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easy and is well-balanced and lightweight, making it easy to use. I'm sure it'll last a long time."

Dwight Steelman, Burleson, Texas: Dwight's disappointed with his **Longtrac** 680 tractor equipped with a **Woods** 1020 front-end loader. "With only 420 hours on it, the tractor snapped in half while we were picking up a scoopful of dirt. It broke at the bell housing connection. My father was hurt and could have been killed, but luckily he wasn't."

Lynn D. Wrosch, Onaga, Kansas: Lynn's the owner of a 2003 **Case** 60 XT skid steer loader as well as a **Hick** hydraulic rotary tree saw that mounts on the skid loader (Hick Fabrication, Berryton, Kansas ph 785 862-8603). He says they're both best buys. "The tree saw is easy to maintain and cuts scrub trees like crazy. The skid loader runs great and has a lot of power."

"I'm also well pleased with my **Miller** plasma cutter."

"We have a 1953 **Farmall** Super M loader tractor equipped with a live hydraulic pump that drives off the timing gear. The problem is that we were always breaking the timing gear when lifting heavy loads. To solve the problem we had a machinist cut the center out of a good timing gear, leaving about one inch of the original gear. He then machined out a solid steel hub and bolted the new hub to the original gear. We haven't had any problems with it since."

Clem H. Miller, St. Anthony, N. Dak.: "It's the best pulling pickup I've ever owned," reports Clem about his 2004 **Dodge** Ram 2500 equipped with a **Cummins** diesel engine. "I've used it to pull a 28-ft. high profile fifth wheel trailer. It's really fuel efficient. It's fun to drive this pickup with the fifth wheel attached."

William Hintz, Pierce, Neb.: "My best buy ever was my 1981 **Bobcat** skid steer loader. I used it to load silage every day of the year and also to load all the manure from our farm. In 1998 I traded it in for a new **Bobcat** 773. No problems with either machine."

"The **Cummins** irrigation engine that I bought new in 2000 is my worst buy. It was hard to start, due to a bad starter. Then the push button starter switch kept falling off due to vibration. The exhaust pipe also vibrated off."

Charles Trubey, Arcadia, Ind.: "I've had problems with the 2003 **Speeco** 35-ton log splitter I bought from Tractor Supply Co. It has a big hydraulic cylinder, and when the nut holding the piston onto the shaft came loose I had to pay \$80 to have it repaired at a machine shop. The splitter came with a one-year warranty, and since I had owned the machine for one year and nine months the company wouldn't help out. I think they should have because it was a matter of poor workmanship."

Howard Hoftzyer, Rushmore, Minn.: "I bought my 1988 **Jeep** Wrangler used with 130,000 miles and now it has more than 180,000 miles. I have a towbar on it so I can tow it to other farms. It'll go anywhere an ATV will go. It's fuel efficient and can be driven all year long even in Minnesota's coldest weather. I can use it to tow loads weighing up to 3-ton loads if I'm careful."

Tom Lane, Placida, Fla.: "My 1973 **Chevrolet** 3500 1-ton dually pickup equipped with a 454 cu. in. engine is my best buy. It runs strong and tows well and has required only routine maintenance over the years. My only problem is that wherever I go someone wants to buy it from me."

Kevin West, Covington, Ohio: "My 2004 **Bed Slide** 4 by 8-ft. bed extender for pick-

ups is my best buy (ph 888 807-0099; www.bedslide.com). I installed it in my capped work truck. It's rated at 1,500 lbs. and evenly distributes all my carpentry tools, making them easy to reach. All but 24 in. of the unit can be extended out the back of the



bed. It locks both in the open and closed positions. It also provides an area underneath for storing 2 by 4's pipes, etc. It cost \$625 shipped to my trailer dealer. I give it an A-1 rating."

Bruce Reeder, Shelton, Neb.: Bruce likes his **Strip Cat** strip-till machine (Twin Diamond Industries, Minden, Neb. ph 308 832-1983; www.twindiamondind.com). "It clears out corn rows and places fertilizer under the row. Wherever I used this machine my corn



yielded at least 30 more bushels per acre. This company makes good products and educates people on strip-till techniques."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 2000 **Polaris** 4-WD ATV. "The clutch broke after only about 18 months of use, and it took three weeks to get a new one."

Larry G. Sassen, Little Falls, Minn.: "It's the lightest, most powerful chain saw I've ever owned," says Larry, pleased with his **Stihl** MS 260. "It always starts promptly and maintains power, even if the air cleaner gets covered with a thick coat of dust."

"My 1999 **Chevrolet** Ventura van is my worst buy. The service engine light is always coming on, even when the engine seems to be running smoothly. All six fuel injectors had to be replaced within the past year, even though the van has less than 70,000 miles on it. Also, the air bag light is always going on and off."

Doyle C. Scott, Hoagland, Ind.: "I use my 1970 **New Holland** 35 skid loader every day of the year. We load heavy bales, scoop manure, and clean free-stall barns twice a day. I have another model 35 that I use primarily to move logs and lumber out of our sawmill building. I'd never buy another brand."

Randy Beaupre, Frankville, Ontario: "Our 1990 **Hesston** 80-66 4-WD tractor equipped with an **Allied** 594 front-end loader is a great tractor and has been trouble-free while requiring only routine maintenance. The 4-WD really comes in handy in muddy barn yards when loading manure, feeding round bales, and doing many other jobs. My dealer stands behind this product, and if any parts are needed he always has them on hand."

