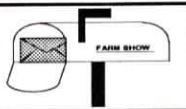


Reader Letters



As a patent attorney and an avid reader of FARM SHOW, I read with interest the article about C.F. Marley (Vol. 14, No. 5) and his "do-it-yourself patents". Mr. Marley is to be commended for his perseverance in obtaining patents on his own. However, the article leaves the impression that the important thing is just to get a patent on one's invention. That is certainly not the case. The scope of protection provided by the patent is what is important. The patent's protection depends on the wording of the "claims" of the patent, which are definitions of the invention. If the patent is overly narrow in its definition of the invention as a result of poor wording, someone else may be able to design around the protection of the patent and much of the value of the patent claims is not an easy task.

The article also mistakenly gives the impression that U.S. Patent Office examiners will help inventors obtain patents on inventions that will automatically result in granting of a patent providing worthwhile protection. Such is not the case. While it is true that patent examiners will help inventors process their patents, there is no legal requirement for patent examiners requiring them to help provide the best protection possible for inventions. Because I was at patent examiner at one time, I know that the type and quality of help provided by examiners varies widely. Claims or definitions drafted by an examiner will have a tendency to be overly narrow in scope of protection, which may be of little value in actually protecting an invention in the marketplace.

The article also failed to mention that once a patent application is filed in the Patent Office, no new information can be added to it at a later date should the patent examiner decide more information is needed. This can happen 6 mos. to a year after the application is filed. If the inventor has been publicly using or selling the invention more than a year before the time when the examiner rejects the application, then the applicant won't be able to refile it to correct the defects. The opportunity to obtain the patent will be lost forever.

Finally, Mr. Marley states that if you do it yourself you'll end up with a better patent because you know your invention better than anyone else. I strongly disagree. Knowing your invention better than anyone else does not help get a better patent. The important thing is to translate knowledge of an invention into a well-written document and then be able to revise that document in view of prior art cited by the patent examiner. It depends on the individual's ability to write and express himself and on knowledge of patent rules and principles.

If you seriously think your invention has a lot of commercial potential, you are being "pennywise and pound foolish" if you attempt to get your own patent. (John R. Flanagan, 1844 Pearl Street, P.O. Box 4309, Boulder, Colo. 80306 ph 303 449-0884).

C.F. Marley replies: Mr. Flanagan makes some interesting points but I stand by my statements concerning do-it-yourself patents because, in my experience, patent attorneys do not have all the answers either. The fact is, I first went through the office of one of the biggest and most reputable patent attorneys in the Midwest and paid out substantial fees on the first patent I tried, only to have them fail. I continued to work on the invention, then wrote a new application myself, and received a patent. Knowing my

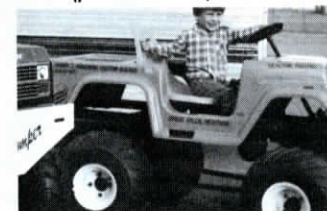
own invention intimately, I was able to write it better than he did. In each of the three instances of obtaining my own patents, I was helped by the examiner in writing my claims. I firmly believe I obtained better claims for having this assistance. (C.F. Marley, P.O. Box 93, Nokomis, Ill. 62075 ph 217 563-2588)

The story in your last issue on the "Weight-All" field scale that mounts on a tractor loader to let you weigh loads just proves the old saying that there's no such thing as a totally new idea. Over 20 years ago we developed the Weylode add-on scale that works on exactly the same principle. It is now widely used in Europe and is still in production. In fact, 10 years ago FARM SHOW reported on the Weylode scale when it was on exhibit at the Royal Show in England.

There are two important points readers should remember if they try to put together their own loader-mounted scales as described in the article. The first is that when installing a scale you need some protection from overloading. If the front wheels of the loader drop into a rut or hit a bump when there's a load on, then the pressure in the hydraulic lines will rise very sharply and there is a risk of damaging the gauge. Second, readers should keep in mind that not all gauges are built to the same standard of accuracy. Some scales are accurate only in the middle range of the scale. Although we still make gauge-type weighers, we are introducing a digital Weylode at this year's Royal which will be extremely accurate and easy to read. (Jim Wilkie, Weylode, Tetbury Road, Old Sodbury, Bristol BS17 6RJ England ph 0454 313305; fax 0454 273054)

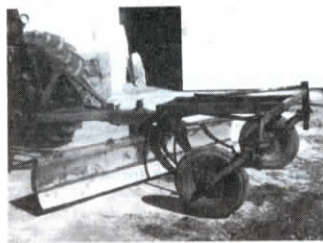


This is a good way to carry rocks in from the field without handling them twice. I hung a trip bucket on the front of my IH tractor. I throw rocks and other debris into it while in the field and simply pull the lever to dump at a rockpile. The spring-loaded bucket came from a manure loader. It's got a slip-on mount so it'll go on or off the tractor in seconds. (Roy Davis, Clemons, Iowa 50051 (ph 515 477-8580)



Thanks for your article (Vol. 14, No. 4) about our "Super Pedal Puller" tractors and tractor pulls. We've had a lot of response from all over the U.S. and Canada. Since the article came out, I've designed and manufactured two Pedal Power Monster Trucks that might be of interest to readers. They're even more popular than our big pedal-powered Versatile and Deere tractors. All are built so that

a young child can pull a lot of weight. (Harry J. Benjamin, 105 Smelter Ave. N.W., Great Falls, Mont. 59404 ph 606 727-6677)

