



Each "bird" is different and all are painted bright colors. Photo courtesy Grass & Grain

He Makes "Shovel Birds"

Welding is a hobby for LeRoy Klatt, McPherson, Kan., who scours flea markets and auctions looking for what other people might call junk to make his colorful and unusual lawn ornaments he calls "Shovel Birds".

Seven of Klatt's creations stand in his yard and he's made another 40 to 50 to give to friends and relatives spread out over five neighboring states.

Klatt uses all kinds of shovels - scoop, spades, blunt nose, etc. - to make his creations. Old tractor seats, rakes and pitchforks are also used for the body and tail feathers.

"Any odds-and-ends junk will work. I use rebar steel for the feet and legs, old

springs for the neck, and a horse mower guard for the head and beak," says Klatt.

Ball bearings are used for eyes as well as knock-out steel circles from punch presses. (Klatt says the steel circles are easier to weld into place than bearings.) Each "bird" is different from the next and all are painted bright colors.

Sometimes neighbors ask Klatt to make shovel birds for them out of junk they have around the farm. He does so without charge. Shovel Birds are not for sale since he only makes them to give to friends.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, LeRoy Klatt, Canton, Kan. 67428 (ph 316 628-4391).

Editor's Note: Most of what goes into Ag World stems from story ideas sent to us by readers. This special section of FARM SHOW touches on the lighter side of farming and ranching — everything from human interest stories, to unusual hobbies, to unique things farm families are doing for fun or profit.

If you've read or heard a good Ag World type story you'd like to share with others, send it to: FARM SHOW, Box 1029 Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

Farmer's Rock "Looks Great In Farmyard"

"We farmed around this rock for years and finally just decided to dig it up and put it in the yard," says Kathy Novak about the huge 110-ton boulder that sits in the yard of her and her husband Wally's farm near Kilkenny, Minn.

Kathy says the top of the granite rock had been visible for years in a field only about 300 ft. from their house. "It came up to about your knee. The rest of it was buried."

Other farmers in the past had tried to destroy the rock. One former owner of the farm blew up a whole case of dynamite on it and only managed to break off a small piece. Others tried to dig it out but with no success. Kathy and Wally finally decided to try their luck.

They hired two Caterpillar D-7's to do the job. The machines cleared dirt away from around the rock but weren't able to move it. Luckily they found a contractor with two bigger Cats - a D-8 and a Terex 82-50 - who said he loved big rocks and would help them. The two big machines slowly pushed and rolled the rock to its resting place in the yard, making only a few scratches on it in the process. The Novaks spent months cleaning the granite surface of the boulder and then laid smaller field rocks around the base of it.

The rock has been estimated to weigh 110 tons. "We've never heard of anyone digging up a bigger rock to use as a lawn ornament," says Kathy.

Word traveled fast about the big rock and visitors from as far away as Ireland, California and Oregon have stopped by to have their pictures taken with it. Sometimes people just drive through the yard, look at the rock, and leave. "I wish they would stop because we like to meet them and find out where they're from," says Kathy.



Photo courtesy Agri News

Two big Caterpillar tractors had just enough power to dig the 110-ton rock out of the ground and push it 300 ft. to the yard.