

the transmission was rebuilt. The pickup has about 210,000 miles on it now, but the body still doesn't show any rust. We have three Chevy pickups and like all of them.

"Our 2006 **Maytag Neptune** washer is our worst buy. We bought it new thinking it was a top-of-the-line washer. However, after just four years the main drum bearings were shot and the dealer told us it would cost \$600 to repair. Instead, we contacted the company and bought a drum for \$250 and installed it ourselves."

Thomas Hazelgrove, Rossville, Ind.: "We had our **Panasonic** 'over-the-range' microwave for seven years when it decided to quit working. We called the company to ask about repairs, but instead they sent us a brand new microwave free of charge. We sent the old one back, and they reimbursed us for the shipping charge."

Gary Alford, Edwardsburg, Mich.: "I bought a set of **Cinch** mole traps because someone had bragged them up in FARM SHOW. I tried them all last summer and used them as instructed, but with no luck at all. I didn't catch a single mole, even though there were moles all around."

"My best buy is my **Deere 105** riding mower. It's a good value, and my wife loves it."

Ron Dove, Century, Fla.: "My **Deutz D6206** tractor is more than 20 years old but

"Local farmers have tried to buy it. I just smile and say 'no thank you.'"

still going strong. It's a dependable tractor, and I don't know what I'd do without it. Some local farmers have tried to buy it. I just smile and say 'no thank you.'"

Jim Evans, Gales Creek, Ore.: "My 2005 **Branson** tractor has about 400 trouble-free hours on it."

Steve Avery, Du Bois, Neb.: Steve likes his 1999 **Grasshopper** riding mower. "I'm a retired farmer who got into the lawn cutting business. I put about 200 hours a year on my mowers and trade them every year to keep current. Over the years I've owned seven different **Grasshopper** mowers, starting with a chain-driven one, and never had a problem with any of them. The fold-up deck works great. These mowers hold well on slopes and are well designed."

"I've used an **Echo** gas-powered leaf blower for the last 3 years, and it works great."

Randy Cowart, The Dalles, Ore.: "I bought my **Kubota B7300** tractor used with 210 hours on it. It came equipped with front-end loader, 4-ft. rear blade, and 4-ft. finish mower. At first I thought this tractor was a bit on the small side, but it does a good job."

"I stopped buying **Sears Craftsman** cordless drills. The batteries wouldn't stay charged. I've switched to **Ridgid** cordless drills, which work much better."

Ed Landis, Abilene, Kan.: "My 2004 **Deere 5203** tractor is handy and easy to get on and off, and very easy on fuel. However, I think it should have a hitch on front under the grill guard."

"My 1994 **Chevrolet** pickup has about 87,000 miles on it but still has the original tires. It's a good, solid truck."

Bob Fine, Excelsior Springs, Mo.: Bob's the satisfied owner of a 2005 **Deere Gator**. "I think every farm needs at least one or two of these machines. I have one, my wife has one, and my grandkids one. I paid about \$6,700 for it. I probably use it on average 12 times a day, for everything from getting the mail to

hauling chainsaws, wood, apples, and fencing items, and transporting deer hunters."

"I've had problems with my 2008 **Cub Cadet** zero turn riding mower equipped with a 52-in. deck. The B & S engine has problems and the mower pulls sideways. Also, it won't pull itself up a 25-degree hill. However, the mower does a great job around small trees and I like the leaf vacuum attachment."

Gale Oswald, Milford, Neb.: "Last year I bought a **Chicago 1/2-in.** electric hammer drill at Harbor Freight because I needed to drill several hundred holes in concrete. I still use this tool to drive wood screws in old, hard lumber. Sometimes Harbor Freight gets a bad rap, and no doubt sometimes it's deserved. But I'm happy with this 'cheap' drill."

Ed Coker, Macomb, Ill.: Ed owns a 2009 **Suzuki 750cc King Quad** ATV. "This machine has enough power to handle any hauling and towing jobs around our farm. It came with a 2 or 4-wheel option. Steers easy and rides good going across fields or through timber. This is my third Suzuki ATV."

