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on the left driver's side, and it's a very rough ride if you're in the rear."



Walter L. Betzel, River Falls, Wis.: Walter is impressed with his **Power Badger** 1800US engine block heater controller (Vol. 42, No. 1; www.thepowerbadger.com; ph 828-453-7779). "You can set it to sense the temperature so the vehicle or tractor is ready to run when you need it, or you can set it for the time you need it to run. I've saved over \$30 a month on my electric bill compared to having a tractor plugged in around the clock."

Walter is unhappy with his **Napoleon** Knightsbridge propane gas fireplace purchased in 2022. "We paid \$5,500 for it because we wanted the best with all the options. Since it was installed, it's broken down more than it runs. The only thing we haven't had to replace is the burner because it doesn't have many hours on it. This fireplace was made in Canada. They won't talk to the customer, only certified service reps. The warranty only covers parts for one year that are broken again. We've spent over two months waiting for parts. Junk!"

Johanne Hoyer, Watseka, Ill.: "One of my best purchases has been my 2023 **Grasshopper** 725DT mower. It has a power lift front deck that's handy for cleaning the deck and changing blades. The diesel engine is a miser on fuel."

Roger Veigel, Power, Mont.: Roger is pleased with the **International** 1400 series combines. "I've been around these machines since 1980. They were a giant leap ahead and are still relevant. No sensors or computers. It was the only farm machine that was good right out of the shoot. The second edition 1400s were even better than the first edition."

Roger's opinion of his 2011 **Dodge** Ram 2500 isn't positive. "I bought this vehicle in 2018 and sold it in 2024. Good riddance. I thought I would grow to like this pickup but never did from the first day. It had relatively low miles but had a death wobble, rode rough, and had numerous issues over the years. The 6.7 Cummins had no low-end torque and got awful mileage."

Tommy Sanson, Eloy, Ariz.: Tommy appreciates his 2010 **PJ Trailers** Car Hauler (www.pjtrailers.com; ph 866-646-6789). It's a 20-ft. low-dove model. "All I've done for maintenance is grease the lugs. I've rebuilt the fenders four times. The plug lasted four years. I put five-lug Chevy truck rims on the trailer and moved from 205/70R15 to 10-ply 225/75R15. The deck and the hitch have lasted all these years. I've pulled it all over the USA with many cars, trucks and parts. Overall, it's the best trailer ever."

"My 2010 **DeWalt** impact still works great after two sets of batteries. The first battery gave me about eight years of service. I use it several times a week. I'll definitely buy a new one when this one dies."

Tommy is displeased with **Walmart** batteries. "They only last two years and can't handle off-road or cold-weather use. One battery wouldn't hold a good charge and had dead cells and leaking top posts. Their ATV batteries can't take the shock of fields or trails."

"I also haven't been happy with **O'Reilly Auto Parts**. They have a good warranty, but if you're lucky, the parts will last an average of a year. Parts seem to have a bad casting. Master cylinders leak after a month of use if the lines even fit. Alternators and starters fail."

Marvin Boike, Maynard, Minn.: "My best buy is my 2015 **Deere** 1025R tractor with a 2023 mower and a 54-in. front-mount snowblower. Everything can be easily taken off or put on, including the loader. It'll blow snow over 70 ft."

B.D. Johnson, Des Arc, Ark.: "I bought a new **Stihl** MS 211 chainsaw in 2021. It's been a piece of junk since day one. It would run for about two minutes and quit. I took it to the dealer, and they said I was using the wrong gas. I was using Stihl 50-1, so that didn't work. They said it had a bad carb and put a new one on. It still does the same thing. I asked for a new saw and was told, "No, we'll fix it." It was still the same. I put it on the street corner with "free" on it, and it was four hours before it was gone. This was my second Stihl; they were both lemons."

Elias Wolf, Mancelona, Mich.: "I picked up a used **Crosman** 760 Pumpmaster BB gun at a garage sale. It works very well at keeping down the ever-increasing rodent population, which causes so much damage to everything. I'm very pleased with it."

Eli also shares a couple of worst buys. "We bought **Dunlop** rubber boots, which cost about \$25 a pair. My pair only lasted one year, and my brother's and sister's lasted about eight months. That rate will certainly keep the company and the landfill in business. All three pairs are cracked up."

"We were forced into buying two **Tracfone** Alcatel MYFLIP phones when our phone guy claimed our old Verizon phones couldn't be used any longer. The Tracfone's batteries keep draining down, even when the phones aren't in use. They're also very archaic."



John Hewitt, Litchfield, Minn.: "I have two **Venta** Airwashers. They're both beasts. You use tap water in them and don't need filters. You only have to buy a wash to clean out the residue from tap water. They're made in Germany."

David Zietlow, Minot, N.D.: "I initially bought a **Makita** drill/driver set. I was so satisfied that I purchased many other Makita tools, including a blower, weed wacker, sawzall, jigsaw and chainsaws. The battery power lasts a fairly long time. They're very durable."

David is dissatisfied with solar-powered lights. "Each year, I try another brand or type. They're not very bright and don't seem to last more than a couple of months. It's more expensive to replace the batteries than to buy a new light."

