

WILDFLOWER'S NOTES
MID-WINTER 2008

FORWORD

“So it's the end of the world”

Whoopee do, it has always been there looming in our futures, plague, famine, war, the collapse, whatever. So far so good, there has not been a real world killer yet leaving the survivors in a post stone age aftermath yet scrambling in daily survival cooking the old family pet over a crude barbeque setup. (Or a fat neighbor). Ho, ho, ho.

So what are you going to do when the shit hit's the fan for real. Most likely be a panic because no matter how hard life was before, that be damn easier to live with than in the aftermath. Unfortunately, it be what you know and got on hand to deal with whatever is now for real.

Those whom were prudent enough to stock something aside like food, camp-gear, survival books and tools, extra medicals, and more; you got something to fall back onto to decently survive by. Those whom never did anything, screw you is my blessing, you poor wailing idiot. But then if you are foolish trying to steal mine, you be dead sooner.

In the post aftermath world, the credit card and currency issued be of little or no value; ditto be said for coins like those of gold or silver be of any value except “metal content”. Your most likely exchanges be in useful items like 22 ammo, whole spices, can foods, batteries, condoms, and anything else once purchased freely from now looted stores. You also could exchange skill values like welding, dentistry, labor, or even sex for some sort of goods that could be used for self or future barter trades.

As time goes by, those whom were able to create a library of useful books, basic hand tools, and certain other supplies; be trading homemade parts, soap, fuels, and medicals in their local markets. When for example, local supply of ammo is no longer available, locally made flintlock rifles and gunpowder will command good exchange values. Or ground glass lenses for those with failing eyesight. Those whom grow stuff, such items besides food be welcome; spices, tobacco, wild-wood weed, medical herbs, and bamboo can also be bartered too.

Those whom made it that far will chuckle about the campfires stories of those silly idiots of the past.

So while we are living in \$4 a gallon gasoline, high prices for everything else, and no pay raises world. Those whom won't prepare, enjoy it now, and please afterwards don't wail too much, just shut up and die please.. Us real prepared survivors have better things to do.

A HOMEBUILT VACUUM CHAMBER

Those whom “vacuum seal one jar at a time”, a tedious job it is. If one could “vacuum seal” several or more jars at a time, self productivity be easier over a shorter period of time.

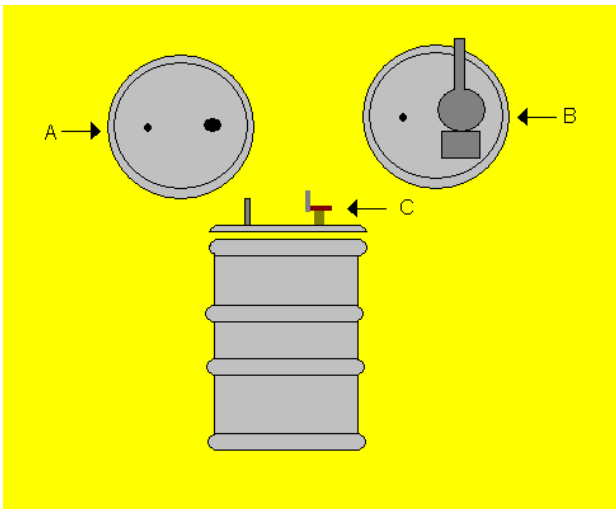
Some years back built a vacuum chamber big enough to actually seal eight at a time , quart mason jars filled with dry beans or wheat for myself and friends. Using a vacuum hose attached to the truck’s vacuum lines , was able to vacuum seal at 15 to 20 inches on an idling engine. For you novices, one inch on your vacuum gauge equals 1000 feet above sea level so 15 to 20 inches is 15000 to 20000 feet above sea level.

NOTE# Or roughly “3 miles up”!

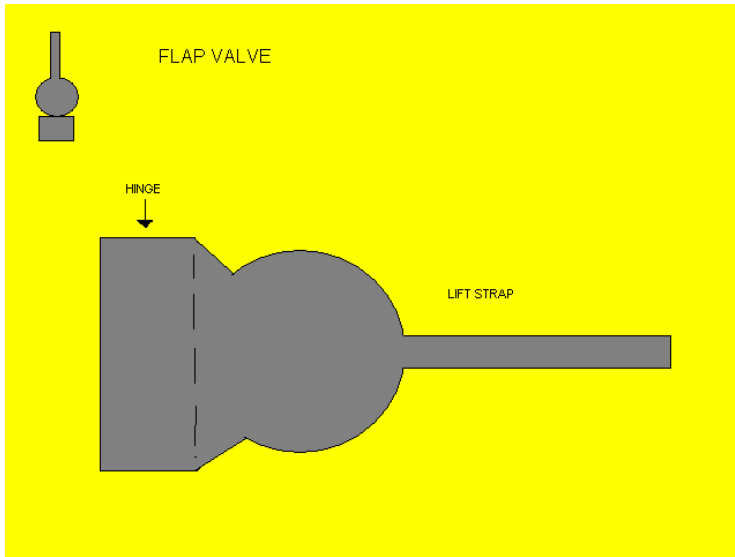
Acquired a “30 gallon” steel shipping drum from a surplus dealer along with its intact rubber “o ring seal”. Washed it out with soap and water, then set aside to dry.

