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Fred Hyer, Paola, Kan.: “I own two Husqvarna 455 Rancher chainsaws equipped with 20-in. bars. Both saws always start on the first or second pull. I use them to cut 30 to 35 cords each year, and I’ve also used them to make several hundred Osage Orange fence posts. I’m 78 years old so I like reliable saws that are easy to start.”

Jesse Downs, Readstown, Wis.: “All of my Milwaukee cordless tools, which include a drill, impact driver, and circular saw, are best buys. The circular saw is very handy for construction projects where electricity isn’t available.

“My Jonsenud chainsaw is reliable and has required only routine maintenance.

“The 4-WD on my Kubota 5100 tractor went out at only about 500 hrs. Also, the tires are thin and flimsy.”



William A. Schultz, Norwalk, Wis.: He likes the 2018 Econo-Wrap 3-pt. mounted round bale wrapper he bought from distributor Belco Resources Equipment in Rocky Mount, N.C. (www.br-equipment.com; ph 252 442-0700). “It’s well-built and easy to use, and can wrap bales weighing up to 2,300 lbs. I paid \$3,850 for it, whereas other bale wrappers on the market sell for up to \$6,850. The machine can wrap bales in less than 90 seconds, and they’re easy to load. The film wraps tight on the bale, perfectly every time.”

David Davignon, Damar, Kan.: “We’ve always had good results using Marvel Mystery lubricating oil in our vehicles (www.marvelmysteryoil.com; ph 800 232-9596). We use the oil in our 1997 Pontiac Grand Prix, which we bought 8 years ago with more than 150,000 miles on it. We just add a couple squeezes of oil every time we fill the fuel tank. The car now has more than 231,000 miles on it, but still has the original fuel pump and always starts right up.”

Darrell Avery, Coldwater, Mich.: “In 1987 we bought a new Cub Cadet 1872 lawn tractor equipped with a 50-in. mower deck. It has been very dependable and now has about 1,800 hrs. on it. We needed another tractor so in 1992 we bought a new Cub Cadet 1864 model equipped with a 54-in. deck. It is also a pleasure to use. Both are excellent machines.”

Verle Holdeman, Halstead, Kan.: “I like Milwaukee 18-volt tools and rarely even use air tools any more.

“I’ve found that Amerseal Tire Sealant will seal most tire punctures, which saves a lot of time and money. I use a chart to pump in the correct amount of sealant, and the tire is fixed. It’s available on Amazon.com and at many retailers.”

Roger Berkoski, Cantril, Iowa: “My 2011 Chevrolet 1500 Silverado crewcab pickup has a quiet cab with a good view, and is fuel efficient.”

Milan W. Mast, Danville, Ohio: “Last summer I bought a new Stiletto 14-oz. hammer (www.stiletto.com; ph 800 987-1849). I work in construction building pole barns, and the titanium head gives this



hammer twice the striking power while keeping it lightweight. It was well worth the \$150 I paid for it.”



David Lees, Alexandria, Ohio: “It has performed as promised,” says David about his 2019 Yetter Stalk Devastator, a roller attachment for combine corn heads (www.yetterco.com; ph 800 447-5777). The Stalk Devastator wasn’t difficult to attach, and it leaves my fields so smooth that I don’t need to chop stalks. That saves time and fuel.”

Nathan Nevels, Whitley City, Ky.: Nathan’s the satisfied owner of a 2003 Dodge Ram 3/4-ton 4-WD pickup equipped with a 5.9-liter Cummins diesel engine and 5-speed transmission. “It has been trouble-free while requiring only routine maintenance. I plan to keep it forever.

“I started having problems with my Stihl 250 chainsaw right after I bought it. Yet my Stihl 028 Super chainsaw worked great for 23 years.”

Robert Corbin, Sykesville, Md.: “I’m happy with my Greenworks cordless chainsaw, pole saw, and leaf blower (www.greenworkstools.com).

“My New Holland TC29 tractor has operated faithfully for 20 years with no problems. I use it to move tons of dirt, rocks, and firewood. It became my ‘retirement tractor’ after I quit farming.”

Darren Martin, Greenwood, Wis.: “We’ve put about 1,500 hours on our 2004 Takeuchi TL120 track skid loader, but it still works great. It starts right up in the coldest weather and works fine for pushing snow, gravel, and dirt. The joystick pilot controls on it work great for maneuvering in tight spaces, and the tracks can go through deep snow and mud.”

Mitch Fitzgibbon, Westfield, N.Y.: He nominates his 2018 Power Trac PT425 loader tractor as his “best buy” (www.power-trac.com; ph 800 843-9273). “Works great for handling materials in tight spaces where my bigger tractor can’t go. The quick-tach loader accepts more than 40 implements. This tractor is hydraulically-operated, with no mechanical drivetrain. I find it to be remarkably capable for its size, and love using it.

“I bought a Polaris electric Ranger utility vehicle, and within three years I had to spend more than \$2,000 to replace the battery trays and the built-in battery charger. The electric motor has a lot of torque and I like that it’s direct-drive, but the maintenance cost to operate this vehicle was discouraging, especially knowing that battery replacement wasn’t far behind. I traded it for a Kubota RTV 500, which works fine.”

