

Tow-Behind Lawn Vacuum

Using parts from an old walk-behind snowblower, Walter Paschke of Forest River, N. Dak., built his own low-cost, tow-behind lawn vacuum.

"I didn't want to spend \$700 to \$1,200 for a commercial vacuum," says Paschke. "I pull it behind my 18 hp Case riding mower and use it to vacuum up both leaves and grass trimmings."

The snowblower's vacuum fan and cage mount on the frame of a 2-wheeled enclosed trailer. Paschke attached a length of 6-in. dia. flexible hose to the side of the mower deck. The hose leads to the vacuum fan, which is belt-driven by a 5 hp Tecumseh engine. The emergency brake handle from an old car is used as a belt tightener to engage the vacuum. A length of furnace stove pipe delivers the material into a 4 by 3-ft. box that's covered with canvas.

He already had a small flatbed trailer. He used 1-in. sq. tubing to make a box frame. A screen door on back of the box, hinged at the top, allows air to exit. To dump leaves, Paschke flips the door up and over the box, then releases a trip lever to manually tilt the box back.

"It works good - I'm surprised at how much vacuum power it has. It sucks leaves right



"It works good - I was surprised at how much vacuum power it has," says Walter Paschke, who used parts from a walk-behind snowblower to build this lawn vac. out from under the mower," says Paschke. "I had been hand using a tow-behind lawn sweeper but it was too small and I spent too much time dumping it. As the leaves go through the vacuum it shreds them into mulch, which I use in our garden.

"I got the canvas from a company that uses them to cover piles of sugarbeets. I found the snowblower in a junk pile, and the flexible hose came off the end of a grain auger spout. The only thing I had to buy was the flexible hose that connects the mower to the vacuum.

"To power the vacuum fan, I had to extend the shaft on the fan and install a pillow block bearing so I could mount a pulley. I used



Snowblower's vacuum fan and cage mount on the frame of a 2-wheeled enclosed trailer.

the metal slide bracket from underneath an old car seat to tighten or loosen the belt."

He used sheet metal to make a hinged metal housing that attaches to the mower's discharge chute. "To remove the housing I just pull a pin," says Paschke.

He also attached a homemade metal housing to the vacuum fan, welding a short length

of pipe into the spout to which the flexible hose is attached. "The spout attaches to the vacuum with a spring hook so it can be quickly removed if the vacuum ever plugs up, but it never has," notes Paschke.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Walter Paschke, 5576 148th Ave. N.E., Forest River, N. Dak. 58233 (ph 701 248-3365).

Ground Hog Cultivator

A machine with a track pulling a small cultivator caught the eye of Levi Stoltzfus when he was shopping for a new garden tiller. The owner had built it himself 10 years before. Now Stoltzfus manufactures a modified version of it at his business, Swampy Hollow Mfg., in Goodville, Pennsylvania.

"My wife loves it," Stoltzfus says, "so we made two, put out ads and sold them right away." The first one ended up in India for cultivating sugar cane.

The Ground Hog Cultivator is operated like a tiller, but instead of front tines, it pulls a small cultivator. The cultivator tines go in the ground about 4 in. with just the weight of the machine. For deeper tilling, simply go over the area twice, Stoltzfus says. The cultivator pushes the dirt apart instead of pulling moisture and weed seeds to the surface like a tiller. And instead of jumping like a tiller when it hits rocks, the cultivator slides past them.

"It's easier to operate than a regular rototiller," Stoltzfus adds. "With a tiller you have to hold back. This one you set it to the speed you want. It feels like it's going faster and gets something done."

Stoltzfus uses 5 1/2 hp engines that run from idle to full speed.

Another benefit of the cultivator is that it folds up for rows as narrow as 9 in. and expands to rows up to 30 in. With tracks instead of wheels, there is less compaction and slippage on the soil, Stoltzfus adds.

At 175 lbs., the Ground Hog is similar in weight and size to a tiller. Cost is \$1,095. In the near future, Stoltzfus says he hopes to add a transmission for two forward speeds and reverse. He also plans to add attachments: a row maker, hiller and seeder.

"I am personally pleased with it, but I hardly get a chance to use it," Stoltzfus says, adding that his wife uses it all the time.



Tracked Ground Hog Cultivator works like a rototiller, pulling rear cultivator tines.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Levi St., Goodville, Pennsylvania 17528 (ph 717 Stoltzfus, Swampy Hollow Mfg., 1564 Main 445-4027).

Powered "running board lift" can be installed on either or both sides of a vehicle. It's powered by a 12-volt motor and hydraulic system, which attaches to the frame under the vehicle. It's controlled by a wireless remote.



Powered "Running Board Lift"

People who have trouble getting in and out of big pickups, SUV's and vans will love this new powered "running board lift".

It's 10 in. wide and made out of 14-gauge steel. The unit can be installed on either or both sides of the vehicle. It's powered by a 12-volt motor and hydraulic system, which attaches to the frame under the vehicle and is controlled by a wireless remote.

The lift is designed so you can stop the up and down motion at any time by releasing a hand-held remote control, much like the one you use to lock and unlock your car door.

The lift works only when the transmission is in the parked position. When the transmis-

sion is not in park, the running board will retract and stay in the up position, even if the remote is accidentally activated.

"The unit is custom made with brackets for each vehicle and can be painted to match the vehicle it's installed on. The length of the running board will vary depending on your vehicle and your needs," says Richard Esh.

Prices start at \$5,995. Installation starts at \$1,995.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Starship Custom Vehicles, 4315 Wyland Dr., Elkhart, Ind. 46516 (ph 574 293-6555; fax 574 295-1880; sales@startracks.org; www.startracks.org).

Restored Utility Vehicle May Have Been The First

It was only manufactured for one year but the Farm Handy 3-wheeler, built by Farmhand Industries in 1966, was the forerunner of the Deere Gator, Kawasaki Mule, and other farm utility vehicles, says Lynn Klingaman, Columbia City, Ind. He displayed the rig at the recent Ohio Farm Science Review.

"It was an all-around chore vehicle that could haul up to 500 lbs. I don't know how many were ever made, but I do know that there aren't many around any more. I know of only two others," says Klingaman, noting that the 3-wheeler was designed to run through soybean fields to pull weeds and volunteer corn.

The vehicle rides on two 15-in. high lugged rear wheels and a single 12-in. high front wheel. It has a 3-passenger seat with a metal cargo box behind it that measures 30 in. long, 4 ft. wide, and 10 in. deep. The box, which has a plywood bottom, can be flipped forward to access the drivetrain. Power is supplied by a 8 hp Kohler engine that belt-drives a 2-speed rear transaxle with a high and low range, providing four speeds forward and two reverse. Top speed is about 6 mph.



Built by Farmhand Industries in 1966, the Farm Handy 3-wheeler was the forerunner of the Deere Gator, Kawasaki Mule, and other farm utility vehicles, says Lynn Klingaman.

"It has pretty basic controls - just a clutch, throttle, and gearshift," says Klingaman. "I bought it used from Mark Struz of Goodhue, Minn., and restored it to like-new condition. I had new decals made by a local company, which took photos of the original decals and made copies."

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