"With 165 miles on it the engine blew up, scoring a piston and cylinder walls, even though the oil had been changed every 100 miles according to the company's recommendations. After I spent a month fighting with the company, they finally paid for one third of the repair bill. The dealer and I split the rest of the bill, even though he had done everything possible to solve the problem."

Ronald Hogeland, Hayden, Ala.: "I bought my 1946 **Ford 2N** tractor used in 2001. The engine had some stuck valves, so I ground the valves and added some new parts and a new coat of paint. Now this tractor runs good and pulls a 5-ft. finishing mower with no problems. It's a good, strong tractor."

Melvin Ens, Inman, Kan.: "In 42 years of farming it's the best tractor I've ever owned," says Melvin about his 1994 **Case IH 7240**. "I bought it used with 2,500 hours on it, and now it has 6,750 hours. My sons and I bought another model a couple years ago. They're good tractors."

Ben Parks, Austin, Texas: "My **Battery Tender** battery maintainer is my best buy. It's a money saver because I don't have to buy replacement batteries for my vehicles as often. It helps prevent battery sulfation and works great for cars, trucks and other vehicles that are used only occasionally."

"For example, I have a collector car that sits idle most of the time. Back in 2001, I bought a cheap battery for it, just to get by. About that time the **Battery Tender** started showing up in stores, so I bought one and kept it connected to the car's battery to trickle charge it. Unbelievably, the battery lasted for nine years."

"My 1992 **Makita 9-volt** cordless drill, which was given to me in 1998, is one tough drill. It has a heavy-duty motor, switch and case. I had to replace the switch back in 2006, and when I opened the drill, I saw that its gears are made of metal instead of plastic, like on some newer drills."

"The drill's 9-volt battery wouldn't charge any more so I sent it in to a company called **Voltman Batteries**, after reading about them in FARM SHOW (www.voltmanbatteries.com; ph 419 526-1570). I got back a new battery with a lot more power than the old one. It was \$88 well spent."

"I like **Ballistol** multi-purpose lubricant (www.ballistol.com; ph 800 253-2460) which was also featured in FARM SHOW. In fact, I like this product so much that I don't even buy WD-40 any more. A little of this oil goes a long way when lubricating parts, freeing stuck bolts, and cleaning guns. The best thing about Ballistol is that it's waterproof and doesn't wash off easily, so it prevents rust."

Dodge Ram Nears 1.7 Million Miles

Howard Clayton's Dodge Ram 3500 is heading for the record books. Purchased new in 2000, people tell him it looks like it might have 80,000 miles on it. When FARM SHOW caught up to him, he had just passed 1,688,676 miles. In all that time, he's never touched the inside of the 5.9 Cummins engine, and it's not because he follows the book.

"The book says change the oil every 3,000 miles, but if I did that, I would be stopping every other day," says Clayton. "I change the oil and filter every 10,000 miles. That's two trips from Indiana to California."

Clayton lives in Iowa, but he tows trailers for an Indiana company, putting on more than 160,000 miles a year. Most of his trips are west. The 70-year-old has been trucking for the past 20 years. The first 10 years were in a semi, and the last 10 in the Dodge 3500.

Forest Cunningham is Clayton's mechanic, though he lives in Missouri. Cunningham himself is sort of a legend with those who know him for his work on fuel pumps and high mileage engines. When FARM SHOW contacted him, he said another customer had just left with 400,000 miles on his engine.

"That one is just a baby compared to Howard's," says Cunningham, who gives credit to Clayton for taking good care of his rig. "Once a year we clean out all the fluids and refill with fresh synthetics. He has a custom-built set of injectors, stock injection pump and an after market device that alters injection timing. He gets more than 300 hp with that engine, and I've no idea how much torque."

Clayton has had to replace the battery, alternator and lift pumps. The closest he has been to engine problems was replacing a head gasket, though he has had a couple of oil leaks over the years.

