

Good weather, great crowds for the 75th Reunion

The 75th Midwest Old Threshers Reunion marked a historic milestone, celebrating three-quarters of a century of preserving agricultural heritage, steam power, and rural traditions. This year drew record crowds, with visitors from across the country filling the grounds to experience the sights, sounds, and stories that have defined the Reunion since its beginnings. From breakfasts under the Wright Family Food Pavilion at sunrise, to the noon whistles, to evening entertainment on the KILJ Grandstand Stage, the energy on the grounds reflected both the scale of the event and the pride of those who make it possible.

Perfect weather played a major role in the Reunion’s success. Clear skies, warm days, and comfortable evenings created ideal conditions for steam engines to run, tractors, horses, cars and trucks to parade, and families to explore the grounds and all OT has to offer. The favorable weather and big crowds contributed to an atmosphere that felt celebratory from Wednesday’s Harvest Day Parade and Don Carlson Horse Pull, to the last Cavalcade of Power on Labor Day.

At the heart of the 2025 Midwest Old Threshers Reunion was an extraordinary volunteer effort. Volunteers staffed gates, maintained grounds, operated historic equipment, provided hospitality, and worked countless behind-the-scenes roles that kept the Reunion running smoothly.

The combination of record attendance, ideal weather, and unmatched volunteer commitment made the 75th Midwest Old Threshers Reunion more than just another year—it became a landmark event. It honored the past while proving that the spirit of community, education, and preservation remains strong for generations to come.

Looking ahead, excitement is already building for the 2026 Midwest Old Threshers Reunion. Next year will offer another opportunity to gather, learn, and celebrate, while also honoring the 250th birthday of America.

As the nation reflects on its history, Midwest Old Threshers looks forward to continuing its tradition of preserving the past and bringing generations together for another unforgettable Reunion.

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OT continues to support Toys for Tots

Midwest Old Threshers staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors once again partnered with the Mt. Pleasant Police Department for their annual Toy Drive. This year’s donation included dozens of toys to help make the holidays brighter for local families.

Pictured (left to right): Jared Walker, Julie Scott, Police Chief Lyle Murray, and Christy Vickerman.



Thank you for a fantastic 2025



**Terry McWilliams, CEO
Midwest Old Threshers**

Dear Old Threshers Friends,

As we reflect on the 2025 Midwest Old Threshers Reunion, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you. Your dedication, long hours, and passion are the foundation of everything we do. Because of your efforts, the 75th Midwest Old Reunion was not only successful, but meaningful—bringing our agricultural heritage to life for thousands of visitors.

What makes Midwest Old Threshers truly special is the way we work together. From long-time volunteers to those who joined us for the first time, teamwork is what allows our traditions to endure. Each role, no matter how big or small, contributes to preserving the stories, skills, and values that shaped rural America. More than 41,000 volunteer hours were recorded for 2025, a testament to the dedication and passion of the people who believe in the mission of Midwest Old Threshers.

As we look ahead, it's also important that we embrace change while honoring our past. New ideas, new technologies, and new generations of volunteers help ensure that our mission remains strong and relevant. By blending tradition with thoughtful progress, we continue to protect and share our agricultural heritage for years to come.

As the year comes to a close, I wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you again for your commitment, your pride in our history, and your belief in our future.

We look forward with excitement to the years ahead, including the opportunity to celebrate 250 years of America—an extraordinary milestone that reminds us why preserving our heritage matters.

Terry



**School Tours hosted more
than 1,000 students.**

**Greater Iowa Swap Meet and Flea Market filled McMillan
Park Memorial weekend.**



**GOMACO delivered the new Milan
Car 1811.**



**OT and McMillan Park was the home
base for the 2025 KXEL Tractorcade.**

Old Threshers float wins Best Community Entry

After being delayed a night due to frigid temperatures, the Mount Pleasant Holiday on Main Parade saw a string of lighted floats from local businesses wind its way through historic downtown in early December.

Midwest Old Threshers' mix of fire and ice won the Best Community Entry. The float featured a snow machine paired with a fire pit and Christmas lights.



Four members return to the Threshers board

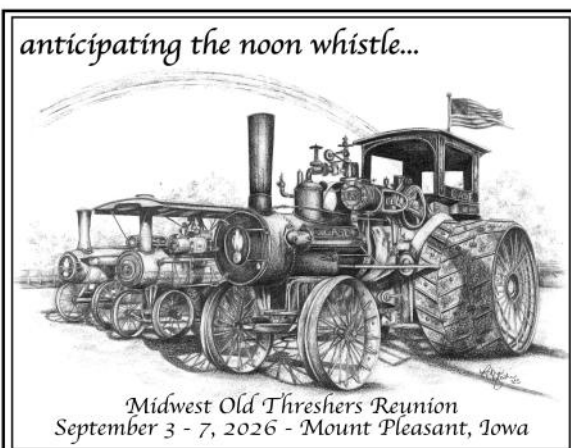
The 2025 Midwest Old Settlers and Threshers Association Annual Meeting was held in November in the basement of the Theatre Museum. About 75 people gathered to learn how the Association did financially and what plans are in the works for the coming year.

Board members Melinda Huisinga, Alan Buckert, Bob Gerdes and Bob Welander filled letters of intent to continue on the board as their current terms came to an end. All four candidates were re-elected and will serve for another four year term.

It is tradition at the Annual Meeting to unveil the 30-hour volunteer award. Created by Robin Fisher and titled "anticipating the noon whistle," features three traction steam engines including the Association's 110 Case. Volunteers who log at least 30 hours following the 2025 Reunion thru the 2026 Reunion are eligible to receive one of these awards.



Melinda Huisinga, Alan Buckert, Bob Gerdes and Bob Welander will serve another four-year term on the OT board of directors.



The 2026 30-hour award—anticipating the noon whistle..., by Robin Fisher—was unveiled at the 2025 OT Annual Meeting. The first volunteers receiving the award for hours logged since the 2025 Reunion were Linda Enearl, Tony Fitzsimmons, Randy Belnap, JoAn Belnap, and Norm Stremmel.

Mount Pleasant Festival of Lights shines bright

The Mount Pleasant Festival of Lights once again proved to be a highlight of the holiday season, welcoming thousands of visitors for a festive drive-through experience enjoyed by families of all ages. With 186 displays stretching an impressive two miles, the illuminated route transformed winter evenings into a sparkling celebration of the season.

The traditional Holiday Stroll, held the weekend before Thanksgiving, saw more than 2,200 people take advantage of free trolley rides around the displays and the opportunity to walk the lights in comfortable temperatures. The Log Village was open to visitors. Volunteers dressed in period clothing demonstrated in the Blacksmith Shop while other volunteers offered music, hot ciders and cookies to those who visited.

