

# Reader Letters



In regard to the article in your last issue entitled, "Great Way To 'Unstuck' A Tractor", what were you guys thinking? It's hard to imagine a more dangerous practice. If the driver goes forward and the log breaks free, it could come up and crush the driver. If you're going to try this idea, don't use an entire log. Just use short pieces, chained to each wheel. **(Brien Patterson, Wadena, Iowa)**

**Editor's Note: A recipe in the last issue for Drop Biscuits had an error. The recipe actually requires 2 cups of flour.**

In your Vol. 23, No. 4 issue in 1999, you published an article on my "Easy Backer" trailer. After a few years of hard work,



several appeals, and a lot of lawyer money, I finally received a patent on the trailer.

Thanks to your original article, I have had many inquiries from people wanting to buy a trailer like this. However, my health has gone downhill during the years I worked on the patent so I would like to find a buyer for the invention. If any company out there is looking for an outstanding product to manufacture, please contact me. **(Dan Edens, W5582 Colberg Rd., Ogema, Wis. 54459 ph 715 767-5761)**



This handy scraper gets used a lot around our place. It's made from a piece of steel tubing and a used sickle blade. I just cut a V-notch in the end of the pipe, insert the blade, pinch the ends together and weld it in place. It's a tough scraper that works great for scraping manure. **(Elmer Grossen, Hillsboro, Ore.)**

An irrigated backyard melon patch with no weeds works great for anyone who doesn't own a rototiller. It's incredible the amount of melons you can grow in just a small area.



You can plant the melons right into grass sod. We first lay down a soaker garden hose and then cover it with a strip of landscape fabric and weight it down. You can also use a piece of old carpet.

You cut holes in the cover to plant the seeds. The vines grow right over the

cover. Moisture is held underneath but if it gets dry, just turn on the soaker hose.

It's amazing how many melons you can grow in a small area. **(C.F. Marley, Nokomis, Ill.)**

I spent last summer in the Colorado mountains with no power so I had to work with what I had. To wash clothes, I used an old wringer washer powered by a chainsaw motor. I had to try a few times



to get it geared right so it wouldn't toss clothes and water out in the first few seconds. But once I got it set, it worked well. Everyone on the mountain could sure tell when it was wash day. **(Jim Moon)**

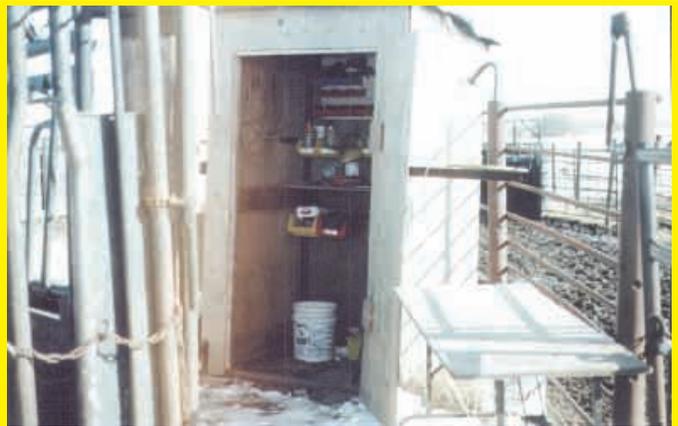
You can download free detailed plans for the no-till roller developed by the Rodale Institute at [www.newfarm.com](http://www.newfarm.com). The roller was featured in FARM SHOW'S Vol. 28, No. 3.

The roller is part of a one-pass system



that allows farmers to control a soil-conserving cover crop and plant next season's cash crop at the same time by mounting two implements on the same tractor. By using the roller to push over and crimp the stems of a standing cover crop that has grown over winter, the system provides weed control, erosion suppression, moisture conservation, and an improved growing environment for many crops. **(Greg Bowman, The New Farm, www.newfarm.com)**

I'm writing in regard to a story in your last issue called, "Homemade Cannon Sent Bowling Balls Flying". The article is interesting but the method used to propel the bowling balls is very dangerous. Oxygen and acetylene are extremely explosive gasses and could prove to be deadly. Perhaps the builder of the cannon was a design engineer who is familiar with stress loads and is qualified to construct such an apparatus. But most people don't have the knowledge to take on such a project. A family friend of mine was badly injured 15 years ago working with these gases in a steel tank. He still suffers from the effects of that accident today. Please warn your readers to be careful. **(Mike Winn, Dugspur, Va.)**



A friend of ours, Clyde McCoy of Clyde, Alta., built a 4 by 4-ft. shed on skids that looks similar an outhouse. It allows him to store all of his cattle processing equipment within a couple steps of his squeeze chute. We think it's a great idea and he says it saves him thousands of steps when handling his herd.

