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Tractor Test and Power Museum, The Lester F. Larsen

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# Newsletter 44 Issue 1 - Spring 2011 - Nuts and Bolts

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A PUBLICATION FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE LARSEN TRACTOR MUSEUM

# Nuts and Bolts

A Program of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Biological Systems Engineering

No. 44 - Issue 1 Spring Newsletter 2011

Larry Ehlers, Phil Dinges and Jerry Kohl pictured with their Honorary Life Membership plaques. *Photo by Dana W. R. Boden*

## Life Memberships

By Jeremy Steele

Three dedicated individuals were awarded Honorary Life Memberships at the Annual Meeting for the Friends of the Larsen Tractor Museum (LTM) on January 25, 2011. Larry Ehlers, Phil Dinges and Jerry Kohl have been instrumental in the development of the LTM.

Larry is as dedicated as they come. He is currently finishing up his term as Secretary for the Friends organization. He has provided countless hours of volunteer service giving tours at the LTM as well. Larry gives tours on Monday and Thursday afternoons.

Phil Dinges will do anything for the museum…except paint. He is a skilled carpenter and knows a thing or two about restoring tractors as well. Phil is currently restoring a Tiashan tractor for the LTM.

Jerry Kohl is an outstanding teacher. He has been involved with maintaining and repairing Museum tractors since the very beginning. Jerry recently lead a discussion on maintaining and caring for tractor batteries.

### Membership

Membership is a great way to help support the mission of the Larsen Tractor Museum. It is also a great way to connect with others who have similar interests. Supporters, or Friends, are invited to attend quarterly membership meetings and an annual meeting on the first Saturday in June.

Memberships are available for individuals ($25 or 25 volunteer service hours), families ($35), students ($10 or 10 volunteer service hours), and affiliate organizations ($250).

The membership year begins **July 1**. The Membership Committee will be mailing out renewal forms in the near future.

### Support

Support for LTM operations can be provided through private donations and volunteer service. Friends of the Museum are organized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

The Friends organization is governed by a Board of Directors. All Friends are eligible to serve on the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee is currently developing an election slate for board members.

Bill Splinters stands behind a Minneapolis Ford tractor in 1999. *Photo from Larsen Museum Archives*

# Switching drivers

By Bill Splinter

As most of you know by now, I stepped out as Director of the Lester F. Larsen Tractor Test and Power Museum (LTM) Jan. 1, 2011. Jeremy Steele has been appointed to lead the program by Dr. Ron Yoder, Head of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Biological Systems Engineering.

I turned 85 in November and I had a series of health problems that basically caused a great deal of absenteeism during 2010. I felt it was time to assure a more vigorous and involved leadership. Fortunately Jeremy has had 5 years of experience with the museum and has proven to be competent and skilled in formulating new and innovative approaches to the management, organization and improved visibility of the Museum. In addition, he has worked doubly hard in earning a Master of Science degree enhancing his expertise in the operation of the Museum and providing him with the academic credentials for a leadership position within the University structure.

I am confident that everyone will continue to support the Museum and the programs Jeremy develops through membership, donations and involvement with the Friends, including volunteer support as a Docent. For my part I will continue an intense interest in the program and will serve in support as needed.

**Unique and Novel**

The Larsen Tractor Museum is the only museum that documents the evolution of food production from the hand implements used in pre-revolutionary times through the introduction of machines replacing hand labor transitioning through the development of the tractor from crude machines to the sophisticated machines of today.

**Tractor Restoration**

One of our important programs has been the restoration of historic tractors to a running condition. Although we do not have room to display them, we hold the original machines leading to conservation tillage, now adopted across the US.

# Plowing forward

By Don Edwards, Friends President-Elect

Congratulation to Jeremy Steele for becoming the Manager of the Larsen Tractor Museum on January 1, 2011. Thank you to Bill Splinter who established the Museum and for his leadership to make the Museum a one-of-a-kind world unique Museum. While Bill continues to be a resource volunteer and significant supporter of the Museum, the future of the Museum lies with Jeremy and the Friends of the Museum. Everyone who holds membership with the Museum is considered a Friend of the Museum.

