

Continued from previous page

Dennis Knobloch, Mascoutah, Ill.: "I needed to clean out 400 ft. of an 8-in. wide, 4-in. deep trench that had just been dug. About 1 ft. of loose dirt in the bottom of the trench had to be cleaned out before we could put in a water pipe. We tried using spades, hoes, and vacuum cleaners but with little success. I've seen tools made specifically for this job, but couldn't find one.

"Then I happened to be at a local Amish hardware store and found a tool called the **Seymour** drain and irrigation channel cleaner (www.seymourmfg.com; ph 800 815-7253). It's well designed and will probably outlast me. It's available in either a 4 or 5-in. version."



Jim Ruen, Lanesboro, Minn.: "When I saw the **Button-Up Helper** from Lee Valley Tools, I knew I didn't need one yet. But I could see how handy they would have been for my late mother with her very arthritic hands. I suspect they would have been equally helpful for my late father-in-law who had lost multiple fingers on his left hand.

"At \$6.95 for a pair (why a pair is needed, I don't understand), I thought they would be worth trying out and added them to another order (www.LeeValley.com; ph 613 596-0350).

"The 7-in. long tool has a 3 1/4-in. long steel wire loop held in place by a steel ferrule. The loop is long and narrow to fit easily through a buttonhole. The loop widens out to nearly 3/4-in. to easily capture almost any common size button.

"The technique is to simply slide the loop through the hole around the button and pull it back through. While it can take a bit of twisting to get the button through, it does work.

"I tried it with both hands, with and without fingers gripping the handle. As long as you can grip the handle between the base of the thumb and the palm or by even a single finger against the palm, it works. Like anything, practice helps.

"If you have problems buttoning shirts, cuffs or collars, or you know someone who does, the **Button-Up** may do the trick."

J.M. Heiser, Vesper, Wis.: He's impressed with his **Timber Tuff** electric chainsaw sharpener (www.timbertufftools.com; ph 218 943-6290). "This unit mounts on a bench or wall and is relatively easy to set up. The motor is quiet and the sharpener blade puts a sharp edge on the saw's teeth."

William Nelson, Withee, Wis.: "I bought a used 2008 **Ford XLT F-150 4-WD** shortbed pickup with about 63,000 miles on it. It now has more than 106,000 trouble-free miles. It comes in handy on my hobby farm, and I also use it to give people rides to the doctor or local VA hospital."

Roger Hess, Waynesboro, Penn.: "The **Claas 900** self-propelled forage harvester we bought used 2 years ago has been very reliable. We use Claas's Mad Jag wear liners in it which keeps our downtime next to nothing. We use this machine to chop corn and hay and some cereal grains. It has more

than 3,800 hrs. on it, with only one hour of downtime due to a U-joint problem on the corn head. Not bad, considering we used this forage harvester to chop about 50,000 tons of feed last year.

"The anti-spill devices on today's gas cans end up losing more fuel than they save. The devices don't vent right and sometimes don't unlock right, which is a frustrating problem. We usually end up taking the top off the spout and using a funnel instead. The old gas cans with flex pour spouts were much easier to use."

Jim Bullinger, Shepherd, Mont.: "Last spring I bought a used 2006 **Massey Ferguson 2350** compact loader tractor, along with an adjustable rear-mount blade and a landscape rake. I built clamp-on forks for the bucket, which I use a lot to lift and move logs and sacks of wood pellets, and to support a plywood platform that we use to harvest produce in our garden. I also use the tractor to haul manure, till the garden, plow snow, blade gravel, and pull out fence posts. It's a great tractor."

John Cotner, Belgium, Wis.: "A few years back I read a story in **FARM SHOW** about **Pinzgauer** military trucks imported from Switzerland (Vol. 30, No. 5), so I bought one from Expedition Imports in Vallejo, Calif.

"It can carry 8 people. No amount of snow can stop this vehicle."

It's an excellent truck with a good ride. It can carry 8 people in back and comes with a seat that folds down to haul equipment. No amount of snow can stop this vehicle. Parts for it are easy to find, and it's easy to service - if you can repair a lawn mower you can work on this truck. It always starts and it runs great. My wife loves it, too."

Ernest F. Gribi, Mineral City, Ohio: "Two years ago our daughter bought a **Kawasaki** high speed drill and polishing set for me as a Christmas gift. When I opened the package and saw the drill I didn't think I'd use it very much, but I was wrong. I use this little tool a lot for grinding and sanding hard-to-get-at spots, and I wouldn't be without it."

Wayne Reiners, Opelousas, La.: "My 2013 **Deere 825i S4 Gator** utility vehicle has a lot of power, and the ride and handling are outstanding. It's a double seater model but it still turns reasonably short."



Richard McDonald, Maple Valley, Wash.: "I use my **Harbor Freight** cordless oscillating tool to trim the bottom branches at my Christmas tree farm. It's lightweight and the battery lasts a surprisingly long time. I also used this tool while rebuilding a rotted-out motorhome. I bought a second model so I can alternate batteries."

