

Continued from previous page

Options include a number of hardwood and softwood species.

"Once I push the prongs into the wood, the moisture level shows up in a second or two. What I like is getting a quick read without carrying a bulky, stand-alone tool around. The meter is compact with a tough, flat, rubbery cable. A see-through cap slips over the prongs to protect them.

"The Ryobi is more than a firewood meter. It can also be used for lumber (hardwood or softwood), wallboard, concrete and more. It lets you track moisture content from 6 percent to 44 percent. At around \$20, it is a handy tool that works well with my cell phone."

**Ed Krass, Wheeler, Wis.:** Ed likes the **Chicago Electric 240-volt, 145-amp welder-inverter** he bought at Harbor Freight. "The inverter makes this a true D.C. welder, one that works even better than my Lincoln 400 generator welder. It does an amazing job and makes smooth and accurate welds. It measures just 5 3/4 in. wide by 12 3/4 in. long by 8 in. tall, so it's small enough to store in my pickup's toolbox. It uses only 15 amps per wire. Remove the cover and you'll see a printed circuit board and a coil that's small enough to hold in your hand, yet this welder will work all day long on a 100-amp setting."

**Robert D. Brooks, Martin, Tenn.:** "My 2016 **Stihl** cordless chainsaw works great on tree limbs up to 8 in. in dia. and can be used for up to 30 min. on a single charge. No problems."

**Allan A. Rinzel, Germantown, Wis.:** Allan's the owner of a 2015 **Excel Industries Hustler Raptor SD** zero-turn riding mower equipped with a Kawasaki 23 hp., 2-cyl. engine and 48-in. deck ([www.hustlerturf.com](http://www.hustlerturf.com)). "I've put about 50 trouble-free hours on this mower. It consistently produces a great-looking lawn, and turns on a dime which saves time because I have a lot of obstacles to maneuver around in my yard. It used to take 45 min. with my old Deere 38-in. riding mower to mow our yard, but now it takes only about 25 min."

**Ernest Rusack, Coventry, R.I.:** "I'm still using my 1968 **Cub Cadet** riding mower equipped with a Kohler 12 hp. gas engine and 48-in. deck. I've had to replace the batteries, belts, and clutch but it still runs good. It has a solid frame and chassis."

**Ziggy Jurglewicz, Southington, Ct.:** "I started having problems with my 1999 **Ford New Holland TC25D** loader tractor just a few hours after I bought it. A switch under the seat malfunctioned. Pallet forks are difficult to put on using the loader's hook-up levers. The tractor had starting problems and required other major repairs that cost about \$1,300. Now the tilt steering wheel adjustment mechanism is jammed, and I may have to take it apart. I'm using bungee cords to hold it in place for now."

**Kevin Fulton, Litchfield, Neb.:** "The 3 **Honda Rancher** ATV's I bought in 2001, 2007, and 2015 are my best buys. I've operated most of the other major ATV brands, but I think Hondas are by far the best. The 2001 model has more than 36,000 miles on it but still runs great with no major repairs. Those miles have been strictly for farm use, and not easy ones because I often use these machines to pull heavy loads up steep hills. The company's newer models are just as reliable."

**Roger Mautz, Mt. Perry, Ohio:** "My **Generac Guardian 13kW** generator is my best buy ([www.generac.com](http://www.generac.com); ph 888 436-3722). I recently came across the operator's manual and was surprised to find my generator is already 10 years old. The only maintenance it has needed so far was for a

new oil filter and battery."

**C. Donald Carpenter, Galway, N.Y.:** "My **Lynxx 14-in.** electric chainsaw does a great job of removing tree limbs. I always keep a backup battery for it on hand.

"My 2016 **Kubota B23 4-WD** loader tractor works as good as I hoped it would."

**Joe Duggan, Rochester, Mass.:** "I like my **3M WorkTunes** wireless headphones with Bluetooth technology and AM/FM digital radio ([www.3m.com](http://www.3m.com)). The headset is comfortable, and I can listen to the radio all day long without needing any other hearing protection. I enjoy using it whether I'm driving my tractor, operating a chainsaw, or working in the fields."

