

Reader Letters



Thanks for the story in your last issue on the 45-ft. tall cornstalks we grew last year. One thing that was not explained in the article was where the corn was grown. We needed a longer growing season to produce such tall corn so it was grown in Costa Rica, not here in New York where we do our research. We don't have to worry about early or late frost down in Central America. (**Jason Karl; jrk36@cornell.edu**)

I am concerned about an article in Vol. 40, No. 5, called, "Goat Milk Better Than Milk Replacer". We have had dairy goats for 20 years and practically all American dairy goats have CAE, which is "caprine arthritis and encephalitis". The encephalitis kills you. If the goat reaches old age, it gets terrible arthritis (which is why goats click when they walk). CAE is transmitted through milk, saliva and even persists in the soil. CAE-free goats are very expensive and need to be kept separate from infected animals or wherever they used to be housed. So using goat's milk as replacer is not a good idea. (**Kent MacDougal, Yonges Island, S. Car.**)

I thought the information in the story last issue called "Geothermal Furnace Runs Off Well Water" contained misleading statistics. It claimed that it could produce 24,000 btu's from 3 gal. of well water per minute. If the well water was at 48 degrees, you would have to pull out 24 degrees of heat to get 24,000 btu's, meaning the water would exit at 24 degrees which is below freezing. Frozen water won't come out of a pipe.

Most geothermal units extract only 5 or 6 degrees, which is why you have to pump so much water through them. With a well water system, you would have to consider wear and tear on your well pump and the electric cost of operating it.

Geothermal units that heat and cool homes must be properly engineered. If they are, then some savings are definitely possible. (**Alan Linda, retired HVAC instructor, New York Mills, Minn. 56567**)



Thank you for your article a year ago on our dumping snow blade made out of a curved Harvester silo panel. It's designed to be pulled by a 2 or 4-horse hitch and we've used it since 2010. Last spring we redesigned the tongue latching and unlatching system to improve operating efficiency. It lets anyone who doesn't have a skid steer or tractor snowblower clear a driveway easily using horses. (**Jesse Fisher, 347 School Lane Rd., Gap, Penn. 17527 ph 717 442-8958**)

I've noticed that a couple FARM SHOW readers have written in to say they've had trouble catching mice with my "Best Mouse Trap Ever" trap that was featured in FARM SHOW (Vol. 39, No. 4). I hate to hear this because I've used this trap

for 20 years to catch thousands of mice and we've also sold thousands of traps to customers all over the country. Every once in a while someone says they can't catch anything and all I can say is to try putting it in a different location and possibly try a different bait. A bait that works great for most people is to melt a couple tablespoons of peanut butter in a microwave and stir it into a cup of cracked corn. Mice can't resist. Shelled corn and oatmeal also work well. Anyone who wants more information or help can call me. I'll answer the phone. (**Dave Cassens, CasMac Innovations, www.BestMouseTrapEver.com; ph 618 786-3614**)

I wrote to you several months ago seeking help with the idea of using a leaf blower to "self propel" a kayak. One of your editors was very helpful in digging up stories and videos of people who have done it, even though the idea had never been in FARM SHOW. With the help of friends, I used a 2-cycle blower, pvc parts, and an 8-ft. kayak from Walmart. Total cost was about \$200. It works great. (**Steve Bashaw, Maurertown, Va.**)



I've never seen anyone as energetic and creative at age 87 as my buddy, Joe Staton. My wife needed something to hold her business cards and asked him to make her something out of old tools. This is what he came up with, using 3 open-end wrenches. If you put a level on it, it's perfectly horizontal so the cards won't slide off. (**Robert R. Barnes, Benton, Ark.**)



Here's a photo of a drawbar holder that keeps the drawbar from turning. I've tried to locate the maker on the internet, but with no luck. This drawbar holder is one of the most useful ideas I've seen. Any idea where it can be purchased? (**Ed Petransky, 298 Wheeler Hill Rd., Frewsburg, N.Y. 14738**)

On some of my vehicles the headlights turn on automatically during the day, but on some they don't. According to government statisticians it's much safer to drive with your headlights on, especially with motorcycles.

