of federal lands, provide grants for biomass energy production from the debris produced by the projects, authorize test treatments for insect and disease infestations and, like its House counterpart, establish a Healthy Forest Reserve Program to protect up to two million acres annually of

threatened forest ecosystems. The House version of HR 1904, passed on May 20, caps the HFRP at one million acres.

Both the Agriculture and ENR Committees held hearings on the wildfire issue on Tuesday, July 22, and heard from a number of expert witnesses, including Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, Montana Governor Judy Martz, Agriculture Under Secretary Mark Rey and Interior Assistant Secretary Rebecca Watson. In his remarks to the ENR Committee, Rey told members that Congress needs to quickly pass a broad overhaul of natural forest management policies to reduce the threat of wildfires next year.

Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) noted that a current head count would fall at least four votes short of the 60 needed in the Senate to pass the House bill. Similar efforts by the administration in 2003 to fast-track a "Healthy Forests" bill failed to bring about an agreement.



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FEDERAL REGULATIONS WEBSITE

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HOW IMPORTANT ARE YOUR HANDS?

Let's take a minute here to talk about your hands. How would your life be affected if you lost a finger? Not Much? A lot? How about if you lost your thumb? No problem you say? Try using any tool effectively without your thumb. What if you lost a hand? Or both hands?

I know of one person's grandfather who lost both of his hands and forearms in a farming accident when he was a kid. While he was a remarkable and successful man, there were many things that people with two good hands take for granted that took him years to master. Like eating with a fork, (he refused to use prosthetics), or dealing from a deck of cards. What would you do if you lost your hands? Think about it. It probably would not be what you are doing now.

All accidents just don't happen, they are caused by not paying attention and by not thinking of what can go wrong before it goes wrong. I am sure that you can think of instances in your own life where you or somebody you know or love was injured because of these simple reasons. The grandfather who lost his hands as a young boy did so because he didn't shut down the threshing machine before he tried to unclog it. You may be shaking your head and think that you would never do such a thing. But how many times a **DAY** do you do something that could result in an accident to yourself or those around you? Someone, somewhere suffers an injury every single day, every single hour and probably every single minute.

The construction trades and manufacturing industries are especially prone to hand injuries. There are rough materials to handle, objects to be stacked and stored, tools to be utilized, equipment to be operated. All pose special risks to hand injury. To come up with a list on how to protect your hands in each and every situation would be impossible. The list would be never ending. Each new advance in technology also advances the opportunities for people to damage their hands and they will, be it by operating a 100-ton press or testing a circuit board.

People usually approach their tasks "at hand" in one of two ways: they either don't think of safety at all before they jump into the task or they think that they "won't or can't" hurt themselves. Wrong. They will. If not today then most likely sooner than later. Do the smart thing: Before you begin a project, or take up a tool, or start a piece of equipment, think of the accident that **CAN** and **WILL** happen unless you make sure that it doesn't. Apply the "what if" criteria of safety to what you are doing: What if...the knife slips while I am stripping this wire? Will I cut myself? What if...the screw driver slips off this stubborn screw I'm trying to remove from this box in my hand? Will I punch the screwdriver through the palm of my hand? What if...that pallet of material falls off the fork lift while I am holding this gate open? Will my hands be crushed?

Keep your mind on your hands. "Hand Safety Sense" is just plain ol' "Common Sense"...use yours BEFORE you lose yours. If your coworker seems to be lacking in common sense then use yours BEFORE they lose theirs.

Keep your mind on safety first and your hands will continue to provide you with a way in which to achieve your personal goals.

ROADLESS RULE DUMPED AGAIN

A US District Court on Monday found that a Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Rule imposed during the Clinton Administration violates both the Wilderness Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In his opinion, Judge Clarence Brimmer indicated that the Forest Service's designation of 58.5 million acres as roadless areas amounted to designating 'wilderness areas' in violation of the "clear and unambiguous process established by the Wilderness Act for such designation..."

The roadless rule was the object of contentious debate even long before it became final in January 2001. As a result of a lawsuit, in May 2001 the U. S. District Court for the District of Idaho enjoined the rule from being implemented. A December 2002 ruling by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, however, lifted that injunction.

