

# Reader Letters



Thank you for the story on our Bass Baby, an 8-ft. long "boat with wheels" that's designed to fit into any full-size pickup bed, eliminating the need for a trailer (Vol. 26, No. 2). However, in the article you stated that the Bass Baby comes equipped with a trolling motor, which is not true. (**Connect-A-Dock, Inc., 1000 Flag Road, Adair, Iowa 50002 ph 877 742-3071 or 614 742-3071; E-mail: steve@ssi-ia.com; Website: www.connectadock.com**)

Thanks for the story on the hitch I made to stiffen up the drawbar on my IH 84 tractor (Vol. 25, No. 6). I originally came



up with the idea because the drawbar on this tractor often flopped around as I backed up, making it difficult to hitch up to my pto-powered feed wagon. I solved the problem by welding an open steel frame onto the drawbar. The top of the frame hooks to the 3-pt. top link, which makes the drawbar rigid. A pto shaft can run through the frame. If I want I can replace the drawbar pin with a 2-in. ball to move livestock trailers, etc.

I recently added an attachment that supports a pintle hitch hook. I welded a 1/2-in. thick steel plate onto a short length of 2 by 3-in. tubing and then bolted



the pintle hitch to the plate. I spot welded nuts for 1/2-in. bolts on the back side of the plate. There are three sets of holes so six nuts were required. And four bolts were needed to mount the pintle hook. In addition, two 3/4 by 6-in. grade 8 bolts were used to attach the bracket to the drawbar frame. The addition of a spacer allows the pintle hook bracket to set squarely to the drawbar. Then 3/4-in. nuts were spot welded in place on the top side of the 2 by 3 tubing.

This pintle hook is of the 5-ton variety. Larger ones could be made to work accordingly with minor adjustments. Because the 1/2-in. thick plate is higher on the top side, two 1/4 by 1 1/4-in. flat straps, 7 1/2 in. long, were placed at an

angle to the tubing and welded in for additional support. Now I have a really versatile hitch that will accommodate drawbar pin implements, 2 or 2 5/16-in. ball hitch implements, and pintle hook pulled implements. (**Leonard Seltzer, 16040 W. Elmwood, Manhattan, Ill. 60442 ph 815 478-3578**)

My home-built portable "saddle caddy" allows me to store up to four saddles in between riding sessions. The saddles are



held by wooden racks bolted to a pair of vertical wood posts, which are in turn bolted at the bottom to a steel frame. The frame rides on four castor wheels and is widened out on front for added stability. To steer the caddy, I hold onto a length of pipe that's connected to the frame. It steers much like a tiller steers a boat. (**Mark Kimes, Beecher City, Ill.**)

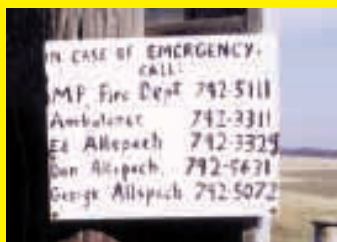
After trying several methods of getting rid of gophers in crop fields, I fitted my chisel plow with 7-in. wide sweeps and ran it about a foot deep through the gopher-infested area. Where the mounds were the thickest, I even made a couple of passes and circles around them.

I'm not sure why, but this took care of the problem. I suspect it collapsed the tunnels and the gophers that were in there suffocated.

Another farmer I talked with did the same thing, except his sweeps were wide enough so he was able to undercut the entire field.

If anyone would like more information, I'd be happy to talk with them. (**Arvid Fischer, Hewitt, Minn. ph 218 924-2318**)

You ran a report in your last issue on a farmer who used PVC pipe to run air lines from his air compressor to various parts of his shop. I'd like to point out that PVC pipe is not rated to take air pressure. And if you lean on an air line, or hit it with equipment, you can weaken or crack it and then possibly have an explosion in your shop. Much better to spend a bit more money and time to run metal lines. (**Jim Schreifels, 64893 - 375th St., Watkins, Minn. 55389**)



Over the years we've had several medical emergencies, so we know how

important it is to post emergency phone numbers around the farm. The photo shows such a posting we made for one of our buildings. It lists phone numbers for our local fire department and ambulance and for three members of our family. (**Allspach Farms 20023, Mt. Pulaski, Ill. 62548 ph 217 792-5072**)

My mailbox is 100 yards across the street from my home so I want to be certain the mail has arrived before I go out to get it. I made my own "mail alert" by mounting



a 3 by 5 1/2-in. aluminum block on the mailbox lid. The block is painted white on one side and red on the other side. The block is hinged at the bottom and is mounted on a metal bracket that's bolted onto the mailbox lid. In its normal position the block leans back against the mailbox lid. But when the mailman opens the lid, the block falls forward and exposes the red side which indicates that the mail has arrived. The hinge was made by welding a short bolt onto each end of the bracket.

