

# Collection Helps Him Teach The History Of Toast

There's really no good explanation why Wayne Konkel started collecting toasters about 35 years ago. He just sort of fell into it when he found a couple of old toasters in the basement that his mother had saved. Being from a frugal Kansas farm family, Konkel decided to see if they worked. He tore them apart, repaired a few wires, brushed off the rust, polished them up, plugged them in, and celebrated by making toast.

After that he started noticing toasters at flea markets and antique shops. When a dealer mentioned that irons and waffle irons sort of fit with toaster collecting, he added those, too.

Konkel estimates he has about 200 toasters, 120 irons and 95 waffle irons. Most of them are displayed at the Pratt County Historical Museum on 6 shelves that wrap around the walls of one of the museum's rooms ([www.prattcountymuseum.org](http://www.prattcountymuseum.org)).

"What surprises me is that about 90 percent of them worked when I got them," Konkel says. Most of his repairs are on the cord or plug-in, and he switches out the heating elements on some toasters from a stock of toasters he keeps for parts. Because wiring was different when the old toasters were made, he has a low voltage test stand to check to see if they work.

His oldest toaster is a 1906 General Electric, and the newest models were made about 1970. Konkel says he's not interested in nylon or plastic model toasters. The old toasters were better made, he says.

His collection showcases how toasters developed over time. The first ones required the bread to be turned over to toast the other side. A couple had bells to indicate when the bread should be turned over. A 1938 Toast-olator had a metal track that delivered a piece of toasted bread at the end. Automatic pop-up toasters were introduced around 1948.

Models come in different shapes, from teepee style to sides that fan out to place the bread. A 1925 Estate toaster fans out in all 4 directions. Some are very ornate, have a little silver in them, or come in unique shapes or colors.

"One of my favorites is a red one that lets you see the wires when they turn red," Konkel says.

As a collector, he picked up a few books to learn the values of toasters. Values start at about \$40, and Konkel has some in the \$250 to \$500 range. There are a couple he would like to own, but they are rare and expensive. One is a heart-shaped toaster with doors that fold out on each side. The other is a toaster with the Blue Willow pattern that starts at \$1,500 – when you can find one.

Konkel suggests that people who are interested in collecting toasters check out the Toaster Collectors Association ([www.toastercollectors.org](http://www.toastercollectors.org)).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wayne D. Konkel, 510 N. Main, Pratt, Kan. 67859 (ph 620 672-1903; [www.prattcountymuseum.org](http://www.prattcountymuseum.org)).



Photo courtesy, Stephanie Schaffer

Wayne Konkel has about 200 toasters in his collection. Most of them are displayed at the Pratt County Historical Museum in Kansas.



Models come in different shapes, from teepee styles to sides that fan out to place the bread in all 4 directions.

## Illinois Girl Collects IH Equipment

One would think that a tractor would be the last thing a 17-year-old girl would buy after receiving a \$3,000 check. Hannah Foster admits she also considered buying a pickup, but she figured the tractor's value would hold better. In addition to her restored 1955 Farmall Cub, she has invested in about a dozen implements that can be used with the tractor.

Foster, now 21, admits she isn't a typical girl. She earned her big check by carefully choosing three clone-like Cornish Cross chickens and entering them at the Illinois State Fair, five different years. In 2010, she earned a place at the Sale of Champions, and a bidder paid \$3,000 for her chickens. Combined with money she earned working on her family's farm and selling Sheltie pups, she had enough money to buy the tractor.

The fifth of seven siblings (six girls and one boy), Foster explains that she and her sisters tend to be tomboys because they have helped on their family's farm "ever since they could walk and carry a bucket".

Foster, her father, Darrell, and brother, Russell, are members of the National

International Harvester Collectors Club. She likes the small size of the Cub for hauling on a trailer with implements to events in Penfield, Ill. the Red Power Roundup and the Half Century of Progress.

"I decided to collect implements because when you go to shows there are rows and rows of just tractors," Foster says. "They didn't save implements like the tractors, so they are harder to find. And implements are more educational for young people."

Her Cub tractor has a 1-pt. fast hitch, which makes it easy to hook up implements. By shopping at sales and on Craigslist, her fleet includes a corn planter, two-way plow, harrow, and a handy platform carrier the Fosters restored with new lumber.

"My favorites are my corn sheller and hammermill, because it's nice to know they made implements small enough to work on the Cub," Foster says. She also likes using them for demonstrations at shows. When she runs the hammermill she thinks of the man from Virginia she bought it from. He said the last time it was used was 1956, when he and his mother ground corn for chicken feed.



Hannah Foster's collection of IH equipment includes this restored 1955 Farmall Cub and implements that go with it, as well as a 1956 International S-112 pickup.

Her rotary hoe is her rarest implement. Her brother, Russell, sandblasted and painted it in its original colors, red and blue.

Collecting runs rampant in the Foster family. Russell has purchased, restored and sold more than 50 tractors since 2006, and he collects farm tractor and implement literature and manuals. When Foster's sister, Jennie, won \$5,000 for her chickens in 2012, she also purchased a tractor – a 1946 Farmall B.

Foster says her friends think her collection is cool – it was popular as a photo backdrop at her graduation party. She loves collecting

and agriculture. She raises pups and works on the farm caring for livestock and putting up hay.

She doesn't think she will find all the implements that go with her Farmall, but she has plenty to keep her busy for now.

As for a pickup, she managed to buy one of those, too. She is the proud owner of a 1956 International S-112 pickup.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Hannah Foster, 294 N. 1200 E Rd., Paxton, Ill. 60957 (ph 217 749-2369; [fosterhannah1993@yahoo.com](mailto:fosterhannah1993@yahoo.com)).

## "Satellite Dish" Gazebo

"I've wanted a gazebo for years, but was hesitant because of the difficulty of constructing one out of wood. Using an old satellite dish made it relatively easy," says Bruce Larson, Nielsville, Minn.

He got the aluminum satellite dish free from his local phone company. It measured 10 ft. 3 in. in dia. He cut 5 in. off the slanted receiver attachment brace at the center of the dish, then mounted a 4-in. dia. hooded vent pipe over it and attached an oblong copper toilet float on top for decoration.

He bought the gazebo's octagon-shaped sides from a local school auction for \$10. The gazebo platform measures 12 sq. ft. and sets on a base made from three 12-ft. long, 4 by 4 stringers set on concrete blocks. The deck is supported by 12-ft. long, 2 by 6 floor

joists on 16-in. centers. He used 1 by 6's for the deck boards. All the wood is treated and either stained or painted.

"It makes a nice cool retreat during the warm summer months and gets decorated for different seasonal events," says Larson. "Rose bushes grow in flower planters that I set on each corner of the deck. My total cost was about \$350.

"After the photos were taken I installed underground electric wire and also added a hanging chandelier for lighting."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bruce E. Larson, 303 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Nielsville, Minn. 56568 (ph 218 946-3605; [kimlarson4@gmail.com](mailto:kimlarson4@gmail.com)).

Bruce Larson used an old aluminum satellite dish to build this gazebo. "It makes a nice cool retreat during summer," he says.

