

Reader Letters



I'm in the woods a lot and often have to spend a lot of time afterwards removing sticktights, or burrs, from my jeans. I remembered one day that my dad used to brush them off his pants with a wire brush. I tried it and it removed them in seconds. Sure beats picking them off by hand. (Merritt Hall, Henry County, Ky.)

Last issue you published my "best & worst" buy story about the steering valve I bought from Farmland Tractor Supply. Everything in the article was correct, but since I sent that report to you I got hold of the owner and told him about my problems. After reviewing my information, he agreed to compensate me for the defective hose assembly and did so. I wanted to let you know that I was satisfied with the help I received. (John Osborne, Rineyville, Ky.)

Jim Ruen wrote an article in one of your recent issues on the benefits of eating Burdock Root (Vol. 44, No. 4). My wife has had digestive issues for 50 years and has always thought the problem was caused by lactose intolerance or irritable bowel syndrome. She's tried everything over the years to no avail. Long story short, she started taking Burdock Root a couple times a day as directed for 30 days and then reduced it to once a day with dinner. Now she can eat anything with no discomfort. Her innards are working normally after 50 years of trying everything else. Whatever this root provides is exactly what she was deficient in.

It took the full 4 weeks before things changed. We found Burdock Root for \$10 for 100 capsules (Amazon.com or health food stores) so there was little to lose in trying it. We are still shocked at the results. We might try growing some ourselves. FARM SHOW comes through again! (Jeff Hoard, Austin, Nev.; www.hmranch-hoardmfg.com)



I raise geese for sale and for our holiday table, and they travel in comfort in my homemade wooden coop. It has slats spaced a few inches apart on top, and a hinged door that flips out of the way for access. With the extra headroom the slats give them, the geese stay quiet and comfortable. We use the coop when making short trips to another barn, or during the pickup ride to a customer's home. (Dietmar Ranft, Rollinshainer Str 5, 09236, Claufnitz, Germany)

In your last issue's Best & Worst Buys, Bob Moty said he did not recommend using Great Stuff, a foam insulation that comes in an aerosol can. In my opinion, this product really is "Great Stuff" if used correctly. Great Stuff (and probably every other brand of foaming insulation) offers a "low-expansion" version specifically for use in window, door jams, and other spaces where it's not desirable to put pressure on the containing walls or structure.

I've used many different grades of aerosol foam insulation for about 40

years including high-expansion; regular expansion; rodent-resistant - which has a buttering agent to prevent gnawing through; and low-expansion, water-based solvent, mostly with great success. (Tom Scott, Star, Texas; tomcatbeer@aol.com)

After I saw a neighbor's Deere 4440 tractor stuck in the mud, I decided to set up my tractor so that if I ever got stuck, it could be easily and safely pulled out without damaging the tractor. I've heard horror stories about farmers who pulled the front axle off their tractor while pulling from the front, and I didn't want that to happen to me.

I welded a pair of 1-in. thick steel bars onto the tractor's drawbar frame, then drilled a hole through the bottom bar and ran a clevis through it. Before I go to a field where I think the tractor could get stuck,



I run a steel cable from the clevis up to the tractor's front weights and wrap it around them until it's needed. If the tractor gets stuck, I just unwrap the cable and attach it to the pulling tractor. A short chain wrapped around the weight box keeps the cable running straight ahead.

I also can pull the tractor out from the back by wrapping a chain or cable onto the drawbar. (Gary Swensen, Yankton, S.Dak.)



Our loader-mounted, 4 by 6-ft. scaffold comes in handy when constructing new buildings on our farms. Works great for installing siding, windows, vent fans and so forth.

The scaffold is fitted with 2 skids, and the loader forks fit on either side of them to keep the scaffold from slipping from side to side. A pair of 6-ft. long wooden beams are bolted on underneath the skids, to keep the scaffold from tipping over if anyone should step too close to either side.

The loader can raise the scaffold up to 12 ft. high. (Jack Agnew, 4605 Fox Chase Run, Gum Spring, Va. 23065 (ph 804 556-3377))



Loading a boat out of water onto a trailer can be tricky, especially when high winds can cause the boat to bob around. To



I made this life-size manger scene to put in front of our house at Christmas. Because the entire scene mounts on top of a heavy-duty 4 by 8-ft. pallet from a steel company, I can pick up the entire manger with loader forks. I welded together a metal frame out of old shelving, covering it with boards I sawed on my own sawmill. The boards were "weathered" by spraying them with a mix of vinegar and steel wool.

I bought mannequins on the internet and the wardrobes, wigs and accessories are Halloween costumes. The Joseph mannequin was a standing figure so I heated and bent the legs to put him in a kneeling position. I used a life-size baby doll for the infant and added some firewood and other accessories. For lighting, I use a 12-volt landscape light with a photo cell.

I wish I had built this life-size manger scene a year sooner so my mother would have gotten to see it before she passed away. (Mark Yax, 36755 Pettibone Road, Solon, Ohio 44139; ph 440 248-1894)

make the job easier, I mounted a pair of snow skis on the sides of the trailer as guides. The skis are bolted to vertical metal brackets.

I can tell whenever a trailer is being pulled down the road because of the rattling noise made by the pickup's receiver hitch. My homemade "hitch silencer" solved that problem for me. It consists of 2 L-shaped metal brackets spaced a couple of inches apart. One bracket is welded to the hitch, and the other one is free to travel. A bolt goes through both brackets, and a nut is welded to one of them. Turning the bolt causes the forward bracket to wedge



tightly into the receiver hitch so that it stays nice and quiet. (Larry Symynuk, P.O. Box 5, Denholm, Sask. Canada S0M 0R0 ph 306 445-4817; larsym01@sasktel.net)



I used mostly scrap material to build a cozy 3-ft. high, 6 by 4-ft. dog house in our garage. It keeps our dog warm in cold weather. The garage wall forms one side of the dog house, and a commercial "doggie door", consisting of 2 clear plastic flaps, leads outside the wall to a step and a plywood windbreak. The doggie door came with an extra panel that can be slid on outside the door to lock it up.

Inside the garage, there's a plywood door on the front side of the dog house along with 2 glass windows.

A pair of 1 by 4-ft. fiberglass electric piglet heat mats are screwed to the garage wall, one above the other, to provide heat inside the dog house. There's a big pillow inside, and the hinged plywood lid on top of the dog house opens for easy cleaning. (Fritz Groszkruger, 1820 Warbler Ave., Dumont, Iowa 50625 (ph 641 425-4929; 4selfgovernment@gmail.com))



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