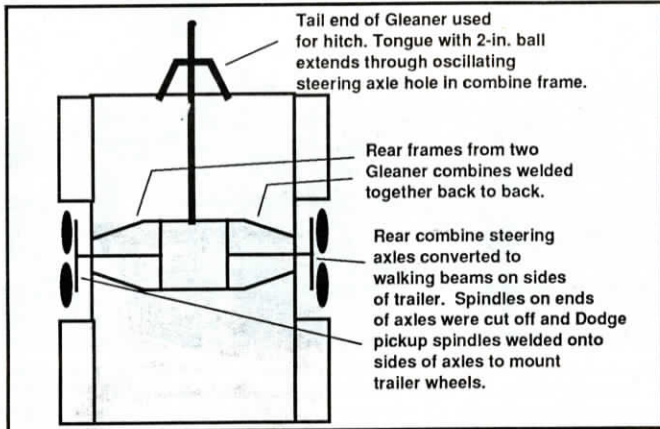


Reader Letters



The problems many of your readers have with new equipment is one reason why I've never bought a new car or pickup and probably never will. I have a 1974 Dodge 4-WD with 157,000 miles, a 1978 Ford 4-WD with 176,000 miles, and a 1977 Pontiac with 138,000 miles. All three are in good shape. All I've ever replaced, other than fan belts and tires, is power steering hose and U-joints. I bought all three vehicles over 10 years ago with over 70,000 miles on each of them.

Readers might be interested in how I built

an 8 1/2 by 18-ft. heavy-duty flatbed trailer using frames and steering axles from 3 old Gleaner combines. I butted two of the frames together to make walking beam tandems, with the steering axles on either side of the trailer. I cut off the original spindles and welded Dodge pickup spindles to the sides of the axles to mount the trailer wheels on. I used a third combine frame to make the hitch. The frame of the trailer is 7-in. channel iron. The deck is 1 1/2-in. oak. It pulls easily and we've hauled as much as 9 tons of junk iron on it. (J.E. Chizek, Cuba, Kan.)



I'm sending along a photo of a "tractor" I built a few years ago. We call it "Old Iron". It's made out of an old John Deere horse mower and parts from a Deere paddle grain elevator. The clutch from the elevator is used to get power to the pitman shaft. I also used parts from an IH swather and made the steering from an end reel carrier off a John Deere grain binder. It's powered by a 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 IH engine. We've entered it in several parades and threshing shows. Makes for good conversation. (Raymond Heck, Box 55, Hekoma, N.Dak. 58355)



We put our semen tank in a 30-gal. garbage can to protect it. Just cut holes in the top of the lid for ventilation. Keeps semen tank dry and clean.

We also made a calf feeder that lasts



longer and is easier to handle than bag-type feeders. I took a calf bottle, screwed a lamb

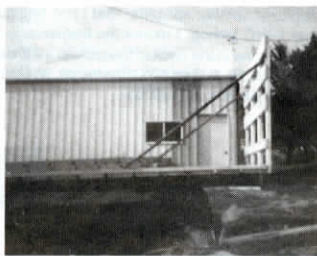
nipple onto it, cut the end off the nipple, and attached a plastic hose from an oral calf feeder bag to it with a hose clamp. It works well and is easy to handle. (Bryan Brunner, Rt. 2, Box 32, Arkansaw, Wis. 54721 ph 715 285-5312)

My husband has a neat way of spraying fencelines. He mounts a spray tank on front of the tractor, then slips a wooden pallet onto the 3-pt. hitch in back. Using a hay bale for a seat, he rides on the pallet with a spray wand while I drive the tractor. (Mrs. Francis Burch, 16434 Zero Ave., Lester Prairie, Minn. 55354)

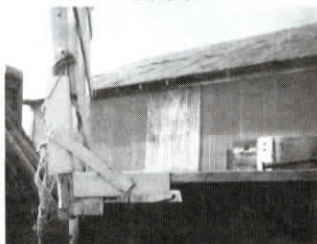


Our stand-up Tread-L-Bike, which was first featured in FARM SHOW about a year ago, is now on the market. It was the article about us in your magazine that brought us to the attention of people who formed a company to manufacture and market treadle cycles. They're like bicycles except that they're powered by a treadle system instead of pedals. The rider shifts his weight from one foot-sized platform to another to propel the bike's drive wheel. It's great exercise and gets you around fast.

