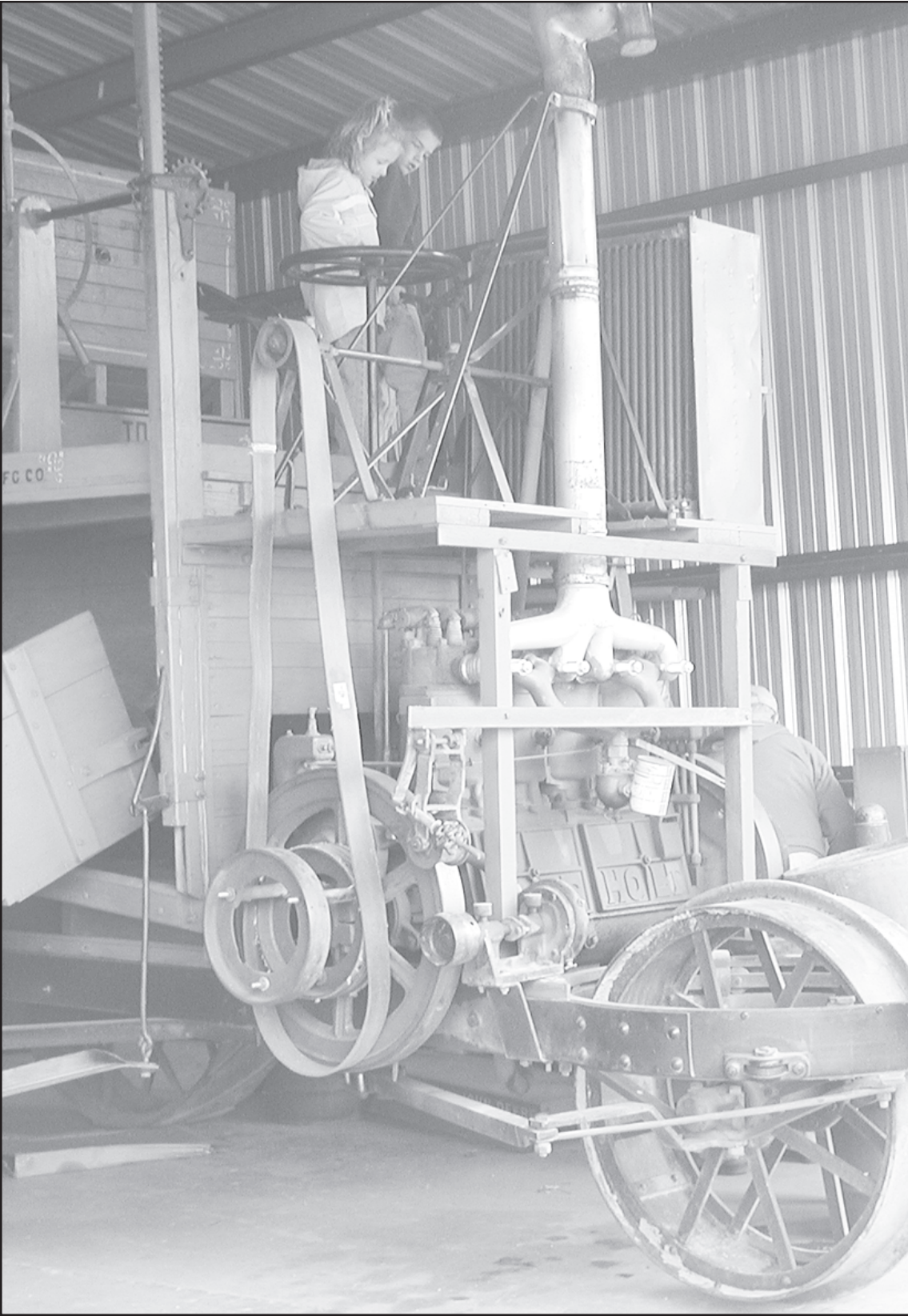




Volunteer Jan Busse shows first graders from Benkelman around at the Antique Engine and Thresher Showgrounds.



Students climb up to experience the antique thresher first hand.



Norm Dorsch drives the fire truck to escort the first grade around the show grounds.

Times Staff Photo by Melinda Basnett

Students learn lesson in history at showgrounds

By Melinda Basnett

For those of you who think the grounds of the Thresher Show are only used one week a year, think again. On Wednesday, there were 19 first grade students from Benkelman who got the grand tour.

Volunteers, Ken Beougher, Norman Dorsch, Jan Busse, and Leroy Fikan showed the kids the sites. They rode the old fire truck and the kiddie train made of barrels.

They went to the country school and brought their lunches to eat there. It would have been nice to have the weather a little warmer, but the students didn't seem to notice the wind and sprinkles.

