



Ed Swinger, Redfield, Iowa: “One of my best buys has been a **Hopper Walker** electric drive auger hopper mover (www.hopperwalker.com; ph 800-478-7801). It has a remote control, which saves me from getting out of the truck to swing the hopper. I’ve had it for about 20 years with very few problems.”

Kevin Cox, Tioga, La.: “I bought a **Polaris Ranger Crew 1000** side-by-side two years ago. I was so pleased because it was my first new ATV. But some thieves stole it. Because I had full insurance, I bought another just like it. I’ve hauled some very heavy loads in the bed, and to date I’ve had zero repairs. The only money I’ve spent has been on oil changes.”

Joel Bender, Meyersdale, Pa.: “**Harbor Freight** frequently gets a bad rap, and I’ve had some disappointments myself. However, I’m well pleased with most of the air and hand tools they supply. Most notably, a Pittsburgh 16-piece combination wrench set. This is my most-used wrench set and is still going strong after nearly 30 years. Not bad for a set costing less than \$20. Furthermore, they gladly honor their warranties, whereas some more expensive brands are very reluctant and accuse me of abusing the tools. A company isn’t obligated to offer a warranty, but if it does, it should honor it.

“I have a **Ridgid** 10-in. aluminum pipe wrench that broke right across the warranty logo. I never used a cheater pipe on this wrench. I haven’t been able to get a replacement because they no longer make that size. Harbor Freight would offer another size if it were one of their tools. I know because it’s happened a few times.”

Mark Newhall, Eagan, Minn.: Mark is the satisfied owner of a 2024 **Toyota Sienna** hybrid van. “I’m 71 years old and have always driven SUVs, but I decided to try this van now that I have a couple of grandchildren I frequently transport. I get right at 35 mpg whether I’m on the highway or driving around town. On one 200-mile trip, I had 4 adults, the back was packed with luggage, food and beverages, and I got 37 mpg.

“There’s plenty of room in the back for cargo, and I really like the safety features, such as the side mirror alert and automatic braking when I’m close to backing into something. The seats are very comfortable, with both heating and cooling. Although it has a small gas engine, the electric power kicks in nicely when passing on the highway or climbing steep grades. I like that it was built in the U.S. with over 80% U.S. parts.

“I plan to drive this van for a long time.”

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“I’ve also had a big gas-powered pressure washer for years that works great but is very loud and a pain to use. If you need high pressure and you’re working out in the yard, it’s fine. But when you have to clean a deck, yard furniture or other smaller stuff,

I generally don’t bring it out because it’s a hassle to use. That’s why I’m so pleased with my new 2,100 psi **Westinghouse ePX3100v** electric pressure washer. It’s small, weighing just 18 lbs., with a built-in carry handle. It came with a 25-ft. pressure hose and three different nozzles.



“I love how compact it is for moving around and storing. But the best thing about it is how quiet it is. You can carry on a conversation while it’s running (something you could never do with a gas-powered pressure washer), and it turns on and off when you squeeze the handle trigger, conserving energy and being easier on the pump. When you’re not actively washing, it’s silent.

“It’s well-made and seems like it should last a long time. It averages 4 1/2 stars on Amazon. Best of all, it’s inexpensive at \$119. I’m going to find lots of things to wash with this because it’s so easy to use and effective.”

Mike Gallagher, Blue Springs, Mo.: “I don’t have anything to report on new purchases, but I have something from when I was growing up on a small family farm in Iowa. In the 1960s, my dad farmed with his main tractor, a **Farmall Super M**. That tractor had guts. We used it to plow on the farm. We had clay in the dirt, and we pulled a 3/14 plow. The tractor would go up hills with the plow turning over that clay and never complained.

“Then we traded it in for a new 656 gas tractor. The ‘new kid on the block’ couldn’t keep up with the old Super M. I think Dad regretted that purchase after he made it. A few years later, he decided the 656 needed to go, and we got a new **Deere 4020** diesel. I thought I died and went to heaven. When you got up on the 4020, it was huge and a great tractor. However, I wished we still had the old Super M. She was a working fool.”



