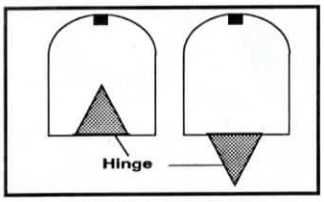
Reader Letters

FARM SHOW

In your last issue (Vol. 17, No. 5) there was a story about how to construct a baffle chamber on an air compressor to extract moisture from air lines. I wanted to point out that the farmer involved has, in fact, constructed a pressure vessel that is probably holding air at 150 to 200 psi. The idea is a good one but it should be constructed out of approved material by a pressure welder and properly tested. If not, it could be a potential bomb. ***(George Markle, Box 1501, Claresholm, Alberta T0L 0T0 Canada ph 403 625-2052)***

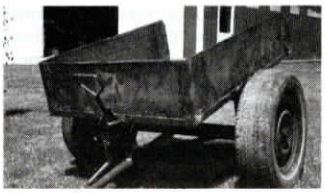


Over the years lots of different mailbox devices have been invented to let you know if the mailman has dropped off your mail yet but I've come up with a simple, cheap idea anyone can use. I simply mount an ordinary hinge on my mailbox. One side of the hinge attaches to the bottom of the box and the other end is raised up against the mailbox door. When the mailman opens the door, the hinge drops down and stays down after the door is shut again, telling you he's been there. ***(Luke R. Thelen, Rt. 2, 1181 N. Grange, Fowler, Mich. 48835)***

I just had to write after reading about the "Low-Cost Deck Saver" invented by 12-year-old David Klaason that was featured in Vol. 17, No. 4. Klaason drilled a hole in the top of his lawn mower deck and installed a hose fitting so he could easily hook up a garden hose after mowing to wash out the underside of the deck. I have a Ford tractor mower that's at least 20 years old that was manufactured with this type of hookup. There's a female hose connector mounted on the left side of the deck that you hook up to with a hose while the mower's running. That means this "invention" is actually older than David Klaason! ***(Bob Mehl, Rt. 1, Box 145-B, Teague, Tex. 75860)***

While attending the Empire Farm Days last summer near Seneca Falls, New York, I met a man who has invented a new chain saw chain specially-made to cut big round bales with a regular chain saw. He had not heard of FARM SHOW Magazine so I explained it to him the way I do to many other farmers I meet. I told him that it's as exciting to me now as Playboy was when I was 18. I'm enclosing this man's name and address so you can send him a sample issue and get more information on his new product. I met another man at the show who makes a high-strength bale spike that was featured in FARM SHOW over 6 months ago. He told me he's still getting calls from that article and that it's been a big help to him in getting his new business venture off the ground. ***(Kirk W. McLaughlin, Rt. 2, Box 131-1, Unadilla, N.Y. 13849)***

My auto-dump ATV garden cart is 3 by 4 ft. with 1-ft. sides. It's made of 1/8-in. sheet steel with 1 1/2-in. angle iron on corners and around the bottom. It rests on 1 1/2-in. dia. pipe with 1-in. strap steel for hinges. I made the running gear using VW Beetle spindles and wheels welded to 3-in. channel iron for the axle. When loaded with 1,000 pounds of rock or dirt, you just pull the spring-loaded release lever in front and it dumps automatically. You just drive out from under the load.



Then pull the bed back to level to relatch the trip mechanism. ***(Dale Dickerson, Rt. 2, Box 68E, Edinburg, Ill. 62531 ph 217 623-4715)***

I think this pig might be one of a kind. It has long red and white strips from tail to nose. It was about 8 or 9 weeks old when the picture was taken. I talked with the manager of Heinhold Hog Market and he said he had never seen anything like it. Could this be the start of a new breed? I'd like to hear from any readers who have more information. ***(George Hein, 6411 Madisen St., Merrillville, Ind. 46410)***

Our new safety rail for grain bin roofs provides a sturdy handrail when you're opening or closing a bin. One size fits all bins. The

two semi-circular pieces create a rail about 8 ft. in dia. Simple mounting brackets and drill screws are provided for easy installation. A 2-screw hold-down strap screws into each rib on the roof. The rail, which sells for $112, is made from 1-in. dia. galvanized tubing. One pair of rails weighs just 40 lbs. ***(Vince Steffen, Harvestall, 3 North Walnut Ave., New Hampton, Iowa 50659 ph 800 722-7544)***

