



Lake Country Antique Tractor Association members show off their tractors. From left are: Willis Brummett's 1950 Model B John Deere; Duane Fisher's 1955 Model 70 LP John Deere; Jim Dozier's 1936 Case; Charles Harris' 1961 Massey Ferguson 35 Deluxe Diesel; Bob Gray's 1956 Farmall Cub; Leonard Davis' 1948 Minneapolis Moline; Barbara Thompson's 1952 Farmall Cub; Clarence Lee's 1939 Ford Ferguson; Charles Thompson's 1952 John Deere Model MT; Jerry Sowell's 1944 Ford 2N; and Lee's 1942 John Deere Model LA. Wayne Scott and Lee hold the club's banner.

They Call It Tractor Fever

And There's No Cure for This Contagious Family Fun

There is just something about a rumbling, chugging tractor that lives deep in the heart of every little boy (and even some little girls!). For some, tractor ownership remains a lifelong, wishful dream, while others actually reach out and grab their inner child by the steering wheel. And for those who do ascend to tractor ownership, there is a kindred spirit that has translated into a national following called the Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor Association (EDGETA).

Its stated purpose is to stimulate interest in collecting, restoring and preserving engines, gas, diesel and steam tractors and other power-driven farm machinery with historical value. The organization has grown to include more than 180 branches throughout the United States with 14 in Texas. One of those Texas branches, the Lake Country Antique Tractor Association (LCATA), was born during the meticulous and time-consuming restoration of a 1939 Model H John Deere.

The Model H was owned by Mark

Thompson, who worked with his parents, Charles and Barbara of Quitman, to restore it to its former glory.

Charles and son Mark foraged for parts and worked the mechanics, while Barbara cleaned and sanded the body. Pretty soon, the tractor resurrection became a neighborhood show, with folks dropping in on Saturdays to watch the progress. Together, the Thompsons and those first neighbors decided to form a club. The group started out in 2000 with seven members and nine tractors, and today there are more than 200 individual members who have restored more than 500 antique tractors. Charles was the first president and still serves as such.

Usually, a member buys a tractor similar to one he or she admired when they were young. Or, the relics are given to them, having been long abandoned in the corner of a field or hidden away in the back of an old farm building. These are the ones that take hundreds of hours of research and

hands-on labor to get them working and looking their best, with the goal of returning them to as close to factory-built specifications as possible. Total restoration includes removing just about every nut and bolt, cleaning, sanding, priming and painting about seven to ten coats. Members say the Internet has eased the job of finding parts, but the labor involved in restoration still takes time and good old-fashioned elbow grease—and a lot of both.

To be considered an antique by the LCATA, tractors must have been built before 1972. Currently, the oldest running tractor in the chapter is a 1924 McCormick-Deering, but there is an array of other brand names such as Fordson, John Deere, Farmall, International, Massey Harris, Massey Ferguson, Ford, Allis Chalmers, Moline and Oliver.

LCATA is an extremely active club. Members meet every other month for a business meeting, and they hold a "play day" during the other months. On play days, members of the club get

together to see what their tractors will do and practice skills needed during events they stage, such as tractor pulls.

The group has built its own sled for the tractor pulls, and it organizes contests at various local festivals and events. In a tractor pull, tractors matched by weight class take turns pulling the sled to see which can tow it the farthest. In the earliest days of tractor pulls, a dead weight was dragged, or the step-on method was used in which people actually hopped on board at fixed intervals. Today, sleds use a system of gears to move weights slowly from the sled's rear forward as the tractor moves down the course. As weight moves forward on the sled, it pushes the front down, creating drag and making it more difficult to pull. The tractor driver who moves the sled the farthest usually wins a ribbon, but more importantly, wins bragging rights.

The LCATA tractor pulls are usually held in conjunction with various regional festivals around East Texas like the Grand Saline Salt Festival and the Golden Sweet Potato Festival. In addition to the pulls, the group travels all over East Texas with stationary displays or revs its engines to add a unique flair to parades. The group also gives nostalgic hay rides to senior groups, hosts trail rides from town to town, participates in benefit fundraisers and raises money for scholarships. In all, they are involved in

more than 30 events each year.

Although relatively new to the club, a retiree from Wood County Electric Cooperative (WCEC), Jim Dozier, along with his wife Faye, are somewhat typical of the members in their enthusiastic support of the club's mission and of their own working metal monument to the past. Their tractor was owned by Jim's dad, A.R. "Cap" Dozier, who used it to defoliate cotton in the late 1930s and early '40s. After the useful life of the 1936 Case had run its course, the machine sat rusting in an old shed for more than a decade. The Doziers finally moved it to their Quitman home, where it sat undisturbed for another 20 years until Jim retired and had the time to devote to restoration. Faye supported him every step of the way, using her computer skills to research and locate replacement parts.

"This has been a sentimental journey, I guess you'd say," Jim said. And, it seems to continue to be. At one of the first displays the Doziers participated in, a man read on the tractor's plaque about Cap's original ownership. The visitor regaled Jim with tales of Cap, who had been good friends with his own father and a well-known and successful cotton farmer.

