

# Homemade Cannon Sent Bowling Balls Flying

DeLari George used to have a blast when he went bowling. His ball would literally fly through the air for half a mile and bounce another quarter of a mile, thanks to his homemade cannon.

"The first time we fired it off, we spent two hours looking for the bowling ball, but we couldn't find it," recalls George. "I thought it would go a couple hundred yards, but it went half a mile."

Over time, George and his friends lost more than 60 bowling balls. He built his cannon from a 14 1/5-ft. long piece of oil well stem pipe. The 8 5/8-in. dia. pipe had 1/2-in. thick walls. A heavy-duty well cap was welded to one end. A bolt about 2 feet from the end acted as a stop for the bowling ball.

The ball fit tight enough to contain a pow-

erful mix of oxygen and acetylene behind it.

A stem for the gas input and a spark plug for ignition were installed at the capped end of the pipe. A magneto wired to the spark plug would let them set it off from a distance.

"We would set the gas mixture for a cutting torch, get the mix as hot as we could get it, shut it off and hook it on to the stem in the pipe," recalls George. "When we set it off, it would shoot flame for about 40 ft., and the holes in the ball would make it whistle through the air. Sometimes we put in some dirt before loading the pipe, and it made it look like smoke was coming out."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, DeLari George, RR 2, Box 322, Turpin, Okla. 73950 (ph 580 778-3999).



DeLari George and his friends have shot bowling balls up to a half mile with this homemade cannon.



Deborah Cipriani of SkunkHaven says the Ohio shelter is the only domestic pet and wild skunk rescue organization that's both federally and state licensed.

## Shelter Rescues Abandoned Skunks

When a skunk gets into trouble, the SkunkHaven Shelter in North Ridgeville, Ohio, is a good place to go.

SkunkHaven provides a home to animals that are unwanted because they have behavior/health problems, or simply because an owner can't keep it any more.

Deborah Cipriani is president of SkunkHaven. She says the home base shelter in Ohio is the only domestic pet and wild skunk rescue that's both federally and state licensed.

The group has members and associates throughout the U.S., Canada, and several European countries.

Like many states, Ohio law requires a license to own a pet skunk, Cipriani says. It's illegal to take one from the wild, so most people acquire their skunks from licensed breeders or pet stores. Scent glands are surgically removed.

"Skunks are not an easy animal to take care of. They're much different than ferrets, dogs, or cats because of their time-demanding behavior and the fact that you've always got to cook for them. We feed them chicken, dog food, fresh vegetables and fruit," Cipriani says. "The shelter is here for people who realize too late that caring for a pet skunk is more than they bargained for."

Cipriani relies on veterinarian Dr. Frank Krupka of the Avon Lake Animal Clinic to deal with health concerns. Over the past six years, he's become a skunk specialist, drawing clients from far and wide.

"Besides our local owners, people from Indiana, Michigan, Alabama, and Florida

have all brought me their skunks - just to name a few. It's amazing the distance people will travel for a skunk vet," Krupka says. "I've gotten phone calls from other veterinarians from Holland and Canada, too."

Cipriani and Krupka agree that skunks are not recommended for children. They must be trained not to bite and there are no approved rabies vaccines for skunks.

"If your skunk bites you, and the health department finds out, they can confiscate and destroy it," she cautions.

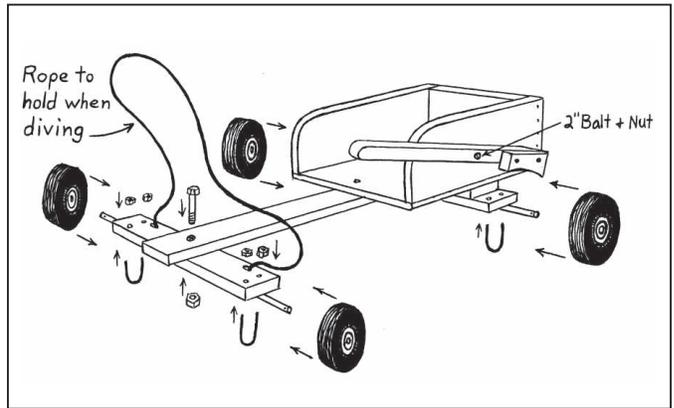
On the open market, pet domestic skunks can bring up to \$600.

Contrary to popular belief, they are not limited to the traditional black-with-two-white-stripes colors and markings. There are a wide variety of coat patterns and alternate colors (all have some white), including: albino, brown, smoke, gray, apricot, champagne and lavender, just to name a few.

According to Cipriani, these colors were developed by one family who began pioneering domestic skunk breeding close to 70 years ago and is still in business today. Randy Ruby and his mother, Mae, sell skunks on their farm at New Sharon, Iowa.

Whether you have a pet skunk that you can no longer care for, or you'd like to adopt one, Cipriani and her network of skunk aficionados are there to help you.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, SkunkHaven Shelter, Deborah Cipriani, President, Box 201, Avon Lake, Ohio 44012 (ph 440 327-4349; daisyphew@comcast.net; www.skunkhaven.net).



Wooden push cart rides on rubber tires with inset bearings that fit a 5/8-in. steel shaft.

## How To Build A Kid's Push Cart

Courtesy of Ron Tackmann, here are simple plans for a wood push cart for young children who aren't ready for a motorized cart.

Tackmann says you can buy 8-in. dia. solid rubber tires for Harbor Freight (800 423-2567) for \$4.99 apiece that have built-in bearings to fit a 5/8-in. steel axle shaft. Other parts needed:

- 1 - 2 by 4 - 8 ft. long
- 1 - 20 by 48-in. 3/4-in. plywood

- 4 - U-clamps
- 1 - 5-in. bolt and nut
- 1 - 2-in. bolt and nut
- 2 - 5/8-in. steel shaft rods for axles
- 4 - 8-in. dia. wheels
- 1 - 6-ft. rope
- 4 - cotter pins for wheels.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ron Tackmann, P.O. Box 149, 85A2882, Attica, N.Y. 14011.

## Pedal Tractor Backhoe

"My grandchildren really like playing with it," says Eric Meyer, Hinsdale, N.Y., who bought an old Murray pedal tractor, cleaned it up and repainted it, and then mounted a backhoe on back of it.

The pedal tractor's seat can be turned around to face backward in order to operate the backhoe. "Facing backward, the child can grab a pair of levers to operate the backhoe right from the tractor seat. When he's done playing, he can turn the seat around and use the pedal tractor normally," says Meyer.

A friend gave him the pedal tractor, which came without a seat. The plastic seat that's now on the tractor is off the backhoe, which is designed for playground use. The seat was originally designed to slide into a metal flange and was secured by a snap lock. Meyer cut off the snap lock, then unbolted the seat and flange from the backhoe and screwed it onto the tractor's original seat mounting bracket. "I cut off the snap lock so the seat can be quickly slid either forward or backward," says Meyer.

After mounting the backhoe, he noticed that it was stretched out too far for a child so



Pedal tractor's seat turns around so the child can face backward to operate the backhoe.

he cut about 6 in. off the backhoe linkage. "The backhoe seat was originally located directly above the backhoe's swivel point, but when I fastened it to the tractor the swivel point was moved 6 in. back behind the seat," says Meyer.

"The pedal tractor has a fake motor, with plastic panels that attach to both sides of the tractor so that when you look at it from the front it looks like a V-8 engine," he notes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Eric Meyer, 1228 Flanigan Hill, Hinsdale, N.Y. 14743 (ph 716 557-8378).