



Mark MacLean turned a junked bicycle and the drum from an old washing machine into this wind-powered compost tumbler.

Wind-Powered Composter

Mark MacLean, Ovilla, Texas, can turn food scraps into "aged" compost in about 4 weeks with his wind-powered compost tumbler. He made it from a junked bicycle and a drum from an old washing machine.

The composter is powered entirely by the wind, with the "windmill" mounted on four 8-ft. tall wooden poles anchored in the ground. Material is loaded through a door on one side of the drum, which sets on its side inside a metal frame located just above the ground. A plastic lid covers the top of the drum to keep the contents from spilling out.

The entire windmill with tail, rotor, and gears rotates 360 degrees. MacLean bolted the windmill blades to the rear wheel rim off a bicycle. The bike's drive chain, sprockets and one of the bicycle pedals bolt to a metal bracket on one side of the bike's front fork assembly. A length of chain connected to the pedal leads down to a horizontal arm



Windmill's blades are bolted to rear wheel rim off a bicycle. Bike's pedal is connected to a vertical shaft that fastens to drum.



As pole pushes down, it cranks a horizontal shaft that slowly rotates drum.

that supports a pair of vertical metal poles spaced about 16 in. apart. One of the poles leads down to the drum.

"As one pole lifts up, the horizontal arm forces the other pole down, which rotates the drum," says MacLean. "The drum rotates very slowly on a horizontal shaft and makes only about 5 full rotations every day. A pair of ratchets keep the drum turning clockwise, in one direction only."

MacLean makes other windmill-inspired machines, including aerators and pumps. He also builds wind-powered lawn ornaments including a model of a World War II B-24 bomber with windmill-style propellers, and even a windmill mailbox.

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"Kitty Hilton" A Home For Barn Cats

Jed Van Der Zwaag's "Kitty Hilton" keeps cats warm in winter and keeps chickens out of their food. The old refrigerator's insulated housing keeps them warm, and the big door makes it easy to replace food and water.

"I had an old refrigerator I was scrapping out, and my wife suggested I use it for the cats," says Van Der Zwaag. "I laid it on its back and cut a hole in the side near the former top. The divider between the freezer section and the refrigerator slid out, so the cats can access the complete interior."

The small access hole keeps most curious chickens out. Should they squeeze through, they don't go much farther. Van Der Zwaag replaced the divider with a wire shelf and cut a hole in it also. The cats crawl through it to

reach food, water and space to catch catnaps.

"In the winter, I put a flood lamp with a 40 watt bulb inside the cat house," says Van Der Zwaag. "It provides enough heat to always keep the interior at least at 60 degrees."

Van Der Zwaag and his family appreciate how easy the recycled frig is to clean. "If I need to, I can just flip it back on end and hose it out," he says.

A second, smaller refrigerator has found a new life as a dog food container. Van Der Zwaag says the airtight, insulated housing is ideal.

"It was an old dorm refrigerator," he says. "It keeps the food fresh and keeps out rodents."

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Home Elevator Made From Forklift

Jack Michael was 90 on his last birthday but doesn't show any signs of slowing down. He still keeps his 3 restored vintage autos in tip-top shape and occasionally builds something special for his home. Michael has been a long-time FARM SHOW reader and recently copied one of the ideas he read about to build a home elevator made from forklift components.

"My wife and I made an agreement several years ago that if either one of us needed special care, the other person would try their best to provide it at home," Michael says. "Not long after that she had a stroke and was paralyzed on her right side and lost most of her ability to speak."

Michael needed to be able to move his wife in her wheelchair from the lower level garage up to their home's main floor about 10 ft. up, so he built the elevator to handle the job.

"I knew those walk-behind forklifts can raise about 10 ft. in the air and lift several hundred pounds, so I found a good used one," says Michael. He positioned the lift in the lower level of his house and removed the rolling mechanisms so the machine is stationary. Then he built a rectangular-shaped elevator "car" about 5 ft. by 8 ft. and mounted it on the forks. The forks raise the car up and through an opening in the floor of their house.

Michael uses two, 12-volt deep cycle batteries to raise and lower the lift. He hooked up starter switches in the elevator's bi-fold doors, so when the doors are closed at either level the starter switches are activated. The lift stops when it touches a starter switch at the top when it's raised or on the garage floor



Jack Michael uses his home-built forklift to move his wife in her wheelchair from a lower level garage up to their home's main floor.

when it's lowered. Michael says the motor that raises and lowers the car is about the size of a car starter. He says it has enough power to lift 5 guys that weigh about 200 lbs. each, which is more than enough for his needs.

"Once I got the idea for the elevator in my mind it took me about 30 days to build. There wasn't a lot of cost to it, and the finished lift works as good as pockets in a pair of pants," says Michael.

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Water Jug Bird Feeder Looks Like A Pig

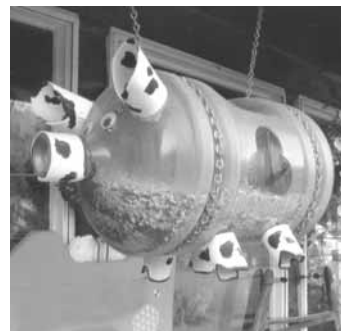
About 6 mo. ago FARM SHOW published a story about how reader John Dougoveto filled a large water jug with sunflower seeds and made a perch at one end using a chunk of stiff wire and a couple of radiator hose clamps.

The feeder holds a lot of seed, and there's a lot less waste because birds hop right inside to grab seeds.

Bud Falkenstein recently sent photos of his own version of the water jug idea, which is decorated to look like a flying pig.

Bud wrapped a wire coat hanger around the snout for a perch and a pair of light chains around the jug to hang it up.

"I made a couple of these feeders and then took one down to my neighbor friend Henry, who operates a store with lots of customers," says Bud. "Henry has an artistic employee who took the feeder home and decorated it to look like a pig. She also came up with the idea of cutting holes into the side so the birds have easy access to the feeder, as well as an



Bud Falkenstein made this big bird feeder out of a water jug and then had it decorated to look like a flying pig.

escape route."

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Jack Van Der Zwaag uses an old refrigerator, with its insulated housing, to keep his cats warm in winter. The big door makes it easy to replace food and water.

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He removed the divider between the freezer and refrigerator and replaced it with a wire shelf. Cats crawl through a hole in the shelf to reach food and water.