Cars lined up nightly beginning November 26th as families made memories together, taking in the colorful displays. The festival offered a safe, cozy way to celebrate—windows down, hot cocoa in hand—at least one family had pizza—and holiday music setting the mood thanks to KILJ playing holiday music on FM98.5.

Mother Nature decided to not cooperate and for the first time the gates were closed for two nights due to weather and icy roads.



That did not deter carloads of people making the trip to the Old Threshers Campground other nights. The overwhelming turnout and positive response made this year's Festival of Lights a true success. It was a wonderful reminder of the joy that comes from community traditions and the simple magic of sharing the holidays with family and friends.

The Mount Pleasant Festival of Lights continues to be a shining example of how our community comes together to celebrate the season and create lasting memories.

The lights are open from 5:30-9:00pm thru New Year's Eve. Tickets can be purchased online at oldthreshers.com or at the gate and are \$10 per family vehicle, \$25 for a limo, \$30 for a mini-coach (up to 30 people) and \$60 for a motor coach.

Campground, Transportation project almost complete

Megan Andrew, from the Iowa Economic Development Authority, recently reviewed the Campground and Transportation capital improvement project that is nearing completion.

Once the trucks belonging under trolley 1779 are ready, all the boxes will be checked and the Campground and Transportation capital improvement project will officially be complete.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and active volunteers, the Midwest Old Threshers would like to thank the State of Iowa and the Iowa Economic Development Authority for their financial support.



2026 Features



2026 Featured Tractor

1949 Minneapolis Moline GTB

Owned by: Logan Christe of Mount Pleasant, IA



2026 Featured Antique Car

1955 Chrysler New Yorker Deluxe St. Regis

Owned by: Dick & Fran McElhinney of Morning Sun, IA



2026 Featured Antique Gas Engine

Early 1900s Lennox Vertical

Owned by: Jerry Balvin of Chelsea, IA



2026 Featured Traction Steam Engine

1919 Port Huron 19-65 HP

Owned by: The Rob Nelson Family of Lockridge, IA



2026 Featured Garden Tractor

1968 Minneapolis Moline 114

Owned by: Clayton Jenkins of Hamilton, IL



2026 Featured Antique Truck

1923 REO Fire Truck

Owned: Redflag Tour • Operated: Graber Family, Mt. Pleasant, IA



2026 Featured Horse

Belgian

2025 Miss Sweet 16 Royalty



From L to R: 1st Runner Up: Naomi English; Miss Sweet 16: Lauryn Willham; Miss Volunteer: Beatrice Anderson; 2nd Runner Up: Isabella Traman.

Thank you to all the amazing candidates and 2024 court for their dedicated volunteerism throughout the week of Old Threshers!

Miss Sweet 16: Lauryn Willham; Miss Volunteer: Beatrice Anderson; 1st Runner Up: Naomi English; 2nd Runner Up: Isabella Traman.

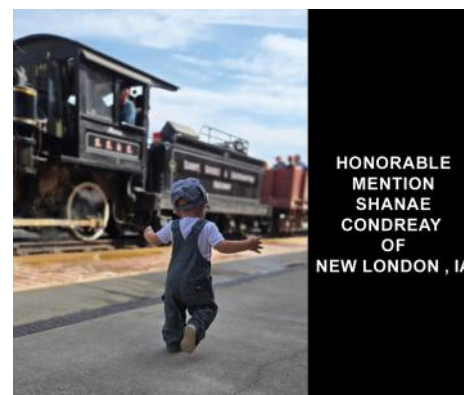
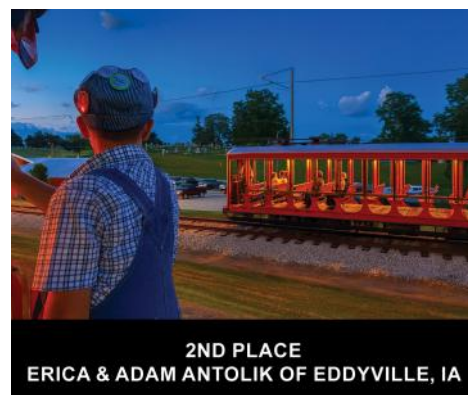
100 volunteer hour award recipients: Patience Sparks, Annette Reynolds, Isabella Traman, Izzy Zihlman, Roma Bride

Previously received 100 hour award: Annika Kerr, Cayleigh Osterhaus, Jacie Campbell, Meadow Carter, Zenlynn Lee .

2025 Midwest Old Threshers photo contest winners

Congratulations to the 2025 Midwest Old Threshers Photo Contest Winners!

Each of these incredible photos captured the spirit and tradition of the Reunion through unique moments and creative perspectives. Thank you to everyone who submitted entries — your photos help us tell the story of Old Threshers in such a special way.



A Book Review from the shelves of the Midwest Old Threshers' Library

Editor's Note: This is one of many book reviews by Threshers volunteer Joan Alt Belknap. Joan has made a detailed list of all the books in the Old Threshers' Library in the conference room. "Many of them are amazing for different reasons. It seems a shame for them to just sit there with many people not even realizing they are there," says Joan.

Galland, Isaac. *Galland's Iowa Emigrant: Containing a Map, and General Descriptions of Iowa Territory. Chillicothe: Wm. C. Jones. c1840. (reprinted by Iowa State Historical Society)*

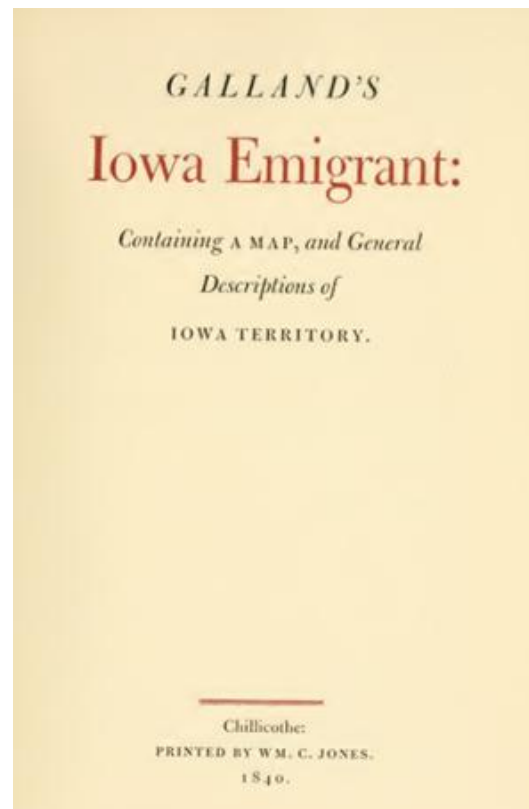
I thought it would be interesting to review the oldest book in the Old Thresher's Library. I thought it might have been the first Holy Bible of the Prairie Gem Church which was published in 1867. Upon searching the records I found it was Galland's Iowa Emigrant, written in 1840. Though not an original copy, it was worthy of reprinting by the Iowa State Historical Society.

