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working and when I opened it up, I found that it was half full of rain water. If you read the fine print it says 'install indoors only', but who uses a fence charger indoors for 'livestock confinement only'?"

Mike Grubb, Georgetown, Ind.: Mike is happy with his 2014 **New Holland Workmaster 40** loader tractor. "This tractor is almost as powerful as our Deere 3010 and as nimble as the Ford 1910 it replaced. It's an excellent example of big performance in a small package. It powers the equipment we

"It will run all day on a tank of fuel."

need to use on our three farms and will run all day on a tank of fuel. The tractor has great features like shuttle shift transmission, 4-WD, power steering, and a 3 by 4 transmission. It has a lot of power and is built strong."

Ed Gillier, Kent Bridge, Ontario: "I like my 2015 **WeCover Structures** work shop equipped with a powerlift door (www.wecover.net; ph 877 849-9049). The building has a lot of height and overhead clearance without needing extra high walls."

Robert Wheeler, Florence, Alabama: Robert's the satisfied owner of a 1977 **Kubota 175 2-WD** tractor equipped with an 18 hp, 2-cyl. diesel engine and 4-speed transmission. "This tractor never lets me down. I put 15-in. temporary spare tires on front, but it still has the original rear tires. I added a rollbar and a new seat, and I need to rebuild the fuel injection pump as it's leaking fuel into the crankcase."

Gary Ahlbrecht, Brownton, Minn.: Gary likes his 1980 **Chevrolet C1500** pickup equipped with a 305 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission. "I bought this pickup new and drove it to work almost every day, and also used it to haul wood. It always got 18 to 20 mpg. I put about 260,000 miles on it in 30 years. The only problem was that it went through 16 different fuel pumps during that time."

Charley Page, Redfield, Ark.: "I bought my 2004 **New Holland TC55DA 4-WD** tractor equipped with a TL-18A front-end loader used with about 600 hours on it. It's my best buy ever. The 4-WD and hydraulic shuttle reverser on it have really spoiled me, as they make my tractor work much easier. The tractor has almost 1,000 hours on it but has needed only a couple of minor repairs. I'm definitely sold on New Holland."

Jim Ruen, Lanesboro, Minn.: "You don't need a sledgehammer to bust up concrete, not to mention jackhammers or explosives. All you need is to drill some holes, pour in some Ecobust slurry, and give it a little time."

"I had a 6-in. thick, 3-ft. square slab that had been poured on to an existing floor. I needed to clear it out for a renovation.



"Ecobust suggests drilling 1 1/2-in. dia. holes, 80 to 90 percent of the way through the block of concrete. The company also suggests drilling the holes every 12 to 14 in.

in concrete without rebar or other reinforcing.

"Not one to follow directions exactly, I drilled a crisscross pattern in the pad and used a 1-in. bit, as I didn't have a 1 1/2-in.

"I did follow directions on the slurry. Although I found it hard to imagine a little more than 3 pints of water could dissolve 5 lbs. of powder into a slurry, it did.

"What I ended up with was a great deal more than I needed. I filled the holes and was amazed how quickly the slurry began to thicken and set up.

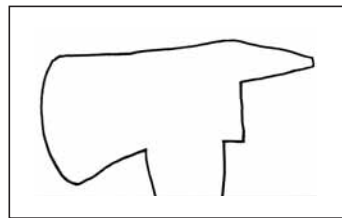
"The company warns that the slurry can react so fast that it can blow out of the holes. Mine didn't do that. However, the directions suggest stirring it to remove any air pockets. When I did, I found the first holes filled were already solidifying.

"I covered the slab with a tarp and checked it 24 hrs. later.

"The solid slab had broken along the lines of the holes just as promised. My only regret was that I hadn't drilled more holes and used more of the slurry. Some of the chunks were still pretty heavy."

"I did have 2 frustrations with the company website. First was an inability to get anyone to answer a phone call during the workday. My other frustration is the examples offered. The closest to my situation was a 4 by 4-ft. pad, 16 in. thick. The picture showed 16 holes drilled and suggested that 44 lbs. of powder should be used. Based on my experience, that amount would seem to be extreme overkill and a waste of money. But then, the resulting pieces likely weren't as heavy as mine."

Don Peer, Roscommon, Mich.: "I made what I call a 'pick axe' from an old double bit axe that had been sitting in our barn for at least 50 years. A friend with a cutting torch



cut one of the axe blades for me, reshaping it into a point to pick up logs. It's the best tool I've ever used.

"We burn wood in an outdoor furnace and keep a pile of 8-ft. logs nearby. I use a chainsaw to cut the logs up, and then use the pick axe to load them into a wheelbarrow for stacking or burning in the furnace. My pick axe saves time and also saves on my back. It also comes in handy for chopping small branches. I'd be lost without it."

Dave Wochinski, New London, Wis.: "I use my 2004 **Suzuki Ozark 250 4-wheeler** seven days a week for farm work and hunting. For the most part, this ATV has required only routine maintenance. However, I've had trouble with the starter. I have to install new brushes in it almost every year, although I do use the machine 25 to 50 times a day."

