

Reader Letters



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for the drill fill when I bought it years ago. (Merrill Schreiner, Box 202, Minto, Manitoba, Canada R0K 1M0; ph 204 776-2362)

My father sent me a copy of your recent issue containing the story "Protect Your Future: Sell Your Farm's Development Rights" (Vol. 21, No. 6). I have a few comments.

First, the article stated that Minnesota is one of several states "close to" implementing a program similar to Vermont's, where farmers sell their land's development rights to a state program to keep it from ever being developed. True, a program is being developed in Minnesota that holds promise of purchasing development rights, but it's only being proposed for a few rapidly developing counties. The program is being funded by the state legislature, but dollars have not yet been allocated for any actual purchases.

There is, however, another alternative in Minnesota and many other states - donating development rights to your land. Donated conservation easements can offer a number of tax benefits while helping farmers to assure that their land stays out of the bulldozer's path forever. Since 1993, our organization has protected over 5,000 acres - 1/3 of it farmland - throughout Minnesota. Thousands of additional acres in the state are in the process of being protected. Our easements are designed to protect open space and generally have little effect on the landowner's farming practices. Our easements ensure the availability of farmland and open spaces for the future, while allowing the farmer the freedom to farm.

FARM SHOW readers wanting more information on donated land trusts outside Minnesota should contact the Land Trust Alliance, 1319 F Street NW, Suite 501, Washington, D.C. 20004-1106 (ph 202 638-4725).

For information on the Minnesota program, contact me at this address: (Sherrrie Crampton Beal, Minnesota Land Trust, 20 North 22nd Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. 55411; ph 612 522-3743)

FARM SHOW readers might be interested in an update on our air-supported dome silo



which you featured 16 years ago (Vol. 6, No. 2).

The story explained how we had covered a 46 by 68-ft. trench silo with the same type of material used to cover football stadiums, baseball parks and tennis courts. We purchased the material from the Brownie Tent Co. in Clinton, N.Y.

The dome was up for more than 10 years before we switched from haylage to balage and no longer needed it. The dome material itself is still in good shape and would still do the job if we needed it. (Terrence O. Weigel, Weigel Farms, 9865 Pinnacle Rd., Sanquoit, N.Y. 13450; ph 315 737-5582)

I built this inexpensive bale accumulator to mount on a front-end loader. I use it to push bales into a pile in the field. The 14-ft. long



base of the accumulator, which attaches to the loader arms, consists of 3 by 6's, while the 6 ft. arms were made out of 2 by 6's. It's 18 in. deep and has a truss built out of iron pipe in back to keep it rigid. It quick-attaches to loader arms with two bolts. It's large enough to push 15 to 20 small square bales at a time, and you can push hundreds of bales into one pile, then manually load them onto a wagon. Cost under \$100 to build and works like a dream. (Billy R. Hatfield, 3409 Hwy. 63, Speedwell, Tenn. 37870; ph 423 869-8311)

I'm writing to let others know what happens when a big company decides to exercise an antiquated legal right to your land without so much as discussing it with you.

That's what happened to me last May when I went to the field to work ground for soybean planting, only to discover a huge new power pole 140 ft. into the field. Down in a gully and out of sight of the house, it was put up without notice by our power company, Consumers Energy, based in Jackson, Mich., to supply power to a Dow-Corning Semiconductor plant located in Midland, Mich. True, Consumers Energy purchased a right-of-way in the 1930's for \$80 per mile to install one power line. But this right-of-way dates back to a time when no one could have contemplated high tension lines, like the ones feeding the semi-conductor plant, or the massive poles needed to support them.

I complained to Consumers Energy to little avail, then hired an attorney through whom the company offered me \$200 compensation. I considered this offer an insult, especially since a neighbor was offered \$1,500. After months of hassles, it now appears I'll have to live with the pole in my field without any compensation.

Has anyone had a similar experience? If so, I'd like to hear about it. (Joe Ivan, 3680 S. Orr Road, Freeland, Mich. 48623; ph 517 695-5769)

Editor's note: "It's unfortunate that it got to this point. I don't know where we go from here," Dan Bishop, a spokesman for Consumers Energy, told FARM SHOW. "Our position is that there is clear language in the easement that allowed us to do this. Mr. Ivan turned down our offer for compensation, which was based on a formula. There were different circumstances in his neighbor's case, which is why, using the same formula, he received more money."



I call the gadget in this photo my "Big Mailbox" and use it when I have to move just one hog in the back of my pickup. It's a lot easier to maneuver than the heavy stock rack I used before.

