

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

and removed the deck so I can use it to pull a home-built, heavy-duty trailer. It can pull a 200-lb. load with no problem. I recently wired the tractor with a 4-way trailer light coupler and also installed a custom exhaust stack. Three of the 4 tires are original; I put some slime in them to prevent any leaks that might happen due to dry rot. It's a great all-around tractor."

**Ward Bivens, Lacon, Ill.:** "My 2004 Toyota Avalon has more than 211,000 miles on it but has required only routine maintenance. I've had to replace only the water pump and idle air control valve."

"My Frigidaire 50-pint dehumidifier froze up after just one year of use. The company said they wouldn't help because I had purchased the dehumidifier from Amazon. Fortunately, when I contacted Amazon they refunded the full purchase price and paid for the return freight charges."

**Connor Bishop, Guilford, Conn.:** "My Ariens GT-17 garden tractor is more than 20 years old, but the engine and transmission on it still work great. This tractor is as tough as nails and takes a lot of abuse. I'd buy another one if I had the opportunity."

"My 2001 Toyota Tacoma 4-WD pickup still performs flawlessly. It can go through all sorts of terrain, and I've overloaded it a number of times with no ill effects. It has about 170,000 miles on it, and I expect it to go another 170,000."

**Roy Quick, Plummer, Minn.:** "I bought my Posi Lock 110 gear bearing puller to pull a large gear that had to be removed in the field. Large warning stickers all over the puller said to lubricate the bearing puller's screw, or else the warranty would be voided. So I lubricated the screw before trying to remove the gear. When I cranked on it with a breaker bar the screw got stuck. I took the bearing puller back to the store where I bought it, and they sent it in. Two months later I was told that I had abused the unit and would have to pay \$220 for repair parts."

"Meanwhile, I welded longer arms onto a smaller and cheaper, Chinese-built gear puller and was able to pull the gear right off. Now I keep the Posi Lock puller by my shop door as a reminder to never buy that company's tools again."

**Randy Seckman, Calcutta, Ohio:** "In 2007 I bought a Lanair MX250 waste oil furnace kit for \$5,000. The fuel lines were cheaply made and had to be replaced, and

### "The filtering system was poorly designed and leaked constantly."

the filtering system was poorly designed and leaked constantly so it also had to be replaced. After 2 years the preheater had to be replaced at a cost of \$300, and then we had to replace it every 2 years after that, too. The final straw was when the heat exchanger cracked. This furnace turned out to be a high-priced piece of junk."

**Dale Nauertz, Richland Center, Wis.:** "We're happy with Sid Harvey's Perma-Weld Liquid Boiler Sealer (ph 608 647-5500; www.ashcreekph.com). Our wood boiler was leaking water badly toward the top, but after we added 2 quarts of this sealer it held pressure like a new boiler. We bought the sealer at a local plumbing shop for \$15 a quart."

**James Hanson, Stoughton, Wis.:** James is the owner of a 2013 Kubota L4600 4-WD loader tractor equipped with a hydrostatic transmission. "I bought this tractor in early August, and my dealer ordered rear control

valves to operate the hydraulic cylinders. He said they wouldn't arrive until the end of March and didn't even seem to know where the valves were made. I've waited more than 7 months for them, and I'm not too happy about that."

**Martin Gutzmer, Cambridge, Ill.:** "I bought our 2009 Ford Ranger 4-WD off-road pickup to get down our farm road in snowy winters. Using 4-WD in low range really does the trick. Too bad the company stopped making this pickup."

**Alfred Daum, West Milton, Ohio:** "I use my 1989 Ford 4630 front-wheel assist tractor to feed round bales to our livestock all winter. It has never missed a day of work."

**John Classen, Nisswa, Minn.:** "My worst buy is a set of 4 Hankook H-27 tires. I went to a local tire dealer with my wife's car intending to buy Michelin tires, but the salesman talked me into the Hankooks. He claimed they had a longer tread life (100,000 miles) and a better warranty. But after 20,000 miles 3 of the 4 tires had flat spots worn in them so bad that they shook both the car and the steering wheel. The tread was worn down 1/16 to 1/8 in. more on some parts of the tires."

"I went back to the dealer and he made me pay for a new tire to replace my worst tire, and said I would get a refund after the tire rep checked everything out. That was 8 months ago, and since then I've made many phone calls and visits to the dealer. Now I'm told they won't do anything about it and that I have to live with it."

**Verlyn Nordseth, Watertown, S. Dak.:** "I'm well-pleased with my 2011 Kubota L3940 tractor. I use it a lot in the winter to move snow and it always starts, no matter how cold it is. It has a good, tight cab."

**Art Hertz, Vermillion, S. Dak.:** "I've operated payloaders for 60 years and am now a dealer for LiuGong, a Chinese brand that I think is the very best available today (ph 605 638-0897; www.buyaloader.com). This payload loader uses very little fuel and handles great, without any smoke at the exhaust. It's equipped with a reversible fan, an automatic 4-speed transmission, an automatic greasing system, and computerized backup lights."

**Robert Shoe, DeGraff, Ohio:** "I'm impressed with the battery rebuilding service offered by Voltman Batteries (ph 419 526-1570; www.voltmanbatteries.com). The company rebuilds any brand of power tool battery packs. You'll receive your original case back with brand new batteries on the inside. Their turn-around time is very good."

"I've been disappointed with LED bulbs from Heartland America. Some of the bulbs last only about a month. Also, the company's refurbished Homelite chainsaws are junk. I took my saw to a local dealer 3 times before we found that parts were missing. I had to spend more than \$90 on repairs."

