

# Reader Letters



In regard to your blurb about premium gas being a better deal (Vol. 28, No. 4), this idea is wrong. Compression is in the design of the engine, not in the gas. Premium gas is better only in high-compression engines. Also, all gas has the same power. Octane only allows the power to be used at high compression. (John Harrer, Vineyard Haven, Mass.)



I read your article in a recent issue about the World's Largest Egg, laid in Russia (Vol. 28, No. 3). One of my chickens recently laid what I think might be the world's smallest egg. At 2/10ths of an ounce, or 5.6 grams, it's just a fraction of the size of a regular egg. I know which chicken laid it because it was still wet when I pulled it out. For some reason, the small egg is also spotted. (Robert Schunk, 9955 Creek Rd., Batavia, NY 14020)

I make these walking sticks for hiking or just walking. I call them Mississippi walking sticks. They're made from vines that grow around small trees, giving them an interesting look. The sticks can be tall or short, and of a big diameter or small enough for a child to handle. I charge \$30 each plus shipping. If you order one, it may take as long as 30 days because I might not have the size you want and would have to go to the woods to find one that will work. I don't believe these sticks could be commercially manufactured. It's all hand work. (Nancy Randall, 6638 Hwy 483, Lena, Miss. 39094 ph 601 654-3961)

I made this windmill weather vane out of two bicycle wheels. There are vanes on each wheel which turn them in different



directions because the vanes are angled different ways. The counter-rotating wheels make an eye-catching yard or fence ornament. If you mount them on a pole or on top of a building, they make good wind direction indicators. (K.J. Disprose, 120 Mission Ave., St. Albert, Alta. T8N 2C6 Canada ph 780 459-7361)

I use tide soap powder to kill ants. Just stir the bed up and sprinkle a cup of Tide in it. Works every time. (C.H. Green, Sneads, Fla.)

I have an old 7-in. ice auger used to cut ice fishing holes during winter. I now use it to dig holes for posts. Unless you hit a tree root, the hand-cranked auger

works great. (Allan E. Meier, 15356 Fish Lake Road, Grantsburg, Wis. 54840)

While serving my 6-month tour here in Kosovo, I have been constantly amazed by the ingenious home-crafted equip-



ment used. It's still common to see horse-drawn wagons in town and farmers using scythes to harvest their wheat.

One of the most interesting pieces of equipment I've seen is this well-drilling rig used to drill wells about 3 ft. wide. It



was completely built from scrap materials. The frame consists of two truck frames mounted with one upside down on the other. The top one slides back and forth. A third truck frame is used as a guide for the drill extensions. The rig works just like a twist posthole digger, but on a much larger scale.

The drive shaft from the engine connects to a hydraulic pump that powers most of the operation. Hydraulic rams extend and retract the machine over the well, and another ram applies down pressure. The drill bucket is turned by a hydraulic motor. The transfer case is used to power a winch that raises the drill bucket when full. Once the bucket is lifted, a piece of plywood is thrown over the hole and the contents emptied into a wheelbarrow.

Once completed, the well was about 20 ft. deep and lined with concrete culvert sections. Total cost was \$830. The well supplies up to three houses and may or may not be fitted with a pump.

Hand digging the same-sized well would've taken weeks while this one was done in two days. (Keith Ferdon, Motley, Minn.; email: keith.ferdon@monteith2.areur.army.mil)

I'm a longtime owner of pet hedgehogs and an active member of The Hedgehog Welfare Society ([www.hedgehogwelfare.org](http://www.hedgehogwelfare.org)). A friend recently gave me your article about hedgehogs titled "Hedgehogs Make Fun Hobby, Add Income".

I wanted to point out that in order to breed hedgehogs you must be inspected annually by the USDA, meet their requirements and have a permit from them. Hedgehogs should not be weaned until 6-8 weeks and not bred until 6 months old and retired after only a couple years. They are not an animal to make money with. Most breeders barely meet their expenses.

Hedgehogs are wonderful pets for the right owner. They need specialized care and housing and are expensive to maintain because of vet bills. Hedgehogs are prone to cancer and Wobbly Hedgehog Syndrome to name just two health issues.