The booklet is a virtual travel guide for the Iowa Territory, before it became a state. The author is an interesting fellow having a somewhat dubious past, but he did actually live in Iowa and the Lee County area for a number of years before writing the guide.

While it contains the usual items a persuasive guide might have like rivers, meadows, lakes, birds and fruits, it also mentions military defence and a complete speech made by Black Hawk in 1831. Galland gives a list of political officers, and even a list of post offices, of which Mt. Pleasant is one, as well as counties including Henry County.

A large portion of this short booklet was devoted to the Native Americans, and the land available in the area. Twenty-two counties had been carved out of the first four Indian cessions (the Black Hawk Purchase, the Keokuk Reserve, the Half-breed Tract, and the Second Black Hawk Purchase. Almost one-half of the population (17,816) could be found in the three southeastern counties— Davis, Des Moines, and Lee. Indians still occupied three-fourths of the territory and Iowa was still six years removed from statehood.

Galland seemed very sensitive to what was happening to the natives, as well as voicing an opinion of slavery in the south. Still, his booklet was aimed at attracting new settlers to the area. If you are interested in the history of our state, you might find it interesting to read this booklet from the perspective of someone deciding whether to move here.



OT wins Best Tourist Attraction award



Midwest Old Threshers has won the Best Tourist Attraction Award for the second year in a row for 2024. The Dammy Awards, presented last February, are local community awards, organized by Radio Keokuk, that recognize the "Best Dam Businesses" as voted by residents, celebrating local favorites in food, retail, services, and more through community nominations and voting.

2025 Reunion recap

The 2025 Midwest Old Threshers Reunion marked 75 years of celebrating and preserving our agricultural heritage. The volunteers, who through their donation of time, talent, and treasure, make the Reunion what it is today, received t-shirts commemorating the 75 years and their important role as a volunteer. Everyone was instructed to wear the shirts on Reunion Sunday. The bright, yellow apparel stood out throughout the grounds. The volunteers at Printers' Hall are pictured at left. Thank you to everyone for your dedication to OT, not only during the Reunion, but also during the other events held throughout the year.

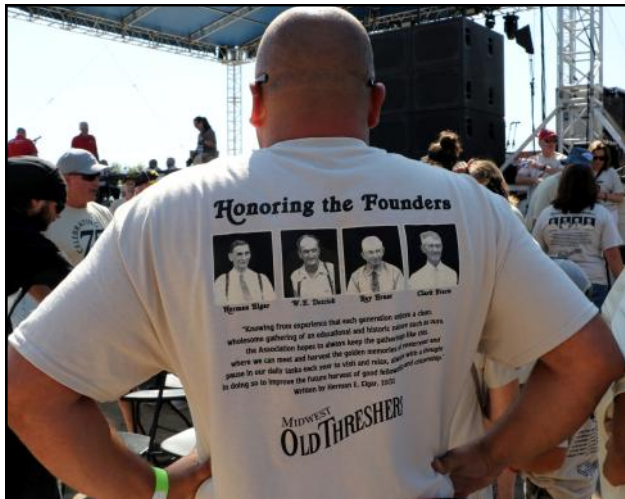


Kicking off the 5-day celebration was the Harvest Day Parade and Don Carlson Invitational Horse Pull on Wednesday afternoon and evening. The weather was perfect as crowds gathered along Washington Street for the parade and later filled the grandstands for the horse pull.

Mother Nature can make or break an outdoor event. She was definitely on our side as the highest temperature topped out at 79 degrees on Labor Day.

Family members of the four founders of Midwest Old Threshers were recognized during the Reunion. Descendants of Herman Elgar, W. E. Detrick, Ray Ernst, and Clark Everts gathered on the grandstand stage on Reunion Thursday for the opening ceremonies.

For the first time in Old Threshers history, the KILJ Stage featured a comedian instead of a country music act, and the crowd loved every minute. Jeff Foxworthy performed to a sold out crowd on Reunion Sunday. It was a special evening that will be remembered for years to come.



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2025 Reunion by the numbers

- 38,007 people passed through the gates over the five-day event.
- 12,887 five-day passes sold
- 25,120 single-day passes purchased
- Friday drew a record crowd of 7,077 attendees, while Saturday surpassed all previous records with 11,495 visitors on the grounds.
- Children 10 and under were given bracelets this year enabling that demographic to be counted for the first time. Between Thursday and Sunday, 6,853 children enjoyed the Reunion's activities with their families.

One of a kind painting now hangs in Rock Island

Congratulations to the Waterhouse Family of Rock Island, Illinois, for placing the winning bid for this one-of-a-kind oil painting by local artist Annie Guldberg. The painting was up for silent auction in the Foundation Room during the 2025 Reunion. Pictured are Abby and Bryson who picked up the painting following the silent auction.

Annie's interpretation of the 110 Case was reproduced on can koozies as well as a limited edition 75th Reunion ornament.



Theatre Museum display



The Theatre Museum of Repertoire Americana now has a traveling exhibit. It was on display at the Coralville Public Library in November and part of December. These panels share the story of tent theatre, including the lives of the real troupers involved in performances, what it was like to

attend a show as an audience member, and features of the Theatre Museum's collection and its resources.

Built in 1973, the museum is dedicated to the history of Tent Theatre in America and is located on the Old Threshers grounds just North of the Campground.



MULTI-DAY ADMISSION TO THE 2026 REUNION ON SALE UNTIL MAY 31ST!

\$30 vs \$40

From the MCRR Shop

By Lauren and Kendall Osier

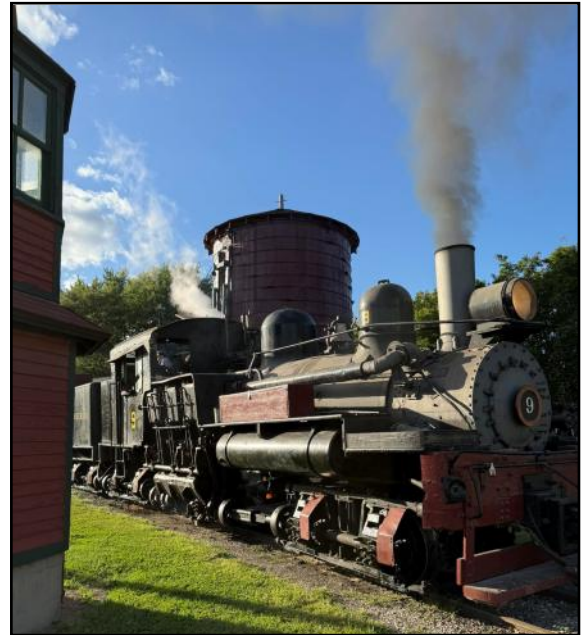


The railroad has been in its busy season since the last Chaff. Since the last article, a few projects—some major—were completed. First, the biggest project completed that many have heard or seen by now is the return of West Side Lumber Company No. 9 to service! The locomotive had its first official run since 2021 the Saturday before Old Threshers. The wonderful sound of the Southern Pacific 6 Chime was a welcome sound throughout the grounds. It was great for the railroad to have two steam locomotives operating.

