

Gene Wilson with the full-size Farmall M before 1,200 lights were installed.

MADE OF 1/2-IN. DIA. CONDUIT

## Giant Lawn Ornaments Light Up At Night

Elmwood, Ill., farmer Gene Wilson has launched a booming sideline business making giant lawn ornaments out of 1/2-in. dia. thin-wall steel conduit.

"We custom-build full-size, 3-D silhouettes of everything from reindeer to tractors and combines to a 28-piece Nativity set," says Wilson of Christmas Lane Farms. "They're far more detailed than anything else on the market. And they're big so thieves can't throw them in the trunk of a car."

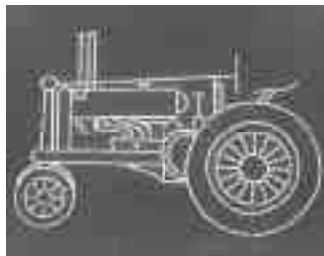
Among the Christmas ornaments he builds are 6-ft. tall angels, 10-ft. tall shepherds, and a standard 3-piece (Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph) Nativity set with a 6-ft. tall kneeling Joseph. (Sells for \$750.)

Pieces of conduit are formed on pipe benders and welded together. Ornaments are lit by miniature Christmas lights spaced 1 1/2-in. apart and taped with clear electrical tape to the pipe. Angels, for example, are illuminated with 350 to 400 lights, while the 3-piece Nativity set is lit up by 850 lights.

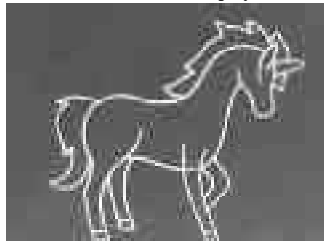
"Right now we're working on a 28-piece Nativity set, complete with camels and wise men, that'll take us three years to complete," says Wilson. "Everything we do is strictly to the customer's specifications."

Along with Christmas decorations, Wilson makes tractors and cars for area implement and automobile dealerships.

For example, he's now working on a 3/4-



A 1937 Deere A is part of the Wilsons' Christmas Lane Farms display.



A pony that was built as part of a tribute to the Wilsons' three children.

size 4-WD Agco Star tractor for a dealer that'll be lighted by 2,000 lights.

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Wilson welds together conduit that will form a Deere 70 diesel which was custom-built for a Rockford, Ill., farmer.

# FARM SHOW



Gumienny's 13-ft. dia., 42-ft. tall cement silo barber pole is painted red, white and blue with latex paint.

## He Gives Haircuts In A "Silo" Barber Pole

"It's the largest barber pole in the world," says David Gumienny, Elkhart Lake, Wis., who gives haircuts right in the middle of a 13-ft. dia., 42-ft. high cement silo that he painted with red, white, and blue stripes.

Gumienny, who lives on a 6 1/2-acre hobby farm on the edge of town next to a prominent lake resort, set up his silo barber pole shop in 1976 - the year of the U.S. Bicentennial. The cement roof is painted blue and has an American flag flying over it at a height of 54 1/2 ft.

He tore down a milk house that was adjacent to the silo to build a waiting room for customers. To make room inside the silo, he first poured a cement floor, then covered it with carpeting. He attached 2 by 4 studs to the walls and ran 2 by 12's across the top of them to make an insulated 8-ft. tall ceiling. He put three layers of 3/4-in. thick plywood on top of the ceiling as protection in case cement ever chips away from the roof. He also insulated the outside walls and then sheetrocked them, giving the room

a 9-sided look.

He used a cement saw to cut a door in the silo wall that leads to the waiting room. He also added a bathroom at the bottom of the silo chute and covered the chute's open windows with plexiglass.

"The poured cement silo walls are about 8 in. thick and with the insulation it's so quiet inside that you don't even know when there's a storm outside," says Gumienny.

It took a while to figure out how to paint the stripes on the silo. He used a fruit jar to test his design. He penciled squares on a sheet of paper and made colored stripes at a 45 degree angle, then wrapped the paper around the jar. It worked. Then he used chalk to mark the silo in 30-in. squares and started painting. "I use latex paint which lasts for about five or six years. I've painted the silo twice since I moved in," says Gumienny.

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