

SouthWestern Flash

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Upcoming Seminars of Interest

Dealers of Tomorrow - July 15-16 -
Hyatt Regency, Wichita, Kan.

Dealers of Tomorrow - Oct. 7-8 -
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Austin, Texas

Detailed information coming soon.
Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Western Farm Show - 2004

The latest in agricultural technology and innovation played a key role in this year's Western Farm Show - held Feb. 21-23 in Kansas City, Mo. Farmers and ranchers from throughout the Midwest visited the Show to see the latest products designed to increase their productivity and profits. New products were highlighted in all areas of the Show - from innovative equipment designed for the large-scale producer all the way down in size to new innovations for the weekend or "lifestyle" farmer. The Show also featured the latest in cattle and livestock equipment, seeds, fertilizers, and nearly all other categories of equipment and products used on farms and ranches in the Midwest.

The photos below were taken at the 2004 Western Farm Show!



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We will forward important Association
correspondence to your attention via
e-mail. Please register your e-mail
address at:

[www.southwesternassn.com/register-
email.htm](http://www.southwesternassn.com/register-email.htm)

New Power and Features Added to IRON Search

IRONsearch.com, the equipment industry's leading used equipment search engine has increased power and a new look effective today. IRON Search provides a global site for equipment dealers to list their used agricultural, outdoor power and industrial equipment online. The user can choose to view the machine price in their preferred currency.

This powerful equipment site provides even more speed and search features for users to locate equipment across North America. With over 48,000 pieces of equipment, users can search by equipment categories, size and value ranges, distance-to-dealer and more.

IRONsearch.com and the family of IRON Solutions websites have consistently grown their user base, achieving a new record of 13.6 million hits during the month of February 2004. This is the highest monthly traffic their websites have experienced since origination in 1999. The family of IRON Sites welcomed over 11,000 worldwide visitors each day.

IRON Solutions, LLC is the technology joint venture of NAEDA (North American Equipment Dealers Association), the Affiliate Associations and Central Communications. To learn more about IRON Solutions and their products visit the IRON Solutions website at www.ironolutions.com.

Federal Legislative News

President Bush opened the budget debate this year by asking Congress to make the tax cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003 permanent. That's not likely to happen. As lawmakers get serious about next year's budget, they are pulling back on tax cuts and spending. They're worried about the deficit.

The Senate has approved a budget resolution for fiscal year 2005. It would extend three tax cuts scheduled to end this year for five more years. The three are the higher child tax credit, marriage penalty relief and the expanded 10% tax bracket. It would also move full repeal of the federal estate tax up by one year. None of these changes are permanent.

Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, where tax legislation begins, said he has no plans to produce legislation to repeal the estate tax. He would rather increase the exemption to "probably \$5 million" and lower the tax rate on the remainder.

The House is still trying to agree on its budget resolution. Although action may not happen for another week or so, the Budget Committee was looking at extending the three expiring tax breaks plus the dividend and capital gains tax rate cuts. The plan did not include moving the estate tax repeal up a year.

Although the President continues to call for all tax cuts to be made permanent, he emphasizes the three expiring measures and would probably accept whatever Congress comes up with.

Source: National Retail Hardware Association

Home Investment Continues

Americans bought more homes and paid higher prices for them in 2003 than they did in the previous year. Home prices have risen, but this hasn't stopped homeowners on both ends of the spectrum from purchasing.

Spurred by the lowest annual average interest rate since 1971, sales of existing single-family homes grew 9.6 percent in 2003, as 6.1 million properties were sold. The national median price for existing homes was \$173,200 in December 2003, up 6.7 percent from December 2002, when the median was \$162,400.

In good news for retailers, this home investment growth has been accompanied by vigorous consumer spending, as homeowners continue to spend generously on maintenance and home improvement. The bulk of the money spent was earmarked for improvements, including additions, alterations and major replacements to existing homes. The most popular remodeling jobs were kitchen remodeling (undertaken by 63 percent of remodelers), bathroom remodeling (done by 61 percent) and room additions (58 percent), according to the National Association of Home Builders.

Favorable Forecast for Outdoor Power Equipment

The latest news from the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) is good. The organization has issued a positive forecast for 2004 based on figures gleaned from 2003. Riding mowers experienced a double-digit increase (11.1 percent) for the 2003 model year, and walk-behind mowers grew by 3.5 percent. Tillers and commercial turf mowers experienced declines, while commercial turf riders shot up by 21.6 percent for the model year.