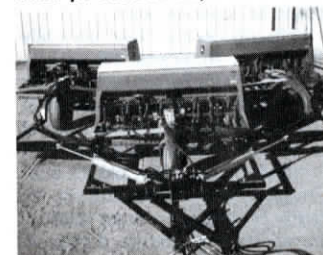


This carrier frame allows you to control a blade so much better than a standard 3-pt. mounted blade that you have to see it to believe it. The caster wheels and framework came from an old swather. The secret to making it work is the chain that replaces the solid top link. It must be loose enough to let the wheels carry the blade but tight enough to pick up the whole unit. The photo shows it mounted on a bi-directional Versatile but it'll work on any tractor 3-pt. (Norbert T. Benke, Dent, Minn. 56528)



We've found a way to make inexpensive, long-lasting waterers and feeders out of old plastic barrels that would otherwise be discarded. We cut the barrels in half and put metal legs on them. We've used them for 8 years now and they're still in fine shape. We use them both inside and outside. They cost only a fraction of commercial ones. (Glen B. Gockley & Son, Rt. 2, Box 2592, Mohnton, Penn. 19540)

I just want to express my opinion that even in this high-tech space age era, some of the best things are age-old. I train and sell Border Collies and they can move livestock in a careful and controlled manner better and with less labor than any other method or breed. People always think of them for sheep but they do a great job with sheep and hogs, as well as other livestock. You can replace several workers with one dog when it comes to moving or loading livestock. The list of chores are endless. One dog I sold is used to bring cows in for milking. On orders, he always leaves the bull outside the barn. I use four dogs to hold 100 lambs and their mothers in a fence corner to administer vaccinations. Without dogs you might spend 3 hrs. to catch 30 sheep. My dogs can bring 200 ewes off of 80 acres in minutes. They come in handy for other chores, such as keeping animals away from feedbunks while I fill it. I would be happy to show any of your readers what these dogs can do. (Ray Bjork, Rt. 1, Box 4, Ocheyedan, Iowa 51354 ph 712 758-3672)

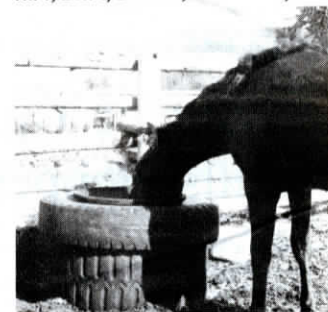


Our grain drill hitch makes it easy to move drills from one field to another. It takes only about 30 sec. to move drills from field position to road position, and vice versa. You don't have to unhook tractor and hydraulic

lines from drills like you do with some end-wise transport hitches. It does not have hydraulic cylinders, hoses, wheels, and framework hanging on back of drills so it's easier to fill drills and there's less weight on press wheels. I make them to fit 9300 Series and LZ Series Deere hoe drills, Case/IH drills, and Melroe Kirschman hoe drills. It can also be adapted to other drills, and it can be made for more than 3 drills. (LeRoy Hartman, Hartman's Drill Hitch, Rt. 1, Box 74A, Grainfield, Kan. 67737)



Here's a good way to make a corner post anchor. Cut the points off a pair of throw-away plow shares about 1/8 or 1/4 in. from the first bolt hole with a metal saw or torch. Attach the shares to either side of a wooden post, about 3 in. from the bottom, with two large staples driven through holes in the shares, so that the shares hang freely out to the sides. When you drop the post down into the hole, the shares will come in against the sides of the post. But once down in the hole, the shares will hinge outward and pinch the post down so it can't be pulled out. I've had posts anchored this way for the past 12 years and they haven't risen an inch. I originally got the idea from an old wooden stave silo anchor. (Eldor Wambgsans, Rt. 1, Box 4, Elmdale, Kan. 66850)



Some of our horses used to like to spill and play with their water tubs, getting them dirty. Every chore time we had to rinse dirt and manure out of their tubs. Even if we attached the tub to a fence, that didn't stop "foot dunkers" who'd paw the tub and get the water dirty. Finally we made a "spill-proof" tub holder out of two old tires that solved the problem. It gets the water tub up high enough off the ground so horses can't paw it with their feet. We put a heavy, wide tire on the bottom and a smaller one on top. The top tires has just the right inside diameter so our water tub fits down snugly into it. When it's full of water, it's impossible for the horses to pull it out and the tires are heavy enough that the horses can't move them around. Also, tires won't hurt the horses if they run into them. (Heather Smith Thomas, Box 215, Salmon, Idaho 83467)

I got tired of not having good light wherever I needed it in my farm shop, so I fitted rollers to either end of a 4-ft. fluorescent light fixture and hung it on an ordinary drapery track. Now I can easily roll it anywhere in the shop where I have the track, which is so versatile you can mount it anywhere. I mounted a cord rewind from an old Electrolux vacuum cleaner on the end of the light with about 20 ft. of cord. I changed the light ballast to an all-temperature instant start since my shop gets pretty cold in winter time. This light works great for me and I hope it will interest many of your readers. (Arthur Merritt, Rt. 1, Hampstead, N.B. E0G 1Y0 Canada)