Reader Letters

Thanks for the story on our "Truck Glove" that's designed to eliminate scratches and reduce dents and dings on pickups and SUV's (Vol. 25, No. 6). It comes in several pieces and is made from durable polyester with a soft backing. Unfortunately the price was wrong. It sells for $499.95 including S&H. ***(Billy Halbrook, 1005 Countryside Drive, DePere, Wis. 54115 ph 800 840-1410; Website: www.thetruckglove.com)***

I read with great interest your story about where to find new and used parts on the Internet (Vol. 25, No. 4). I think it's a wonderful service to your readers. I wish we would have been included in the story, too. We operate a tractor repair shop and specialize in Farmalls, H's and M's, as well as Deere 60 and 70 tractors. We also do complete tractor restorations. ***(Matthew Throener, Matt's Ag Service, Rt. 2, Box 55, Carnegie, Okla. 73015 ph 580 654-1212)***

I bolted two 7-ft. lengths of 4-in. sq. steel tubing vertically to the back side of a set of pallet forks. It lets me haul three 3 by 3 by 8-ft. bales at a time and safely stack

them six high in my shed, without worrying that the bales will accidentally tip backward onto the skid loader. The lengths of tubing can be quickly unbolted any time I don't need them. ***(Tim Louwagie, 2956 County Road 22, Cottonwood, Minn. 56229 ph 507 423-6674)***

I built a a small-scale crane that attaches to the front of a pickup bed and is pow-

ered off the vehicle's electrical system. It allows me to load a motorized scooter or 4-wheeler into a pickup without the need for ramps. The lifting is done by a remote-control electric winch, using a hook connected to a lift bracket on the scooter or 4-wheeler. A hydraulic pump is used to move the lift arm in an arc for loading and unloading. The arm can be easily moved to a position that won't interfere with the driver's vision. The crane is supported by two concentric steel tubes that bolt onto the pickup's frame at one corner of the bed. The outer tube is stationary while the inner tube rotates on bearings.

The crane is a lot easier to use than ramps, and it increases the mobility and independence of disabled or elderly farmers. It can also be used to load chemicals, tires, and other cargo when forklifts or skid loaders aren't available. I spent a total of about $1,200 for the electric winch, hydraulic pump, and controls. Everything else was made using conventional steel and discarded parts from older equipment, including a Model T Ford planetary steering gear. ***(Einar Oftedal, 3541 265th Ave., Cottonwood, Minn. 56229 ph 507 423-6481)***

As a custom builder of fences, I usually work alone. I got tired of having barbed wire come off the roll and catch on me, or get so badly tangled that I had to cut

off the tangled-up part and discard it. I solved the problem by making a shielded barbed wire unroller that mounts permanently on the rear rack of my 4-wheeler.

The shield is made from the bottom end of a 275-gal. fuel oil barrel. A steel pipe that runs through the shield supports the roll of wire. This pipe fits inside another pipe that bolts onto the ATV. An old disc blade bolted onto one end of the pipe keeps the roll secure.

The shield completely covers an 80-rod roll of barbed wire and is big enough that I have plenty of room to install the roll of wire on the pipe. ***(Roger F. Schafer, 16746 Hawk Drive, Birmingham, Iowa 52535 ph 319 293-3242)***

This bale spear guard is covers the point on a 3-pt. bale spear and also makes it more visible so no one will run into it and get hurt. The guard simply slides over the spear. I came up with this idea after a 10-year-old boy we know was playing tag at another farm family's home and accidentally ran into a bale spear. The boy had to have reconstructive surgery and almost lost the use of his eye.

The bale guard is made from a length of 3-in. dia. PVC pipe, with a PVC cap glued onto one end and a reflector attached to it. I-bolts with bungee cords fasten near the ends of the pipe so I can strap it to the 3-pt. when the spear is in use. ***(Jessica Ratliff, 1243 710th Ave., Eddyville, Ind. 52553 ph 641969-4911; E-mail: rattliff@kdsi.net)***

I thought your readers would like to see this 1-bottom moldboard plow that my dad and a friend, Dean Myers, built back in 1951. They designed it to plow under sand deposited 3 to 5 ft. deep on bottom land after a big flood on the Kansas river. The unit plows 62 in. deep with a 24-in. wide cut. At first they used three HD-10 bull dozers to pull the plow. Later on Myers bought a HD-19, the largest bull dozer available at that time, which allowed them to pull the plow with only two dozers.

Dad had a local machinery company roll the steel for the moldboard. They used the plow for two years to plow fields for neighbors, working a total of about 1,500 acres. They were paid $61 per acre. It worked so well the federal government let them use the plow long after other such factory-made plows were prohibited. Dad still has home movies of the plow working in the field. Now the plow sits as a yard ornament on our farm. A lot of people drive by and stop when they see it. ***(Jack Bernritter, 27155 Fairview Rd., Havensville, Kan. 66432 ph 785 889-4680)***

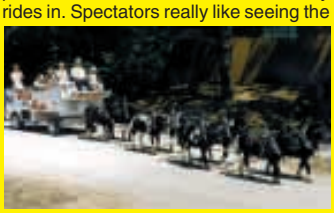
I recently finished building my own portable "stone cutter" that's designed to cut big rocks into widths from 2 to 20 in. The

rig mounts on a two-wheeled trailer and is powered by an 18 hp Briggs & Stratton twin cylinder gas engine. The machine is equipped with a series of 38 teeth made from 1-in. sq. heat-treated, hardened steel. The engine direct-drives a hydraulic pump that operates a pair of big hydraulic cylinders which, as they come down, cause the teeth to put pressure on the rock and pop it in two.

The unit works on rocks up to 2 ft. wide and 6 in. thick. The teeth are free to go up or down 3/4 of an inch. A kerosene pump washes away sand and keeps the teeth clean.

I'm 80 years old and am willing the sell my stone cutter for about $26,000. ***(Steve Manek, 21539 N.E. 36, Harrah, Okla 73045 ph 405 454-3086)***

People of all ages enjoy our "Milk Buds" Shetland ponies - a one-of-a-kind attraction that has been performing in parades since 1974. It features eight Shetland ponies which are hitched together and pull a four-wheeled cart which our family rides in. Spectators really like seeing the



ponies and hearing the music. They frequently compare our little ponies to the famous Budweiser Clydesdales so, since we have a dairy farm, we named our ponies The Milk Buds. All of them are descendants of a single male named Corky - which we got when he was only 1 1/2 years old - and all of them were born on our farm.

We've performed at shows from Springfield, Missouri, to Rutland, Vermont. We've participated in the World Dairy Expo at Madison, Wis., every year since 1984, and also at the Midwest Horse Fair in Madison, Wis., for the past four years. We've also participated in the St. Paul Winter Carnival Grand Parade most years since 1976.

We built the cart and hitch ourselves. The cart measures 6 ft. wide, 12 ft. long,, and 6 1/2 ft. high. The harnesses were made by Amish craftsmen. ***(John and Georgine Schottler, 1374 Cty. Rd. I, Somerset, Wis. 54025 ph 715 549-6751)***

I'm sending you this photo of our son, Josh, and his girlfriend, C.J. Mindedahl,

in front of her father's Deere 4430 tractor. Her father wanted Josh and C.J. to ride in the tractor to their local high school