Sharing the tractor's a/c

Ted Brown

Most regular readers know I bought a new-to-me tractor almost a year ago.

The one key aspect of this tractor's wish list was it had to be equipped with a cab and air conditioning.

I had decided I'd reached an age where I deserved to be cool and stay clean.

Last August, after countless visits to farm equipment dealers both online and in the flesh, I bought a tractor that was so equipped.

I put in a wonderful cozy winter with the heater spewing warmth into the cab during the wee hours of the morning as I blew out the snow in the driveway.

And more recently, I enjoyed cutting and baling hay, the dirt and dust bouncing off the windows of the cab, while the cool air enveloped me.

Now The Sidekick was quite supportive of me getting a tractor with a/c. Her official line was I deserve to work in comfort, citing it's less tiring and healthier to have a/c in a tractor cab. But she neglects to say her 'real' reason for endorsing the air conditioned tractor cab.

She's a tractor road trip junkie.

When I head out to get on the tractor, in preparation of doing some field work, well, she's a bit like a dog wanting to go for a car ride.

I swear, if she had a tail, it'd be wagging. One day I expect to see her run circles around the tractor.

Last year, while shopping for this tractor, I checked out one equipped with a folding 'buddy seat'.

Okay, for those farm equipment manufacturer purists out there, I know the correct term is a 'training' or 'instructional' seat, to be used to train someone how to operate today's high-tech equipment.

But most folks call 'em a buddy seat.

The Sidekick saw it and was smitten.

"Can we get one?" she said, her eyes like platters in anticipation.

After a cursory price check, the $950 price tag cooled her jets. I got her a folding stool which fit in the cab, facing backwards. It ain't perfect, but it works.

Besides, her facing backwards ain't all bad. It saves me bending my neck to look behind.

But another problem came to light this past weekend as she tagged along when I delivered a load of hay to a customer.

It was the a/c again.

You see, The Sidekick, being the age she is, has found that she requires a/c more than she used to.

And where she sits in the cab, well, she's not exactly in the line of fire of the a/c vents. You see, the vents are aimed at me- otherwise known as THE OPERATOR.

I suggested the primary design of the a/c was to keep the operator cool, not a 'tag-along buddy-seat passenger.'

"Well, can't we share? I get too hot sitting here," she protested, and then proceeded to push the deflector to blow on the window, which really meant on her, while I sat in the operator's seat, with little air moving in my direction.

I was willing to accept the situation as it was, but she suddenly decided it was too cold.

She flipped it back to blow in my direction. And so on....

To push it to the limit, we have another 'problem' she's discovered. The door latch lever jabs her in the hip. One occasion, she squirmed so much the door latch opened.

(I actually snickered at that one. I tell ya- she sat dead still for the rest of that trip.)

Now we've come to the latest suggestion.

"If you mounted a bench seat across the back of the cab..." she said.

Overlooking the fact that I'm supposed to be looking out the back of the cab to monitor the equipment behind me- IT AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN.

Geez, how could I face my farmer friends?

But with this last suggestion, I'm starting to have a change of heart.

Suddenly, that $950 folding buddy seat doesn't seem quite so pricey...

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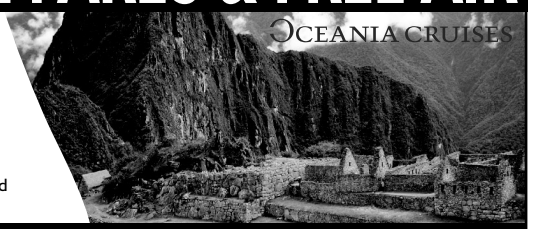

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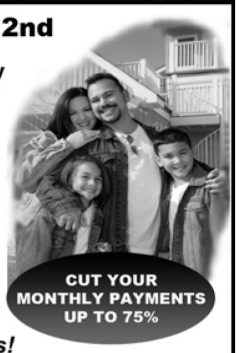

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