

Reader Letters



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To make inexpensive egg-laying nests for my chickens, I use square plastic buckets that kitty litter comes in. I make



a stand out of 2 by 4's to hold them and cut away most of the lid, leaving a small piece at the bottom of the opening to keep the eggs from rolling out. I also tip them toward the back. It was a good way to recycle used buckets. (Tom Kalista, 2107 48th Ave., Longview, Wash. 98632 ph 360 425-3953)

In your last issue, Rex Gogerty sent in a picture of an old tire with "No



Trespassing" painted onto it. He said it's a way to make an indestructible sign. I want to tell him that he should be careful or they'll be stolen by some "red neck" who wants to upgrade the tires on his pickup (see photo). (Ivan Pfalser, Ganey, Kansas)

This year I tried a new method of supporting tomato plants. Usually I string a wire between two posts and attach



each tomato cage to the wire. But the wires get in the way when cultivating or harvesting the crop, and they don't always provide proper support. So this year I tried electric fence posts with plastic insulators. They worked very well. The wire cage simple fits into the insulator. I can use a couple poles per cage. Works great and they're easy to set up. (Jim E. Dale, 721 Hillside St., La Cygne, Kansas 66040 ph 913 757-2084)

I enjoyed reading the story on how Robert Bastin of Golden City, Mo., replaced the factory air conditioner on his White tractor with a new Sears window air conditioner (Vol. 30, No. 3). In our area some farmers are using the same idea on their combines, especially older ones with air conditioners that don't work any more. They mount the air conditioner inside a metal frame that bolts to the combine cab. The original glass window on one side of the cab is removed and replaced with plexiglass. A heavy duty inverter is used to operate the air conditioner off the combine battery. The inverter bolts to the side of the cab, just below the air conditioner. If you want, you can also use the inverter to operate trouble lights or power electric-operated tools.

To reduce losses when harvesting soybeans, some farmers in our area install poly pipes about 2 in. behind the guards on the header. The pipes block loose beans from rolling off the header. You can either clamp the pipe on behind the guards or drill down through the header every 4 ft. and bolt the pipes in place.

By the way, it was so hot and dry here last summer that trees were observed chasing dogs, and raccoons were seen carrying water into corn fields. (Wayne Schnelle, Lockwood, Mo. ph 888 232-4700)



Just for fun, I shortened up a Deere 185 Hydro Drive garden tractor by cutting 12 in. out of the middle. It draws a lot of looks whenever I display it at antique tractor shows. The tractor was originally equipped with a Kawasaki 12 hp engine but I didn't need that much power, so I replaced it with a Kawasaki 4 hp engine. It came off a Toro walk-behind mower and is really easy on fuel. I had to remount the steering sector straight up and down, instead of at an angle, because of the lack of room. (Pat Prom, 12661 Pioneer Trail, Eden Prairie, Minn. 55347 ph 952 944-9266)

I'm quite proud of my antique 1948 Cushman motor scooter, which as far as I know is the first motor scooter ever made in the U.S. To spiff up the scooter,



I added a 'spare' tire on back that's off another Cushman scooter.

The scooter was originally equipped with a 4 hp 'pedal start' gas engine equipped with a 2-speed transmission with a centrifugal clutch. However, the engine was worn out so I replaced it with an 8 hp Kohler electric start engine. I also added a battery that mounts under the seat.

The crankshaft on the Kohler engine turned in the opposite direction as the one on the scooter's original engine, so I mounted a jackshaft in it that pulls the scooter from the opposite side. I get a lot of compliments on my antique scooter whenever I take it to shows and parades. (Roy L. Gray Jr., 22382 Cross Keys Rd., Newsoms, Va. 23874 ph 757 653-7362)



I recently restored this old Bolens 1-row garden cultivator equipped with a Briggs & Stratton gas engine. The engine still runs, and I know it's very rare. It's a "P" series engine that was built sometime between 1920 and 1923. However, I can't read the entire serial number on the engine, and no one seems to have any information on it. All the company can tell me is that I have a rare engine. The engine has no cowl-



ing, but does have an exposed 7-in. dia. cooling fan. Nowadays, OSHA would never allow such an exposed cooling fan. I've never seen another one like it.

I displayed the cultivator at a recent steam and gas engine show, and a lot of old-timers came by but not one said they had ever seen anything like it. One suggested maybe it was a prototype that never got manufactured.

My uncle Pete bought the cultivator some time in the 1920's. Can anyone help me find out when this cultivator was made, and where it was manufactured? (James Goetsch, 8011 Meadow Dr., Merrill, Wis. 54452 ph 715 675-4203)



My homemade, heavy duty firewood trailer is designed to haul firewood out of the woods wherever I cut it. It measures 8 ft. long and 3 ft. wide. A 1,500-lb. boat winch on front of the trailer is used to put tension on the firewood so that when I pull it over rough terrain the wood won't fall off. Cables from the winch extend back over the firewood pile and run through holes in the trailer floor. There's a platform on back of the trailer so your "helper" can ride along. The front-mounted hitch can be used to "push" the trailer effortlessly to the exact location. I've used this trailer for more than 15 years with great success.



You can enjoy the outdoors even more with this adult-size swing that's designed to mount between two trees. I've come up with special metal brackets that let you use the natural setting of trees as posts. The brackets screw in 10 ft. up on the trees. Chains extend from the brackets down to each end of the swing. The long distance of these chains gives

you a longer swing. The brackets are permanently lubricated so there are no squeaks. I furnish the brackets.

A 3/4-in. rod runs through a pipe with I hooks at one end. The rod is coated with grease so there are no squeaks. Swing is 6 ft. wide and can hold four adults.

My 3 by 5-ft., ATV-pulled brush trailer works great for cleaning up yards. Just place the branches between the vertical posts, then haul them to your dumping area. I find that hauling branches this way actually works faster than running



them through a wood chipper. The trailer comes with two tie-down hooks and a standard 1 7/8-in. coupler. Remove four vertical posts and you have a nice flatbed trailer. The trailer comes with puncture-proof tires and is for off-road use only. I'm willing to build the trailer for sale for \$374. (Dan Jacobson, 8913 Weaver Lake Dr., Pequot Lakes, Minn. 56472 ph 218 543-6623)



We restored a badly rusted 1920's Jaeger cement mixer to like-new condition. It rides on four steel wheels and uses an engine to chain-drive a drum on one side of the machine and a "skip" bucket on the other side. The machine was built by the Jaeger Machine Co. of Columbus, Ohio.

We found the mixer in October 2001 near Holton, Wis., where it had been sitting unused in some weeds for 30 to 40 years. The machine is called a "one-bag mix", meaning that you dump one bag of cement mix and a mixture of sand and rock into the skip bucket, which is then lifted up to the drum and dumped in. When the engine is running, the drum is turning. The skip bucket eliminates the need to shovel the mixture all the way up to the drum.

While the drum is mixing, the operator gets his next batch ready in the skip,



which is down on the ground. When the mix is complete in the drum, you hand crank the drum to dump it and then send the skip up with another load.

The engine was built by Hercules. When Jaeger bought these engines from Hercules they painted them royal blue and put their name and decal on them. Hercules sold the same engine to Sears and Roebuck. Sears painted them red and called them Economy.

Our friend Brad Thielen helped us with the painting. (Duane Nelson, 25439 Keystone Ave., Chisago City, Minn. 55013 ph 651 257-1859; presnelson@aol.com)