

“Plum Tractor” Was A Hit At Wedding

It sounds tricky to keep a purple tractor a secret, but Bob Kurth managed to do just that. Except for his bride, Annie, and a few friends, the purple 1755 Oliver hitched to a decorated wagon was a total surprise to family and guests exiting the church after the couple's October 2014 wedding ceremony.

The tractor is a fitting reflection of the couple. Annie, a city girl, loved the tractor rides she took with Kurth when they dated. As a salvage yard operator he had traded for the Oliver and had it in storage. With power brakes and steering he figured it would be a good first tractor for Annie. And, since it needed to be dismantled to install a clutch and repair other parts, it was a good candidate to restore and repaint. Annie liked the idea.

“She wanted it to be unique and girly, but not pink,” Kurth says. She chose “Plum Crazy”, a flamboyant purple automotive paint that Kurth's brother sells. The color set the theme for the wedding, and Annie's choices for bridesmaids' dresses and groomsman's ties coordinated well with the tractor.

Kurth hauled the Oliver about 30 miles to have the work done at Ron Jones Tractor Parts & Repair in Rock City, Ill., then brought it back after dark and hid it in a neighbor's shed.

It was a hit with the guests and wedding party that rode on the wagon behind it through Lena, Ill., out to Kurth's father's farm to take photos with cattle and decorated hay bales, and back to the reception hall for about a 7-mile ride.

“My dad knew there would be a tractor, but he didn't know what tractor. At the wedding I heard him say, ‘Darn kids; they aren't supposed to be purple.’” Kurth laughs.

In fact, at least one Oliver 1850 was painted purple in 1966 as a sales gimmick. But it was definitely not Plum Crazy purple.

The color is permanent, Kurth says, and the tractor will likely be driven in local parades and tractor shows. And he's considering using it in a pull or two. But there's a prerequisite.

“Last fall I wanted to rake with it, but Annie wouldn't let me,” Kurth says. “She said, ‘Not until I get to use it.’”

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Photo courtesy Scott Kempel
When Bob Kurth and his bride, Annie, got married last fall, family and guests were surprised to see this purple Oliver 1755 waiting outside the church. Annie had the tractor painted “Plum Crazy”, a color that set the theme for the wedding.

Adjustable Angle Hoe Cuts In Any Direction

Retired New Mexico farmer and mechanic Marion Crum has been tending big gardens since he was 15 years old. Over the years he has come up with several ideas to keep the ground free of weeds, including his Weed Eradicator, which works so well he has a patent pending on it.

Crum's Weed Eradicator is made from old sickle blades and a typical hoe handle. Daughter Kerry Borth says, “He welded 2 blades together and then welded them to a metal bracket, which he then mounted on a handle. Borth says, “He welds the blades together in a way so the Eradicator can be used pushing forward, pulling backward or sliding side-to-side. There are cutting edges in all directions.” The cutting angle is adjustable with a bolt on the mounting arm. Weeds can be cut at ground level or just below the surface of the soil.

Borth says her father, who's now 88 years old, is real proud of his invention. “As he got older he knew there had to be an easier way to work smarter, not just harder. He tried several ideas, but the Eradicator is the one that worked the best. Every year he brings several of them to the family reunions where items are auctioned off and always goes home empty handed. Everyone who tries one has to own one,” Borth says.

Crum says the secret to the Eradicator is the fact it has an adjustable head that can be moved to any angle. “You don't have to use the chopping motion as you do with a hoe, you just slide it back and forth on top of the ground or just under the surface. You can use it standing up or sitting down in a chair, or even in a scooter, like I do,” Crum says.

Crum is no longer able to make the Eradicator himself, so his nephew Charles Richardson is manufacturing, assembling and selling them. The Weed Eradicator sells for \$45, plus shipping and handling. Says Crum, “It's much easier to use and does a better job than a hoe will ever do. A person can weed up close to plants, and if the blades ever get dull, they're easy to sharpen.”



Marion Crum made this adjustable angle hoe by welding 2 sickle blades together and then welding them to a metal bracket. Cutting angle is adjustable using a bolt on the bracket.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Charles Richardson, 12 Cherry Tree Lane, Animas, New Mexico 88022 (ph 575 574-8322).



Oaxacan Green Dent Corn originated in Mexico and produces emerald green kernels on 10-in. ears.

Oaxacan Green Corn Grown For Green Flour Tamales

A green-kernel heirloom corn that originated in southern Mexico is gaining in popularity in the U.S., primarily because of the tasty tortillas and tamales its flour makes, and also for its use as a fall-season ornamental.

Oaxacan Green Dent Corn is a 95-day variety sold by Seed Savers Exchange, Decorah, Iowa. The Seed Savers catalog offers this description: “Oaxacan Green Dent (*Zea mays*) was grown for centuries by the Zapotec Indians where it's used to make green-flour tamales. It's traditionally grown with squash and beans, which climb up the corn stalks. Drought-resistant, sturdy, 7-ft. plants produce emerald green kernels on 10-in. ears 75 to 100 days.”

Tom Wahlberg, Seed Savers Seed House Manager, says the company sells approximately 500 lbs. of Oaxacan Green Dent Corn seed per year, and the volume is growing. Seed Savers grows its own seed, “having made intensive selections over the past several years to improve coloration

and ensure GMO-free.” Wahlberg says the majority of their Green Dent Corn is sold to the Pacific Northwest, where “the shorter-day corn still yields well and matures.”

Seed savers is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving and sharing some 20,000 varieties of heirloom seeds. Their mission is to “conserve and promote America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations by collecting, growing and sharing heirloom seeds and plants.”

Seed Savers stores varieties in back-up locations at the USDA Seed Bank in Fort Collins, Colo., and at Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway. These off-site deposits remain the property of Seed Savers Exchange, according to the website.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Seed Savers Exchange, 3094 N. Winn Rd., Decorah, Iowa 52101 (ph 563 382-5990; www.seedsavers.org).

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