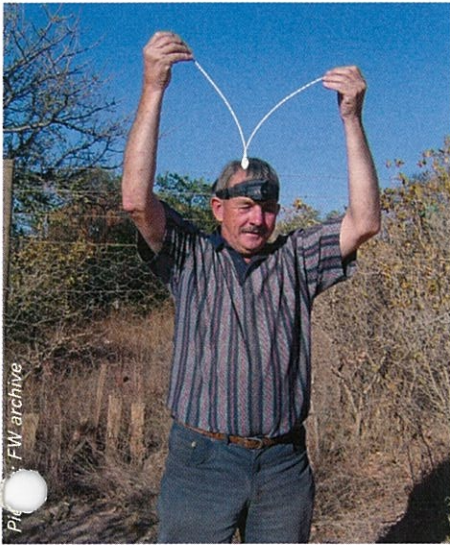


LETTERS

The views and opinions expressed on the letters page don't necessarily reflect those of *Farmer's Weekly* or Caxton.

Write to us: *Farmer's Weekly*, PO Box 1797, Pinegowrie, 2123, South Africa.
Send your letter by fax: (011) 889 0862 or e-mail: farmersweekly@caxton.co.za

THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET TO WATER DIVINERS



I READ the article about Jan Smit's water-divining theories and capabilities in *Farmer's Weekly* of 19 September 2003 with great interest. My interest in groundwater started when I was 10 years old, when my parents allowed me to go with Oom Fransie Maritz, who was digging a well on a ridge near our home. After about eight months it was 40m deep and becoming damp on the one side, which was softer.

During my period underground with Oom Fransie I learned a great deal from this experienced well-digger. I learned that water use brittle passages to move through rock. Even hard rock erodes and becomes brittle when in contact with underground water for millions of years. Oom Fransie said that the best water is found mostly in crumbly rock and seldom in harder rock with fine cracks.

As an adult I also learned from Oom Flippie Schutte, who, apart

from being a fairly well-to-do farmer, was also a water diviner and well-digger of fame in Charles Herman Bosman's Marico bushveld, where I grew up and still live. He once came to dowse for me. He walked at pace with hands folded at ease behind his back and peered all around him, and eventually slowed down, stopped and said: "Nefie, you can drill here." I asked Oom Flippie why he didn't use a *stokkie* to find water. He replied that he could use a *stokkie*, but that true diviners didn't really need it. "The *stokkie* is a dead thing – it's the human who shows the water, with or without the *stokkie*." He also said there were many pretenders who claim to be able to show water, but "talk is cheap".

The more I was taught by science about underground structures and their water-carrying abilities, and with my use of the resistance meter – also covered in Albertus Lombaard's article in *Farmer's Weekly* of 19 September 2003 – over many years, the greater my respect has grown for the late well-diggers Oom Fransie and Oom Flippie. They learned about the earth as the dug into it.

I agree with Oom Flippie that for every water diviner who knows what he's doing, there are many who are pretending. I have visited close to 500 farms and pegged out thousands of drilling sites, and have often come across "water diviners" with fancy gadgets such as copper rings. I hereby propose to Jan Smit and all other water diviners that we should get together and submit ourselves to a stringent practical test so that we can publish the names of the successful dowers and get rid of the chancers. I have a suitable list of rules that would constitute this test. I hope to see at least two dozen applicants who'll be willing to risk their good reputation.

**Johan Greeff
ZEERUST**

ANOTHER CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH A WARTHOG

MIKE Clark's letter in *Farmer's Weekly* of 5 December 2003, about an 80-year-old Zim farmer's tussle with a warthog, had me in stitches. As a mere 72-year-old, I too have been inadvertently indulging in the same sport.

A recent walk with my dogs landed me in trouble when a large, disgruntled warthog showed his resentment of my presence on his beat. He ran straight for

me and my assembled dogs, one of whom, an old bull-terrier cross not known for avoiding trouble, was on a lead. I thought I had managed a rather neat side-step when the pig tried to run between my legs, but in the process I let go of the lead and somehow dropped the loop over one of the boar's large tusks, while at the same time cursing at him loudly in a mixture of Swahili and Hausa.

Obviously unappreciative of my remarks, the warthog took off with the dog attached to him by the lead. It pre-

sented the truly amazing spectacle of two rapidly retreating rear-ends – one tail up, one tail down. Luckily my big ridgeback cross went to the rescue, and in the ensuing, highly vocal entanglement, the old bull-terrier got detached from the pig.

The only outright winner of this episode was the vet, who had to do some interesting repair work on my companions.

**Anna Merz
Melkrievier
VAALWATER**

LEO'S
TRAILER MANUFACTURERS

P.O. Box 155 BRONKHORSTSPRUIT
TEL (013) 932-4151/2
CELL 082 892 3279/082 455 4466
E-MAIL Leos@penta-net.co.za

MODEL: LEO - B1 - 3/4 TON

Single deck with rails and one small rear gate.
14 STANDARD MODELS AVAILABLE
PRICES FROM R8 000 TO R30 000
3 YEAR FACTORY GUARANTEE

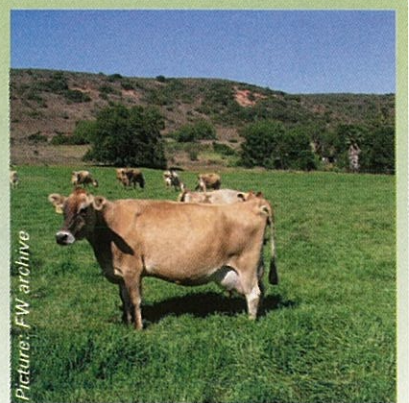
EVANS EQUIPMENT STILL IN USE?