David Nolt, McVeytown, Penn.: "I've had good luck with my **Ingersoll Rand 1/2-in.** cordless impact wrench. It has about as much torque as most air impact wrenches and the Lithium battery doesn't lose power until it's completely discharged. The battery comes

Drone To Help Launch Business

Darren Stinson is learning all he can about drones, otherwise known as unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAV's. He thinks other farmers should do the same. Widespread commercial use of UAV's is likely to grow rapidly once new FAA rules are approved, probably later in 2015.

"Anyone can fly one for personal use if you follow established rules for remote control model aircraft," says Stinson, a former pilot. "It's not reserved for those who already know how to fly. There will be commercial opportunities ahead, but at today's prices, you can justify them just for fun or use in your own fields. Get one with a hard case, and you can throw it in the back of the truck until you need it."

Stinson flies a quadcopter (4 rotors) for fun now, getting practice making videos for himself. While no one has offered to pay him to do so, he will be ready when the FAA approves commercial uses.

Stinson was introduced to quadcopter drones when visiting a cousin in Canada where they're already commercially accepted.

"He's a building inspector and uses his to inspect roofs," says Stinson. "When I got back home, I ordered the model he had, a **DJI Phantom 2 Vision +.**"

While there are bigger and more advanced quadcopters and other UAV's, Stinson says this one had what he needed. It's equipped with GPS, a lithium ion battery offering up to 25 min. flight time and a camera with 14 megapixel stills, as well as 1080P and 720P high definition video capability.

"The camera is built into a 3-axis gimbal that provides amazing camera stability, flying in any direction or quickly stopping with no shake in the video," he says. "It flies really well, even in a fair amount of wind. It's so stable that when locked onto GPS, it sits in one position while you focus on taking pictures or turning video on or off."

Stinson appreciates the ability to use his smartphone for viewing video as it's being taken. He can also review recorded video and images. It clips to the controller that has a repeater box for the Wi-Fi, which connects to the quadcopter, giving it more range.

with a gauge that shows remaining capacity."

Ron Borden, Coshocton, Ohio: "My **Honda 4-cycle** weed string trimmer starts easily in cold or hot weather. It uses only about half as much gas as a 2-cycle trimmer.

"I keep my **Milwaukee** handheld bandsaw by my vise and use it instead of a hacksaw to cut anything that will fit the saw. Unlike a flame-cut it results in a nice, smooth edge."

Francis Przybylski, St. Catharine, Mo.: "I haven't found anything that my 2013 **Eastwood Versa-Cut 60-amp** plasma cutter won't cut (www.eastwood.com/versa-cut-60-plasma-cutter.html; ph 800 343-9353). The company says this tool will cut right through 7/8-in. thick material, although I haven't used it on anything that thick yet. But it will cut right through 1/2-in. thick steel like it was butter. The owner's manual doesn't really tell you how to set the machine so there's a learning curve to operate it."

Richard T. Jagels, Buhl, Idaho: Richard's happy with the **Powershot** propane injection system he installed on his **White 2-105 tractor** (www.dieselformanceproducts.com; ph 888 993-4373). According to the company, it's a variable-stage vapor injection system unlike others that are only activated with boost pressure. The system comes on slow and steady and as the engine's boost pressure increases, so does the flow of propane.



Stinson took these photos with his quadcopter drone last fall.



Stinson's system cost around \$1,300, including an extra battery. With its GPS and the smartphone controller ground station, he can pull up a Google map of the area he is flying and lay out a pattern for the quadcopter to fly. He simply points out waypoints for it to fly to on the screen and indicates the elevation for the UAV to reach at each point. The quadcopter will then fly to each point automatically and return to base. At any point he can pause it and take control. When it returns to the starting point, he can transfer video or stills to his smartphone for emailing or uploading.

"It's a very good place to start if learning to use a quadcopter," says Stinson. "If looking at others, just remember to not skimp on the camera and make sure you get a 3-axis gimbal. Also, get the most battery life you can, and buy an extra battery. Even 25 min. isn't that much."

Check out Stinson's drone videos at farmshow.com.

Contact: **FARM SHOW Followup**, Darren Stinson, Grand Forks, N. Dak. (ph 218 732-0327; aerials@amerinucks.com).

"A dynamometer showed the **Powershot** raised my tractor's horsepower from the original 110 hp to 130 hp. Also, there's a lot less smoke coming out of the exhaust and the fuel economy is much better," says Jagels.

He's disappointed with **Syngenta Palisade 2EC** plant growth regulator that's designed for use on cereal crops. The company says the growth regulator increases stem thickness and diameter and reduces crop height to help decrease lodging.

"I applied this product on malt barley according to the label instructions, but it didn't shorten the barley's height so lodging and second growth occurred," says Jagels. "Some of my barley didn't even make malt quality. I won't use this product again."

Wayne Reiners, Opelousas, La.: "My 2013 **Deere 825i S4 Gator** utility vehicle has a lot of power and the ride and handling are outstanding. Considering it's a double seater model, it turns reasonably short."

D. Teal, Rosalia, Wash.: "I bought my 2000 **GM SLT 1500 4-WD** SUV as a backup model for winter use. I'm impressed with its large size and the available options such as auto select, 4-WD, electric windows and mirrors, cruise control, and stereo. This SUV is fuel efficient and handles great in bad weather. The leather interior is well made and durable."