The town I live in passed a law that banned the use of burn barrels, and I didn't want to pay \$20 a month to a trash hauling service. So I used 3/16-in. thick sheet metal to make a 3-ft. sq. stove that doesn't send any ashes up into the air. It fills from the top and has a 4-in. sq. flue welded on top of it. Halfway up the stove is an air vent with a protective cover to prevent sparking problems.

The stove doesn't have a bottom but does have a big hinged door on top for filling. When it gets about half full of ashes I simply turn the stove over on its side, then dump the ashes out on the ground from the bottom and scoop them up. All the stove's outside edges are fitted with heavy angle iron to reduce warping from the heat. (**Elmer M. Pinkerton, 305 West D Street, Elmwood, Neb. 68349 ph 402 994-5885**)

I made my own low-cost greenhouse out of discarded sliding glass doors that I got from someone who had bought them as



surplus but then discovered that the rollers were rusted out. The greenhouse measures 10 ft. wide by 19 ft. long and is attached to our house. I used nine glass doors for the roof, setting them inside 4 by 4 framing, and four glass doors for the sides. The side windows are hinged at the bottom so they can be opened and then held in place with lengths of chain. The rest of the greenhouse is made from 1/4-in. thick wall board.

The greenhouse has a dirt floor which I cover with an 8-in. thick layer of leaf mold. Works great for growing flowers, strawberries, collards, broccoli, and cabbage. (**E.A. Arldt, FM 2104 120 Cooke St., Paige, Texas 78659 ph 512 253-6518**)

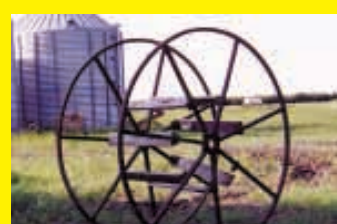
I use my Bush Hog 307 7-ft. rotary mower to cut hay as well as brush and weeds on our farm, which has a lot of big rocks. The blades are made from soft metal and often got chipped or became very dull. If



I hit a rock it was often enough to snap the blade in half. To solve the problem I cut a 3 by 2-in. piece off the front part of the blade. Then I cut the same size piece out of a stainless steel plow share and weld it on.

The steel is much harder than the original blade material so it lasts three to four times longer. The add-on piece is tapered which makes it easy to sharpen. I still sharpen the blades once in a while, but not nearly as often as before because the stainless steel is a much tougher material. If I hit a rock just right, it may put a big nick on the blade but not on the plow share. Usually the plow share just skips over the rock without being damaged.

Welding two different materials together - stainless steel and soft metal - is a little tricky. I use an arc welder with a stainless steel rod. I've used this idea for 10 years with no problems. The modified blades seem to last forever. (**Albert Tritch, 12305 West A St., Lincoln, Neb. 68532 ph 402 474-0721**)



Here's a photo of a "safety wheel" that keeps us safe during the calving season. We got the 8-ft. dia., 3-ft. wide metal wheel for free from a local cable company, which used the wheel to install underground plastic pipes. The wheel has a series of wooden boards between the two outer rings. I use it whenever I have to go into a pen that has cows and calves in it. I roll the wheel up to the calf, keeping the wheel between me and the cow. Sometimes I carry a rope along so that I can catch the calf. If the cow comes at me I just duck behind the wheel. I have four of these wheels, one for each of our pens. (**Maurice Van Walleghem, Box 177, St. Norbert, Manitoba, Canada R3V 1L6 ph 204 275-7195**)

Thank you for the write-up in your last issue on our battery-powered, hand-held garden planter. Here are a couple other products that your readers may find interesting. The hand-cranked Dustin-Mizer applies organic insecticides in powder form. It's equipped with a 2 1/2-in. dia., 16-in. long tube and a fill box on top. All you do is fill the hopper and turn the crank. Insecticide is sifted through a