Reader Letters

FARM SHOW

In response to the letter from Leroy Stumpe of Woods Equipment Company (Vol. 18, No. 5) criticizing your story on a farmer who welded steps to tractor loader arms, I would like to challenge a few of the assumptions made by Mr. Stumpe:

1. That farmers may not know how to weld; 2. That farmers who adopt this idea would be careless and fall off; and 3. That FARM SHOW is "promoting" the ideas featured in the magazine.

As a reader for many years of FARM SHOW, I have never thought the magazine was "promoting" anything. Rather, the magazine publishes ideas developed by their readers. It's obvious there are dangers in the use of any equipment whether home-built or factory-built. The one necessary ingredient is common sense and caution.

The greatest percentage of machinery being built today is the result of an idea created in a farm workshop. I suspect machinery manufacturers thoroughly scour FARM SHOW for ideas they can use. I appreciate FARM SHOW and read it cover-to-cover and have used several ideas myself.

Just keep putting the ideas in and we'll determine the risk. ***(Irvan Cregger, P.O. Box 133, Woodsboro, Md. 21798)***

Having lived on a farm most of my life, I find much of what your magazine features to be entertaining and informative. However, as a registered Professional Engineer with a degree in agricultural engineering, I have found that some "innovations" you allow into your magazine are disturbing, even appalling, from a safety standpoint.

Some of the "made it myself" ideas that I find particularly disturbing are the "55-gallon drum as air compressor tank" and similar items. Mounting a 30-ft. high scaffold on a tractor loader to paint a barn is inviting disaster. A recent "made it myself" idea featured a beefed-up log splitter so a fellow could split railroad ties for use in his fireplace. You made this sound very innovative but the creosote in those tires is a highly suspected carcinogen and is an incredible fire hazard even in the latest wood burning fireboxes.

Please believe me, some of the items presented are indeed innovative and useful. But more often than not, a safety concern exists in ideas presented. Many times the safety problems may not be inherently obvious to the untrained eye. Not to demean your readership, but chances are that most of your subscribers do not have a full understanding of physics, engineering, mechanics or materials, failure analysis, and the like, to recognize and avoid a potential accident.

I would suggest that for the safety of your readership that you safety reviewer/editor (if you even have one) use a little more discretion in selecting what is presented. ***(Mitchell Hushak, P.E., 11563 Flag Ave., Colfax, Iowa 50054)***

For anyone who ever has to siphon gasoline out of a tank, here's a way to make it easier and eliminate the chance of swallowing any gas. Put the hose in the gas tank and then pack bags around the hose at the opening to seal it up. Then blow real hard into the hose. When you stop blowing, air pressure inside the tank will force gas up out of the hose to start it flowing. ***(Arthur Seute, 13280 Kimberly Circle R3, Olathe, Kan. 66061)***

Using a hitch I built to pull a gooseneck trailer behind my tractor - together with a front-end loader - I bring home 350 to 500 round bales by myself without even getting off the tractor. I simply back under the front of the trailer and raise the hitch arms to hook up to head to the field. When I arrive, I set the trailer down, load 11 bales on the trailer and hold one on the tractor front-end loader, and then pick up the trailer and head back to the stacking area.

This system has cut my hauling time in half and eliminates the use of a truck or another tractor, as well as the cost of a helper. ***(Herman Stovall, 18020 Hwy. 274, Kemp, Texas 75143 ph 903 498-8185)***

Thanks for your article in the last issue (Vol. 18, No. 5) on our Continuous Sampler for grain augers. It lets you take out a continous "trickle" of grain so that you can get a good sample of an entire bin load of grain, rather than just a handful of grain from the back of one or two truck loads. Unfortunately, the address and phone number printed with the article were for another business. Please correct so any interested readers can contact us. ***(Sid Lockhart, Lockhart Industries, Ltd., 3308 67th St. Camrose, Alberta T4V 3N8 Canada (ph 403 672-4999)***

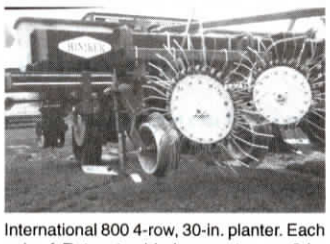
Our new Dial-A-Hitch Bumper is really four hitches in one. It offers a choice of three different size ball hitches or an open hole, eliminating the need to switch hitches

whenever you hook up to a different trailer.

The bumper is equipped with a rotating steel plate fitted with three ball hitches - 1 7/8, 2, and 2 5/16-in. in dia. mounted on it. To rotate the plate you simply pull up on a lever. By releasing another lever you can telescope the unit out for easy hookup. The steel plate is spring-loaded to absorb the shock of starting and stopping while pulling heavy loads. Fits any pickup model. Sells for about $500.

A model designed for a receiver-type hitch is also available and sells for about $130. ***(Schroeder Farms, Rt. 1, Box 128, Lake Crystal, Minn. 56055 ph 507 726-6922)***

Thanks for your article earlier this year (Vol. 18, No. 1) on how we mounted pairs of L-shaped blades off an old Brillion Rotovator in place of the original horizontal rotating disc sweeps on our Hiniker 3-pt. ridge-till planter attachment, which mounts in front of our



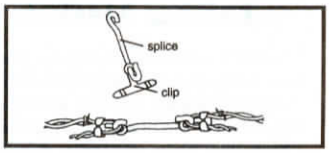
International 800 4-row, 30-in. planter. Each pair of Rotovator blades creates an 8-in. wide cleared strip, loosening ground and killing weeds in the row. We made the modification when we switched from ridge-till to no-till.

