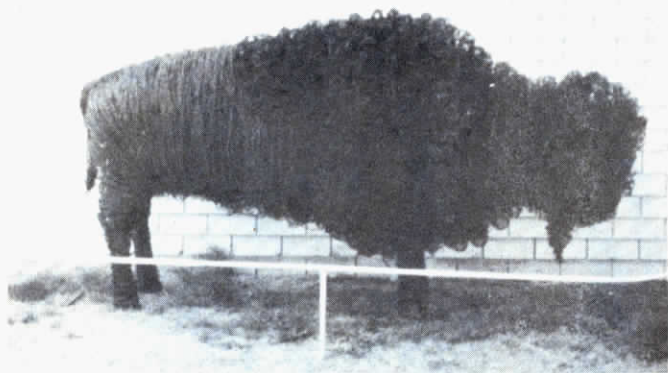


Smith patterned the buffalo after a bull in his own herd.



The front half of the buffalo features "Shirley Temple curls".

## ATTRACTS 5,000 VISITORS ANNUALLY

# Kansas Rancher Builds 60-Ton Concrete Buffalo

Ray Smith and his brother Charles spent more than 2,500 hours building a 15¼-ft. tall, 60-ton, "concrete" buffalo overlooking the Circle 3 Buffalo Ranch near Langford, Kan.

"I thought about the buffalo for a couple of years," Ray explains. "I wanted some way to pay tribute to the great North American buffalo. I kept pretty quiet about it but then one day I mentioned the idea to a friend. He gave me \$5 and after that, I started getting so many contributions I had to start building it.

"I patterned the concrete buffalo after a big bull in my buffalo herd. It took 31 tons of rock, 121 bags of ce-

ment, sand, 144 ft. of railroad ties and steel reinforcing rod to build. I figure it weighs 60 tons," Ray says.

It ended up 15¼ ft. tall, 23 ft. long and 7½ ft. across at the shoulders. A special feature not found on most buffalos are three lightning rods. "At first we didn't have them on," Ray states, "but lightning struck it four weeks after it was built and blew a chunk off of one of the legs."

"We had lots of people here including the governor and attorney general, when we dedicated the buffalo. Now we average about 5,000 visitors a year," he adds.

## STANDS 19 HANDS TALL

# "Iron Horse" Made From Chain Links

Montana professional artist Jim Dolan, Belgrade, created this life-size iron horse out of discarded chain links that he traded another piece of his artwork for.

Located outdoors in front of the well-known Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, Mont., the Belgian horse stands 19 hands high and measure 8 ft. tall from ground to ear tips. And he's for sale — for \$27,000!

Made by welding the chain links together, the gelding weighs 6,000 lbs. and contains over 3,000 3-in. links salvaged from a cement plant kiln. It has a minimal inner framework of steel rod, but is basically hollow.

"Standing up close, you can see a little daylight through it," explained Dolan. "Since completion, the steel links have rusted to add a pleasing color."

The artist spent five months part-time building the sculpture, working indoors except for the final high part

of the neck and head which had to be done after moving out of his basement.

Dolan, 34, is a full-time artist. The iron horse is the largest thing he's created, and the first from chain links. Sculptures of his favorite art medium — welded sheet metal — are on display in airport terminals, banks and elsewhere. He's done elk, deer and large birds.

Dolan, who learned to weld as a youngster while growing up on a Montana ranch, uses a Miller Mig-type wire-feed arc welder. He attended Montana State University, earning a degree in agriculture, and has been a full-time artist for 12 years.

To determine and hold to a true horse shape, the artist's model was a real-life gelding on a neighbor's ranch.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW followup, Jim Dolan, 3501 Airport Rd., Belgrade, Mont. 59714 (ph 406 388-1720).

## LIFE-SIZE REPLICA

# Nebraska Farmer Builds Barbed Wire Buffalo

Next time you look at that old barbed wire fence that needs replacing, don't think of it as junk. Nebraska farmer, Bernard Holscher, of Bertrand, thought of it as art and used more than two miles of the rusty barbed wire to make a life-sized buffalo.

Holscher explains that bad knees forced him to sell his cattle. With his winters free from chores he had more time to concentrate on extra projects once he'd finished off season machinery repairs.

"I decided to build the buffalo out of barbed wire because the animal and the wire are both part of our country's heritage. Strong and durable, they both had to withstand the summer heat and the winter snow and winds," Holscher says. "I thought about the buffalo for about two years before I actually started building it. I also did research on buffalo, even taking hoof measurements of one of my neighbor's larger steers."

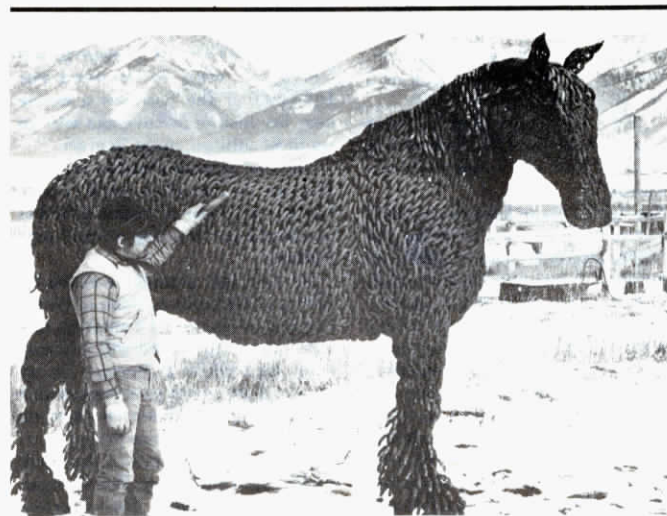
After planning, the next step was collecting the wire. Since he no longer owned cattle, Holscher took

down some of his fences, wrapping the wire on 80 rod spools and cutting out the splices. "Some of that wire was more than 100 years old. In one section the wire was so bad it averaged a splice per rod," Holscher says.

After cutting the wire in 15 to 30-ft. lengths, he wrapped the wire around the frame. The frame is made from old steam engine parts and has a backbone made from an old boiler flue. Loops on each end of the wire lengths hook them to the other wires.

The front half of the buffalo features "Shirley Temple" curls. "I made the curly hair by putting a 1½-in. piece of hollow tube on the end of my variable speed electric drill. I then spun the wire around the pipe to make the curls," Holscher explains.

As a finishing touch, Holscher added horns, whiskers and a tail. He estimates he spent 300 hours during two winters completing the buffalo. It's 10 ft. long, 5½ ft. high and 12 ft. around at the girth.



The iron gelding weighs three tons and contains more than 3,000 3-in. chain links.