

National Threshers Association, Inc.

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NATIONAL THRESHERS STEAMS UP FOR 64th CELEBRATION

Ottawa Lake, MI - The National Threshers Association will hold its 65th reunion Thursday through Sunday, June 25-28, 2009 at the Fulton County Fairgrounds in Wauseon, Ohio.

Billed as the country's oldest and one of the largest events of its kind, the show features antique steam and gas engines that paved the way for modern gas and diesel powered equipment. From agricultural to industrial to personal use, the event relives this bygone era with a variety of historic demonstrations.

This year's NTA reunion will feature Russell steam engines and tractors, John Deere tractors and equipment. In addition, a variety of other restored engines test their power on full size and ½ scale sawmills, grain threshers, double incline, prony brake, Baker Fans and weight transfer sled. Equipment will also take to the surrounding fields for plowing, wheat cutting and shocking demonstrations (weather permitting). A sanctioned antique tractor pull will take place Sunday at noon.

Originally organized in 1944 on a farm in Alvordton, Ohio, thresherman Leroy Blaker's goal was to provide a weekend gathering of fun, food and fellowship with his hardworking neighbors. Today, at the more accommodating Fulton County Fairgrounds, that same concept exists to help show others how many of today's farm tasks were originally handled. Comments NTA president, David Schramm, "It's amazing to experience what our ancestors went through — the smoke, soot and hard labor — to fully appreciate today's modern conveniences. But we like to have a little fun, too!"

From big kids to little kids, the show provides something for the entire family. While adults can view full-size equipment pulls and demonstrations, young children can participate in the Kiddie Pedal Pull on Saturday at 1pm. Now in its 12th year, this popular event lets kids test their pedal power against a mini weight sled. Trophies and participant ribbons are awarded by weight category.

In addition to equipment demonstrations, other activities include daily parades, musical entertainment next to the show arena, and a fiddler's contest Friday night with live bluegrass music before the contest. Saturday night entertainment includes live bluegrass music beginning at 6:30pm. The presentation of the John F. Limmer Award for the Best Restored Engine takes place Saturday at 4 pm, Sunday church service at 8:30 am, and you may even catch a spark show or two after dark. A lantern walk will take place each night through the gas engine area. The show also features a large flea market, variety of food, quality crafts, craft workshops, blacksmith shop and displays of gas engines, models and tractors. Nearly 50 steam engines are expected this year.

Thursday, June 26 is Old Timers' Day with special \$2 admission for guests over 65. Regular adult admission is \$5, while children under 13 are free. Association membership is \$7 per person. Camping for members is \$80 Wednesday through Saturday night, or \$100 for those wishing to spend the week Monday to Sunday.

The Fulton County Fairgrounds is located on State Route 108 just north of Ohio Turnpike exit 3/34. For more information, visit the NTA's web site at: **www.NationalThreshers.com**.