

Reader Letters



If ever there was an overrated and misused product, it's WD-40. The name says it all – "Water Displacement, trial number 40". It's made from petroleum distillates and designed to displace water from vehicle wiring. Read the label. Nowhere does it say it contains oil. It's not a lubricant. I have found it's good for cleaning off oil and grease. Doesn't this tell you that it is not an oil itself? As a former production foreman, I stopped workers from spraying metal parts with WD-40 as a protectant before shipping them. The parts would begin to rust after a short while. We switched to a true preservative lubricant - end of problem. Another time, a machine operator told me a limit switch on his machine was sticking, even though he had sprayed it 5 times with WD-40. I sprayed it with a real lubricant and it stopped sticking right away.

I got a can of WD-40 as a retirement present because I badmouth it so much. I do use it – for instance recently on the wiring of a tractor I suspected of shorting out due to being wet. The tractor started right up afterwards. **(Robert Thomas, Butler, Penn.)**



I needed to transport 2 piglets home from 3 hrs. away in a minivan. So I used a 55-gal. plastic barrel. I cut off the top of the barrel and fitted it with a piece of wire grate, using a rope to hinge it so it wouldn't open. I kept the barrel form flopping from one side of the van to the other by placing it on some wood braces. The pigs laid down and relaxed for the entire trip home. **(John Liberty, Corinna, Maine)**

I was interested in the article in your last issue about straw bale gardening. However, buying 34-0-0 fertilizer, as recommended in the story, is nearly impossible. The authorities in Canada consider that stuff bomb-grade. I'm surprised Homeland Security in the U.S. hasn't restricted sales of it as well. **(W. Richter, Oxford Mills, Ont.)**



We've got a lady scarecrow that's dressed for maximum scare power. She's attached to a 2 by 2-in. pole with cross arms and dressed in a spiffy slack suit. Straw is stuffed into all the right places (crows are very perceptive). One-gallon plastic milk jugs make good

heads because they're smooth so you can paint on facial features. We topped off the lady's wardrobe with an old Easter bonnet. **(Rex Gogerty, Hubbard, Iowa)**

Thanks for the story in your last issue on our round-headed "Barn Nail" for hanging stuff. Unfortunately the published phone number was wrong. The correct number is 231 533-9055. Also, Barn Nails sell for \$5 apiece plus \$6 S&H (that covers an order up to 20 nails). **(Coyote Bill's Ranch, 3820 Stover Rd., Bellaire, Mich. 49615; products@coyotebills.com)**



I built a low-cost mini greenhouse right on the side of my house. First I bought 4 vinyl windows from a local manufacturer for \$10 apiece. Then I figured out a way



to fabricate the windows together as a 1-piece unit in my shop, without having to do any framing work. I glued or screwed all the windows together as a unit and then used a piece of 3/4-in. plywood for the floor.

Then I went outside and cut a hole in the side of the house and framed in a 2 by 6-ft. opening with a header. I used a loader tractor to lift the 1-piece window unit up into the opening and then nailed it in place. **(Wess Cornelius, 1312 Ferrier Rd., Winlock, Wash. 98596 ph 360 785-4178)**

A few years ago I picked up an old corner traffic signal light when a local city decided to install new lights. I installed it in my yard, where it makes an unusual



night light. It's located about 200 ft. from our house and 400 ft. from the road, so passersby can see it. I've got it wired up so that I can use all the lights or just one, depending on the occasion. I use a single light most of the time, which provides plenty of illumination. The lights don't blink on or off, but if I wanted I could wire them up that way.

My son, who is a contractor, removed the light which came equipped with a 400-lb. cement base. I brought the entire unit home on a trailer and used a backhoe to dig a hole, then set the base in the hole and bolted the post on. I removed the original 150-watt bulbs



Years ago, while running soybeans through a fan mill so we could save them for seed, we would always find a few black soybeans among all the yellow ones. We were always curious if they would produce black or yellow beans. So I planted a cupful in our garden and found every bean came up black. I was curious about the oil and protein content, so I took samples to the Illinois Department of Agriculture Laboratory and they found there was no difference. It was kind of disappointing, because I was hoping the black beans were higher in oil and protein content so I could really go into

black bean production.

After first planting in the garden, and then using that seed and increasing the production to a row in the field and harvesting with the combine and saving for planting, I finally got a substantial amount. After 5 years I had a wagon with about 60 bu. of all black soybeans. I kept my project a secret until I took them to our local grain elevators for a joke. I still have the beans in that wagon. One elevator employee took this photo of me standing next to the wagon. **(Jim Niemann, 2124 N. 8th Ave., Litchfield, Ill. 62056 ph 217 324-5574)**

because they use a lot of electricity and replaced them with small 13-watt, energy-saving bulbs. The lights are good and bright and last a long time. There are 2 sets of lights, but I only have one set lit up. It faces the house and road. The unit's "walk" signal is still on but I didn't wire it up. I installed light sensors so that the lights automatically come on at night and go off in the morning. **(John Eilers, 2095 E. 350 N., Pana, Ill. 62557 ph 217 562-4021)**

International Harvester made WD40, W40 and W30 tractor models, but they didn't make a WD30 like the one I made. I removed the engine from a Farmall MD



and installed it in a 1938 W30 model. The engine fit almost perfectly. I had to extend the engine mounts and move the exhaust pipe from the left to the right side, and also move the air breather back. I used the tractor to operate a threshing machine and sawmill at the LA Vintage Machinery Show in Lacombe, Alberta. I also tried it out at a local demonstration tractor pull.

I also made a WD4 that's unlike anything IH made. I removed the engine from a Farmall 340 and installed it in a 1946 W4 model. I had to move the exhaust pipe from the left to the right side of the tractor by cutting a new hole in the hood. The engine fit well. **(Bill Fawcett, 10938 62 Ave. N.W., Edmonton, Alb., Canada T6H 1N2)**

My 4-year-old grandson Jack Burt is crazy about Thomas the Train. I decided to build him his own Train.

I built a 2 by 4 frame on top of my ATV

and framed in the cab and front end with 2 by 2 studs. Then I covered the cab, front end, and skirting with 1/8-in. paneling. I used half of a 55-gal. plastic drum for the round part of the engine top, and half of a 16-gal. plastic drum for the front. My wife



Painted the face. We used colored duct tape for the striping and wheel spokes.

My grandson enjoys riding the train with me and throwing candy to children along parade routes. **(James P. Kay, 703 Clay, Minneapolis, Kan. 67467 ph 785 392-2241; cell 785 392-7619)**

Two winters ago my stepfather bought a 1947 'deuce and a half' truck from a local fire department and mounted an



International manure spreader on the frame. He uses the machine to spread manure and potash on our 164 acres.

Unfortunately my stepfather passed away last January. My mother and I have since taken over the farm and will continue the legacy he left us. This spreader will help make it possible for us to keep the farm going. As a tribute to him and the farming lifestyle that he loved, we fondly call our spreader "the crapper". **(Nicole Hodak, A1 Dube Quarter Horses, www.adqhs.com)**