

Reader Letters



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engine to the transmission. We also added a school bus driver's seat and four chrome-plated mufflers on each side of the tractor. (Math Schmitz, 26567 County Road 9, Richmond, Minn. 56368 ph 320 597-2092)

I use the loader bucket on my New Holland skid loader to back trailers into my storage shed. I modified a receiver hitch



and bolted it to the front of the bucket. It's not a load leveling hitch, just an adapter to hold the ball mount. I drilled two holes in the lip of the bucket and bolted the box on, then pinned the ball mount to it. I like using the skid loader because I have a great view of what's in front of me and because I can turn short, which makes backing up trailers an easy job. (Dave Nicholas, Box 146, Martinsville, Ohio 45146)

My rural mailbox is located 3/4 of a mile away by line of sight across a valley, and one mile away by road. As a result, I never know when the mail is delivered (it can be anywhere from 2 to 5 p.m.).

I solved the problem by placing a model airplane radio transmitter inside the mailbox. My rural carrier aims the transmitter at my house, where a model airplane radio receiver knocks a ping pong ball into a paper cup mounted on a window-sill. When I see the ball in the cup, I know it's time to get the mail. (Coleman Williams Hoyt, Saddlebow Farm, 2351 North Bridgewater Road, Woodstock, Vt. 05091 ph 802 672-3634)

I mounted an old 200-gal. fuel oil tank on a 4-wheeled trailer to haul water for keeping dust down on the driveway in front of our house. I use a small tractor or ATV to pull it.



The wagon is designed so it can be adjusted to different lengths. I extended it to the length of the tank and placed 2 by 4's along the sides. I use a pair of straps to secure the tank.

I wanted to transport my snowmobile without the expense of a trailer, so I made a "ramp" that lets me drive it right into my 2003 Dodge full size van. I started with a sheet of 3/4-in. thick plywood which I slide onto the floor of the van. I attached a plastic runner to each side of the sheet and

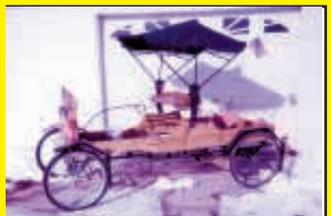
down the middle for the skis and track. I cut a 1-in. wide groove into each plastic runner for the carbide runners on the snowmobile's skis. An aluminum piece laid crosswise on back of the plywood sheet provides traction for the snowmobile's rubber tracks and keeps them from spinning on the plywood. To load the snowmobile or ATV, I place a ramp at an angle and simply drive the vehicle into the van. I put a raised lip around three sides of the plywood sheet in order to keep melted snow off the van floor. Whenever I open the van's back door the water runs out. (Murray Scea, RR 5, Campbellford, Ontario, Canada K0L 1L0 ph 705 653-3203)

I used a section of old tire casing to come up with a low-cost gate opening system that holds my free-swinging feedlot gate in place. It lets me open the gate by simply bumping it with my tractor. I sawed off an 8-in. section of a 16-in. tire and then cut it in half lengthwise. Then I lag bolted both sections to a 2 by 6 board that's screwed onto the gate post. The open edges of the tire's bead face the gate, and the gate is held secure between the two sections. You need to use a fairly heavy tire, at least 6-ply, in order to keep the wind from blowing the gate out of the flaps. You don't want to use a steel belted tire because it would be too hard to saw.

I use a chain to secure the gate whenever I'm not going through it, to keep livestock from pushing it open. Before, when I left the tractor to open the gate, livestock might get out. Now I can just bump the gate and go on through. (Buzz Kutzler, 20499 399th Ave., Huron, S. Dak. 57350 ph 605 352-8177)

The cuffs off old long sleeve shirts can be used to make inexpensive neck mufflers. Simply cut off each cuff and then button them together. Keeps you from getting a sore throat on cold days. (Glenn R. Laskey, P.O. Box 520, Indian Head, Sask. S0G 2K0)

I made this replica of an antique 1901 Duryea car, which was manufactured from 1896 to 1903. I built my replica after seeing a photo of the car in a magazine. I started out by drawing a chalk pattern of the car on my shop floor. The car is powered by a 5 hp motor and has



a 3-speed transmission. It has wagon-type brakes, a V-belt clutch, and 26-in. pneumatic wheels. I'm willing to build another Duryea car for anyone who's interested. (James C. Drullinger, 810 Adams Ave., Akron, Colo. 80720 ph 970 554-9090)



Here's a tip for anyone who raises a few chickens and dresses the birds themselves. I used to hang chickens from a pole and cut their heads off. But I read in a book that if you just cut their jugular vein they will bleed out better because their hearts keep working until they run

out of blood. The book said you can use a gallon jug to make a funnel-like holder for the chicken, and it works great. I use gallon plastic jugs that have funnel necks. I bolt the jugs to a wooden board. (Delbert Elbrader, 1423 Kennebec St., Burlington, Kansas 66839)

Everyone knows the ground freezes hard during a typical Minnesota winter, and that pocket gophers can't dig through frozen ground. But a few years ago I took this photo of big pocket gopher mounds poking up out of the snow. It was Christmas Day. (David Lauer, 30101 Stearns County Road 16, Paynesville, Minn. 56362 ph 320 243-4274)



"Glowing" Safety Vests, Lights Great For Road Travel

A new kind of glowing safety light that can be used on safety vests, vehicle lights, and slow-moving vehicle signs shows up from a much greater distance than conventional lights, says the company that developed the new "electroluminescent" product.

"A glowing light can be seen from a greater distance than a shining light," says John Golle, CEO of Safe Lites, LLC. "It doesn't affect night vision or suffer refraction from material in the air, so it can be seen through snow, dust, smoke, fog, rain, and other debris."

Conventional SMV signs can't be seen until light strikes them. Safe Lite's GlowSkin™ technology can be seen long before it's in headlight range.

"People tend to overdrive their headlights," says Golle. "Pilots report seeing our signs on airport trucks when they are still 2 miles out."

Golle grew up in rural Illinois and understands the dangers of night driving with farm equipment. His company is working with the American Farm Bureau Federation and others to encourage adoption of illuminated SMV signs as a way to reduce the frequency and severity of accidents.

A slight electrical charge ignites phosphors in the company's glow lamps. They can be hardwired into a vehicle's electrical system or to rechargeable Lithium batteries. A 2.1-oz. battery will provide full power for 10 hours and can be recharged to full power in only 3 hours with either a cigarette lighter or an AC charger.

"It only takes a trickle charge of about 2 amps, less than a tail light, to light up a large warning sign on a truck," explains Golle.

The glow lamps are just 1/8 in. thick, making it easy to adapt them to almost any surface.

"We have even encased the components in rubber material for mud flaps and other applications, so any vehicle can be lit up," reports Golle.

Truckers hope the mud flaps will reduce the number of cars that strike the rear of their rigs. It is the fourth most common accident, but the most catastrophic. Current reflective mud flaps don't provide the advance warning needed when traveling at high speed.

Existing products can be purchased directly from the company. SMV sign sells for \$155. Golle says it will last a lifetime since the sign will not discolor. Safety vest sells



Glowing safety vest runs off power pack.



Illuminated SMV sign never fades.



Custom signage of all types can be created with Safe Lite technology.

for \$195, including power pack, which is good for 3 to 4 years. Replacement vest alone is \$95. Golle encourages people with ideas for new applications to contact him with their suggestions. "We are a very entrepreneurial company," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tony Morse, Safe Lites, LLC, 12903 Pioneer Trail, Eden Prairie, Minn. 55347 (ph 952 944-9861 or 866 206-0566; email: tmorse@safelites.com; www.safelites.com).