

“Go Anywhere” Amphibious RV

Tired of pulling a boat behind your RV? You won't have to if you buy a luxury motor home from John & Julie Giljam. Their amphibious RV's are equally at home on land or water.

The Giljams have converted everything from a Ford Explorer to a 43-ft. long Terra Wind RV.

The water-land vehicles have low centers of gravity with in-water propulsion systems.

The converted Terra Wind RV is powered by a 330-hp Cat diesel and an electronically controlled 6-speed Allison automatic transmission. It can travel at 6 to 7 knots in the water or up to 80 mph on land. A live pto at the rear of the engine powers a marine transmission with a power splitter that feeds twin props inside the tunnel hull.

The Giljams have put about 15,000 miles on their show model, driving it to California and New York City for TV interviews and to display it at shows.

“The Terra Wind has a true displacement hull, but also uses outriggers that fold out from the side to give it a 17-ft. beam. All the weight is in the bottom of the boat,” explains

John Giljam. “We get 7 1/2 mpg and more if we aren't running the electrical generators. It weighs 31,000 lbs. with full water and fuel tanks.”

He designs and builds the custom amphibious motorhomes at his factory in Bluffton, S.C. While his luxury show vehicle outfitted with plasma TV screens, teak, marble and whirlpool tub boasts a \$1.2 million price, stripped down versions without the fancy stuff start at \$800,000. An amphibious Ford Explorer costs about \$115,000.

Giljam started out building specialty farm equipment. After converting an amphibious military vehicle into a tour bus, he decided to get into the business.

The Giljams are also working on a high performance amphibious convertible they call the HydraSpider. “We are shooting for 150 to 160 mph on land and at least 60 mph on the water,” says Giljam. “It's been a challenge just getting tires that will stand up to what we are going to do, and we had to custom build the front wheel drive. It will be about 16 to 17-ft. long and be in the \$60,000-



Converted Terra Wind RV motors easily through the water and travels at speeds up to 80 mph on land.

\$70,000 range.”

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Amphibious RV weighs 31,000 lbs. with full water and fuel tanks.



Single-Wheel Trailer Adapted To Tractor

Jerry Marks, Kansas City, Missouri, says he couldn't resist buying an old bumper-mount single-wheel trailer from a garage sale awhile back.

In its original state, the trailer had mounting brackets that allowed it to clamp to a car bumper but still flex up and down. The single wheel was supposed to pivot 360 degrees to let the driver back it up just like he was backing up his car.

Marks' intent was to use the trailer for light hauling behind a Ford 8N, but he had to modify the hitch. With the help of a friend,

the brackets that originally attached to the car bumper were welded to a length of steel tubing. Then a 3-pt. hitch was built onto the steel tubing.

Once that was all worked out, Marks had another friend, one who operates an antique tractor restoration business, paint it to match his tractor.

“One advantage gained by using it on the tractor is you can raise the 3-point to dump the bed,” he says. The only disadvantage of the single wheel trailer is that it doesn't pivot at the hitch, so it follows like a 3-pt. mounted



Trailer's single caster wheel pivots 360°, letting Marks back up just like backing a car.

implement rather than a trailer or wagon. In sharp turns, you have to make sure it doesn't swing around and hit something, Marks cautions.



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Reynolds stretched bike frame to carry propane tank and mounted burner nozzle on front wheel.

Fire-Toting Bike Burns Up Pests

When Greg Reynolds is faced with fields full of broadleaf weeds or yield-reducing insect infestations, he doesn't turn to chemicals. The organic vegetable grower relies instead on a bicycle-mounted flame weeder.

“One time, I had an outbreak of false chinchbugs. The entomologist warned that if I didn't get rid of them, they would establish themselves. I used the flame weeder on them. It ruined the crop, but the bugs didn't establish,” says Reynolds.

Building the propane-powered bike was pretty simple, according to Reynolds. In order to carry the propane tank, he had to stretch out the frame with a little cutting and welding. The front wheel also had to move forward to allow for placement of the tank support. He replaced the axle on the front wheel with a longer piece of rod.

“I used a piece of old truck wheel for the tank to sit in,” says Reynolds. “It sat on the

bottom of the frame where the foot pedal would go. The torch was attached to a piece of angle iron welded to the front axle rod.”

With torch and propane supply in place, Reynolds can coast the bike through the field directing the torch at target weeds or pests. The bike eliminates the strain of carrying a backpack or pulling a cart through narrow row spacings.

Reynolds raises a variety of vegetables on 20 of his 40 acres each year. To control weeds in his vegetable crop, Reynolds prefers a diamond-shaped hoe a friend picks up when he visits Holland. The 7 or 8-in. wide blade on the hoe and its long handle let him walk quickly down a row doing first one side and then the other.

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“It lets me haul my ATV out to the field so if I'm alone and a tractor breaks down, I can drive back home and get another tractor instead of having to walk,” says Cecil Bearden.

Home-Built Hydraulic Dump Trailer

“My home-built dump trailer lets me haul my ATV - or anything else weighing up to 1,000 lbs. - and dump hydraulically,” says Cecil Bearden, Piedmont, Okla.

The trailer is made from channel iron and steel tubing and measures 4 1/2 ft. wide by 8 ft. long. The box, which is fitted with removable sides and a pair of fold-out aluminum ramps, rides on a pair of high speed tandem axles equipped with ATV tires. The box is raised and lowered by a hydraulic cylinder that's operated by a hand-operated jack.

The trailer's tongue is made from 2-in. sq. tubing and fits into a receiver hitch welded onto the front of the box. The tongue can be equipped with either a ball coupler (for pulling the trailer behind an ATV or pickup) or clevis hitch (for pulling behind a 4-wheeler).

To switch from coupler to clevis or visa versa, Bearden simply pulls a pin. To pull the trailer behind a pickup, he flips the tongue over.

“It lets me haul my ATV out to the field so if I'm alone and a tractor breaks down, I can drive back home and get another tractor instead of having to walk. I've also used it to haul bales to my sheep pen where I dump the bales in for feed. The cylinder that raises the box is the header cylinder off an old Massey combine. I paid about \$35 apiece for the wheels. All together I spent about \$1,500 to build it. Commercial dump trailers sell for about \$4,700.”

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