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about 3 years. Now it won't grab the ring gear — it just chatters at too high a speed. It only runs now if I crank it."

Don Wilson, Merkel, Texas: "My 2026 Dodge Ram 2500 truck with a Cummins diesel engine and RamBox storage is great."

"I also like my 2023 Honda CR-V Hybrid. It gets 40 mpg."

Scott Beaudt: "I like my Shindaiwa T242 string trimmer with the auto-feed head (www.shindaiwa-usa.com). It's lightweight and dependable."



George Jasek, Moulton, Texas: "One of my best buys has been a Nightbuddy 230° LED headlamp (www.nightbuddy.co; Vol. 49, No. 4). It's just the thing for working under a car or in any situation that needs light. You get light in the direction you're looking. A simple wave of your hand turns it on or off. It's small and lightweight; you don't even notice you have it on. It's USB rechargeable."

Nolan Jirka, East Chatham, N.Y.: "My best buy is a 1998 Craftsman lawn mower with a 42-in. deck and a Briggs & Stratton 14.5-hp OHV I/C Gold engine. It still runs great, and we only do normal maintenance. A lot of people had it before us. My grandparents bought it for their friend, who left it at a rental property my aunt owns. When my aunt moved, she gave it to us. We've never had to do any major repairs, except when the shifter broke. We were able to fix it. We use it to mow tall grass, and it cuts perfectly."

Dan Decker, Castle Rock, Colo.: "FARM SHOW is a best buy. All the stories are good in one way or another."

John Zychski, Cottrellville, Mich.: "My 1953 Ford Jubilee is one great tractor. Ford built this tractor to last. All it's needed is a water pump, generator, voltage regulator, tires and paint — not bad for a 73-year-old tractor. It just keeps going."

"At 82 years old, I drive a 1994 F-150 and a 2021 Mustang. My tractor, truck and car are built 'Ford Tough.'"

Randy Fortenberry, Marble Falls, Texas: "Shoe Goo and E6000 have been best buys for years (www.eclecticproducts.com; ph 800-349-4667). I find a use for one or the other almost daily. They stick to anything — I've used them to fix everything from the grandkids' toys to a split in the vinyl on tractor seats. Great products."

Darrell Cooper, Chillicothe, Mo.: "My 4430 is one of the best tractors John Deere made."

Mark Vancho, Lynch Station, Va.: Mark is the satisfied owner of a Vevor 3-pt. hitch receiver and ripper blade he purchased for his Kubota. "Both work great. Makes preparing a garden area easy."

Keith Ambrose, Charleston, Ill.: "In the last two years, I've purchased several items I consider to be best buys. First among these is an EGO 56-volt weed eater with an automatic line feeder system. This line feeder is far better and easier to use than the old spool system. This feature alone makes the tool an

outstanding buy. I recently bought an EGO 56-volt blower, which is great as well."

"I also have two Milwaukee best buys that I've found very helpful. The first is a 48-in. stick transfer pump with an M12 battery that I use to empty stock water tanks before cleaning. It's much easier than bailing out the dirty water with a bucket. In 2025, I bought an 18V hedge trimmer with a 24-in. bar. It makes trimming almost easy."

Steve Pottorff, Fancy Gap, Va.: "The worst product purchase I've made in the past several years was a Maytag top-loading washing machine (model MVW6200KW2). I bought it at the local Lowe's."

"My parents bought their first Maytag in 1968. It lasted a very long time. I decided Maytag was the best brand and bought Maytag machines as well. My first washer lasted 24 years, and the second 16 years. I figured Maytags were built to last, so I bought a third washer."

"Boy, was I wrong. The third one was very cheaply made and lasted only 2 years before it failed. My wife and I are the only ones in the household. Even after spending several hundred dollars to repair the machine, it still didn't work correctly or reliably."

"I finally scrapped the Maytag and bought a Speed Queen washer. It works flawlessly. When it came time for a new dryer, we purchased a Speed Queen."

"I contacted both Lowe's and Whirlpool Corporation (the parent company of Maytag) about the issues with the machine. Neither company was helpful or sympathetic. I don't plan to buy any more Maytag or Whirlpool appliances."

Verle Spence, Hartford, Iowa: Verle's had good luck with his EdenPURE cordless vacuum. "It's lightweight (5 lbs) and cleans better than any vacuum we've had, and we're in our mid-80s."

William Short, Rapid City, S.D.: "In July 2024, we purchased a new 2024 Honda Ridgeline to replace a 2020 Ridgeline that was totaled in an accident. I love it. It's comfortable, gets good fuel mileage, and has been totally reliable."



John McDowell, Shamrock, Texas: John is pleased with his Montana T-Rex 350E post driver (www.montanapostdriver.com; ph 800-330-1937). "We mounted it on our used Deere 35D compact excavator (also a best buy) for ranch fence work."