So here's how you can convert to automatic headlights without having to spend \$30 to \$40 for an adapter. Find the



Several years ago FARM SHOW featured my "measured" firewood trailers that hold 2 cords of wood in 4 half-cord size compartments (Vol. 34, No. 5). I thought you might be interested in my new larger covered trailers that each hold 3 cords of wood weighing about 12,000 lbs. I built 3 of the trailers using 20-ft. long Ford truck frames and wheeled axles from old manure spreaders. I welded 10-in. extensions onto the frames to make them 4 ft. wide and used 2 by 3-in. sq. tubing and angle iron to build up the sides, making roof trusses out of 1 1/2-in. angle iron fitted with 2 by 4's to hold the tin roof. Wood planks were used for the floor. (**Bill Kelsey, 5 Weber Road, Sharon, Conn. 06069**)



automatic eye that turns the headlights on (it's usually located on the dash) and cover it with electrical tape. Your headlights will automatically turn on as soon as you start the vehicle, day or night. (**Gary Swensen, 1408 Sunrise Drive, Yankton, S. Dak. 57078 ph 605 660-3489; g_swensen@msn.com**)



I enjoyed reading the article in your last issue about a business that converts old fuel tanks for various uses (www.witlane.com; ph 717 369-5319). Here's a photo of an old fuel tank that someone in Siberia uses as a house. Notice the window on one end of the tank and the shed/porch built onto the other end. The photo was taken in 1993 while I was working over there in the oil fields. (**Ken Todd; kentt@xplornet.ca**)



I'm 100 percent Finnish and thought your readers would like to see my beautiful homemade ice candles, which are a Finnish custom at Christmas time. In Finland they place ice candles on the graves of family members to honor them.

I make them by filling a plastic bucket 3/4 full of water and then letting it sit outside overnight so the water partially freezes. In the morning I place the bucket on its side, pour water over it, and slide the ice chunk out. It's still open in the middle and at the bottom but has about a 2-in. thick layer of ice on top and along the outside. I place the chunk upright, then use a spade bit to drill a 1 1/2-in. dia. hole on top. I set the candle in a small piece of cardboard on the ground and



then place the ice chunk over it. Then I use a barbecue grill lighter to light the candle.

The candle will burn for hours and sometimes even days, depending on the kind used. I place a line of ice candles alongside my driveway. They're quite colorful and so pretty at night that all my neighbors want them, too. (**Kenny Ranta, 1711 Wornall Rd., Excelsior Springs, Mo. 64024 ph 816 536-6320; kiranta1@yahoo.com**)



I am a full-time school bus mechanic and I also operate a sideline business making hay for area farmers. I use older International Harvester mowers, rakes and small square balers, which I buy cheap and fix up as needed.

To make it easier for my customers to find me, I put up a big oval plywood sign that stands 20 ft. high next to the shed, which is located close to a busy road in front of my home. The sign was made from an old 44-in. dia. wagon wheel ring that frames a 3/4-in. thick piece of plywood painted white. "Chaney Farms, Driven By International Harvester" is painted onto it in red and black. Four old IH wrenches, zip-tied to the plywood, add a decorative touch.

About 3 ft. below the sign there's a 2-ft. square plywood box with a big red and black IH symbol painted onto both sides. It rides on a bearing that allows the box to spin in either direction in the wind. A big rain gauge extends out one side of the pole about 10 ft. off the ground.

It's a unique landmark and a great way to help customers find my farm. People know me as the guy with the big, tall IH sign in his yard. (**Tom Chaney, Sr., 14732 E. 1800th Rd., Chrisman, Ill. 61924; ph 812 249-6039; tom.chaney@midwesttransit.com**)