

Benches, Tables Made From Old Grain Drill

James Smith has found a niche market for his “livestock furniture” made from antique grain drills. The Abbotsford, Wis. resident collected the cast iron pieces for 25 years before he retired and started turning them into benches. Later he added wooden shapes (designed by an artist) to make cattle and pig-shaped end tables.



James Smith uses cast iron pieces from antique grain drills to make furniture, including calf end tables and benches.

Different drill models are suited to different animals, Smith says. For example, he uses Massey-Harris grain drill ends for his pigs. He sandblasts and paints the ends with automotive paint to showcase their intricate designs. An artist paints the eagles on his Case grain drill ends.

Beautiful grains in hickory and butternut wood enhanced with a hard acrylic finish accent the cast iron. Smith bolts padded wooden blocks to the legs to protect the floor.

“Coming up with something unique is the biggest challenge,” he says. The calf end tables are his favorite, but he also made a cow in a stanchion and another drinking from a drinking cup.

One customer purchased 3 of Smith’s pieces for his agriculture-themed party room. Other pieces were purchased to hold cards at a wedding and as a storage bench near a sewing machine. Some customers buy the pieces because they collect John Deere, Case or other brands of equipment.

Smith displays his creations at Northern Lakes Vet Supply in Abbotsford, where he works part-time.

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Craig Czako built this wheelie-popping “johnmower” by attaching a wooden outhouse on back of a Sears riding mower. A 2-wheeled wheelie bar trails behind.

Wheelie-Popping “Johnmower”

“It’s a big hit everywhere I go,” says Craig Czako, Mt. Morris, Penn., about the wheelie-popping “johnmower” he built by attaching a wooden outhouse to the back of a Sears riding mower. A 2-wheeled wheelie bar trails behind to make sure the rig doesn’t tip over backward.

The driver sits on a toilet seat and has a roll of toilet paper handy, with a deer skull and antlers behind him and a fake “corn cob” gearshift lever off to one side. There’s also an ooga horn, which Czako blows whenever he’s ready to pop a wheelie. A big color drawing on front of the tractor shows a ‘weirdo hot rod.’ The drawing is on an aluminum plate that’s bolted to the mower frame. Another plate on back reads “eat more possum”.

“I take it to car shows and drag races, and it always steals the show. People love it and go nuts when they see me do a wheelie for the first time,” says Czako. “The combined weight of the rear-mounted engine and outhouse makes it easy to lift up the front end. The entire rig is so well balanced that I don’t have to be in motion to stay up in the air. In fact, when I pop a wheelie it always stays on 4 wheels whether I’m driving or not so it’s very safe to use. And because the engine is rear-mounted, I can pop wheelies as long as I want without starving the engine for oil.”

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Old Dish Makes Classy Patio Umbrella

Ken Bolyard and his wife, Ann, spend more time outside their Texas home since Bolyard turned an old satellite dish into a classy patio umbrella.

With the help of his son, Toby, Bolyard buried a piece of 12-in. dia. culvert about 30 in. deep and cemented it in with 14 bags of ready-mix concrete. They cut a hole in the middle of a steel mesh table with an acetylene torch and cut and welded the table’s support braces to the culvert.

To support the dish, they welded four tabs on the outside of an old 3-ft. wagon wheel and welded the wheel to the top of the culvert. They drilled holes in the dish and bolted it to the wheel tabs.

“I cut a big hole in the middle of the dish to let heat out,” Bolyard says. To keep rain out, the Bolyards welded a piece of pipe to the wheel with an old disk blade on top. They

drilled a small hole and attached a piece of pipe to drain rainwater that catches on the dish’s lip edge.

“There’s a rope light threaded around the wagon wheel. It gives off a soft glow under the dish,” Bolyard says. He ran the wiring through the culvert and added an electrical outlet.

The couple considered painting the exterior to look like a giant mushroom, but the dish looked clean and bright after it was power washed, and they painted a decorative maroon band instead and topped the dish umbrella off with a purchased weathervane.

Bolyard notes that there are different types of dishes. The seamless 10-ft. fiberglass style he used worked out well. He also suggests keeping the umbrella as low as possible to maximize shade. The bottom of his dish is about 3 in. taller than him. With its shape and



Ken Bolyard turned an old satellite dish into this classy patio umbrella. It’s supported by a length of 12-in. dia. culvert that has a steel mesh table welded to it.

concrete footing, the umbrella doesn’t move at all – even in big winds.

“It was a fun little project. The longest wait was for the cement to dry. My son and I probably have about 2 hours in it,” Bolyard

says.

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Lift Makes Horseback Riding Possible For Everyone

There’s no doubt that horseback riding is therapeutic for injured patients or the disabled. The only problem for many riders is getting up on the horse. The SureHands® lift system makes it easier for the rider and volunteers. No manual lifting is required. The rider goes right from a wheelchair to the horse.

“What makes SureHands unique is the variety of specialized slings,” says Debra Sardella, marketing manager for the N.Y. company.

Padded cups support the upper body, and strong supports slide under each thigh to support the lower body. This makes it easy to put on and remove the SureHands lift whether the person is on a horse, swimming in a pool or taking care of personal hygiene at home.

Sardella explains that SureHands lift models include mobile units as well as wall and ceiling lifts to accommodate clients’ needs. Ceiling mounted lifts are commonly used in homes because a track system can allow people to live independently or with the assistance of a caregiver.

“Caregivers love SureHands because transferring is easier and safer for them and consumers,” she says.

The ceiling mounts are typically used for horseback therapy programs. The lift has a quiet motor that doesn’t spook horses and is capable of lifting up to 440 lbs. (Larger capacity models are also available).

SureHands systems have been installed in therapeutic horseback facilities throughout the U.S. Staff at SureHands work with PATH

International (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) and provide information to help groups when they apply for grants to help pay the cost of the lift system. Costs vary, Sardella says, according to the setup. Anyone interested in learning more about the lift should contact the company, which will have a local dealer contact them for a personal consultation and estimate. Videos on the company’s website show how it works.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, SureHands Lift & Care Systems, 982 County Route 1, Pine Island, N.Y. 10969 (ph 800 724-5305; info@surehands.com; www.surehands.com).



Lift system uses specialized slings that takes the rider right from a wheelchair to the horse.