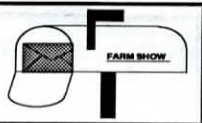


# Reader Letters



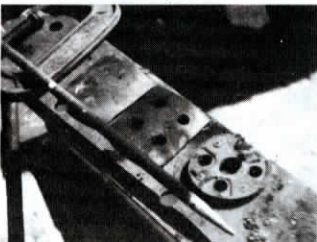
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of farm needs. Individual links fit together without any special tools. You simply place end tabs through the links and twist them with your thumb, then turn the belt inside out. Links can be added on up to any length and there's no cutting or splicing needed to connect them. The belts are stronger and will last much longer than conventional belts. They're particularly handy in tight situations where shafts and pulleys would have to be removed to install a regular one-piece belt. The link belt can simply be threaded through the pulleys and fastened. If you get the size wrong, you can add or subtract links as needed. (Tim Toohey, Standard Bearings, Box 823, Des Moines, Iowa 50304 (ph 515 265-5261))



Over the past couple of years we've had trouble with the power driven rotary screen mounted over the radiator on our Massey 510 combine. The screen was chain-driven off the feederhouse and when a bracket broke we couldn't keep the chains from falling off. We tried using a belt and pulley but with no luck. We noticed that the screens on older International combines are operated by air vacuum and decided to adapt one to the Massey.

We removed the old screen and cut out most of the drive shaft, then bolted the screen from an IH 815 combine to the drive pulley. To our surprise, the screen fit perfectly. The only noticeable difference is that it's 6 to 8 in. deeper. We then salvaged a fan blade off an IH 1466 tractor and bolted it onto the pulley. The fan blade was too small for the screen so we cut old license plates in half and brazed them onto the blade tips to lengthen them so they would work more efficiently. The fan blows toward the screen and causes it to turn. It runs by itself so it's maintenance-free. We paid \$70 for the screen. Last year we purchased a new Case IH 1640, but we kept our Massey 510 for harvesting small grains and to help out in soybeans. It's a reliable, durable and efficient machine. We hope to use it for many more years. (Gary Hopp, Rt. 2, Box 170, Nicollet, Minn. 56074)



I got tired of trying to use a drill bit to make holes in rubber gasket so I came up with a new idea. I make a mark for the hole, and place the rubber in a vice. Then I grind the end of a steel rod down to a point, heat it red hot, and push it down through the rubber. It burns a perfect hole in the exact size and place I want it. A drill bit jumps around and never cuts the rubber out perfect. The rod

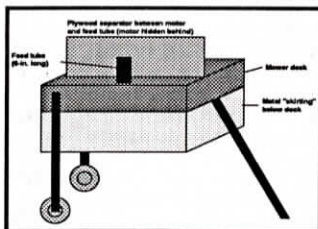
can be whatever size you want. The photo shows the rod I used to make holes in a self-aligning shaft coupler for my Deere 95 combine. It would also work for making rubber cab mounts, etc. (Richard Breneman, Rt. 3, Parsons, Kan. 67357 ph 316 421-5227).



Our "Pull-A-Post" fence tool lets one man jack posts up out of the ground fast. It consists of three pieces - a 3-ft. long handle, a 3-ft. long vertical member that supports the handle, and a hinged "C-section" that catches the teeth on the face of the post. The vertical member is equipped with a flat steel plate that rests on the ground. You pull down on the handle to raise the post up a few inches, then slide the C-section down to get a new grip on the teeth. It has so much leverage that it takes only four or five strokes to pull the post completely out. It works better than using a front-end loader because one man can operate it and the posts come out straight. Sells for \$31.78. (Bob Lynch, Tri-L Mfg., Inc., Rt. 2, Box 57, Ozark, Mo. 65721 ph 417 485-6820)

I made this cornstalk chopper out of an old mower deck mounted on three legs. I use it to chop up cornstalks from my garden and to open up corn fields for the guy who rents my land. I bag up the chopped fodder to feed to my cows or I use it as mulch.

I mounted the mower deck on three legs



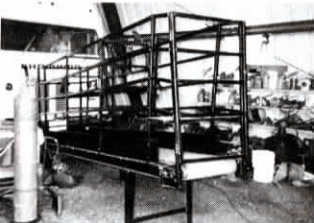
so it would stand better on uneven ground than if it had four legs. Two of the original mower wheels mount on the back legs. I cut a hole in the top of the deck and inserted a 6-in. long pipe (I made it longer than fingers so you couldn't accidentally stick them in there) cut out of an old drive shaft. It runs down to within 1/2 in. of the mower blade. This feed tube is positioned toward the end of the blade where it has the most momentum. I run the engine at just above idle while chopping.

Heavy metal skirting is welded below the original deck to protect me from flying debris as I feed material into the chopper. The mower's original 3 1/2 hp. motor provides power. A piece of plywood stands between

the motor and feed tube to keep chaff out of the motor intake and cooling fins.

I changed the way the blade is sharpened. Originally, when used to mow grass, the bevel was on the top side to pull grass up. I sharpened the blade so the bevel is on the bottom side to pull material down into the chopper.

