

Reader Letters



I was appalled by the article in the Best of FARM SHOW book on the Empress Splendor Trees. I planted one about 30 years ago. This is a very invasive tree from eastern Asia. The seeds from this tree spread for miles in the wind. It's a favorite food for the spotted lantern fly, which also eats native trees, and especially grapevines.

We have many beautiful native trees and plants that are beneficial. I would recommend the bald cypress which is hearty in every state. It is a beautiful tree, rot resistant, and it will thrive in both wet or dry conditions. **(Robert Seip, Alburtis, Penn.)**

I read with interest the FARM SHOW Newsletter article from Fred Wardi about using black pepper to seal small radiator leaks. Back in the 40's, when my father had to weld cracked engine blocks (money was short), he would add a small amount of linseed meal to the engine coolant. Voila, no leaks from any small pin holes from the cast iron welding. **(Roy Cameron, Bowmanville, Ontario.)**

A hint for newer washing machines that are not getting clothes clean: Try adding approximately a quart of water before starting the cycles. I think most newer machines weigh the load and then measure out the water. Adding water bumps up the weight so more water is used in these water-saving washers. **(Joe Hanson, Aberdeen S.Dak.)**

I read with some interest in FARM SHOW (Vol. 44, No. 6) about the shop urinal with the drain piped through the wall to the outside. A neat idea, but I just keep a suitable container with a cap or lid that seals it in my shop. When it's full I dump it on mole runs around the yard. They don't like it and will leave. Why waste good urine? **(Mike Frantz, Seymour, Mo.)**

I enjoyed reading the article in your last issue on convincing a cow to adopt a calf, if her own calf dies at birth. Back when I had stock cows I came up with an easier way.

I would put the cow inside a pen and then pour a little vanilla extract down her nostrils and into her mouth. Then I used a rag to smear vanilla extract on the calf. All the cow could smell and taste was vanilla extract.

Any time I tried this idea it always worked - the cow immediately adopted the calf as her own. **(Charles Kunau, 32909 320th St., Bellevue, Iowa 52031 ph 563 542-4214; charliekunau@hotmail.com)**

When cleaning out grain bins with a broom, the bristles can easily get caught in the bin's slotted drying floor. That's why a cordless leaf blower works better. **(Richard Zigler, rzigler01@gmail.com)**

I joined two rakes together by running a bolt through both handles to serve as a pivot point. To pick up leaves and mulch, I just grab both handles and pull them apart. I replaced the rakes' original wooden handles with rigid 3/4-in. dia. aluminum tubes because they can handle more pressure without breaking. The tubes are off an old coat rack.

The wire tines on my rakes are stronger and more rigid than the metal or plastic tines on other rakes so I can pick up a bigger load.

I used to own a construction company and stripped off a lot of wood and



asphalt shingles. I hauled the shingles in a 2-wheeled dump trailer I made from a 1948 Jeep Willys. The box measures 8 ft. long by 4 ft. wide and tall and holds about one ton of shingles.



I found the Jeep laying in the trees on a farm in Alberta. I cut off the front half and stripped it down to the frame, then built a plywood box.

I use an 18-volt Ridgid cordless drill and an electric winch to dump the trailer. The winch is U-bolted to the trailer's 2 1/2-in. pipe tongue, and the drill is attached to the winch's shaft. A double pulley system sends cable to the top of a 6-ft. pole, then back down to a subframe that supports the box. To boost lifting power, I can assist the drill by hand cranking the winch at the same time. **(Quinton Tschetter, 2379 Hwy. 92, Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577 (ph 641 660-9765; Qct1944@gmail.com)**



I used old electric power poles from our local electric co-op to build this pair of raised bed gardens. They measure 18 ft. long, 5 ft. wide and 18 in. high.

I used a loader tractor to set the poles in place, drilling holes through the bottom poles and driving 1/2-in. rebar through the poles and into the ground to hold them in place. Lengths of perforated plumber's strapping at all 4 corners help

secure them. I didn't spend much money on my 'pole garden' and I like how it turned out. **(Tim Harbaugh, 1500 CR 305, Jonesboro, Texas 76538 ph 254 736-1098; timintexas@startmail.com)**

Thanks for the article in your last issue on my wall-mounted air tool rack. Here's



a photo of another metal bracket I made for my 3/4-in. air wrench. The bracket is mounted on a wall in my shop, next to a door that leads to my 50-gal. air tank. The 13-in. long, 6-in. wide bracket has 2 curved metal tabs on each side of the wrench handle that cradle the wrench. An air hose hangs neatly on a peg above the bracket.

The wrench bracket comes in handy for changing the big bolts on my tractor's dual wheels and for other jobs. I painted a red outline on the bracket to remind others where the wrench belongs when not in use. **(John Lubinski; jlubinski@yahoo.com)**



A few years ago FARM SHOW published a story on my homemade "thistle kicker" that's designed to take out the biggest thistles, root and all (Vol. 36, No. 4).

It consists of a 9-in. curved metal blade, made from a light truck or car leaf spring, welded to a 1-in. dia. pipe handle. The back side of the blade edge is sharpened. You push down on an angle iron footrest to shove the blade into the ground next to the thistle.

A local manufacturer makes the thistle kicker for us, and we've sold many over the years. It's a phenomenal tool, and I think it still works better than anything else on the market. It has no moving parts and is virtually indestructible. Most of the time it takes out the entire root so the plant can't come back.

"The curvature of the blade and sharpening the back side of the blade work together to catch the thistle's conical root. It also works great as a

transplant tool for small bare root trees. Sells for \$70 plus S&H. **(John Solbach, Greenbriar Farms, 1518 E. 250 Road, Lecompton, Kan. 66050 ph 785 887-6300; jsbachlw@gmail.com)**

I wonder if any farmer has ever used a road grader to plow fields. It seems to me you could remove the grader blade, mount plow units in its place, and you wouldn't have to turn your head anymore to see what's happening behind you. It would be like a big Allis Chalmers G tractor. You could also use it to cultivate. The cab windows usually go right down to the floor so visibility would be great. I've noticed that used road graders can be bought for \$20,000 or less. **(Norm Blais, North Bay, Ontario)**



A few years ago my Farmall H tractor with a CX500 Honda motorcycle engine was featured in FARM SHOW. I had a lot of fun with it, riding in parades and on tractor rides. I started having problems with the engine so when I ran across a 1500 CC Honda Goldwing engine, I decided to install it in the tractor. With the two 5-speed transmissions, it has 25 selections forward and 5 in reverse. It's a joy to drive, runs smooth, has lots of power, and goes down the road at 45 mph. **(Homer Weber, 25012 Silverthorn Rd., Cuba City, Wis. 53807 ph 608 759-5855)**

I put a grease zerk on back of my claw hammer. People are usually too scared to ask where I got the hammer or the purpose of the zerk. If someone does ask, I just say, "It runs smoother and it's fast. Don't you have one?" **(Tom Dent, Oak Grove, Mo.)**



In your last issue a reader showed how she uses a ribbon attached to her mailbox door as an easy-to-see indicator of when the mail is delivered. Here's a different idea that's less noticeable to whomever might be driving by. I use a 14-in. chunk of insulated electric wire and drill a hole in the front door, slip in the wire, and tie it in a knot. I seal the knot into the hole with silicone caulk. The other end of the wire connects to half of a magnetic clothespin that has a magnet on back. It sticks to the side of the mailbox until the door is opened, and the wire pulls the clothespin off so it dangles down. It's easily visible from across the road. **(Rod Sobieski, Kansas)**

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