**Robert E. Spencer, Gasport, N.Y.:** Robert's happy with his 2012 **Echo SRM 260** weed trimmer equipped with a cutting blade ([www.echo-usa.com](http://www.echo-usa.com)). "It starts good, handles well, and is easy on fuel. It'll cut grass and brush up to 2 in. dia. It comes with a shoulder harness which I've never used."

"My 1995 **Echo CS4400 20-in.** chainsaw has been a real workhorse. I've cut a lot of wood with it."

**Rick Robinson, Fairfield, Iowa:** "My 2016 **Ferris 700Z** zero-turn riding mower equipped with a 72-in. deck has many improvements over my 2009 Ferris model equipped with a 62-in. deck ([www.ferrismowers.com](http://www.ferrismowers.com)). For example, it's equipped with a hydraulic deck lift and a right angle gearbox on the deck's belt drive system. And even though both models are powered by the same diesel engine, the new one seems to have more power even with the bigger deck."

**Alec Yeager, Hendley, Neb.:** "Over the last few years I've bought six different attachments for my skid loader from **Quick Attach LLC** ([www.quickattach.com](http://www.quickattach.com); ph 866 428-8224). Their attachments are built with excellent quality and workmanship."

On the minus side, he lists "**The Best Mouse Trap Ever**." "I bought three of these live mouse traps two years ago and have tried using numerous different baits, and even no bait at all. But all three traps are still sitting in my sheds, and I haven't caught a single mouse yet."

**Adrian Flath, Evans Mills, N.Y.:** "My **Mahindra 3550 PST 4-WD** loader tractor rides on R4 construction tires that make the tractor's tire footprint 6 ft. 3 in. wide, which isn't compatible with 6-ft. wide implements.

## "When I turn in my seat to check on an implement the gearshift lever is in the way."

The tractor's throttle pedal is in an awkward location, and whenever I turn in my seat to check on an implement the gearshift lever is in the way."

**Jeff Shepherd, Lexington, Ind.:** A 2011 **Cub Cadet L60** zero-turn riding mower equipped with a Kohler Command 27 hp. engine and 60-in. deck rates as Jeff's "best buy". "I use this mower to cut 3 1/2 acres of grass on rolling ground, and it does a beautiful job. It's equipped with a floating front axle that smoothes out many of the bumps. It has needed only routine maintenance."

**Ken Dittbrenner, Denton, Neb.:** "I've had problems with my 2017 **Deere 110** riding mower equipped with a Briggs & Stratton 19 hp. engine. I bought the mower used and at a discount from Lowes with only 3 hrs. on it. However, when I tried to start the engine it would often backfire, and I had to make 3 trips to the dealer before they discovered

## "Best Buy" Electric Chainsaw

**Jim Ruen, La Crescent, Minn.:** "Makita's cordless chainsaw makes cleaning up brush and thinning out trees a lot more fun. It uses the same batteries as my cordless Makita 7 1/4-in. circular saw.

"The chainsaw is so quiet that my wife, who was working on the other side of our house, couldn't hear it run. Without its twin batteries, the saw weighs in at only 10.6 lbs. It has all the standard features, such as a chain brake. Take your finger off the switch, and the saw chain comes to a standstill in less than a second. In fact, the company strongly recommends taking it in for service if the saw chain takes more than a second to stop.

"The 14-in. bar is ideal for trimming away branches and light trunk work. I sliced off 10 pine tree trunks of 8 to 10-in. dia. almost as fast as I could walk between them.

"Even better, I had battery power to spare. I headed over to a pile of 15 to 20 in. dia. walnut trees that had been grubbed out earlier this summer. I trimmed away



branches and began slicing up larger branches and trunks for firewood, making it through several before running out of power.

"The Makita is well designed for ease of maintenance. A lever on the sprocket cover means no tool is needed to install or change saw chains. Likewise, the tension-adjusting dial is easy to use. Battery check lights and capacity indicators let you know when it is time to recharge.

"After 40 years of dealing with pull starters and fuel mixes every time I have a little trimming to do, the Makita cordless chainsaw is a real treat to use."

the problem. They found the compression release had broken, so they replaced the cam. Fortunately the repair was covered under warranty. The machine works good now."