Walk-behind rotary shipments soared during the first quarter of the 2004 model year (September-November), compared to a weak period in the previous year, and are expected to continue growing at a slower pace during the year, ending model year 2004 with an increase of 5.7 percent.

Shipments of all consumer riding mower categories started the 2004 model year at a fast pace; growth of 5.4 percent is forecast for the entire model year. Rear engine riders will remain positive to slightly flat through 2004 and 2005. Front engine lawn tractor shipments posted double-digit increases during the 2002 and 2003 model years. More growth is anticipated in this category for 2004 (5.8 percent) and 2005 (2.7 percent). The forecast for riding garden tractors calls for growth of 3.7 percent during the 2004 model year and an additional 6.6 percent the following year.

Source: Home Center Institute, March 17, 2004

Virginia Dealer Elected President of NAEDA

Jim Meinhardt, SouthWestern Association Board Member, Elected First Vice President

John Fleet has been elected president of the North American Equipment Dealers Association (NAEDA).

Fleet owns Fleet Brothers Inc., a four-store operation. He has three Deere locations headquartered in Tappahannock, Va. and an AGCO dealership in Hartfield, Va., which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Fleet has been in the equipment business for more than 35 years.

“We are looking forward to John’s leadership in the coming year,” says Paul Kindinger, CEO, NAEDA. “He has a passion for NAEDA’s top priority – manufacturer/industry relations. We’re looking forward to working with John, the association’s board and NAEDA-affiliated associations to improve the relationships between dealers and their major suppliers.”

Fleet is a six-year member of NAEDA’s board of directors. He represents the SouthEastern Equipment Dealers Association, one of 18 North American dealer associations affiliated with NAEDA. He is a past president of the former Mid-Atlantic Equipment Dealers Association (now SouthEastern).

Fleet is active in his community. He’s been a little league baseball director and coach in Middlesex, Va., for 38 consecutive years and currently chairs the area’s sports complex committee. He’s a lifetime member of the Middlesex Lions Club and a director of the Rappahannock General Hospital. Fleet was graduated with a B.A. from the University of Richmond in 1968, where he played baseball.

Fleet and his wife “Cookie” have been married 35 years and have two sons – John and Matthew – and one daughter, Robin, and one grandson, Pierce. Matthew is manager of Fleet Brothers’ Kilmarnock, Va., location.

Fleet was installed as NAEDA president during the association’s annual meeting, Feb. 19-21, 2004, in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Jim Meinhardt (first vice president) and Robert “Bob” Frazee (second vice president) also were elected as NAEDA officers for 2004-05.

Meinhardt operates KanEquip, Inc., a New Holland, Case IH and AGCO multi-store operation headquartered in Wamego, Kan. Meinhardt operates six dealerships in Kansas. He serves on NAEDA’s board from the SouthWestern Association.

Frazee is a Deere dealer and sells equipment from five locations in New York. Frazee is a member of the Northeast Equipment Dealers Association. His dealership, Cazenovia Equipment Co. Inc., is headquartered in Cazenovia, N.Y.

The North American Equipment Dealers Association is based in Fenton, Mo. It provides educational, financial, industry relations, legal, and legislative services to more than 4,500 dealers in the United States and Canada.

AGCO Appoints Richenhagen President & CEO

AGCO Corporation recently announced the appointment of Mr. Martin Richenhagen as its President & Chief Executive Officer.

Mr. Richenhagen has most recently been Group Executive Vice President of Forbo International SA, a flooring material business located in Zurich, Switzerland. Prior to this position he was Group President of Claas Kga mbH, a major farm equipment manufacturer and distributor located in Germany from 1998 thru 2003. In this role he achieved extensive experience in the agricultural industry worldwide, with particular knowledge of the European market. Mr. Richenhagen is a graduate of the University of Bonn and Cologne and speaks four languages.

Mr. Robert J. Ratliff, Chairman, President & Chief Executive officer will continue as the Chairman of the Board of Directors. In this role, Mr. Ratliff will continue to provide his significant experience and knowledge to the management issues of the future, and be responsible for the seamless transition of executive management responsibilities to Mr. Richenhagen and his introduction to the investment community. Mr. Richenhagen’s appointment will be effective upon receipt of the appropriate immigration approval.