**Gerald Jerry Head, Imogene, Iowa:** "It's a good all-around tractor that looks nice and is easy to climb onto," says Gerald about his 2012 Deere 8335. "I use it to apply anhydrous ammonia and to plant corn, and also to move snow with a rear-mounted scoop that can get into tight places. This tractor has plenty of power for both large and small jobs on our farm."

**Duane Frasier, Sharon Springs, Kan.:** Duane's impressed with his 2012 Kubota L3800 loader tractor equipped with a hydrostatic transmission. "It starts easy even in cold weather, and the hydrostatic transmission works great for mowing and loader work. This tractor is a lot handier to use for small loader work than a big tractor. It takes only about 2 min. to install or remove the loader. The tractor uses less than 1 gal. of diesel fuel per hour when doing utility work."

"I like my 2013 Polaris Ranger 500 utility



David Brewer is happy with his Amish-built cabin. The modular cabins are built at the factory and fully assembled, then hauled to the site.

## Amish Cabin Fits Him To A "T"

David Brewer couldn't be happier with his Amish-built home. The Olympic-T model consists of a 14 by 40-ft. section and a 14 by 32-ft. section that fit together like the letter T.

The cabins are built at the factory and fully assembled, then hauled to the site. In the case of the Olympic-T, it comes as two separate cabins that fit together. The modular units have all wiring and plumbing in place. All Brewer had to do was call a plumber to hook it up to septic and well and get the electrical work inspected.

"Each room has a ceiling fan complete with bulbs," recalls Brewer. "When they left the factory with the one unit, someone placed the key to the door on top of the light switch box. It was still there when they arrived because the trip was so smooth."

The cabins have outside walls that are half log, with a 1-in. layer of styrofoam inside covered by 1 1/4-in. tongue and groove boards. Similar boards cover the ceiling.

Although the company offers buyers some freedom in placement of doors and windows, Brewer went with the standard plan.

"They don't come with any heating or air conditioning, as originally they were sold as vacation cabins," says Brewer. "We went with three Mitsubishi heat pumps. They require no ductwork, just a 4-in. hole in the wall. Our electric bill was half what we used to pay in our previous home."

Brewer is especially happy with the customer service he received. He was able to visit the factory and see his home under construction.

"My wife is in a wheelchair, and when we ordered it, we asked that they make the porches full access," recalls Brewer. "They built custom ramps for the doors so she can

vehicle. It's everything they said it would be."

**Gary Brindle, Moses Lake, Wash.:** "It cuts clean and fast and can be used with many different attachments," says Gary about his 2013 Walker riding mower equipped with a 26 hp. engine. "The only negative is that for a handicapped person, this mower is hard to get on and off."

**Joe Germuga, Rochester, N.Y.:** "I recently sold my Ford 3550 industrial loader tractor and rear-mounted snow blade. In 16 years this jewel never failed to start once, but health issues forced the sale. It was the greatest snow machine ever, and after the heavy snow we had last winter it will be sorely missed."

**Fred Fowler, Afton, N.Y.:** "We had 2 electric fences—one an Agway and the other a Parmak FM-1—damaged by lightning, so we had them repaired by Country Electronic Center of Sharon Springs, N.Y. (ph 518 284-

easily go out onto the porch."

Linton Wells is a dealer for the company. He says the company offers 5 other modular cabin models of various sizes. "All use the same Amish post and beam construction with energy efficient hybrid wall design," says Wells. "All the cabins are built at our factory and delivered from there. Our cabins also come with a solar power option."

The Brewers ended up with a little more than 1,000 square ft. with their 32 and 40 ft. long units. Any combination of 32 or 40-ft. units can be put together, says Wells.

Cabins are available insulated and fully assembled, assembled but non-insulated and in kits both insulated and not insulated. Among the options are front porches the length of the cabin, and two coats of poly on all interior surfaces. A wide variety of other options are available, including a second bathroom, kitchen cabinets and more.

"We ordered ours ready to go," says Brewer. "All we had to do inside was to sweep out the footprints."

Cabins vary in price based on size, features and configuration. The 14 by 40-ft. Cumberland has 860 sq. ft. of floor space (with one floor and two lofts), 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, vaulted ceilings, a porch and a 40-year metal roof, and is priced at \$46,862. The 14 by 28-ft. Appalachian 1 bedroom with 392 sq. ft. is \$27,970 in a deluxe model assembled on site, but can be ordered in a basic non-insulated kit for \$12,560. An Olympic-T such as Brewer selected can be any combination of cabin designs, joined to make a single unit.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Amish Cabin Company, 1712 13th St., Ashland, Ky. 41101 (ph 606 922-8401; sales@amishcabincompany.com; www.amishcabincompany.com).

2180). Both fences now work better than new and will shock right through weeds. The repair cost was less than one third what a new fence would have cost."

**Bob Moty, Crystal Lake, Ill.:** "For the best knife sharpener in the world, go to [www.cabelas.com](http://www.cabelas.com) or call 800 237-4444 and ask for Smiths 11 1/2-in. diamond bench stone kit, item no. 1K516113. It may take 2 or 3 min. to sharpen your knives the first time, but after that only 3 or 4 swipes on each side of the knife will keep a razor-sharp edge."

**John C. Fathe, Sr., Avon, S. Dak.:** "I bought 3 hoop buildings from Rushmore Buildings, Springfield, S. Dak., and am well satisfied with all of them (ph 866 776-5617; www.rushmorebuildings.com). They were easy to construct and they hold up to high winds. We had a strong wind that blew down regular buildings, but our hoop buildings stood up with no problems."