

Powered Bath Tubs Draw Big Crowds

"My niece was in charge of a small town parade and she told me that every year they kept getting the same old cars, tractors, horses and fire wagons and that she wished she could find something new to liven it up," says Bill Crain, Helena, Okla., who took that as a challenge and headed out to his shop.

"I'd seen the story in FARM SHOW's Vol. 15, No. 1, 1991, about Rick Clow's powered bath tub so I set out to build my own. The motor is the only part that's new. Everything else came from the junk pile.

"The front caster wheel came off an old corn binder elevator and I used a fork lift rear end on back, driven by the hydraulic system off an old Deere combine. I used the engine starting controls from an R diesel Deere tractor as brake levers. The rear wheels on the powered tub came off a Ford Fairlane 500. The bolt patterns fit the fork lift hubs.

"The rear, non-powered tub is mounted on the frame of an old Graves bale elevator.

"I tried to rig up a bubble machine to blow bubbles out of the tubs but never got that working right so I settled for a little yellow rubber duck that's mounted on a coil spring so he looks like he's swimming when we're



Crain squirts himself with "deodorant" while his wife scrubs in the back tub and powders her face using a tin pie pan for a mirror.

moving. The squirt can in my right hand in the photo holds my "deodorant". After I scrub good under the arms, I give myself a couple of squirts. My wife scrubs in the back tub and powders her face using a tin pie pan for a mirror.

"I give the announcers instructions to say, 'What in the cat hair is this?' when they

see us coming and then when we get closer, to yell, 'Oh my gosh! Don't look now Ethel.' Then after we get past, he says it was an educational float so all the old maids in the audience don't have to wonder now what a man looks like in the bathtub.

"We went to 11 parades and got first prize at 6 of them, second at one, and the rest

didn't have judging but we got a lot of standing ovations.

"The one big mistake I made after finishing this project was not buying Kodak stock because I'm sure it went way up considering how often our pictures get taken."

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The "Bench Gang" with home-grown garden produce that they donate to the needy.

CHARITABLE PROJECTS KEEP MEMBERS BUSY

Retirees Found New Life As "Bench Gang"

By G.C. Glover, Hudson, N.C.

In our small town of Hudson, North Carolina, there isn't much excitement on main street except watching cars go by. But that was enough to give birth to a group of retirees with some time on their hands but the desire to still keep busy in a useful way.

It all started when a couple of retired residents rigged up a makeshift seat in front of the hardware store to sit, talk and watch the traffic. Soon others joined them. As the group grew larger, someone donated nice benches for them to use in summer and a local merchant provided an empty house where they could gather in winter. Soon everyone was referring to the loosely organized group as the "Bench Gang".

Most of the 25 or so members of the

Bench Gang are local people who have known each other from childhood or worked together in local factories or businesses over the years.

A few years ago, someone in the Gang suggested they plant a big garden and donate the produce to the needy. There is a small field behind the Bench Gang's winter house, and the man who owned it let them use it for the new project. The garden worked out so well they've since expanded using more donated acres, tractors and equipment, and selling enough produce to help the poor and also to set up a scholarship at a local community college.

A winter project developed when local residents started donating black walnuts to

they Gang. At first they cracked the nuts and had their wives bake them into cakes. As the amount of nuts grew, they started selling the surplus at the local hardware store and donating the proceeds to a local Hospice.

The fall of 1993 produced such a bumper crop of black walnuts, the Gang ended up with over 100 bushels of nuts which they were able to store in a local furniture shop's warehouse. Then they had to come up with a way to crack them open for sale.

Black walnuts have a hard outer shell that's difficult to remove. At first they laid the nuts in a driveway and drove over them with a small tractor, but then we read about a home-built machine in FARM SHOW

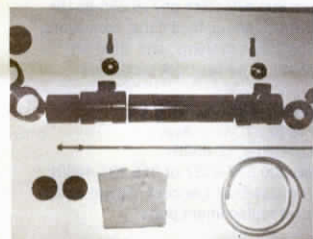
"Hydraulic Cylinder" Powered By Tap Water

"I helped my son design a double-acting hydraulic cylinder powered by ordinary tap water for a school project and thought other FARM SHOW readers might be interested in how we did it. Makes a great demonstration project for school groups interested in learning more about hydraulics," says Vincent St. Pierre, Nepean, Ontario.

St. Pierre says he and his son simply bought off-the-shelf plumbing parts at a local hardware store to make the 3-in. dia. water-powered cylinder, the main body of which is made out of PVC pipe.

"It will lift over 200 lbs. with just 40 psi of water pressure. You just hook up hose fittings to the inlets at either side of the cylinder. We use sprinkler valves to control the flow of water to the cylinder," says St. Pierre. "There's nothing like it on the market but I can think of many applications where such a cylinder might be used. Our main purpose in making it, however, was as a demonstration. It's a clean, safe way to teach kids hydraulics.

St. Pierre would be willing to make plans available.



St. Pierre bought off-the-shelf plumbing parts at a local hardware store to make the 3-in. dia. water-powered cylinder. Its main body is made out of PVC pipe.

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Magazine that does the hulling automatically. I built a prototype for the group, and it worked so well, we took it to a fabricating shop which put together a quality-built unit that does a great job.

Now the Bench Gang is looking for an automated way to separate the inner shells from the meat since at present they're doing it the old fashioned way by hand. We'd like to hear from any readers who might have a better way. We'd also like to know if anyone knows of a market for the shells of black walnuts.

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