

# Reader Letters



If you've ever been frustrated trying to reach the mail at the back of the mailbox from your car or truck window, here's an idea that will help, and it's simple to make. Just take a scrap piece of 1/4-in. plywood and attach a 3/4-in. block on the back. (Mike Frantz, Seymour, Mo.)



I have a container garden, and, in one container, I put coffee and tea bag grounds in the soil. In past years, I've also watered plants with coffee and tea. I found my plants in that container had their leaves chewed off. I'd read on the internet that turning coffee grounds into potting soil is beneficial, but I found more invasive insects when I did that. I found more invasive insects when I brewed and drank coffee, so I stopped drinking it. I think invasive insects go after scents from the land they're originally from.

I enjoy your magazine. My father worked on his grandparent's farm and learned to fix machinery. (Faith M. Friedrich, West Allis, Wis.)

This letter is in response to Leonard Seltzer's issue with the bad carb in his Deere Z335E mower (Vol. 47, No. 6). It may not be Deere or the carb company at fault. The problem could be at the local gas station.

I was at a local garden tractor and mower repair shop, and sitting around were almost new lawn tractors torn apart. I asked what the problem was with all this newer equipment. They said they were waiting for new carbs for all of them! It seems our 10 percent ethanol gasoline is corroding the carb's insides.

If you listen to lawn mowers running in your neighborhood, you'll hear them surging. It's from the 10 percent ethanol eating up the carbs. There are lots of stories on YouTube about bad carbs.

My Deere 216 with Kohler engine is 45 years old. When they came out with

10 percent ethanol gas, I started adding 3 oz. of Motor Medic Lead Substitute and 1 oz. of automatic transmission fluid to 5 gal. of gasoline. I've been running it that way ever since. It burns no oil. Motor Medic is sold at Amazon, AutoZone, and other retailers. Any automatic transmission fluid will work. This also helps lube the top end of the engine, like the valve guides, pistons, and rings. I hope this helps a lot of motors out there! (John Fleissner, East Aurora, N.Y.)



I built a carrier for a 50-gal. drum that connects to the trailer ball on my ATV. It's a salvaged folding tractor seat support. I mounted an old 1 7/8-in. ball hitch to it and ran 3/4 by 1-in. angle irons from the rear corners of the carrier to the rear rack on the ATV.

When I want to use it for watering, I use a ratchet strap to hold the drum in place on the carrier. I have a short length of garden hose and one of 3/8-in. tubing plumbed into the bottom of the drum.

To fill it, I just drive over to the rainwater barrels. I have an electric pump on one and a pitcher pump on the other. I can pump the barrel full and then water the plants.

If I want to trickle water on, I lay the tubing down and let it gravity flow to the plants. If I want more flow, I use the garden hose or lay down both and let the water run.

The carrier is also handy for carrying other tools and supplies. If I don't need it, it's easy to remove.



I have a self-propelled steel wheel 1-bottom plow made by Shaw. It has an early Briggs engine on it with a cast iron cover on the side of the belt and the lifting mechanism of the plow.

The plow is a 10-12 in. moldboard, and I would guess the motorized plow replaced a team. The drive wheels are about 36 in. in diameter.

The engine is mounted on a sled and can be moved to tighten or loosen the drive belt. It has no battery, just a spark plug and a magneto on the flywheel. It's a heavy flywheel. The engine is rated at

2 to 3 hp., but has a super long stroke for 700 to 800 rpm's.

Turning is accomplished by pulling levers that engage or disengage one wheel or another. The operator would pull one lever and walk the plow around before re-engaging the wheel.

The Shaw plow had a stick shift transmission, similar to a Model A with three forward and a reverse. I had it running a time or two, and it was a job to move.

It's similar to the transmission and engine on a David Bradley walk behind from the 1940's or 1950's, but its wheels are on rubber.

I suppose that once you had a good furrow, it would track, but that first furrow would have been a nightmare to make.

