

His Silver Saddles Shine At Shows, Parades

Back in the 1940's and 50's, when Hollywood stars rode horses decked out with sterling silver saddles and tack, a saddle-maker named Ted Flowers in Indiana decided to make his own silver saddles. But he used German silver (nickel silver) that looked the same but cost a lot less.

About 15 years ago, leather-worker Bob Glessner discovered and purchased Flowers' old dies and started making silver saddles. "When I build a full clad silver saddle, not a lot of leather shows through," Glessner says, explaining that it's like building two saddles because everything has to be backed with leather.

It takes about three months to complete a saddle and tack.

"I also do a lot of restoration work," Glessner says. Because he has the dies, he

can make parts for people who own Flowers' saddles.

Following Flowers' style, Glessner offers six full-clad styles that include diamonds, horse heads, Indian heads and other designs. He customizes them with initials and other items at the customer's request. He also offers custom saddles with varying amounts of silver.

Cost for the full-clad silver saddles starts at just over \$11,000, averaging about \$15,000.

Glessner's customers have show horses and ride in parades, and his saddles appear at the Rose Bowl. With more interest in developing new parade classes for horses, he's seeing renewed interest in silver saddles.



Leather-worker Bob Glessner makes silver saddles, as well as saddles in a variety of styles.

Contact Glessner for a catalog of saddle styles or about saddle restoration.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Loon Creek Leather, LLC, Huntington, Ind. (ph 260 356-0726; www.looncreekleather.com).

Reader Inquiry No. 96

He Treats Well Water With Hydrogen Peroxide

Water has often been described as the most neglected ingredient for proper livestock nutrition, but that's not true for pork producer Wayne Neuberger, Klemme, Iowa.

He installed a chlorinator on his well years ago that provides water for his hog buildings and home.

While the chlorine did the job on the water, Neuberger didn't like the idea that you could smell and taste it in the water. Then he heard about a system that injects hydrogen peroxide into the water line.

"Peroxide can do everything chlorine can do when it comes to taking contaminants out of water," he believes. "The big advantage we noticed right away is that it leaves no smell or taste in the water."

Then he found another advantage.

"It wasn't until after I'd switched to peroxide that I found what the chlorine had done to my well," he says. "We'd been using chlorine tablets, dropping them into the well casing. Chlorine is highly corrosive and it actually ate through the steel casing. We had to pull the pump, re-drill the well and replace the casing. When we pulled the pump, it was encrusted in undissolved chlorine from the tablets."

He says the cost was "significant." He had the well deepened, but the water from the lower aquifer had a high sulfur content.

That showed him another advantage of hydrogen peroxide. "Peroxide immediately oxidizes the sulfur, so we have water that's as clean, clear and odorless as fresh spring water. There's also iron oxide in the water

and while the peroxide can't take it out by itself without extra filtration, it keeps it in suspension so it doesn't accumulate and plug waterers," he says.

Neuberger says he's run out of peroxide a couple of times. When that happens, the sulfur smell and taste show up in the water to remind him it's time to get a new supply.

He says you don't need to be a plumber or expert mechanic to install a hydrogen peroxide injection system. "All you need is a squeeze pump to inject it into the water and a wire from the well pump controller to the squeeze pump, so when the well pump comes on, the squeeze pump does, too."

After that, he says, the big thing is calibrating the squeeze pump so the right amount of peroxide is injected into the water. Hydrogen peroxide test strips tell you the level you're at. "Once you have it set, that's all there is to it," he says. "I haven't touched the pump since then."

Neuberger has found one more way to use peroxide for his hogs. "I add a little extra to the hog water through the medicator whenever I hear them coughing or suspect they might have a touch of a respiratory infection," he says. "That almost always knocks it out and I seldom use any other medication."

Compared to drugs, peroxide is considerably less expensive. And, while it costs less than a penny per pig more than chlorine for treating water, Neuberger says the fact that it's noncorrosive and not apparent in the water makes it more desirable and probably more economical in the long run.

He says he uses Oxy Blast, which is the brand of hydrogen peroxide that Essential Water Solutions, Inc., Story City, Iowa sells. The company says it is much more effective than plain peroxide because of its proprietary formula. Neuberger uses a 15 gal. drum of Oxy Blast every couple of months, or about 90 gal. per year, for both his house and hog operation. Oxy Blast runs about \$18 per gal. Neuberger uses the 34 percent Oxy Blast purchased from Randy Navratil, owner, Essential Water Solutions, Inc. Navratil says the Oxy Blast is available in 5, 15 and 55 gal. drums and 300 gal. totes. They also offer companion products to Oxy Blast for water high in pH, TDS and sodium.

Navratil reports that Oxy Blast is not only used for swine operations, but also benefits poultry, beef and dairy. There currently are hundreds of thousands of cows and feedlot cattle, and several million chickens on over 4,500 Oxy Blast systems throughout the U.S. and Canada. More often than not, producers report that Oxy Blast eliminates the need for antibiotics besides cleaning up the water and waterlines. The Oxy Blast system comes with a six month buy-back guarantee.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Randy Navratil, Essential Water Solutions, Inc, Hillcrest Dr., Story City, Iowa 50248 ph 515-523-7011; cell 515-290-9070; e-mail: randy@essentialwater.net web site: www.essentialwater.net

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