Jack Bligh, Gainesboro, Tenn.: Jack is pleased with his 2008 **Toyota** Tundra. "I bought it new, and it now has 230,000 miles. The only repairs have been a \$300 wheel bearing and \$400 U-joints."

On the negative side is an **LG** refrigerator. "The sealed compressor went bad. The repairman said \$1,500 to fix it. LG gave no support. The repairman recommended Frigidaire."

Powerful Planer Is A Best Buy

Tom Hohl, Duluth, Minn.: "My **Powermatic** 15-in. planer is a great unit (www.powermatic.com; ph 800-274-6848). Setting it up correctly and checking the calibrations was quite a process, but after I completed that, I didn't need to make any adjustments. It's calibrated at the factory, but the company wants the owner to check it in case there were changes to the setup in shipping."

"The planer is quiet and very powerful. It has 74 four-sided indexable carbide knife inserts that don't require adjustments. Three V-belts transfer power from the 3-hp motor to the helical cutterheads. The planer is quite heavy, weighing about 580 lbs."

"It has a cast iron table and two extension wings. The stand has built-in lockable casters, so I can move it if necessary. A 4-in. port angles the collection hose away from the work area. The dust collection system works great. It doesn't leave any residue on the boards that are being planed, and there's no dust in the air either. I really like the serrated steel infeed and smooth steel outfeed rollers



Hohl is impressed with his Powermatic planer.

that provide a maximum cutting depth of 1/8-in. Overall, the planer creates a smooth surface that needs very little sanding on all types of wood."

Dean Robinson, Loysville, Penn.: "I bought a **Chevy** 1500 4x4 pickup new in 2011. So far, I've only replaced the tires at 72,000 miles. It still has the factory battery."

Dave Batker, Brooklyn, Wis.: "At age 86, my good old big **Ariens** snowblower became harder to handle. So, I sold it even though it was still in great shape. I bought an **Ego** Power+ 21-in. single-stage battery snowblower despite being skeptical about a thing like that. I'm extremely pleased with its ability to chew up wet, icy snow and clear the area needed to finish with the plow."

Steven Hood, Claremont, N.H.: "I'm absolutely thrilled with my 2021 **Subaru** Outback. With X-Mode driving and over 8-in. of clearance, it's been amazing in the woods, traversing steep slopes and crawling over sizeable rocks. I've hauled several hundred pounds of firewood, concrete blocks, rocks, etc., in the cargo area. It gets great gas mileage, decent acceleration, and is an overall nice ride."

Steven isn't impressed with his **DeWalt** cordless drill. "With little use, the chuck malfunctioned after about a year. Very poor value for the price. No more DeWalt products for me."

Edward Van Gerpen, Avon, S.D.: "My best buys are my 1968 and 1969 **Deere** 4020 tractors. This model is the most reliable tractor ever made by Deere—no computer. There are still many being used. If Deere made a new 4020, the line to buy them would be 10 miles long."

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Preston Williams, Victoria, Va.: "I recently bought a **Cub Cadet** 46-in. cut riding mower. It cuts fast and rides easy. I've had three Craftsman mowers, but I like this one best."

"I had a **Worx** weed eater, but the charge stopped working, so I had to scrap it all."

Kale Warren, Bolivar, Mo.: "Around 2017, my dad purchased a new **Hustler** FasTrak lawnmower with a 60-in. deck. That thing has been a tank. Now, seven years and

nearly 700 hours later, we've only replaced the tires, fuel gauge, fuel filter and drive belt for the deck. I recommend adding tires with more grip if you're doing steep and sometimes muddy ditches, as our stock tires weren't good at either."

"I'm disappointed in the **Polaris** Trailblazer 330 we purchased used. All the other Polaris 4-wheelers I've been around have been good, but the Trailblazer 330's ECU board is just a dud part. On ours, it wouldn't start without it being straight off the charger. One day, the board sent a ton of smoke out of it. The part cost an arm and a leg to replace, so we sold it and bought a more reliable Polaris Trail Boss 325."

Billie Brandt, Concordia, Mo.: "In 1967, when I was 28 years old, I purchased an **International** 444 tractor. I'm now 85, and the tractor is still running well. It starts easily and never gives me any trouble. I think it'll outlast me."

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Greg Krush, Hotchkiss, Colo.: "My cordless **Makita** 1/2-in. impact has lots of power. I haven't used an air wrench since."

Bruce Madden, Castleberry, Ala.: "I bought a **DeWalt** 20-volt battery-operated drill about five years ago, and it's still going strong. It'll bore a bolt hole through a 15-in. power line pole in less than three minutes. It did this new and is still doing it today."

"My worst buy was an impact air driver from **Walmart**. I don't remember the brand. It didn't last a month. I tossed it in the trash."

David Miller, Pickett, Wis.: "I bought a **Ferris** 54-in. zero-turn mower two years ago and am very happy with it. It has a Kawasaki 2-cyl. engine that starts easily. The suspension system gives a smooth ride. It's easy to service and gives a beautiful cut at high speeds."

David isn't happy with his **Stihl** MS 250 chainsaw. "It starts hard when it's cold. It has a lot of compression and is very hard to pull over."

Rex Larsen, Spanish Fork, Utah: "My 2023 **Polaris** NorthStar side-by-side is very dependable. I use it every day on the farm and to check the cattle. I love the heat and air conditioning."