

Living Umbrellas Provide More Than Shade

Dave Tilley had an epiphany when he saw people crowd around a tall potted plant seeking shade from Las Vegas's scorching sun and 120-degree heat on a swimming pool patio. Why not use vegetation to create living umbrellas?

As an ecological engineering professor at the University of Maryland, the idea fits perfectly with his focus to incorporate nature into urban areas with things such as green roofs, living walls and rain barrels. With financial help from the University of Maryland, state and national grants, he and three other team members developed an aluminum prototype that debuted at the U of M campus, trade shows and restaurants around the Mid-Atlantic region.

The umbrella rib frame peaks at 9 ft. tall and includes a container with soil and nutrients to fertilize plants and support up to 100 lbs. through an entire season. The solar power can be used to irrigate the plants on top.

"We plant Mandevilla vines and treat it as an annual. It's a phenomenal flower producer beginning June 1," Tilley says, adding that the

plants are 3 to 4 ft. long when planted so that they will create a canopy within a month.

The team is looking at other species, including edible plants that could be grown and used in entrees at restaurants.

Tilley notes that during development, engineering students focused on the shade aspect and how growing plants add an extra cooling factor.

"When we talk to restaurant and hotel owners, they feel these (living umbrellas) are a way to show patrons they care about their health and the environment," Tilley explains.

Tilley and his partners created Living Canopies Ltd. They are testing the market with trial sales this year and plan a full-scale market launch in 2018.

The Living Umbrellas are expected to sell for \$2,500 to \$3,000 with options of wheels, plant varieties, etc.

Tilley welcomes inquiries. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, David Tilley, Living Canopies Ltd., 4318 Sheridan St., University Park, Md. 20782 (ph 301 789-5099; www.livingcanopies.com; dave@livingcanopies.com).



Living Umbrellas have a 9-ft. tall ribbed frame that supports vines. Plants are 3 to 4 ft. tall when planted and produce a full canopy within a month.



Hryhorcoff's 7-ft. tall pedal car has a giant steering wheel for parades and shows but on the highway he uses a normal sized wheel.

A Giant Pedal Car Is "Highway Ready"

Retired mechanical engineer Dan Hryhorcoff says his design and building skills were greatly challenged when he decided to build a fiberglass replica of a Murray General pedal car that's over 7 ft. tall and fitted with a V6 engine and other parts from a 1997 Ford Ranger.

"On the road you get the looks; it's just so different," he says. "I built it just for the fun of it."

Hryhorcoff measured the original pedal car, multiplied it by 4.56, and made many patterns. He sculpted shapes out of styrofoam and plaster to make the fiberglass parts.

He kept the interior simple like the original pedal car - including placing the steering wheel in the center. He uses an oversize steering wheel in parades and at shows, but has a second, normal-size steering wheel for driving on the highway. The 5-in. wide by 36-in. tires designed for antique cars fit the car's scale. Hryhorcoff adjusted the rear end ratio to compensate for the larger tire diameter.

The only features on the big Murray fan found on the original pedal car are the hinged doors and a step that tucks underneath. They let Hryhorcoff and up to three passengers climb inside. Hryhorcoff completed the car in 2015 and has had requests to feature it at a variety of shows across the country.

It seems to attract people of all ages and

both genders, he says, and he likes to take it out for fun to get ice cream or run errands.

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Windmill Ceiling Fan

If you are a fan of windmills you'll love this windmill ceiling fan for indoor use. With 15 blades, windmill fans by Quorum International look like old-fashioned windmills.

The one thing they don't have is the squeak, says Lillie Valis, who sells them at Heritage Haus Clocks & Gifts, a store she and her husband, Martin, have owned in San Angelo, Texas, since 1988.

"It's a very quiet fan," Valis says. "The only thing you hear when it's on high speed is air noise."

As a business owner she is impressed with the quality and warranty offered by the manufacturer, Quorum of Fort Worth, Texas. The windmill ceiling fans are made with weathered oak blades and galvanized or bronze rings. They come in 60 and 72-in. diameter models ranging from \$1,485 to \$1,532 (at Heritage Haus). An outdoor model has bronze or galvanized rings and painted aluminum blades and sells for \$1,617. The fans are 6-speed, reversible with wall controls and DC motors and work best in areas with 9-ft. or higher ceilings. Down-rod adapters are available for higher ceilings.

Heritage Haus has installed many of the fans in restaurants and homes in Texas, and



Windmill fan has 15 blades, 6 reversible speeds, and is built much heavier than conventional ceiling fans.

Valis notes they are challenging to put up. The fans are heavy (the 60-in. model is 80 lbs.) so a brace is required and the electric junction box must be securely installed.

"There are 185 screws in the fan, but they aren't completely tightened until the fan is mounted on the ceiling and it is adjusted. Installation takes 3 to 4 hrs. for people who do it on a regular basis."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Heritage Haus Clocks & Gifts, 230 S. Chadbourne, San Angelo, Texas 76903 (ph 325 655-4900; www.heritagehausclocks.com; info@heritagehausclocks.com).

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