John Graham, Southwest City, Mo.: "It's reliable and fuel efficient and is also comfortable to drive," says John, pleased with his 2001 **Dodge** ¾-ton pickup equipped with a **Cummins** diesel engine.

He's disappointed with his 2002 **Troy Bilt** Bronco tiller. "It's built too light and acts just like it was a real bucking bronco."

"My **Troy Bilt** weed whacker doesn't

How He Solved Deere's Hitch Problem

Randall Kohlmeier, Pilot Grove, Mo., recently called to tell us about a "best buy" product that he first read about in FARM SHOW.

"I read the article about Dennis Nebgen in Vol. 28, No. 6, who found a way take the sway out of the hitch arms on his older Deere 3-pt. hitch," says Kohlmeier. "He got the idea from an Allis Chalmers tractor, using chains and turnbuckles to make it easy to tighten up the 3-pt. arms."

"I called Dennis and ordered a set for my 4010 for \$350 and they're just about the slickest thing I've ever seen. I've been fighting those 3-pt arms for years and now they're just as straight as can be and easy to adjust, if needed. Makes hooking up easy."

"This product is very well made and Dennis did everything he said he would do. He really cared how they worked out for me, and called me after I got them to see that the installation went okay. They were no trouble at all to install. Now that they're in place, they'll be there for the life of the tractor."

For more information on Nebgen's stabilizer, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dennis Nebgen, Rt. 1, Irvona, Penn. 16656 (ph 814 672-4305; email dennybob@direcway.com).



Nebgen's Deere hitch stabilizers are modeled after equipment found on Allis Chalmers' tractors.

maintain the height adjustment, and the electric starter failed after only two months of use."

Joe Eilert, Jewell, Kansas: "I like my 2003 **Trailmann** 7 by 24-ft. livestock trailer (Mann Made Products, Inc., ph 800 748-7505; www.trailmann.com). I had it custom-built, with many convenient features added to it. The company really listens to its customers. Its trailers cost a bit more than some



other brands, but the extra cost is well worth it. This is my second Trailmann model.

"My worst buys were the **Michelin** radial tires on my new pickup. One tire blew out with only 500 miles on it. The Michelin dealer wanted \$185 for a new tire after adjusting for tire wear. I already had a new spare tire so I mounted it on the pickup. Now the four tires on my pickup have 32,000 miles on them and already they're almost worn out. I think that's very poor performance for tires that cost \$270 apiece."

John Rempel, Kleefeld, Manitoba: "My 1955 **Ferguson** T0 35 tractor turned 50-years old last month. When I bought this tractor it was the only one I had at the time. For 20 years I used it to do all our fieldwork. Later on I used it as a second tractor. I still use it to move snow during the winter and to work in our yard and garden during the summer. In 1964 I put new **Goodyear** rear tires on it. The tires still don't have any cracks and have two thirds of the original tread left. I had the tractor's engine rebuilt 20 years ago, and it still runs like a clock. Whenever this tractor isn't in use I keep it in a shed. It's an excellent tractor, and I expect to use it for a long time yet."

Doug McAlexander, Cedar Grove, Tenn.: Doug nominates his 1993 **Mack** CH 613 tri-axle dump truck as his "best buy." "I bought this truck used in 1996 with about 300,000 miles on it. Now it has about 750,000 miles. I use it to haul GVW loads weighing up to 74,000 lbs. It's powered by an E7 300 hp Mack engine, which is the most dependable engine I've ever owned. The engine valve cover has never been off. I removed

the oil pan at about 700,000 miles and also replaced the crankshaft bearings for preventative maintenance."

"I'm not happy with my 2003 **Maytag** washing machine, which is a quiet series, heavy-duty model. Whenever this washer goes into the spin cycle it's almost impossible to keep it balanced, so I have to stay right with it. When it gets out of balance, it makes loud metal-to-metal banging sounds and also slides around on the floor. I can move the clothes around, but it doesn't take long before it gets out of balance again. I bought it at **Lowes**, and they said I should contact Maytag. But all Maytag wants to do is sell me an extended warranty. I was happier with the old Maytag that this one replaced."

"About two years ago I ordered a tire bead breaker from **Northern Tool and Equipment Co.** and it's a worst buy. I've never been able to break a bead down with it. The tool simply slides off the rim instead of pushing the bead down. It was built in China and is made of steel that's too soft. It cost \$19.99, but it's not worth anything to me."

Glenn Arfstrom, Willmar, Minn.: "I'm disappointed with my **Wilkening** wood burning fireplace. The secondary combustion chamber, which consists of a brick metal rack, burned out and fell into the firebox below after a year, rendering it useless. The company refused to do anything about the problem. Their 20-year warranty didn't even cover a 2-year-old product."

John C. Haldemann, Chinook, Mt.: "It's one of the most useful machines on our ranch," reports John, owner of a 2004 **Polaris** Magnum 4 by 4 ATV. "It's simple in design and fits our needs perfectly. We use it for working and checking on cattle and sheep, fixing fence, haying, and so forth. No problems."

B. Ahrens, Owatonna, Minn.: "We like our **Deere** 8120T tractor. We use it to plant and spray crops and also to pull our 750-bu. grain cart. This tractor drives and rides like a Cadillac."

Sam Rauh, Okeene, Okla.: "Our family owns many **Ford** vehicles. It started with a 1986 250 diesel pickup with more than 250,000 miles on it. Then we bought a 1991 F-350 diesel pickup with more than 150,000 miles. No problems with either one. These pickups have really been put to the test. They