

50 YEARS OF MEMORIES  
CARVED INTO "FAMILY TREE"

## Totem Pole Carved With 50 Years Of Memories

To commemorate their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, Wallace and Barbara Anderson created a colorful 21-ft. tall totem pole that's carved with the story of their lives together.

The pole stands near the couples' rural Star Prairie, Wis., home. They call it their "family tree".

"I've always had an interest in American Indian culture," says Barb, explaining how she got the idea. "The totem pole represents our lives and the things that have been important to us."

A white oak tree from a nearby farm was hauled to their yard. The tree was laid on several wooden fence posts to keep it off the ground, allowing it to be rolled and turned easily. The first thing they did was remove the bark and knobs where limbs had grown. When the tree was smooth enough to work on, Barb applied a preservative and then painted the tree with two coats of deep brown. Then the tree was notched into five sections, and the notches were painted with bright colors.

Barb drew the patterns and a router was used to trace them into the tree. The patterns were then painted.

The bottom section of the pole starts with the early years of their marriage. There's an image of a car - a 1930 Ford sport coupe with a rumble seat. Wallace trapped and skinned muskrats to pay for it. "In that car, we felt like masters of our destiny; brave enough to tackle marriage during the Depression years," says Barb. As you move up the pole there are images of a farm, cows, horses, and a Canadian flag, symbolizing where Wallace was born and where they took many of their trips. An Irish shamrock honors Barb's heritage. And, of course, there's an American flag.

Children's birth dates are recorded. There's even a shock of corn to remind them of the



Totem pole stands near the Andersons' rural Wisconsin home and is carved with the story of their lives together.

time Wallace lost his wristwatch - only to find it the next morning tangled in the twine around a corn shock.

The last section of the tree is filled with the couples' hobbies and things they're doing now in their retirement. When the tree was nearly complete a 6-ft. deep hole was dug and a front-end loader was used to set the tree in the hole. Cement was used to anchor it.

The last step was to mount a 3-ft. tall eagle - done by a professional chain saw artist - on top of the pole.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wallace and Barbara Anderson, 2287 Huntington Dr., Star Prairie, Wis. 54026 (ph 715 248-3827).

## IT'S AMAZING WHAT PEOPLE WILL BRING IN Illinois Auctioneer Creates New Fund-Raising Idea

Nearly everyone has treasures in their home or on their farm that are worth more than you might think, says Kurt Aumann of Aumann Auctions, Nokomis, Ill.

Aumann has proved that statement over and over in the course of running auctions across the Midwest. He has worked professionally as an auctioneer since he was only 12 years old and runs one of the most successful rural auction services in the country along with his father.

Kurt recently came up with a new fund-raising idea that has helped several local groups raise money. Called the Hidden Treasures Road show, people bring in treasures from home - antiques, heirlooms, etc. - and Kurt, along with members of his staff, give them an expert mini-appraisal. The cost per item evaluated is \$5, which all goes to charity.

"It's been a great way to raise money and even people who don't have items to appraise

enjoy seeing what other people bring in and what we think the items are worth," says Aumann.

He says you never know what will show up. One woman brought in a German-made teddy bear. "She brought it in a garbage bag. We told her it was worth \$10,000 to \$12,000. When she left she was clutching it carefully in both hands."

At another event, a man brought in an old tin-type photograph that he had bought at a garage sale. Kurt looked it over and determined that it was genuine. What was more, it was a photo of George Armstrong Custer and could be worth as much as \$8,000.

Kurt says each event so far has raised between \$400 and \$600. "That represents a lot of appraisals," he notes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Aumann Auctions, 20114 Illinois Rt. 6, Nokomis, Ill. 62075 (ph 217 563-2523).



Kansas farmer Leonard Steinle still uses three Deere No. 55 combines to harvest the wheat crop on his farm near Bunker Hill, Kan.

## Deere Combines Keep Going And Going

Many farmers are partial to a certain John Deere tractor model from their past. But for Kansas wheat grower Leonard Steinle, it's the No. 55 John Deere combine that makes his heart go pitter-patter.

For 50 years, Steinle's loyalty to the No. 55 has never wavered. He started in 1949 with a new 55, which impressed him then with its ability to harvest large volumes at a fast clip. "I fell in love with that model, and I've never wanted to change to another," says the 69-year-old farmer.

Steinle has since owned and operated four other No. 55s. Today, three of those are still used to harvest the annual 400-acre wheat crop on the Steinle family farm near Bunker Hill, Kan. One is a 55 he bought in 1961. His most recent purchase was a 1959 No. 55

acquired two years ago.

Steinle describes his combines as "very reliable," despite their age. "I've never had a serious breakdown," he says, "and I've never had to take one to a John Deere dealership for repair. For one thing, I'm careful about regular maintenance. I keep my chains maintained and don't overgrease the bearings. I think that's part of the secret."

Steinle recognizes that today's John Deere combines offer much more capacity, convenience and operator comfort. "Sure combines have come a long way," he says. "But me? I'll stick with my No. 55's."

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## Fishing Line Chases Birds Away

Ordinary fishing line can be used to keep birds out of gardens, according to wildlife specialist Jim Knight at Montana State University.

Stretching lengths of clear monofilament line across garden rows repels sparrows and many other birds. The line moves lightly in the air, making it seem to appear and disappear, which scares the birds, says Knight.

He has found that 20-lb. test line seems to work the best. You just tie it to stakes about an inch above the rows when you plant the garden - to keep them from digging up the

seeds - then raise line up as the plants grow.

On one test plot, Knight found that rows of line spaced 6 in. apart above strawberry beds completely eliminated fruit loss. He has also been successful protecting a full-size cherry tree by stringing line "teepee"-style from a pole standing at the center of the tree.

In addition, fishing line strung along the eaves of a house or along building rafters will keep birds away.

Knight says robins are the only birds he has so far seen that ignore the fishing line. (*The Furrow*)

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