"My worst buy is my Klein Tools ET450 Advanced Circuit Breaker Finder. It wouldn't come on and never did."

Glenn Allen, Mt. Vernon, Ohio: "My best and worst are the same machine. The best part of my JCB 270T track loader is the ability to get in from the side."

"On the worst side, the boom latch didn't hold, and the rock bucket came through the windshield. They said I had to prove the latch didn't hold, even though they'd said it was a problem."

"The A/C unit had continuous cooling problems; it's now on its fifth temperature



Stihl KM 111 R power head replaced the 80-year-old FS 85T.

He's Used Stihl String Trimmers For 20 Plus Years

Lorn Manthey, Wanamingo, Minn.:

"When I was old enough to help with yard work on our Minnesota farm, my mother handed me an old metal clipper to 'clear out that tall grass' under the fence around our house."

"I didn't know what carpal tunnel was as a 10-year-old, though I'm sure I had it after 10 min with that miserable device. A month later, she came home with a 30-in. tall version of the same device, mounted on two small wheels. That 'squeeze cutter' wasn't any easier on my hands."

"Perhaps sensing our displeasure with grass clipping, my dad arrived home one day with an electric-powered string trimmer. My four-year-old sister called it a 'zizz zizz,' and I used it around the fence, the garage, the windmill and anywhere the electric cord could reach. Within an hour, the yard was whipped clean, and the power cord was shredded. That's when I learned to repair cords and longed for an even better device."

"Thirty or so years later, I found that device: a gas-powered trimmer with a built-in supply of trim cord. I don't remember the brand name, but I do remember backing over it after one of our neighbor's kids set it down in the middle of our driveway. That was before backup cameras."

"Soon, I was unwrapping a Stihl Kombi-System power head, an FS 85T pro model with trimmer and pole saw attachments. Powerful, lightweight and easy to handle, the power head and its associated tools have been tireless performers for more than 20 years. Lately, the FS 85T, in its elderly years, began coughing and sputtering, even after regular Seafoam gas treatments and a tune-up."

sensor. After the warranty expired, the dealer said they could fix it. It had too much freon from the factory."

"The battery would be dead after 8 hrs. of sitting. The ECU wasn't shutting down. I've had to use J-B Weld to put plastic back together in the cab. The primary fuel filter is nearly impossible to replace."

Johnny Annala, Casa Grande, Ariz.: "I like my Bobcat CT1025 tractor. I built a step on the driver's side so I can get on it."

Tibor Molnar, Afton, N.Y.: "I had an older DR Field and Brush mower that I could no longer get parts for, so I traded it in for a brand-new one. I like it because it starts much more easily and has a bigger engine. It also cuts 2 in. wider and is good on gas."

"Another best buy is my 4-WD Kubota L3430. It's fuel-efficient and has a glide-shift transmission."

Russell Smith, Waco, Texas: "My Husqvarna 54-in. mower with a 24-hp Kohler engine is easy to use. It has an



"Searching for a replacement, I looked at four different KM gas models and four battery powerhead models, then settled on the 111 R gas model. It's about a pound and a half heavier than my older model, but the handy shoulder strap makes it easy to carry with any of the five tools I have."

"Starting is easy with three taps on the gas bulb and turning the choke knob. When the engine springs to life, the choke automatically shuts off. It's a smooth runner, idles quietly and zips to life with plenty of torque when the throttle is squeezed."

"It easily powered through 1-1/2 in. thick brush with the saw blade and 6-in. limbs with the pole chain saw. Handling the trimmer was like a walk in the park."

"Stihl offers a long line of KombiSystem tools, including sweepers, tillers and edgers. For now, I'm more than happy with the five tools I use regularly. If she were still clipping grass, my mother would probably be using a small Stihl battery-powered clipper. Thank goodness those old hand-operated wrist wreckers are long gone."

adjustable ride seat, or you can stand on the deck. It's every bit as good as the 48-in. I got around 2010. I help with the church's 5 acres and mow my 1 1/2 acres. It's pretty thirsty, though."

"Any and all of my Echo yard equipment are best buys. My weed whacker is probably 20 years old, and it still starts right up."

"My Ford 8N is 75 years old and runs like new, but it needs a paint job."

"The secret to most anything is taking care of things."

"I love your magazine."

Larry Donkers, Elysian, Minn.: "I really like my Hercules drill set from Harbor Freight. We used it to build a deck right out of the box. It's full of torque, and the 5Ah battery lasts well."

Craig Spierling, Levering, Mich.: "My recent best buy is a Milwaukee air compressor I bought this spring. It can air up multiple tires. It saves a lot of time inflating tires on old equipment."