

Path-Maker Best Buy

whistles. The Earth Stove heats 100 percent better.”

Robert Wolf, Oconto Falls, Wis.: “My **Worx** 20-volt 10-in. pole saw/chainsaw works well both as a pole saw and as a chainsaw. The battery power is excellent and long-lasting.

“My **Black & Decker** 18-in. gas-powered chainsaw starts well cold and in cold weather. In warm weather, it starts fine cold, but is hard to start after it warms up.”

Steve Hickenbottom, Fairfield, Iowa: “The cab on our 2022 **Kubota** 1100cc side-by-side has heat and A/C, so it’s comfortable regardless of the weather. We liked it so much that we bought a second one and we use both machines every day. We have two different sprayers, a head seeder, and a foam marker. We adapted a simple guidance system. They’re diesel and start easily with the glow plugs.”

Kevin Wideman, Russellville, Mo.: “I like my 2015 **Dirty Hand** 22-ton log splitter (www.dirtyhandtools.com; ph 877-487-8275). I bought it at Lowe’s for less money than building my own. It starts easily and splits everything put in it with ease, including a 36-in. four-knot section of log. Five stars.”

Eldon Hemberger, Conway Springs, Kan.: “I noticed someone listed their **Ozark Trail** water jug as a worst buy. I have to disagree. This jug keeps liquids cold all day. It’s just like a Yeti but costs significantly less.”

Gary Willison, Standish, Maine: “For coffee-drinking readers, do not buy a **Keurig** coffee maker. I’ve gone through four of them in the last 6 mos. These include exchanges for new ones. They quit working quickly. Stay away.”

Stephen Zonies, Waitsfield, Vt.: “My gas-powered **Ryobi** power head with multiple tools starts easily, and it’s easy to change from weed wacker to rototiller to brush hog. I also like my 18-volt grass and hedge trimmer. It’s great for precise and fast garden weeding.

“One of my worst buys ever was my 1997 **Ford F-150**. Everything leaked - manifolds, gas tank, fuel lines, brake lines and reservoir, transaxle, engine oil and more.”

Dale Myers, Bel Air, Md.: Dale nominates his **Kubota L3240** as a best buy. “I bought this tractor before the emissions regulations. It has a loader, a 6-ft. belly mower, and is set up for a 3-pt. log splitter. I haven’t had any problems with it.”

Eddie Powell, Millen, Ga.: “I’ve been using my **Worx** 20V string trimmer for 4 years. It works as well today as the first day. I also have the **Worx** 20V drill, screw gun, blower, jigsaw, and pressure washer. I like all of them.

“My **Frigidaire** upright freezer works fine but is the loudest running freezer I’ve ever heard. I’ll never buy another Frigidaire appliance of any kind because of this freezer.”

Edward N. Young, Defiance, Ohio: “I bought my **Echo** pole saw to trim some large oak trees on my property line. It starts easily and cuts right through up to 10-in. dia. limbs. But it’s a handful high above your head.”

Harry Mulhearn, Monticello, Fla.: “My 2015 **Toyota Prius** has had 55,000 trouble-free miles. At 50 to 60 mpg and high fuel prices, the car is paying for itself.”

Harry isn’t pleased with his **Torin** Blackjack 2-ton trolley jack. “The first time I needed it for roadside work, the jack failed. The **Torin** company wouldn’t do anything.”

Ronald E. Blakley, Indianapolis, Ind.: “My **Power Trac** tractor is still my best buy (www.power-trac.com; ph 800-843-9273). I bought it new in 2000. I’ve used it hard, and it answers all demands. It has 1,200 hrs. of mostly mowing, but it has moved over 200,000 lbs. of material over the years.”

Bob Fielitz, Morristown, Minn.: “I’m 77 with a 40-acre hobby farm. My **Polaris** Ranger has been a life changer. The grandkids love getting rides in it. I love using it for hauling, snow plowing, trips to local stores, ice fishing and more.”

