

# Combine Engine Swapped Into 50-Year-Old Tractor

In 2023, Mitch Fenske and his friend Barry Schimke repowered a 756 Farmall tractor with a school bus engine (Vol. 47, No. 5). It turned out so well that in 2024, Fenske repowered a 1974 IH 766. He replaced the tractor's D360 engine, rated at 80 hp., with a D436 engine from an IH 1440 combine, rated at 136 hp. "The replacement engine cost \$2,500, which I thought was a very good price since the engine only showed 2,700 hrs.," Fenske says. "The hydro unit was out on the combine, so this engine was a perfect candidate."

When he pulled the oil pan, Fenske inspected the 436s bearings, and they were good. "I did very little to the engine besides cleaning and inspecting the electrical and cooling system. I put on new hoses and used the tractor's starter and alternator. The 436 has a 12v electrical system, so it starts and runs beautifully."

Fenske says, "I took the D360 out of the tractor, and all I needed for the swap was a shorter fan shroud and the tractor back plate. I did put in a new IPTO shaft, clutch, pressure plate, and flywheel, but other than that, it was a very easy swap. I did this originally to keep the tractor, but I've had interest from people who might want to buy it or have me do other swaps. Knowing that, I'm building my own shop in 2025 and will be willing to take on more projects like this. I'd rather see these tractors put back in the field than be parted out."



**Fenske repowered a 766 Farmall with the engine from an International 1440 combine, a swap that gives the tractor more power.**

Fenske says he received a lot of good advice from Mike Hesse, Barry Schimke and Taylor Brehmer to help him complete the project. "Tips and tricks from people who've done this before really help out," he says. "I didn't paint the tractor after finishing it because if someone buys it, they can paint it how they want it or just use it the way it looks right now."

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Visitors to the Kline Museum in Prescott, Iowa, can view old vehicles like this rare 1911 Carter car.

## Iowa Town Preserves Farmer's Generous Gift

Residents in and around the small Southwest Iowa town of Prescott knew for years that local farmer Clarence Kline collected hundreds, if not thousands, of items related to farming and agriculture. They didn't know that when he died, he'd leave the entire collection to his hometown of about 200 residents and ask that it be preserved as a museum. That was in 1988, and 35 years later, the tiny and productive Prescott community honors his legacy with the Kline Museum.

Local farmer Randy Cooper, who farms and is president of the museum's board of directors, says that Kline's will specified that the community keep what it wanted from his collection and sell the rest. The town organized a committee that selected many valuable items and still had enough left for a 3-day auction. That event raised money to help operate the museum. A 1911 Carter automobile and a Waterloo Boy tractor were two valuable saved items. The museum board restored the car and its four-cylinder engine to near-mint condition. Every year, the vehicle

into the swamp, with only the muffler sticking out. The site was marked with a coffee can, and all hope of rescue was abandoned.

Most forgot about it, except for the landowners and Harold Wilkinson of Frazee, Minn., who was intrigued by the legend of the dozer stuck in the swamp. After much research, he tracked down the landowner.

"Harold got me kind of interested," Janke says, so he agreed to do the legwork for Wilkinson, who was in his 80s. In January 2018, they met with Norma Grotnes, the landowner, and her son, Steve, who took Janke to the site on a side-by-side ATV. Though the swamp showed no sign of a dozer burial site, they returned with an ice auger a week later. On the third hole, a 15-ft. pipe in the hole hit something about 9 ft. down.

Sandquist volunteered to return to the scene and dig out the frozen ground around the dozer.

"It was on its side at about 10 o'clock," Janke says. "Later that summer, divers went there seven times to clean out the muck." They also hooked up chains and attached them to floating barrels so they could be found the following winter. As word spread about the rescue mission, Janke says that volunteers came forward to help.

They included owners and employees from Jim's Towing of Fargo, who drove to the swamp on March 16, 2019, with three wrecking trucks used to pull out semis and big equipment. Two trucks with military winches were set up as anchors for the main tow truck, which was brand new and designed specifically for the job. It had 200,000 lbs. of pulling power.

"The truck came off the ground 4 or 5 ft. and hung there and finally broke the suction of the clay," Janke recalls. Once the dozer was pulled out, sunflower heaters were put around

leads Prescott's annual Septemberfest Parade.

