

If you're looking for new ways to add to your bottom line, take a look at the money-making ideas featured here and on the next page.

If you've found or heard about a new income-boosting idea, we'd like to hear about it. Send details to: FARM SHOW Magazine, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 (ph 800 834-9665) or email us at: editor@farmshow.com.

Split Rims Make Comfy Chairs

It's doubtful truck drivers are nostalgic about changing tires on dangerous split rims, but they might appreciate how comfortable the rims can be when modified into chairs. After spending several years inventing and patenting, Neal Andrus recently introduced his Fenderback chairs.

"They are comfortable. The back of the chair hits your lumbar just right," says the Rigby, Idaho, farmer/inventor. "I got the idea about 10 years ago when I started cleaning up around the farm, and I saw the potential in the rims."

The experienced welder uses a plasma cutter to remove about two-thirds of the rim to shape the back. He grinds it smooth and has it sandblasted. Andrus modifies a bearing assembly to attach under the 15 1/2-in. diameter seat so it can swivel 360 degrees. He typically makes the base out of wrought iron balcony pickets, and the foot rail is made with the ring from the second half of the split rim.

The Fenderback can be finished in either powder coatings, automotive paint, or even painted by local artists. Customer logos can be applied through customized paint design or embroidered into the upholstery. The upholstered seat can be done in a variety of fabrics or leather.

"We can even do a rust patina with a satin powder coat and are not limited to split rims. We are also able to produce chairs from aluminum and steel drop center truck rims," Andrus says.

So far, his chairs have attracted the most interest from equipment dealers who give them as custom rewards for their customers. But they would be suitable in any home, shop or business.

Understanding how handy FARM SHOW readers are, Andrus is offering readers a personal, non-retail licensing agreement to produce their own Fenderback chairs, valid through Dec. 31, 2018. He is also offering retail licensing agreements for his patented idea, both for a reasonable fee.

For FARM SHOW readers he also offers a special of \$850 plus shipping (regular price is \$1,102) for an all-metal chair seat with bearing assembly. Customers will have the opportunity to finish their base, upholstery, and paint as they desire. Top end



Neal Andrus converts old truck wheel rims into comfortable, swivel-type stools. He cuts away about two-thirds of the rim in order to shape the back.



chairs with upholstered seats, a logo, multiple powder-coating and professional paint sell for \$2,495.

As interest for the chairs grows, Andrus is confident he can find plenty of rims. Most split rims have been retired to scrapyards because they are dangerous.

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He Brings Wooden Water Towers Back To Life

Paul Behrends repairs old wooden water tanks and also builds new ones. Behrends is a windmill repairman, and wooden water towers were once a common way to store water.

"We've worked on several old water-pumping windmills with tanks built into the tower," explains Behrends.

Putting the tanks in the tower assured water pressure for users. These were often not small tanks, notes Behrends.

"We overhauled a wooden tank in a steel tower that was built to hold 9,000 gal.," he recalls. "The tower above the tank had a 14-ft. diameter head on it. A vertical sleeve in the tank held the pump rod as it went up and down to draw water."

The owner of that tank wanted it restored for appearance only, not actual use. Behrends and his employee rebuilt the catwalk and sprayed urethane on the roof to protect it from further rot.

Behrends was recently asked to build a new 3,000-gal. wooden water tank for Ralph Gerbie on his LaPorte, Ind., farm. The tank was built next to a 50-ft. windmill with a 10-ft. head over a new well. Gerbie had planted a small orchard nearby.

"The idea was to use the well powered by the windmill to fill the tank and use the water to drip irrigate the orchard," says Gerbie. "We also wanted a design for the water tank with stairs to a platform with a railing where we could sit and watch the sunset."

Unlike others he had worked on, this one would be built alongside the windmill and be supported by a wooden structure.

"Ralph wanted an overbuilt, massive and heavy-duty look," says Behrends.

Massive is what he got. Behrends engineered the water tower around Gerbie's concept. It used 27 yards of concrete for a base. Vertical posts were 8 by 8-in. by 12-ft. with 8 by 12-in. primary beams, some as long as 14 ft. Joists were 6 by 12-in. and as long as 14 ft. to the tank deck.

"We used green white oak timbers, which made working with them a challenge," says Behrends. "We cut the verticals to give them a 7 1/2-degree lean, but we could only get about 3 cuts with a chainsaw before the chain got dull and started to veer off. We used a lot of 40 grit sandpaper."

Behrends did all the cutting and trimming in his shop, assembled 2 sides of the tower, and hauled them in their vertical position to the site. Once on site they were floated into position, and the other sides pieced between them.

"They were anchored to the concrete at all



Paul Behrends built this 3,000-gal. wooden water tank for a customer who uses it to drip irrigate an orchard. Tank is filled by 50-ft. windmill in background.

4 corners and the middle with 1-in. bolts," says Behrends. "We used 3/8-in. galvanized, hot rolled, steel plate fabricated in our shop to tie the joints together. Timber tie bolts are galvanized, 10-in. long, 1-in. square head bolts. Nothing is going to give."

The tank staves and bottom were made from Western red cedar Gerbie had shipped in from British Columbia. It was stored in a barn on the property to acclimate to the local climate. Once it was assembled, Behrends also added decking and a railing around the tank.

"Once Paul put it all together, the windmill fills the tank. If we don't shut it down, overflow runs down a copper pipe and into a canal that connects several ponds on the farm," says Gerbie. "When we want to irrigate, we open a valve on a second pipe."

Gerbie has since had a mural painted on the water tank. It is similar to a larger mural he had painted on the end of his turn-of-the-century barn.

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"Pacapu" A New Alpaca Byproduct

We've printed several stories about raising alpacas, how their fiber is processed, and the creative things people make and sell from it. So, we were interested in hearing about "Pacapu" from FARM SHOW reader Paul Brooks in Cheboygan, Mich.

Brooks got the idea of selling alpaca manure from a Georgia alpaca producer who sent him a "poop sheet" on the value of alpaca manure according to a University of Idaho study. With about 1.7 nitrogen, .69 phosphorus and .66 potassium, it ranks higher than other livestock manures. And because of its lower organic content, it

won't burn plants. The rabbit-like pellets make it easy to side-dress without the need for composting.

Alpacas tend to drop manure in one area which makes it easier for Brooks to collect.

"I use a leaf rake and snow shovel to fill breathable fiber feed bags and zip tie them shut," Brooks explains, noting that alpaca manure has very little smell.

Because of that, he dries some of the alpaca "beans" and grinds them in an old food processor to sell in quart bags (\$3.50) for household plant fertilizer (about 1 tablespoon/plant). He also packages alpaca

beans in gallon bags (\$1) secured with 2-ft. lengths of twine that can be steeped in water for about 6 to 7 gal. of nutrient-rich manure tea.

The Brooks sell the feed sacks of Pacapu (\$6/bag about 40 lbs.) and the other fertilizer products, along with the yarn and items Brooks' wife, Susan, makes, at local farmers markets.

Repeat customers for Pacapu include vegetable gardeners, heirloom rose gardeners and flower growers. The Brooks also use it in their own garden to raise vegetables for themselves and to sell at the farmers market.

In their 70's, the "retired" couple added alpaca to their sheep herd about 10 years ago for Susan to have more fiber variety for her spinning and fiber arts creations. The couple currently has 20 sheep, six Huacaya alpacas and two Suri alpacas.

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