

Antique tractor, farm equipment display cultivates memories

By GEOFF PARKS
For the Capital Press

One of the more visually interesting parts of the Willamette Valley Ag Expo each year is the huge display of antique farm and ranch equipment from local owners.

One family in the Scio area — Grimm Tharp and his wife, Lorrie, son Darren and daughter Kelsey — has a particular love for collecting and restoring what are called “Memorial Tractors.”

They plan to bring anywhere from four to all 14 antique tractors they own — and possibly all five of their Memorial Tractors — to the big show.

One of them will be a 1962 Oliver 550, which Grimm, a diesel mechanic who began collecting antique tractors in the early 1990s, called “one of the best projects I’ve ever done, but one of the saddest.”

“A dear friend of ours bought the Oliver 550 that was his father’s tractor with the intention to restore it and show it at the tractor shows,” Grimm said. The friend died before Grimm finished the restoration. Grimm will be showing that tractor at the Expo as a Memorial Tractor for his friend, along with sev-



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Darren Tharp, Grimm Tharp, Kelsey Tharp and Lorrie Tharp with some of the antique tractors they will have on display at this year’s Willamette Valley Ag Expo.

eral others.

Lorrie Tharp said each Memorial Tractor is marked with a plaque to indicate who is being honored, along

with information on the restoration and specifications of the tractor.

“We do all of this as a hobby,” Grimm said. “But

the fantastic people we meet out there are priceless.”

Grimm said he may bring other Memorial Tractors to the Expo as well, along

with classic tractors such as a 1938 McCormick-Deering Farmall F20, a 1955 Ford 850, a 1955 Ford 650 and a 1957 International

Farmall 450.

They will share space with about 60 to 70 other tractors in the Cascade Building at the Expo.



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