

He Turns Horseshoes Into Art

Frank Schwegel started out making clothes hooks from horseshoes and progressed to stylized bull heads, dogs, horses and even a 3/4-scale stagecoach.

"My dad used to make things out of horseshoes, and when I became a welder, I started doing it, too," he says.

Schwegel traveled the country for 40 years while working in the logging industry. It was while living in northern Colorado for 9 years that he started making horseshoe hooks.

"Friends started asking me to make things for them," he says.

Although he and his wife have retired to a home in South Dakota, they still travel. Now it is to rodeos, horse and stock shows. One reason is to sell his art. The other is to take part in Ranch Sorting competitions at state and national levels.

"We take along our art, and it pays our entry fees," says Schwegel.

In addition to show pieces, Schwegel also makes utility items including boot racks, hoof racks for farriers, wine racks, coat

and hat racks, and more. The more includes everything from trivets to welcome signs and chairs.

"I make directors' chairs with arm, back and foot rests," he says. "Rocking chairs are a big hit at the shows."

Schwegel is happy to do custom projects as well. He will add names and dates to personalize an item.

"Just send me a picture of what you want and we can talk about it," says Schwegel. "I like to have a conversation with people. I have something for everyone with items running from \$10 to \$1,500."

His work is so popular that he often runs out of raw material. He offers a \$25 discount if a customer brings him a 5-gal. bucket of horseshoes.

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Robert Sallee converted a Cub Cadet riding mower to look like an International Harvester truck from the 1930's. It's equipped with a 4 by 5-ft. dump box with a wood bed.

Mini IH Truck Built From Cub Cadet Mower

"It brings back a lot of memories from back in the days when I was growing up," says 86-year-old Robert Sallee of Coffeyville, Kansas, who converted a Cub Cadet riding mower to look like an International Harvester truck from the 1930's.

The truck measures 11 1/2 ft. long and is painted IH red and black. It's equipped with a 4-ft. wide by 5-ft. long dump box that has a wood bed. The truck's lugged rear wheels are chain-driven just like they were on trucks from the 1930's. Power is provided by an 18 hp Kohler engine and the mower's hydrostatic transmission. The semi-circular front fenders are off a trailer.

The truck features a wooden cab and a hinged metal hood with a gas cap on top that serves as a handle. The steering wheel is original, but the Cub Cadet seat was replaced with a bench seat that can support 2 people. There's even an old fashioned ooga horn off a 1928 Dodge truck.

Sallee stripped the Cub Cadet down to the frame, transaxle, wheels, and engine. He lengthened the frame by 5 ft. by bolting heavy angle irons alongside the Cub Cadet's original frame. Then he used heavy pipe to build a new rear axle about 2 ft. behind the Cub Cadet's original transaxle. "I had to build a new rear axle that would carry more weight than the original one, in order to support the dump bed," explains Sallee.

He removed the wheels from the transaxle and replaced them with sprockets. Then he mounted the wheels back on the new axle and mounted sprockets next to them.

"The Cub Cadet's original rear axle doesn't carry any weight at all and is now used only

to chain-drive the new axle," says Sallee. "I replaced the Cub Cadet's original rear tires with 8:50 by 12 lugged tires that provide better traction on wet ground. I also installed compression bearings on the Cub Cadet's front spindles to make the truck steer easier."

The mower was originally equipped with a 12 hp Kohler engine, but it proved to be underpowered so Sallee later replaced it with the bigger 18 hp Kohler. "In order to make room for the new engine I had to widen the frame by 2 in.," he says.

Old-time trucks had wood beds with metal strips on the joints, so Sallee made his truck bed the same way. He made a steel frame and laid boards on top of it. He cut a small groove on the edge of each board for the metal strips to hold them when the strips were bolted to the frame.

"There are no bolts or nuts in the wood itself," says Sallee. "I had a hard time finding the 1 1/4-in. wide metal strips, and when I did find them they were expensive. I had to pay \$80 just for a handful of strips."

The bed is raised and lowered by a heavy duty hoist and cylinder with 2,000 lbs. of lifting capacity. It has a metal headboard made out of 1-in. sq. tubing, and Sallee used 3/8-in. metal rods to spell out his last name and add it on top of the headboard.

He used 2 pieces of expanded metal to build the truck's grill and painted it silver. The bench seat can be raised to access the gas tank and an electric-hydraulic pump that powers the dump bed.

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William Green's giant 9-ft. tall, high-wheel tricycle can carry 2 adult passengers on back. Rear wheels are driven by a 3 1/2 hp. engine that belt-drives the hydrostatic transmission off an old riding mower.

Giant Tricycle Powered By 3 1/2 Hp. Engine

"I came up with the idea to build a giant 9-ft. tall, high-wheel tricycle similar to the ones from the late 1800's. It's always a big hit at parades and shows," says William Green, Wilburton, Okla.

The giant tricycle can carry 2 adult passengers on back. It has a top speed of about 5 1/2 mph and rides on an 8-ft. high front wheel and 5 1/2-ft. tall rear wheels. The rear wheels are driven by a 3 1/2 hp., 1-cyl. engine that belt-drives the hydrostatic transmission off an old riding mower, which in turn chain-drives the rear axle.

The metal driver's seat is off a piece of farm equipment, and the 2-person seat on back was built from scratch. A set of 8-in. wide metal pegs lead up to the seat, with leather streamers hanging down from the handlebar hand grips.

"I call it my 'Rolls Canardly', which is a pun on Rolls Royce and a fancy-sounding name for a car that doesn't work very well. It rolls down one hill and canardly get up the next," says Green. "I built it last summer intending to use it as a yard ornament, but then I decided I wanted to ride it so I had a lot more work to do. I painted the frame and wheels red because we were always IH fans, and because years ago all little trikes were painted red and white.

"People get very excited when they see me on my giant tricycle in parades. We've won several prizes in parades because it's so different."

The machine is equipped with hand-operated boat motor controls, including the gear shifter and speed lever. A cable leads from the controls down to the engine.

The hydraulic disc brake off a small motorcycle is attached to the center of the front wheel. A hose runs from the brake to a small hydraulic cylinder located in front of the seat. "I use a foot-operated metal arm to slow down and pull back on the speed lever to stop the hydrostatic transmission," says Green.

The wheels were made from big metal spools that underground cable is stored on until used by utility companies. Their 1 1/2-in. wide rims are covered by 1/4-in. thick strips of rubber. All the wheels are partially covered by white expanded metal "fenders", which are tach-welded to metal bars that come out the center of each wheel.

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