

Show is perfect for Farmer

Mary Freda, Reporter

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Nearly 30 years ago, Tim Farmer attended his first Tri-State Gas Engine and Tractor Association Show.

Now, he spends a week to a week-and-a-half camping at the Jay County Fairgrounds, annually.

"A lot of shows it's just usually like four or five days over a weekend. You might spend two to three nights camping at any given place, but we spend more time here than any of them," said Farmer, who goes to about a dozen shows during the summer months.



Tim Farmer has been showing a 1923 Fairbanks-Mores 50 horsepower engine at the Tri-State Gas Engine and Tractor Show for more than a decade. (The Commercial Review/Mary Freda)

Farmer, an Eaton, Ohio, native, attends the show with the Oil Field Engine Society, where he shows a 1923 Fairbanks-Morse 50 horsepower oil engine — the same one he's shown for the past 12 to 13 years.

However, Farmer didn't always restore engines. He, along with his brother Russel, dabbled in antique tractor restoration first.

Their first tractor?

A John Deere, of course.

"My name is Farmer, but we weren't farmers," said Farmer. "I worked for a road department for almost 30 years, and we didn't, we had tractors, but we didn't have them to use on a farm. We just enjoyed restoring them ..."

"We had some old John Deere tractors and we'd buy them and restore them and fix them up and show them. Sometimes we'd sell them, and we enjoyed those mechanically and repairing them like bringing back the old tractor back to life and getting it running. It's something that may have set for years in a barn that was kind of discarded and then you kind of brought it back to life and spruced it up, fixed it up, freshened it up and then take it somewhere where somebody else can enjoy it."

After some time, Farmer said he, along with Russell, began to enjoy antique engine restoration more — and not just because it meant foregoing tires, batteries and paint.

"When we got to restoring the old antique engines, we kind of enjoyed that more. The history behind that and stuff was more interesting to us — how they used the engines in the oil fields," said Farmer. "A lot of that stuff comes from eastern Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, western New York — a lot of them engines come out of that part of the country. The history of all that was more intriguing to us, I think."

Though Farmer enjoys the restorations, he said it's the community around the hobby that keeps him coming back each year.

"A lot of people you only see once to (a) year ... you might only see those people at that show once to (a) year," said Farmer. "You become friends with them over the years and you look forward to seeing them ..."

"We got a pretty big group of friends. We usually go out uptown to eat somewhere every evening, and we ride the golf carts around town to the different yard sales, and we enjoy doing that."

"There's usually quite a few yard sales in town."

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