

Motorized Tree Stand Eliminates Climbing

“The idea for a battery-powered lift on a portable deer stand came to me like a bolt of lightning, an answer to my prayers as to how I could continue with my favorite pastime while dealing with the fact I could barely lift my legs from one step to the next,” says Shawn Booth, who in 2019 was diagnosed with aortic stenosis and ALS, Lou Gehrig’s disease. Despite those issues, and the fact he could no longer work his construction job, he put his vision into a working prototype in the ensuing months.

“There were some glitches here and there, but the original idea is unchanged,” says Booth, who now has a patent pending on the device which holds great promise for he and countless other handicapped hunters. “We’re building the product now and just launched a website in March, 2020, to sell the product and our clothing online,” Booth says.

One person can set up Booth’s Tree Runner Series 1 in less than 5 min. The 6-ft. tall base rail is secured to a tree with two sturdy straps, then the platform and seat are locked in place. “With those two items secured, a hunter can stand on the platform, activate the switch and elevate high enough to secure another

6-foot rail, then elevate to add a third rail if needed. The Tree Runner can lift a hunter to any height up to 18 feet,” Booth says. “Better yet, the stand lowers or raises if the hunter wants to change positions for a better view.”

The detachable motorized seat with integral battery pack weighs 48 lbs., so Booth says a hunter can carry it in to the hunting location or even move from one location to another if needed. The 6-foot rails weigh 32 to 36 lbs. apiece.

Booth says the lift moves up and down on a cogged trolley that isn’t affected by rain or snow. The battery is easily removed for charging.

“The lift is quiet, portable, and convenient,” says Booth. “The electric motor allows a hunter to move up or down to whatever height needed, which is a real advantage compared to a stationary stand.”

Booth says he’s had inquiries for using the device for many other purposes, including farm use, which might require some modifications that he’s working on. Another feature he’s testing is adding a solar panel that would have a USB charging port to keep cell phones charged in the cold.



Battery-powered Tree Runner stand moves up and down on a cogged trolley. “It can be moved up or down to change positions for a better view,” says inventor Shawn Booth.

For every 250 units he sells, Booth is donating one device to a wounded warrior and has launched a Go Fund Me account to raise money for other donations. He’s also donating some of his proceeds from equipment and clothing sales to Lou Gehrig’s disease research. Pricing is on the website,

which attracted more than 44,000 unique visitors in its first week of operation. “That’s a remarkable show of support and gives us great encouragement,” Booth says.

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He’s Been “Spinning Metal” For 50 Years

Robert Miller can turn a flat disk of metal into spheres, bowls and even urns. All he needs is the right dies. If you need a curved piece of thin metal, he can make it. He’s made cremation urns, reflectors for a Rolls Royce, and parts for old tractors.

“I learned the trade from my grandfather, who learned it from my great, great uncle,” says Miller. “I started learning how to spin metal when I was 8 years old, and by 11 I was getting paid to make a part for one of his customers. I made thousands of those parts. It’s how I earned enough money for my first motorcycle.”

Miller was graduating from high school when his grandfather sold his shop. The buyer needed a spinner and hired Miller. Four decades later, he is still practicing a trade that has to be seen to be believed. Attach a flat circular disk to a lathe and press a die against it. As the metal spins under that slight pressure, it begins to change shape, thinning and expanding where pressed.

Miller says a particular piece may take multiple dies to get the final shape. He can spin solid pieces that work for a bullnose corner or rings for a metal basket. One customer wanted a cover for the pulley wheel on an older tractor. Miller did it.

He has worked with steel, brass, copper, stainless steel and more. The type of metal isn’t the limiting factor, but for Miller, the thickness is.

“I can spin 1/8-in. steel, but I had to turn down a job that was in 1/4-in. steel,” says Miller. “If I had bigger equipment, I could have done it.”

Miller still does production work for major manufacturers, as well as custom jobs. However, most metal spinning work goes to low-wage markets like Mexico and India.

“I made cremation urns for a retired art teacher who decorated them and sold them to funeral homes,” says Miller. “We used heavy-gauge aluminum, which is very durable, and spinning adds tensile strength to the material. The funeral homes marked the urns way up over what she charged and still went out of the country to buy them cheaper.”

Miller’s own sons helped him with his work when they were growing up, but neither of them connected with it like he did. That’s



Metal spinning involves attaching a flat circular metal disk to a lathe and pressing a die against it. As the metal spins it starts to change shape, thinning and expanding where pressed.



okay with Miller.

“Metal spinning is really rewarding work, but you have to love it or don’t do it,” he says. “I’ve spun every type of material that can be formed.”

With more than 50 years under his belt, he still loves it.

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Robert Miller started learning how to spin metal into various objects, such as this big pan, when he was just 8 years old.



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