

“Wood Rat” Pickup Is A Hit At Car Shows

FARM SHOW reader Roger Braddock fulfilled his dream of participating in car shows by using a little creativity and very little investment. His truck is made of wood and attracts attention at events he attends. He calls it the “Wood Rat.”

“I don’t weld or work with metal, but I do a lot of woodworking,” he explains, noting he started with a wrecked 2006 Ford Focus and used a reciprocating saw to cut off the metal. Fortunately, with an oil change and new gas, battery and brakes the car worked just fine.

With just the running gear and mechanical parts left, Braddock used metal screws to attach a 2 by 4 wood frame.

“I used mostly plywood and 1 by 4’s for trim. There are door hinges for the hood and the doors,” he says. “The only part I had a problem with was getting the front wheel wells so the tires wouldn’t rub when I turned.”

He initially planned to build a car but didn’t have much room to create a back seat, so he added a pickup bed instead with a lattice tailgate. Burning the wooden body with a torch and coating it with spar varnish gives the truck a slightly yellow tint.

Braddock added details like suicide doors, an air horn, novelty license plates and decorative wood piecing around the windshield to make it car show-worthy. This winter he hopes to build a C cab on it for a 1920’s Ford appearance.



Built on a 2006 Ford Focus frame, the wood truck is a favorite at shows.

Braddock built the truck in 2020 and transported it on a trailer to three shows in 2021, where it attracted a lot of positive attention. It also inspired some teasing about whether he had termite insurance.

Braddock is pleased with his wood truck and being able to attend car shows.

“It drives well (on the show grounds), the AC still works and the stereo plays,” he says. Plus, with the high price of lumber in 2021, it’s already gone up in value.

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Collectible oil cans come in all shapes and sizes. There were many different graphics used as small companies each had their own designs.

Skottle Grills Can be Expensive or DIY

Skottles, better known as cowboy woks, consist of a concave disk heated by a propane burner. Fire them up to high temperatures for searing or low temperatures for sauteing meats and veggies. Set a pot on the surface and boil water or cook up soups.



Skottle grills are a popular way to cook while camping. The Oris Skottle (left) retails for \$360. The DIY Skottle (right) can be made for as little as \$25.

The Oris Skottle and lid costs \$360 for the 17-in. cooking surface, 10,000-btu burner, 32-in. stand, and powder coating.

The TemboTusk Skottle grill with adjustable leg kit checks in at \$395. It offers an 18-in. grill plate without a lid, but also comes with a 10,000-btu burner.

Do a search on the internet for DIY Skottles and the price falls quickly. A group of Toyota Tacoma owners had several posts about homemade versions. One from “ktrmrd” gave detailed instructions with photos of one he built for around \$125. That included a 17-in. cast iron campfire griddle from Amazon.

“WitchDr.Blue” (Nathan) made his own for a total cost of \$25. His girlfriend’s father was a farmer who gave him a used disk blade. He patched the hole and went to work.

“I spent a few hours grinding off the coating and used a sanding disk to clean it up and get it smooth,” said Nathan. “A broken pop-up tent supplied the legs, which can be



adjusted from 21 in. to 38 in. The burner setup was from a grill a friend had laying in his garage.”

Nathan told FARM SHOW that he welded bolts and supports for the legs on the bottom of the disk. He also painted the underside and the legs with high-temperature black paint.

For a video how-to, go to Narrow Road Adventures on YouTube. Taylor gives a tutorial on his version of a Skottle, built at a cost of about \$65. He demonstrates its use and remarks on the device’s strengths and weaknesses.

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Oil Can Collectors Love Rare Finds

A Husky motor oil can is one of Addie Ehrlich’s favorite high school graduation gifts. It was given to her by her father, Chad Ehrlich, and is displayed with other vintage oil cans in their collections.

“With cans, it’s all about the graphics,” Chad explains. “There are thousands of cans, many made in limited runs.”

Animal graphics, like the dogs on the front and back of Addie’s Husky can, are especially sought by collectors. Regionally, cans differ because of the many small companies that made them. For example, White Eagle Oil had a refinery in Kansas, where the Ehrlichs live, and those cans are among Chad’s favorites. The company was only in business for 10 years before it was bought out by Standard Oil.

Ehrlich knows about cans through his business, selling classic cars, parts and memorabilia, and he shares that information on his YouTube live shows called “Nobody’s Show.”

“Right now, the old car and collectible market is hot,” he says. Smaller items like cans or signs don’t require a lot of space to collect and they can be used as décor.

Beyond the round quart cans, there are many shapes and styles of cans that go back to the turn of the 20th Century, starting with kerosene cans.

“We have some that say harness oil for horses, buggies, carriages, wagons and motor vehicles,” Chad says. “The 5-gal. cans have really taken off. The nice thing about them is they’re bigger and easier to see so they are great for decorating in larger venues such as restaurants.”

“What appeals to me is the graphics and what they put into the designs,” says Addie, who got interested in collecting when she was about 9.

She is a big fan of the Husky cans and Silent Chief that came out of Wichita. Because of her interest in paleontology, she also collects



Regional oil cans are especially popular for collectors.

Sinclair cans. Addie notes that graphics often focus on specific markets; some have pictures of boats and farm equipment, for example.

Cans come in all shapes from round rocker cans to square, oblong and other shapes. Even cardboard cans from the 1970’s are collectible, Chad says.

Prices vary from \$5 to \$5,000, he says. At a recent Indiana auction, the highest price paid was \$861 for a rusted 5-gal. can with Lincoln on it. A 5-gal. Bingham’s Cardinal Brand Oil can with a picture of a cardinal on it sold for \$295. A couple of typical quart oil cans, Blue Seal and Hudson, sold for between \$300 and \$400.

Rare, good condition cans can sell for much more. Rare Silent Chief cans with a graphic of an Indian Chief are worth between \$2,500 and \$4,000. A 2-gal. Big Chief Motor Oil can sold at an auction for \$10,500.

For people interested in finding the value of cans they own, Chad suggests going online. There are also a couple of reference books, American Oil Cans Identification & Price Guide by Tom Allen on Amazon and 2021 Oil Can Collector’s Guide at www.gasandoilcollectibles.com.

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