



Standing 40 ft. wide by 10 ft. high, Holst's Volkswagen Spider is a real monstrosity.

## Volkswagen Spider A Real Attention-Getter

By Janis Schole, Contributing Editor

You're all familiar with the Volkswagen "Beetle" but have you ever seen a Volkswagen Spider?

David Holst and a group of relatives built a 40-ft. wide by 10 ft. high monstrosity. "I have a cousin who works in the oil and gas industry, so that's where I got pipe for the legs. My uncle, Carl Holst, is a welder and he was the brains behind the construction. He figured out all the measurements for the design."

Holst says he worked together with his uncle, aunt and cousins to complete the project in four or five weekends. It was an enjoyable family effort for the six of them.

Cost was about \$500 for pipe and welding rods. Holst, who was an auto detailer at the time, was able to trade his services for the early 1960's Volkswagen body.

He says the old Volkswagens are easy to work with because they have more steel in them than the newer models, thus making it easy to find welding points.

The first thing the crew did was to remove the beetle's underbody (wheels/axles), motor, and power train. They left the windows in and spray painted everything black.

Four sections of heavy, 6-in. gas line pipe were welded to the underside of the car to provide the eight points from which the legs extend. The first vertical section of the legs are also made with the thick 6-in. pipe, while the next three sections used only 4-in. and 3-in. pipe, tapering down to the ground to give a more realistic look to the legs. All eight legs touch the ground, with each of them at different angles, so it looks like it's walking.

After the first four sections of pipe were welded to the bottom of the car, Holst's uncle used his front-end loader with the addition of two long pipes on the forks, to hold the



With its underbody removed, car is supported by legs made from oilfield pipe.

car body off the ground. Then he went around with a ladder and welded on the rest of the sections.

When it was complete, the family positioned the giant arachnid at an angle to the highway, and close to the house to deter vandalism.

"After it was finished, I came home from work one night to find a bus parked along the side of the highway in front of the yard with about 48 Chinese people and the bus driver all standing there taking pictures of it," Holst recalls.

It certainly does attract people, and everyone knows where it is, he says. Since Holst is now in the car sales business, he sometimes parks three vehicles underneath the spider to get people to notice them.

"I'm planning to get a solar panel to power the headlights dimly for the first half of the night, so nighttime traffic can enjoy it, too," he says. "My brother has a bunch of rope lights that we could also string down the legs for Halloween and Christmas."

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## Add-On School Bus Seat For Garden Tractor

Marc Burg, McCallsburg, Iowa, likes to attend farm equipment shows to check out new equipment and watch it working in the field. To make the job easier, he mounted a school bus seat on back of his Wheelhorse 12 hp garden tractor.

"The add-on seat makes it easy for us to get around shows. It lets my wife, daughter, or grandson ride with me," says Burg.

To make the conversion, he cut off the tractor's original spring-mounted seat and bolted a metal frame on in its place, then bolted the bus seat to the frame. He added a metal railing on both sides of the seat, as well as seat belts. The school bus seat was worn so he put new upholstery on it.

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Burg mounted a school bus seat on back of his Wheelhorse 12 hp garden tractor.

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Peg leg has a fake plastic hoof with a hockey puck mounted on bottom for cushioning.

## "Peg Leg" Horse Still Doing Great

Roger Brincker's horse, "Sweet Nothing," was headed to the meat grinder when he rescued the mare. She now lives a nearly normal life with the help of a prosthetic left hind leg. In fact, the animal may be the only horse in Western Canada to have a man-made leg.

The peg leg is made from heavy duty stainless steel, acrylic resin, foam lining (which absorbs some of the pressure in the socket), and a fake plastic hoof with a hockey puck mounted on the bottom for cushioning.

Seventy-four year-old Brincker, who lives near Fort MacLeod, Alberta, paid only \$200 when he purchased the 5-month-old Quarter horse in 1999, adding her to his collection of other animals rescued from an early death. At the time, Sweet Nothing was happy and healthy, but five years later, she somehow broke a bone in her foot and developed an infection.

"The vet did two operations, but they were unsuccessful, even though I spent about \$8,000 on her," Brincker says. "I was advised to put her down."

By this time, Brincker's concern for the horse was supported by a friend, Cindy Wasney, who had fallen in love with her as well. They could see that Sweet Nothing had a strong will to live.

"This proud, brave horse has a dignity and courage about her, and a way of making people want to help her," Brincker says.

Wasney offered to research and finance an artificial leg. Eventually, Calgary veterinarian Shawn Mattson agreed to do the amputation and fit a leg even though there's a high failure rate.

While awaiting her fate, the spunky mare moved around by hopping on her remaining back leg.

Mattson amputated below the hock and Sweet Nothing stayed in the animal hospital for five months.

Next, Colman Prosthetics and Orthotics of Calgary built the artificial limb after casting the stump and determining the correct dimensions to correspond to the horse's center of gravity. The company generously waived the estimated \$5,000 cost of making the prosthesis.

Sweet Nothing's small size and tenacity helped her adjust in the days following the hour-long prosthetic fitting that was done while she stood patiently.

The prosthetic leg cups her stump, which must be covered by a surgical sock. Three nylon/Velcro straps hold the device on securely. The surgical sock must be changed every two days.

Though Sweet Nothing still belongs to Brincker, Wasney now boards her at a stable near Victoria, B.C., where she grazes almost year-round.

She can run and do almost anything the other horses can, and seems to hardly realize she has a peg leg, according to her admirers. Brincker cares for about 100 animals at his animal sanctuary, and depends on financial assistance from others to continue his work in this field. He welcomes any donations.

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