PANEL LOOKS AT AML PROGRAM

The House Resources subcommittee on energy and mineral resources on July 24 began its review of the abandoned mine lands (AML) program, which is up for re-authorization next year. The AML program is a key component of the Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act of 1977 and its' authorization expires at the end of September 2004. Issues that will need to be addressed in the re-authorization include fees on coal production to pay for reclamation of abandoned mines and mine worker health issues.

Consistent with NACD policy, the association will submit a statement in support of reauthorizing the bill to include language ensuring that the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Fund continues to fund state reclamation efforts at levels commensurate with annual fee collections.



NRCS ANNOUNCES FUNDS AND CONTRACTS FOR WHIP AND WRP

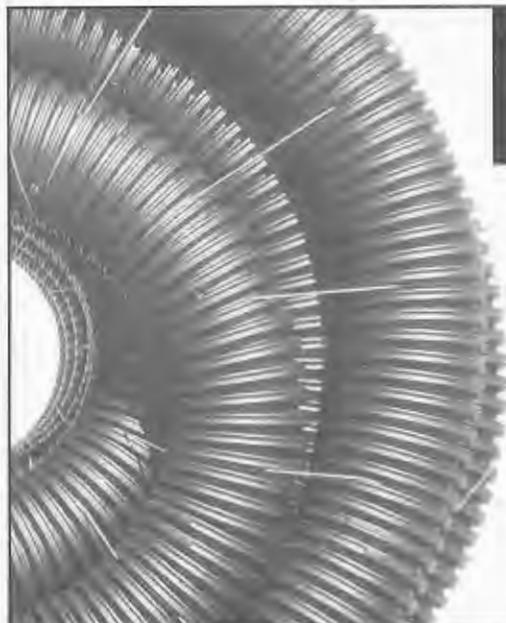
Champaign, IL - State Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Bill Gradle announced funding levels for 2003 WHIP and WRP program recipients in Illinois. (NRCS) has finalized applications and agreements that will put federal funds on the ground in the form of conservation and resource protection. 2003 funding for two programs, the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) total \$15.1 million, which will fund projects on 13,183 acres in Illinois.

2003 funds for WHIP totaled \$315,000 for 51 contracts that will improve habitat for wildlife on 3,343 acres in 30 Illinois counties. With WHIP, private landowners plant trees, native grasses, and restore prairies. WHIP funds also support forest stand improvements, wetland restoration projects, and creation of shallow water areas - all proven techniques that sustain wildlife populations, endangered species, and increase biodiversity. With 2003 funds only 22% of applications submitted will receive cost-share assistance. "NRCS received 228 applications this year," Gradle said, "which shows how much interest there is in protecting wildlife areas and improving the environment." Applications not funded will remain on the list for next year.

2003 funds for WRP totaled \$14.8 million and will create or restore wetland habitats on 9,840 acres in 18 Illinois counties. Areas to be covered include land along the Cache, Embarrass, and Wabash Rivers as well as other areas across the state. Of the 28 WRP contracts to be funded, all but one are permanent easements - the wetlands created with these WRP funds will remain wetlands forever. According to Gradle, "Both WHIP and WRP are popular programs that Illinois landowners have

used well in the past. These federal dollars represent a wise and long-term investment in Illinois' natural resource base and in our future." For more information on NRCS conservation programs, visit www.il.nrcs.usda.gov

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MORE ON CELL PHONES

"Nothing on a cell phone could be more important than what's happening in front of your car." That's the advice being given by drivers who crashed while talking on a cell phone. The call was not nearly as important as the life that was lost, the injuries that were suffered, or even the vehicle that was lost - yet the driver took his eyes off the road to answer it.

More than 115 million Americans bought cell phones in the last 10 years, and 80 percent say they talk while driving. No statistics exist on how many accidents are caused by these drivers. One study by The New England Journal of Medicine shows that their collision rates are about the same as for drunk drivers.

