

Reader Letters



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I think my drop-away gutter is a great idea. It's designed to eliminate the need to use a ladder to clean out the gutter. The gutter has a hinge on one side that's attached to pivoting brackets.

By pulling on a lever attached by wire to the brackets, the homeowner can let the gutter down for cleaning. Or, he can leave the gutter down



during the winter so there's no ice buildup to ruin the roof. He could let the gutter down from the ground, even on two-story buildings.

My invention is still in the prototype stage. However, it took second place last year in the "Peoples Choice" category at the Minnesota State Fair inventor's group exhibit. I'm looking for a manufacturer. (Bill Kurtz, 2187 State Rd. 87, St. Croix Falls, Wis. 54024 ph 715 483-3866).

Thanks for publishing the stories on my modified Wheel Horse tractors (Vol. 24, No. 6 and Vol. 25, No. 1). I'm proud of two antique trucks that I restored - the 1929 Chevy 1-ton model and a 1932 Ford



Model B equipped with dual tandem rear wheels. Both trucks are very rare. The Chevy has a blue body with black fenders on front and diamond plate aluminum fenders on back. The wheels are aluminum mags. The truck's rear end is off a Pontiac car. There's a big "cherry bomb" exhaust muffler alongside each side of the truck, just above the running board. After I bought the truck, I replaced the original 6-cyl. engine with a V-8, 454 cu. in. engine. It lasted a few years and then I replaced it with a 402 cu. in. engine.

The first year Chevy offered trucks with a 6-cyl. engine was in 1929. It was a depression year so not many of these trucks were ever made. At that time Chevy trucks were built with frames that had a lot of wood, which is another reason these trucks are so rare. I had to make a few new wood pieces on my truck's frame to replace ones that had rotted out.

The Ford truck has a red body with black fenders and is powered by a 427 cu. in. Chevy engine. This truck also has



diamond plate aluminum fenders on back, which I made out of cold air duct pipes. I call it my "Great Mountain Climber" because I replaced the original V-8 engine with a big alcohol-injected

engine and drove this truck for years in 2-WD truck pulling contests. It had cleated tires mounted on a single rear axle. When the engine suddenly quit on me, I replaced it with the Chevy engine and added a second rear axle off a Chevy 3/4-ton pickup. Only the rear axle drives.

My Ford was originally used as a logging truck and was equipped with big wheels and a stake bed. I removed the original bed and made a new one equipped with wooden racks. I keep a load of nail kegs on the bed to add to the old-time look. The original fuel tank rusted out so I replaced it with one off an old Massey Harris self-propelled corn picker. The outside part of the tank serves as a toolbox and has a Chevy hub cap at one end that serves as a lid. The hub cap is held on by a pair of wing nuts. (Charlie Melton, 6941 Eyman Rd., Washington Court House, Ohio 43160)

To mix up feed for a small number of animals, we use an old electric-operated grinder-mixer that we purchased a few years ago from a Federal grain inspec-



tion agency in our area. The grinder-mixer has an opening on top and a spout at the bottom. We bolted it inside a wooden frame made from 2 by 4's and 4 by 4's. Then we mounted a metal wash tub on top of the frame. The tub has a slide at the bottom. We use 5-gal. pails to dump grain and concentrate into the tub. To mix the feed, we simply flip a switch on the grinder-mixer. The mixed feed drops into a 5-gal. pail. (Terry Hill, 4439 Capitol Ave. S.W., Battle Creek, Mich. 49015 ph 616 979-9492; fax 616 979-8102)

The conventional way to seal up grain bins is to apply tar or caulking around the outside where the bin meets the foundation. It can be a hassle because over time the tar or caulking cracks and leaks and you have to apply new material.

Instead, we seal the bin from the inside using ordinary grease and 4-in. wide "caution tape" that's often used at construction sites. You can buy it cheap at any hardware store. We hook up an air-operated grease gun to a big tub of grease and apply a 1/2 to 3/4-in. thick bead along the inside edge of the bin. Then we place the tape over the grease and gently press it down. As the bin is being filled, the grain pushes on the tape and forces the grease between the bin and foundation to create a seal. The tape keeps the grain away from the grease.

