

Appliantology

In this issue...

- How to keep your beer cold... and what to do when it's not!
- A sweet-smelling pot-pourri of hot tips for various appliances.
- A look at the state of the appliance repair trade.



Mt. Sava
in the [Saints Range](#)
of the White Moun-
tains.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR BEER COLD THIS SUMMER...

And other precious pearls of appliantological wisdom from your budrows at [Fixitnow.com](#).

Chill Out, Dude!

We've all had this nightmare: it's a hot, muggy summer day and you come in from mowing the lawn, all slimy and sweaty. You reach into ye olde refrigerator for a tooth-cracking cold Budweiser ('cuz that's the only way it's drinkable) and, to your horror, you discover that everything in the 'fridge is just barely cool, nevermind frosty. Bile burns the back of your throat as you dash to your computer and your fingers frantically type in the address to the Samurai's website (hint: [bookmark it now](#) for future reference). In anticipation of your fermented beverage crisis, here are some key pages at my site that will help you in this, your hour of need.

Start with the [warm refrigerator fire drill](#). This will get you going with some preliminary

diagnostics and pertinent observations to report to us in the [repair forum](#) and saves you valuable time because we won't have to post back asking you for the things you could have told us right up front. Usually, these problems are simple control problems but, once in a while, there's a [compressor that needs to be replaced](#) or some other problem with the [sealed system](#).

Dishwasherology

Since [the last newsletter](#), I've posted several dishwasher articles which I'll summarize here. Before I do, though, I want to answer a question I get asked a lot, "Are there any good dishwashers today?" The answer is a resounding, "NO!" And [I explain why in this post](#). Now on to some particulars...

If you have a **Whirlpool-built dishwasher** (which includes KitchenAid and some Kenmo-



A Rare and Privileged Glimpse into the Samurai's Office

Yep, this is where the magic happens. The Samurai toils day and night here, helping you fix your stinking appliances.

res) with a blinking clean light, [this post](#) has some answers for you. Sometimes, just [resetting the control board](#) can buy you some time, allowing you to continue using the dishwasher until you get around to fixing it proper-like.

If you own a **GE dishwasher**, first of all, you have my condolences. If it's on the fritz, you'll need to [locate the tech sheet](#). If it's beeping, blinking, and not running the wash cycle, then [this post will help gird your loins for battle](#).

Whirlpool Duet Sport Dryer

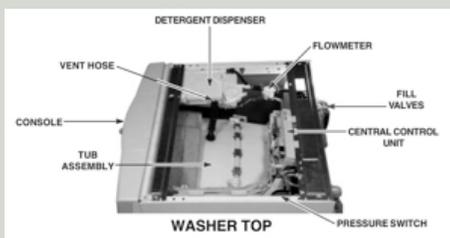
This is Whirlpool's latest offering in the dryer arena and, oh, what a disappointment! Why? Because this dryer uses an "electronic control system" consisting of a dime-store calculator LCD display, a plastic touch pad, and a cheesy circuit board, all made in a Chinese sweat shop.

Look, dryers are simple, humble machines that do three things: tumble the clothes, get 'em warm, and move a lot of air. Why would you want or even need an over-priced failure-prone "electronic control system" for a frigg'in' dryer? I can almost understand it for a refrigerator or a gourmet oven, but a dryer? Putting an electronic control board in a dryer is like installing a GPS nav system on a kid's tricycle. Enough! Stop the madness! Friends don't let friends buy dryers loaded with over-blown electronic crap.

Anyway, if you were suckered into buying one of these dryers (and it's too late to return it), then you'll need to [familiarize yourself with the guts of this dryer](#) and know how to get into [diagnostic mode for troubleshooting](#).

Whirlpool Duet & Kenmore HE3/4t Front Loading Washers

This is a big-seller and, with [a few exceptions](#), seems to be a mechanically-sound front-loading washer. The controls, on the other hand, suck. Here again, the manufacturer has made the decision to violate the [5th Law of the Prophecy](#) and use electronic controls on a wet



appliance. Bad move! The controls on this washer have proven to be its Achilles' heel and you'll need to [know your way around the electrical controls](#). Might as well go ahead and [git you a service manual](#) while you're at it.

Other helps on this washer:

- [How to remove/replace the tub](#)
- [How to replace the door switch](#)
- [How to replace the door bellows](#)
- [How to fix walking or vibration problems](#)

And for any front loading washer, here are some tips for [keeping it smelling schweet, baby, schweet](#).

While we're talking about washing machines, I have a Zen koan for you: [What is the sound of one Staber washing?](#)

What About Them High-Dolla Brands?

I know, you're thinking that if you buy one o' them high-dolla or furrin' brands, that it ought to be more reliable. A perfectly reasonable thought since, in most things, you usually get what you pay for. But not in this case. My own service experience has shown that [the so-called high-end appliances fail just as often \(if not more\) than the "common brands."](#) And the repair costs on them high-dolla brands can be up to twice as much. Why? Because they're usually much more difficult to work on. You'd think that if Whirlpool and Frigidaire (not a typo) could figure out how to design service-friendly appliances, then the snot-nosed brands could do it, too. But NOOOOO!

The other reason for the higher repair costs is the parts costs. You may think that after you've paid four to five times more for, say, a Thermador range than for a Whirlpool range, that prices for comparable replacement parts would be very similar. Oh, my naive grasshopper, but you would be so wrong. You see, the outrageous price you pay for a "high-end" appliance is just the beginning of the pillaging that you're in for. They figure that anyone stupid enough to so fantastically overpay for a silly appliance must be good for lots more milking down the road. Mooooo!

By the way, if you own a Thermador appliance, I've posted a [complete listing of all error codes for Thermador cooking products](#) that you'll want to download and keep in a safe place. You'll need it and probably very soon.

Parts is Parts

But all parts vendors are not created equal. [If you need parts, buy them from my parts partner](#). You'll get excellent prices, the most generous return policy in the industry, and you'll get 'em fast. "But I want to buy locally to support my local business." Look, the Internet has re-defined "local." Can you get any more local than right here on your computer monitor?

The State of the Trade

If you've tried to get a decent appliance servicer in your home lately, then you were probably wondering, "[Where have all the tradesmen gone?](#)" Part of the problem is the difficulty in getting an [appliance repair apprenticeship](#).

For a glimpse at what it's like for a rookie just getting his feet wet and learning the hardest part of the trade-- dealing with customers-- you have to read about the [adventures of a new appliance technician](#).

A few months ago, *The Washington Times* ran an article on some interesting trends in appliance repair. And, surprisingly, it wasn't a hit piece on the trade, either. Still, though, it had [one or two issues that needed correction](#).

That's a Wrap

In case you're reading this issue from the [newsletter archive](#) and you'd like to subscribe so you can get your very own, personal copy, delivered to your email in a discreet brown wrapper, [come hither](#). And, please, don't flatter yourself-- I have much better things to do with my time than to harvest your email address for spammers.

OK, I'm all newslettered out for the next few months and I'm sure you are, too. Time to wrap this one up and do what I really love doing: [go hillstomping in the White Mountains of New Hampster](#).

Sayonara!