Auto insurers are considering a surcharge for drivers who use cell phones. Legislators in many states have passed or are working on laws that limit cell phone use. Other countries have addressed that problem. Hands-free devices are required in Italy, Brazil, and Denmark. Portugal, Israel and Japan ban all cell phone use by drivers.

Recently Verizon Wireless said it would support laws requiring hands-free devices like headphones, earpieces, and voice-activated dialers. In the meantime, drivers should be more than cautious.

Never answer a cell phone while in traffic, on dangerous roads, or when driving at high speeds. Keep your eyes forward.

Pull off the road to make a call or to speak with a caller who is doing more than just delivering a short message. Actual studies show that it is talking, not dialing, that is involved in most accidents.

An activist quoted in Newsweek says it is not where your hands are, it's where your head is that's important. Keep your hands on the wheel and your mind on the road!



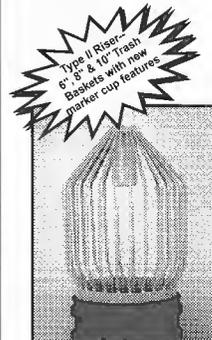
UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS

The Office of the State Fire Marshal proposed a new Part titled "Petroleum Equipment Contractor Licensing" (41 Ill Adm Code 172) to implement Public Act 92-618, which replaces the Gasoline Storage Act concerning petroleum equipment contractor licensure. The rules require all contractors who perform underground storage tank (UST) work in Illinois to hold a license after 9/15/03 for UST installation, repair, decommissioning, relining, tank and pipe tightness testing, cathodic protection system testing, and other work categories that may be established by the State Fire Marshal. Certain contractor employees must be certified, and certain contractor employees and subcontractors must comply with federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) worksite standards. Topics covered include definitions, licensure requirements, OSHA identification cards, fees, out-of-State contractors, reporting requirements, penalties, and appeal procedures. Small businesses that perform UST activities will be affected by this rulemaking.

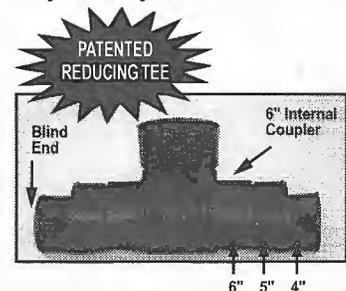
Questions/requests for copies/comments until 9/20/03: Shelly Bradley, OSFM, 1035 Stevenson Dr., Springfield, IL 62703-4259, 217/785-1020.

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The Ladies Committee is raffling off a beautiful hand made wall hanging.

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For more information, contact

Paul Sandefur, Kentuck

Executive Director at: 270-274-3403 or
Debbie Dickens, LICA Executive Director
at: 573-634-3001

TOGETHER WE CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS

RIGHT NOW, legislation is pending in Congress that will take profit out of your pocket - unless it is blocked.

RIGHT NOW, environmental organizations are meeting across the country, shaping policies that directly affect your business; LICA is in the thick of all of it.

RIGHT NOW, regulations are being written that will take business away from you - unless they are changed.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Congress listens to numbers. The rule makers are moved by expertise. Environmental policy must include the practical experience of people who do the work. LICA's power in Congress, its expertise and its experience come from its members. Won't you become a part of this dynamic organization that is at work daily on your behalf?

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Hertz also makes sure you're enjoying special worldwide savings. As an Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association member, you'll receive discounts off your rentals in the U.S. and around the world. They key to your savings is your **Hertz Discount CDP# 1467723**. Just mention this number when making your reservation. Then present your membership card of Hertz Member Discount Card at the time of rental. It's that easy!

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LICA POSITIONS

CAPITAL GAINS TAX REDUCTION

LICA POSITION: LICA supports legislation that lowers capital gain tax rates and provides incentives for long-term investment.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS: The capital gains tax is levied on all capital gains, including those attributed to inflation. It subjects income to multiple levels of taxation, deprives individuals and companies of money to invest, and deters property owners from selling assets. Equity investors in the construction industry - often employees, friends, and family - are risk takers, building businesses and creating jobs. This activity must be encouraged to produce long-term economic growth. Lower capital gains taxes will provide incentive for construction companies to innovate, grow, create jobs, and increase wages.

