

Giant "Birdcage" Greets Visitors To Farm

People who drive onto the Paul and Phyllis Hoeger farm near Maynard, Iowa, for the first time often sit in their car and stare for a few minutes before they get out and have a good laugh.

What brings them up short is the giant bird cage standing in the farm yard. Paul and Phyllis explain:

"We built a large parrot out of plywood and installed it in a wire corncrib.

"About two years ago we decided not to store ear corn anymore. We tried to sell our wire crib but had no luck. During the winter of 1995-96, we started talking about what we could do with the crib. We had always thought it looked like a bird cage so we decided to put a giant bird inside.

"We found a picture of a scarlet Macaw on the front of a greeting card and graphed it out from the 3 by 5-in. card to a 2-piece pattern measuring 13 1/2 ft. from the tip of the tail to the head. We cut the two pieces from a single sheet of 3/4 in. exterior grade plywood and gave it a couple coats of oil-based paint.

"Then we made a metal frame to bolt to the bird to keep it from warping. It was worth the effort because the parrot has held up to wet weather and winds of 50 to 60 mph without warping. The bird mounts on a pipe across the crib about two-thirds of the way up.

"The hardest part of the entire job was putting the bird in its cage. We had to use a block and tackle to handle the 200-lb. bird and several cables to hold him in place on his perch.

"The positive response to the bird has been



The Hoegers' 200-lb. "parrot" was placed on its "perch" with a block and tackle.

overwhelming. It's rare that we go anywhere in nearby towns without someone remarking about our bird. Two local TV stations have done stories on it along with local newspapers. People stop to take photos all the time.

"This was something we did just for fun, but it has paid off big dividends by bringing smiles to the faces of people driving by. Farming can be stressful - once in a while you have to do something just for fun."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Paul & Phyllis Hoeger, 17458 100th St., Maynard, Iowa 50655.



Boxes off a 1300A 6-row Deere planter serve as storage bins for the coffee table.

LEGS ARE INSECTICIDE BOXES OFF AN OLD DEERE PLANTER

"Planter Box" Coffee Table

Old farm equipment can be turned into beautiful furniture show pieces, says Jim Teeter, Clarksville, Tenn., who recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a coffee table he built using a pair of insecticide metering boxes off a Deere planter.

The 22 in. wide, 48-in. long table top is solid cherry and is bolted to the lids of the insecticide boxes so that it hinges up to open the boxes for storage. Each box still has the original 5-in. dia. cast iron chain sprocket used to drive the metering shaft. Between the boxes is a shelf where a toy Deere tractor is displayed.

"It has become quite a conversation piece around here and I'm very proud of it. Everyone who sees it wants to know where I bought it," says Teeter. "The boxes are off a Deere 1300A 6-row planter which my dad purchased in 1965. It was the very first 6-row 30-in. planter in this part of the country. We added no-till coulters to it and used it to plant no-till soybeans until the mid 1980's when it was retired. The insecticide and herbicide boxes were unique so we took them off and left them outside along a fence row. When I went to retrieve them the lids and boxes were filled with water and the bottom of one box had rusted out. I filled the bottom in with sheet metal and body filler, then sand blasted both boxes and painted them their original Deere green. I painted the chain sprockets yellow for contrast and put the original over-



Top flips up providing access to bins.

size Deere logos back on the boxes.

"My friend Darin Beck did most of the actual wood work. He had already built his wife a coffee table out of black walnut. I liked it so much that I decided to combine his talents for wood working with my love for farm machinery. We decided to build the table out of solid cherry because its color is a good match for Deere green and yellow.

"I built another identical coffee table which is on display at our local Deere dealership. I'm willing to build tables for others. They sell for about \$800."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jim Teeter, 944 Rollins Drive, Clarksville, Tenn. 37040 (E-mail address: Farmature @AOL.COM).



Stanley Mackey shows off his buggy jack at a recent antique show.

HIS RARITIES ASTOUND OTHER COLLECTORS

Farmer Owns Amazing Antique Tool Collection

You can find tools for just about any occasion in the antique tool collection of retired Monticello, Ill., farmer Stanley Mackey.

To name a couple: a buggy jack which was used to take off buggy wheels so axles could be greased, and a second edition single duck bill shears used for cutting wire off oats and wheat bundles.

Mackey, 81, began collecting tools during his 43 years of farming. His collection now contains more than 1,000 pieces displayed on eight sheets of plywood.

He has other rarities, too, like more than 180 types of barbed wire.

Among the oldest tools he's collected is a rope bed tool that was used to tighten ropes

on bed frames. It dates back to the late 1700's and early 1800's. A couple of Mackey's four all-wood meat grinders date back to the middle 1700's, while the rest are from the late 1800's.

Perhaps the rarest tool in Mackey's collection is a "clothes stumper" patented in 1892. It's spring-loaded and was used to wash clothes in small containers like buckets or dishpans.

Mackey estimates his collection's value at \$15,000 to \$20,000. He displays it at shows across the Midwest.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Stanley Mackey, 103 Quail Hill Road, Monticello, Ill. 61856 (ph 217 762-8392).