I use it to chop cornstalks and anything smaller. I don't think it should be used for wood or branches since it's not built heavy enough and it's direct drive off the engine so you could shear the crankshaft on the motor if you fed in something it couldn't cut through. (C.P. Christopher, Rt. 1, Box 373, Hopewell, Penn. 16650 ph 814 928-5273)



I built this sheep exerciser for my grandkids who show a lot of sheep at fairs and 4-H. They got the idea when they saw one in another state. They told me what it looked like and what they wanted it to do. I used various pieces of steel and a conveyor belt off an old fertilizer loader. I built what looks like a loading chute but with three separate stalls so three sheep can be exercised at once. I geared a 1/2-hp. electric motor to run the belt - which runs under all three stalls - at a rate of 3 mph. Each stall has its own gate and a platform to stand the sheep's front legs on. The back ones do the walking, which builds up the hind quarters. I welded it all together, and installed tie-downs so we can tie each sheep's head in place while he's exercising. The kids exercise their sheep for 15 min. or so twice a day.

This machine compares to commercial models that sell for over \$2,000. The biggest out-of-pocket expense was \$50 for the conveyor belt. Most of the steel came from old gates. We painted the machine black and call it our "black sheep". The kids have used it all summer and have won big at all the fairs they've been to so far. (Robert N. Brewer, Box 112A, Rt. 2, Bethany, Ill. 61914)

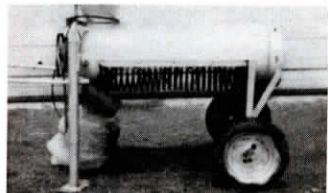


We've taken the metal lids off our standard Ritchie waterers and replaced them with rubber lids made out of rubber belting. They hinge in the same place as the metal lids. The problem with metal lids is that they can freeze down or freeze open. Rubber lids do not freeze down and we think they take less electricity to run since the lids are now closed all the time. There also seems to be less ice around the waterers. Training cattle to use them was easy. We just tied them about halfway open so cows could stick their noses in and lift them up. After about a week they caught on. The lids stick out over the edge of the waterer about 1 1/2 in. (Mel Kuehn, Kuehn & Kompany, Rt. 3, Box 272, Altkin, Minn. 56431 ph 218 927-3260)

I've sold more than 4,000 nutcrackers since my first prototype was featured in FARM SHOW in the 1980's. People who've bought them say they're the best nutcracker money can buy. It's got a cam-operated lever so it's easy for kids to use and is designed so the

top piston comes down only 3/16 in. - just enough to crack the shell without smashing the nut meats. No flying shells or injured fingers. Cracks any nut from 1/2 in. to 2 3/8 in. and mounts on a wood tray that catches shells. It's built heavy out of the finest materials. Sells for \$45 plus shipping.

Recently I made a powered black walnut huller out of an old LP gas tank that had been on the junk pile for a few years. I left both ends in the tank but then cut out half of the



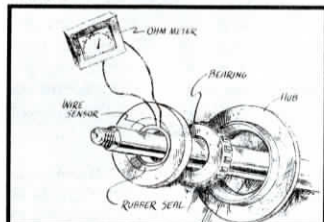
body of the tank. Then I made a grate out of 1/2-in. dia. steel rod. I bent the rods with an iron bender and welded them to two pieces of angle iron, spacing the rods about 5/8 in. apart, and then bolting the grate to the tank. A 1-in. steel shaft goes through the center of the tank, supported by bearings mounted in either end of it. Short lengths of 1/4-in. chain - 24 in all - weld to the center shaft in a staggered pattern. When the center shaft spins, the chains run to within 3/4 in. of the shell of the tank and the grate. An 8-in. dia. pulley on one end of the center shaft is driven by V-belt by a 3-in. pulley on a 1/2 hp., 1,700-rpm electric motor that mounts under the tank.

I pour nuts into an intake funnel at one end of the tank and the chains knock off the green outer hull of the nuts. The broken hulls fall out through the bottom grate and the nuts - in their hard inner shells - fall out through a tube underneath the other end of the huller. It takes 3 to 4 min. to completely hull a 5-gal. bucket of walnuts. Works great on native, hard shell walnuts. (Lawrence Hunt, Box 3, Hartford, Iowa 50118 ph 515 989-3729 or 0117)



I'm sending along a photo of my home-built 20-in. tricycle that I built for handicapped kids. It's hand-pedaled with a crank that mounts above the front wheel. It has a large, comfortable padded seat and a wide foot rest. There's a wire carrying basket on back.

I got the idea after seeing an article in FARM SHOW several issues back about Charles Lee in Montana who designs and builds hand-cranked bikes. I patterned mine after the bikes pictured in the article. (Raymond Rodriguez, 860 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, Calif. 91977 ph 619 464-8775)



We're looking for a manufacturer for our new electrically-monitored bearing seal which lets you check seal wear using an ohm meter. A circuit is embedded in the seal at the depth of acceptable wear. When the seal wears down to that point, it grounds out the circuit.