In the days leading up to the Reunion, several other projects were completed. Our three-bay East Broad Top Hopper Car brakes & trucks were serviced, and the car was then painted and lettered. Denver & Rio Grande Western flatcar 6216 also received stake pockets that we recently had cast.



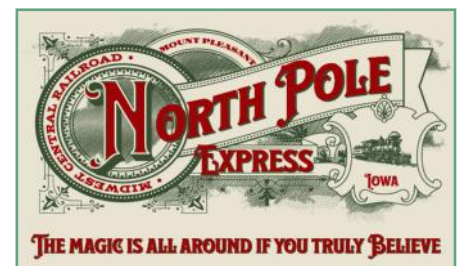
Coach 303 was also finished in the nick of time. Our wonderful volunteers worked long hours and did a great deal of painting in the days leading up to the show! Having the 52-person car is a nice addition back to the MCRR operating rolling stock roster. The lettering still needs to be done on the side of the coach, and will likely be a winter project. Progress has also been made on New Berlin & Winfield No. 2. Patterns for the new driving boxes are currently being made, and more work on the frame is being completed in order to get the cylinders ready to be sleeved sometime this winter.



We had a successful Midwest Haunted Rails in October. Some stormy weather made for some interesting evenings. The videos and photos captured by some were fantastic! Keeping in with the excitement of No. 9 being back, some volunteers carved a WSLCo Jack-o-Lantern for the running board!



Now we are deep into our North Pole Express trains. No. 9 is pulling NPE again for the first time since 2010! This December has felt very wintry with snow for the first two weekends! It has made for some beautiful pictures.



WHAT IS IT? WHERE IS IT?

Can you tell what these things are? And if so, where can one find them during the Old Threshers Reunion?
Answers are at the bottom of page 12.

A



B



C



D



E



F



THOT | Haunted Rails host thousands in 2025

Just days after the Reunion, OT staff and volunteers begin building the Thrashers House of Terror and Midwest Central Railroad volunteers begin setting up for Midwest Haunted Rails. There were 6,677 tickets sold to this year's haunted house. Midwest Haunted Rails sold 9,801 tickets that allowed unlimited Rides of the Ghost Train of No Return, The Ghostly Trolley, Haunted Carousel, and other Ground Activities. Thank you to everyone who makes this event possible!



Thrashers hosted Steam and Trolley Schools in 2025



The last weekend in April and first weekend in May found volunteers from the Traction Steam Area putting their engines together for the first time in 2025 and helping to teach Steam School participants how to safely operate a steam engine. Students spent the first day in class learning the why and spent the second day learning the how with hands-on experience doing everything from splitting wood, pulling flues, starting fires and eventually operating a variety of steam engines.



© Midwest Old Thrashers



© Midwest Old Thrashers



Mother Nature turned on the heat for Trolley School in June, but a strong breeze helped keep things comfortable as participants dove into the history of the Midwest Electric Railway! From classroom sessions to hands-on time with the historic streetcars, it was a day full of learning, fun, and motion—despite the heat!

Answers to What is it? Where is it? From page 11

A) Suds time in the Gas Engine Area B) Side shot of this year's featured truck—a 1931 Ford Model A. C) The back wheel of the Nichols & Shepard traction steam engine on the Mt. Pleasant Square D) The dedication rock for McMillan Park located in front of the Paul Anderson Welcome Center E) Notepads printed at Printers' Hall in Museum B F) Catch phrase from past OT CEO Lennis Moore on display in Museum B.

2025 Volunteer Awards



From L to R—Back Row: Jeff VanAmerongen, Mark Gartin, Connie and Kurt Schroeder, Lydia Miller, Mattie Sharp, Laine Christie, Logan Christie, Mike Ebert, and Sean Seabold. Front Row: Aaron Shirley, Dolores Poulter Wilson, Rosemary Peck, Lynell Wheeler, Bill Tucker, Dean Michel, Mark Doehling, Abbe and Mike Kaufman.

Jeff VanAmerongen

Morning Sun, Iowa

Jeff is married to Lisa and has 2 daughters. Jeff was born and raised in Southeast Iowa.

Jeff is a volunteer firefighter for Morning Sun and enjoys dirt track racing along with his dog Oliver and cats Charles and Pickle.

Jeff attended his first Old Threshers in 1999 and has not missed any since. He was a volunteer in the campground under Mr. and Mrs. Bob Woodall and moved to the trolleys after Bob retired and is currently the head of the trolley maintenance. Been busy getting the fleet up and running.

Marc Gartin

Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Marc is married to Mary. He was born and raised in Mount Pleasant and has never missed the Midwest Old Threshers Reunion. Marc is a software developer and obtained a bachelor of science and chemistry degree from Iowa Wesleyan.

Marc began volunteering in 1978 working for Franco Becker hanging and tearing down equipment on the

grounds, he was known as Squirrel for climbing poles and on the rafters to install speakers. Marc volunteers his music talent on the front porch in the log village for 11 years and now is also volunteering with the trolleys for the past four years.

Connie and Kurt Schroeder

Hickman, Nebraska

Connie and Kurt have two children. Connie was born and raised in Beatrice, Nebraska and is employed as a bookkeeper/event planner and membership coordinator in Lincoln.

Connie has been involved with Old Threshers since 2019, volunteering at the Swap Meet, gas engine, and trolley areas. Additionally, she assists as a gate worker and has created several Sweet 16 dresses.

Kurt was born and raised on a farm outside of DeWitt, Nebraska. After graduating he spent 15 years working as a mechanic, 20 years in the health care field. Since 2020, Kurt has transitioned into the trades working in plumbing on a directional drilling crew.

Kurt has caught the bug for tractors and small engines early on thanks to time spent with his dad. If it burns gas

and oil, he's all in. Kurt is a life member of Camp Creek Threshers, volunteers with the Deer Creek Sodbusters, and at Old Threshers in the Gas Engine Area and at the swap meet.

Lydia Miller and Mattie Sharp

Lydia and Mattie are the daughters of Joe and Fannie Miller. The family has been a part of the Horse Area since 1996. They were born and raised in one of strictest Amish communities in Clark County.