I own a blacktopping business and couldn't find a commercial trailer built heavy enough to haul my Bobcat skid steer loader and 1-ton self-propelled roller for rolling blacktop so I built this 21-ft. tandem axle trailer to do the job. It's built much heavier than most commercial trailers. I used 6-in. channel iron to build the frame. The two 6,000-lb. axles have 7.00 by 16 tires mounted on Ford 8-hole wheel rims. The fenders were made from sheet metal. There's a toolbox and a 7,000-lb. swingaway jack in front. At the back of the trailer are a pair of 2-ft. wide fold-down ramps lined with rubber belting which makes it easier for the self-propelled roller to climb up onto the trailer. Four chain hooks are welded onto the frame on each side of the trailer. I pull it with my 3/4-ton pickup. I spent about $2,000 to build it. ***(John Radloff, Radloff & Weber Blacktopping, Inc., 19450 Normandale Rd., Prior Lake, Minn. 55372 ph 612 447-5733)***

Your readers may be interested in our Katahdin "hair sheep", a hardy meat sheep that has hair like a goat and requires no shearing. Katahdins produce a lean carcass and meat flavor is excellent. Twins are normal and triplets are not uncommon. The breed got its start in the late 1950's when a small number of haired sheep were imported from the Caribbean by Michael Piel of Maine. He began to experiment with crosses between hair sheep and various British breeds, especially Suffolk. He eventually collected a flock of ewes that he called Katahdins, named after Mt. Katahdin in Maine.

From this original flock, new breeders have been able to expand the number of Katahdin sheep in North and South America. In 1986 a breeders organization, Katahdin Hair Sheep International (KHSI), was formed. Its goal is to expand the meat market for the breed. ***(KHSI, c/o Heifer Project International, Rt. 2, Box 33, Perryville, Ark. 72126 ph 501 889-5124)***

I built this one-of-a-kind car in 1957 from the chassis of a 1954 4-door Ford. I call it "Jake's Missile". The body is pointed in front and has a rounded bumper. The pointed front end and solid bumper allow the car to bounce off almost anything in case of a head-on collision.

I lowered the frame and used 10 ga. steel to reinforce it. I made the body from 16 ga. "galvanized" steel so it won't rust. The car has four sliding plexiglass doors that ride on tracks. The front doors slide forward, and the back doors slide backward. The 8-cyl. gas engine is original. The front hood is raised and has an air scoop on top to let air into the carburetor and air cleaner and a hole in front to cool the radiator. There wasn't enough room under the car for the exhaust pipe so I had to mount it outside the right rear tire. To change a flat tire I simply loosen a clamp and pull off the exhaust pipe. The car has a stick shift transmission and recessed lights which was a new idea back when it was made.

I used the car to drive to work every day for 28 years. The 1954 Ford was the first Ford model with "knee action" coil springs in front and an engine equipped with overhead valves. I think it was the best car Ford ever made. ***(Jake Langer, Truck Utilities & Mfg. Co., Inc., 2370 English St., St. Paul, Minn. 55109 ph 612 484-3305)***

I used an air compressor and electric motor to build a round bale "hay lift" inside my barn that takes the work out of storing and feeding

round bales. The lift consists of a 1/3 hp electric motor, a 5 hp air compressor, a winch powered by an air-operated motor, and a two-pronged bale hook that works like ice block tongs. The lift winch rides along a track at the peak of his 96 by 36-ft. barn. The electric motor is bolted to a gearbox that chain-drives the trolley to move the lift back and forth along the track. The air-operated winch motor is powered by the air compressor (which is mounted down in the feed room). It plugs into an air line that runs along the track.

I built this bale lift when I switched from small bales to round bales six years ago. I didn't want to store round bales outside or spend the money for a new storage shed. It lets me store up to 650 bales in the barn's 75 by 36-ft. hay mow without a lot of manual labor. One company makes an electric-operated bale moving system but it costs almost $11,000. I spent less than $3,000. I use a Hesston baler that makes a 39-in. wide, 4-ft. high bale weighing about 450 lbs. The bales are light enough that even my kids can roll them around. I can't use heavier bales because my air compressor doesn't have enough power to lift them. I've never had a bale come loose from the hay lift tongs.

I feed bales by lowering them to the floor of the loft, then dropping them through a hole down into the barn and rolling them out in a feed bunk. A pair of nylon ropes are attached to a rod mounted on the air motor. Pulling one rope lifts a bale. Pulling the other rope lets it down. A cable with rings on it hangs about 3 ft. below the track. The rings allow the coils of the 80-ft. long electric cable and 50-ft. long air hose to slide alongside the trolley as it moves back and forth. The gearbox has a ratio of 60 to 1 to slow the motor down so that it moves along the track at 40 ft. per min. On-off and forward-reverse controls for the trolley are mounted on a board at the bottom of the electric cable.

I bought the electric motor new for $175 and the gearbox for $70. The winch cost $300. The hoist and air motor were salvaged from an old woolen mill where they had been used to operate a crane. ***(Tom Hill, Rt. 1, Kinburn, Ontario Canada K0A 2H0 ph 613 832-1266)***

My son Charles is 16 months old and when we wanted a sandbox for him, I decided to make one out of an old tractor tire. I cut off some of the top rim so wasps couldn't build nests inside. Then I painted the entire tire green and then painted the top of each tread