

# Why Stick Shifts Are So Prevalent In Europe

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI  
www.cartalk.com



**CAR TALK**  
Tom and Ray Magliozzi

**Dear Tom and Ray:**  
My fiancée is European, and they all drive stick shifts over there! When I visited, I had to pay more to rent a car with an automatic. It seems to be true everywhere in Europe. Everybody owns a stick-shift car. But why? I thought automatics have become just as energy-efficient as stick shifts. Why does everyone here have an automatic and everyone there have a stick shift? - August

**RAY:** Your observations are correct, August. In Europe, about 85 percent of cars are sold with stick shifts. Here in America, about 95 percent are sold with automatics. Why?

**TOM:** Traditionally, gasoline has been much more expensive in Europe. So Europeans have always done everything they possibly can to maximize their gas mileage.

**RAY:** That included buying the smallest car they could tolerate, forcing their mothers-in-law to run alongside them on the highway to save weight and, traditionally, using a stick shift to improve mileage.

**TOM:** In America, we've never cared much about fuel economy, since gas has always been cheap. We've always bought the biggest cars we could afford, and we've wanted them

to be extensions of our living rooms, with everything automatic, from the transmission to the radio volume, the seat position and the climate control.

**RAY:** But something strange has happened, and it'll be interesting to see whether Europeans take note: Automatics are becoming more efficient than stick shifts.

**TOM:** Early automatics did get worse mileage than their stick-shift counterparts, due to the inherent "slippage" necessary to make an automatic work, and because

automatics traditionally had fewer gears than stick shifts (the more gears you have, the easier it is to find the most efficient gear for any given situation).

**RAY:** But now, while stick shifts come in five- and six-speed varieties, automatics are now coming in six-, seven- and eight-speed varieties. And where built-in "slippage" used to be accepted as the trade-off for living without a clutch, lock-up torque converters and, especially, new "dual clutch automatics" are reducing or even eliminating the slippage altogether.

**TOM:** So the question is, How long will it take the European culture to catch up with the changes in technology? Given that they just recently stopped referring to us as "the colonies," I'm guessing the answer will be decades rather than weeks.

**RAY:** But let us know. Sounds like you'll be heading over there on a regular basis for the next 40 or 50 years. So drop us a note every once in a while and let us know if you're seeing any changes.

Get more Click and Clack in their new book, "Ask Click and Clack: Answers from Car Talk." Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or email them by visiting the Car Talk website at www.cartalk.com.

# Heartland H.S. Wine And Whiskers Set For Nov. 5

Heartland Humane Society has geared up for the 2011 Wine and Whiskers to be held Saturday, Nov. 5, at Hillcrest Country Club in Yankton from 6-10 p.m.

The event will feature 47 auction packages to include trips to Hawaii, Florida and the Black Hills and wonderful local items such as a hot air balloon ride, spa packages, and more. The event also features wine and beer tasting, hors d'oeuvres, and live music.

"We are excited about the auction donations we've received," said Kerry Schmidt, Executive Director at Heartland Humane Society. "Tickets are selling fast and we expect to sell out before Nov. 5."

Tickets may be purchased by contacting the Heartland Humane Society at 605-664-4244, any Heartland Humane Society board member or emailing hhs@midconetwork.com. The event has already raised

more than \$10,000 in sponsorships including gifts from Feimer Construction, JMMWH, Modern Woodman, Mary Mitchell, Peshong's, Plains All American and Coffee Cup.

"Wine and Whiskers will ensure our animals will receive the best care in 2012," Schmidt said. "We hope if you have a love for pets that you will consider joining us or making a donation towards our largest fundraiser of the year."

Donations can be mailed to PO Box 585, Yankton, SD 57078. Heartland Humane Society serves Yankton and Clay Counties in South Dakota and Cedar County in Nebraska and surrounding communities, protecting and enhancing the lives of companion animals by promoting healthy relationships between pets and people. Visit Heartland Humane Society online at www.heartlandhumanesociety.net.

# Noem Seeking Interns For Washington Office

WASHINGTON — Rep. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.) is currently seeking college students to serve as interns in her office in Washington, as well as in her offices in Aberdeen, Watertown, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls.

Interns in Rep. Noem's state offices will be assigned various constituent case work or work on District-based projects of importance while students in the Washington office will be asked to answer phones, run errands, research legislation for the Member and legislative staff, attend hearings and briefings and assist with constituent mail. Both in-state and Washington internships are unpaid, but provide students with firsthand knowledge of the legislative

process and the countless other functions of a congressional office.

"Interning in a congressional office is an eye-opening experience for college students interested in American government," Noem said. "Interns in my office are a valued part of our team and an internship experience is a good component to any liberal arts education. I strongly encourage hardworking college students to apply."

College students who are interested in interning in any of Rep. Noem's offices should submit a resume, cover letter and references, by Nov. 18, 2011, to: Katie.Douglas@mail.house.gov.

For more information, call 202-225-2801.

# FEMA Deadline For Heating Assistance Is Approaching

PIERRE — As winter approaches, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is reminding homeowners to ensure their home-heating system is in good working order, especially ones damaged by flooding.

Federal disaster assistance may cover furnace repairs that are related to the flooding that occurred March 11 through July 22. It also may pay for cleaning and testing flood-damaged furnaces or for replacement if the furnace is destroyed. However, homeowners who have not registered with FEMA by the Oct. 24 deadline, and later find their furnace is damaged, will not qualify for aid.