Lydia is from Clark, Missouri and works as a medical billing specialist. Lydia is considered a right-hand AND a left-hand helper. She also helps to take care of the food prep for the area meals. Lydia has been volunteering for 10 years.

Mattie is from Jacksonville, MO and is married to Brad Sharp and has three children. Mattie has been a nurse for the last 15 years at the Harry S. Truman Veterans Hospital in Columbia, Missouri.

Mattie comes every year to volunteer and reunite with friends. Being at Old Threshers reminds her of how she grew up with all the different horse drawn equipment. She loves seeing her horse family and friends and exchanges stories

Continued on page 14

2025 Volunteer Awards continued from page 13

of the past year. It is a nice thing when she can put away her phone, the children's phones and participate in the Old Time Era.

Laine and Logan Christie

Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Laine and Logan were born and raised in Mount Pleasant, Iowa and are the sons of Mike and Cindy Christie. Laine has attended the Hawkeye community college diesel technology program.

Logan works as a lineman. Besides coming every year since they were born, Laine and Logan have been volunteering in Tractorland for nine years for tractor pull out and replacement of the tractors in the museum.

Laine even exhibited an FFA restored tractor at the Iowa State Fair this year.

Mike Ebert

Mascoutah, Illinois

Mike is married to Connie and has two sons and two grandchildren.

Mike has been a truck driver for the last 27 years.

Mike's first trip to Old Threshers was in 2004. Since 2008 he has been volunteering and running steam engines. Mike gives demonstrations in the steam area and has helped with steam school, haunted rails, and the carousel. Normally he is here 2-3 weeks a year helping where needed before, during and after the show.

Sean Seabold

Marion, Iowa

Sean is married to his wife, Rachel and has two children. Sean was raised in the Cedar Rapids area. He has a degree in automotive technology and repair. He has been volunteering for the Traction Steam Area by helping set up and tear down since 2010 arriving early and staying past Labor Day to get the engines ready for a long winter's nap.

Aaron Shirley

Bloomfield, Iowa

Aaron is married to Leslie and they have two children.

He was born and raised in the Pleasantville, Iowa area and has worked as a farm hand. Aaron volunteers with setting up craft vendors, as a back shop crew member, Reunion set up and tear down, along with threshing when they need an extra hand.

He has been attending the Old Threshers Reunion for 18 years with 10 years of volunteering.

Dolores Poulter Wilson (DP)

Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Dolores is a widow of both Dr. William Poulter and Robert Wilson. She was born and raised on the Graf family farm near Lockridge an Iowa Heritage Farm.

She is a retired professor of 60 years at Iowa Wesleyan College and was a biology professor until the college closed.

Delores has displayed in the tractor area from 1950-2023. She had the tractor of the year in 2023. She's also been a volunteer at the first United Methodist Church Food tent since 1994, The Festival Lights for the last 11 years along with volunteering at the Theater Museum. Dolores attended her first reunion at the age of nine in 1950 and has attended every Reunion! Thanks to DP, we have the EMS building on grounds.

Rosemary Peck

Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Rosemary is married to Gregg Peck has three children and six grandchildren. Rosemary was born and raised in the Chicago, Illinois area and attended Iowa State University. She has remained in Iowa ever since graduating from ISU and is a retired teacher.

Rosemary volunteers on the Saint Alphonsus Old Threshers committee along with her husband Gregg and continues to volunteer there. She also

volunteers at the West Pleasant Lawn, one room schoolhouse in the North Village with the Retired Teachers Group since 2017. In the winter she also can be found helping out at the Mount Pleasant Festival of Lights.

Lynell Wheeler

West Union, Iowa

Lynell grew up on the family farm near Arlington, Iowa. Upon graduation, she left for college.

Linnell obtain a master's degree in education from the University of Kansas and taught school in the Kansas City area for 31 years.

During the Old Threshers Reunion, Lynell met Sheila Bell who was cleaning two sets of bathrooms due to a volunteer shortage. Lynell says she loves a clean bathroom so the next day she volunteered to help. Volunteering is a great way to meet people. She also discovered that the Reunion campers love a clean bathroom too!

Bill Tucker

Williamsfield, Illinois

William is married to his wonderful wife Gale and they have four sons and eight grandchildren. He was born and raised in Williamsfield, Illinois while growing up in a small farming town. He had the opportunity work for an original Threshers Reunion follower Royce (Rusty) Kimler. Bill helped Rusty shell corn with a 1946 John Deere sheller on a 46 Ford frame.

Bill first attended the Old Threshers Reunion in 1975. He visited Old Threshers on and off until he started camping and volunteering in 2016. He retired in 2020, of course no Reunion, and now he is officially full-time campground volunteer. Bill enjoys volunteering, preparing, and maintaining the campgrounds for the Reunion. He loves meeting new people and seeing old friends while volunteering.

Continued on page 15



As part of the 75th Celebration, key volunteers were honored as Grand Marshals in the Harvest Day Parade (left.) Current and past OT Board Members were also recognized (below.)



Volunteers from Traction Steam and Printers' Hall worked together for another successful Steam Roller Printing event (left.) Campground volunteers gathered prior to their annual meal for a photo (above.)



2025 Volunteer Awards continued from page 14

Dean Michel AKA "Peanut"

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Dean is the son of Deloris and CS Michel. He is a CNC 12 grade machinist. He started showing gas engines in the early 2000s and started volunteering a few years later. His volunteering reaches multiple areas, gas engines, North Village and Swap Meet.

Mark Doehling

Surprise, Nebraska

Mark is married to Deb and has one daughter.

Mark has an AAS degree in Diesel Technology and has been a 43-year firefighter /EMT with the local fire

department of Surprise and the Emergency Manager of Butler Country Nebraska.

Mark has attended Old Threshers for over 30 years. He has brought his Case 50HP For the Case Expo in the early 1990s. A volunteer working in the Stationary Steam Area drew Mark into helping there. Mark enjoys working with Dan and the crew in the Stationary Steam Area.

Abbe and Mike Kaufman

Wayland, Iowa

Mike and Abbe have two sons. Both were born and raised in the Wayland area. Abbe is a pharmacy technician for Hy-Vee. Abbe has attended Midwest Old

Threshers every year as a kid, usually visiting grandpa Richard Stout's cleaner combine and hanging out with cousins.

Mike works as an IT technician at Continental in Mount Pleasant has been employed there for 20 years.

Both started volunteering at the Thrashers House of Terror in 2021 and are now a part of the core committee that puts the event on. Mike and Abbe lend a hand to the Sweet 16 program by providing food, escorting the young ladies to interviews and around the grounds as well and wardrobe inventory.

Obituaries

Donald Grimm

Donald Grimm, 87, of Cedar Rapids, passed away October 23, 2024.

