

## Money-Saving Repairs & Maintenance Shortcuts

I wrap a rag around the ice bag and place the bag on the shaft, then wait for about 20 min. The cold ice will shrink the shaft just enough so that the bearing falls off. Once the ice bag has been removed it doesn't take long for the shaft to expand back to its original size, so when I'm ready to put a bearing back on, I repeat the process."



**Carl Miner, Willmar, Minn.:** "When I need to install or remove a spark plug in a tight place, I slip a short length of rubber fuel line over the plug. Makes it easier to thread the plug in without ruining the threads, which often happens when using a wrench in tight quarters.



"Aerosol cans on my metal welding table would start rolling around whenever the table got bumped, so I started using inexpensive welding magnets sold at discount stores to hold the cans in place.

"I use swimming pool noodles to protect my knees when resting them against a ladder rung in order to keep my balance. The noodles can be easily moved from one rung to another."



**EverGreen Restoration, Spooner, Wis. (ph 715 520-7876; www.evergreengauges.com):** They recover old tractor steering wheels, using a manmade rubber material that doesn't leave marks or residue on your hands. They can recover both flat and round spoke wheels. Prices range from \$95 for 14, 15, and 17-in., 3-spoke flat or round spoke wheels, to \$110 for 19-in., 4-spoke wheels.

"Customers can send their steering wheel core to have it recovered, or exchange for a core that I've already recovered. Or, they can buy a new steering wheel from me," says owner Jerry Treka. "I got started recovering old tractor steering wheels about a year ago, when I was able to buy some molds that had been sitting unused in an Iowa rubber shop for a long time.

"Most of the steering wheels that I recover are from tractors built in the 1930's to the 1950's. I don't sandblast or prime them because many people prefer to leave their tractors in original condition without adding

anything new to them."

Treka also sells replacement gauges for antique tractors including oil, amp, temperature, and fuel gauges for Two-Cylinder and New Generation tractors. In addition, he sells dash lights, tachometers and cables, cigarette lighters, Fiber Optics, indicator lights, and ignition switches for various tractor models.



**Jeff Prose, Lakeville, Minn.:** Jeff says he was shocked to see the \$49 sticker price on a simple plastic tool he needed to shove insulation into concrete expansion joints. "An absolutely stupid price to pay, especially when I decided I could make one myself in 20 min. for less than a dollar," says Prose.

Using his hand-held grinder with a metal cutting disk, Prose cut a 1/4-in. wide slot about 1 in. deep into the end of a piece of 3/4-in. dia. copper tubing. Then he mounted a 1 1/2-in. dia. washer in the slot, securing it with a 1-in. long sheet metal screw.

"The washer easily rotates when I push the insulation 3/4 of an inch into the expansion joints. The screw that holds the washer in place guides the insulation to the exact depth needed all along the joints. Once the insulation is in place, I caulk all the joints, let the caulk dry, then scrape the surface smooth to create a seam that won't collect dirt or gravel in my new shop floor. It couldn't have worked any better if an engineer had designed it on CAD."



**AirSHIM™** (www.calculated.com; ph 800 854-8075): AirSHIM acts like a third hand when you're working alone. And it's a strong hand with the ability to securely hold up to 500 lbs. as you level and secure a window frame or door, for example.

With an internal plate to hold its shape, the 10 3/4 by 5 1/4-in. tool can slip into openings as narrow as 3/32 in. and be pumped up to 3 in. to perfectly align and level a variety of things.

Simply squeeze the bulb pump by hand or with a foot, and twist the bleeder valve to adjust the correct placement. Once leveled and held in place, the installer has both hands free to secure a window or door frame, adjust appliance wheels, or shim cabinets. Since putting it on the market, the company has heard from customers who use it for a variety of other uses, from spreading calipers when changing brakes to using it in place of a wedge for cutting down a tree.

The AirSHIM sells for about \$15 on Amazon.com.



**Harold Curie** uses a homemade winch and pulley system in his shed, to lift the front of his Deere riding mower.

### Winch-Operated Mower Lift

About 10 years ago, Harold Curie of Gaithersburg, Md., came up with a winch and pulley system to lift his Deere riding mower, allowing him to more easily service the machine. The 90-year-old is still using it.

The system consists of a wall-mounted, 12-volt ATV winch that's attached to a pair of pulleys – one mounted on the wall about 5 ft. above the winch and the other 12 ft. away on a rafter over the center of the opening to his shed. Cable from the second pulley extends down to a wide neck yoke, which has straps at each end that attach to the mower's front end.

Whenever the system isn't in use, Curie attaches a weight on the end of the cable to keep it aligned and to prevent twisting.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Charles G. Curie, 18508 Fontana Lane, Gaithersburg, Md. 20879 (ph 301 519-8961; curie@curiegroup.com).



Wall-mounted 12-volt ATV winch does the lifting.

### Need A Chain, Sprocket Or Bearing?

"My brother and I grew up in a small rural community surrounded by farms, lumber mills, food processors, and other manufacturers that had all kinds of machinery. So when the opportunity came to provide support with chains, bearings and sprockets, we jumped at the chance," say brother and sister team Eric Fery and Cindy Octobre, who founded Ag Chains Plus in 2010.

Eric and Cindy started small and grew into the sale of a wide range of power transmission products. "We have a very loyal client base in the Pacific Northwest and beyond, and we really enjoy solving client's issues that arise with their equipment," says Cindy.

Ag Chains Plus is housed in a warehouse lined with racks and bins full of parts for all types of equipment. Their chain selection includes roller chain, pintle, steel detachable, t-bar, stainless steel, nickel, mill, welded, and hook-belted chains to name a few. Fery says they can supply just about any type of chain used in agricultural or industrial applications.

Getting into chains led to supplying sprockets and bearings, which later led to sheaves, pulleys, couplers and miscellaneous items like cam followers, UHMW plastics and bushings.

Ag Chains Plus distributes for a variety of chain, bearing and sprocket manufacturers. They promote USA-made products as much



**Ag Chains Plus** supplies chains, belts, bearings, sprockets and many other machinery parts.

as possible across the country.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ag Chains Plus, 1079 Wilco Road, Stayton, Ore. 97383 (ph 503 769-1500; www.agchainsplus.com; Agchains2@gmail.com.)