

Reader Letters



Don't spend hundreds of dollars on a security system for your car or pickup when you can keep it theft-proof for less than \$5 and a few minutes work. Every car today has an inertia switch on the fuel pump. It ensures the pump stops if there has been a crash. Sometimes it goes off if you hit too big a pothole. To turn it back on, you have to hit a switch. Sometimes the reset is inside under the dash. On my 1997 F-150, it's under the passenger side of the dash.

Once you find the wire that goes to the reset switch, splice in wire to a second switch. Mount that switch elsewhere under the dash or out of sight, but easily reached by the driver.

If you have to leave your vehicle in a high theft area, hit the second switch. If someone tries to steal your car, they won't be able to start it. **(Ronald Krentz, 9108 S. Timberline Terrace, Inverness, Fla. 34452 ph 352 341-0612)**



This is a simple idea but it sure beats walking and stooping. I just carry a trigger-type "grabber" stick with me on my riding mower so I can pick up sticks and stones around the yard and toss them in the trailer. You can buy one of these grabber sticks for just a couple bucks at Walmart. **(Jack Roberts, Zeating, Iowa)**



When beavers cut sticks to make a dam, they choose straight, strong branches. We had a dam on a nearby creek so I used some of the sticks to tie our berry bushes to. They worked perfect. **(Tom Gogerty, Madrid, Iowa)**

The handiest idea I've had lately, for the money, is making use of those mini solar-powered lights that you can buy to stick in the ground alongside sidewalks or landscaping. Instead of putting them in the ground, where they just get in the way of mowing, I attach them with metal screws to the rain gutter over the doorway or steps. I also attached one over our house number, which is attached to a tree. You can put them anywhere you need a little extra light. They have one or two rechargeable batteries in them that keep them lit overnight. **(Eldon Reese, Jonesburg, Mo.)**

You had a story in the last issue about a fellow who uses a "stand up" pvc pipe to water newly planted trees. I've been using the same idea for several years, burying a pipe so the bottom end is next to the roots to water new plants. On top of the pipe I usually insert an upside

down plastic soda bottle with the bottom cut off to make a built-in funnel. I tape it in place. Makes it easier to see how much water goes into the pipe. **(Ben Parks, quincy443@yahoo.com)**



Thank you for featuring the WonderFunnel in FARM SHOW (Vol. 37, No. 3). I've gotten more orders, feedback and interest on the article than I ever expected. You must have a very large circulation with very avid readers. Thanks again. You have been a great help to my start-up business. **(Dale Hester, WonderFunnel, ph 405 613-7000; www.wonderfunnel.com)**

As a farmer and professional civil engineer, I was disturbed by your recent article about using old railroad flatbed cars as bridges. Until a structural analysis can be done on the structure of each car used, it's dangerous and, in many instances, illegal to use these for this purpose. No respectable transportation engineer would allow this on any public roadway. As a farmer I understand the attraction of this idea but don't do it! You are better off in the long run to purchase culverts and bridge material from a reputable supplier. **(Todd Larson, todd.larson@hancockconcrete.com)**

Wide-mouth plastic jars – the kind found in grocery stores as containers of crackers and cookies – make ideal



waterproof signs. The jars fit easily over the top of a 2 by 4 or 4 by 4 so you can drive in a post, tape a sign on ordinary paper to the inside of the jar, and put the jar over the top of the post. You can screw or nail the jar in place on the post through the threaded end. **(C.F. Marley, Nokomis, Ill.)**

In your last issue you had an article about a "made it myself" mini earth mover pulled by a small tractor. It's an impressive-looking earthmover. However, in the article it says the owner built it because he couldn't find a small unit that his tractor could pull. I bought a small earthmover from Hoelscher Commercial Products (ph 620 562-3575; www.hoelscherinc.com). It's very well-built and they offer 3 sizes, from 1.2 yard to 1.8 yard capacity. **(Rick Baker, rsbaker@localnet.com)**

Mixing 3 lbs. of diatomaceous earth to every 100 lbs. of grain you feed your horses is a simple way to keep flies away from your barn and manure pile.

Food grade diatomaceous earth can be purchased online or from companies like Perma Guard (ph 505 243-1460) for \$28 for 50 lbs. The reason it works is that the diatomaceous earth kills any maggots from the eggs flies lay in the manure, just

the way it eliminates worm problems by killing them in the gut.

Our vet was amazed to see that we have no fly problems despite our manure pile being just a few feet from our barn. It also enriches the garden or wherever you spread the manure. Diatomaceous earth can also be used as a dust in your garden to control soft-shelled insects. **(Alton Eliason, Northford, Conn., altoneliason@comcast.net; ph 203 484-0277)**

I built this small ferris wheel from a pair of large dump rake wheels. I started with two rider seats and later added two more. A Teddy Bear rides in each seat.



We wanted the Teddy Bears to be large and showy and went to flea markets and garage sales to find just the right ones. All the bears are about the same weight for balance.

Power is provided by a McCormick gas engine, with a clothesline belt running from the ferris wheel to the engine. Every year I take the ferris wheel to a local steam and gas engine show where it's quite a conversation piece. Little kids like to watch it go around while their parents snap photos. At parades I haul it on a trailer in my 1937 Ford truck, and it's a real crowd pleaser. **(Wally Clavadatscher, S9895 County Rd. E, Sauk City, Wis. 53583)**

Using a long-handled dandelion digger, it's possible to harvest asparagus without having to bend over. I use a spring-loaded "grabber" to hold the asparagus while I cut it off with the knife. **(C.F. Marley, 26288 Oconee Ave., Nokomis, Ill. 62075, ph 217 563-2588)**



I recently discovered this lady at a flea market in Bristol, Tenn., selling buttered popcorn and using an oil can to add the butter. She says she adds a little canola oil to thin the butter so it'll flow better. **(Ron Balkom, 3060 Upper Copper Creek Road, Lebanon, Va. 24266, ph 828 289-3883)**

Someone gave me this cast iron seat. He wanted to give it a good home so I told him I'd convert it into a rocking chair. The 15-in. high steel wheels are off a small



wagon, with leaf springs welded onto the bottom. The armrests are made from stained wood, and the back was made by cutting down a steel gate. There's a cup holder on one side. **(George Feltz, 6280 5th St., Stevens Point, Wis. 54482, ph 715 341-0162)**



I needed to clean out a narrow trench so I came up with this handy tool. I took a broomstick and a curved piece of 2-in. dia. plastic pipe, drilled a hole in the side and shoved the broomstick in, securing it with a screw from the other side. The end of the conduit is cut down to form a scoop. **(Anonymous)**

I carved this bear and cub out of a big 4-ft. dia. cedar tree stump. It stands in my back yard and is all one piece.



The tree had a fork in it so I carved the cub out of the fork, hanging on mama bear's back.

I used my 4 1/2-in. air die grinder to do most of the work and bought a special bit equipped with chainsaw teeth to carve the fine stuff such as the mouth, eyes and teeth.

Cedar is a real light wood so I painted the bears to make them stand out better. Everyone who sees the bears wants to have their photo taken standing next to them. It took me about two weeks to do the work. **(Tom Allison, P.O. Box 86, Orofino, Idaho 83544, ph 208 816-0775)**

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