CoffinBound!

http://coffinbound.com/props/wheel.html

Pirate Ship Steering Wheel

When I saw this prop on someone else's site, I told myself that I had to have one for this year's display. Considering it isn't a hard prop to make, and fairly inexpensive, it was definitely going to be made!

To make the prop, I purchased a wagon wheel from Harbor Freight for $15 on sale. I then picked up some fence styles from Home Depot. I think they were $1.50 a piece, so about $12 total. The rest of the lumber and such I already had at home. If you want to keep track, I probably have about $10 in spare lumber, $17 for the wiper motor, and $1 for the mounting plate for the motor. Total cost for the project is around $45

First thing I did was to remove the metal band around the wheel. I wasn't too worried about it falling apart. If it did, I would just fix it the right way! I then proceeded to cut up, reshape, and attach the fence styles to the wheel. After that, I then stained the wheel and styles. Nothing elaborate, just a light coat to help protect it a little.

While that dried, I proceeded to make a rectangular tube to mount the wheel to. Since I only had bolts on hand large enough to support the wheel, didn't want the bolt to be seen on the backside of the column. Making the column a box, I could hide the nut assembly inside it. Taking a couple pieces of scrap lumber, I then made a cap by cutting slightly smaller squares and then cutting 45 degree angles on the edges. I then glued and brad nailed them together. I will eventually brad nail this to the top of the column.

I then took some more scrap lumber and made a box that would become the base. I cut and attached some scraps to the bottom of the column, then screwed them to the outer box. This design also gave me a spot to mount the motor assembly.

I used a suggestion from Scary Terry on mounting my wiper motor. Using a metal post cap, I drilled holes that aligned with the mount holes on the motor housing. Using 6mm screws, I attached these together and mounted it to a scrap piece of wood. I then took some scrap 1/8" metal I had in the garage and cut a 2" piece off. I drilled the appropriate size holes in each end and attached them to the motor and the wheel. Fortunately for me, the bottom half will be well hidden from view of the public, so I don't have to worry about painting it black or anything.

That's about it. It took me about 4 hours to cut and assemble the column/base assembly, and another 4 hours to fix up the wheel. This was definitely an easy project and can be tackled by anyone (that's old enough to operate power tools that is. ;))

PIRATE SHIP STEERING WHEEL