

## Truck Power Steering Pump Keeps Deere Mower Going

When the hydraulic pump on his 1980's Deere F425 hydrostatic drive riding mower failed and a new pump from Deere couldn't be found, Michael Heron, Rivercourse, Alberta, decided to replace it with the power steering pump off a big truck equipped with a Cat diesel engine.

"The hydraulic drive system on this mower shares the same oil used by the engine," says Heron. "The oil goes to a hydraulic motor, and all the return oil from the motor goes back to the engine sump."

"The pump sits in the bottom of the engine and is driven by the engine camshaft. Once the pump fails, you don't have any drive at all because there isn't any power going to the hydraulic motor that powers the mower's drive wheels."

Heron found a used pump for \$800 but thought that was too much money. So instead of trashing the mower, he mounted the power steering pump toward the back of the mower and attached a pulley on top of it. He also made an adapter and then attached a belt and pulley to the flywheel above the mower's engine. He removed the hydraulic steel lines from the original pump and ran used lines, which someone gave him, to the mower's hydraulic motor. The pump's original foot control pedal was hooked up to a flow control valve, which allows him to vary the motor's speed.

"I installed an in-line electric pump that automatically comes on when the oil level in the engine sump gets too high, due to oil seeping out of the motor. It



**Heron mounted the power steering pump off a big truck toward back of mower and attached a pulley on top of it. He also attached a pulley to the flywheel on top of mower's engine.**

returns the excess oil to the mower's hydraulic oil reservoir," says Heron. "All in all, this job was quite a challenging exercise but I like how it turned out."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Michael Heron, 452078 Range Rd. 13, RR 2, Rivercourse, Alberta Canada TOB 3X0 (ph 306 821-6367; m.heron@sasktel.net).

## "Accidental" Parts Business Catches On

Gene Wedde's salvage yard is relatively small but he gives his customers big-time service. At a time when many salvage yards put most of their resources into big and late model equipment, Wedde and Sons Vintage Iron focuses on antique equipment. However, like the big guys, he uses technology to help sell parts.

"If I part out a Farmall 560, I create a category for it on my website and add all the parts, descriptions, photos and prices," says Wedde. "When a part sells, it's deleted. If a customer inquires about a part on the site, 99 percent of the time, it is available."

Wedde warns that the website can mislead buyers who stop by and expect many acres of salvage. The business is mostly run out of a single 40 by 64-ft. pole shed. Parts are stored out of the elements in the shed. With the help of the website, however, he has sold parts to customers in more than 35 states.

"Our specialty is supplying good quality, hard-to-find Farmall and International Harvester parts," says Wedde. "Occasionally we may disassemble another color, but we stay true to our red roots."

Wedde started the business accidentally with the purchase of a Farmall C that had broken in half. He planned to put it back together and resell it. While searching for parts online, he realized that parting it out might pay better.

"I advertised the fenders on Yesterday's Tractors website, and the next morning I had a buyer from Nebraska," says Wedde.

Free classified ads in a statewide newspaper brought in more business. More sales, more ads and then booths at tractor and gas engine shows followed the C purchase. Eventually he added the Red Power Roundup show.

"I've done as many as 7 shows in one



**Wedde and Sons Vintage Iron focuses on parts for antique equipment. "Our specialty is supplying hard-to-find Farmall and International Harvester parts," says Gene Wedde.**



summer," says Wedde.

Eventually Wedde set up his own website. It allows him a national showcase while maintaining his vintage style.

"I take phone calls on a land line, no texts, and do emails from a computer," he says. "I will respond to everyone, usually within 24 hours if I'm not out of town, whether I have the part or not."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wedde and Sons Vintage Iron, Wautoma, Wis. (ph 920 787-7635; www.weddeandsons.com).



**Mower parts are not in short supply at Outdoor Power Equipment. "I've got more than 1,900 riding mowers waiting to be parted out," says LeRoy Oleson.**

## He Sells Mower Parts By The Thousands

If you need a part for a riding mower, LeRoy Oleson, Jr., likely has it. He has mowers by the hundreds waiting to be parted out and mower parts on shelves numbered in the thousands. His South Dakota farmyard is covered with mowers, and his buildings are packed with parts for mowers and more.

"I've got more than 1,900 riding mowers waiting to be parted out," says Oleson. "The farm buildings contain more than 12,000 parts for riding mowers, skid steers, ATV's, motorcycles and small engines. We also sell complete units, such as riding mowers, skid steers, 4-wheelers, 3-wheelers and motorcycles."

Oleson estimates he has purchased more than 6,000 mowers over the years. He once bought 48 in one day. It all started with a good deal at an auction in the early 1990's.

"I bought a riding lawn mower for not much money, got it running and put an ad in the paper," recalls Oleson. "I had 25 to 30 calls. I did it again with similar results. For the first 5 or 6 years, I just sold repaired mowers, no parts."

Oleson had such good luck reselling auction mowers that he started advertising to buy them as well as sell them. At one point he was spending \$30,000 a year on ads. When the regional newspaper wanted to raise their rates, he switched to eBay and internet sales.

He also made the switch to selling parts. He quickly found that he could break down a Deere 318 he had paid a few hundred dollars for and sell the parts for \$4,000. His parts have gone all over the world, from Russia and France to New Zealand.

"I sold 115 items on eBay in one day," he

says. "In one 2-day period I sold \$18,000 in parts."

Oleson no longer counts on eBay as it provides only a tenth the results it once did. Due to a discontinued relationship, he has started a new eBay account and is establishing a new website. His eBay user name is grassmonkey1. "I have had as many as 10,000 parts listed, but have only 1,100 at this point," says Oleson.

Health problems in the past year also took a toll. With reduced sales, he has returned to being a 1-man shop. However, the business continues via his new website.

Oleson still buys mowers and other items at auctions and estate sales and by the truckload from other auction goers.

"I've been doing this for 25 years. I can look at something, and I'll know what the parts are worth," he says. "I'm still buying mowers. Generally people bring them to me from as far away as Oklahoma. If it's something special, I'll drive to the other end of the state."

If you are having mower problems and need a part, Oleson suggests sending him a picture. "You can look under the hood and see what the model is and whether it is a twin cylinder or not, but a picture is worth a thousand words," he says. "I can look at the shape of the part, and I'll know if I have it or not."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dakota Outdoor Power Equipment, 44910 281st St., Parker, S. Dak. 57053 (ph 605 254-2599; bobcatman53@yahoo.com; www.facebook.com/mowerfreedom/).

## Tip Helps Fix Tractor Tires

"I've been fixing ag tires since 1977 and some of the tougher leaks to repair are those caused by corn and soybean stubble punctures," says Dale McLaen, Rutland, N. Dak.

"While the location of a puncture is obvious on the outside of the tire, locating the exact location of the pinhole leak on the inside of the tire can be almost impossible. Stubble doesn't travel in a straight line like a nail but often curves off to the side so the hole in the tire liner can be as much as an inch away from where you expect it to be.

"Probing the puncture with an awl to find the leak doesn't always work and you might accidentally make another hole.

"Here's what you do: Spray some soapy water on the inside of the tire about where you think the puncture should be and then take a blow gun nozzle and press the tip tightly against the puncture hole on the outside of the tire, forcing air into the puncture. The soapy water mix on the inside of the tire will instantly foam up at the exact location of the puncture and you'll be able to make a proper repair without any guesswork. It's a simple trick that makes fixing these kinds of punctures a breeze."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dale McLaen, McLaen's Service Inc., 13756 Highway 11, Rutland, N. Dak. 58067.