Currently, the Museum holds information and data on all tractors tested at the Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory. Additionally, the Museum has exhibits of tractors used in agriculture and tools that transferred the need for power from the backs of humans and animals to machines. Each of the over 50 tractors or a similar model of the tractor that is on exhibit was tested at the Laboratory. Each tractor made a significant contribution to the efficient and safe operation of the evolution of the tractor as we know them today.

The Larsen Tractor Museum is unique throughout the world. With the responsibility to disseminate information from achieves of this unique one-of-a-kind Museum will take a carefully designed management system. Jeremy has initiated plans and engaged people to draft operating and management procedures for the operation of the Museum. The bottom line is, 'What should the Museum be like and doing in ten years?' Once the question can be answered, funds, staffing, space, user-friendly collections and exhibits can be acquired and put into operation.

Don Edwards dusting off his tractor at the 2009 Nebraska State Fair

Friends of the Museum will be an important component of the future of the Museum. Friends will be called upon for financial support, identifying audience needs, volunteering in supporting the operations of the Museum, and all-around general guidance and support. More emphasis will be placed on the interests and educational needs of the membership. Each member should ask, 'Why should I give my time and resources to the Museum? What do I expect from being a member of the Friends of the Museum?' As a world-wide collection of people with common interests, the Friends have the opportunity to answer these questions.

# Farmall fundraiser

By Howard Raymond, Cowboard Online Fellowship

The Cowboard (nebraskacowman.com) is planning a fundraiser for the Larsen Tractor Museum at the 2011 Red Power Roundup in Albert Lea, Minnesota June 23-25.

A 1928 Farmall Regular will be auctioned off. The tractor is currently being restored to replicate a white demonstration model. The restored tractor will be offered at public auction at the June event. Bids can be placed either live on-site or by mailing a sealed bid prior to the show.

**Please mail bids to:**
*Nebraska Cowman*
*P.O. Box 212*
*Curtis, NE 69025*

You can watch for updates and pictures of the restoration process at Nebraskacowman.com. In the past the Cowboard has raised a substantial amount for the Wisconsin Archives. Like the Wisconsin Archives, the Larsen Museum, housed in the original Tractor Test Lab on the University of Nebraska East Campus is a fantastic resource.

White Demonstration Model. *Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Archives*

White Demonstrators is the feature tractor this year at Red Power Round Up in Albert Lea, Minnesota June 23-25. Researching through the Wisconsin Archives provided evidence that IH started painting select tractors and equipment white as early as the late 20s if not before. White paint was used to draw attention of crowds at events such as State Fairs.

LARSEN TRACTOR MUSEUM
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL
SYSTEMS ENGINEERING

P.O. Box 830833
Lincoln, NE 68583-0833

## Location:

UNL East Campus
35th and Fair Streets

## Hours:

Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
Saturday 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Closed Sundays and Major Holidays

## Contact:

Phone: 402 - 472-8389
Email: tractormuseum@unl.edu
Web Site: http://tractormuseum.unl.edu

## Activities and Events:

Friends Board Meeting / April 12 / 6:30 pm / UNL East Union
Friends Membership Meeting / April 19 / 7:00 pm / Location TBA
Museum Open House / June 4 / 10:00 am / UNL East Campus
Friends Annual Meeting / June 4 / 6:00 pm / Location TBA
Super Fair / Augus 5 - 14 / Lancaster Event Center / Lincoln, NE

# Larsen Tractor Museum

## Mission Statement

To be the premier steward of advancements in agricultural technology through the development of collections, exhibits, and programs for public benefit.

## Museum Staff

Jeremy Steele, Manager
Lou Leviticus, Curator
Mark Nickolaus, Docent

## Board of Directors

Chris Ford, President
Larry Ehlers, Secretary
Jerry Kohl, Past President
Donald Edwards, President-Elect
Darold Smith, Treasurer

Dana W. R. Boden
Jim Christ
Dale Dinges
Larry Hermann
Doug Koozer
Brandon Kreiling
Howard Raymond
Keith Sheets
Darold Smith
Richard Sposato
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Luis G. Vasquez
Russ Tooker