

Reader Letters



Continued from previous page

Unfortunately, my mailing address changed soon after I talked to your reporter. If anyone wants to talk to me about the gate, you can reach me at the address below. I have patented the gate and would like to find a manufacturer to put it on the market. **(Todd Amthor, Box 203, Admiral, Sask. S0N 0B0 Canada ph 306 297-2724; E-mail: damthor@t2.net)**

Winters can get pretty rough in the Midwest. Every year, when it starts getting cold, I put together a winter survival kit



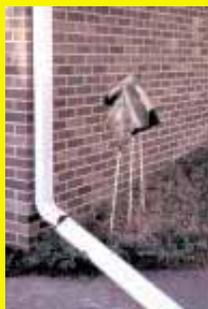
using an ordinary suitcase. I just fill it full of warm clothing, a blanket, candles, food, and whatever else fits. The suitcase keeps everything clean and takes up less room in the trunk. **(Rex Gogerty, 33475 K. Ave., Hubbard, Iowa 50122 ph 515 487-7617)**



You can make all kinds of things from old school buses. We've found that it doesn't



take much to make cheap, sanitary transportation for early weaned pigs. All you have to do is strip out the seats and board off the driver's platform. **(Roger Howe, 1233 Eastman Ave., Clemons, Iowa 50051 ph 515 477-8600)**



This is a simple idea that's handy if you have a lot of wet boots. I just hang them upside down on electric fence posts. It's easy to set up as many posts as you have boots. **(Jack Gogerty, Zearing, Iowa)**

We needed a ladder on our M&W grain cart. We simply bolted a section of lad-

der off a windmill. It's strong and makes checking the wagon safe.

Another idea that works well for us is putting a sheet of plastic under our unloading auger. We just stake the corners down to hold it in place. Makes cleanup easy. **(Jim Oakes, Zearing, Iowa)**



My father, Sam, bought this 1941 Deere "B" tractor new. It has now served four generations without ever needing an overhaul. It's still an active part of our operation. **(Asher Oakes, 107 North Pine, Zearing, Iowa 50278 ph 515 487-7361)**

Last fall a lot of my corn was blown down completely flat during a bad windstorm. The down corn wouldn't feed into my corn head so, out of desperation, I designed my own down-corn reel. It works perfect and cost me only the time to build it.



I used the center tube, mounting arms, and several of the spokes from a batt reel off an old 20-ft. wheat table. The tube was just the right length for my combine's 8-row corn head. I added several 16-in. wide, 24-in. long paddles which I made from continuous belting off a conveyor. I positioned the paddles and spokes over the row snouts, instead of the rows, so as not to impede the harvest of standing corn. The reel is driven by a hydraulic motor from the wheat table and is manu-



ally raised and lowered by a pair of come-alongs attached to the back of the corn head, one at each end.

I also designed a quick and easy way to lift a full barrel of oil out of my pickup and move it into my shop or over to an irrigation engine site using my loader tractor. I welded a 16-in. length of chain to each of the two screw-in lids on top of the barrel. To lift the barrel out of the pickup I simply screw in each lid and then bolt the end of one chain to the end of the other chain. The same lids are found

on most sizes of drums and can be used over and over again. **(Dale Orman, 1300 Timber Run Dr., St. Louis, Mo. 63146 ph 314 434-7645)**

I used an old 9-ton, 3-axle trailer to build a light duty bridge for my friend, who operates a bed and breakfast on his farm. He already had a wooden 9-ft. wide, 22-



ft. long bridge that was designed for pedestrians, light vehicles and horse-drawn wagons, but he wanted it replaced. The steel-framed trailer had been used to carry a backhoe towed behind a dump truck. I removed the trailer's fenders and front and rear axles. I also cut the center axle from the frame and then chained it



back into place so that the trailer could be moved to its new location.

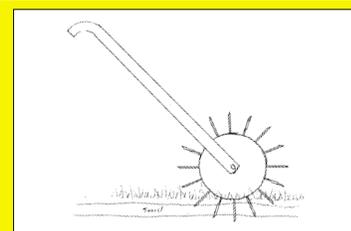
I installed five rows of pressure-treated wood planks the length of the frame and 2-in. thick Hemlock planks at each end. We planned to cover the remaining 12 ft. in the middle with the decking from the old bridge. The bridge was then loaded onto a trailer and transported 80 miles to my friend's farm. There, we removed the deck deck from the old bridge and pushed the new bridge across the timbers. A big skid steer loader was then used to lift one end of the deck so that the axle could be unchained and rolled out. Then the center of the bridge was re-decked. The new bridge deck is 10 ft. wide and 22 ft. long and has a 5-ft. high railing on each side. **(Hudson Wilson, 14776 Hwy. 50, Rt. 2, Bolton, Ontario, Canada L7E 5R8 ph 905 857-8768).**

We demonstrated this miniature working replica of a 1936 stationary hay baler at



the Sunbelt Expo last fall near Moultrie, Ga. It produces miniature bales of hay or straw that measure 4 in. wide, 5 in. high, and 9 in. long. The baler itself is 62 in. long by 18 in. high and weighs 110 lbs. It's powered by a modified 1939 John Deere pedal tractor which is equipped with a small gas engine. Both the tractor and baler were built by Clifford Stone of Benton, Tenn. He's in his late 70's and built the baler from memory. As a child growing up on the farm one of his chores was to help bale hay with his father's stationary baler. **(Patsi Barker, 233 Co. Rd. 782, Etowah, Tenn. 37331 ph 423 263-2914)**

Over the years I've had problems with moles in my yard so I decided to find a



way to kill them for good.

The first thing I tried was something I call a 'mole stabber'. It consists of a 10-in. dia., 1/2-in. thick steel disc with 3-in. sharpened steel spikes welded to it. The spikes are about 1 1/2 in. apart. A handle is attached to an axle that runs through the disc. I just push the stabber ahead of me, following the path made by the moles as they dig their tunnels and push the dirt up. I know I've killed at least one mole this way because as I stabbed into the tunnel I heard him squeak and then dug him up. But I decided that method was too hit and miss.

My second idea works better. During the evening I use my ATV to pull a 1,000-lb. lawn roller across the yard and roll the tunnels down flat. Then at about noon the next day, when moles are looking for food, I go back with a spade and watch for any fresh digging activity. If I see dirt being pushed up at the end of a tunnel I pop the spade down, flip the ground over, and kill the mole. I have to walk quietly because moles are very sensitive to ground vibrations and will stop digging if they hear you coming. Last year I killed 24 moles this way. **(Mike Dick, 1998 215th St., Humboldt, Iowa 50548 ph 515 332-3550; fax 3770)**

We have a lot of trees around many of our fields and often have to trim off overhanging limbs. Standing on a ladder or in a loader bucket while holding a chain saw can be dangerous and time consuming, so to solve the problem I built my



own loader-mounted cherry picker. I use it on my Deere 2020 tractor. It consists of a treated plywood box that pivots at the end of a pair of 12-ft. long steel arms that bolt to steel brackets that wrap around the box. A pair of cross pieces connect the arms together. To keep the arms from bending I attach a pair of chains to the top cross piece and down to hooks welded on back of the bucket.

The box pivots on a pair of bolts so it always remains vertical even as the loader is being raised or lowered. A shock absorber on one side of the box reduces bucket sway. The box can be lifted up to 20 ft. high.

It also works great for access to center pivot irrigation pipes, electric lines and poles, etc. The bucket on my loader is hydraulic-controlled. For safety reasons I'd never try this idea on a manually-controlled bucket. **(LeRoy Lampen, 13277 Born St., Jones, Mich. 49061 ph 616 244-5455)**