Born September 1, 1937, and raised in Hurdsfield, ND, Don formed close bonds with his home community. Like most small-town kids, he was into a lot of school and community activities. He joined hometown musical groups - the Hurdsfield Community Band, a church gospel quartet, and the Red Jackets dance band. He loved participating in sports, of which it was said of him: "It's good that you're so modest, Don; you have a lot to be modest about." After school and Saturdays, he worked in the family business, the Corner Garage, an Allis Chalmers farm equipment dealership.

After high school graduation (in a class of three) Don earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering at North Dakota State University. While there, he worked as a control room engineer at KXJB-TV and was technical director of KDSC, the campus radio station. He played in the Gold Star Band and was a member of Sigma Phi Delta fraternity. Most importantly, Don met Marjorie on a blind date just before his senior year.

Don joined Collins Radio Company in Cedar Rapids to work as a circuit design engineer in July of 1959. During his Collins career, he completed his MS engineering degree at North Dakota State University, and spent four years at the Collins Melbourne facility, living with his family in Satellite Beach, FL. His responsibilities evolved eventually to a position as Senior Technical Staff in aircraft electronics systems for commuter airliners and business jets.

Don was active at St. Mark's Lutheran Church and later at First Lutheran Church. He sang in the choir and served on numerous church committees. He was a long-time participant in civic choral music organizations and was one of the founding members of the Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale.

Many different hobbies attracted Don's interest. He earned a commercial

pilot license with multi-engine and instrument ratings and flew over 2000 flight hours, logging pilot-in-command time in 37 different airplanes. He was a member of the Quiet Birdmen pilot's fraternity. Don and his family visited nearly all 48 contiguous states by private plane. Model building was a life-long interest, from model airplanes to miniature working models of internal combustion engines. He collaborated with a group of Collins engineers through Nauticos to analyze the final flight of Amelia Earhart. Those search-and-recovery efforts continue to this day. He also created and maintained a web site preserving Hurdsfield historical documents and grave site locations at the cemetery.

Following retirement in 2000, Don joined the Rockwell Collins Retiree Volunteers. Through that organization, he helped charter the WRAP (Wheelchair Ramp Access Program) and became an active SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program) counselor. Don was also an active Kiwanis Club member.

Far more significant than any of these things to Don was his marriage to Marjorie in June 1960. She brought great happiness to his life, and together they shared many decades of life's joys and woes. They were blessed with three children: Ann Grimm, Roy Grimm, and Jane Adams. These children have been a never-ending source of pride, comfort, and satisfaction to their dad.

Don is survived by Marj, Ann, Roy, Jane (Jason), and by his brothers, R. Eugene (Karen) Grimm and Duane (Allison) Grimm, sister-in-law Janice Little, and brother-in-law Rodger (Joanne) Fewell. Don's parents Kermit and Julia (Harris) Grimm preceded him in death, as did an infant son who died at birth, brother-in-law, Jack Little, and sister-in-law, Susan Grimm.

It's Been Fun

Hey, everyone; my ride is here. I have to go.

Thanks for a wonderful visit;
I enjoyed it very much.

See you all later.

- Don Grimm

David Postlethwait

David Gene "Posty" Postlethwait, 81, of Springville, passed away of natural causes on November 20, 2024, at Terrace Glen Village in Marion.

Dave was born August 20th, 1943, the son of Homer Jehu and Blanche Margaret (Bleuer) Postlethwait, in Mogadore, Ohio where he grew up and discovered his love of farming. Dave and his twin brother Don could be found tinkering on tractors, competing in tractor pulls, and competing in local competition plowing events. Dave married Anne Seigfreid on February 11th, 1961, in Uniontown, Ohio and had four children.

Dave and Anne visited Iowa in 1971, and absolutely fell in love with Iowa with its rich sense of agriculture. They moved their family to Iowa in 1976 and purchased a farm North of Springville in 1977. This is where he restarted his love of agriculture and became involved in many clubs and organizations. Dave worked many years at ADM Corn Sweeteners as a Maintenance Mechanic. He worked on big machinery and climbed the silos at night. Dave also enjoyed taking in the Cedar Rapids lights below him. He worked 3rd shift, allowing him to be available to go to all his kids' sporting and school events.

Dave loved visiting Old Threshers and camping on the grounds with his family. He spent many years showing stationary gas engines, his father's John Deere A tractor, and a quarter scale steam engine. He was very involved in bringing competition plowing back to Iowa. He served as the Iowa Chapter President as well as the National President. Anne and Dave traveled the country and overseas for many competition plowing events. He was a member of the Eastern Iowa Two Cylinder Club and served many years as the President. He also enjoyed playing rounds of golf for many years.

Dave is survived by his wife, Anne of

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Springville, IA; children, Rich (Lisa) of Ottawa, IL; Jodie (Mark) Speas of Big Rapids, MI; and Tracie of Marion, IA; eight grandchildren, Kelsy Marie, Olin James, Hannah Lynn, John David, Kelly Elizabeth, Emily Anne, Sophia Joy and Benjamin David; daughter-in-law, Joelyn of Marion, IA; and nieces, nephews, extended loving family members, and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, a son, Wally; daughter-in-law, Maria; eight siblings, Ray, Paul, Homlyn, Robert, Vonn, Margie, Tim, and his twin brother, Don. He was the last surviving member of his immediate family.

James Ellison

James Edward "Jim" Ellison, 50 of Canton, Missouri died peacefully with not a worry in the world on January 13, 2025 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. Owner of Ellison Service Lawn Care a family business since 1985, a business that he was proud to take over from his father and work side by side with his children.

Jim was born on February 1, 1974 in Quincy, IL to Francis and Nancy Leaser Ellison. Brother to John (Jerilyn) Ellison of Canton. He attended Lewis County C-1 School and Culver-Stockton College. This provided him with a solid foundation of life skills that helped propel him to a life of service, entrepreneurship, and devotion to his family, church, and community.

Through the years, Jim worked in various roles at Culver-Stockton College, managed the Canton Comfort Inn, and taught at Lewis County C-1 School District and the Canton R-V School District before assuming the role of owner of Ellison Service Lawn Care.

He was truly dedicated to the love of his life, Tammy, who fell in love on the "Hill" at C-SC and were married on June 2, 2001. Jim and Tammy devoted their time, love and support to raising six children to be positive, successful, and wonderful children. Patrick (Kristina) Ellison of Monticello, MO, Isaac, Robert, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Alexander Ellison all of

Canton and his special companion dog, Truman.

