



Ed Hutzel's no. 21 "bear trap" stands 6 ft. 9 in. tall, has a 30-in. jaw spread, and weighs 140 lbs.

Giant Bear Trap Looks Great In Living Room

It takes 700 lbs. of pressure on each spring to set Ed Hutzel's largest trap. His no. 21 "bear trap" is 6 ft. 9 in. tall, has a 30-in. jaw spread, and weighs 140 lbs.

The Meyersdale, Penn., master trap builder has developed a big reputation over the past decade among trap collectors and trapping associations.

"These aren't reproductions. They are my own design," Hutzel says. "These traps are heavier and stronger and made huskier than any other trap made in the last 100 years."

His biggest traps are actually bigger than bear traps — large enough to trap water buffalo, rhinos and even elephants. Though completely functional, the traps are no longer legal for bears, but highly sought after by collectors from all over the world who display them on fireplace mantels or hang them from lofts of spacious lodges.

Hutzel blends a variety of old and modern techniques from blacksmithing to temper the steel, to cutting the steel with laser and waterjet cutters. He uses everything from hammers and punches, to sandpaper, grinders and polishing discs to create dozens of trap styles, from smaller working traps to collectibles with a mirror finish.

Hutzel has been commissioned to build traps for many notable events including a trap for the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 2004 and more than 100 bear traps for the 50th anniversary of the National Trappers Association in 2009.

Prices for the large collectable traps range from \$325 to \$925. The traps are serial numbered, documented and made in limited editions.

Hutzel also makes working traps — including tiny mousetraps, small game traps and dog-proof traps. He is working on two sizes of wolf traps.

Besides making collectable traps, Hutzel has sole rights to sell a few books on traps and their value. For example, he sells "Collectable Traps" by Robert Vance, which lists more than 2,500 items, including traps and other collectables, for \$19.95. It is the 10th edition, good for 2010-2015. He notes that many farmers may have valuable traps in their barns and sheds, and they should educate themselves before selling them.

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"Mini Mack" Dump Truck

"I built it to look like a miniature version of an early 1970's Mack dump truck," says Art Pascale, Monson, Mass., about the 10-ft. long, 10-wheeled dump truck he built using components off an old Sears riding mower including the machine's front and rear axles, engine, and steering gear.

The truck rides on 12-in. high tractor tires and is powered by a 10 hp Briggs & Stratton engine that mounts on a frame made from sq. tubing that's located behind the cab. The rig's 5-speed transaxle is off the riding mower. The dump box really works and is raised and lowered by a pair of hydraulic cylinders off a 1969 Ford convertible.

"It was fun to build and really turned out nice," says Pascale. "This is the third miniature Mack truck I've built over the years. I recently sold it to a construction company, which painted it the same color as their company trucks to drive it in parades. I mounted the engine on back instead of under the hood in order to make room for the driver.



Kids have a lot of fun driving this 10-ft. long "mini Mack" built by Art Pascale. It's powered by a 10 hp Briggs & Stratton engine.

The engine is exposed whenever the dump box is raised. I use a 2-way switch on the dash to raise and lower the box."

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Photo by Charles A. Ite

Foot-powered milkers were manufactured for about 20 years in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Most were junked when electric milkers hit the market.

Foot-Powered Milker Milked Two Cows At Once

William Mehring's foot treadle milker, patented in 1892, was among a handful of pulsating machines that eventually led to the development of automatic milkers.

There was a fair amount of work powering the machine. A 19th Century circular explains the process.

"The operator does his own pumping," Mehring wrote. "This machine is best adapted where grown persons do the milking. You set the pump along beside a cow, or rather in between two cows. After sitting on the seat you place your feet on the treadle, which works the pump. The treadle works similar to a seesaw. You now work the pump with your feet, and place the cups against the cow's teats. The cups will rapidly suck on. You can milk two cows simultaneously just as well as one cow at a time. After a few milkings the cows will stand just as well to be milked from the left side as from the right."

Mehring touted the cleanliness of the milk, the speed and labor-saving nature of the machine as benefits, as well as cow comfort. The milkers were manufactured for about 20 years. Most were junked when electric milkers hit the market. So finding one in the 21st Century can be difficult.

Robert Dunn looked for 10 years before he purchased one in March 2010 at an Amish farm auction. He had seen two before that — one at a sale that went for \$4,600 and another in an antique shop that wasn't for sale. They are rare, so prices start around \$1,500 and some have reportedly sold for as high as \$6,000.

Dunn, a retired dairy and fruit farmer, has



Two cows can be milked simultaneously by the pedal-powered pump.

collected farm-related items since he got married 50 years ago.

"I just like antiques and am crazy enough to run around looking for things from the 1800's," he says.

Others appreciate them too. When Dunn took his new treasure to its first show, the All-Dairy Antiques and Collectibles Show in Harrisburg, Penn. (www.allamerican.state.pa.us), it attracted curious onlookers. A young boy in a nearby booth was fascinated by it and posed for a photo as he tried it out.

Dunn notes that pedaling the milker does create action, but the teat cups are brittle and he doesn't plan to actually milk a cow with it.

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