



Bionic Pets creates prosthetic legs for cows, sheep, goats and other animals.

FARM SHOW



He Makes Bionic Limbs For Any Animal

Derrick Campana keeps pet animals alive and thriving with innovative prosthetics developed at his company, Bionic Pets. Initially trained to help humans, he switched to animals after he was asked in 2004 to design a prosthetic for a dog and found it very rewarding.

Today he is known worldwide for his work with all types of animals from ducks and eagles to camels and elephants. Animal Planet aired a feature on him creating a prosthetic for an elephant. Recently, Campana's company gained media attention after he devised prosthetics for all four legs of a goat that had been born in the winter and lost its limbs to frostbite.

"What sets us apart is I have more experience, I have a mobile unit, and our process is fast which keeps costs down," Campana explains.

About 70 percent of his company's work is designing braces. For \$695, a custom brace on a partial ACL tear can help heal a dog in 6 months, versus an expensive surgery. The brace can be worn for a lifetime for more

severe tears.

The cost for a partial or full limb prosthetic is about \$1,000 on average. It can all be done through the mail.

Clients receive a kit for them or their vet to take a mold and record various measurements. Bionic Pets staff mold and assemble the prosthetic and ship it back. For animals that are still growing, Campana offers price breaks on Go-As-You-Grow packages with multiple prosthetics. Upkeep is also important and pads and straps are replaced as needed.

"I do tons of work with sanctuaries working with cows, sheep, goats and other animals," Campana says.

He's worked with 3D technology to print duck feet and notes that costs keep coming down.

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Pittmann's Barrel Train is 47 ft. long and built so the cars track well enough to turn in a small area when being pulled behind his lawn tractor.

"Made It Myself" Barrel Train

Mark Pittman, Morristown, Minn., was at an apple orchard with his family where they were giving "barrel train" rides to kids. His daughter asked if he could build one for his grandkids, so he got to work.

"I searched on YouTube and found a video series from Jim Bollinger of DoRite Fabrication with instructions and a materials list," says Pittman.

He got 55-gal. detergent barrels from a nephew's dairy barn. The wheel assemblies came from Harbor Freight for less than \$5 each and the steering wheels were purchased from eBay, and were for wooden play sets. He used 1-in. square tubing, 1-in. flat iron, and 5/8-in. rod from a local metal supply store. Stripes of 2-in. colored tape from a local sign shop match the steering wheels

in each car.

Pitman made the seats from wood and used reflectors for the dash and lights. Hitch pins and keepers are used between the cars, and also on his John Deere X724 garden tractor used to pull the train.

The train is 47 ft. long from the front of the tractor to the back of the 9th car. The measurements used to build each car allow them to track behind the ones in front and allow the whole train to turn in a small space.

"I spent about \$40 per car for materials and I am very happy with it. I use it to entertain my grandchildren and I may even put it in a few local parades," says Pittman.

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Student Creates Seed Exchange

Alicia Serratos, a middle-school student in Orange County, Calif., hatched the idea of starting 3 Sisters Seed Box, a seed exchange similar to the popular Little Free Library system. The concept caught on in 2020 and she has now shipped more than 100 seed-library starter kits to communities throughout the country.

Serratos says the mission of 3 Sisters Seed Box is to teach people the practice of seed saving, increase food security, and provide people with a deeper connection to nature.

Her seed box idea started out as a Girl Scout project and quickly turned into a nationwide movement. Seed Savers Exchange donated heirloom seeds for the project and the Community Seed Network mapped all of the seed-library locations.

The 3 Sisters Seed Box website invites people to request a seed box that "makes it easy to establish a seed library." Each box contains an information binder with an overview of seed libraries, 20 containers to house each seed variety, 20 packs of seeds, 20 wooden seed label stakes for labeling newly planted seeds, one pack of envelopes (to check out and return seeds), and one pack of pens. The request form for a seed box asks the inquirer to describe where the seed library will be set up, including confirmation permission for the proposed location.



Middle-school student Alicia Serratos ships seed-library starter kits to communities throughout the U.S.

Most seed libraries are located in schools, public libraries, community centers, senior centers and other sites easily accessible to community members.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, 3 Sisters Seed Box (www.3sistersseedbox.wordpress.com).

"Corn Propeller" Squirrel Feeder

"To feed the squirrels that come into our yard on winter days and keep them from raiding the bird feeder, I made a 2-cob wooden 'corn propeller' and lag screwed it to a tree. The horizontal arm is a broken pitchfork handle, and the vertical arm is an old sledge hammer handle," says Justin Kelzer, Randall, Minn..

The cobs are held by screws. Kelzer cut the heads off them and then pounded them into holes drilled in the wood. The horizontal arm is attached to the tree by 2 lag screws, which he welded together head to head so the arm can be screwed in without turning inside the pitchfork handle.

Next, he drilled a hole through the middle of the sledge hammer handle that's big enough for a short piece of small pipe to act as a bushing, and he put a lag screw through the pipe and tightened it so the arm can still spin.

"The squirrel climbs up to the top cob and spins around or down to the cob and grabs a kernel, and then turns around and sits on the horizontal arm while eating the kernel," says Kelzer. "I can put 2 cobs on, and 2 days later



As squirrel climbs up to top cob, the arm starts spinning.

they're both gone. One time a deer grabbed the bottom cob and pulled down on it, which bent the screw in the horizontal arm, so I moved the unit up about 10 ft. off the ground. I place a ladder against the tree to put on the cobs."

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