

Reader Letters



My wife Denise enjoys fishing but is only able to use one hand due to a handicap. To make fishing more fun for her, I developed the Electro-Retrieve, a small, motorized device that will reel in fish at the touch of a button. It uses a small appliance motor, similar to those used on hand-held vacuum cleaners, to reel in the line. The motor attaches to the fishing rod and is powered by a battery carried in the pocket of a life jacket or fishing vest.

I really believe there's a market for something like this. There are a lot of people who don't fish just because it takes two hands. I'd like to compare notes with interested investors and manufacturers. (Jay Jensen, No. 49, Marway Tr. Park, St. Peter, Minn. 56082 ph 507 931-4810)



Kids of all ages can enjoy "Bat-A-Ball and Catch," an all-wood device I invented which allows an individual to play ball alone, or with someone. You swing the bat, striking the ball underneath. The ball is guided straight up about 40 ft., then comes straight back down. I'd like to sell the idea to an interested manufacturer. (Lloyd Ystenes, 421 12 St. N, Moorhead, Minn. 56560 ph 218 236-9137)



Our firm has taken over manufacturing and marketing of the Tobin silage liner for truck boxes and fifth wheel trailers. Designed to handle green chop as well as silage, it's made of heavy sheet metal and slips inside the truck box itself. It's equipped with its own automatic endgate which operates from inside the cab. It's completely inside the truck box and stays up and out of the way when the hoist is raised to allow for complete unloading. Automatically closes when truck box is lowered. Stands on its own built-in legs when not in use.

To load, the driver simply tilts the truck box and backs up to let the liner slide up and into the box. Attaches in seconds with 4 bolts—no hardware on the outside of the truck box.

Available in 14, 15 and 16 ft. units, and optional 1 to 6 ft. extensions. (Joe Schnell, Schnell Welding and Machine, P.O. Box 157, Lake Preston, S. Dak. 57051 ph 605 847-4448)

Just wanted to write and tell you how much I enjoy FARM SHOW. I'm a 79 year old retired wheat farmer.

In your last issue, you stated (Publisher's Notebook, page 5) that John Deere invented the steel plow. This is only partially true. A man by the name of Leonard Andrus had started a settlement at Grand Detour, Ill., in 1836. He invited John Deere of Vermont to come west. They formed a partnership and, in 1838, made three steel plows, using a ruined saw blade from Andrus' saw mill. In 1839 they made 40 plows. The steel plow was a success from then on.

Andrus erected a large building and by 1846 production was over 1,000 plows a year. About that time, John Deere decided to go on his own. He moved to Moline, Ill., and that was the beginning of the John Deere Co. (Francis Tritle, P.O. Box 1030, Omak, Wash. 98841)



I enjoy FARM SHOW very much and have gotten many good hints and ideas from it. So I decided to send you an idea that's been a big help to me when painting. It's a paint can spout for 1-gal. paint cans that I made out of 20 ga. sheet metal and an old paint can lid. I got the idea while spray painting a 1944 Farmall M because I was having trouble pouring paint into the paint gun cup.

I started with a piece of sheet metal 10 in. wide and 7 1/4-in. tall and an old clean paint can lid. First I cut an arc at the bottom of the sheet metal from one side to the other so it produced about a 110° angle when fitted in the groove on the paint can lid. Then I brazed the spout to the groove of the can lid. It works best if you press the lid onto an old clean paint can to keep the lid from warping when it heats up. Then I found the center of the spout and measured out 3 1/2 in. to either side and used a tin snips to taper the spout down to the lid. Then I cut about a 2 1/2 in. dia. hole in the lid of the paint can, centered on the spout. Now only a little paint runs down the spout and what does run down is easy to wipe up before it makes a mess. (David Dickmeyer, Rt. 1, Box 144, Higginsville, Mo. 64037)

Now that the U.S. has declared war on fat, many breeds are suddenly making claims of having the leanest meat. But breeders of Piedmontese, a striking "double-muscled" beef breed from Italy, not only make that claim, we have the research to back it up. The breed first came to the U.S. in 1982 from Canada. There are still only a few hundred purebred animals in the U.S.

The Italian beef industry never wanted this breed to get out of Italy in the first place



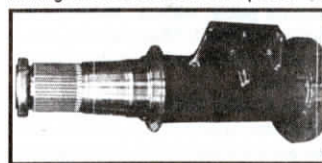
because it's so unique. No more new animals will be getting out of Italy in the near future since European countries have been plagued with mad cow disease so demand is high for the animals we already have. Currently full-blood females sell for between \$10,000 and \$25,000, depending on age and pedigree while bulls sell for between \$4,000 and \$7,000. Frozen embryos sell for \$1,500.

The U.S.D.A. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) in Clay Center, Neb., recently conducted a multi-year study comparing 11 different breeds, including Hereford and Angus crosses, Shorthorns, Charolais, Longhorns and others. The published results ranked Piedmont cattle first in most categories, including tenderness, natural leanness, ribeye size, and dressing percentage.