An easy-to-ride 3-wheel model sells for \$749 and is available from: Tread-L-Power, Inc., P.O. Box 180, Cedar Beach Road, Charlotte, Vermont 05445 (ph 800 648-7335). (John Sandgren, 903W Twin Tower Bldg., 1110 N. 3rd Ave., Fargo, N.Dak. 58102)



Before



After

Here's how we make mini braces for hay rack backs. We replace the original diagonal braces, which extend out about a third of the way along the rack, with metal corner braces made out of two pieces of 1/4-in. thick, 2 by 6-in. angle iron. Each piece is 12 in. long. I weld a flat metal brace across the two pieces on each corner and then bolt the brace assembly to the floor and back of the rack.

Eliminating the big diagonal braces lets me load my racks 5-wide without fighting for room. It also makes it easier to load and unload big round bales. (Kenneth Hoffman, Rt. 4, Box 234, Newton, Iowa 50208 ph 515 526-3092)

I read with interest the article in the last issue of FARM SHOW about the overhead garage door opener converted to open a sliding barn door. I thought you might be interested in how I modified a Chamberlain 710 garage door opener to open both sides of a sliding barn door. Originally, the opening mechanism was fitted with a combination of chain and cable. I replaced it with all chain and installed a sprocket in place of the "nose pulley" on the end.

As originally designed, the door is pulled open by a sliding mechanism that moves back and forth on a T-rail. I made a second T-rail out of 1 1/2 by 1/8-in. flat steel and welded it to the original T-rail, with about 2 in. separating the two rails. I found a used slide mechanism to mount on the homemade T-rail (I later discovered that the T-rails and other parts are available from Chamber-

lain). I attached an 8-ft. push rod to the sliding mechanism on the added T-rail.

The door opener is mounted on brackets about 1-ft. out from the wall at the top of the doors. Push brackets bolt to the top of each door. When the doors are closed, one sliding mechanism is positioned back by the motor and the other is up at the "nose". As the motor pulls one door open, the 8-ft. push rod pushes the other door open. No modifications were made to the safety devices on the opener. If the door gets hung up, it stops just like with a normal door opener, but I haven't had any problems with that. (Dale R. Dickerson, Rt. 2, Box 68E, Edinburg, Ill. 62531 ph 217 623-5715)

A comment on the article "Electric Car Recharges Itself On-The-Go" (Vol. 17, No. 3): It won't work. If it did work, it would be a perpetual motion machine. Here's why: The turbine that drives the alternators derives its power from the air forced through it by the motion of the car. The motion of the car, of course, is derived from the power delivered by the electric motor. Conceptually, this is the same as using the motor to drive a fan and directing the air flow into the turbine. The point is, it's not free energy. The turbine represents extra wind resistance as far as the motor is concerned, so the motor has to deliver more power to maintain a given speed, which draws more power out of the batteries. The turbine-driven alternators will put some power back, but the result is a net loss. If the turbine was removed and the front part of the car was smoothed over, the car would have a greater range because it would be lighter and more aerodynamic, and the motor wouldn't have to work as hard. Therefore, it wouldn't drain the batteries as fast. (Kervyn D. Mach, 7528 Belle Plain Drive, Huber Heights, Ohio 45424)

Jake Langer, builder of the electric car, responds: "My air turbine is designed so that air goes through the front end of the car and creates a vacuum under the car which in turn pulls more air through the turbine. The front end of the car causes only half as much wind resistance as the front end on conventional cars, even aerodynamically-designed ones. Less wind resistance results in more thrust. The turbine will produce 18 hp at 40 mph even going into a 25 mph head wind."

Our super absorbent "chami mop" sells for \$19.95 plus \$4.50 for shipping and handling, not \$6.95 as you reported in Vol. 17, No. 4. Replacement heads sell for \$6.95 plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling. (Chami Mop Co., 1242 Tenth St., Suite 4, Santa Monica, Calif. 90401 (ph 310 393-4679).



I used a canvas bag-type lawn vac behind my Dixie Chopper lawn mower for years but it was always hard to empty leaves and it was a dirty job. I solved the problem by building a large square hopper with clear plastic on three sides and a large swinging rear door to empty the leaves. It rides on two caster wheels. I used the original vacuum's blower and motor. This really works great.

Another idea I had was a way to handle my electric power washer. My washer is small and compact but I needed a way to handle the power cord and hose. I simply strapped the washer to a cheap 2-wheeler and put hooks on the handles to hold the hose and cord. Makes a handy portable unit. (Marvin Van Syoc, Box 456, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa 52641)