

## EARNING THEIR KEEP!

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Over the years I've been most fortunate when it comes to having a big-boy toy or two. But early on, most of those toys also paid their own way.

I would buy a regular Michigan license plate for them, that way I could still use the vehicle for work and pleasure both and, when I say work, I don't mean just driving to work!

Rather than putting a trailer hitch on our family car, I would install a trailer hitch on many of these big-boy toys. During this period I did not always have a pick-up truck, so whatever I owned as a toy, it would now have to also take its place as a truck and "earn its keep!" I would use them to haul brush or any other big items that I did not want to put in our family car.

My wife and I bought a new house back in 1962, and we did all the landscaping ourselves with the help of my big-boy toy, which was the car pictured pulling the trailer. It was a 1934 Ford two-door sedan.



We hauled out trailer loads of rocks with that old Ford while preparing our yard, so we could plant grass seed. We hauled dirt, shrubbery, trees, you name it, and that old '34 Ford probably hauled it!

I do remember one time when I did ask too much out of one of my big-boy toys. A few years later, we had bought the spare lot next to us, and then had a pole barn built on it.

In the path from our back door to the pole barn was a pair of clothes poles that stood in the way, and they would have to go! I offered them to a brother-in-law and told him he could have them if he dug them up!

Well I waited and waited and could see the writing on the wall that the brother-in-law was never going to get around to digging out the clothes poles and I was tired of walking around them, so I decided to remove them.



I owned the 1954 Ford F-100 pick-up pictured here loaded with firewood. The pick-up had a 289 V8 engine, and it also had a custom rear bumper with a trailer hitch built into it! The truck also had a set of Cragger wheels with some wide tires on the back. I figured, no problem, I would "pull those clothes poles out!"

I wrapped a chain around one of the poles and hooked the other end to the ball hitch on the pick-up then I eased the truck forward. Now with the chain tight, I pressed down on the accelerator. I could tell that I had moved some but was now spinning the tires, so I

backed up and hit it again. I did this several times, each time moving a little more. I wasn't sure if I was pulling the pole out, or bending it, so I got out to check. Well, I was wrong on both counts! I had now just about pulled my custom bumper completely off my truck!

I forgot that when I installed the clothes pole that I had also cemented them in with a bunch of rocks, and yes, I did end up digging them out! I even ended up delivering them just to get them out of my sight.