Todd Carlson, Bloomer, Wis.: “When our company, AJ Manufacturing, was looking for parking lot barriers, we found a best buy at **repurposedMATERIALS**. Their concrete railroad ties were perfect.

“They’re 98 by 9 3/4 by 7 1/2 in. We ordered about 25 and welded post bases where the tracks had been mounted. We slipped PVC poles over them so semi-truck drivers delivering materials or picking up product would easily see them.

“The concrete ties were described as built for extreme durability, and they are. They weigh 545 lbs. each. While retired from service supporting steel rails, they offer long-lasting strength and structure for our purposes.



Precision tools from Woodpeckers help Hohl produce top-quality woodwork projects.

Best Buy Woodworking Tools

Tom Hohl, Hermantown, Minn.: “I’ve enjoyed building many woodworking projects in retirement and learned early on that premium-quality tools make every job a little easier.

“I have several measuring, drilling, routing, sawing, assembling and clamping tools from **Woodpeckers** (www.woodpeck.com; ph 800-752-0725). Their tools are precision-machined with laser equipment and have accurate scales that ensure perfect layouts when used properly. I like the quality and precision of their tools, as well as the many features you don’t find on tools bought at a lumber yard, big-box store or hardware store.

“Woodpeckers uses only top-of-the-line materials in building its tools, which leads to superb accuracy. I really like its indexable squares, woodworking rules, router bits and several jigs.



Hohl especially likes the **ClampZILLA** for joining boards used on tables and cutting boards.

“They have everything a woodworker needs and continue to expand and improve their tools and product line. Their customer service is excellent, and they treat you like they really care. Best of all, they’re an American company located in Ohio that makes its tools in the U.S. rather than importing them. Check out their excellent website for more information.”

Strap Solution Best Buy

Jim Ruen, La Crescent, Minn.: “I read about the **Strap Lizard** in *FARM SHOW* (Vol. 49, No. 1; www.straplizard.com) and decided to try it. I’m always trying to tie off strap ends, but too often they flap in the breeze behind the trailer anyway. The Strap Lizard looked like a possible solution to a messy and potentially dangerous problem.

“I ordered two at \$14.99 each. When they arrived, I appreciated how easy the straps were to install. Remove four small bolts, separate the shell halves, and thread the strap end into the multiple slots in the holder centered in one half. The company does a nice job with videos, which is good, as the instruction guide is less than helpful.

“The holder is self-tightening; simply tug the strap. The fold-out handle winds up the excess strap, and the clip attaches the Strap Lizard to the load. To release the strap, simply unwind it using the handle.

“I put them to use right away on the receiver hitch rack on the back of my ATV. Because I only needed to reach a few feet, I had lots of excess strap. The Strap Lizard quickly eliminated the problem.

“The company offers a \$2 discount on each when buying 12 or more, which is good, as I definitely want one on every ratchet strap I have. They also offer a larger version for straps up to 2 in. wide, as well as Lizard Leggings, which are ratchet-strap



“Needing to reach only a few feet, I had lots of excess strap. The Strap Lizard quickly eliminated the problem,” says Ruen.



Remove four small bolts, separate the shell halves, and thread the strap end into the multiple slots in the holder centered in one half.

anti-scuffing pads. They slip over straps to protect them from loads with sharp edges. They’re \$2.49 each.”

“It was our first time dealing with repurposedMATERIALS, but the next time we have excess supplies, they’ll get a call.”

Jonathan Pollock, Powhattan, Kan.: “I bought a set of **Makita** cordless tools that included an impact driver, a hammer driver, two 18-volt 4Ah batteries, and a charger. I haven’t had any problems with them.”

Anonymous, Pa.: “**Red Wing** boot oil works great to soften stiff leather, but

if you expect it to waterproof, you’ll be disappointed.”

Gary Sampson, Freedom, N.Y.: Gary’s had good luck with **Sashco** Through The Roof! caulk (www.sashco.com; ph 800-767-5656). “You’ve got something leaking? This is the answer. It’s flexible and strong. No more silicone caulk for me. I’ve even used it as glue on some non-weight-bearing projects.”