The shed is on a 2-in. pipe frame with skids so he can move it when necessary, and has plywood sheeting bolted on. He likes the fact that he can easily pull the shed out to his pasture if he wants to. It has a door and shelves inside for storage, including an 18-in deep "table" that's handy for writing on.

A main feature of the shed is that it also has a 2-ft. swivel-out angle iron arm with a round wooden shelf that rotates for

easy access (like a lazy Susan). This is where he sets down the supplies he's currently using for whatever job he's doing at the squeeze... drug bottles, syringes, eartagger, etc.

The arm swings out of the way so you don't have to go around it when you're not using it. He also keeps a fold-up table inside the shed for when he needs extra surface space for tools.

The shed also works well if Clyde has a calf that needs help nursing during inclement weather.

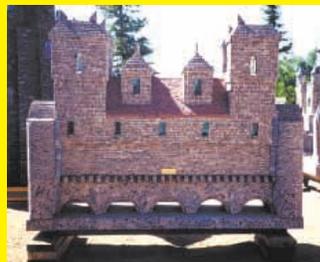
There's no floor in it, so he can clean the floor by moving it a few feet.

**(Janis Schole, R.R.#1, Pickardville, Alta., Canada T0G 1W0 ph 780 349-3538).**



I thought you and your subscribers might be interested in seeing an unusual egg that one of our hens laid. It's gourd-shaped and when most people see the picture, that's what they think it is. The egg was only about 2 1/2 in. tall though.

The funniest thing about this egg is that it was laid on April Fool's day. I tried to save the shell by blowing the yolk out but the top blew right off. **(Preston Johansen, 19088 Acorn Rd., Elgin, Iowa 52141)**



After a disabling accident in 1988, a friend suggested I find a way to keep occupied. After he gave me a rock saw, I got the idea of building mini castles out of stone.

I have built 10 of them and have shown them all over the world. At the moment, there are several in our yard for people to see. This kind of work takes a lot of patience. Each castle takes about 1,600 to 2,900 hours to complete, plus a lot of sandblasting. I sell them for \$3,500 to \$12,000. We have lots of stone already cut so that we can build more as needed. **(John Fullenwider, 2595 East 5th Street, Silver springs, Nevada 89429 ph 775-577-9692)**

I think the article in the last issue of FARM SHOW by Andrea Johnson about her corn-burning stove is accurate for many models of corn stoves, but I'd like to point out that some stoves do not require that level of maintenance, such as the Bixby Energy Systems stove:

1. The Bixby stove starts with a push button with no gel or wood pellets required.
2. The Bixby corn stove will automatically dump the clinkers into an ash pan.
3. The home owner only adds corn every day or two.
4. The home owner empties the ash pan once or twice a week, depending on the heat output setting.
5. The Bixby stove only requires 10 min. of cleaning once a week.

I do agree that corn stoves are not for everyone, and that they do require some maintenance. But there are some proactive companies out there trying to make corn burning more viable to the average consumer. I invite your makers to check us out. **(Justin Thompson, Technical Service Manager, Bixby Energy Systems, ph 877 500-2800 or 763-428-1806; www.bixbyenergy.com)**

After reading the letter in your last issue about Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters, I felt compelled to write to correct the misinformation expressed in that letter. I am a licensed Master Electrician and Electrical Contractor in Michigan and I have worked in the trades for 40 years.

First, it's important to understand how GFCI protection works. Under normal circumstances, the current flowing to the neutral wire (the one that is connected to the longer slot in your receptacle) is equal to the current flowing in the hot wire (the one which is connected to the shorter slot in your receptacle). However, if the electronic circuitry in the GFCI device senses that there is a difference of 5 milliamps (.005 amps) or greater in the current flowing in these two wires, the GFCI device will immediately trip and shut off the power. An abnormal situa-

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