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“Half-Scale” Tractors Match Full-Scale Restorations

After he's done restoring a full-sized antique tractor, Gaylord De Jong of New Sharon, Iowa likes to build a half-sized model of the same tractor.

He's done it two times already and is working on a third. He builds each one from scratch.

De Jong's half-scale Allis WC is fashioned after a 1939 model and weighs nearly 350 lbs. It's powered by a 3.5 hp commercial Briggs and Stratton engine and the rest of the tractor "is pretty well all hand built."

"I just enjoy doing this for myself - it's a hobby," De Jong says. "Once I get the big one done, then I kind of have an idea of what I'm working on for the little one. I use the full-sized tractor as a guide while I'm working, so they're side-by-side and it's easier to see how you want it to be.

"The little ones are more of a challenge to find parts that fit, and still make it look correct on the outside. You can scratch your head for a while before you come up with something that will work."

He says it helps that his regular job is in a welding repair shop, so he has some specialized tools available.

Although they're called "half-scale," the mini tractors are actually about 1/8 as big as the originals.

They start with a pull rope like a lawn mower and have 3-speed transmissions, belt pulleys and operating pto's. De Jong makes the steering wheels himself and covers them in Plasti-dip.

The mini's have fake gauges - he cut out pictures of water and amp gauges from magazines and then put clear coat on them.

"The generator and the starter don't work; they are shells, and the battery box is empty," according to De Jong. "I took the gears out of lawn mower transmissions, made cases for them, and put them in so they look like the original tractor's gearbox," he explains. "I fashion the frame and tin after the original tractor as close as possible. It's a lot of welding smaller pieces together and grinding them down smooth. Then I use Bondo to cover up my welds so you get a smooth finish."

The little tractors' back tires are actually from walk-behind garden tractors from the 50's and 60's. De Jong says they're still sold commercially at Miller Tires (www.millertire.com), which specializes in "antique and odd stuff." He has also found used versions at swap meets. He also bought the front tires from Miller's.

It takes De Jong 2 to 2 1/2 years (in his spare time) to build one half-scale model. He says most of his materials are scrap metal and a new motor costs a couple hundred bucks. His total cost for a mini is between \$500 and \$700.

"People enjoy seeing them," he says. "We've put the grandkids on them in parades. A 5-year-old looks real good on it. If they get much bigger than that, they're too big for the tractor."

To enable himself to operate the tractors, De Jong made a little two-wheel cart with a tractor seat on it that hooks to the drawbar and pulls him around. He made a special hand lever for the clutch so he can reach it from the back, and says he can reach everything else fine.

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His “Retirement Plan” Tastes Good

In these days of workers sweating out the security of their company retirement plans, Art Duvall decided to take matters into his own hands. His "retirement plan" is right where he can see it. Best of all, it keeps the weeds down.

In his 70's, Duvall has 170 acres near Pana, Ill., 104 of which is in pasture and hay. He has 64 acres in CRP. He has a herd of 212 Boer goats which he says are easy to take care of and sell like hotcakes.

Duvall retired from a large glass company and set up a small farm and butchering business in Maryland. He did a land swap to end up in Illinois and started building his herd of goats after realizing there was a strong mar-

ket for them. Meat goats, especially the Boer breed, have been catching on across the country, with strong demand from immigrants, Muslims, and Jews. Young goats bring in \$70 to \$90 a head and he sells about 100 head a year. He holds back breeding animals to keep building up his herd.

Duvall says the goats are easy to care for, and easier to handle than cattle. And the income is steady, a nice bonus during his retirement years. He protects the flock with three Great Pyrenees dogs that run with the goats and keep away predators.

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Art Duvall says his Boer goats are easy to take care of and sell like hotcakes.

Old-Fashioned Milk Paint

Milk Paint is back in style, and a family company in Massachusetts is making it easy to use. While lots of old recipes for milk paint can be found, modern day substitutes for ingredients can be hard to locate. When antique furniture restorer Charles Thibeau couldn't find a reliable source for the old paint, he decided to develop his own.

"My dad researched milk paint and conducted probably 200 experiments to find modern ingredients that worked," says daughter Ann Thibeau, company president. "Yankee Magazine was doing books on forgotten arts and interviewed him for it. When the book was published, the phone started ringing off the hook. It turned into a business."

Milk Paint products come in 6, 12 and 48-oz. packages of dry powder priced at \$8.95, \$15.50 and \$43.95, respectively. Mixed with water, it is enough to make pint, quart and gallon amounts of ready-to-apply paint. It is available in 16 colors and a pigment-free base (add your own pigment), but blending different colors is easy. It is biodegradable, non-toxic and odor-free when dry, ideal for children's toys.

"People are using it for the look it provides,

but it is also popular with those who are chemically sensitive and can't use petroleum based paint," says Thibeau. "It is very durable and continues to cure over time, getting harder and harder."

Milk Paint is being used on everything from woodwork to furniture of all types and is especially popular on kitchen cabinets. Milk paint dries quickly so Thibeau warns that it can be hard to keep a wet edge on large surfaces. However, that hasn't stopped people from using it for everything from walls to floors (with a sealer).

"We've been working on an exterior formula, but at this point, it needs a sealer on top of it to keep it from water spotting white," says Thibeau.

Old Fashioned Milk Paint products are available from more than 400 dealers in the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia. It can also be ordered direct from the company by phone or over the internet.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The Old Fashioned Milk Paint Co., Inc., 436 Main Street, P.O. Box 222, Groton, Mass. 01450 (ph 978 448-6336 or toll free 866 350-6455; fax 978 448-2754; sales@milkpaint.com; www.milkpaint.com).

Chandelier Slides On Old Hay Track Carrier

To add just the right touch to their rustic living room, Bob and Nancy Bugger of Effingham, Ill., mounted a homemade chandelier - equipped with five big lantern-shaped lights - on a hay track carrier salvaged from an old family barn.

They can slide the chandelier anywhere along the track to put light exactly where it's needed.

Their living room measures 24 ft. long, and the track is 18 ft. long. The chandelier hangs about 7 ft. off the floor. The track bolts onto a wooden beam at each end of the room, using the original hangers. However, the center of the room has a higher ceiling so there the track is suspended from a chain.

Bugger used a steel wheel off an old horse-drawn cultivator to make the chandelier. A series of chains extend from the perimeter of the wheel up to the trolley.

"It's a real conversation piece that fits nicely into our living room, which has a rustic old-time feel," says Bugger. "Going into the living room is like taking a step back in



Bob and Nancy Bugger mounted a homemade chandelier - equipped with five big lantern-shaped lights - on a hay track carrier salvaged from an old family barn.

time. We finished the walls with salvaged barn siding and have a lot of dad's old farm equipment hanging on it. It's nice to be able to slide the chandelier over the card table whenever we play cards."

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