

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

scanning service.

"I sent the slides off to the company, which has facilities in India and California. Within about 6 weeks time, I was able to view the restored, cleaned, digitized images online. Then the original slides were returned along with a DVD containing the scanned digital images.

"I was able to track the status of my order at all times, which took away the fear I had of sending off my family's memories. The digital images are fantastic and I was able to share them with family members who had no way to view the original slides. It's a wonderful way to relive past family experiences, especially when many family members are no longer with us.

"One of the best things about the service was that you don't have to organize the slides before sending them off. And you can go in afterward and delete any photos you don't want and there will be no charge for them. Cost to scan each slide was 22 cents."

David W. Myers, Waterloo, Iowa: David's happy with his 2011 **Bad Boy Pro 61** zero turn riding mower equipped with a 36 hp Briggs & Stratton engine. "This is a 'go get'r done' mowing machine with good controls and a lot of power. The deck and the machine in general are built like a tank, with lots of steel. The mower leaves a nice, even cut that looks good. It took 6 to 7 hours to mow our yard with my old riding mower, but it takes only 3 hours with the Bad Boy."

Doug Crifton, Purdy, Mo.: "My 2011 **Leatherman** Skeletool CX multitool is lightweight, has a belt clip, and is small enough to fit inside my pocket. I hardly even know it's there (ph 800 847-8665; www.leatherman.com). It's fitted with a stainless steel knife blade, pliers with wire cutters, a bit driver, pocket clip and a carabiner/bottle opener. I tried using the wire cutter to cut some high tensile fence wire, but the tool broke. I sent it back to the company for repairs under warranty, but instead of just replacing the cutter they sent me a brand new Leatherman. It's an excellent product."

Verne Nelson, Strathcona, Minn.: "I think it's the best raccoon trap on the market," says Verne about his 2010 **Duke** coon trap (ph 662 494-6767; www.duketrap.com). "Dogs and cats never get caught in it. I'd recommend this trap to anyone."

Dale Jarvis, Theodosia, Mo.: "I bought my **Montgomery Ward** air compressor new in 1977 and am still using it. It's a 2-cyl., 2



hp, 220-volt model. I've replaced the wheels, and I change the oil and drain moisture from the tank after each use. I don't use this compressor every day, but some days I use it all day long. I wish every product lasted this long and worked this well."

David Neal, Manzanita, Ore.: David's the satisfied owner of a 2010 **Honda EU2000** generator. "It goes non-stop and has enough power to operate everything in my travel trailer, including the air conditioner. It's also easy on fuel. My wife loves it."

Gerald Atkins, Westport, Ore.: "My **Harbor Freight** plastic welder didn't last 6 minutes before the element burned out."

Arnie Roper, Platteville, Wis.: "I like my 2003 and 2005 **Deere** 485 riding mowers, which are equipped with 54 and 60-in. mower

decks. We use these mowers around our farm and also around our apartment buildings. They drive smooth, have a lot of power, and really eat up the grass. My wife calls them her 'convertibles'."

Fred Wheaton, Montour Falls, N.Y.: "We love our 2010 **Briggs & Stratton** 10kw auto standby, propane-powered generator. We lose power quite often and have used this generator 16 different times to provide our home with full power. It has performed flawlessly. We bought the unit from our propane company, which took care of everything involved with installation."

Frank Galovic, Bradyville, Tenn.: "We bought our **Sleep Number** bed 2 years ago and it has been an utter failure. There's a valley in the middle of the mattress where the air tubes have failed, and now the edges are starting to fail. We bought one of the company's top line mattresses, so it would cost us more than \$800 to repair it."

Mike Hanna, Myrtle Point, Ore.: "I like my 2006 **Polaris Sportsman 500 H.O. ATV**. I use it almost every day on our ranch and it's always ready to go. It's probably responsible for me putting on 10 lbs."