We've been sealing bins this way for



Years ago my dad and cousin cut part of the rear end off a pickup and attached it to a 7-in. dia. post hole auger that's pto-driven off our Ferguson 20 tractor. They cut off part of the axle on each side of the differential, then drilled a hole through the stub shaft and bolted the auger shaft on. They made their own pto shaft and attached it to the differential's yoke. A

homemade steel frame that attaches to the tractor 3-pt. is bolted to the stub shaft on the other side of the differential and also supports the differential.

It doesn't look fancy, but we've used it a lot over the years and have dug a lot of holes with it. (Ervin Novak, 5515 Oak Grove Road, Ennis, Texas 75119 ph 972 875-2942)

712 343-2161)

almost 20 years and have never lost any grain to spoilage. Our bins measure 27, 40, and 48 ft. in diameter. We can usually leave the tape and grease in for three to five years before it has to be replaced due to a broom or shovel catching the tape. It takes only a few minutes to pull the tape up and use a putty knife to scrape away the old grease. We do use new grease and tape every year on the 48-ft. dia. bin, because with a bin this big the sides will often shift one or two inches as the bin is being emptied.

We buy bulk grease cheap in a 100-lb. drum and fit the air-operated grease gun on top of it, with a hose leading out to the grease gun handle. (Richard Pope, 3728 Gary Dr., W. Harrison, Ind. 47060 ph 812 637-1365)

I'm proud to own the only oil well in Iowa. After retiring from farming a couple of years ago, I finally took time to build a fake well out of wood. Our farm is located along Interstate 80 in western Iowa so



my oil well gets noticed a lot. Occasionally someone will stop and ask if it really pumps oil.

The pump is about 12 ft. long and 8 ft. high and is operated by an electric motor that runs on a time clock. The electric gear motor drives a rod that is attached to a big 12-ft. long "arm" that goes up and down at about 10 strokes per minute, which is about the same speed as a real oil well. The arm is made from a 2 by 12 plank and the counterweight wheel is made from plywood. The entire well is mounted on skids so I can pull it around with my tractor.

Normally I operate the well only during the day, but throughout the past Christmas season I put lights on it and also operated it at night. The well is located at the edge of our building site, with a large sign placed much closer to the Interstate. The sign reads "Oil Leases Available, 1 800 Dry Hole". (Eugene Sornsen, 45398 York Rd., Avoca, Iowa 51521 ph

I made my own lawn edger by bolting the blade off a 10-in. circular saw onto the pulley side of an old 3 1/2 hp snowblower. I removed a bolt from the pulley and installed the blade on the pulley hub, then put a longer bolt back in. Works good.

I also converted a 3 1/2 hp push-type lawn mower into a stationary leaf shredder. I removed the wheels and handle and bolted a section of metal underneath the deck to form a cover. I then drilled a hole on top of the deck and placed a funnel inside it. To shred leaves, I simply throw them into the funnel. The mower blades grind them up and then they're discharged out the chute where grass clippings would normally exit. It really works slick and can even be used to chop up small tree branches. (Roland Schmidt, 290 E. 10th St., Garner, Iowa 50438 ph 641 923-2349)

Our new reel paddles are designed to replace the fingers on the Hart Carter pickup reel found on Deere, Case-IH, Gleaner, and New Holland combines. The 6-in. wide poly paddles pull the crop



into the header and keep the cutter bar cleaned off, which results in even feeding of the crop into the combine. They work great on soybeans, cereal crops, and short specialty crops. The paddles



can also be used on swathers. One paddle replaces two to three fingers.

The paddles sell for \$4.50 apiece (U.S.) plus S&H. The cost for a 25-ft. reel with six bars is \$729 plus S&H. (John R. Althen, Keho Products Ltd., Box 449, Nobleford, Alberta, Canada T0L 1S0 ph 800 661-9419 in the U.S. or 800 661-8034 in Canada)