“Best Buy” CSA Software Program

Curtis Millsap, Springfield, Mo.: Curtis is well-pleased with his Harvie CSA Software Program for people with Community Supported Agriculture businesses supplying regular deliveries of garden produce to customers (https://www.harvie.farm). “It’s easy to use and has had some unexpected benefits,” he says. “We enter a harvest estimate several days in advance of our CSA pick-up day, and Harvie generates a share for all customers based on product availability and preferences that the customer have given us.”

Curtis says that the software program sends emails to customers detailing what will be in their share that week, and gives them the option to swap out vegetables prior to pick-up. “It gives choice in real time and the customers love it. On harvest day, Harvie generates a pick list for us with labels for packing. It has given us other unexpected benefits such as using product availability and prices to give us a target number for income. This helps us see what we have to offer over what we have committed, so we can see from week to week where we have a surplus so we can expand our offerings. We can also now offer small quantities of things

to our customers, since Harvie has reduced our need for as many units of products.”

“For example, many people like parsley, but may not want it every week. Harvie gives the customers the option to choose parsley or not, reducing the amount of parsley that Curtis has to grow while still satisfying the customers who do want it. Another feature of Harvie that Curtis likes is the customer service department. He says that the Harvie team handles the majority of CSA customer questions and concerns while keeping him in the loop, so he can choose to step in and deal with a customer directly if needed. He says other helpful features of the program include options for the customer to put their share on hold if they are out of town, sending customer specific emails with tips and recipes based on their given vegetable preferences, and handling the CSA payments and auto renewal plans. “The program cost is scale neutral. After the initial set-up fee, it’s 10 percent of sales. It’s still a start up program so there are occasional design or functionality issues, but overall it’s excellent.”

Loren Loehmer, Monterey, Ind.: “My Sachs Dolmar chainsaw always starts right up. I’ve owned Sachs Dolmar chainsaws in the past and have always been satisfied with them.”

Aden Troyer, County Line Sawmill, Shiloh, Ohio: “I save a lot of time with the Green Giant pallet jack with a Honda motor we bought from Eli Shrock, 4250 S. Funk Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691. It’s equipped with a Honda engine and works mechanically using roller chains, without any hydraulics. We use this pallet jack to move lumber around. One person can move a big load by himself, and it’ll lift up to 10 ft. high.”

“My Cruze gets 57.6 mpg. It’s a great car.”

Frank Spithaler, Evans City, Penn.: “I always owned Volkswagen cars equipped with diesel engines, until it was revealed the company cheated on emissions tests. I sold my car back to them and bought a 2017 Chevrolet Cruze equipped with a diesel engine and 6-speed transmission. It’s rated at 52 mpg, but my Cruze actually gets 57.6 mpg. It’s a great car. My total expense after selling the Volkswagen and buying the Chevy was only about \$2,600.

“I love FARM SHOW. It’s a great example of American ingenuity, and over the years I’ve used several ideas from it. I always read your ‘best and worst buys’ section, and keep a notebook to record the ‘best buy’ products that I’m interested in, as well as any contact information on them.

“My Husqvarna 55 Rancher chainsaw is at least 10 years old but always starts right up. However, I’ll be 80 years old this February, and somehow this saw seems to have developed a lot more compression! To make the saw easier to start I place it on the ground and hold it down with my foot, and then yank the pull cord. It always starts on the first or second pull.”

Bill Fricks, Muldrow, Okla.: His Deere 425 zero-turn riding mower turned out to

be a lemon. “I spent about \$2,500 to keep this mower going. I had to replace both transmissions, the carburetor and manifold, and numerous spark plugs and filters but the company didn’t seem to care. I’ve always been 100 percent Deere, but not any more.”

Maurice Richter, Franklin, Ind.: Maurice likes his 2019 Gorilla Hook cordless drill holder (www.thegorillahook.com; ph 845 651-5376). It uses a belt loop system with a self-closing latch to keep the drill securely attached to your belt. Sells for \$14.99 on the company website.

“With other drill holsters that I’ve tried the drill can accidentally fall out, or the drill’s trigger will catch on something and then the drill starts running while it’s still inside the holster. The Gorilla Hook lets me place and remove my drill with one hand, and there’s no way it can fall out.”

He’s well satisfied with his 2001 Chevrolet Express 3500, 15-passenger van equipped with a 5.7-liter engine. “We bought this van used in 2004 with about 60,000 miles, and now it has about 300,000 miles. We’ve driven it to the West Coast, East Coast, and Florida many times. It started using oil and producing blue smoke so our mechanic recommended using Lucas Oil treatment, which stopped the smoke and I think has also contributed to the van’s long life. The transmission had to be rebuilt, probably because we were using the van to pull a heavy, high-profile trailer on interstate freeways. I still drive this van to work every day.”

Tim Hesla, Grantsburg, Wis.: “It’s the best chainsaw I’ve ever owned. I give it a 5-star rating,” says Tim about his 2019 Stihl MS251 model that’s equipped with an 18-in. bar. “It has a Master Control Lever which makes it easy to start. In fact, it actually starts itself. It also has a lightweight bar and plenty of power.”

John J. Patterson, East Peoria, Ill.: “My Husqvarna string trimmer always starts on the second pull. It does a great job of cutting grass and weeds.

“My Troy-Bilt self-propelled push mower has electric start and a bagger. It does a good job of cutting, and adjusting the wheels in order to control the deck height is an easy job.”