Paul Johnson, Fincastle, Va.: "Last year I bought a **True Temper** half moon cutter at Lowes to cut some bamboo roots, and I accidentally cracked the handle on a tree root (www.true-temper.com; ph 800 393-1848). I contacted the company's customer service department and they sent a new cutter, which was a nice surprise because all I really expected was a replacement handle."

Carl Keeler, Perkiomenville, Penn.: Carl's the satisfied owner of a 2004 **Dodge Ram 2500 4-WD** pickup with more than 200,000 miles on it. It's equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and automatic transmission. "I've had to replace only the



Ewen modified his 1984 combine by adding a Mud Hog axle on back and expanding the grain tank to 300 bu. He likes that the combine doesn't have all the electronic bells and whistles.

30-Year Old Combine Still Going Strong

By Lorn Manthey, Contributing Editor

"The International 1480 Axial Flow combine that I bought new in 1984 is still going strong with more than 4,000 separator hours on it," says Indiana farmer Howard Ewen. "I've done a lot of work on the machine to improve it over the years, but the time and money I've invested has all been worthwhile."

When Ewen first bought the machine he widened the axles so the 30-in. tires would run between the 38-in. rows on his farm. IH didn't have spacers to fit his needs at the time, so Ewen made his own using 4 by 6-in. tube steel. He also put two 1 1/4-in. truss rods under the frame to provide extra support. After installing the extensions, he mounted the wheel rims facing in rather than out. Ewen says that puts less strain on the bearings and the final drive. In the 30 years he's owned the machine he's only replaced one seal on a final drive.

Another reason Ewen wanted extra axle strength was to accommodate a larger grain tank. Ewen expanded the original 200-bu. grain tank by 70 percent, adding extensions to the top. He installed metal supports that connect to the engine mounts and others that extend down to the axles. That bracing strengthens the tank and helps carry the 300 bushels that the tank now holds.

"I've never had a problem with the frame or the tank seams cracking," says Ewen. "We generally don't drive more than 3 mph while harvesting, and we always unload at the ends of the field. We don't drive across rows or through gullies, which puts a lot of stress on the frame when the machine is fully loaded." Ewen also widened the rear axle and strengthened it with 1/2-in. plate steel. Eventually he installed a Mud Hog 4-WD axle and built a whole new center section so the rear wheels would track directly behind the front wheels. Ewen says the setup helps

fuel relay pump. I change the engine oil and filter every 7,000 to 8,000 miles and the transmission oil about every 50,000 miles.

"This pickup was built before complicated diesel exhaust emission systems became required by law. It has a 4:10 rear end and averages 17 mpg. I occasionally use the pickup to tow a gooseneck trailer loaded with tractors and other equipment. It's definitely a best buy."

Mark Steiner, Kunis, Ill.: "Our 2012 **Kubota L3200** compact tractor came with a front-end loader, tiller and bush hog. We use this tractor for everything from mowing old setaside conservation land to ripping out tree stumps with a homemade single tine, 3-pt. mounted ripper. We also use it to operate rebuilt oilfield gearboxes on a pto-powered load test stand. The tractor's 32 hp

reduce compaction because the rear wheels are operating on their own power rather than being pulled along by the main drive wheels.

When Ewen's machine was 10 years old he installed about \$15,000 worth of parts that updated the machine with features that new machines had. "We improved the capacity and were able to run an 8-row corn head, which made the machine more efficient," Ewen says. In recent years he's updated sieves, bearings, gears and the grain unloading system. He put new gearboxes in the corn head and also welded 1/4-in. square stock to the spirals on the snapping rolls so the head does a better job in downed corn.

Ewen cleans his machine thoroughly after each season of use and stores it inside. He washes and polishes the side panels and says the red paint is just like new. "I've always been a stickler for preventive maintenance, and that really pays off with a combine," Ewen says. The engine is still running strong because fluids are changed at regular intervals and it's not overloaded, even with an 8-row head and a larger grain tank.

Ewen says the foam padding in the cab is deteriorating and will need replacing soon. The seat, however, "looks like new and had plastic on it until a few years ago." Ewen keeps it covered with a rug during harvest so it doesn't get much wear.

"The fancy new machines have all sorts of electronics, computers, chips and new technology that costs a lot of money," says Ewen, "but I'm extremely happy with this machine. The engine runs fine, the cab has air conditioning that works, and the machine does a great job delivering clean grain. Better yet, if anything breaks on the machine, I know how to fix it."

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engine is a little sluggish when operating the bush hog in heavy grass, so to boost its power we equipped it with a turbocharger off a Volkswagen engine, which solved the problem. Now we can say this tractor even whistles while it works!"

Bruce Steele, Plainwell, Mich.: Over the years, Bruce has had a lot of success with **Deere** tractors. "I own a 1980 4440 with about 11,000 hours; a 4430 with about 10,000 hours; a 4230 with about 13,000 hours; and a 2955 with about 10,000 hours. None of the engines has ever been touched. The 4440, 4430, and 4230 did require new water pumps.

"All these tractors have actually worked better than me because I had to have my 'motor' rebuilt when I turned 82 years old. But I'm now 86 and still going strong."