Piedmont calves are born with small heads and narrow bodies, making for easy calving. They don't start their heavy-muscling until 3 weeks after birth. The double-muscling increases the amount of red meat on the carcass, producing a product that is actually lower in cholesterol than pork, chicken and even some kinds of fish. Dressing percentage averages 72%, versus about 63% for most breeds.

It makes an excellent animal for cross-breeding since it readily passes along its best characteristics with just one cross, including double-muscling and high feed conversion. The breed has been extensively tested at Colorado State University. More information is available from the Piedmontese Association of the United States (P.O. Box 300284, Kansas City, Mo. 64130 ph 512 437-2348). (Wayne Schlabach, 9445 James Rd., Fredericksburg, Ohio 44627 ph 216 263-3036)

Almost everyone who owns a Versatile tractor is familiar with one of their biggest weak points - the axle housing tubes. Factory tubes are made out of mild, low tensile cast iron which breaks under high torque field conditions. We got into the business of making axle tubes as a normal part of our



job-shop work and discovered that breakage of them is not unique to the rolling hills of this area. We've heard from farmers all over the U.S. and Canada with the same problem.

We build our replacement tubes from high-tensile 4140 steel and guarantee them fully for five years. They're 2 1/2 times as strong as the originals. We have two sizes to fit the full range of Versatiles. They sell for \$1,000, which is more than factory replacements but with our parts you know you've got the problem solved.

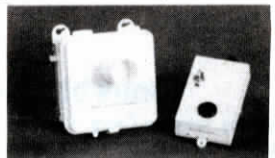
Another problem with Versatiles are the brake calipers which cost about \$600 to replace. We rebuild them for about \$80 plus freight. We also make brake rotors, which sell for \$138. (Keith Lunders, K & M Industries, Inc., Box 66, Troy, Idaho 83871 ph 208 835-2281)

Here are a couple modifications I've made to tractors.

My 1943 Case SC originally had a 6-volt electrical system. I changed it to a 12-volt

battery and coil. I also changed it from a magneto to a distributor. Works great. I've had the tractor for 42 years. I paid \$1,300 for it used in 1949.

I also made some changes on my Deere 2520 gas tractor. To save money, I built a new battery box and mounted it on the rear axle to the right of the cab so I could use a standard 6 1/2 by 10-in. 12-volt battery rather than the factory's 4 1/2 by 19-in. 12-volt battery. The standard-size battery costs less and it's easier to service mounted on the axle. Also, I moved the air cleaner from between the fuel tank and radiator back to the rear axle at the left of the cab. It's also easier to service mounted there and it's easier to keep the radiator clean because now there's more space around it. (Russell L. Fuhrman, 762 Collegeville Rd., Collegeville, Penn. 19426)

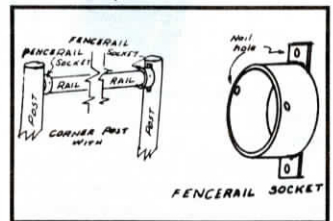


I am a farmer and about 8 years ago I started manufacturing wireless driveway alarms. Our radio-operated driveway alert consists of two parts - a transmitter and a bell-receiver. The transmitter is operated by a 9-volt battery which normally lasts 6 mos. to a year. The transmitter sends out an invisible beam approximately 80 ft. and it can be pointed in any direction since no receiver is needed at the end of the beam. If a person or vehicle breaks the beam, the transmitter sends a signal up to 500 ft. back to the bell receiver which rings for about 3 secs. to alert you. The transmitter is just 4 by 4 in. in size and can be mounted on a tree, post or building. It should be set about 3 ft. high so it won't be set off by small animals walking through. Several transmitters can be used with the same bell if, for example, you have two entryways to your farm or if you want to put a transmitter in your shop or barn. Sells for \$219. Extra transmitters are \$124.

We also make a vehicle sensor that's buried beneath the driveway. It senses metal and will not be set off by people or animals. Installation is simple with no need for an electrician. Sells for \$199.

Our less expensive driveway alert is a wireless rubber hose alert that consists of a rubber hose that runs across the driveway and is activated by the weight of a vehicle. It sells for \$149.

We also make accessories which can be added to any of the alerts, such as a telephone dialer that can be set when you're out of town to automatically dial a neighbor or the police if an alarm is tripped. (Rocky Quam, Dakota Alert, Inc., P.O. Box 130, 112 W. Main, Elk Point, S.Dak. 57025 ph 605 356-2772)



Our new fence rail bracket makes it easier to build a neat-looking, strong wooden fence. It eliminates the need to notch the post to hold the rail in place. Notching weakens a post and breaks the treatment seal. It also prevents rotting and decay at the rail-post connection since air will circulate where they come together. It also eliminates the need to toe nail the rail-post connection, which can help prevent splitting of the rail.

It consists of a bracket with a receiving ring that holds the end of the rail. The bracket has nail holes on the sides to hold