

Clint Evans used two old cub cadet lawn tractors and sheet metal from a John Deere H. The sidecar has a built-in cooler.



Mini Deere With Sidecar

By Bruce Derksen

Over the last 20 years, Clint Evans, Gatesville, Texas has busied himself with various tractor modification projects.

"I had a late 80's or early 90's Cub Cadet riding mower with a deck sitting around and I thought, I need to scrap this thing or do something with it," says Evans. "So, I brought it into the shop and wrapped it in sheet metal from a John Deere H so it looks like a miniature antique Deere."

Evans says the original Koehler engine was cranked and cammed differently from the factory. After starting it and listening to it run, he thought it mimicked an old twin cylinder John Deere and figured, "Why not turn it into one?"

Once the tractor was finished, he got the idea to add a sidecar. He had another Cub Cadet that he stripped down and then covered with vintage tractor metal. It hooks to the tractor with 3 pins, including a pull bar attached to the front of the tractor.

Each piece was built with the articulation to follow the ground separately from the other, ensuring they're smooth and safe to operate.

"I can unpin the sidecar and hook it directly behind the other making it a tractor trailer unit. This helps me load them on my trailer because it's not very wide. After I unload it, it hooks back up easily as a sidecar."

He says the unit is a big hit in shows and parades. A vintage aluminum ice chest mounts at the front of the sidecar and is filled with drinks, snacks and candy for kids whenever they show it off in public.

"It's just for show. People seem to love it because you don't really see anything like it."

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The chicken coop was built using an existing swingset. It has a corrugated plastic "window" and removable door for feeding and clean-out at one end.

Swing Set Chicken Coop

The chickens haven't used the slide yet, but they've stayed safe and cozy in the coop built from the rest of her son's old swing set, says Elizabeth Craib. Though they had limited carpentry experience, her family successfully repurposed the swing set into an A-frame coop.

"We talked about getting chickens for a long time, and last year turned out to be a good year to do it," Craib says.

After researching designs online, she realized the wood beam swing set that her son had outgrown provided the basic framework. With leftover shingles, plywood and scraps from previous projects and neighbors offering leftover tar paper and nails, the coop only cost about \$200, for a roll of heavy hardware cloth and lumber.

The Craibs built the floor off the ground about waist high at the point where it is 4-ft. wide and one sheet of plywood fit perfectly for the floor. They added another 2-ft. section to make the coop 4 by 10 ft. To keep out weasels and other predators, they stretched hardware cloth over the joists under the plywood and up part of the walls. They also included a clear corrugated sheet on the side to add light.

The coop has three doors. A trap door lifts off the floor to give chickens access to a ramp that leads to a fenced-in area during the day.

"It's shaded under the coop and that's where they spend time even on the coldest days," Craib says.

A big triangle-shaped door on one end provides the Craibs access to the coop for feeding, watering and cleaning. Craib's 13-year-old son can get inside for a deep cleaning that takes less than half an hour.

The trickiest part is collecting the eggs. The chickens don't use the nesting box near a mini door on the other end. They prefer to



The interior of the chicken coop provides year-round shelter, food and water

lay their eggs on the floor, just out of reach. Craib solved the problem with a golf ball retriever with a telescopic expandable stick.

Craib notes she was concerned how the small flock of three Wyandotte and two Ameraucana hens would handle their first Vermont winter.

"It doesn't have power so we had no heated water dishes. So every morning I gave them fresh water in rubber feeding bowls. I just popped out the ice in the bowl and refilled it," she says. The hardy chickens were fine even through minus zero temperatures.

The only predator issue turned out to be a bear this spring. Fortunately it just knocked over the galvanized trash can with feed and left paw prints on the coop door. The feed is now stored in the garage.

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Many adopted wild horses have become skilled at dressage, barrel racing, and pleasure riding, while burros can drive and guard livestock.

Wild Horse Adoption Still Providing "Free" Horses

By Lydia Noyes

Federal law defines wild horses and burros as animals that are unbranded, unclaimed, and free-roaming on public lands. Most are descendants of livestock once held by the U.S. Calvary, Spanish explorers, miners and ranchers, and Native Americans.

The BLM manages and protects these animals on almost 27 million acres of public land across 10 states and has placed closed to 250,000 wild horses and burros into private hands since 1971. The goal of these adoptions is to keep the numbers down on fragile public rangeland.

The animals start wild but their sure-footedness, endurance, and innate intelligence mean they have excellent potential as trained work or pleasure animals. Many adopted wild horses have become skilled at everything from dressage and barrel racing to pleasure riding. Likewise, wild burros are excellent for driving, packing, guarding, and acting as companions for livestock.

If you're interested you can attend off-site adoption events, visit one of several dozen adoption centers run by the BLM, or join an internet adoption event. Potential adopters must meet standard requirements for caring for wild horses or burros, including certifying

that they have proper facilities to give them a good home. Some centers may have additional requirements.

Right now you can take advantage of an Adoption Incentive Program that provides up to \$1,000 for adopting an untrained wild horse or burro from the BLM. Under this program, adopters can receive \$500 within 60 days of adopting an untrained wild animal and an additional \$500 within 60 days of titling it.

While new owners are responsible for transporting their adopted animals, those who purchase animals during a scheduled competitive bidding event may request more convenient drop-off locations.

The minimum adoption fee for untrained animals is \$25 and starts at \$125 for those trained and gentled, though it often goes up for more desirable animals in competitive bidding situations. It's possible to receive a title for up to 4 wild horses or burros within a 12-mo. period.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wild Horse and Burro Information Center, 760 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, Colo. 81506 (ph 866 468-7826; wildhorse@blm.gov).