

Heavy metal

Antique tractor lineup honors our farming heritage

BY DAVID CHESANOW

There's something awe-inspiring about a tractor: the way it moves so heavily on its huge back wheels, rumbling and rattling like a mechanical stegosaurus, dragging a plow or rake over the earth instead of a spiked tail...

Tractors are where industry meets agriculture; antique tractors embody not just industrial progress and our rural roots but the idyll of the American family farm.

Visitors to this year's Meeker Days Festival can see some 20

tractors dating from about 1935 to 1960 — as well as old plows, corn equipment and other farm machinery — going back almost a century, courtesy of the Rainier Two-Cylinder Club.

"They all run and most of them have been restored," club activities director Larry Fugle said of the tractors. "We collect them and restore them and show them so the younger generation can see what the old tractors looked and sounded like."

Fugle said that a highlight of the exhibit is a John Deere 1937 Model B that's "unstyled," meaning that there's no grille over the radiator;

instead, the steering box sits in front of the tractor. "It's old, it's got round-spoke wheels and it's fully restored," Fugle noted.

The tractors will be on display on S. Meridian, in front of Pioneer Park.

The Rainier Two-Cylinder Club, with more than 200 members, will also be displaying antique tractors, stationary engines and classic cars on Sat. and Sun., June 27 and 28, at Wilcox Farms in Roy in Roy; they'll also have a sled pull to see which tractors can pull a 37,000-pound weight the farthest. Learn more about the club at www.rainier2cyl.org.

