

Pirate Farm Toys



Chuck Steffens customized this pair of 1:16 Precision tractors. The John Deere Model 4430 was a busted-up replica. Chuck manufactured the larger tires. He removed the precleaner and added newer-style steps. The International Model 1568 started as a Model 1468. It was converted to a red-stripe tractor by removing the lower front hood louvers, changing the rear cab window to a squared style, removing the lower cab door windows and repainting the cab and hood in the proper style. He also added mechanical front-wheel-drive.



Dan Forbis, a custom builder from Riverton, Wy., logged 500 hours in creating this high-detailed 1:16 scale AgChem RoGator Model 854 field sprayer. The original sprayer had a 90-foot boom; therefore, this model is equipped with a 5 1/2-foot boom. The tank is constructed from wood, whereas, aluminum, copper and brass were used throughout. There are over 2,000 parts comprising this beautiful replica.

The NFTS is a melting pot for farm toy collectors of all stripes. And those with similar stripes tend to congregate during the show to learn from one another.

Toy Farmer hosts the annual Collectors Dinner. Toy Tractor Times sponsors an evening dinner event with a featured speaker, who discusses a selected topic about the hobby.

Another group that started meeting about five years ago is Pirate Farm Toys, an Internet forum. Toy Farmer was invited by hosts, Chuck and Angie Steffens of Sherrill, Iowa, to attend a group from Pirate Farm Toys.

In February 2009, Jake Doudney of West Union, Iowa, and Rob Lynch of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, launched an Internet forum focused on larger-scale tractors.

"We are often asked about our name, Pirate Farm Toys. It has no significance, just a name that has caught on. The forum provides a place where collectors and custom builders can exchange ideas about farm toy models.

"Most are builders, customizers or collectors curious about what we do. There aren't any restrictions regarding scale size, but most guys are involved with larger-scale model toys," Jake indicated.

Chuck Steffens, affectionately known as Chucky, hosted a dinner for a chat session with a group who became acquainted through the Internet forum. The group of 17 builders and collectors who attended were from six states stretching from Ohio to Wyoming.

Several brought recent models they had built and/or customized. This provided an opportunity to see how another builder handled a particular challenge in the enhancement process. These models created a great deal of interest and conversations throughout the evening.

Everyone in attendance shared where they lived. They also commented on their involvement in collecting and/or customizing. While there was a diversity of employment, many had farm connections, either past or present.

While the talent was amazing, the group was approachable and eager to discuss topics of interest. It truly was an assembly desiring to learn from each other.

Chucky had these comments to share, "I've been involved in the Pirate Farm Toy forum for about five years. At last count, there were just over 350 members with about 40 regular participants. The site gives custom and scratch builders a chance to help one another. They can also see projects that others are working on.

"There are collectors who are regulars on the forum. They are anxious to learn about what we may have available. Beginners who have questions are encouraged to come aboard. I have helped many with their projects. I have also received help in return. I would say it is one of the major high points of the site.

"Check us out and get involved through the web site at: www.piratefarmtoys.proboards.com. We were pleased that Toy Farmer came to learn about this exciting part of our hobby."

TF

By Fred Hendricks

A National Farm Toy Show Gathering



Dale Kolpin of Minnetonka, Minn., specializes in scratch building one-quarter scale puller tractors. This Green Streak puller has a fiberglass hood. The remaining parts, including the frame, are made from aluminum. This pro-stock replica is powered by a 35cc four-cycle Honda gas engine. The clutch and throttle are remote controlled. It weighs approximately 85 pounds.



Shown is a rear-view shot of a 1:16 scale Massey-Harris Model 44 tractor and disc customized by Jason Flanders of Mondovi, Wis. The tractor started as a Precision replica. The used look includes dual wheels and tires, grease gun mounted on the right frame, toolbox mounted on the left frame, makeshift seat cushion, along with a slow moving vehicle sign suspended with wire. The disc has the used look as metal is worn and chips are broken out of the blades.



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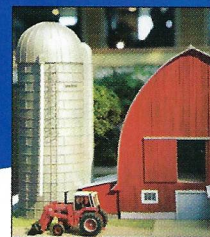
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