Irwin firewood holder (center) with Ruen firewood bookends (left).

Nifty Firewood Holder And Divider

By Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor

FARM SHOW asked me to check out Sam Irwin's firewood holder. It's one he features on his GoBuildStuff YouTube channel. I was immediately sold. It's simplicity itself as a cheap, no-nonsense firewood holder.

Irwin simply sticks 2 by 4s into the holes in concrete blocks to form a V. When he gets fancy, he uses two concrete blocks with 2 by 4s in both holes of each block and two 4-ft. 2 by 4 stringers nailed on edge from one pair to the other. This gives greater stability and stores more wood. Either way would be great for temporary firewood storage.

Looking at the pictures of the single block style suggested another use. I have a woodshed that holds dry wood for the coming season. However, I add fresh wood throughout the year as I cut and split fallen trees. At some point each winter, I hit the wetter wood that lay over earlier stacked dry wood. I had no way to separate the two so I could use up the dry wood and leave the wet to cure. Irwin's holder was the answer.

I had three cords of dry wood stored and was starting to split some fresh wood. I stuck an 8-ft. length of 2 by 4 in one end of a concrete block and placed it against the sloping stack of dry wood. The slope of the wood and the angle of the 2 by 4 didn't match up, but I fixed that later.

The next step was to put a 4-ft. (any length would do) in the opposite hole of the block. I filled the resulting V with fresh split wood and began stacking more fresh split wood behind it.

Once the V was partially full, I filled in the space between the 8-ft. 2 by 4 and the stack's slope. The wood in the V held the 8-footer in place. Now, as I split wood, the wetter wood will always be in and behind the concrete block and 2 by 4s.

The concept works great with my firewood bookends. These are simply a 4 ft. long 2 by 6 vertical attached mid-length on another 4-ft. long 2 by 6 leg. A chunk of wood beveled at both ends to 45 degrees is nailed to the two 2 by 6s to reinforce one side of the vertical leg.

I've used chunks of old barn beams and short lengths of 2 by 6s for the stabilizers. Anything you have handy works fine.

I put one bookend at the front when starting a line of firewood and the other at the rear when finishing. While they would probably hold simply with the weight of wood stacked on them, I stack my wood on pallets on an old concrete corn crib floor and simply slide the bookend into the forklift space in the pallets.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup: Sam Irwin (www.youtube.com/@gobuildstuff).

Bodman bolted the 5 by 7-ft. bed to the truck frame. He installed LED taillights and new roofing metal for the floor.

Pickup Customized With Trailer Bed

Converting a trailer bed into a truck bed made Philip Bodman's 1985 Toyota one of a kind and envied by those who see it.

"The original 5 by 6 1/2-ft. bed was rusted and busted," says Bodman. "I replaced it with a 5 by 7-ft. bed with LED lights and a step-up bumper with receiver hitch."

Bodman removed the old bed from the truck before starting on the 5 by 8-ft. trailer. Using his DeWalt grinder, he cut a foot out of the front end of the trailer bed. Then, he welded the front section back in place, making it a 5 by 7-ft. bed.

"Before mounting the bed, I added 1 3/4-in. heavy-duty leaf springs and heavy-duty Trail Master shocks to the truck," says Bodman. "I welded brackets to the frame, cut old Honda coil springs in half, and mounted them as suspension overrides."

He also fabricated a rear step that was the truck's width and attached it to the rear frame. A 20-in. receiver hitch is mounted to the frame and flush with the rear edge of the step.

With his beefed-up suspension system in place, Bodman bolted the 5 by 7-ft. bed to the truck frame. He installed LED taillights and new roofing metal for the floor.

Original trailer bed was 5 by 8 ft., then cut with a grinder, welded to 5 by 7 ft., then mounted to the truck frame.

Bodman says the new/old bed fits his desire to recycle and "use what you have" value. It's also proven popular with those who see it.

"Everybody wants to buy my truck," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Philip Bodman, 215 Cupp Hollow Rd., Rogersville, Tenn. 37857.

Tomamichel designed and welded mounts, adapters, supports and braces to fit his loader and connect to the quick coupler.

Mower Redesigned For Forward Use

When Brent Tomamichel needed to mow and trim the grass, shrubs and brush under his fence lines, he bought a used Swisher Rough-Cut ATV trailing mower to pull behind his tractor. After consideration, he attached it to his tractor's loader arms for better visibility and control.

"I figured I could use a standard skid-steer quick coupler," Tomamichel says. "The idea ran from there."

The 48-in. wide mower features a self-contained, 12.5-hp. Briggs & Stratton gas engine to power the double blades. Tomamichel designed and welded mounts, adapters, supports and braces to fit his loader and connect to the quick coupler.

"It cuts up to 3-in. saplings with ease around my fence lines, ditch banks and pond," he says.

Lifting the entire mower to head height makes servicing the blades and undercarriage easy.

"The tricky part was calculating how to situate the mower," he says. "When driving forward, I wanted it to cut in the same direction as when pulling it. Getting that right took a little time."

Tomamichel paid $600 for the original mower and engine and estimates he spent an additional $175 on the coupler adapter and steel for the brackets and supports.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Brent Tomamichel, Springtown, Texas 76082 (ph 817-471-5155; tomamichelb@gmail.com).

Carolla built a heavy-duty box bracket that lets him quickly attach and detach different tools to his mini-excavator.

Quick-Tach Bracket Built For Mini Excavator

Ian Carolla made a special bracket to easily mount different tools to the swing arm of his SANY mini excavator. The heavy-duty bracket uses two 14-in. long pieces of 6-in. C-channel welded together with one piece of 8 1/2-in. long by 2 7/8-in. dia. round stock on the inside top corner of each flat surface. A 6 1/2-in. by 9-in. piece of 3/8-in. plate steel is welded to the top of each C-channel on the opposite end.

Carolla bolted a pillow block bearing to the plate, which holds a 1 1/4-in. pin from the saddle bearing on the excavator's arm. "The bracket is very strong and simple to make and works with the 27-in. push mower that I mount to the swing arm for mowing ditches and around ponds," Carolla says.

He also uses the bracket to mount the spring tine rake he bought to clear debris from ditches and edges of ponds. That tool has 21 curved-steel tines bolted to a piece of 1/2-in. thick by 6-in. wide steel plate welded to a 6-ft. long piece of channel iron. He reinforced the tines with rebar and diagonal anchor bracing on the ends to handle more challenging conditions. The tines are spaced 3-in. apart.

"I could've paid more than a thousand dollars to buy a mounting system like this, but making it myself took just a few hours, which saved me a lot of money," Carolla says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ian Carolla, Carolla's Compact Construction, Eau Claire, Mich. (carollascc@gmail.com).