

Riding In Comfort At

3-Wheeled Show “Trike”

“It’s a handy vehicle to drive around at swap meets and tractor shows,” says Steve Nichols, Galesburg, Ill., who recently sent FARM SHOW photos of his home-built 3-wheeled “trike”.

“I call it my Deere 1 by 3. The inspiration for it came from a similar rig that was featured in FARM SHOW (Vol. 32, No. 5). It’s lightweight, compact, and inexpensive to build,” says Nichols.

The rig rides on a single 20 by 10.00 by 8 tire on back and two 15 by 6.00 by 6 tires on front. The frame is made from sq. tubing. “It’s painted Deere green and yellow, but the rear wheel and tire is the only actual Deere part on it,” says Nichols.

He started with a snowblower he got for \$10 at a garage sale. It was powered by a Briggs & Stratton 5 hp engine equipped with a 6:1 gear reduction unit, which eliminated

any need for a jackshaft to reduce speed. “I used belt drive with a foot pedal-controlled tensioning idler for the clutch. With a 3-in. pulley on the engine and a 12-in. rear pulley, this rig is geared perfectly for my needs. It goes about 1 mph at idle and has a maximum speed of about 8 mph,” says Nichols.

The front axle, which he cut and widened out, is off a Husky riding mower. The tie rods had to be lengthened and made adjustable for setting toe-in. The steering column support and handgrips are from the snowblower.

The frame was made from 2 by 2 lightwall steel tubing, which came from a large weight gym setup that Nichols hauled home from a garage sale for free. He also used the gym setup’s chromed chinning bar for the handlebar, the black plastic end plugs for the square tubing, and the seat.

“The only parts I had to buy were the



Steve Nichols built this 3-wheeled “trike”. “It’s painted Deere green and yellow, but the rear wheel and tire is the only actual Deere part on it,” he says.

rear axle and bearings, the 12-in. pulley and V-belt, and the conduit elbows which form the seat support. Everything else was salvaged mower parts or things I fabricated from odds and ends. The headlamp is just for

looks,” says Nichols.

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Marlin Swanson converted an old Ford garden tractor into this articulated 2-WD model. “People tell me they didn’t realize Ford ever made a tractor like this,” he says.

Articulated Ford Garden Tractor

Marlin Swanson turned a 1968 Ford 120 garden tractor into an articulated 2-WD model. It’s powered by the tractor’s original Kohler 16 hp engine and rides on 12-in. high lugged tires. The 3-ft. wide bench seat has room for 2.

“People see the Ford sticker on the side and then tell me they didn’t realize that Ford made a tractor like this. A lot of them get down on their hands and knees trying to figure out how it steers,” says Swanson.

He removed the front wheels on the Ford and then mated the tractor to a rear end and wheels he got from a friend. He used steel tubing to build a frame between the 2 axles. “Only the front wheels drive, because that’s where all the weight is,” says Swanson. “In fact, I had to move the engine back 6 in. to help balance the load.”

The tractor pivots by means of a roller chain that’s attached to the tractor’s steering wheel, which in turn is attached to the input shaft of the gearbox off an old walk-behind rototiller. The roller chain pushes and pulls on a cable that winds around 2 drums that are also off the rototiller. As Swanson turns the steering wheel left or right, it turns the gearbox, which causes the cable to wind and unwind around the drums. “One cable goes over the top of one drum and the other cable goes under the other drum, so when one cable is winding the other is unwinding,” says Swanson. “A big steel pin serves as a hinge pin between the 2 halves of the tractor.”

A 1-ft. long steel shaft connects the two halves of the tractor and keeps it from sagging in the middle.

“It steers easy – I can spin the steering wheel with one finger,” says Swanson. “The

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gearbox has a 21:1 gear ratio so I have to turn the steering wheel 21 times in order to make the drum turn once. I plan to install another small gearbox that’ll fit on the steering column.

“One advantage of the mechanical steering system is the engine doesn’t need to be running for me to turn the steering wheel, which makes it easy to push the tractor around and load it onto a trailer. With a hydraulic steering system you would have to have the engine running.”

The tractor has a wooden bed on back with open metal sides. “The bed is made so that by pulling a pin it would dump, but I don’t use it because the bed doesn’t have solid sides,” says Swanson.

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Tony Henderson turned a pair of WheelHorse garden tractors into this stretched-out tractor that measures a full 9 ft. long.

Stretched WheelHorse

Tony Henderson, Columbus, Ind., needed a way to get around farm shows with his father. He turned a pair of WheelHorse garden tractors into a stretched-out tractor that measures a full 9 ft. long.

“I collect old WheelHorse garden tractors and built it last year just for the challenge. It doesn’t turn very short, but it’s fun to drive,” says Henderson. “We call it the Big Hoss.”

He started with a 1972 WheelHorse B80 garden tractor equipped with a Kohler 10 hp engine and hydrostatic transmission. He “stretched” the tractor by unbolting the rear end and then using a homemade mounting plate to bolt the frame from another identical tractor on behind it.

He replaced the tractor’s original drive belt with a new one that’s 155-in. long and replaced the original belt guard with a much longer one. He used sheet metal to fabricate new running boards, and he also added the

seat off a Bush Hog riding mower on back. To make everything look more proportional, he replaced the tractor’s original rear wheels with 14 1/2-in. wide ones.

“It’s a real eye catcher and draws a lot of attention at shows,” says Henderson. “My dad and I put it together because he has back issues, and it was getting hard for him to walk around at farm shows. It took about 1 1/2 years to build in our spare time. It was fun to build and brought dad and I closer together.

“We painted the tractor the same red-orange color that’s found on the new Ford 8N tractors. We also lined the top of the tractor’s frame with cherry wood, all the way from the dash to the rear seat.”

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2-Person Toro Garden Tractor

Ken Royce, Winnebago, Minn., converted an early 1990’s Toro garden tractor into a 2-person people mover. A wooden rack on back is used to haul lawn chairs and jackets.

He lengthened the tractor by 24 in. and also moved the tractor’s hydrostat transmission back 6 in., then welded a 2-ft. extension and cross member on back. The extension supports a wooden rack that measures 3 ft. wide, 2 ft. deep, and 1 ft. high. He also replaced the tractor’s original seat with a wooden buckboard-style, padded seat that’s 44 in. wide. Both the seat and the box are made from pine with a mahogany stain.

“I built it because my friend Pat has medical problems and can’t get around too well,” says Royce. “I spent about \$45 to



Ken Royce uses the wooden rack on back of his 2-person Toro garden tractor to haul lawn chairs and jackets.

have steel bent to match the tractor’s frame and for a new, longer belt for the hydrostat transmission.”

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