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Stone Plow Yanks Rocks Out Of Ground

When the frost lifts a new crop of boulders to the surface of roads through his woods, Ken Lake plows them out. All he needs is to get the tip of his stone plow under the edge of a boulder, and the weight of the rock does the rest.

"Pulling against the rock drives the plow down and underneath it, and the weight keeps the wheels from spinning," he says. "In the spring when the ground is soft, the boulders just pop right out. I pull out three or four and then move them off the road with my loader. I've pulled out 600 to 800-lb. rocks with it."

Lake has been making the stone plows for himself and neighbors for several years. The retired welder fabricates a 3-pt. hitch using 4 by 4-in. angle iron for the cross bar. He boxes the last 6 in. on either end to give it extra strength and then welds on 3-pt. pins to match the buyer's tractor.

"It really works well on tractors like a 460 Farmall with down pressure on the 3-pt. arms," says Lake. "It slides right in."

The plow itself is made out of the main beams from an old two-bottom plow. He cuts them apart and then matches them up next to

each other like a two-time fork. Lake says he has never bent or straightened a stone plow beam.

"I put a 5/8-in. cross plate about one third of the way down the curving beams to stabilize the beams so they won't pull apart," says Lake. "On some, I have welded a 4 to 5-in. tip made from the leaf spring on a trailer house. They really go into the ground easily with that tip."

So far he has made and sold nine stone plows. Lake says he'll continue making them for about \$200 as long as he can find old plow beam raw material.

Lake says the stone plow can be handy for other chores too. When a neighbor clear-cut half an acre covered in alder brush, it grew right back thicker than ever. Lake suggested he cut it again, but this time, use the stone plow on it. "He used the plow to tear out the roots. He cleared them off, disked it and planted it to grass for pasture," says Lake. "It worked great."

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Old Fashioned Burial Coming Back Into Style

Just when you began to think you couldn't afford to die, "natural burials" have started coming back into style. The idea is to eliminate embalming, fancy caskets and concrete vaults.

"A lot of people don't see the point in paying \$15,000 for a cherry and brass casket that people will see for a few hours, and then it's put in the ground," says Kimberley Campbell, vice president, Memorial Ecosystems. The company is a consulting firm that helps organizations and people establish "green burial" cemeteries or memorial parks.

In 1998, she and her husband, Dr. Billy Campbell, opened Ramsey Creek Preserve in South Carolina, the first "green cemetery" in the U.S. It is a 33-acre area that is being restored to its natural state with the sale of plots.

With natural burial, the body is placed in a biodegradable casket of wood or cardboard or wrapped in a cotton shroud and placed in a shallow grave. Nature takes its course, decomposing the casket and the body naturally and safely. And, it's all legal.

"People are becoming more educated about what the legal requirements are for burial," says Campbell. "Often funeral directors aren't aware of the laws themselves. You have to go in armed with information."

She says some funeral directors may say

you can't have an open casket if the body isn't embalmed, or that the body must be buried within 24 hours. None of that is true because bodies can be refrigerated until the funeral is held. She points out that Jewish people have never allowed embalming. As states have different laws, she suggests checking the consumer alliance website www.funerals.org for information.

Not all funeral homes resist natural burial, notes Campbell. "We work with a funeral home that picks up the deceased, keeps the body refrigerated until burial, takes care of the death certificate, and then delivers the body to Ramsey Creek, all for \$1,280," she says. "Our charge for the plot and natural burial, which includes opening and closing the grave and a plain marker, is \$2,225. Engraving the marker stone costs from \$85 to \$175. A shroud or cardboard casket costs less than \$200, and a wooden casket costs \$800. All together, it costs less than \$5,000."

Campbell stresses that the cost can be much less, as legally the family can handle all the green burial details the funeral home takes care of, if they wish. Of course cost isn't the only factor, or even the most important for many people. For them a green burial is a more natural and peaceful process.

Floating Solar Pumps Serve Many Purposes

Regardless of how remote a water source may be, floating solar pumps let you easily pump water to wherever it's needed.

Livestock watering tanks can be filled from ponds, springs, creeks or rivers, thanks to the three sizes of floating solar pumps sold by Sunmotor International.

"Keeping cattle out of water sources not only improves animal performance and health, it is better for the environment," says company owner Eric Jensen. "The Sunmotor M-Series pumps are simple and convenient, making it easy to move them around to any water source needed for rotational grazing."

These pumps are also ideal for other projects, such as small irrigation projects and drainage.

The totally submersible line of pumps have low power requirements and are self-priming. They handle silty water without a filter and connect directly to solar panels or batteries with no electronics. They have internal overload protection and if they're inadvertently left out over winter, being frozen will not harm them.

"Our pumps are fully serviceable, have long life and are simple to install and operate," Jensen says. "The M3 model has a 75-watt solar module and a peak flow rate of four U.S. gpm with a vertical lift of 15 feet. Our M10 model utilizes a 400-watt solar array to achieve a flow rate of eight U.S. gpm with a vertical lift of 40 feet. Lastly, the model M30 incorporates a 300-watt solar array and pumps up to 15 U.S. gpm with a vertical lift of 26 feet."

Sunmotor will custom design your solar water pumping system if you provide them



Floating solar pump is designed to pump from surface water sources such as ponds, dams, canals and streams.

with the volume of water to be pumped per day and the total pumping height plus the pressure required.

"Contact us to obtain a free design and cost estimate for your specific application," Jensen says.

The company has also announced the successful development and testing of their new solar generator which provides reliable, clean and silent AC power at any location for a wide range of applications. It, too, can be custom designed for client specifications.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sunmotor International Ltd., N. Eric Jensen, P. O. Box 3721, Olds, Alberta, Canada T4H 1P5 (ph 403 556-8755; fax 403 556-7799; sunmotor@reveal.ca; www.sunpump.com).

Add-On Safety Seat Lets Kids Ride On Back

Terry Martin of Shelby, Ohio, found a way to babysit his kids while mowing his yard. They love to ride so Terry made a double safety seat with seat belts. He used square tubing to make a rectangular frame for the seats and slips it into a receiver hitch that he mounted on back of the tractor. To remove the add-on seats, he just pulls a pin.

"I use it on my Deere L120 garden tractor. I came up with the idea because I love spending time with my kids and they like to ride with me on the tractor."

Martin has a patent and would like to develop the idea. "Everyone I talk to says it's a good idea. I've built a few add-on seats for friends and family members, who have mounted them on a variety of different tractor brands. They love them. I've spoken to my attorney and other patent attorneys who say I can market this as an aftermarket accessory to garden tractors, but that first I need liability insurance. I got one quote from an insurance company for \$125,000 per year."

Martin says he'd like to know what FARM SHOW readers think of his idea. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Terry



Terry Martin made a double safety seat with seat belts so his kids can ride with him while he mows his yard.

Martin, 351 West Main St., Shelby, Ohio 44875 (ph 419 347-7942; tmartin79@neo.rr.com).

"It involves the family in the process, instead of keeping them separate," says Campbell. "We have family members who want to help dig the grave, lower the body and fill in the grave. It's how we used to do it and how it is still done in cultures throughout the world."

Campbell says Memorial Ecosystems has been approached by nature preserves and individual landowners about developing green cemeteries. The green cemeteries can be for profit or nonprofit. The Campbells are currently developing a nonprofit preserve in Georgia for a monastery.

"We have had contacts from families

whose farm has been in the family for many years," explains Campbell. "They want to preserve it from development. They can develop part of it for a green cemetery and maintain an income flow. As many municipal cemeteries are running out of room, you can even partner with a city or town to protect green space, yet offer a service."

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