

Reader Letters



Since your article ran last summer on our ProDomeSeal for keeping birds out of propane tank lids (Vol. 43, No. 4), we've sold hundreds to readers all across the country as well as to one propane company which placed a large order.

Originally, we had just one color – orange. In response to customers, we have produced 2 additional colors that match most new propane tanks. They still sell for \$9.99 and simply slip into place with no fastener needed. We have wholesale pricing for large orders. **(Ron Forbes, Erie, Penn. www.proseal.com; ph 814 403-0727)**



This fence gives us total protection against burrowing animals as well as from animals that try to climb over to reach our garden. The fence was set up in a trench which was then filled in so the bottom is buried. An electric fence wire on top stops the climb-over pests. **(Tom Gogerty, Madrid, Iowa)**

Here's a "Recipe For A Happy Day" that I found in an old cookbook.

- 1 cup of kind, friendly words
- 2 heaping cups of understanding
- 4 cups of time & patience
- A pinch of warm personality
- A dash of humor

Measure words carefully, then add heaping cups of understanding and generous amounts of time & patience. Cook on front burner, but keep temperatures low. Do not boil. Add warm personality and humor to taste. Season with the spice of life! **(Mark Kihn, Calgary, Alberta)**

I read your recent article about a guy who restored a manure spreader. It reminded me of a poem I wrote some time ago about manure spreaders:

*A manure spreader is not a good buy;
I'm sure you'll agree as to why.
The guys who designed 'em,
Will not stand behind 'em.
And if I built them, neither would I!*
(John Ottem, Broomfield, Colo.)

In response to the reader in the last issue who had a problem with his Sears top-loading washing machine, we have a GE top-load washer we bought 2 years ago which had the same problem – clothes coming out dry and unwashed, sometimes with soap that didn't even dissolve. I discovered that there's a built-in scale that weighs the clothes to see how much water the load needs. To fool the scale, we dump a gallon of water around the clothes after we put them in the washer. Solved the problem. **(David Neises; dfneises@gmail.com)**



I enjoyed the story in a recent issue (Vol. 44, No. 1) about the fellow who grows 20-ft. tall tomato plants using a lot of fertilizer and various other plant food products. I bought a house in town in 2017 and dug up a 12 by 54-ft. garden plot. All I did was put down 25 lbs. of lime and 20 lbs. of 10-10-10. The only other thing I've done is to mulch in leaves in the fall and to put grass clippings onto the garden plot during the summer.

Amazingly, my Big Boy tomato plants got to be 10 to 12 ft. tall and the pepper plants 6 ft. tall. I got tons of produce off them. I'm thinking the grass clippings and leaves really made the difference, but I'm not sure. My neighbors are putting their clippings on their gardens now, too. **(Joel Argersinger, Toledo, Ohio)**



I needed a second handrail on the stairs leading up to our deck so that my wife, a stroke patient, could get up or down the 3 steps. Both sides of the handrail have a 1 1/2-in. wide, 3/8-in. deep recessed finger groove in them. The 2 handrails are about 3 ft. high and 28 in. apart.

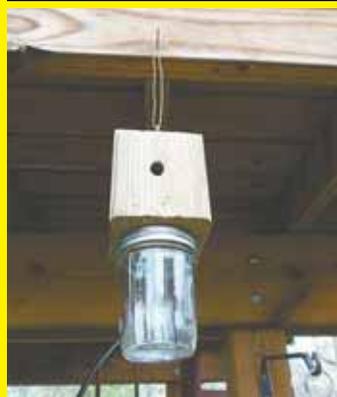


I made another handrail alongside movable steps that lead from the garage to our home's mud room. It's made from 2 by 4's with a round handrail screwed on top of it. I attached a 19-in. long metal handle to the inside of a steel door to provide assistance as my wife walks up the steps. I drilled starter holes, then used large hex screws to attach the handle's flanges to the door. **(John Lubinski, Plainview, Minn. J.J.Lubinski@yahoo.com)**



I was disappointed that the "best buy" report in the last issue on my Central Boiler outside wood burner did not show the photos I sent you of how the boiler is set up. I heat a 3-bedroom home with a full walk-out basement, as well as our hot water and radiant heat in my 2 1/2-stall garage. My electric bill is only about \$100 a month to run it.

"I built an open-front 10 by 13-ft. woodshed around the stove, with the burner sticking out the back. Wood is stored around the stove. A motion light comes on when it's dark outside and I have to feed the boiler. **(Richard Mountcastle, Rockville, Ind.)**



My dad and I built a 4-sided carpenter bee trap by screwing a canning jar to the bottom of a box made from 7-in. long pieces of wood. We drilled 1/2-in. holes into all sides of the box at an upward 45-degree angle, which prevents direct sunlight from shining in. We also drilled a 1-in. hole in the bottom of the box and screwed the jar on over it. The box hangs from a wire attached to our barn.

Bees crawl inside to lay eggs. Once inside, they see light coming up from the hole at the base of the trap and

move toward it, assuming it's the exit. But instead of finding their way out, they find themselves trapped in the jar, and its tapered shape prevents them from escaping. **(Chris Hicks, 3845 N. U.S. 421, Whitestown, Ind. 46075 ph 317 618-2201)**



When constructing a building, we attach horizontal 2 by 4's to the 2 by 6 wall studs and to steel posts driven into the ground, to make sure the studs remain upright until the hole gets filled with concrete. By covering the entire base of each post with concrete – instead of just pouring a footing – the posts are protected from rot and anchored securely in the ground. **(Mark Mahlow, 71049 120th St., Zearing, Iowa 50278 ph 515 487-7708)**



I used 3/8-in. all-thread rods to bolt a 1 by 2-ft. board on front of my Deere ZTrak mower and mounted a 16-gal. spray tank on top of it. It lets me use a wand to spray insecticide on my pecan trees right from the mower seat, which is a lot easier than walking around with a backpack sprayer. A pair of bolt-on metal brackets, one at each end of the board, help support the tank's weight.

A pair of rubber straps with S hooks are used to attach the tank to holes drilled into the board. The tank's pump is wired to the mower's battery and can develop up to 3,000 psi, allowing spray to shoot out up to 24 ft. and cover the entire tree. **(Al Robbins, 1004 Briar Creek, Friendswood, Texas 77546 ph 713 818-9898; a.robbs@askco.com)**



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