

Reader Letters

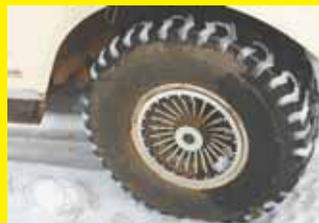


I recently subscribed to your magazine and entered the contest to win a restored 1950 Deere MT. In my younger farming days, this was the tractor I farmed with. I was so poor at the time I didn't even have a car – this Deere was it!

I met a lovely young lady and courted her on my tractor. She later accepted my proposal and after the ceremony, I drove her to her new home on the tractor. Tractor courting obviously works because we were married for 62 years.

Seeing this tractor brought back good memories. Thank you! **(Gayle Lehman; magic1moon@gmail.com)**

There was a mistake in your last issue in the story about how I solved gasket problems with my V-10 Ford truck engine. At one point in the story it says "as the exhaust manifold cools, the gasket contracts, causing the bolts to break off inside the block". Instead of "gasket contracts" it should have said "manifold contracts". Obviously, a gasket could not break off bolts. **(Mike Anderson, Chichester, New Hampshire)**



I use a golf cart for feeding and farm chores. I was having problems with traction because golf cart tires are slick. Instead of buying new tires, I found out that many garden tractors use the same tires. I got several used sets for free just for asking at a local lawn mower repair shop. Problem solved.



We live in a 1780's farmhouse and the new clothes washer and dryer I bought were very loud in the wood frame house. I solved the problem by installing a horse stall mat under both appliances. Now they're so quiet I have to look at the displays to see if they are working. **(Wallace Browning, Buckingham, Va.)**

I use spiders instead of insecticide in my garden. I find golden orb spiders, pick them up in their webs, then drap them over plants in the garden. They stay there and catch insect pests that come after my vegetables. It's safe because unlike the brown recluse or black widow spider, golden orbs won't harm people.

I got another good gardening tip from a friend. I pick fresh ears of corn and stuff them in freezer bags with the husks on, and then put them in the freezer. We don't do anything else except to trim off the base of the ear so it will fit on the rotating plate in our microwave oven.

When we want some corn on the cob, we just microwave a couple of ears for about 6 min. or a bit more, strip away the husk, and all the silk goes with it. The husk holds the moisture in, and the corn tastes fresh-picked. **(John Owens, Paris, Texas)**



I made this rocking chair out of metal binder wheels, a mower seat, boards from an old house, and a piece of sewer pipe. **(John Rogers, Sebright, Ontario)**

Here's an idea I used to keep mice, ants, wasps, roaches and other pests out of any area I want to protect. I use insecticidal ear tags for cattle. I hang 4 in the engine area of a vehicle that's going to be parked for a while and 3 or 4 in my woodshed. I put one in each compartment of our travel trailer, one behind my pickup seat, one or two by my workbench, and one by our hot water heater. The only place you can't use them is around food. **(David Mertell, Independence, Mo.)**



This photo shows a little tractor I built 47 years ago using a 1952 Lincoln rear end and a 1949 Ford truck transmission. I built a chain box that bolts to the transmission. The chain runs in oil and there is a short drive shaft to the rear end. It's powered by a 10 hp. Wisconsin engine and has a hydraulic 3-pt. hitch drawbar for my plow and back blade. I still use the tractor and it runs fine. **(Robert "Improvise" Burt, 50 Wildwood Lane, Lopez Island, Wash. 98261)**

I've discovered that if I place a Japanese Beetle Scent pad inside my electric bug zapper, the scent will pull beetles into the zapper day and night. I get the scent pads by taking apart inexpensive beetle traps that you can find online or in home stores. **(Mike Byrn, Georgetown, Ind.; ph 812 366-3558)**

I made a raised bed "tomato garden" last summer by stacking pairs of old car tires together, and spacing them about one foot apart so that I could walk around them. I filled the tires with soil, then transplanted a tomato seedling into the center and added a wire cage. I also sprayed Roundup around the tires to control weeds.



