

Grain bin contractor Craig Regnier has lived in his "dream house" for five years.

MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT THAN A NORMAL HOUSE

Living Is Easy In A Grain Bin Home

There's no getting away at night or on weekends from the products rural contractor Craig Regnier works with all day long.

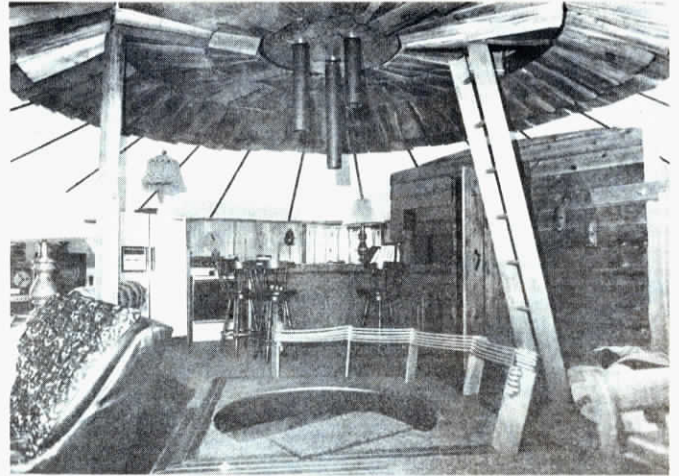
During the day, the Clay Center, Kan. builder spends his working hours erecting grain bins. And after the day's work is done, he goes home to the 10,000 bu. bin he's turned into a very unique home.

"I'd always worked around grain

bins and installed them," says Regnier. "So a grain bin just seemed like a natural home for me."

Driving home from work one day, Regnier got the idea for his special dream home — a round grain bin. He finished building this dream home 5 years ago and has enjoyed life in it — plus plenty of curious visitors — ever since.

In normal farm use, the bin would



Photos courtesy Farm Building News

The 1,400 sq. ft. home has an office and two bedrooms downstairs, and a combination living room and kitchen upstairs.

be used to store 10,000 bu. of grain. Instead, Regnier has added an office, two bedrooms and a combo living room and kitchen on two levels.

"Most of my friends thought turning this grain bin into a home was a crazy idea," admits Regnier. "And in fact, making the transformation wasn't all that easy."

Doing most of the work himself, Regnier often had to pause to figure out what to do next to make living quarters out of the bin. But things eventually fell into place.

One big advantage of "bin living" has been a considerable savings on electrical bills. As an example, Regnier only turned on his air conditioner four or five times 2 years ago when temperatures exceeded 100° on many hot, Kansas summer days.

While he's not sure why the bin is more energy-efficient than a normal house, Regnier suspects the "roundness" of the house may be the chief reason.

Living in the grain bin has turned out so well that Regnier has talked with a real estate developer down in Arizona about building stucco-covered bins to sell as homes. The price tag would be around \$25,000.

In the meantime, Regnier continues to live in one of the few grain bin homes you'll find anywhere. And while it may look like a grain bin to many passers-by, it's seldom you see a television antenna sprouting out of the roof of a grain bin.

(Reprinted from Farm Building News.)

"PRINCE" IS 43 YEARS OLD, OR ABOUT 172 IN HUMAN YEARS

This Old Horse Has Beaten The Odds

By Paul Levy

This horse tale is not about just any old horse.

"Prince", a tan-colored gelding, was bought by Mary Jane Ausland, of Brainerd, Minn., in 1952. Documents supplied by Prince's original owner indicate the horse was first sold in 1940 as a yearling. That would make Prince 43 — or approximately 172 in human years.

The average lifespan of a horse is 18 years. The Guinness Book of World Records states that the oldest reliable recorded age for a horse is 62. (That horse, "Old Billy," was born in 1760 and died in 1822. Its skull is preserved in a museum in Manchester, England, where it lived.)

While Prince is not ready to challenge Old Billy's record, his 43-odd years are enough to astonish veterinarians.

"I haven't seen him in three months but he seemed alert and healthy then," said Dr. John Piehl, the

Brainerd veterinarian who treats Prince. "It's remarkable that a horse that old could be in such good shape."

When Piehl says "good shape," he is speaking figuratively. One noticeable sign of Prince's old age is his concave back; nobody is allowed to ride him anymore. There also are marked indentations above both his eyes, the result of fat loss, another sign of old age, said Piehl.

Prince has cataracts, which affect his night vision. And he has difficulty breathing in dusty areas. But since suffering a stroke in 1978, Prince has been relatively healthy, said Ausland.

"I don't think there's any secret to Prince's long, healthy life," Ausland said earlier this week. "I guess I don't treat him like other people treat horses. See, he's my favorite pet. I baby him a lot."

Ausland and her husband, Marvin,

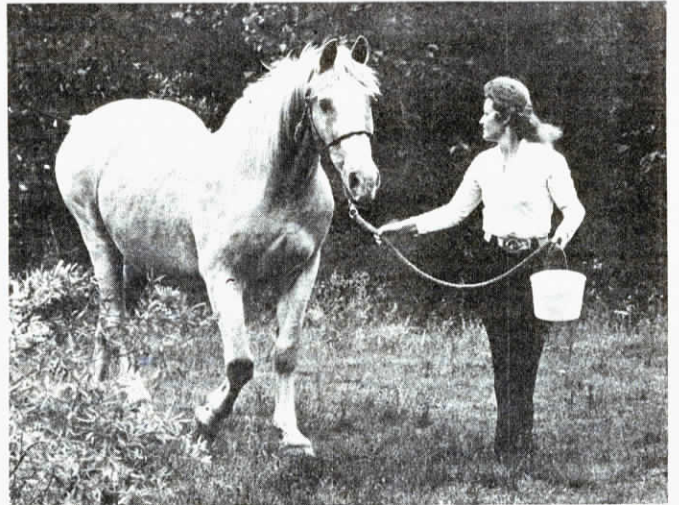


Photo courtesy Minneapolis Star Tribune

Prince is a little sway-backed but otherwise no worse for 43 years of wear.

own nine horses as a hobby. While the other horses exist on a diet of oats, Prince and his constant companion — a 29-year-old mare named Kit — are fed cracked corn, rolled oats, vitamins and sugar lumps. Prince also receives flu shots annually.

Only in severe weather is Prince confined to a stable. Otherwise, he and Kit are free to roam about a large,

enclosed section of the Auslands' 40 acres.

"The exercise he gets helps, and I spend at least a half hour a day brushing him," said Ausland. "But I certainly can't take credit for Prince's long life."

(Reprinted from the Minneapolis Star and Tribune.)