



Lawn care operator Joseph Mundil needed a way to haul away lawn clippings and tree branches. So he turned an old van into a dump truck with club cab.

Chopped Van Turned Into Dump Truck

Turning an old van into a dump truck with club cab was a good investment for Joseph Mundil. The lawn care operator needed a way to haul away lawn clippings and tree branches.

"I bought a 1992 Aerostar minivan with 169,000 miles for only \$400," says Mundil. "It has 4-WD, which is good in the winter, and I still have the second seat so it'll seat five adults comfortably."

Mundil chopped the van where the two side windows met just behind the second seat, but only as far as the door/fender panel. This allowed him to retain full use of the sliding door. He filled in the opening with the back side and window from a 1984 Ford Ranger pickup cab. He also cleaned out the interior to make room for the dump box.

A local metal shop bent heavy tin for the box. Mundil attached used angle iron to the corners and a strip of channel iron at the tail-

gate. The channel iron let him hinge the box to the rear of the van.

"I bought a hydraulic cylinder and built a rack beneath the dump box," says Mundil. "It uses a 12-volt pump that I installed in the rear. I put a hole in the side of the fender and made a lid to cover it. It lets me reach the toggle switch and valves I mounted inside the fender."

Mundil mounted a manual 2-way tailgate on the dump box. He can tilt it down or flip it up and over the top of the box. The only other change he made to the van was replacing rusty quarter panels.

"The conversion only cost me about \$200," he says. "It's just like a four-seat pickup, but it cost a lot less."

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Larry Sommerfeld "spoiled" his 1950 Mercury 2-ton truck by equipping it with a wind-deflecting stainless steel spoiler off a semi tractor.

How To "Spoil" An Old Truck

When Larry Sommerfeld drives to town for a cup of coffee, he gets a lot of second looks. That's because the Moose Jaw, Sask., farmer "spoiled" his 1950 Mercury 2-ton truck by equipping it with a wind-deflecting stainless steel spoiler off a semi tractor.

The spoiler mounts about 3 ft. above a home-built flatbed and is supported by an open, metal frame. With the cab painted shiny red and black, it certainly gets noticed.

"I drive it in parades and take it to shows," says Sommerfeld, who completely restored the truck along with friend Wayne Alm. "Whenever we drive down the highway, semi drivers start waving and honking their horns."

Another unusual feature of the truck is the engine, which is complete with dual header exhausts and is out in the open behind the cab. "With big radial tires on back and the rear-mount engine, it looks somewhat like a dragster," says Sommerfeld, who says he actually used to race dragsters.

The original flathead V-8 engine was worn

so they replaced it with a 351 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission out of a wrecked 1986 Ford Crown Victoria. The engine has a 4-barrel carburetor and homemade headers made out of a pair of 2-in. dia. muffler pipes. Another pair of exhaust pipes extend from the engine all the way forward to the radiator and electric cooling fan.

The truck's radiator, electric cooling fan, and automatic transmission cooler were relocated under the hood.

The truck's rear universal joint is original, while the front universal joint is off the car's automatic transmission. To weld them together he had to first shorten the truck's driveshaft, which is now only 6 in. long.

The dump box was all beat up so they threw it away. Then they built an aluminum flatbed and mounted it on top of the truck's frame, then mounted the spoiler on it.

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Stained Glass Windows Ideal For Barns

Since Todd Daniels put a large stained glass window featuring a bass and a walleye in his barn facing the road, it's easy to give directions to his farm. Daniels, who now runs a stained glass business, says barns and sheds are natural places to display his work.

"In a house, most windows are double glazed, and if you put a stained glass window on the inside, you can get condensation in between," he says. "In a barn, shed or garage, condensation is not a problem. You can even hang the stained glass on the outside."

Daniels and his wife Laurie cut and mount the glass for use in houses, barns and other buildings. Fittingly, they fixed up an old granary to use as a studio. Todd draws the design. Laurie selects the glass to make the design come alive. Both cut the glass, but Laurie bends and cuts the channels to hold the glass and solders the joints.

The trickiest part of the process, Todd says, is the cutting. Each piece has to be cut within 1/32 of an inch of the original art to fit properly.

The couple uses various types of stained glass, from the traditional church window type to the Tiffany Lamp style. They can also paint a picture of a bird or other image on clear or white stained glass, firing it at 500 degrees to make it permanent.

A 20 by 34-in. window to replace a standard 6-pane barn window starts at \$200 and goes up based on complexity. The couple also does smaller works, including 15 by 15-in. pieces to hang in front of windows. They start at \$75. These include a series of Minnesota birds and another of wildflowers. Todd says he could easily do someone's favorite flower, tractor or pet. He has already created a window with a barber's pole for a barber.

"A barn window with a favorite horse or prize bull would be ideal for the barn of a livestock breeder," he suggests. "Why not have it out where you can enjoy it everyday as you work?"

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Daniels makes stained glass windows for use in houses, barns and other buildings.



He put a large stained glass window featuring a bass and a walleye in his barn.

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Look-alike Gator was made by marrying a Murray lawn tractor to a Craftsman mower. It has a 4 by 4-ft. flat bed that inventor George Daulton can use to haul stuff.

Looks Like A Gator, But It's Not

George Daulton likes the idea of making things that look complicated, but really aren't. When a friend gave him an old Murray lawn tractor, he married it to a Craftsman mower. The result, with some John Deere paint, was a look-alike Gator with a 4 by 4-ft. flat bed he can use to haul stuff.

"The rear wheels are for looks, not drive, but they do help carry a load," notes Daulton. "I'd love to have a real Gator but can't justify the expense, so I built this for the fun of it."

Without worrying about hooking up drive units, building the mock Gator was easy. Daulton cut off all but the rear end of the Craftsman and bolted it to the Murray.

"The Craftsman was a little bigger than the Murray. I was able to cut it so it would just slide up and around the Murray," he recalls. "I made the body of the flatbed out of 1-in. tubing and used plywood for the bed."

The only problem Daulton has run into with his look-alike Gator is a little difficulty turning the light front end when the rear is loaded with wood or stone. "I figure a little added weight would take care of it," he says. "Meanwhile, I just have fun with it."

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