Gene Johnson, McDermott, Ohio: “I’ve bought several **Bauer** 20-volt brushless tools (a reciprocating saw, a 1/2 hammer drill, and an oscillating tool) from Harbor Freight. The hammer drill has plenty of power. The reciprocating saw has an easy blade change and blade depth gauge. Frequently, you can get a tool, battery, and charger combo for the same price as a bigger battery. I’ve always had good luck with warranty issues. My next tool will be the 4 1/2-in. angle grinder.

“I bought a **Central Boiler** outdoor wood burner for \$9,000 in 2013. This year, I found rust holes in the back of the firebox. I called the company, and they said the 10-year warranty is prorated. They would pay 25 percent for the material used to fix it. I found someone to fix the firebox. The firebox floor is 3/8 in., the top is 1/4 in., but the back and sides are barely 1/8 in. thick. It had also rusted around the door frame, so I took 1/4-in. square stock and welded a new edge on it. I think the rope gasket in the door needs to be replaced about every 4 years. The dealer I bought it from is working with me to recover part of the material and labor costs.

“I bought another one of these furnaces about 6 years ago. So far, I haven’t had any problems with it.”

Ward Goodrow Jr., Woodland, Penn.: “I love my 2017 **Kubota** 2290 lawn tractor with 21.5-hp. engine and 42-in. deck. I can do my mowing in 3/4 the time now.”

Walter Graham, Paynesville, Minn.: Walter is impressed with his 2021 **Deere** 1025R sub-compact tractor with a drive-over mower and loader. “Changing from the loader to the mower takes less than 10 min. and it’s the same going back to the loader. It has plenty of power and is easy on fuel.

“The engine on my 2017 **Chevy** Trax had to be rebuilt at 35,000 miles and again at 70,000. The warranty took care of it but is over at 100,000 miles. The dealer bought it back at a fair price.”

Roger Ezell, Perry, Fla.: “We’ve been pleased with our **Subaru** Outbacks. We’ve always had them serviced at the dealership and never had any mechanical issues. We bought a 2014 with 5,000 miles and traded it at around 95,000 miles for a 2018 with 7,000 miles. It now has around 71,000 miles. They’re outstanding cars.”



Michael Elliott, Joliet, Mont.: Michael has been pleased with his **MaximalPower** battery charger for small batteries (AAA, AA, C, D, and 9V). “The MaximalPower company said the chargers extend the useable life of batteries. I was skeptical, but it works well to refresh rundown batteries. The purchase was well worth it (www.maximalpower.com).”

Charles E. Hawkins, USAF MSGT Retired, Austin, Texas: “I use **Shell** Rotella T6 Synthetic 5W/40 in all of my gasoline engines (cars, pickups, trucks, A/C backup generators, and all yard equipment). It’s best to start with new equipment after break-in.

Jim Ruen, La Crescent, Minn.: “The **Path-Maker** (www.pathmakerllc.com; ph 318-548-3643) is everything the company said it was when I did a new product story on it about a year ago (Vol. 46, No. 1). I know how well it works because the company recently sent FARM SHOW their latest model, the Gen 8 ground level chainsaw on wheels, to test out.

“The Path-Maker is 22 in. wide with a 20-in. cutting swath for getting into tight spaces between trees. The Gen 8 has a stronger engine, an improved design, and a slightly larger fuel tank.

“I have about 60 acres of woods and the usual roadside areas that grow up with brush and brambles when not tended. I’ve used brush cutter blades on string trimmers, arborist chainsaws, and full-size chainsaws. All of them worked, but all of them also had problems.

“Brush cutter blades on heavy-duty string trimmers are terrific for smaller stems. Hit one that is too big, and it can kick back. A big problem with chainsaws is keeping them out of the dirt, plus small stems seem to encourage chains to jump the bar.

“The Path-Maker addresses both problems. It easily chews through small stems, and while the company recommends not tackling saplings larger than a 4 1/2 in. base diameter, the biggest concern seems to be how trees might fall.

“The chainsaw/dirt problem is less of a concern with the Path-Maker’s roughly triangular bar. It’s angled slightly upward. It still cuts the stem at ground level, but the design, angle, speed and point of entry allow chains to go a longer time between sharpening, on average about 5 hrs.