Pete Fay, Bozeman, Mont.: "Ten years ago I purchased 2 pieces of equipment from **Buckeye Tractor Co.** - a 'water wheel' transplanter and a plastic mulch layer. Both units have performed flawlessly and paid for themselves in just one season. This is a great company and I recommend them highly."

Tom Smith, Moadus, Ct.: "No problems with my 1999 **Kubota L35** backhoe/loader. Sometimes I load this machine beyond its rated capacity with rocks or logs that I cut in my sawmill. I replaced the original 6-ply front tires with 10-ply skid loader tires."

James Roberts, Scio, N.Y.: James is happy with his 2011 **Norwood MX34** portable bandsaw mill (ph 800 567-0404; www.norwoodsawmills.com). "The components in this sawmill package went together easily, and the assembly instructions were good. I've used the saw to cut 32-in. dia. black walnut trees."

On the minus side, he lists his 2010 **Dodge Ram 2500** pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine. "I previously owned a 2003 Dodge Ram pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel that was trouble-free and had a lot of low-end power. However, the 2010 model has been a disappointment. It lacks power and isn't fuel efficient. Also, the steering wanders and I've had problems with the electronics."

Kristine Jackson, Pottlatch, Idaho: "My 2010 **Mercury Mariner** hybrid SUV has become a rare beast since the company no longer makes this model. It's equipped with hybrid assist 'Jato Rockets' (jet assisted take-off), which are wonderful. The Mariner hybrid can haul up to 5,000 lbs. of cargo. It gets 33 mpg during the summer and 26 mpg during the winter."

Keith Frank, Frankenmuth, Mich.: Keith bought a 1992 **Kubota B7100 HST** 16 hp diesel tractor used with 620 hours on it. "This tractor is fantastic in every way. It has about 2,000 hours on it with no problems. Every time I get on this tractor I'm amazed at what it can do."

Billy Stanton, Montpelier, Ind.: Billy's impressed with his 1980 **Simplicity 7114** garden tractor. "I use this tractor every year to mow 2 1/2 acres, and it still works good."

"I recently bought a **BV100** water distiller from **American Water Distillers**. I was only able to make 4 1/2 gal. of water before it quit working. The distiller was guaranteed for one year. I called the company and got a recorded message saying they would call back within 24 hours. I called 8 different times but no one returned my calls. I also tried talking to



Wilmer Hanson is still using his "best buy" 1942 Ottawa pto-driven drag saw.

Wilmer Hanson, Holmen, Wis.: "My pto-driven drag saw was a best buy when I bought it new in 1942 for \$99, and it still is. The saw was made by the **Ottawa Mfg. Co.**, Ottawa, Kan. With its 18-in. stroke and 10-gauge blade, it was an early alternative to chainsaws.

"It has an adjustable grab pole to hold the log in place, while a pitman arm on a

reciprocating gear drags the saw back and forth across the log.

"Mine sat in the woods for many years. A few years back I pulled it out, painted it up and mounted it on a 1940 **VC Case**. It still works fine. A neighbor had an Ottawa saw with a water-cooled engine that could be moved around on two wheels. They sawed a lot of wood with it."

a salesman twice but he hung up on me both times. That was \$599 down the drain."

Stan Jones, Alma, Ill.: "I love driving my **Kawasaki Brute Force 750 ATV**, which I bought used. It has more power than I could possibly ever need and a very smooth ride."

"My **Gravely Promaster 44Z** zero turn riding mower does a great job of cutting grass, and the Kawasaki engine is easy on fuel."

Richard Ormston, Waverly, Iowa: "My **Toro Titan 4800** zero turn riding mower is built strong. I use it to mow 3 acres of lawn with about 125 trees on it. I'm 87 years young and have fun cutting grass and zipping around trees."

Richard Propp, Sidney, Mont.: Richard's pleased with disc mower blades from **Meg-Mo Systems** (ph 877 625-0125; www.meg-mo.com). "We put these blades on my wife's Deere riding mower equipped with a 42-in. deck, and it really made a difference. She can mow our lawn and some rough, weedy ground next to gravel by a road with no problems."