I had my best tomatoes ever. My wife and son used a lot of them to make salsa, and we gave a lot away to friends and neighbors. I was able to walk around the tires and pick tomatoes without having to bend over or do any weeding. Also, the plants were all up off the ground which made for easy picking when the tomatoes ripened. In fact, sometimes the plants grew so big and heavy that they toppled over and took the cage with them. **(Ian MacCuaig, St. Telesphore, Quebec, Canada J0P 1G0 ph 450 764-3464; ian@maccuaig.ca)**



I got tired of fumbling for the ignition key for my old work car, especially in winter when I have several layers of clothes on. I decided to find a way to start it without having to have a key in hand. So I cut the head off the ignition key and slid it into the switch. I painted the cut part of the key black so it looks like there isn't a key in the ignition to the casual observer. I leave the key in there at all times. Saves a ton of time and is more secure than just leaving the key in the ignition. **(John Kocur, Carlisle, Iowa)**

I have an older 7-ft. wide, 3-pt. mounted snowblower that was originally equipped with a hand crank and cable used to turn the chute. I got tired of turning around all the time so I replaced the crank and cable with a 12-volt electric winch controlled by a pistol-grip remote control. I paid \$45 for it.

I bolted the winch onto the snowblower and ran the cable around the chute and back to the winch spool. A pipe clamp at the center of the spool keeps the cable from slipping.

I bolted the remote control onto the tractor fender using a short plastic pipe. I use a toggle switch to turn the blower in either direction. **(Mac Holmes, 387 Mackey Creek Rd., Mackey, Ontario Canada K0J 2B0 ph 613 586-2546)**



I recently developed a wheel kit and power sweeper attachment for Mantis rototillers. I adapted another vendor's sweeper drums to the rototiller and also incorporated a wheel kit, which makes

the unit easy to maneuver. You can watch a video of the Mantis rototiller kit in action on our website. It sells for \$395 plus S&H. Works great to clean up along driveways and gravel roads. And it's great to have another use for a Mantis. **(Russ Kempf, Simplify Your Tools LLC (ph 262 339-9213; perry.kempf@gmail.com; www.sweeper-wheels.com).**

I've found that hanging old CD's and DVD's from trees in my garden is an easy way to scare birds away. Sunlight reflects off them and sweeps across the garden at unexpected intervals which startles the birds. To mount them I drill a small hole near the edge of the CD, then attach a fishing leader swivel so the CD will turn freely in the breeze. A wire hook is used to attach each one to a tree branch. Several CD's placed around the garden send criss-crossing beams of light over and across the area, creating a dazzling effect. **(Paul Brick, Pomerene, Ariz.)**

I installed a cigarette lighter socket by the headlight on my 1996 Polaris ATV. When I need to check on cattle at night, I just plug a handheld spotlight into the cigarette lighter. Very handy. **(Doyle Nowell, 1111 Cutts Rd., Ackerman, Miss. 39735)**

For years I worked as the maintenance man for the Monrovia, Ind. school system. When they replaced some playground equipment, I was able to bring home a heavy-duty swing set. I mounted a 12-volt winch on top of it, which works great to pick up logs and place them on my log splitter. The swing set's legs are spaced far enough apart so they don't get in the way. **(Bruce Atkinson, 220 W. Pray St., Monrovia, Ind. 46157 ph 317 502-6818)**



I got this post-pulling idea from an article I saw in a previous issue of FARM SHOW. It's a simple idea but it works a lot better than just wrapping a chain around a post, because it won't slip off.

I welded a chain hook onto an 8-in. long pipe with threaded ends. I also ran a bolt through one end of a chain to keep the chain from pulling all the way through the pipe.

To pull a post, I hook one end of the chain to the loader bucket. I wrap the other end around the post and attach it to the hook on the pipe. As I raise the loader, the chain pulls through the pipe and tightens up once the bolt reaches the end of the pipe. The threaded ends of the pipe dig into the post and help keep the pipe from slipping. It only takes about 15 sec. to pull the post up out of the ground. This idea also works great to pull small trees and brush. **(Roger Ezell, 15495 Robert Ezell Rd., Perry, Fla. 32348 ph 850 578-2135; rezell@fairpoint.net)**

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