OPPOSITION: Opponents of capital gains tax cut say that it is a tax cut for the wealthy.

LICA RESPONSE: Congressional studies have found that more than 60% of taxpayers with capital gains had income under \$50,000. Also, half of all US families own assets such as homes, stocks, bonds, business, and real estate that can generate capital gains tax.

PROTECT CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF PRIVATE LAND OWNERS

LICA POSITION: Private property owners are constantly being deprived of their rights by never ending governmental regulation which effectively takes private property without any compensation. Private property owners are capable of developing land while simultaneously protecting sensitive environmental areas without government interference.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS: Governmental regulations slow down any use of private property for development or commercial use, thereby costing jobs, and slowing down the economy, effectively denying an owner the use of their property.

OPPOSITION: People who propose governmental control of private property believe property owners are not capable of protecting the environment from harmful use. **PROPERTY OWNERS ARE THE VERY BEST STEWARDS OF THE LAND.** And it is in their best interest to protect the land and use it to the best advantage.

LICA RESPONSE: LICA strongly believes in Private Property protection as guaranteed by the constitution. When government takes land through regulation or otherwise, the landowner should be fully compensated in a timely manner.

PERMANENT ELIMINATION OF DEATH TAX

LICA POSITION: LICA **supports** federal legislation to eliminate the Death Tax permanently on family-owned business, family-owned farms and their employees. The Death Tax is the most confiscatory of all taxes. The Death

Tax is unfair, anti-family, anti-business, and anti-jobs.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS: The federal estate tax is one of the biggest obstacles to family business continuity and growth because of the astronomical rate of 55% federal tax, in addition to state estate taxes, as well as income, business, and capital gains already paid over the individual's lifetime. The thousands of dollars spent on estate planning to minimize their tax burden could be better spent on business growth, job creation, and equipment purchases.

OPPOSITION: Opponents of estate tax relief say that it is a tax cut for the wealthy.

LICA RESPONSE: Because of their significant investment in heavy construction equipment, family-owned construction companies are hit very hard by the Death Tax. Paying the Death Tax often requires a liquidation of company assets, which eliminates jobs and opportunities for business growth, while devastating communities that rely on these businesses. **PERMANENT REPEAL OF THE DEATH TAX** enjoys broad bipartisan support in Congress and the business community in America.

REDUCE THE NATION'S DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN ENERGY BY TAPPING DOMESTIC SOURCES OF OIL SUCH AS THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (ANWR)

LICA POSITION: LICA supports opening the coastal plain of ANWR for oil exploration and drilling, as well as expanding the use of gasohol.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS: America's increasing dependence on foreign oil, coupled with the increasing cost of oil, weakens our ability to compete globally. Instability in the Middle East further illustrates the need for expanded domestic oil exploration and production. Of ANWR's 18.3 million acres, less than one-tenth of the northern most 1.5 million acres would be affected by the development of the plain. Protecting valuable natural resources can be equitably balanced with the need to provide America's economic viability. Expanded use of gasohol would open additional marketing opportunities for farmers.

OPPOSITION: Environmentalists believe that if the coastal plain of ANWR is opened for oil exploration, the habitat and migration of native species will be harmed.

LICA RESPONSE: Oil drilling in ANWR's arctic plain will have little impact on the remaining 16.8 million acres of land and wildlife under Federal protection. Proof can be seen in other oil drilling areas of Alaska. Animal numbers, habitat and migration are not adversely affected. Increased use of gasohol would further reduce dependence on foreign oil.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

LICA POSITION: LICA **supports** legislation seeking health care reform which does not include increased Federal mandates, bureaucracy and litigation. LICA believes that competitive, market based forces and not governmental dictates will drive health care costs down

and allow greater access to healthcare. The government must seek ways to control litigation in the health care services. HR 660 would provide the vehicle to permit small businesses to obtain affordable health care insurance for their employees.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS: In recent years, Congress has considered proposals calling for broad health care consumer protection and quality standards. Unfortunately, the "Patients Bill of Rights" would rely heavily on employer mandates, new Federal bureaucracy and the threat of litigation to achieve these goals. Of particular concern is a provision that would expand malpractice liability to health care plans and employers. Proponents argue that employers are shielded from lawsuits by this legislation, but the language is murky at best, and does not fully exempt employers from lawsuits. A company could be sued simply for selecting a health care plan. The only way an employer might protect himself is to not provide any health care benefits.