“I really appreciate having the cutting bar out and away from the operator. I know how quickly a chainsaw can kick back at me, especially when chewing into a thicket of stems.

“I still managed to have the chain jump the bar when I failed to check tension after running it initially.

“Safety comes into play in another way with the Path-Maker. Stems are sliced off at

I’ve never had engine problems. Tail pipes are always clean, just like factory new. Don’t start using it if your mileage is over 20,000 to 25,000 miles. It’ll clean out the sludge and then start using too much engine oil.”

William Fischer, Fremont, Wis.: William likes his bandsaw blades from **Cooks Saw** (www.cooksaw.com; ph 800-473-4804). “They make blades for all sawmills. They are excellent blades with long life. They also sharpen blades. They’re very nice people to work with.”

Tom Barbour, Gillette, Wyo.: Tom is the satisfied owner of a **DeWalt** 20-volt battery-powered grease gun. “I was doing a lot of dirt work with a large loader I’d leased. I put a quick lock on the end of the grease gun. Greasing all the fittings every day was a breeze with this setup. The battery lasts a long time, and it’s easy to use. It came in a hard box which made it easy to carry.”

John Malechek, Logan, Utah: “Without question, **J-B Weld** is a best buy. I’ve used this product to patch or repair a vast array of items, ranging from filling a 10-in. external crack in the cast iron engine block on my Deere M to reattaching the handle on one of my wife’s stainless steel cooking pots. Just be sure the surfaces are clean and grease-free. Cleaning with acetone or lacquer thinner is recommended.”

WM A Saugen, Pine Island, Minn.: “My **Massey Ferguson** 1760M tractor has



Path-Maker chews through small stems and saplings, cutting them at ground level.

ground level, leaving no nubs a few inches tall to trip me as I walk through the woods.

“I noticed a couple of things I hope the company addresses in Gen 9. One is the placement of the hand control for start-up and throttle. It’s centered on the handle. If it was an attempt to address left and right-handed people, it doesn’t work. It does make it awkward to push forward while cutting.

“Another change regards the oil tube. While they include a hose clamp to secure it in place to lubricate the bar, it’s suggested as an option. I installed mine immediately as I know how easily it could fall off and the chain run dry before I noticed it.

“The only non-operator problem I ran into was a loose bolt on the sprocket mechanism. It had not been tightened down at the plant, and I failed to notice it when installing the chain. Soon after startup, vibration loosened the bolt further, and the chain stopped in place. Once I tightened the bolt, it was good to go.

“At \$599 plus shipping, I think the Path-Maker Gen 8 is a best buy.”

excellent power and an awesome cab with heat and air. The view from it is great. It also has a fantastic warranty.”

Terry Coartney, Bens Run, W.Va.: “In 2021, I bought a **Stihl** MSA 140 C battery-powered chainsaw. It’s lightweight, easy to use, and has good power. The battery holds up great. It’s cut a lot of firewood and is also perfect for trimming.

“I bought a new 2021 **Honda** GSV190 as a replacement engine for a wood splitter. It’s the hardest small engine to start. Once it’s started, it runs great with plenty of power. I’ve had several Honda engines that started easily, but not this one.”

Bobby Abernathy, Casa, Ark.: “My 2017 **Kubota** M7060 has 2,000 trouble-free hours. It has good heat and air. It works well in the hay field.”

Russell S. Smith, Waco, Texas: “My 2022 **Echo** gas leaf blower (PB-2520) is just as good as all of my other Echo products. They’re all lightweight and easy to use. Most other brands are too heavy for this 80-year-old. All of my Echos are great.”

Peter Miller, Wooster, Ohio: “We like our **Milwaukee** cordless tools (drill, angle grinder and hacksaw). We fabricate sawmill equipment and install it. We use and abuse our tools daily. Sometimes they get dropped 20 to 25 ft. onto the concrete and they keep right on working. If they do stop working, Milwaukee replaces them at no charge.”