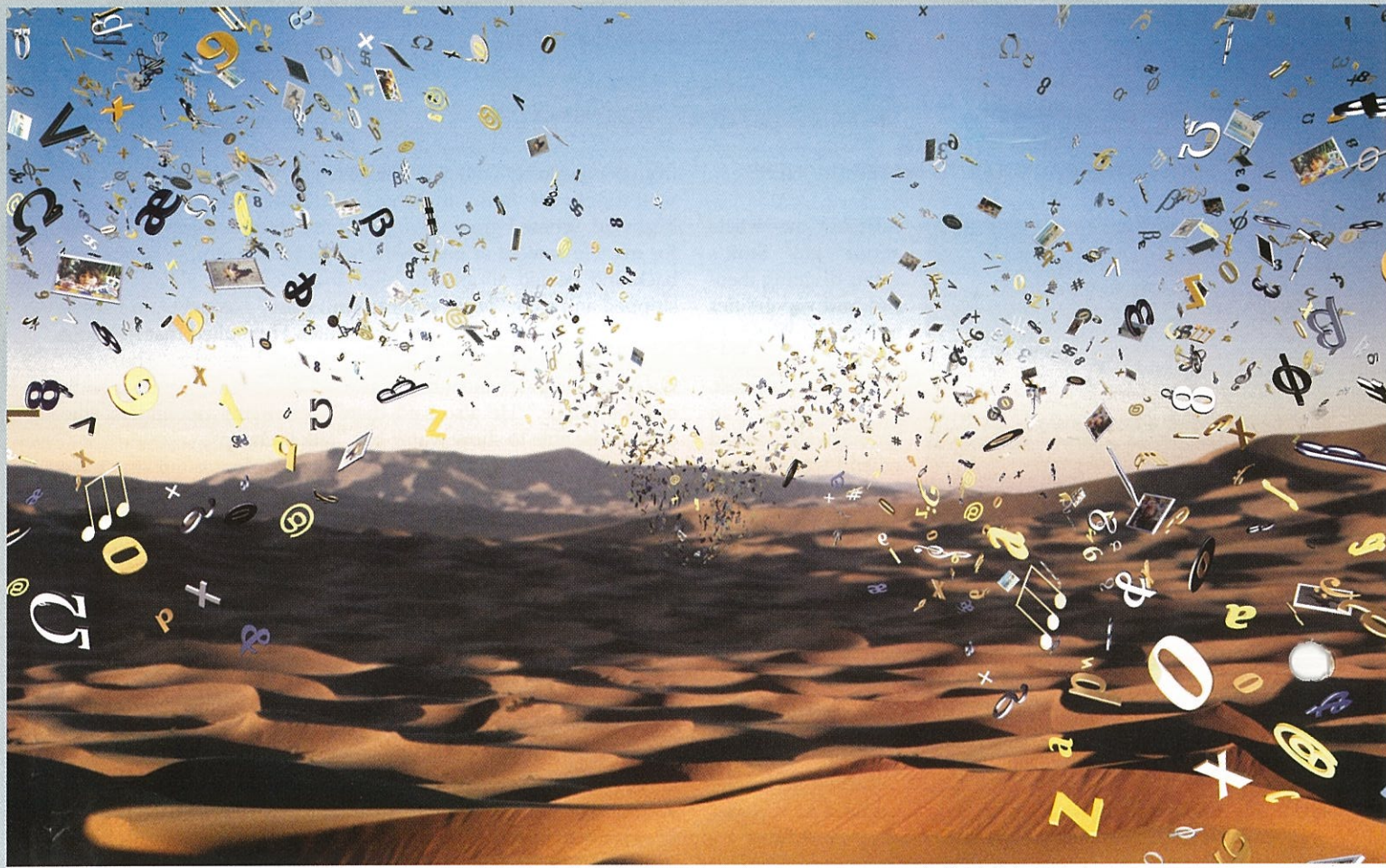
ARE THERE any Evans cranes or trailers out there that are still in operation? I am writing a biography on the late Sonny Evans, who was a doyen in the sugar and timber industries from the 1950s through to the late 1980s. He made in/out-field heavy equipment, and I'm curious as to whether any of this equipment is still being used today. Please contact me on (031) 904 3340.

Hazel Lodetti

MATTER OF FACT

IN *FARMER'S Weekly* of 9 January there was an article on Jersey farming near Jeffreys Bay. The e-mail address of the farmer, Elbe Strydom, was given incorrectly. The correct address is: ssprings@futurenet.co.za.





Imagine the Remote Possibilities

High speed. Flexible. Always on.

VSTAR™

Somewhere at this moment at a remote mine in Limpopo Province, data is being transmitted via Sentech VSTAR to a head office in Sandton.

An x-ray is being transmitted from a health clinic near Queenstown to a medical team in Cape Town.

This is the communication Sentech is making possible via satellite, to homes and businesses in the remotest areas of Southern Africa, covered by the PAS7 satellite footprint.

Distance insensitive. Fully bi-directional. Reliable. 2Mbps of data inbound and up to 10Mbps of data outbound from the hub. No landlines needed and a fixed monthly cost.

VSTAR Internet provides pre-packaged Internet access, while you can choose a tailor-made service with VSTARCustom, which will meet your specific requirements.

The result is that what appears to be an inaccessible location is suddenly changed into a bustling hub of network activity.

VSTAR is brought to you by Sentech, the large commercially operated state-owned enterprise.

Get connected to your world via the Internet or Intranet. Call us now. And welcome to one of the most important happenings since the birth of the Internet.

From R1 999pm Excl. Vat



**SENTECH**
connecting You

Enter the **Sentech Broadband Zone**
Call 0860 Sentech/0860 736 832

You are Zoned
Visit www.sentech.co.za