OPPOSITION: Proponents claim Federal legislation is needed to protect patients from abuse at the hands of cost-conscious Health Maintenance Organizations.

LICA RESPONSE: Both contractors and employees want a health care system that delivers affordable, quality care. This cannot be achieved by increased Federal mandates, more bureaucracy and litigation.

OPPOSE EXPANSION OF THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

LICA POSITION: LICA **opposes** any attempt to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to cover non-health related absences or to include employers with fewer than 50 employees.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS: Expansion of the FMLA could create new and substantial administrative and staffing burdens on small business. The FMLA now requires firms employing 50 or more to grant up to three months off without pay to their employees for the birth or adoption of a child, care of a sick relative or personal health conditions. The regulations cover more than 300 pages, and are very complex. Among the many deficiencies of the FMLA is the definition of "serious health condition" (which is vague and confusing) and the intermittent leave provisions which are complicated and difficult to administer. This places an especially heavy time and expense burden on small companies. Small business cannot afford consultants and attorneys to help them comply with all these rules and regulations.

OPPOSITION: Those who favor FMLA cannot possibly understand the severe burden this places on small business. They also want the act expanded to allow time off for "parent-teacher conferences."

LICA RESPONSE: To attract and retain a competent work force in today's competitive work environment, business must respond to employee needs for health, family and school - related activities. Employers must deal with crisis on a flexible basis. There simply is no need for the Federal Government to mandate company leave policy in nearly every workplace in America.

CARE (CONSERVATION AND REINVESTMENT ACT)

We strongly **oppose** this act. Our nation is founded on the principle of Private Property Ownership and history has shown that in countries where this is not the case, private citizens lose their "stake" in the country. The Federal government already owns over 30% of the land and is doing a poor job of managing that.

The bill has no protection against condemnation of private land. It allows grant money to environmental and animal rights organizations. It allows the government to grab land for nearly any reason if land or water is suitable or capable of being made suitable for feeding, resting or breeding by wildlife. Our taxpayer funds can be used to meet the perceived needs for wildlife and the habitats on which wildlife depend.

Small boy to father: "Here's my report card along with one of yours I found in the attic."

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GABBING WITH THE GALS...



Here I am a-sittin' in my "new" office with my just-fixed typewriter and my wee brain searching for something to say to all of you out there. It seems that my days of going downstairs to my office are gone forever; since the knee surgery is a no-no, stairs, that is. When you can remember how these same legs used to fly down those same stairs and thought nothing of it; now the medical profession thinks nothing of it, too. They have moved part of my equipment upstairs and one of these days it will be organized just like it was in the basement. You know that old saw about how the top of your desk looks littered and the owner says not to bother that they know just where everything is - well, it is very true. It may have looked cluttered but I knew just where this or that was and now it is lost to me as everything has been moved around. Oh, well, one of these days I will be treated to something that has been lost when all of the papers get a good going-through. It is fun to find something that you haven't seen for some time and something that is important to keep.

Speaking of keeping, we have changed one routine. It used to be look over the mail and put aside what you don't have time to go through for another time. Of course "another time" did not show itself and so things piled up. Now we go through the mail and discard most of it as never going to be used. Sure has cut down on the items piling up. In today's world when a catalog or magazine gets your name they in turn sell their mailing lists to others and before you know it the whole world seems to be in your mail box. They don't give up either, because places that orders have never been placed just keep on sending their catalogs; am hoping a lot of them will become discouraged and cease and desist. It would cost too much in stamps to write to all of them and ask to be removed from their list. This year there will be more ordering for gifts since by mobility is not improving, so there are good in some of these things.