I cut a 150-gal stock watering tank in half and stood it on end so it formed two separate arches. I lengthened it to 5 ft. with sheet metal and bolted in a wooden floor. I put metal doors made out of the sides of an old oil tank on each end and even added a flag to the side for the fun of it.

It's strange to think of a machine as a close friend, yet that's how I feel about my "best buy" International M tractor that's still going strong after 50 years.

I bought the 1946 M for \$1,650 in 1948, the same year I got married. It's never required anything except normal repairs, and



has served me faithfully on my 170-acre farm for half a century. I have no idea how many hours are on it, but they have to number in the thousands by this time, operating reliably through both good years and disappointing ones.

The old tractor will have a good home for many years to come, as my family assures me they'll keep it as a family heirloom. (Verle Johnson, 3256 E. 28th Rd., Marseilles, Ill. 61341-9424; ph 815 357-6357)

Thanks for including my "R" Minneapolis-Moline Registry in Vol. 21, No. 6.

I've had great success with the registry, registering over 530 units in just over three years, and have constantly been asked when I was going to start a registry for other models, particularly the "U" and "Z". I decided to expand my project to do even more. I now operate The M-M Registry, for all Minneapolis-Moline, Twin City, Moline, and Minneapolis tractors, implements, power units, and other products produced by M-M and its parent companies.

My M-M Registry's address is: Rt. 1, Box 147-A, Geary, Okla. 73040. (Brian Rukes)

We've been inundated with inquiries (1,304 to date) from all over North America since FARM SHOW published our story, "Working With Diesels In Ford Pickups" (Vol. 21, No. 6). The new 7.3 liter Powerstroke engine, which I didn't mention in the story, has a somewhat better design than the previous 7.3 but is certainly not worth all the hype that's been associated with it.

An electronic fast idle kit for the diesels costs about \$1,000 to \$1,300 or you can use a manual throttle cable for about \$30.

It's 2 1/2 ft. tall by 3 ft. wide and accommodates a 220 to 230 lb. or larger slaughter hog nicely. I load it into the pickup - sometimes with the hog inside - with the loader on my tractor.

This mailbox hauler also works well for moving boards and sheep.

Out-of-pocket expense was practically nothing because I used scrap materials. (Larry Tucker, 14323 Ill. Rt. 127, Butler, Ill. 62015; ph 217 532-2676)

One problem that we've come across in repairing these engines is cracked blocks, where the main crank bearing webs are cast into the block. It seems that they have lightened these and, from all the vibration and torque, these webs crack allowing coolant into the oil. Also, the service costs, i.e. injectors and pump, are quite high.

"Having repaired the Chevy 6.2 and 6.5 liter engines, the Ford 6.9, 7.3, 7.3 turbo, and 7.3 Powerstroke engines, and 5.9 liter Cummins, I would say that if you insist on having a diesel in a 3/4-ton or 1-ton pickup, stick with the B series 5.9 Cummins. (Douglas McKenzie, Box 2657, Stony Plain, Alberta, Canada T7Z 1Y2)

Editor's note: We were informed after receiving this letter that Mr. McKenzie died Jan. 11. His wife told us all unanswered inquiries were returned.

I came up with a nifty method of cutting twine and net wrap off bales that works a lot better than a pocket knife.

I cut one or two knife sections off an old sickle bar with a torch, leaving the head end on to use as a handle. I've cut twine and net wrap off round bales this way for about a year and haven't yet had to sharpen the cutting edge of the knife sections. (Richie Ingram, RR 5, Box 877, Duncan, Okla. 73533; ph 580 252-1328)

That's me with hanging upside down in a trapeze-type exerciser I invented in 1944 after doctors at the Mayo Clinic advised me to hang upside down daily to clear my lungs of fluid. It's the result of a respiratory irritation I got while baling wheat straw.

I hang upside down by my toes and heels on the trapeze for four minutes a day. I also mount in the back of a pickup and take it to local parades, hanging upside down. I intend to participate again this year.

I like to say the exerciser will help me make 100. Incidentally, I'm practically there already - I'm 92 years young. (Richard M. Lamp, Rt. 2, Box 187, Blair, Neb. 68008-9764)

Edible bean, pea, lentils and hay growers in our part of the country love the land rollers we build.

We build rollers up to 45-ft. wide, with our three-section, 40 ft. model being our most popular. Like all our rollers, it features a 42-