



Thresher show begins July 29

By Casey McCormick

The highlight of the Bird City summer is here. The Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Association will hold its 51st show on July 29, 30, 31 and August 1.

There will be more to see than steam engines and wheat threshing. Automobiles will be displayed and paraded, as will many tractors. Museums and various buildings will house many interesting and historic items. And of course many will flock to the swap meet and flea market.

Here is a schedule of events:

Thursday, Friday and Saturday Programs

(reduced schedule on Sunday)
9:30 a.m. - Servicing equipment.
10 - Invocation, flag raising, introduction of personnel and the queen and princess.

10:15 - Corn shelling, Prony brake and Baker fan testing.

10:45 - Parade of old machinery and early-day harvest equipment.

11:15 - Pyramid stunt, steam engine talk and thresher talk.

11:45 - Steam engine races.

Noon - Lunch.

1 p.m. - Kids tug-of-war with small steam engine.

1:15 - Parade of antique cars.

1:30 - Parade of antique tractors and steam engines.

2:30 - Threshing, plowing and straw baling (using a gas tractor on Thursday and using a steamer Friday and Saturday).

3:15 - Saw mill and shingle mill.

4 - Steam engine races, stationary engine demonstration and antique auto display.

4:30 - Steam engine rides.

Special Noon-Day Programs

Thursday: Recognition of outgoing Queen and introduction of 2004 Queen and Thresher Princess.

Friday: Recognition of Auto Club Queen.

Swap Meet Each Day

For information, inquire in Building 5, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Thursday Old Fashioned Literary

An old fashioned literary will be held at the country school at 7 p.m.

Friday Antique Tractor Pull

The popular event will be held at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday Evening Barbecue

The McDonald Lions Club will



DELBERT POWELL AND KEN BEOUGHER spend some time in the shop at the Thresher Grounds in preparation for the 51st Show. The tractor Delbert is working on is a 1951 Case.

Times staff photo by Casey McCormick

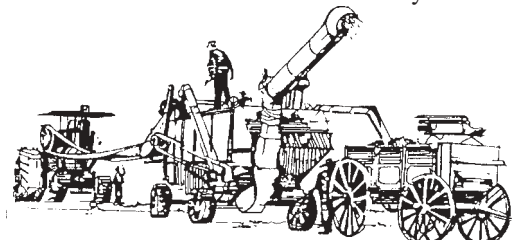
host the barbecue from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. The price will be announced.

Special Entertainment

Following the barbecue will be entertainment by Deans Duckson and the Turkey Snorts.

Sunday Worship Services

Worship services will be held at the country church at 9, 9:30 and 10 a.m. Sunday.



Thresher Queen identity unknown

Last week, the readers saw an early photo and a short biography of the 2004 Thresher Queen and many may have already guess her identity. In case some are still in doubt, here is the rest of the story!

One of the happiest times in this year's Thresher Queen's life was when she was a telephone operator. She loved her job. It was the best paying job she had ever had and she was able to help her parents out financially and still have money left for her needs. She was working at the switchboard the night of the Republican River Flood. It was a very busy and exciting night and she will never forget it.

After her marriage, she continued her harvest cooking. The harvest crews usually came to the house for breakfast, lunch and supper. She always had a huge feast prepared for them. She and her husband also provided a place in their home for the crews to shower and clean up. This continued for many years.

She was a very dedicated wife and mother. Her children were the "joy of her life." She always opened her home to their many friends. To this day, she doesn't know a stranger.

Times have not always been good for the Thresher Queen. Her family has suffered many difficult times. You won't hear her complaining though. She'll tell you that life just goes that way once in