We've wanted to let you know that since them we've replaced the Rotovator blades with new 16-in. sweeps designed for Buffalo high-residue cultivators. They do a beautiful job. They work on the same principle as the Rotovator blades but loosen the ground 16 in. wide so they control weeds over a wider area. Also, the slanted sweeps just skim the ground and don't plug up in wet trash. The Rotovator blades went straight down and tended to drag trash if it was wet. I chopped my corn stalks last fall and used a chisel plow equipped with 14-in. sweeps, then planted directly into the stalks last spring with no further tillage.

Each sweep consists of a 1 1/2-in. wide bolt-on point in front that breaks up the ground and three additional parts - two bolt-on blades and a 12-in. high shoe. The shoe bolts onto a 1/2-in. thick steel plate that we had previously welded to the bottom of the adjustable-depth bracket that originally held the horizontal ridge-clearing discs. The shoe is narrower than the shank on a conventional sweep and doesn't open up as much ground. Rocks are no problem - they just glide sideways off the narrow point. We paid $90 for each sweep. ***(Chris Blonigen, 29862 Co. Rd. 177, Paynesville, Minn. 56362 ph 612 548-3268)***

I built this 4-WD, 4-wheel steer mini dump truck that's powered by an 18 hp Briggs & Stratton engine and a hydrostatic transmission. It's fun to show it off at threshing reunions and other gatherings.

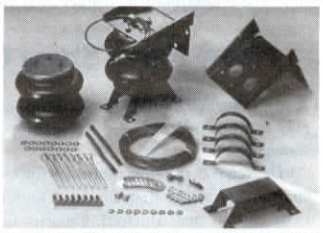
People get a kick out of it. I built the truck 5 years ago. It runs at speeds up to 20 mph. At one time I mounted a snowplow on front which I could angle from side to side. The axles and 6.00 by 16 tires are off an old Jeep. I used 5-in. channel iron to build the frame. The 4-ft. wide, 5-ft. long hydraulic dump bed was custom made and I welded it onto the frame. The truck has two front seats. I used sheet metal to make the hood look like a Model A car and automotive leaf springs to make the bumper. ***(John J. Cable, RD 2, Box 225, Hollsapple, Penn. 15935 ph 814 479-4149)***



Our new 'no tools' wire splicing kit lets you repair fences fast. Kit consists of a "Bull splice" hook and a lock clip. You make a 2-in. bend at the end of the broken wire, then slip the lock clip on the hook and hook the "shepherd" end of the splice over the hook. Then slide the lock clip down to the wire so you can fold it around both strands of the wire. Then repeat the above steps on the other end of the broken wire.

It lets you repair fence fast and is stronger than wire. It also eliminates the need for extra wire to make a splice. It takes only an average of about 15 seconds to mend a break in the fence. A package of 12 splices and 12 clips sells for $5.88. ***(J Bar T Enterprises, Inc., 34485 Hiway 93 N., Saint Ignatius, Montana 59865 ph 406 745-2244)***

Rear end sag on pickups can be cured by installing our new "air bag" load-leveler and stabilizer. "Air Helper" air bags bolt onto each side of the pickup between the frame and



rear axle. They're equipped with air line inflation valves so they can be filled up just like you fill up a tire with air. The air bags keep the pickup's leaf springs from sagging under heavy loads to eliminate rear end sag and maximize the load carrying capacity of the pickup.

The air compressor ($250) provides an instant air supply. Optional dual cab controls installed in the dash ($180) let you adjust right or left air bag automatically from the cab. The air bags sell for $250 to $275 per set depending on pickup model. ***(NYB, Inc., Rt. 1, Box 5, Brooks, Minn. 56715 ph 218 698-4668)***

This "stone fork" mounts on the front edge of an 8-ft. loader bucket and pivots up or down, powered by a pair of hydraulic cylinders. When scooping up rocks, I hold the bucket close to the ground, tilting the front of the bucket up and the 3-ft. long forks down so they just skim the surface. Rocks roll up onto the forks, then slide down into the bucket.

It works much better than rigid mounted stone forks because the bucket can be tilted back to keep rocks from rolling. It works best on a Ford-Versatile Bi-Directional tractor or a skid steer loader because they give you a good view of the forks. I've made a half dozen stone forks for farmers in my area. Two farmers liked them so much they went out and bought Bi-Directional tractors just so they could use them to pick stones.

The spring steel tines bolt onto a pair of steel plates that bolt to hinging brackets on the front of the bucket. The cylinders are hooked to brackets welded to the sides of the bucket. The steel tines are spaced about 4 1/4-in. apart. Total cost is about $300 per foot, including cylinders. A stone fork for an 8-ft. bucket sells for about $2,400. ***(Robert Adelmeyer, N2247 Hwy. K, Campbellsport, Wis. 53010 (ph 414 269-4937)***