We sure hated to miss the picnic this year; this gal was in the hospital and the rest were otherwise occupied - probably visiting me. We did get to go to the Day Reunion and the weather was perfect; we sat outside in the shade and had a very good time, as well as keeping up the genealogy charts. Our host for this event kept saying he was going to change the name of it if more Days didn't come, so this year we had seven instead of the same two. At our age we don't know who we won't see the next year. At Easter this year we had Rambling Rose's side of the family and that turned out great. Mostly cousins now as time marches on. we wanted to get together for enjoyment and visiting when it wasn't a funeral.

Why did the guru refuse Novocaine when he went to his dentist appointment? He was able to transcend dental

medication. Sign on a psychiatrists door: Satisfaction guaranteed or your mania back.

A widow was complaining to a neighbor about her late husband, "He didn't leave me one dime of insurance," she said. "All he left me was a small burial policy." Her friend said. "Why I heard that he left you the money to buy that beautiful ring you're wearing." "Oh," the widow replied, "that was part of his burial policy. He left me \$2000 for his funeral and \$3000 for the stone. This is the stone." Amen.

Seems that many advertisements are about health. If you take all the products that are recommended, we would get nothing else done during the day. One of the health professionals will claim one thing and someone else will veto it, or the government recommends something one month and the next month comes out with a different point of view. Seems to this writer that when my age was in the growing stage people just lived and didn't worry about cholesterol, salt, etc. Maybe that is what we should do now. My mother used to fry sausage, pack it in grease in glass jars and we would have that to live on through the winter. Didn't seem to hurt us at all. Guess we should all depend more on our common sense than on bad advice. Take this fellow whose doctor told him that the best thing for him to do was give up smoking and drinking, get up early, jog a mile and get to bed early every night. He thought about it for a minute and said, "Doctor, somehow I don't feel that I really deserve the best. What's the second best?"

We have one more holiday in good weather and our town seems to be taking advantage of it as they are having a SummerSet Celebration with games, contests and all those good critters. The Shriners also have a Kid's Day and that is really enjoyable for all the children. The parents get to help and it makes their day also. We hear comments that we don't see children playing outside so much anymore - either watching television or playing games on the computer. Why does there have to be something bad with something good. Guess its how you use it - that's our own free will.

The word for this issue is "downstairs". You really don't miss something until it is not available to you anymore. My goal is to get this leg well enough to allow me the luxury of going downstairs if only to see what has been done to it. We installed a stack unit of Maytag washer and dryer in one of our bathrooms and it is handy not to have to haul everything down and back up again. When it was installed, whoever was helping moved a bunch of clothing, etc., so it wouldn't be in the way of new pipes installed; I would love to see what was done with those. One has to really talk to yourself to keep from stewing about it. I'm sure it is all still there, just in a different place. So I do have something to look forward to when the doctor gives the all clear for the stairs! (And driving again!)

You all enjoy the rest of the summer so you will be ready for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Wish the best of health to one and all and keep praying for our troops to come home safely and proud.

...Rambling Rose.

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the Motor Vehicle Record
of a driver,
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CDL WRITTEN TESTS AVAILABLE AT ADDITIONAL SOS LOCATIONS

The Illinois Secretary of State's office is expanding the number of locations where drivers can take their CDL written tests.

Earlier this year, the Secretary of State switched over to a computerized testing system for the written tests limiting the testing to just 20 locations statewide.

Secretary of State Jesse White says additional locations are having the computers installed to offer the written tests. They include Bloomington, Decatur, Macomb, Sterling, Fairfield, Hillsboro, Metropolis, Nashville, Libertyville and Pontiac.

The computer equipment allows the Secretary of State's office to randomly select from hundreds of CDL test questions to prevent any cheating.

The other Secretary of State facilities which offer the written CDL tests are:

Bolingbrook

Bradley

DeKalb

East St. Louis

Effingham

Elk Grove Village

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Morris

Olney

Peoria

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The contest runs from March 1, 2003 to February 7, 2004.

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ILICA PICNIC HELD AT PRAIRIE LAKES PARK & GOLF COURSE, MARSEILLES



Approximately 55 ILICA members and friends enjoyed the great facilities and food served at Prairie Lakes on June 28, 2003. Thanks to chairman Steve Anderson and the committee members, Cathy & Ron Masching for choosing such a great spot to hold our annual picnic, golf outing and Board Meeting.