No one could remember how long the first grade class had been coming on this field trip, but the teacher knew that this year's senior class had come. There have been a couple of years skipped when time would

not allow, but they are few. It was hard to tell who was enjoying the day more — the kids or the showmen who are so proud of their machines.

Some other excitement is planned. There will be a new building erected on the show grounds this month. It will be located on the west side, just north of the small metal shed already there. This will allow more storage for the machinery.

School board makes tough decisions for future budgeting

By Melinda Basnett

First grade teacher, Kathy Weber addressed the Cheylin School Board members at the Monday meeting. She was concerned about a combination class being created for the upcoming school year.

There are only four kindergarten students this year. Mrs. Weber said she had been approached with thoughts about combining the first and second graders next year. She was not opposed to the idea, but she was concerned about the feasibility of teaching two different curriculums.

Scheduling music and gym classes to help with separate class time might also be arranged. "Whatever the board decides,

we've got to think of the students, they're number one," Mrs. Weber said. "If I am chosen to teach this class, I will need your, (the board members) help to do the job to the best of my ability."

Cheylin Board of Education voted unanimously to commend the students who qualified for the state music festival: Kaedra Dixon for I rating in vocal solo; Montana Rhymes for II rating in vocal solo; Josh Moyer and Colleen Shrader for II ratings for instrumental solos; Girls Ensemble- Mindy Antholz, Samantha Beeson, Sydney Busse, Kaedra Dixon, Nikki Johnson, Aubrey Kehlbeck, Hannah Louderbaugh and Montana Rhymes for II rating; and Mindy Antholz and Amanda Walden for III ratings for instrumental solos.

Kevin Dixon was commended for receiving a Math Moves U Math Hero Award sponsored by Raytheon Company. He receives a \$2,500 award and Cheylin Schools receives a matching grant of \$2,500 for use in the classroom for math-

related equipment, and materials to enhance the Cheylin math program.

In other business, board members accepted the resignation of Tammi Carmichael as Dance Team Coach, and voted to approve Tammi Carmichael and Amy Hendricks as Co-Dance Team sponsors. New dance uniforms were also approved with the hope that a planned fundraiser will recoup a large part of the expense.

Approval of a natural gas supplier for the 2006-2007 school year was tabled until next month in the hopes that prices will drop.

Teachers for summer school were approved: Abbi Dixon, Kevin Dixon and Marjean Zumbahlen will teach the summer school classes, with the possibility of a fourth teacher being needed if a lot of students attend.

The Local Option Budget was a large topic of discussion as Superintendent Dave Zumbahlen estimated figures and told the board that, due to declines in enrollment, the district would need to make up

approximately \$58,000 or 3.22 mills for the coming year. This could be done by dropping mills from Capital Outlay, or adding them to the taxes, or cutting additional staff positions. Arguments were presented in favor and against such actions, but all agreed that to let the district become too financially strapped just so they wouldn't have to raise taxes, would be irresponsible of their positions.

"We want legislators to raise taxes so we won't have to," Board member Dave Frisbie said.

A combination of dropping 2 mills from Capital Outlay and adding 4.5 mills to the Local Option Budget was favored. This will make up the needed funds, and allow a small amount to be added to the contingency fund. If enrollment increases after the coming year, the board hopes to be able to lower the taxes back down.

The new banners for league mascots have been purchased and installed in the gymnasium in McDonald. The cost of the banners

were \$1550. The class of 2005 left funds in the amount of \$750 that was used for the purchase, and Cheylin Booster Club paid the remainder.

Trying to limit spending was brought up several times with concerns on music department spending, (\$1,250 for accompanists for the music contests), and transportation costs with 153 activity trips to date totaling \$31,000, heading the list.

Board member Kerby Krien excused himself from the meeting to allow discussion on the summer hours and Power School University time he would be required to attend as System Administrator. All members agreed that he has done a good job with the computers, and that the system is working the best it has ever worked. They agreed he should continue maintenance through the summer to have the equipment ready for the new year. Each and every machine will be gone through to make sure all is well. Mr. Krien took over the duty after the school advertised the position and no one responded.

The Board voted to go into executive session for one hour for the purpose of discussing non-elected personnel such as the Elementary Teacher Classroom Assignments for the 2006-2007 school year, the approval of non-certified staff contracts for the 2006-2007 school year, and approval of supplemental duty assignments for the 2006-2007 school year.

When the board reconvened it was decided that the elementary teaching assignments for 2006-2007 school year will be: kindergarten- Sharon Hendricks, combination first and second grades- Kathy Weber, third grade- Ken Hankins, fourth grade- Tammi Carmichael, fifth grade- Judy Poore, sixth grade- Marjean Zumbahlen.

Contracts for non-certified staff were approved and some, but not all of the contracts for supplemental duties were approved. A list of staff will be given in next week's paper.

The board adjourned at 12:45 a.m.