

Robert Bauer and his grandkids enjoy tractor rides on his farm with the seat from a mini-van welded to angle iron and bolted to the Farmall tractor frame.



## Van Seat Perfect For Tractor Rides

When Robert Bauer's grandkids come to visit one of the first things they ask is, "Can we go for a ride on the tractor?"

"I bought the Farmall B just for that reason," Bauer admits, noting there is plenty of room to mount an extra wide seat on it, enough space for him and 2 children.

He pulled the backseat out of a Dodge Caravan, leaving the seatbelts intact, and welded it on angle iron that bolts through existing holes on the fender. Angle iron from the backside of the seat to the drawbar adds more stability.

"I have an old cattle pasture with the

Vermillion River running through it so we go down there or go out to check the crops," says the Hastings, Minn., farmer. The grandkids, as young as 4, are safely belted in and love their tractor rides.

Because the Farmall B steering is offset, there is plenty of room on the right for Bauer.

He mounted a step on the clutch housing, noting that he gets plenty of use out of the tractor with the extra wide seat.

"When the grandkids aren't around, the two dogs get to ride," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert Bauer, Hastings, Minn. (ph 612 987-2790).



Baskets made from used rodeo rope are unique and colorful accessories that can be made in different sizes.

## Baskets Made From Rodeo Rope Selling Fast

Susan Kanode of Paradise, Texas, has been making baskets from used rodeo ropes for 20 years. What started as a hobby has grown into a lucrative side business after Kanode found that buyers were clamoring to get their hands on her creations.

"I had been giving them away as gifts to organizations for fundraisings, but once the pandemic hit, I decided to see if I could sell them," she says. "It has blessed me more than I could ever imagine."

Each basket is made to order according to the customer's size and color preferences. They range from \$90 to \$130 and are shipped across the country.

Most of the rope Kanode uses for her wares comes directly from roping contestants at the rodeos where she works as a publicist. Sometimes she picks the rope out of the dirt after a contestant discards it while other times ropes are given to her because cowboys know she will give them new life.

These ropes often have a story. It's common for families to provide her with the ropes of deceased loved ones to be transformed into memory baskets. She's also been gifted ropes from well-known rodeo contestants. These sell well at silent auc-

tions, especially when paired with an autograph.

As her business has scaled up, Kanode has started buying used ropes directly from the National Ropers Supply in Decatur, Texas.

Crafting each basket is a labor of love. Each starts with 2 or 3 circles of rope shaped to form a sturdy frame that Kanode connects with pieces that act as rib supports. She then unravels the remaining rope into distinctive strands of polyester and nylon fibers. "I untwist the ropes into 2 strands each for the bulk of the basket," she says, "The ends that hold the frame and ribs together use a single strand."

From taking ropes apart to weaving the basket, tying knots, and unraveling the ends, the whole process takes between 6 to 8 hrs. During this time, Kanode names each basket and prays for the person who will receive it. "The baskets have been a real blessing to me," she says. "I pray that God will bless the people who own them just as I have been blessed by crafting them."

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The RC pullers build their own tractors using engines from weed wackers and snowblower tires. Servos from model airplanes control the throttle and steering.

## Remote Control Tractor Pulls Catching On Fast

By Chad Smith

There's a new type of tractor pull that is quickly rising in popularity and the tractors are a lot smaller than most people expect.

Howard Jones helps oversee a popular remote-controlled tractor pull in Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

"During Covid, when everything was shut down, we still had an event, one of the few in the country," he recalls. Pullers came from as far away as St. Louis, Chicago, and Peoria, Illinois because they had nowhere else to go.

"The 2 from St. Louis drove 250 miles, while the others from Illinois drove 8 hrs. to get here," he recalls. "They all said they drove that far 'just so they could play with their toys'."

Jones says the remote pullers all build their own tractors, using servos that are found on model airplanes to work the throttle and steering.

Like the full-sized tractors, the remote ones need to meet certain specifications. They have to fit into different types and weight classes like the big boys do.

The little tractors typically weigh between 45 and 65 lbs. He says the detail the remote pullers put into their creations is "amazing".

"The engines that most of them use are off machines like weed whackers," Jones says.

"They also use mini-snowblower tires for the wheels. They're all home-built. No one buys remote tractors to use in these competitions."

The puller from Chicago brought down a home-built John Deere remote puller that had 6 small engines synchronized on a single shaft.

The remote control tractors had better be powerful. The sleds they pull typically weigh as much as 300 lbs.

The Hopkinsville Show doesn't charge admission to view the event. Instead, they ask attendees to donate to different causes every year. On average, Jones says they raise around \$2,000 every year for charity.

"The generosity of those folks at our shows always amazes me," he recalls. "Not only that, we never have a problem with trash and junk on the grounds when the show finishes up. They always pick up after themselves."

Jones credits Mickey Buntin of Portland, Tenn., a longtime acquaintance, and his father with getting remote control tractor pulls off the ground, especially in the southern U.S.

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## Combine Playground Popular At On-Farm Creamery Store

"It gives kids the experience of sitting in a combine and getting a feel for driving it," says Jeff Metz about the combine playground he built for his family's on-farm creamery business. While parents shop for honey, gelato, cheese curds and other cheeses at Metz's dairy store, their kids can climb in the combine cab and check out the levers and panel. There are also a couple of slides, a swing, and sandbox.

Metz purchased the International cab from a combine salvage operation. Metz built a treated post and lumber platform about 4-ft. tall to support it.

"We have a lot of events and people post photos of the playground on Facebook," he says.

He and his wife, Mariann, started their on-farm creamery in Rushford, Minn., 5 years ago and sell about 40 percent of the milk from their 200-head herd through products they make. The Metzses sell them at their farm store, to local stores and restaurants and online at their website.

"We're a family-owned operation. We have four children and their spouses involved,"



Jeff Metz took an old combine cab and built a platform to create a play set for his family on-farm creamery business.

Metz says.

Check out the website or Facebook for information on products and upcoming events.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Metz's Hart-Land Dairy, Creamery, and Honey, 25909 Co. Rd., 102, Rushford, Minn. 55971 (ph 507 864-2627; www.metzhartland.com).