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## “Parade Train” Built From Riding Mower

“My grand kids enjoy this ‘parade train’ that I made out of old riding lawn mowers,” says Art Thompson, Dolliver, Iowa.

The 35-ft., five-unit train hitches behind Thompson's Deere 112 garden tractor and includes a steam locomotive, coal tender, passenger car, cattle car, and caboose. The train holds up to 16 children who sit on plywood seats. All the cars have holders for small flags.

Thompson stripped the mower frames down to their running gears and then built 38-in. wide plywood car bodies on them. Most of the cars have the original riding mower wheels. To make the hitches he welded lengths of angle iron together.

The locomotive body was made from a steel barrel with a length of 4-in. galvanized steel pipe for the stack and a plastic funnel serving as the “bell” at the top of the stack.

The locomotive has a dummy whistle and a bell that kids can pull. There's a small three-function red light on back of the caboose that can either flash on and off, rotate in a circle, or stay solid red.

“All the front axles pivot so when the locomotive turns, all the other cars loop around behind it,” says Thompson. “Sometimes I take it down to a local park and pull my grand kids around for an hour

or so. They love it. The Deere tractor's original Kohler engine was shot so I replaced it with a Briggs & Stratton 12 1/2 hp gas engine. I plan to mount an engine in the locomotive to make it self-propelled.”

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The late Tony Trenkamp, shown here with his wife Dorothy and his self-propelled combine which was built in 1917.

## One Of First Combines Ever Built Restored To “Mint Condition”

Antique machinery collectors like to find and restore anything that's considered the “first of its kind”. Tony Trenkamp of Spearville, Kan., restored one of the first commercial self-propelled combines ever built. What was really significant to Trenkamp was that the combine was built by his great-uncle, M.J. Hines.

Hines started making harvesters in the 1910's. Trenkamp got hold of a 1917 model. It had three chain-driven forward speeds which were changed by switching to a different sprocket. However, there was no reverse gear, at least not on the first machines. “Dad said he remembered being told that if you didn't get it turned soon enough in a corner, you'd have to go get a team of horses to pull it out,” says Tony Trenkamp, Jr.

The header had a sickle with two short canvases on either end. The canvases fed the crop into a third canvas that took it up into a

36-in. cylinder. The separator and driving units ran separately. That allowed the separator to build up adequate speed before wheat was delivered to it by the elevator. The combine was powered by an air-cooled, 80 hp Twin City engine.

Hines made the combines for 20 years, building a total of 63 units. He couldn't keep up with demand so he sold out in the 1930's to a Wichita, Kansas company. They predicted that within five years they'd be turning out 5,000 machines per year. It didn't happen, however, because of start-up problems and the drought and Depression that followed. The Hines combine was never manufactured again.

Trenkamp recently passed away but his wife Dorothy still has the combine.

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“When people first see it they think it's a factory-built model,” says Kelly Birkey about his 4-WD articulated Cub Cadet tractor. He's shown here with his wife Minerva.

## 4-WD Articulated “Cub Cadet” Tractor

Many visitors at the recent Farm Progress Show near Cantrall, Ill., did a double take when they saw this Cub Cadet tractor – a 4-WD articulating model equipped with dual wheels all around.

The yellow-and-white rig was built almost entirely from Cub Cadet 1250 and 1450 tractor parts by Kelly Birkey of Paxton, Ill.

The tractor is powered by a 14 hp Kohler gas engine and equipped with a pair of hydrostatic drive transmissions. The front seat tilts forward for access to a toolbox, and a passenger seat can be bolted on between the back set of wheels. There's even a pair of hydraulic outlets on back, allowing Birkey to operate a 56-in. box scraper.

“When some people first see it they think it's factory made,” says Birkey. “I built it because I used to be an International Harvester implement dealer and got to know Cub Cadet tractors well. Building it was a fun challenge.”

Birkey mounted the rear axle and hydrostatic transmission from a 1450 on the frame of a 1250. The rear axle and hydrostatic transmission off another 1250 mounts behind. The front transmission drives the rear one via a telescoping shaft equipped with a pair of universal joints that allow the

tractor to pivot. A cable also connects the two transmissions. The tractor has two pivot points, each consisting of a swiveling ball joint. The same hydraulic cylinder originally used to raise the deck on the 1450 is now used to pivot the tractor.

Birkey fitted the tractor with 6.00 by 12 lugged dual tires all the way around. He needed narrower wheel rims, which he got from other old garden tractors. He also equipped the tractor with a new hydraulic-driven power steering assembly off a late-model Cub Cadet.

“I mounted the 1450 up front because it had a hydrostatic transmission equipped with an auxiliary outlet that was used to raise the mower deck. I use that outlet to operate the tractor's power steering system,” says Birkey. “The most difficult part of the job was getting the two hydrostatic transmissions to turn at the same speed. That's because the moment you move the front hydro just a fraction of an inch, the back one has to move, too. It takes a good, heavy cable to connect the two transmissions.”

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