Several of our members teamed up to test their skills at Golf. Thanks to Prinsco, Advanced Drainage Systems, Springfield Plastics, Precision Intakes and Hancor for sponsoring food, drinks and hole prizes for golf.

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An old man lived alone in Idaho. He wanted to spade his potato garden, but it was very hard work. His only son, Bubba who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

Dear Bubba,

I am feeling pretty bad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my potato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. If you were here, all my troubles would be over. I know you would dig the plot for me.

Love, Dad

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

Dear Dad,

For heaven's sake, dad, don't dig up that garden, that's where I buried the BODIES.

Love, Bubba

At 4 am the next morning, FBI agents and local police showed up and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

Dear Dad,

Go ahead and plant the potatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances

NRCS ESTABLISHES TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER

If you are interested in being certified as a NRCS Technical Service Provider (TSP - formerly Third Party Vendor), you will be interested in the NRCS' new website. This site (<http://techreg.usda.gov/>) gives you information on the who, what, where, etc. of the TSP program.

We also recommend that all LICA Chapters become very involved in your state's NRCS State Technical Committee.

CENTRAL CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION (CCR) SYSTEM

Contractors currently doing business with USDA and potential vendors, are encouraged to register in the CCR. Based on a recently published proposed change to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), it is anticipated that contractors will soon be required to register in the CCR database before they can be awarded a contract.

The notice of the proposed change to the FAR was published in the Federal Register on April 3, 2003. The proposed change would require, among other things, that contractors be registered in the CCR database before award of any contract, basic agreement blanket purchase agreement or basic ordering agreement can be made. There are five (5) exceptions to this requirement, including purchases that use the government-wide commercial purchase card as the purchasing mechanism, urgent procurements and awards to foreign vendors for work performed outside the United States, if it is impractical to obtain CCR registration before award.

The proposed change would also require that contractors with existing contracts that require performance after September 30, 2003, also register in the CCR system.

A copy of the proposed change can be viewed on the CCR website at <http://www.ccr.gov>. Information on where and how to submit comments to the General Service Administration, FAR Secretariat are contained in the proposed rule.

The CCR is designed to be a highly secure, single repository of vendor information. Vendors will be able to register once, with identifying information, including electronic funds transfer data. Only authorized government financial and procurement officials will be able to access the proprietary and sensitive data. Vendors will have access to update the information as necessary. Annual renewal/update is necessary to remain active.

The preferred method for completing registration via

the world wide web at <http://www.ccr.gov>. A handbook and other information is available at that site, including information on how to obtain a DUNS number, which is required to begin the registration process. Once a vendor has registered in CCR, a Trading Partner Identification Number (TPIN) is mailed to the individual identified by the vendor as the CCR point of contact. The TPIN is very important as it is required for any subsequent changes to the original registration.

CAUTION:

Fraudulent letters allegedly from USDA and also from Dept. of Transportation have been sent to vendors requesting completion of CCR worksheets or verification of Trading Partner Identification Numbers (TPINs). If you receive such letters, faxes or telephone calls, they should be disregarded. Your TPIN number should never be given to anyone. A Security Alert is posted on the CCR website. Please review this notice.

EPA RELEASES ENVIRONMENT REPORT

On June 23, 2003, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its first-ever "Draft Report on the Environment" - a score card on US environmental quality and human health. The report, commissioned by Administrator Christie Todd Whitman in November 2001, states that the nation has made real gains in providing a cleaner, healthier and safer environment. According to Whitman, who left EPA the end of June, "...it begins an important national dialogue on how we can improve our ability to assess the nation's environmental quality and human health, and how we can use that knowledge to make improvements."