**Vernon Vignolo, Linden, Calif.:** "I'm disappointed with **Lazer Bond USA**, a liquid plastic compound that's designed to harden under ultraviolet light. It's supposed to work on plastic, metal, glass or wood and provide a '3-second rapid repair', but it never bonded anything that I used it on. I finally gave up on it."

**Claude Strauch, Richville, Minn.:** "I bought a **Deere 10-ft.** field cultivator made in the 1950's at an auction and am only its second owner. It still does a good job of digging. I guess some equipment is just made to last a long time."

**Joe Abba, Acampo, Calif.:** "My 2001 **Dodge** diesel pickup has been in the shop for more than 5 mos. because the mechanic can't find a computer board for it that works. It's the second time this problem has happened. The pickup has only about 50,000 miles on it."

**Ethan M. Burkholder, Stanley, N.Y.:** "Our 2013 **Kubota SVL75** rubber track skid loader works great and is definitely a better machine than our previous Deere 240 skid loader. It's built tough. In fact, my dad accidentally broke through the upper floor of our barn with it and fell 9 ft. down onto solid concrete below, yet he was able to drive right on out of the barn without skipping a beat."

**Glenn Meteer, Maple City, Mich.:** Glenn bought a used 2015 **Chevrolet** crew cab pickup equipped with a 6-liter engine, 6-speed transmission, and 8-ft. bed. "It rides good and handles anything that I can load in it or onto a trailer."

**Karl Rethemeyer, St. Peters, Mo.:** "My 2015 **Nissan Rogue** sports utility vehicle gets 28 to 29 mpg and is a good towing vehicle. However, it has some problems. The seat belt catches in the doors, and the weather stripping on the driver's side door disintegrated with less than 1,000 miles on the vehicle. The transmission is slow to respond and was under recall - the dealer finally replaced a sensor. The headlights aren't correctly adjusted, and the dealer only reluctantly agreed to align them under the warranty. Also, the vehicle's sheet metal is so thin that I can't let my elbows touch the hood when cleaning the windshield."

**Glenn Dawson, McConnelsville, Ohio:** "I'm still using my 1989 **Kubota 5200**

lawn tractor equipped with a 48-in. mower deck. The only repair needed was to replace the steering shaft, which broke when I accidentally hit a tree stump."

**Ozie Prier, Fredericktown, Mo.:** "I'm restoring a 1947 **Deere M** tractor that I bought for \$400. While disassembling the tractor I came to the conclusion that all the newer tractors lack the quality metals found in these older tractors, and that their workmanship is terrible. The older tractors are made with pride, workmanship, and quality materials."

**Andy Yoder, Fort Plain, N.Y.:** Andy likes **Jake's Wire Tighteners** ([www.jakeswiretighteners.com](http://www.jakeswiretighteners.com); ph 334 541-4950).



"This is the single most time and hassle-saving fence repair device that I've ever laid hands on. It consists of a clip that you wind into the fence wire with a crank handle. It won't break a barbed wire from bending it too sharp. You leave the clip in the fence, and later on you can grab the handle and give the clip another crank or two to retighten the wire, if necessary.

"We bought a **Harbor Freight Predator 3** hp. gas engine to operate our sawmill blade sharpener, but even on the warmest days we have to pull 10 times to start the engine. Other Amish farmers in our area have had the same problem with this engine. However, it doesn't seem to be a problem with 6 1/2 hp. Predator engines and up.

"I've always had good luck with Honda engines and never thought I'd switch brands but **Harbor Freight** sells the 6 1/2 hp. Predator engine for \$99 with coupon, whereas a Honda 6 1/2 hp. engine sells for about \$300. We've used a 6 1/2-hp. Predator engine on our water pump for at least three years, pumping about 700 gal. of water per week, with no problems. I recently bought an 8-hp., 310cc Predator engine to operate our sawdust blower and it runs good, too."

**Jonathan Burkholder, Sheridan, Mich.:** Jonathan's happy with the **Sturdy Built** one-way flow control gates he bought for his dairy barn (ph 717 335-3030 or 866 543-5116). "I