His passion spanned beyond his work to his family, church and community. Jim served on the board or volunteered for countless committees and organizations where his business experience, leadership, and willingness to volunteer really set the gold standard for others. He was dedicated member and Grand Knight of the St. Patrick Knights of Columbus 2526 and member of the John F. Kennedy Assembly 1446. Jim served on the Lewis County IDA/Port Authority Board, Lewis County Extension Board, Lewis County Food Pantry, Heartland Resources Board, City of Canton Planning & Zoning Board, Canton FFA Alumni Association, Canton Main Street Association, Classic Green tractor club, and Lewis County Central Democratic Committee. In the past he also served the LaGrange Chamber of Commerce and the LaGrange Fire Department.

He was passionately patriotic, a '57 Chevy Belair owner, and had love for John Deere lawn and garden tractors that took his family on many adventures and side excursions. One of Jim's most passionate joys was displaying tractors at Midwest Old Settlers & Threshers Reunion where he continued to share the love of tractor knowledge with everyone that passed by.

While we lost our most beloved son, brother, husband, dad, many have lost a friend and loved one in him. He has been a rock to many, a master at sarcastic humor and witty timing to others, and even a glorious pain in the neck, to what we are sure is a small select few (because no matter what happened between you in your lives, once you were marked as important to him, he'd be by your side if you needed him). There was so much more to him than Jim or dad, though to us that was his greatest roll - he was also a friend, a coworker and colleague, a cousin, brother, stand-in paternal figure, a handyman, garden designer, the list goes on and on.

He was preceded to heaven by his sister Mary Ellison Norton, grandparents,

aunt, cousins, and dear friends.

Memorials may be made to the Ellison Family Scholarship benefiting students from the Canton R-V and Lewis County C-1 School Districts.

(Tom) Russell Stone

(Tom) Russell Stone of Perry, went to be with the Lord on August 5, 2025 at the Perry Lutheran Home Eden Acres, at the age of 85.

Born on June 2, 1940, in Marshalltown, IA, to Marion Bealy and Alta Mae (Russell) Stone. Tom lived a life defined by hard work, humility, and unwavering faith. From his early days delivering Anderson Erickson milk to many farmsteads in the quiet hours of the morning or driving trucks across countless miles for Pantier Trucking in Perry or making safe roads for the Dallas County Road Maintenance department, he exemplified dedication in every role he undertook. "Stoney's" service as a cook in the Iowa Army National Guard reflected both his discipline and his heart for service, nourishing not just the body but the spirit of those around him. Tom's life of service led to many other endeavors such as a meatcutter at Fareway and a driver for Turf Services.

Later in life, Tom answered a deeper calling, becoming a commissioned pastor. His love for the Lord shone through in his ministry, where he preached not only from the pulpit of various local churches but through his everyday actions- always kind, always generous, and always steadfast. Whether offering a warm meal, a word of encouragement, or a listening ear, his faith was lived, not just spoken.

Tom married his darling wife Susan (Gliem) on April 13, 1969. He was a loving father to Thomas Jr., Julie, and Tammy, and a loyal friend to many. His sense of humor, quiet strength, and gentle presence will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. These could be seen through his time fishing, camping, driving his tractor, watching wrestling, or attending one of his children

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or grandchildren's events, he never met a stranger.

Tom is survived by his spouse, Susan of Perry; his children, Thomas Jr. (Sarah) of Columbia, MO, Julie (Andrew) Hudnell of Ogden, IA, and Tammy Ellison of Canton, MO; grandchildren, Norah and Meredith Stone, Ashlynd and Brayleigh Hudnell, and Patrick (Kristina) of La Belle, MO, Isaac, Robert, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Alexander Ellison; sister, Marian (Lenore) Wernli Bellevue, NE and other family and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents; siblings, John and Helen; father-in-law and mother-in-law, Thomas and Myrtle Gliem; brother-in-law, Robert Wernli; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Gerald (Jerry) and Janet Gliem; son-in-law, James (Jim) Ellison; and other family members and friends.

The family asks that donations be made to the Perry Community School Foundation or First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Beatrice Bride

Beatrice "Jane" Bride of Roseville passed away on August 20, 2025, at Courtyard Estates of Monmouth. Beatrice was born on March 23, 1937, to Maynard and Theresa (McGarry) Brothersen in Victor, Iowa. She was the youngest of 4 siblings.

She met her only true love, Fred Bride, who proposed on their second date. They celebrated their 65th Wedding anniversary on Wednesday, August 13th. They spent most of those 65 years working side by side on the farm, chatting/socializing with neighbors, dancing, and just enjoying each other's company.

She graduated from St. Ambrose Nursing School in Davenport with her RN and later earned her bachelor's degree from Western Illinois University. She was a nurse by training but a caregiver by nature. Jane made everyone feel accepted, heard, and loved. Her home was always a welcoming place, filled with laughter, warmth, and understanding. After raising her children,

she returned to nursing at the doctor's office in Macomb. She always loved to care for her flowers, garden, and Fred. As a woman of faith, she was a long-time member of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Raritan, where she will be fondly remembered for her kindness and friendship.

Those left to cherish her memory are her husband Fred; her children James (Belinda) Bride of Davenport, Sarah (Duston) Anderson of West Branch, Iowa and Thomas (Joy) Bride of Palm Harbor, Florida; Eight Grandchildren, James (Shelby) Bride, Rachel Bride, Jaccy (Leon) Owens, Joey (Elizabeth) Billeter, Jacob (Toyin Thompson) Billeter, Zachary (Quin) Bride, Ryan (Meixia Sindelar) Bride and Madeline Bride. Her bonus granddaughters: Carrigan and Carlin Sears. Seven Great-Granddaughters, Jimmy/Shelby's: Katie, Hazel Beatrice, Rachel's: Roma, Jovi Jane, Aylie; Zachary/Quin's: Emerson Jane, and Jaccy/Leon's daughter Ava Jane. (She has a lot of namesakes to carry on her name.) Along with many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Jane will be remembered as a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She will also be remembered for her large lunches served from the trunk of the car to all in the field, fair exhibits, craft projects, sewing, but most of all her peach pies and amazing Coffee Cake. In later life, she loved to go for a drive with Fred to get out and about, with an occasional ice cream stop.

She was preceded in death by her parents; siblings Harold (Genevieve) Brothersen, Reverend Maynard Brothersen, and Rita (Gerald) Baustian: sisters-in-law; Mariella (Chuck) Colclasure and Bea (Donald) Gavin; nieces/nephews: Gloria Geers, Stan Gavin, Bob, Jack, Darrel, and Janine (Brant) Brothersen, Richard and Danny Baustian. As well as many dear friends.

Memorial Contributions in Jane's name may be directed to Immaculate Conception School and left in the care of Moore Memorial Home, Roseville.

Marvin Crull

Marvin Cecil Crull, 88, of Mt. Pleasant, passed away with his family at his side on Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at Park Place Elder Living in Mt. Pleasant.