As in (A), drilled two holes, one was $\frac{1}{4}$ ”, the other was $\frac{1}{2}$ ”.

As in (C) Then with two-part “welder’s epoxy” attached a $\frac{1}{4}$ ” pipe to the $\frac{1}{4}$ ” hole. This serves as the outlet to attach the vacuum hose. To the other hole with the same epoxy, attached a salvaged “water cooler” valve, which serves as a “vacuum relief inlet”.



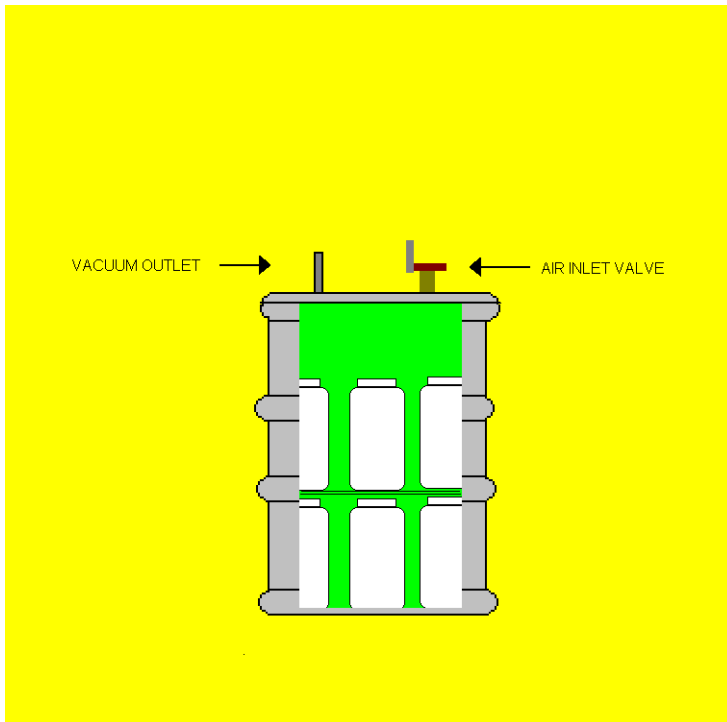
As in (B); if no valve is available, one could attach a homemade “FLAP VALVE” cut out of salvaged auto tire inner tube with its flap hinge end “GOOP ’d” to the lid top.



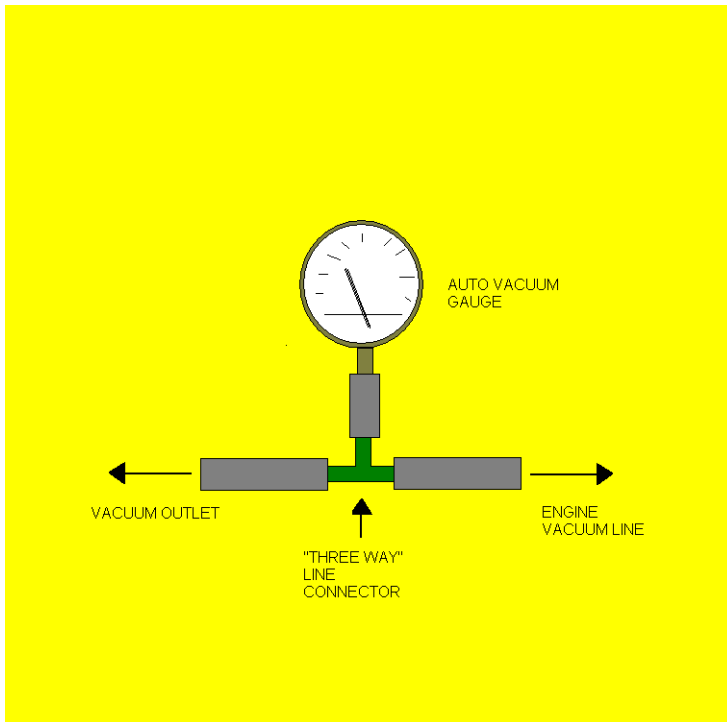
In any case, grease the “O” ring with light oil or petroleum jelly.