The average lifespan is maybe 4 years. (Naomi Wikane, Active member of the Hedgehog Welfare Society, [www.hedgehogwelfare.org](http://www.hedgehogwelfare.org))

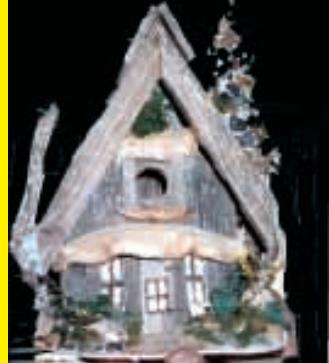


Here's a photo of an old cream separator that we found in a fenceline. It was completely covered with dirt and had been there since the early 1900's. It's rusted together solid.

Does anyone know of a rust remover product that could be used to restore a machine like this? (Keith Barthel, 47033 Frontier Rd., Amelia, Neb. 68711)

Thank you for the article in the last issue of FARM SHOW on our mini-nubian goat venture. We've had great response and met many interesting people. My only regret is that between the time you got the story and the time it was published, we obtained a new web site so the old one was not good. Our new website address is: <http://webnanny.net/whisperingpines/> (Susan Selvage, 3080 Turners Creek Rd., Ferrum, Va. 24088 ph 540 365-1696)

My hobby is making bird houses out of old barn boards, laminated birch bark, cowboy boots, and work boots. I also use natural products such as tree bark, twigs, fungus, moss, and so forth. They're



real conversation pieces. Over the years I've made more than 700 bird houses, and no two are exactly alike. I even number and sign them. Some of them look like barns or churches and are made out of stones held together by tile cement. The churches have stained glass windows in them.

The birdhouses sell for \$50 to \$175. I keep many of them on display at my home. (William Pennington, 25163 Co. 25, Akeley, Minn. 56433 ph 218 652-2141)

I used a 36-in. length of 12-in. dia. schedule 40 pipe to build a pull-type lawn roller. It has a 3/8-in. thick steel plate welded in to each end and Dodge W-25 weld-in



hubs at each end with Dodge 2517 taper lock bushings. The roller rides on a 1 1/16-in. dia. cold roll shaft that's 44 in. long.

I bolted 1 15/16-in. pillow block bearings to each end of a frame that I made

from angle iron. A length of 1/2 by 1-in. flat steel on front serves as a scraper to keep the roller clean. The hitch point is a piece of flat bar bent around a bolt, with a spacer welded in for strength and so that it will pivot.

The unit weighs just over 200 lbs. and is heavy enough that I don't have to add water. I use a Sears 15 hp garden tractor to pull it. Most of the material that I used could be found at a scrap yard. (Joe Zimny, 170 E. Aycliffe Dr., Shelton, Wash. 98584; ph 360 426-2792; email: [jenz41@msn.com](mailto:jenz41@msn.com)).

For twelve years I've been known as the "Antler Doctor" because I use herbs from Mother Nature to restore damaged deer antlers and bring them back to their origi-



Before After

nal condition. All the material I use comes from the woods. I don't use any varnish or stain. I've restored antlers for people from coast to coast, including Alaska. I charge \$1 to \$1.35 per inch depending on the antler's condition. They make great mementos of a hunt. (Ronald Berthiaume, 704 Columbus Smith Road, Salisbury, Vt. 05769 ph 802 352-4323)



I attached a metal platform on front of my riding mower on which I placed a 15-gal. spray tank. The tank is held in place by a pair of bungee cords, and a quick disconnect cord supplies power from the mower's battery. The mower is hydraulic-driven so I can use one hand to control both speed and direction. My other hand is free to operate the sprayer nozzle control. The spray tank and platform can be quickly removed. (Harry T. Fast, Box 68, Rickreall, Oregon 97371)

Storing Christmas icicle lights is a lot easier ever since I converted 4 by 8 sheets of pegboard into icicle light hold



ers. They keep the lights from getting all tangled up. I cut the sheets down to 2 ft. square and use a 1-in. hole saw to cut four connecting holes in the middle toward the top for a handhold. Then I make notches on each side and wrap the cord around and around in them so the icicles hang straight down. I made two other holes spaced 16 in. apart so I can hang the boards from the joists in my garage. I leave the shingle clips right on the lights to make the job easier. Every year I put up about 8,000 lights on my property, so this idea has saved me a lot of hassle. (Pat Prom, 12661 Pioneer Trail, Eden Prairie, Minn. 55347)

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