Another new member, Jimmy Thompson, also a retired WCEC employee, became interested in antique tractors when he saw a pull in Golden. He didn't have a tractor

at the time, but decided to join the club. It wasn't long before he'd acquired his first, a 1958 Oliver 880.

"I knew I was going to retire and needed something to keep busy," he said. "The biggest joy I have is meeting people, and I do this by going to tractor shows, parades and pulls." Now the proud owner of eight tractors (four working and four in various stages of restoration), Thompson readily says, "I've caught the tractor fever."

Charles Thompson says of the club: "It is a continuing education for us and those that share with us. As an organization, we like to help our neighbors, young and old, in educational activities. I am totally surprised and pleased by the growth we have gained from what began with just an idea. Every member continues to share ideas to help our organization fill the needs of our community."

One of LCATA's larger exhibitions will be at the Autumn Trails Show and Pull in Winnsboro on October 10-11. Activities will be at the City Park's Jack Cross Pavilion. There will be a pull beginning that Friday at 6 p.m. and a parade Saturday at 9 a.m. with another pull at 10 a.m. Following that, there will be a large benefit October 18 in Sulphur Springs for three regional Child Advocacy Centers. For more details on these events or all other club activities, visit the group's website at:

WWW.LCATA.COM.



LEFT: Hayley Dozier enjoys the special seat her Granddad Jim built for her atop what was once her great-grandfather's working tractor, a 1936 Case. **RIGHT:** Jimmy Thompson joined the club before he even had his first antique tractor, a 1958 Oliver that he had shipped all the way from Iowa.

National Cooperative Month Celebrates Tradition

Since October is National Co-op Month, it's an excellent time to reflect on the history of cooperatives. At a time of increasing concerns about the economy, cooperatives can be held up as a model of success in demonstrating that people working together can and do make a difference.

A general definition of cooperatives is that they are businesses owned and democratically controlled by members who use the co-op's services or buy its goods. Cooperatives are not investor-owned. Any surplus revenues are returned to members based on their usage of those goods and services, or put back into operation of the cooperative. Cooperatives are motivated to offer the most-valued and economical goods or services to their members.

There are actually four categories of cooperatives: consumer, producer,

worker and purchasing/shared services.

Wood County Electric Cooperative (WCEC) is a prime example of a consumer-owned co-op, since it's owned by the people who buy electric services. Other consumer co-ops' examples include credit unions, child-care cooperatives, food cooperatives and telecommunications cooperatives, among others.

Producer-owned cooperatives are owned by those who produce commodities or crafts and band together to process and/or market their products. Examples include dairy and agricultural producers with well-known names such as Sunkist, Sun Maid, Blue Diamond and Land O'Lakes.

Worker co-ops are owned and democratically governed by their employees. A good example is Cooperative Home Care Associates, a home health-

care agency that provides workers with livable wages and good benefits.

Purchasing co-ops are owned by independent small businesses that work to make large buys to leverage purchasing power. Ace Hardware is a good example, with each store being independently owned, but with the buying clout of a national chain since all stores pool their purchasing power.

Even though there are different types of cooperatives, they all have something in common: the ideals used as their foundations. These values have roots as far back as 1844, sprouting from what were originally called the Rochdale Principles of Co-operation, which focused on cooperative economics. Updated and refined, these are now known as "The Seven Cooperative Principles" and are the very standards adopted and followed by WCEC today.



SAVE ENERGY ■ SAVE MONEY

When you're done baking a meal and you turn off the oven, pop in a baking sheet of raw nut meats after you've taken out your food. The residual heat will roast the nuts for future use, saving you the power you would have used to cook them separately.

REMEMBER TO VOTE!



You should receive a ballot from WCEC in the near future. Don't forget to mail it in time to arrive before October 9. Please do not bring it to the cooperative, but mail it (no postage required) to our independent auditing firm. If you do, you'll be included in a drawing for a chance to win one of four \$250 electricity credits. This year's director election will include candidates for WCEC Districts 2, 3 and 7. The election results will be announced at the 70th Annual Meeting of WCEC.

The annual meeting will be at 2 p.m. Friday, October 10, at Governor Jim Hogg City Park in Quitman. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Beginning at 12:30 p.m., there will be entertainment by the New Plainsmen Quartet. Those present

at the meeting will have the chance to win multiple door prizes. To participate in the door prize drawing, please bring the detachable card sent with your ballot that has your member number and name on it.



**WOOD COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

*invites all members
to attend the*

**70TH ANNUAL
MEETING**

Friday, October 10, 2008

*Governor Jim Hogg City Park
Quitman*

**12:30 p.m.
ENTERTAINMENT**

**2 p.m.
MEETING**



**FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW,
AND BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND,
THE NEW PLAINSMEN QUARTET WILL
ENTERTAIN WCEC'S MEMBERS PRIOR
TO THE 2008 ANNUAL MEETING.**



Looks like
someone got an "A"
in energy savings.

Believe it or not, when you switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs, you'll actually be changing the way you use electricity. Or rather, the way you'll use less of it. Switching to compact fluorescent bulbs can reduce your lighting costs by up to 70 percent. And that's just the start. Ensure that your home is well insulated, properly sealed and using energy-efficient appliances. A lot of little changes can really add up. To learn more about saving energy, visit touchstoneenergysavers.com.

**Wood County
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 