With data garnered from more than 30 federal agencies, departments, states, tribes and nongovernment organizations, the EPA reports that:

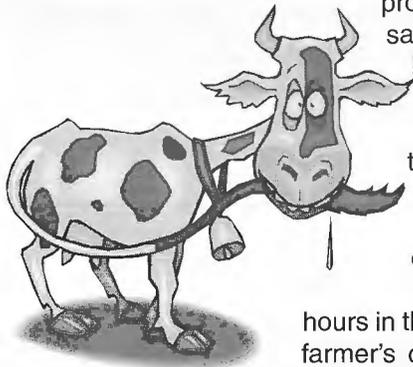
- Air pollution has declined 25 percent over the past 30 years, even while the US experienced large population increases and industrial growth.
- As of last year, 94 percent of Americans were served by drinking water systems that meet health-based standards.
- Releases of toxic chemicals have declined by 48 percent since 1988.
- People are living longer and infant mortality has dropped to the lowest level ever recorded in the United States. Despite the good news, the report cautions that more must be done. Additional data is needed to answer remaining questions about environmental pollutants and their impacts on health. The report is part of the EPA's "Indicators Initiative" under the President's Management Agenda.

WISE OLD FARMER

A wise old farmer went to town to buy a pickup truck that he saw advertised in the paper for a certain price. After telling the sales man which truck he wanted, they sat down to do the paperwork.

The sales man handed the farmer the bill, and the farmer declared, "This isn't the price I saw!" The salesman went on to tell the wise old farmer how he was getting extras such as power brakes, power windows, special tires, etc. and that was what took the price up. The farmer needed the truck badly, paid the price and went home.

A few months later, the salesman called up the farmer and said, "My son is in 4-H and he needs a cow for a project. Do you have any for sale?"



The farmer said, "Yes, I have a few cows, and I would sell for \$500.00 a piece. Come look at them and take your pick." The salesman said he and his son would be right out.

After spending a few hours in the field checking out all the farmer's cows, the two decided on one and the salesman proceeded to write out a check for \$500.00.

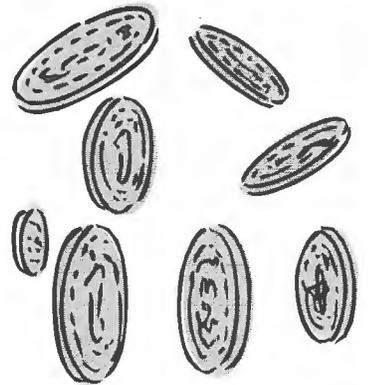
The farmer said, "Now, wait a minute, that's not the final price of the cow. You're getting extras with it and you have to pay for that too." "What extras?" asked the salesman.

Below is the list the farmer gave the salesman for the final price of the cow:

Basic Cow	\$500.00
Two tone exterior.....	75.00
Product storing equipment.....	60.00
Straw compartment.....	120.00
Spigots (4) (\$10/each)	40.00
Leather upholstery	125.00
Dual horns.....	45.00
Automatic fly swatter	38.00
Fertilizer attachment.....	185.00
Grand Total.....	\$1,233.00

5-CENT COIN DESIGN COULD CHANGE

In June of 2002, the U.S. Mint announced that it would use existing authority to redesign the back of the nickel to show the image of an American Indian and a bald eagle facing westward. The redesign was to coincide with the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Monticello has appeared on the reverse of the nickel for over 60 years.



H.R. 258 would authorize the Secretary of the Treasury (in consultation with the commission of Fine Arts and the newly created Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee) to change the designs on both sides of the nickels issued in 2003, 2004, and 2005. The changes would be in recognition of the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase and the expedition of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.



If the Secretary chooses to change the designs, the front of the nickel would have to depict President Thomas Jefferson in recognition of his role in the Louisiana Purchase and the commissioning of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The back of the nickel would have to depict images emblematic of the Louisiana Purchase or the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Any nickel issued after December 31, 2005, would have to depict Thomas Jefferson on the front and his home at Monticello on the back.



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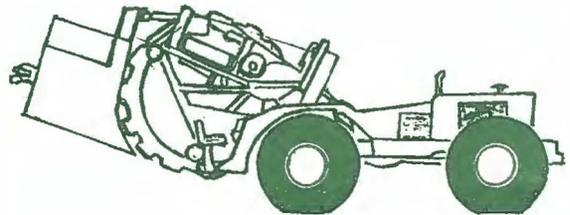
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