Donald P. Hunsberger, Harrisonburg, Va.: "My 2005 **Saturn Vue** has been trouble-free and is a delight to drive. Too bad they stopped making this car."

Kelly S. Myers, Brookline, Mo.: "I like my 2005 **Ford F-150** pickup equipped with a 4.6-liter engine and automatic transmission. I use it regularly to pull a 6,000 to 8,000-lb. dump trailer, and to haul up to 10,000 lbs. of antique tractors on a flatbed trailer. This pickup has about 140,000 miles on it but has required only routine maintenance and still runs like a top."

Steven M. Liss, Harrison, Idaho: "I bought my **Deere 5410** diesel tractor used with less than 1,000 hours on it. It always starts right up with no fuss. I use it to blow snow with an **Erskine** front-mount snowblower (ph 800 437-6912; www.erskineattachments.com) which has been trouble-free, and to cut 6 acres of grass with a Deere 10-ft. bush hog. I love the quiet cab with air conditioning, heater and stereo."

Amos L. Fisher, Jr., Narvon, Penn.: "I find that **PB Blaster** loosens stuck bolts and nuts that otherwise would require tremendous pressure to loosen (ph 216 901-5800; www.blastercorporation.com). I highly recommend this product."

Jack Foster, Middletown, N.Y.: "I own a **Deere 2500** tractor equipped with a 200CX front-end loader and a 2011 **Deere** model 46 backhoe. It's a good tractor and loader, but the backhoe leaves a lot to be desired. We bought this machine to replace a Deere 2310

tractor equipped with a loader and backhoe. The backhoe on that unit broke after just 3 years of service. I had it repaired and added extra steel to brace it. However, it tore apart with low hours on it.

"The unit was repaired under warranty and the dealer service was first class, but the design leaves a lot to be desired. The steel isn't strong enough to hold the pivot pin."

Jim Cole, Ottawa, Kan.: Jim likes **Sky Group** vinyl billboard tarps which have been featured in **FARM SHOW** (ph 612 722-1200; www.BillboardTarps.com). The company sells used vinyl billboard signs as tarps at deep discount prices. You can buy the tarps one at a time, by the pallet, or in truckload quantities. Farmers use them to cover hay bales, silage piles, and all types of equipment. Others use them to cover houses and barns under repair or to serve as wind/vapor barriers.

"I used their tarps to make a pond liner. They're good quality and the company offers excellent service," says Cole.

Ted Johnson, Colesburg, Iowa: Ted's happy with his 2005 **New Holland TS115A** tractor equipped with a 6.7-liter engine and 24-speed transmission. "I use this tractor mostly for baling work. It has a lot of power and only uses 2 1/2 gal. of fuel per hour. It has about 1,000 hours on it with no problems. "I've used my 2007 **New Holland BR780A** round baler to make about 9,000 bales with no problems. It makes fantastic bales with nice, smooth edges that weigh up to 2,300 lbs.

"My 2008 **Ag-Bag G6060** pull-type bagger is my worst buy. The main gearbox recently had to be replaced for the third time with only about 200 bags made. Last summer the axle broke away from the main frame due to a poor factory weld. I should have kept the **Kelly Ryan** bagger that I traded in."

Richard Arnold, Hattiesburg, Miss.: Richard likes his 2011 **LS 4-WD LS3010** tractor (ph 252 984-0700; www.lstractorusa.com). "It's fuel efficient and the 4-WD is indispensable. I love the shuttle shift transmission. Although this tractor is small I've used it to pull full-size trucks out of muddy bogs."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 2010 **Howse** 6-ft. disk. "The second time I used it I noticed it wasn't biting into the ground. I got off the tractor, lifted it up and was able to spin the blades on the shaft. Apparently when it was assembled there wasn't enough torque applied to the end nuts. When I took the disc back to the dealer to get it repaired, they wouldn't honor the warranty."