"Howard was nervous when he stopped recently," recalls Cunningham. "He was using a quart of oil every 200 miles, but it was the vacuum pump that was leaking. We

Garry Janney, Manhattan, Ill.: Garry's impressed with his **DR** road grader. "I can't believe how great this grader works on gravel driveways. It does exactly what the company says. They told me to use the grader for six months and that if I didn't like it, they'd come and pick it up. You can't beat that for service."

On the negative side, he lists his **Sears Craftsman** twin cutter electric saw with double blades. "I used this saw only twice. One of those times, I used it to cut the bottom off an old wood garage door, and the motor up. It's a great concept, but it's just not built right. The reviews on the internet agree with me."

Shannon Rupnow, Reeseville, Wis.: "I like shopping at **Tractor Supply Company**. It's a small store so I can get in and out quickly. They sell good stuff at a good price and provide excellent customer service."

"My **Deere Gator** is a best buy. I have no idea how I ever got by without it."

"My 2002 **Ford F-150 4-WD** pickup works great. It's equipped with a V-6 engine and a 5-speed manual transmission. The seal on the slave cylinder went out. It would have been an expensive 10-hr. repair at the dealership. Instead, I pulled the engine out and did the work myself in only 5 hrs."

Carl Huth, Canby, Minn.: "I bought my 1944 **Deere 70** diesel tractor used in 1964 as my 'big' tractor, and it's still my best buy ever. I used it to plow with four 14-in. moldboards, and I also disked and planted with it. I never had any problems with the pony motor and I replaced the plugs and points only once. I replaced the head gasket



Howard Clayton has put almost 1.7 million miles on his 2000 Dodge Ram 3500 pickup, without ever touching the inside of the 5.9-liter Cummins engine.

resealed the oil cooler, changed oil and sent him out the door again."

Clayton says there are no secrets to what he and Cunningham do. "I try to keep an eye on maintenance, and if anything goes wrong, I take care of it immediately."

Clayton relies on synthetic Rotella 1540 for engine oil and Fleetguard oil filters. Transmission and rear end fluids are also synthetic. He gives them at least part of the credit for never having touched the 6-speed transmission or the rear end.

Clayton also uses a fuel treatment year round to keep his injectors clean, as well as using Lucas Oil Additive. He adds half a quart of the thickening agent with every oil change.

"It thickens the oil just enough for better oil pressure," says Clayton. "You don't want it too thick, especially in the winter."

Clayton says his odometer gets a lot of attention when people first notice it. "I had a small fuel leak and stopped at a Dodge dealer in Kankakee, Ill.," he recalls.

"The mechanic couldn't believe it when he saw the odometer and called the manager out to see it," says Clayton. "I told them to add a million. I had to show them an article about my truck in Diesel Power magazine for them to believe me."

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on the main engine 19 years ago. Now I use this tractor with a 16-ft. digger in my garden and to mow CRP land during the summer. In my opinion it's the most economical tractor ever built. I'm more than satisfied with it."

"My **Rotozip** saw was given to me as a gift, via a TV commercial. It had problems. First, the handle came apart. They replaced that, and then while I was cutting holes in sheet rock the motor started smoking and quit. They said I had abused the saw. Now I use a key hole saw, and it works just fine."

James Kennedy, Troutville, Va.: "I like my 2004 **Troy-Bilt** chipper/shredder, which is equipped with a 10 hp Briggs and Stratton overhead valve engine. No problems. It never fails to start on the first pull. Every year I use it to mulch enough leaves and small tree limbs to cover both my gardens with 6 in. of mulch, which I later work into the soil. The gardens measure 80 by 35 ft. and 40 by 30 ft. I service the chipper/shredder when the work is done for the year. I wish every machine was this well-built."

George Mader, North Royalton, Ohio: "My **Gator** mulcher blades work fantastic (www.gatorblade.com; ph 217 359-1234).

I've got 2 1/2 acres with a lot of maple and oak trees and as long as the leaves are dry, these mulcher blades will cut them down to the size of confetti."

Continued on next page

