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Strange made his own mounting kit for the plow. It's operated by a self-contained battery and hydraulic pump that mount in the pickup bed.

Pickup Equipped With Front And Back Snowplows

Whenever Alan Strange of Kingsley, Mich., drives into town, he gets some "strange" looks. That's because he has a Meyer 7 1/2-ft. snowplow at each end of his pickup.

"It lets me plow snow in both directions so I never have to turn around. That reduces my plowing time by half and also saves on fuel," says Strange. "If I want I can angle the blades in opposite directions."

His 1987 Ford F-250 4-WD heavy duty pickup is equipped with an automatic transmission.

"I came up with the idea because I was plowing snow on three different farms and found it to be a time consuming job. One day I realized that I was spending half my time backing up, so I decided to mount another snow plow on back of the pickup. It operates

completely independent of the front plow."

The rear plow is operated by a self-contained battery and hydraulic pump that mount in the pickup bed. The battery is wired to the pickup's fifth wheel trailer wiring harness and draws 233 amps on a full load. The wiring harness is able to take a 12-volt charge. However, it's only a 10-ga. wire, so pulling more than 200 amps through it while operating the hydraulic pump might have caused a short and fried the wire.

To solve the problem, Strange came up with a couple of relays that break the circuit, allowing the battery to stay fully charged at all times without shorting the wire or draining the pickup's battery. Because of the relays, when the pump is running there isn't a very high amp draw through the 10-ga. wire.

He made his own mounting kit for the plow, complete with a lift frame hinge that allows him to open and close the tailgate even with the snowplow on back. He also made a control box that mounts in the pickup cab. The control box has switches that control both plows independently.

"Whenever I go to town, I see people stop and point. Some of them ask me how it works so I often give them a demonstration," says Strange. "I can pull right up to a garage door, drop both the front and rear blade, and back away from the house. With the added weight of the rear plow, I can do most of my plowing in 2-WD which saves wear and tear on the pickup's 4-WD system.

"The rear plow not only reduces my plowing time by half, but I'm also able to gain at

least one more plowing per tank of gas. And with fuel costing \$2 to \$3 a gallon, the savings add up."

Strange says the two-way snow plowing system originally took some getting used to. "However, once I got the hang of it, it didn't take long before I was able to put snow anywhere I wanted. Now I can plow snow as easy going backward as I can going forward. It cleans the snow right up. At first I plowed only half a blade every pass with the rear snow plow, but after a couple of plowings I was plowing full width with both blades."

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He Got His Boots Fixed At A Local Tire Shop

When one of Jerry Tkachuk's winter rubber boots recently sprung a leak, he simply treated it like a flat tire and took it to a local tire shop to get it "running" again.

There were actually two punctures in the top of the boot, but Tkachuk knew there was a lot of life left yet in those boots.

"I'm not going to throw away a perfectly good pair of boots just because one's got a hole in it," Tkachuk says. "Those boots are worth about \$40, and a patch is only buck and a half, so I thought I might as well get another couple of years out of them."

Rick Provencal, manager of Fountain Tire in Westlock, Alta., says that although he has no desire to get into the shoe repair business, he likes being able to help out his good customers.

"Jerry buys his tires here and we consider this a customer service kind of thing," Provencal explains. "We've fixed boots for a couple of different people, and we've even done the occasional swimming pool and bike tire."

Fountain Tire employee Chris Humphrey says the boot repair didn't take long to do.

"First, I buffed out that area of the boot with a grinding wheel to make the texture rougher. I put the glue on and let it dry a little before putting on the patch," Humphrey explains. "The hardest part was holding the inside of the boot rigid so it would be like a foot was inside while I used a roller to run across it and secure the bond. To do that, I placed a can the same diameter as a 2-liter bottle inside the boot."

Tkachuk says he's had his boots repaired at tire shops a couple of times over the years, and it's a cheap, effective way to extend the life of his boots.

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"Those boots are worth about \$40, and a patch is only a buck and a half, so I thought I might as well get another couple years out of them," says Jerry Tkachuk.

Lawn Aerator Made With 130 Bolts

Edwin Ruff, Moses Lake, Wash., built a lawn aerator by welding 130 1/4 by 3-in. bolts to an old 10-gal. tank that he fills with water. He fitted it with 6-in. wheels and wheelbarrow-type handles. "The machine works really well on my lawn and around my sprinkler system," he says.

An old rope-start 3 hp Briggs and Stratton engine propels the aerator drum forward. "If I let it go, it'll run straight across the ground," he says. "I walk ahead and wait at the end to turn it a different direction."

A lever disengages the drive belt to put it in neutral.

Ruff says the biggest challenge was gearing down the engine to a slow walk. He used two gear reductions to do that.

"To gear it down, I used a chain-driven bicycle wheel as well as a 2-in. pulley and a 12-in. belt-driven pulley."

Because the original tank full of water wasn't heavy enough, he added another 10-



An old rope-start 3 hp Briggs and Stratton engine propels the aerator drum forward. Edwin Ruff says the biggest challenge was gearing down the engine to a slow walk. He used two gear reductions to do that.

gal. water tank on top that adds more weight.

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