I've tried to find information on Shaw plows, but I haven't found the manufacturing date using the serial number. I think it was built in the 1930's. (John Krueger, Blanchard, Okla.)

Regarding Joseph Bruggeman's issue with his Kubota RTV not starting or cranking (Vol. 48, No. 1)—this is a common problem on modern equipment. Most of the time, the problem isn't the starter. The issue is a voltage drop until the power comes through all the switches and wires. The solution is to wire in a relay right at the starter. It gets its power directly from the battery to transfer to the starter solenoid. The trigger power for the relay is the wire that originally triggered the starter solenoid. This fix was recommended by the Grasshopper company more than 20 years ago for Kubota-powered Grasshopper mowers. It takes care of this issue. The amp draw on starter-mounted solenoids is high enough to create a large enough voltage drop that by the time it gets to the starter it doesn't trigger the starter every time. (John Aaron Rissler, New Enterprise, Penn.)



In 2021, my two sisters were looking for a cheaper way to feed the dogs on our Streblow Family Farm. After some research, they found a great, money-saving way to do it—oatmeal. Although the picture doesn't look like a bucket of oatmeal, it is. It's oatmeal mixed with leftover soup. We take the leftovers from our meals and mix them with the oatmeal. All of our Spanish Mastiffs love this solution. (Judah J. Streblow, Granite Falls, Minn.)

Thank you for running the article "Handy Tips To Solve Carburetor Problems" (Vol. 47, No. 6). Like many of your readers, I'm an old guy who runs old equipment and fixes lawn mowers and chainsaws.

Ethanol in fuel is a huge problem, which, I suppose, is good for the stores that sell lawn mowers. But for the rest of us, it's an expensive and time-wasting chore trying to keep equipment running. And have you looked at the price of the premixed 40:1 or 50:1 at the hardware store?

Please continue to post articles related to gasoline and the problems it's causing. I live near Winnipeg, and now both regular and premium gas contains ethanol. If only there were one station in Winnipeg that sold ethanol-free fuel. This is my wish for today. (Pete de Graaf, Nariol, Manitoba)



I found an adze head and put a straight handle on it. The cutting edge isn't sharp and doesn't appear to have ever been sharp. It has "US PAT D256322" on the underside of the blade. It looks very different from a conventional adze due to its long and heavy triangular point on the back of the head.

Another tool I found has a cast head that fits an oval pick handle. Instead of a pick, it has a blade 12 in. wide, apparently for scraping. "M R LANE" is cast in the blade.

Your readers may be interested to know that the Mercer Museum in Doylestown, Penn., has four floors of pre-industrial (hand-powered) tools in excellent displays covering farming and other activities such as clock making and gunsmithing (www.mercermuseum.org). (Dan Barrett, Athens, Penn.)

At age 18 (I'm now 88), I started working at the Ford dealership in Enterprise, Ala., and continued there for 50 years. My first work was on 9N and 8N tractors. I'm very knowledgeable about all Ford tractors. I specialized in Select-O-Speed transmissions. The last one I worked on came from Ohio for service. I own five tractors and restored all of them. I enjoy reading your magazine. (Grady Strength, Enterprise, Ala.)

After years of scooping the snow off my car trailers, I finally got smart—I used my snowblower to clean them off. (Gary Swensen, Yankton, S.D.)

I might have a solution for Greg Johnson's problem with his 2010 gas Deere row crop tractor (Vol. 47, No. 6). I had a similar problem with my Ford 8N, and a FARM SHOW reader suggested putting fuel oil in the gas, about one ounce per gallon. It might be worth a try. (Stan Collier, Red Deer County, Alberta)

## Easy Way To Send Your Ideas

How often do you see an idea when you're out and about and say, "Hey, that should be in FARM SHOW?" Next time that happens, just take out your phone and send us a photo or two. Just text them to us at 952-465-5019. If you want to leave a voice mail explaining what you're sending, this phone is dedicated to FARM SHOW stories so it's on and available 24/7. No need to worry about disturbing anyone. Call or text day or night with your ideas, comments, or suggestions.



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