Reader Letters

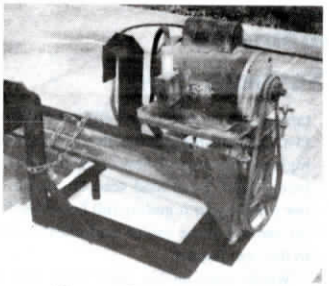
FARM SHOW

I have a collection of four or five home-built lawn and garden tractors that I bought at auctions. I'm sending along a photo of one of them that I got when I traded in a riding mower. I use this tractor to move some of the antique items that I've collected on my place over the years. The tractor didn't have an engine, but I had an antique Briggs & Stratton engine and with some modification of the drive belts and clutch, etc., I was able to use it to power the tractor. I also mounted two oversize wheels on front. The two license plates on the side of the tractor are used as safety shields. It has a 3-speed transmission from an antique automobile and a cut-off car rear end. I can use a hand clutch or hydraulic-operated foot brakes.

I also have a riding mower equipped with a 54-in. deck that's powered by a 2-cyl. Wisconsin engine. It has a 3-speed transmission.

These tractors are a lot of fun but they aren't cheap toys. ***(Wendell O. Anderson, Rt. 1, Box 70, Lake Norden, S. Dak. 57248 ph 605 785-3536)***

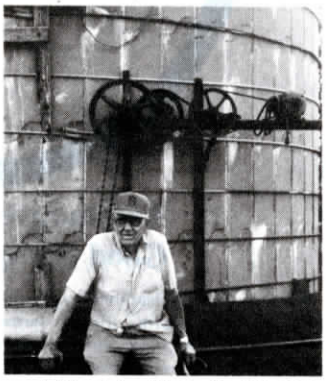
I wanted to use a sweep auger that was designed for a 27-ft. dia. bin in my 24-ft. bin so I made this steel frame. It moves the



auger 18 in. past the center dump so it clears the outside of the bin. The sweep auger pin fits into a hole in the frame (see white dot) and the pin on the frame fits into the center dump hole. The upright arms have a chain bolted to the auger so the entire frame turns as the auger goes around the bin. The arms also secure the auger to a door brace so it can unload into an auger outside the door in case there's an obstruction in the center auger dump. This idea would also work for using a sweep designed for a 24-ft. dia. bin in a 21-ft. bin or for using a sweep designed for a 30-ft. dia. bin in a 27-ft. dia. bin, etc. ***(Bernard E. Michael, 5243 N. County Rd. 200 W., Frankfort, Ind. 46041)***

Normally we use a pull-type combine to swath our oats, but last fall was so wet we couldn't even get through the field with it. We solved the problem by mounting a 24-ft. header designed for a Versatile 160 Bi-Directional tractor on front of our 1962 International TD6 crawler tractor. We removed the crawler's dozer blade and mounted the header on the blade's support frame. We used a Briggs & Stratton 8 hp gas engine to power the header's sicklebar and the hydrostatic variable speed drive on the tractor to power the reel and canvas.

It worked okay except that the crawler's 55 hp, 6-cyl. engine was underpowered. Another problem was that even with tracks the crawler still made deep ruts in the field. After the oats were swathed we used a self-propelled combine equipped with dual wheels to straight-cut the oats. We paid $2,000 for the header and spent about $1,000 more to make a frame for the header. A 2 3/4-in. pin in the frame allowed the header to pivot on ditches and hillsides. ***(Dale Slagerman, Rosser, Manitoba, Canada R0H 1E0)***



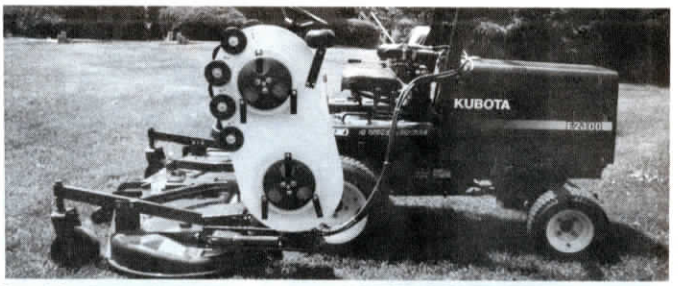
I made this rotating "silo feed bunk" in 1948. It completely surrounds my 14-ft. dia. concrete stave silo. Silage falls down the silo chute and into the bunk as it rotates around the silo. It saves a lot of work. Power is supplied by a 1/2 hp electric motor. It belt-drives a series of reduction gears that chain-drive a rubber friction wheel mounted under the bunk. It takes about two minutes for the bunk to rotate completely around the silo. The bunk is made in three sections that bolt together. Caster wheels bolted onto the silo keep the bunk centered around it. A series of rubber gauge wheels under the bunk keep it about 2 ft. off the ground. I'm retired now but my sons farm and still use my rotating bunk to feed cattle. ***(Edward Meyer, Conway Spring, Kan. 67031)***

After reading letters from farmers with long-running tractors in the last couple issues, I want to tell you about our 1970 Deere 4020 diesel. It has over 16,400 hrs. on it and the engine has never been overhauled. It has a Power Shift transmission that has also never had any repair. The injector pump has never been repaired and the radiator has never been off. It runs and sounds like new. The only repairs this tractor has ever had are new injectors, ground valves, and replacement of a short shaft that drives the injector pump. All of this work was done at 10,000 hrs.

