

## Filtering Key To Veggie Oil Success

Tim and Shelley Smith have been burning vegetable oil instead of diesel in their 1987 Volkswagen Jetta for close to two years. They say it runs great but they've had problems with engine wear.

They've gone through three used engines in about 60,000 miles but most of the problems were early on. Their current engine has nearly 30,000 miles with no problems. The key to success, they've found, is good filtering. "We have two different filters in the car, and prior to putting the oil in the car, we also filter it twice with restaurant-type hot oil filters," Shelley explains. "It burns clean — you can't even see the exhaust — but it smells like a barbecue. We get about 59 miles per gallon, using an additive called "Power Up" in our engine oil that is helping to prevent engine wear."

Before the couple starts out on a trip, they warm up the engine by burning diesel for about 15 minutes. Because they have an auxiliary fuel tank and lines with a switch box installed in their car, they are able to have separate diesel and oil fuel lines and switch from one to the other. After 10 minutes on diesel, they switch to straight vegetable oil, which they get for free from restaurants in their area. Then, about 10 minutes before reaching their destination, they switch back to diesel to flush out the system.

Canola oil works best, they say, and it has meant a cost saving of at least a few hundred dollars a month recently on fuel as they've



**Tim and Shelley Smith run their 1987 Volkswagen Jetta on straight vegetable oil, which they get for free from restaurants in their area. Key to preventing problems with engine wear, they've found, is good filtering.**

been driving about 300 miles a day.

"On a 2,000-mile trip to the States, we spent only \$7 Canadian on diesel, and that was our entire fuel cost," Shelley says. "You do have to take precautions like very careful filtering, but we definitely feel it has potential."

Smiths pick up the free veggie oil from four or five different restaurants.

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**Rich DeVries turns old hay rakes into dandy two-seater "swinging benches."**

## "Swinging Bench" From Old Rake

Old hay rakes make dandy two-seater "swinging benches," says Rich DeVries, Forreton, Ill., who made a bench with a large vinyl canopy.

The swinging bench measures 7 ft. wide and mounts on the rake's 4-ft. dia. steel wheels. A small table with cup holders is located between two large padded seats. The entire unit is held steady by a pair of V-shaped steel legs, one on each side.

"It's a comfortable place to watch the sun rise in the morning," says DeVries. "The big

wheels make it easy to roll around. I work with a missionary group and sometimes make presentations inside our shop, where we have a movie screen. I set up folding seats inside the shop and also roll the swing in there. I also move it every time we mow our lawn.

"I paid \$100 for the canopy at Walmart."

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**"It gets a lot of laughs at parades. Kids love to see the stuffed toy bears popping in and out of the can," says Al Wilhelm. Parade goers are also treated to blasts from a big air horn.**

## Parade Tractor Is A Real "Blast"

Parade goers love it when Al Wilhelm drives by with his home-built tractor. They're treated to big blasts from a 2 1/2-ft. long air horn. At the same time, every few seconds a pair of toy stuffed bears pop up out of a milk can on front of the tractor, then drop back down out of sight.

It's all done using air pressure supplied by a small air compressor mounted on a trailer that's pulled behind the tractor. The compressor is powered by a 3 1/2 hp gas engine.

Exhaust from the tractor's 2 hp Fairbanks Morse gas engine enters the milk can and makes a continuous hollow sound "somewhat like a poor man's Rumely Oil Pull tractor," says Wilhelm.

He started with the frame, seat and steering wheel off a 1940's Montgomery Ward garden tractor. The tractor's engine was missing but the belt-driven 3-speed transmission was still in place. He installed a Fairbanks Morse engine and mounted a big pulley on it

that's used to belt-drive the transmission. An air hose leads from the compressor up to the milk can and also to the air horn. The compressor's original tank didn't have enough volume so he installed a bigger air tank under the tractor seat.

Whenever he wants to blast the air horn, he pulls on a rope connected to a lever on one side of the tractor. The lever releases a steam valve which then delivers air to the horn.

"It gets a lot of laughs at parades. Kids love to see the stuffed toy bears popping in and out of the can," says Wilhelm. "The air horn delivers a booming bass sound that really gets your attention. I bought the air horn, which came off a semi, at a flea market."

The tractor's front tires are original, while the rear tires are donut-type spare tires.

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**Jim Parenteau converts older bikes to gas engine power, adding kick-start engines and handlebar-mounted, twist-grip throttles just like on real motorcycles.**

## He "Motorizes" Old Bikes

A Minnesota man says his motorized bicycles provide the fun of biking but with a lot less sweat.

Jim Parenteau, of Hugo, converts existing older bikes to gas engine power. He collects old bikes at flea markets and swap meets and makes the conversions strictly as a hobby. The motorized bikes are equipped with kick-start engines and handlebar-mounted, twist-grip throttles just like on real motorcycles. Many, but not all, of the bikes are 3-speed models.

He spotted Parenteau last summer at the Little Log House and Antique Power Show near Hastings, Minn., where he had several motorized bikes on display. Occasionally he would ride one of them around the show grounds.

One was a 1939 Elgin bike painted International Harvester red and powered by a Honda 5 hp gas engine that can be either kick-started or pull-started. The engine chain drives the rear wheel via a large add-on sprocket. The bike's original sprocket is used only for the rear brake. He cut and bent the frame to make room for the engine and installed a bracket for it. A length of flexible,

1-in. dia. exhaust pipe leads from the engine back to the rear wheel. "The exhaust pipe gives the engine a nice, mellow sound," says Parenteau.

Another model on display was an early 1960's Schwinn powered by a Johnson Iron Horse slanted cylinder, 2 hp gas engine off an old washing machine. It's painted Allis Chalmers orange and has a gas tank that looks like it came off a motorcycle.

Parenteau says motorized bikes aren't new. "Shortly after World War II, Schwinn dealers offered a dealer-installed kit that was designed to retrofit existing bikes with 4 hp gas engines. They also offered a bicycle with a heavy duty frame and wheels and its own engine. It was called the Whizzer and is now quite rare and worth big money. I have a genuine restored Whizzer. A California company is now reproducing the Whizzer, but it's not built as well nor is it as powerful as the original model. It sells for \$1,000 to \$2,000," he notes.

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