

HE STILL WORKS CATTLE, THANKS TO SPECIAL SADDLE SUPPORT

Paralyzed Rancher Is Back In The Saddle

"After the accident doctors said I'd never ride a horse again. But, in three weeks, I was out of the hospital and began lifting weights at home. I did the same therapy and exercise program at home as I would have done at the hospital, and within six months I was riding my horse again," says Kelly Bess, Lincoln, Calif.

He's still able to work cattle, thanks to a custom-built saddle that consists of the back from an old school chair with pipes bolted onto the back. The pipes slip into holders mounted on the back of the saddle, and on the back of the "chair" are sewn two large straps of Velcro that wrap around Bess' midsection.

Bess is able to pull himself up onto his horse or into his truck and can lower himself back into his wheelchair. "I never thought this cattle op-

eration was too much for me. Whatever I wanted to do, I found a way to do it and got it done," he says.

Bess, 23, has been a paraplegic since a truck accident four years ago. He was on his way home from a basketball game until, three miles from his home, he fell asleep behind the wheel of his truck.

Both Bess and his wife Karen are actively involved in the cow-calf operation. During the school year she teaches sixth through eighth grade physical education in Marysville and helps Kelly during the summer.

"We can take care of things during the evenings or weekends, and I have a ranch hand working with me during the days, so I get things done," he says.

Bess began cowboying before high school, but after his accident he de-



An old school desk back and a pair of Velcro straps keep Kelly sitting tall in the saddle.

ecided to return to school and pursue a career in business. He hopes to find job in agribusiness.

Bess now has a two-year degree in finance and is less than two years away from his bachelor's degree in business.

"The biggest obstacle I've had to

overcome is not being able to get out and cowboy or team rope as much. I can't push it as much anymore—I've learned to take things a little slower," Bess says.

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COLLECTS OLD TELEPHONES, OLD CAR EMBLEMS AND MAKES TOY TRACTOR CLOCKS

Unusual Hobbies Keep Retired Salesman Busy

Retired seed corn and feed salesman Paul Lokre, of Madelia, Minn., has three unusual hobbies to keep him occupied now that he's no longer calling on farmer customers.

Toy Tractor Clocks — "They make great Christmas gifts," says Paul of his newest hobby of turning toy tractors into attractive clocks. He hides the battery and clock mechanism behind one of the rear wheels and drills out the axle to attach the hands and stem. Roman numerals glued to the face of the tire tell the time.

By sawing them in half, Paul is able to make two mounted clocks out of each tractor. Or, you can buy complete, free standing tractors with one or both rear wheels equipped with clocks. He sells all major makes of "half tractor" clocks mounted on a wood base in your choice of walnut, cedar or apple wood for \$50 each. Unmounted whole tractors with a clock in one rear wheel sell for \$70. Prices include shipping.

Old Telephone Conversions — Over the years, Paul has acquired one of the nation's largest private collections of old telephones. He also fixes, repairs and supplies missing parts for old telephones. He's also figured out a way to rig old telephones with modern dials and ringers, allowing them to be used as regular operating phones. If you have an old family heirloom phone, Paul will equip it with a dial ringer and wiring. Conversions cost from \$35 and up, depending on the type of antique phone, whether the dial goes outside or inside the phone cabinet, the number of missing original parts he has to make or supply, and so forth.



Paul shows off one of his "half tractor" clocks.

Old Car Emblems — Paul started collecting old car emblems about 50 years ago and today has more than 2,500 of them, all neatly displayed on three 4 by 8 ft. boards which he proudly displays at fairs and shows. He also buys, sells and trades radiator and body emblems from old cars. His outstanding collection — one of the biggest and best in the U.S. — includes such a rare finds as Empire, Brush, Haynes, Reno, Rabbit, Appleton and Little Giant.

For more information on his toy tractor clocks, antique telephones or old car emblems, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Paul Lokre, 122 Dill St., Madelia, Minn. 56062 (ph 507 642-3689).

AUSSIES BREED THE SPECIAL VARIETY FOR THEIR MUSICAL ABILITY

Canary Enthusiasts Train Birds To Sing

Teaching canaries to sing may sound like a cuckoo idea — until you meet the people who do just that!

One such group of dedicated singing teachers is the Roller Canary Society of Australia, which recently celebrated its fifth birthday.

The aim of the society's 70-plus members, who are from various parts of Australia, is to breed the best feathered "opera stars" and then train them to sing the right songs on cue. And that's a job which demands patience and skill — and more than just a little bit of luck.

Roller canaries do not chirp like ordinary canaries, but have a trilling song which can cover a natural range of up to 18 tours, as the separate sounds are called. The secret is to find a male bird which can master as many tours as possible. Hens do not sing but genetically they influence the musical "knowledge" of their offspring, which makes breeding something of a gamble.

"Once a suitable male has been found, training begins when it is three to six months old," explains Gail Robinson, the society's secretary, who has been breeding and

training her own rollers for more than 10 years.

How do you teach a bird to sing?" The trainee roller canary is put in a small, portable cage with two doors at the front. The doors are gradually closed, one after the other, finally leaving the bird in total darkness for an hour or more.

"I sometimes play tape recordings of other singing roller canaries to my birds when the doors are closed," says Gail. "That gives them something to think about in the dark and also stimulates their own singing."

The next step is to teach the birds to burst into song when the doors are opened. "You open the doors three times a day over a period of several weeks. Each time the roller sings, you reward it with a piece of apple or other delicacy, much as you would do with a dog which is being trained."

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Roller Canary Society, Lorna Zerbe, 7 Salisbury Ave., Valley View, South Australia 5081 Australia.