NOTE# no “O” ring? Could try using “rubber seal tape” (or slit a length bicycle tube) for a few wraps around the outside of the drum rim, allowing some material over the rim to the inside of said drum. This sealing material is important when the lid is fitted/ fastened to drum top to prevent air leaking into the vacuum drum.

The next picture shows two layers of mason canning jars separated by a piece of wire grid screen. Each jar filled with desired contents, is topped with a rubber seal canning lid with the screw seal band loose. When the air is allowed back via the valve, only then screw tight those lid retainer bands to help keep the lid tight protecting the vacuum and contents intact. Remove jars wearing gloves carefully, then stack away on storage shelf. Take care handling as any crack in the glass could become an implosion of contents and sharp glass shards.



The next picture is a basic hookup between the drum outlet to the engine vacuum line. This hose can be purchased at most auto supply stores, along with a three way connector and a mechanical engine vacuum gauge. Cut hoses to lengths needed, and grease with petroleum jelly the connectors to fit into the hose. My setup also included a small inline gas filter (not shown) to protect the engine in case any dust entered the vacuum line. No hose clamps were needed but one can included them if desired.



The basic operation, fill jars to 90% with contents, top jar with canning lid, then retaining band left loosely tightened. Place each one into chamber carefully, if in layers separate with heavy wire screen. Place lid on top. Your auto engine should be already running at idle. Hook up between drum outlet to vacuum inlet of auto engine (the brake vacuum line I've used) with inline connector of choice.. Just hold down drum lid, if the drum seals are good, will achieve 15 to 20 inches noted on your vacuum gauge. Then open your air inlet valve on the lid. As air equalizes the jar lids seal vacuumed jars of desired product. Remove drum lid, and with gloves remove each jar carefully, check lid with eyes if sealed, then tighten the band to keep the jar properly sealed. Move each jar to storage shelf as knocking the glass can crack jar with implosive force!

Repeat this process till all jars are done, then unhook the setup and put away for another day.

This basic setup allowed me to vacuum seal up to twelve quart mason jars of wheat, pasta, dried beans and peas, and lentils. Vacuumed jars containing oatmeal, tobacco, or soft candy tended to loose vacuum seal to out-gassing of contents with a few days. Do not try vacuum sealing ammo, gunpowder, butane lighters, or water; it may prove a quick deadly disaster. Same noted with batteries, capacitors, and oiled goods.

As for vacuum chamber, one could substitute a large metal ammo can with good rubber seal. Do not use plastic drums, pails, or even metal trash cans as most trials resulted in implosions of all three.

Those savvy enough to acquire a used refrigerator compressor should before using,

should pump a cup or two of 10 weight motor oil to lubricate the pump. Also should enclose the compressor with a good fan as these motors will run hot in a short time. In normal use in closed loop refrigeration there is along with its gas charge a light oil lubricant. So therefore to prevent seizure, which will render pump useless, pre-lubrication is necessary every time. Also when in operation be allowed to cool between jobs power off with the fan still on. This was learned the hard way by myself.

Ten years ago vacuum sealed jars of wheat, lentils, peas and beans. In a recent check, out of two hundred sealed jars, only 4 had bad seals. A friend whom purchased a vacuum bagger kit, found most of the bags leaked within a few months time. Also noted the vacuum pumps on many of these sealer machines developed faults or quit working after 40 seal jobs on average.

LAST WORD

The price per gallon of regular gasoline may reach \$4 by this summer, at last fill-up was just \$3.41 per gallon. As rising fuel prices increase so will anything produced, packaged, shipped or sold rise in prices too, the only thing staying same will be one's paycheck. Most are coping with wiser use of fuel, buying in bulk items needed, using a bike or moped for short trips, and combining errands into one trip. There are many not buying expensive items, or planning long trips, as money has to saved and spent on essentials. What is worse as consumer demand or purchasing, a ripple effect in those employed is occurring as layoffs resulting in more unpaid bills and debt. This will close more stores, factories, warehouses; all increasing the number of unemployed. No doubt shall see more people unable to afford decent food, get sick, and go slowly mad resulting in deaths.

A grim future yes for those whom never learned how to take care of themselves or even bothered to prepare a survival cache of emergency food and other items. There be a lot of needless suffering, sickness, homeless, and eventual violence while the people whom profit from rising fuel costs can afford to live in well protected gated communities elsewhere.

No matter who wins the election, there be no "magic bullet" to stop this decline. Even those whom purchased gold and silver might find any surviving currency to exchange in, see their metals seized while be sent to a forced labor camp. It may be my final sarcastic note that "the party is over folks" and "the grim-reaper is knocking at your door to collect on what you owe". Welcome to your new hell, people!

May I be wrong about all this too.