The quality of Deere tractors has a lot to do with being able to put on this many hours, but we truly believe we can give almost all the credit for the phenomenal long hours to the superior quality of the Conklin lubricants we use. The parasynthetic motor oil, Convoy, is changed only once a year in all our equipment, including the 4020. The oil filter is changed every 100 hrs. ***(Charles "Buddy" Myers, 2585 Millers Lane, Zanesville, Ohio 43701 ph 614 674-5132)***

My Dad bought our 1970 3020 John Deere tractor new in the spring of 1971 with 52 hrs. on it. I bought it from him in 1976 and when I finally had it overhauled in April, 1993 it had 15,577 hrs. on it. That was the first time the engine was opened. This tractor is now 24 years old and is still a dependable and easy-starting tractor. ***(Cecil J. Ropp, 1710 E. Westpoint Rd., Campbell Hill, Ill. 62916)***

I have a 1979 Deere 4040 with 9,400 hrs. on it without an engine overhaul. I'm sure it's not the longest-running tractor without engine work but it still runs like new and uses no oil. It's one of my all-time best buys. ***(James Wenger, Rt. 4, Box 416, Harrisonburg, Va. 22801)***



Our add-on "no-stop" trimming mower (Vol. 16, No. 2) is now available for use with front-mount mowers. The 35-in. wide trim arm is designed to mount off to the side of the tractor and bends backward 90 degrees around obstacles. The mower arm supports two 17 1/2-in. dia. cutting discs. Edges of the housing around the discs are covered in rubber and small roller wheels on front help roll the cutting arm around obstructions without doing damage. The outer cutting disc can be fitted with unbreakable plastic cutting cord, rather than blades, to reduce potential damage to trees.

The cutting discs are powered by two hydraulic orbit motors that turn at about 4,460 rpm's. Two valves are used to operate the unit. One powers the cutters, the other is used to raise or lower the arm. Sells for

$1,199. We also make a 52-in. wide trim arm. I use it with my 5-ft. Woods front-mount mower or a 60-in. finish mower. My total cutting width is over 9 ft. ***(Dave Gates, Rt. 5, Box 148-B, Chillicothe, Mo. 64601 ph 816 646-2654)***

In your last issue (Vol. 18, No. 4), you included a story about a couple of farmers who rigged up an International "H" tractor with a lever on the clutch pedal that lets them engage the pto from the ground behind the tractor. They use the tractor to drive a grain auger. A much safer method would be a lever on the pto rod so you could stand in front of the rear wheel and pull the clutch pedal by hand and then engage the pto. This would keep you away from the pto shaft, which is not shielded on an "H". ***(Eugene Alt, 1720 Heron, Audubon, Iowa 50025 ph 712 563-4115)***

I've been working on a new way to dry grain that looks interesting but has not yet been perfected. I got the idea from the way air conditioning units are serviced. When you're recharging an empty air conditioner, you first check for leaks and then put vacuum to the unit to dry it out. Any water left will make ice, causing problems. When you reach a certain level of vacuum, you know there's no longer any moisture in the unit.

My idea is to use the same principle to pull moisture out of grain. You could put grain into a sealed structure and put vacuum to it to suck out moisture. On a small scale, the idea seems to work but I don't have the resources to develop a farm-size unit. Maybe there's somebody out there who'd like to work with me on it? ***(Garry Tisoway, P.O. Box 213, Archerwill, Sask. S0E 0B0 Canada ph 306 323-4277)***

Here's a photo of my husband Earl's "step saver" hinge on our mailbox. An ordinary door hinge bolts to the bottom of the box. When the mailbox has been opened, the hinge drops down and is easily seen from the house. When we take our mail out of the box, we simply flip the hinge up again, ready for tomorrow. I wish we'd had this on years ago. ***(Mrs. Earl Rahn, N7423 Cty. Hwy. A, Beaver Dam, Wis. 53916)***

Enclosed is a check for renewal. I'm looking forward to getting a copy of your Encyclopedia of Best Ideas. I think all farm families should have it. I've sent in at least three subscriptions to others, including a friend who is confined at home with emphysema. I am mostly disabled myself due to two near fatal farm accidents. One time I had a rope on a large tree I was cutting to keep it away from power lines and I didn't get away soon enough when it fell. Some of the branches drove me down, sending leg bones down through my ankles. I spent three months in the hospital and then had 6 weeks of therapy learning how to control a walker. Nine years later, while unhooking a trailer on near level ground, the tractor started to roll slightly. I stepped in to turn the wheel to stop it but the chains on the rear wheel knocked me down and then ran over my chest. My ribs were crushed and a lung collapsed. That was 2 1/2 years ago. I feel fine now but am very short of breath. I learned that accidents happen easily, usually when you least expect them. I'm now 87 years old and still live in the house my ancestors built in 1840. ***(B.L. Briggs, 8900 RD 21, Cohocton, N.Y. 14826)***

I'm a Minnesota farmer who was in need of a test weight scale for my own grain operation. I designed the economical plastic "Acu-Test" scale and, after a story that ran

in FARM SHOW, I've sold units worldwide. I've improved the accuracy of the scale by premolding the vile cavity on the sliding weight. Farmers have been very pleased with the scale's uses which include checking yields, feed quality and bin capacities. The scales are still available for $26.95 each or two for $45, postpaid. ***(Dave Berkes, Berkes Mfg., Rt. 3, Box 228, Canby, Minn. 56220 ph 507 223-7754; fax 507 223-7151)***

I've been a John Deere buff all my life, especially when it comes to Deere 2-cylinder