

Reader Letters



We have concerns about a story in the last issue of FARM SHOW about a "state-of-the-art" grate for Central Boiler Wood Furnaces. This very expensive grate can cause the fire to go out between cycles, can cause the furnace to operate less efficiently, conflicts with the manufacturing construction for the safety listing, and can make normal daily maintenance more cumbersome and time consuming. Installing the grate may also affect the warranty. (Central Boiler, Inc., Greenbush, Minn.; www.centralboiler.com)



While having my morning coffee I looked out the window and saw a swarm of bees hanging from a bush in our yard. I didn't want to kill the bees because we've heard there are shortages due to diseases, but I didn't want them around my place either. I called a beekeeper, Kirk Sewing of Taylor Springs, Ill., who showed up with bee hive "supers". He placed one under the cluster of bees, cut the swarm so it fell

Readers might be interested in the Avian Elevator, a patented poultry lift system that makes loading birds safer,



easier and more efficient. It can be operated by either remote control or dedicated controls on the machine. It can lift a full-loaded cart 900 lbs. to a height of 8 ft. Much easier than lifting chickens up and down by hand. To watch a video of it in action go to www.avianelevator.com. (David Becker, 643 Hereford Road, Elizabethtown, Penn. 17022; ph 717 361-9400; dcwelding@embarqmail.com).

I bought two 20 by 14-in. Rubbermaid "roughneck" totes to keep in the trunk of my car. I put groceries in them to keep from rolling around. Also, if you purchase meat, it will contain the juices that would otherwise leak into the carpet. Lastly, they have handles on the ends so if you have a lot of small items you can just carry the tote into the house. (Bob Moty, Crystal Lake, Ill.)



To block off a creek that rises and falls during the year, we mounted a pair of gates on the sides of the creek and attached the outer ends to steel cables that can be raised and lowered as needed. Simple and keeps the cows in. (Rex Gogerty, Hubbard, Iowa)

I use mouse poison to kill moles in my yard. I take a screwdriver and round out a hole into the mole run, stick a small funnel into the hole, and pour in a 1/2 teaspoon of D-CON mouse poison. I leave the hole open, which I think attracts the mole to the poison. I've been doing this for a couple years to get rid of any moles that show up. The best part is no dead moles to dispose of. (Roger Ash, Charlotte, Mich.)



onto the super, and then covered it up. He let it stand until all the worker bees came back at night and then closed the bee entry so he could transport it back home. Kirk was glad to get the new bees because many of his bees had died from winterkill. So, if you ever find a big swarm of bees, don't kill them. Call a beekeeper. (C.F. Marley, Nokomis, Ill.)



I found a skunk in a live trap recently and had to find a way to get it out without getting sprayed. I threw a heavy tarp over the top of the trap and then ran a piece of metal from a lawn tractor exhaust pipe to the edge of the tarp and ran the tractor for 10 min. to kill the skunk. Once it was dead, I dumped it out into a hole and buried it. (David Neises dneises@gmail.com)

After cleaning out our wood stove at the end of the season, we place cedar bedding chips into the stove. It smells great, covering the scent of the empty stove, and we use the chips to start the fire when we use the stove again in the fall. (Jeff Jackson, Taylors, S.C.)

In your last issue, someone told how they used electrical conduit to make replacement handles on rakes. I've used this method on various garden tools for years. One problem is that the conduit can bend, especially on a hoe, so I insert a 2 or 3-ft. wood dowel inside the conduit at the bottom. (Terry Morgel, Avon, Minn.)



I often attend antique tractor shows and stay overnight in a tent at the show site. I don't like using those long plastic spikes to stake the tent down, because they can easily break when pounded into hard ground. So I went to a local hardware store and bought some cheap 12-in. pole barn nails, then welded 3/8-in. dia. fender washers under the heads to keep the rope from sliding off the nail. (Dave Dam, 111 N. Buena Vista Rd., Eau Claire, Wis. 54703; ph 715 450-2943)

I lost 3 fuel caps on my New Holland tractors over 6 years. The first 2 replacement caps cost \$20 apiece, but



the third one cost \$44, which gave me plenty of incentive to engineer a solution.

So, for 80 cents worth of "jack chain", a 25-cent swivel, 3 pop rivets, 4 pop rivet spacers, and a small piece of aluminum angle iron, I was able to solve the problem. I riveted the chain to the gas cap and to the tractor fender. Sure, I may still forget to put the cap back on, but when it slides off the fender I'll hear it jangle.

I also came up with this handy, front-mounted fold-up guide for my V-rake that makes it easy to follow the edge of



unraked hay. It's built with 2 telescoping lengths of square tubing that have metal rods and short chains at the ends. The tubes can be adjusted up to 15 1/2 ft. wide and fold up out of the way so I can drive through narrow gates.

It eliminates the need to look back all the time and lets me know exactly where to drive. Otherwise, the tendency is to overlap a foot or so over into the raked area in order to keep from missing strips of hay. This device results in full windrows so my New Holland 4 by 4 round baler makes more even bales.

The tubes pin onto a homemade angle iron "bumper" on front of the tractor. They're held together for transport by a metal rod that pins onto brackets welded

on about halfway up the tubes. (Robert T. Murphy, Jr., 10154 Wolf Lane, Dardanelle, Ark. 72834; ph 479 229-4102; murphyft@gmail.com)

For years I've been turning ammunition casings – everything from rifle shells to artillery shells – into steam whistles (Vol. 36, No. 5). My latest effort is a giant 5-ft. long air horn made with a big public address speaker that measures 22 in. in dia.

My other big whistles can be heard a



mile or more away. This giant one will go twice that far. I operate all the others on a 100-lb. propane tank that I keep in my pickup and set at 125 lbs. pressure. However, for this giant air horn I need a much larger tank.

I have about 30 artillery shells in my collection now and recently made a big display rack for about 20 of them. I also make 3-chime whistles out of artillery



shells ranging from 75 to 105 mm. A pipe with elbows and an air compressor hookup connects the shells together. They are designed to make a triple tone like you find on big ships.

I have some smaller whistles made out of 8 to 32-ga. brass shotgun shells that I can just blow into. Anyone with questions please call after 6 p.m. (Dave Dam, 111 N. Buena Vista Rd., Eau Claire, Wis. 54703; ph 715 450-2943)

Thanks to FARM SHOW for your story on my book explaining the rules outlining events for tractor-driving



contests (How To Conduct Your Own Tractor Olympics, Vol. 38, No. 2.) I recently traveled to a fair in Presque Isle, Maine, where they staged our tractor games for their fair. Events have been held in other parts of the country.

At the Presque Isle Fair the number of competitors exceeded the goal of organizers. From the start of the first event at 6 p.m. to the last at 9:30 p.m., cheers and laughter could be heard over the roar of the tractors. (Liz Capen, ph 802 447-4993; LizCapen101@outlook.com)

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