Legislative Watch

Link to Missouri Legislative Update

www.swassn.com/molegislat.htm

Link to Kansas Legislative Update

www.swassn.com/kslegislat.htm

Link to Texas Legislative Update

www.swassn.com/txlegislat.htm

Link to Oklahoma Legislative Update

www.southwesternassn.com/oklegislat.htm

Link to Arkansas Legislative Update

www.swassn.com/arlegislat.htm

Link to New Mexico Legislative Update

www.swaassn.com/nmlegislat.htm

Access the latest state legislative updates by visiting the web-sites listed above.

NAEDA Freight Program

FedEx Express

FedEx Express, the world's largest express transportation company, offers NAEDA-affiliated dealers and members the following incentives:

- Save up to 24% on letter shipments.
- Save up to 19% on U.S. continental shipments next day/second day shipments.
- Save up to 18% on international shipments.

FedEx Ground

FedEx Ground, the nation's premier small package carrier, offers NAEDA-affiliated dealers and members the following incentives:

Discounts on Inbound Collect

- A 10% discount on packages weighing 1-10 lbs.
- A 15% discount on packages weighing 11-30 lbs.
- A 20% discount on packages weighing 31-50 lbs.

Minimum charge is zone 2, 1 lb. rate.

Discounts on Outbound Prepaid

- A 10% discount on packages weighing 1-10 lbs.
- A 15% discount on packages weighing 11-30 lbs.
- A 20% discount on packages weighing 31-150 lbs.

Minimum charge is zone 2, 1 lb. rate.

Multiweight Pricing on Outbound Prepaid and Inbound Collect Shipments

This cost-saving service is for multiple package shipments going to the same recipient on the same day. Packages are rated individually and as one shipment. **You pay the lower rate!** Plus, free inside delivery.

- Applicable for zones 2-8.
- Minimum shipment weight is 200 lbs.
- Minimum average package weight is 15 lbs.
- Rated shipment weight 200-499 lbs. Tier 6.
- Rated shipment weight 500+ lbs. Tier 506.

Minimum charge is \$42.50

FedEx Home Delivery

FedEx Home Delivery is a new neighborhood-friendly, residential-only service for businesses that deliver large volumes of packages to homes.

- A 5% discount on packages weighing 1-20 lbs.
- A 10% discount on packages weighing 21-70 lbs.

Minimum charge is zone 2, 1 lb. rate. A residential surcharge of \$1.40 is added to each package. This service is available to qualified shippers only. For more information please call 800.463.3339.

Yellow Transportation

Yellow Transportation, one of the largest commercial transportation providers in the United States, offers NAEDA-affiliated dealers and members a **62%** discount on outbound prepaid, inbound collect, and 3rd party billing in U.S. and Canada.

- No charge for single shipments. Save \$25/shipment!
- No charge for notification prior to delivery. Save \$27.95/shipment!
- No charge for residential delivery. Save \$63.60/shipment!

Contact SouthWestern Association Today For More Information On These Freight Programs!

800-762-5616!

SPCC Fact Sheet

Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plans were enacted on Jan. 10, 1974 under EPA's Clean Water Act and revised July 17, 2002. The SPCC rules require facilities that store oil to prepare a written plan, train personnel and conduct periodic inspections. The plan must be certified by a Professional Engineer (P.E.).

Who must have a plan?

Any business that has bulk oil with an aggregate aboveground storage capacity of 1,320 gallons of oil or more per location must have a plan. The key word is "capacity." Regulations apply regardless of whether the tank(s) is full or nearly empty. This regulation does not apply to facilities with underground storage tanks subject to state UST regulations.

What is bulk oil storage?

Bulk storage is any container with a capacity of 55 gallons or more.

What's the definition of oil?

Oil of any kind or in any form such as crude oil, refined petroleum products, sludge, waste oil, emulsions, grease, synthetic oils, crop oil, vegetable oil, mineral oil, animal fat, and fish oil to name a few.

For more informatin about what is included in the plan, where the plan is submitted, deadlines, etc. contact Olivia at SouthWestern Association at 800-762-5616.