Restoration of the 1919 Waterloo Boy was completed in 1999 with assistance from Barker Implement Company of Lenox, Iowa. Cooper says the car and tractor ran when the museum opened 35 years ago and still runs in 2024, adding that Kline would be extremely happy.

Over the years, the museum's board has restored several farm implements, tractors and tools used on area farms. They're using part of a \$100,000 donation to restore a 1929 Chevrolet Landau automobile. Another museum vehicle is a 1929 Model A fire truck, Prescott's first fire engine.

Two old buildings, once occupied by a feed store and the American Legion post, house most of the museum's collection. Old machinery and steam equipment dating back to the early 1900s are stored outside.

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**TD-24 International bulldozer took several attempts over the years to be pulled from the swamp.**

## Rescued Dozer Buried In A Swamp For More Than 40 Years

"It looked like a doggone giant turtle coming out of there," said Jeff Janke about the mud-caked TD-24 International bulldozer rescued from a swamp after being buried for over 43 years. It took three wrecker trucks to pull the 57,000-lb. dozer back to solid ground.

Janke says the dozer, dubbed "Harold," can be seen in a shed on the grounds of the Pine to Prairie Antique Tractor & Gas Engine Association in Perham, Minn.

The bulldozer's swamp adventure began on Christmas Eve in 1975 when a volunteer decided to use it to make a snowmobile trail. The 1959 Army dozer had been transported from Missouri to the technical college in Detroit Lakes, Minn., for diesel students to work on. It was also lent out for local community projects.

"Don't go in the swamp," the landowner emphasized to the driver.

But the driver did anyway.

About 200 ft. in, the dozer broke through the bog's frozen crust to the top of the dozer's tracks. Rescue efforts held off until after Christmas, when volunteers cut and laid logs over the bog to create a corduroy road. Ralph Sandquist from Park Rapids volunteered his services and D8 Caterpillar

with a 100-ton winch. It pulled the TD-24 about 20 ft. before the cable broke.

Frigid weather hit the area, and before another attempt to pull out the dozer was made, someone suggested contacting the local National Guard.

Permission was sought and granted by Sen. Hubert Humphrey that the National Guard would pull out the dozer for free as a training exercise. Unfortunately, an untimely editorial cartoon in a local paper that included a keg of beer as part of the military's rescue plan changed the guards' minds about helping.

Sandquist returned with his dozer and was preparing to set up for another rescue attempt when a white pickup with men who said they were taking over the project pulled up. With the help of a Montana demolition expert, they planned to blow up the frozen ground around the dozer. An ice auger was used to drill holes filled with a diesel fuel and fertilizer mixture, which was set off with dynamite.

Perhaps more time should have been taken to calculate the charge. The explosion blew part of the dozer seat 80 ft., destroyed the corduroy road, uprooted trees and plastered Sandquist's dozer with mud.

The TD-24 also moved. It was buried deep

it, and it was covered with tarps. Volunteers returned the next day to clean it up.

"The radiator was packed with mud and duck eggs," Janke says. "I was chipping mud away with a garden tool and saw the two belts on the bottom. And the engine turned. It wasn't stuck, so we thought we could get it running."

The dozer was towed and parked on solid ground until spring, when it could be picked up with Jim's Towing's rotator tow truck and loaded on a lowboy trailer to be hauled to Perham.

So, what was the cost for all of this?

"They didn't charge a dime. They said we don't charge for history," Janke says. "Everyone was intrigued to get it out."

The generosity continued as the owner of another TD-24 bulldozer offered parts to replace the fuel tank, radiator and other parts that needed replacing.

With only 900+ hours on it, the tracks and blade are in good shape. Pine to Prairie group members cleaned and fixed it, leaving everything as original as possible. The TD-24 has been used for various events, including pulling the tractor-pull sled at the 2024 Perham Pioneer Fest.

Unfortunately, Wilkinson, who passed away at 86 in 2020, wasn't present for the event with the dozer named after him.

Janke invites readers to check out the group's Facebook page and YouTube videos, including "The Rescue of the Lost TD24" ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVGhTMuTG5Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVGhTMuTG5Q)) and follow-up videos.

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