



These farmers near Paris, Mich., get together on Monday nights to help each other out with equipment repairs and general "cobbling" jobs.

PART WORK, PART PLAY

Monday Meeting Brings Young Farmers Together

A Monday night gathering that started almost by accident has turned into a weekly ritual for a group of young farmers in and around Paris, Mich., who say the "part work, part play" evening is now an important part of their week.

"It all started several years ago when a good neighbor friend of mine wanted me to help him work on his car. I said sure and we replaced a few wheel bearings and repaired a transmission leak. That just happened to be a Monday night. The following Monday he came to my farm to help me replace the floor in a stock trailer and from then on we just started doing different jobs on Monday nights at my house. After a few weeks a couple more friends started coming over and we really started to get a lot of work done. Whenever somebody needed something repaired, we would help each other out.

"One Monday we replaced an exhaust system on a friend's truck. It wouldn't fit like it should so we had to 'fabricate' it so it would. After we were through, the fellow said, 'What a cobblation!' After that, we started calling our weekly get-togethers our Monday Night Cobblation. Somehow it seemed to fit.

"Over the past few years, we've built many fences, replaced roofs, installed an in-floor hoist in a shop, put insulation in an-

other guy's shop, repaired farm equipment, hauled hay, hauled cattle, and on and on. Just about every farm chore you can think of.

"You could call it a barter system but that sounds too impersonal. What it actually is is farmers and friends doing what they have to ensure survival in these tough economic conditions.

"Sure, there are times when we get a little carried away with the socializing part of it, but when everybody else in the world is complaining about it being Monday, the 'Cobblers' are happy and willing to do whatever job has to be done. I couldn't find a better bunch of guys and I would trust them with anything.

"I'm sending along a picture of a Deere 7-bottom plow that I bought at an auction which became one of the group's projects. I knew I couldn't pull it but I figured we could convert it to a 6-bottom, which I would be able to handle. One Monday night, we removed the whole hitch assembly and cut off the front bottom, and then drilled new holes and moved the hitch assembly back. This Cobblation, like all we do, was done correct and very impressively.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Scott MacFarlane, 20323 Poplar Rd., Paris, Mich. 49338 (ph 616 796-5043).

First And Only "John Dean" Tractor

"I built it because a friend gave me a garden tractor front-end loader and I didn't have a tractor to use it on," says Dean Fechter, Belvue, Kan., who built what he calls a "John Dean" tractor.

It's equipped with an LUC gas engine off an old Deere combine coupled to a 4-speed transmission salvaged from a Studebaker 1 1/2-ton truck. The Studebaker transmission is connected to a 4-speed transmission from an old Ford schoolbus. Fechter cut off the gear housing on the engine and made an adapter to bolt the transmission to the engine. The rear axle and differential were taken from a 1954 Chevrolet pickup. Fechter narrowed up the differential and shortened the axle. He

built the front axle from 1/4-in. flat iron and used spindles from an old Chevrolet car. He fashioned the tractor's frame from 3/8 by 7 1/2-in. flat iron and also made a steel frame to mount the loader. He put a home-built 3-pt. hitch on back and made his own 5-ft. wide grader blade.

"I've used it more than I ever thought I would. Works great for moving snow and dirt. I can also load my welder in the 3-ft. wide bucket and carry it around the farm as needed. I used two transmissions to slow the tractor down. Either 4-speed transmission by itself would have been geared way too fast, especially with the big rear wheels. The two transmissions provide 16 forward speeds - 17 when both transmissions are put



Mural is done L'il Abner style and shows a man, woman and three little girls to represent Duncan family.

ARTWORK DEPICTING "HILLBILLY" FARM FAMILY ENTERTAINS PASSERSBY ON HIGHWAY

Farm Mural Painted On Side Of Farm Building

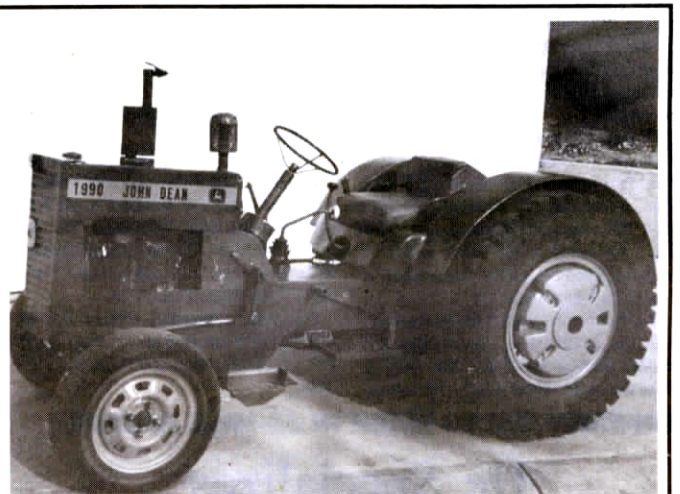
"I'd like to encourage other farmers to paint messages on their buildings to give people a chuckle as they drive through the country," says Dennis Duncan, Bentley, Alberta, who recently had a mural painted on the side of a grainary on his farm that fronts onto a major highway.

It has become quite a tourist attraction since the mural was painted onto the building by Duncan's sister-in-law, with help from other family members. "A lot of people have stopped by to take pictures and

to show their kids. They're usually chuckling," he says.

Duncan, along with his wife Laurie and three daughters, runs a dairy and grain farm. The mural is done L'il Abner style and shows a cartoon Holstein cow, an old shack and outhouse, and a man, woman and three little girls to represent the Duncan family.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dennis Duncan, Rt. 1, Bentley, Alberta, TOC 0J0 Canada (ph 403 748-2413).



Tractor is equipped with two transmissions to slow it down. They provide 17 forward speeds.

in reverse which provides the slowest speed."

The 10.00 by 20 in. truck tires at rear are mounted on wheel rims removed from 7.50 by 20 wheels off an old manure spreader. Fechter used a cutting torch to split the wheel rims and welded a band in them to make them wider. The truck tires didn't have much tread so he bolted wheel weights (salvaged from the rear wheels of an old Deere 7700 combine) into the tractor's rear wheels to improve traction. Power steering from Plymouth car.

The loader came with hydraulic cylin-

ders and a hydraulic pump that Fechter mounted on the side of the engine. He used tie rods off a big truck to make 3-pt. lift arms. The 3-pt. is raised or lowered by a light implement cylinder.

The deck and seat are off an old Allis Chalmers riding mower. Fechter used 12-gauge steel to build the fenders and welded them to the deck. He used 3/16-in. sheet metal to make the grader blade.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dean Fechter, 21855 Oregon Trail, Belvue, Kan. 66407 (ph 913 456-7622).