Residents living in Charles Mix, Hughes, Stanley, Union and Yankton counties who had flood damage to their furnaces are encouraged to register for assistance by calling 1-800-621-3362 or TTY 1-800-462-7585, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. CDT. Individuals may also register for disaster assistance at www.disasterassistance.gov or with a Web-enabled mobile device at m.fema.gov.

If the need for repair or replacement is discovered after a homeowner receives disaster assistance to cover cleaning and testing expenses, the resident may file an appeal for additional disaster funds.

# Nebraska Schools Offered Grants For Wind Turbines

LINCOLN, Neb. — The Nebraska Energy Office is seeking up to four public schools that would like to install 2.5 kilowatt-hour wind turbines next to their school buildings. These grants of \$5,000 provide partial funding of a wind turbine that offers a unique educational experience for students, while offsetting some of the electricity the school uses.

"The Energy Office has already provided grants to six schools," said Energy Office Director Ginger Willson. "Wind turbines have been installed in small towns and urban areas — from Bancroft-Rosalie to Papillion-LaVista, as well as Creighton and Norris. We're hopeful four more schools want to add a turbine and learn more about wind

energy as a renewable resource."

Interested school staff members can quickly check wind speeds in their area with the Energy Office's 30 meter wind speed maps at <http://www.neo.ne.gov/renew/wind.htm>. The maps are zoomable, allowing viewers to get reliable and local wind speeds quickly.

Another resource, the Center for Advanced Energy Studies, is collecting real time wind production data from participating Wind for Schools turbines, including those in Nebraska. The Center maintains a database at [http://wind-for-schools.caesenergy.org/windforschoolsweb/CAES\\_Turbine.html](http://wind-for-schools.caesenergy.org/windforschoolsweb/CAES_Turbine.html), and the data may be helpful in providing estimates of actual energy production.

For more information and to

sign up for the program, contact Jerry Hudgins, Director of the Nebraska Wind Applications Center, at 402-472-3771; [jhudgins2@unl.edu](mailto:jhudgins2@unl.edu) or Michaela Meisner, Nebraska Energy Office, at 402-471-3347; [michaela.meisner@nebraska.gov](mailto:michaela.meisner@nebraska.gov) prior to Dec. 9, 2011.

These grants are being paid for with U.S. Department of Energy State Energy Program/American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds received by the Nebraska Energy Office.

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**TON Yank Challenge**

**Cumulative Results Through Week Seven**

Team Name	Pounds Lost	Percentage
The Center	55.25	4.91%
Yankton High School	268.3	4.48%
KYNT 1450	80	4.15%
First National Bank South Dakota	94.2	3.93%
Yankton Rexall Drug Co	79.4	3.81%
Sacred Heart Monestary	219.8	3.73%
South Dakota Magazine	12	3.64%
Plains Marketing, L.P.	83.8	3.20%
Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services, Inc.	141.1	3.12%
Baldwin Filters	94.5	3.09%
Ability Building Services	123	2.96%
Truxedo "Phat Roll-Ups"	91	2.83%
Shurco	269	2.74%
"Crusin for Losin" Yankton Media (Press and Dakotan and Missouri Valley Shopper)	86.2	2.73%
Wells Fargo Bank	59.5	2.70%
Vishay Dale Electronics	251.9	2.62%
WNAX	101	2.41%
Sapa Extrusions	324	2.08%
Mtron PTI	52.2	2.06%
Mount Marty College	117.8	1.86%
Services Center Federal Credit Union	32.6	1.85%
First National Bank of Omaha	237.2	1.82%
Hy-Vee	157	1.71%
First Dakota National Bank "Waist Watchers"	105.8	1.61%
5 Star Communications (KVHT)	29	1.36%
Kolberg-Pioneer	146	1.36%
Applied Engineering	62.5	0.96%
Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce	8.5	0.89%
Avera Sacred Heart Hospital	109	0.79%
<b>Total Lost</b>	<b>3491.55</b>	

# Presenters Sought For Hydrology Conference

RAPID CITY — The 2012 Western South Dakota Hydrology Conference will be held April 19, 2012, at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center in Rapid City, and will include a special session on Missouri River issues, a poster session, and an evening social. The 2012 conference will be sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, South Dakota Engineering Society, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, U.S. Geological Survey, and the West Dakota Water Development District.

Registration information will be available March 1, 2012, at the conference Web site <http://sd.water.usgs.gov/WSD-conf>. Professional development hours (or continuing education credits) will be available to interested participants.

Abstracts for the 2012 Western South Dakota Hydrology Conference will be accepted through

Feb. 6, 2012. Abstracts concerning any earth science topic are welcomed, as are student presentations. Abstracts concerning Missouri River issues are especially welcomed as a special session on this topic is planned. Abstracts received after the Feb. 6 deadline will only be considered for oral presentation if slots are available. If all oral presentation slots are filled, your abstract will only be accepted for the poster session.

All speakers and poster presenters will be required to pay conference registration fees unless they have student status. For more information and instructions for abstract submittal for both oral and poster presentations, go to <http://sd.water.usgs.gov/WSD-conf/callforspeakers.pdf>. When submitting an abstract to the 2012 conference, indicate whether oral presentation or poster is preferred.

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