

Reader Letters



I was walking through a big 300-ft. barn one day but couldn't see the fire extinguishers, even though I knew there were four somewhere inside the barn. The fire extinguishers were hanging on some 6 by 6-in. wooden posts, and when they got dusty they blended in with the posts making them hard to see.



To make them more visible, I wrapped the posts where the fire extinguishers mount with white plastic. The red fire extinguisher really stands out against the white.

We now use this idea in our shops, dairy barns, warehouses and any building with dim lighting and a dark background. I wrap the plastic all the way around the post so I can easily locate the extinguisher from any direction. (Ken Hennenkamp, Melrose, Minn.)

My snowblower kept picking up rocks on gravel driveways and damaging the auger. Instead of unbolting the shoes, moving them down, and tightening them again, I added this homemade threaded rod assembly. It lets me turn a crank to



raise and lower the shoes automatically. A 9/16-in. socket is welded to the crank and fits over a nut welded on top of a 3/8-in. threaded redi rod. The rod runs down through blocks made from 1-in. sq. bar stock that I bolted onto one side of the blower housing. I had to do some cutting, drilling, tapping and welding to make the various parts.

It works great and saves a lot of time. I also bolted a pair of wheels onto the blower to keep from wearing the scraper bar. (Jim Rotter, P.O. Box 16, Walford, Iowa 52351 ph 319 846-2988)

Calves were jumping out of our calf sled as we moved them. To solve the problem I cut out the back of the sled to slide the calf in, then mounted a pipe toward the front. It lets us rope the calf's back legs and slide the animal in until its butt hits the pipe and the sled pulls along. I also added an open-eye bolt in the center of the pipe so we can drop the rope over it and pull the sled empty.



I drilled two 1/4-in. dia. holes on the pipe, one on the outside sled wall and one on the inside, and then inserted

bolts in them to keep the pipe in place. The outside bolt rolls up against the sled's overhang so the pipe won't turn. (John Mehlhoff, jbmeh190@gmail.com)

I had a problem with wasps building their nests high up in the soffits in my hay barn. It's 42 ft. to the top of the barn, so using an aerosol can of wasp spray was out of the question.

Instead, I shoot the nests with my kids' paint ball gun. The impact of the paint ball blows the nest apart, and the ball leaves a soapy, slick residue that keeps the wasps from rebuilding. The residue will eventually wash away over time. (Todd Hutter, 550 Amelith, Freeland, Mich. 48623 tkhutter@gmail.com)

I live in a mobile home in the country, where mice are a problem. They crawl up through openings where pipes enter the building, build nests all over and even chew the stuffing out of the seats in car and pickups. I tried using traps and cats but the mice kept coming back.

Then I started using Irish Spring bath soap bars as a repellent. I cut the bars into fourths and place them wherever mice might travel, such as inside closets and basements and under the seats of vehicles. The mice nibble at the bars but don't like them and then stay away. I haven't tried using other soap brands. (Tom Ambuehl, 1284 JapEvans Rd., Shelby, Mont. 59474 ph 406 450-1452)

Turkeys love to raid our blueberry patch, so to keep them away I made what I call "predator eye flashers". I cut 4-in. long aluminum strips and then attached



a large fishing swivel in the middle and eye dots on both sides, which I made from reflective tape. The slightest breeze spins the strip and flashes the "eyes". I hang the strips around my berry patch and garden. They really help. (Robert McMahon, P.O. Box 7008, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921 ph 865 690-7783; yz2@bellsouth.net)

I have several garden tractors with implements, but the Cub Cadet 129 tractor I purchased at an auction last fall



didn't come with any implements so I converted it into a nice little loader tractor.

A good used loader for this tractor is almost impossible to find so I built my own. I mounted ATV tires on the tractor,

which helps in soft ground. I also made a bumper hitch on back that supports a hydraulic reservoir and has a built-in receiver hitch. A slip-in holder that attaches to the receiver hitch supports pancake weights for extra traction. (Danny Steckelberg, 1706 Knollwood Dr., Gillette, Wyo. 82718)



I make nice looking "bed benches" out of the metal headboards and footboards off old beds. I cut the footboard into two halves and then weld them onto the headboard to make the bench's sides. A 2 by 12-in. board serves as the seat. (Craig Wegner, 4122 Cherry Ave., Hawarden, Iowa 51023)

I own a Farm King 50-in. rear-mount snowblower and found that blowing snow in reverse was a pain, so I mounted the snowblower on front of my Ford 1100 13



hp diesel tractor with a home-built cab. I installed a home-built frame under the tractor and ran a driveshaft from the rear pto up to the snowblower. I had to reverse the pto drive to match the snowblower's auger drive.

A cable connected to the tractor's 3-pt. hitch is used to raise and lower the snowblower. (Richard Ortenblad, 2750 Vega Ave., Mayer, Minn. 55360)

I built this patriotic, miniature 4-bottom moldboard plow from scratch. It makes an excellent parade item but actually does



a good job of plowing, too. It's equipped with four 6 1/2-in. tall moldboards off an old David Bradley moldboard plow. The moldboards were individual units when I got them, so I welded together a frame to mount them on.

The moldboards are raised and lowered by a hydraulic cylinder that operates off a self-contained, 12-volt hydraulic lift system that I mounted on my Cub Farmall tractor. The back side of the moldboards is painted blue and the front side a soft black protective paint, which scours to a shiny surface when plowing. I used sheet metal to build notched coulters. I had a

lot of fun building it. (Don Nelson, 635 Esmond St., Hildreth, Neb. 68947; mary_n@charter.net)

If you own a Deere 7000 planter, chances are your population chart page is greasy, torn, or missing completely. We make magnetic planter population charts for 30 and 38-in. Deere 7000 planters that fit on the toolbar, in front



of the transmission. The print on these charts is big enough you can read it without needing eyeglasses. The longer a magnet stays on ferrous metal, the stronger the bond becomes so the chart will stay in place.

It would have been easier to go to Rome and become the pope, but I got permission from Deere to make these charts as long as I don't use their logo. The magnetic charts are priced at \$10 each plus S&H. Charts for Deere 7200 planters are also available, and I can make charts for other planter brands and models if you're willing to pay the cost of making just one.

We also offer .060-in. magnetic sheets in 2-ft. widths priced at \$12 per running ft. They can be used as toolbox liners, vent covers, grain screen covers, art projects, and for various other uses. (George Nafe, Nafe Magnetic Sheet, P.O. Box 214, Pierson, Iowa ph 712 251-0333; georgenafe@netscape.net)

In your last issue you showed a photo of an often repaired brass-bladed ice scraper owned by Andrew Sewell in England. He bought the scraper more than 20 years ago while on a trip to the U.S. and now can't find another one like it. He doesn't like using the newer plastic-bladed scrapers.

Years ago I bought 2 or 3 scrapers just like his. The gas station where I bought them doesn't have any more and doesn't know where they came from originally, so I'm out of luck, too.

Some companies still make small scrapers with 3-in. brass blades but they just don't work as well. I really like my older brass blades because if they get dull I can sharpen them with a file. (Al Mathias, Hinckley, Minn.)

Editor's Note: Numerous readers wrote to tell us where to find brass-bladed scrapers but, like Al says above, most are smaller, lighter models. Ken Gates says Andrew's scraper looks



like a "Hoppy 112AT" made by Hopkins Mfg. According to the company, it's no longer available.

Other readers told us about the multi-blade Ice Master Scraper, developed in Colorado. It has four different ice scraping configurations, including a brass blade. It's built heavy and several readers recommended it. You can buy one at Amazon.com for \$20.

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