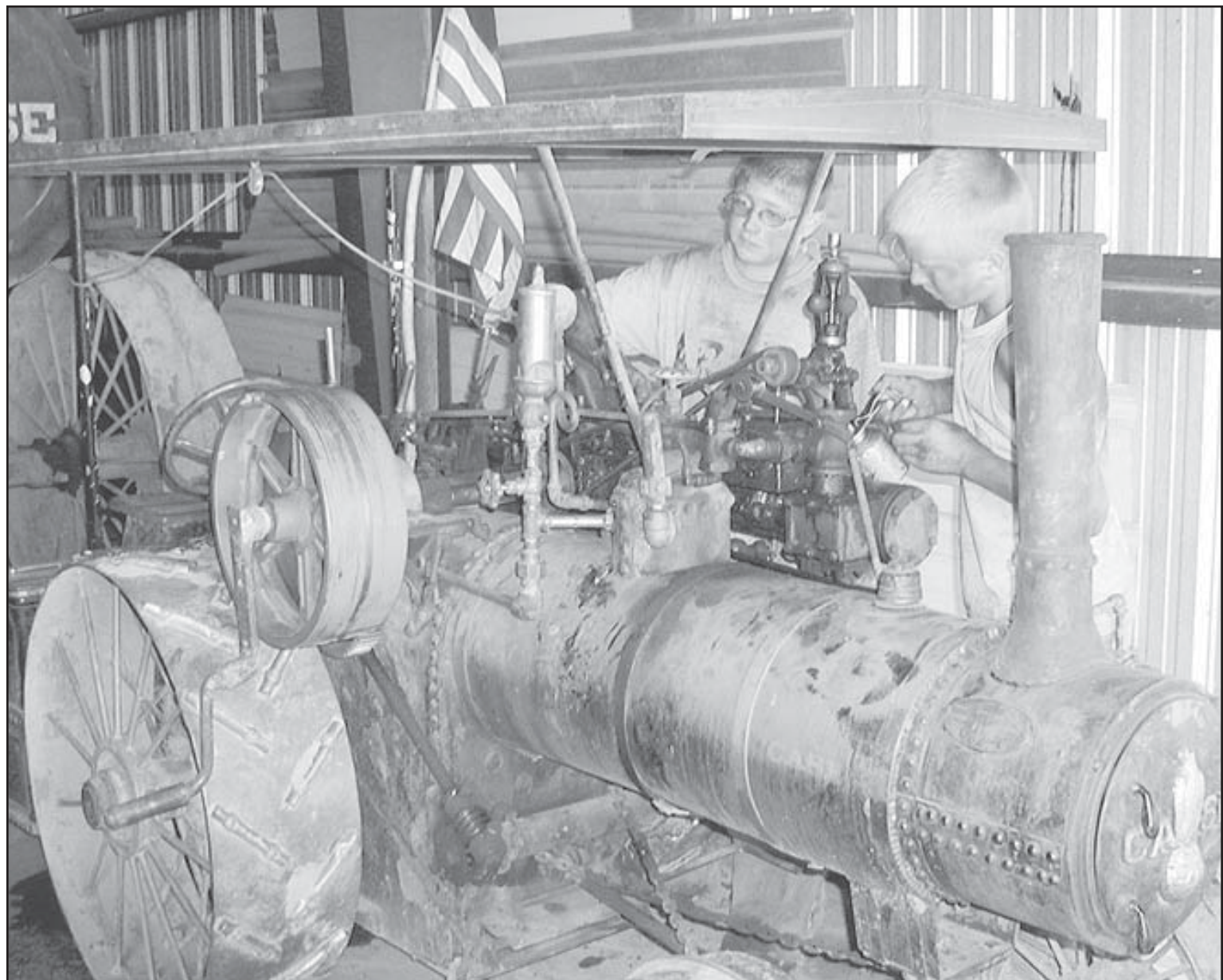


2004 Queen

a while and it makes you appreciate the good times. In the end, you turn out to be a better person, you just have to trust in the Lord.

Her family is still farming in the Bird City community today. They will be the first to tell you that she always makes the best out of any situation. They are very proud of her and very happy to call her mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and now "Queen."

Plan to attend the Thresher Queen revealing at noon on Thursday, July 29, in front of the grandstands on the Thresher Showgrounds.



REX WEISHAPL AND JACOB WHITE work on the small steam engine used for the kids tug-of-war. Although it's all volunteer work these two young men are instrumental in getting the Thresher Show off the ground.

Times staff photo by Casey McCormick

Young hands work on old steam engines

By Casey McCormick

Next week will see the 51st annual Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show at the show grounds in Bird City. But before the event can occur a great deal of preparation must take place.

There are about 16 to 18 vintage steam engines stored on the grounds that need a good deal of service to get in shape for the show. Over the years the majority of maintenance for the massive vehicles has been done by Gerald Wright.

However, Mr. Wright is currently working his regular job as

an over-the-road truck driver. But his absence will not delay the 51st show.

Two of the hardest working volunteers at the show grounds are Rex Weishapl and Jacob White. Even though they are not old enough to have driver's licenses (both will be in the eighth grade next school year) they are comfortable with operating the giant steam engines.

"It's a fun, learning experience," said Rex.

He has been working on the steam engines for five years and Jacob has worked for four.

"We like getting dirty," Rex said. "Chicks, except for our moms, dig it."

It is a dirty job as much of the work is done handling the black, sooty coal that fuels the machines. Also the smaller volunteers have the task of crawling into the fire boxes to sandblast built-up residue on the inside, as was done last year.

"This year we're checking the fuse plugs," Rex said, "to make sure they aren't melted."

Mr. Wright has taught these young men everything they know about steam engines. He trusts

them to work solo on the antique machines.

As for the regular maintenance much must be done: mud is cleaned off, small packings are replaced and each engine is hydro tested.

"The test puts the engine over the normal pressure of the relief valve," Rex said.

The relief valve is the safety device which keeps the steam engine from building up too much pressure and possibly exploding.

When Mr. Wright returns from the road next Friday he will be pleased with what these two