Marvin was born February 1, 1937 in Fredonia. He was the son of George Jacob and Pearl Marie (Bergen) Crull. He started school in Fredonia and graduated from Columbus Community High School in 1955. Marvin served his country as a member of the United States Army from 1955 to 1962. On March 14, 1965 at the Methodist Church in Columbus City, Marvin was united in marriage to Lotty Lee Smith.

Marvin was an Engineer Tech 3 for the Iowa Department of Transportation. He was responsible for the inspection and engineering of roads and bridges. A Registered Land Surveyor, Marvin did private land surveying. He also taught surveying for the State of Iowa.

Marvin was a member of the First Baptist Church of Mt. Pleasant. He was a member and Past Master of Columbus City Lodge #107 AF & AM and a Past Worthy Patron of the Columbus City Eastern Star Chapter. Marvin served two terms on the Midwest Old Threshers Board of Directors from 2001-2006.

Those thankful for sharing in Marvin's life include his wife of 60 years, Lotty of Mt. Pleasant; 2 sons and their wives – Mark & Jana Crull and Matt & Jennifer Crull, all of Mt. Pleasant; a brother – Roger Crull of South Carolina and 7 grandchildren – Emma & Elizabeth Crull, Makenzie (Trandon) Ailey, Madysinn (Caleb) Kingery, Kaitlyn (Tom) Wood, Aaron (Abby) Kelly and Payton (Taylor) Kelly, 10 great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Marvin is preceded in death by his parents, a sister Alice Marie Starr, a brother Jackie Allen Crull, a half-brother and his wife who raised Marvin after his father died – Guy & Mildred Crull, a half nephew whom Marvin was raised with and considered a brother – Fay Crull, and a half sister – Esther Altenbrand. Marvin is also preceded in death in infancy by a

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half-brother – Glen Crull and a sister in infancy.

Those considering an expression of sympathy may direct memorials to Midwest Central Railroad or Every Step Hospice, both of Mt. Pleasant, or the Stead Family Children's Hospital in Iowa City.

Dean Richard Abbott

Dean Richard Abbott, age 94, of Ridgeway, went home to be with the Lord on October 14, 2025, surrounded by his family at the Evans Memorial Home in Cresco, Iowa. Dean was born on April 7, 1931, in Big Creek Township, Iowa to Ward and Helen (Scott) Abbott. He was the first of fourteen children.

As a teenager, Dean accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and was active in the church youth group. He graduated from Geneseo High School in 1950. He attended Multnomah School of the Bible in Portland, Oregon, before returning to Iowa to help his Dad farm. He married Lois Ott in 1952 and had 6 children: four boys and two girls. After a short illness, Lois passed in 1983. In 1984, Dean married Alice (Woolworth) Abbott. Together they had two sons.

From his several years of farming, Dean became a huge John Deere fan. He especially loved his 1941 Model D John Deere. Dean also worked at Woolverton Printing Co. on the Heidelberg Offset Printing Presses. Over the years he and Alice enjoyed attending The Old Threshers Reunion where he ran the old Heidelberg offset printing press. Dean also started his own business painting houses. Over the years, Dean enjoyed growing and caring for his garden, especially his grapes. He dearly loved a bowl of ice cream before bed. No chocolate please!

Wherever he lived, Dean faithfully attended a Bible believing church serving as a teacher, deacon, trustee, and usher. His current home church was the Saratoga Community Church. He was usually the last to leave since he loved talking to people. He would often talk to

people about the importance of everyone being ready for when Christ returns. Dean also prioritized going to Family Camp at Iowa Regular Baptist Camp as a yearly occurrence with his family.

In addition to his parents, Dean was preceded in death by his first wife Lois (Ott) Abbott, a son David Abbott, grandson Bailey Lane, and his brothers: Wendell, Loren and Bob.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Alice Abbott, his children: Dan (Dianne), Rick (Rose), Joy (Bob) Wright, Sonja (Stan) Brown, Royce (Charity), Chauncey (Stephanie), and Dwight. Surviving siblings include Ron (Judy), Barbara Neuendorf, Ralph (Karolynn), Coleen Poyner, Paul (Betty), Tim (Shirley), Beth (Roger) Fossum, Joyce Black, Doug (Rhonda), Tom (Phyllis), and sister-in-law Cheryl; twelve grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Thomas Charles "Tom" Lane

Thomas C. "Tom" Lane, 61, of Maquoketa, Iowa, passed away unexpectedly December 9, 2025 at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, Iowa.

Thomas Charles Lane was born on April 27, 1964, in Clinton, Iowa, to Leland and Jeanette (McCarthy) Lane. After graduating from Preston High School in 1982, Tom pursued his passion for agriculture by attending Iowa State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural education in 1986. His commitment to education and agriculture led him to teach Ag Education in Jackson, Minnesota, immediately after graduation. In 1988, Tom embarked on a distinguished career with the USDA Farm Service Agency, becoming the County Executive Director for Henry County, Iowa, and in 2004 for Jackson County, Iowa. His dedication to his work and community continued as he served as the District Director for Southeast Iowa from 2017 until his passing.

Tom's life was enriched by his loving

family. He married the love of his life, Robyn Lynn Davison, on June 19, 1999, at East Iron Hill Church in rural Maquoketa. Together, they raised three daughters, Natasha, Ashley, and Kaitlyn, all of whom brought joy and pride to Tom's life.

Tom was dedicated to his job and everything he set his mind to. He was very knowledgeable about firearms and enjoyed building, shooting and tinkering with them. He was a committed volunteer at the Midwest Old Threshers Reunion from 1993 until his passing, most notably as part of the OT Smokin' Gunslingers where he played the role of 'Father Tom'. He was the past president and current treasurer of the Maquoketa Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America. Tom was an active supporter of the Maquoketa Youth Trap Team and served as a coach for several years. He also was a conservation advocate, loved history and trivia, and enjoyed playing poker with his poker group.

Those left to honor his memory include his wife, Robyn Lane of Maquoketa, IA; daughters, Natasha (Dennis) Payne, Ashley (Logan) Payne, and Kaitlyn (Jace) Clark, all of Maquoketa, IA; 7 grandchildren, Grace, Hunter, William, Aria, Lily, Declan, and Lincoln; his parents, Leland and Jeanette Lane of Preston, IA; and siblings, Ken (Karen) Lane of Spragueville, IA, Connie (Brian) Kurt of Long Grove, IA, Kathy (Ron) Schmidt of Spragueville, IA, Dan (Peggy) Lane of Elkader, IA, and John (Jenn) Lane of Williamsburg, IA. He was preceded in death by his maternal and paternal grandparents.

In lieu of other expressions of sympathy, memorials may be made to the Midwest Old Threshers, Maquoketa Youth Trap Team, or the Maquoketa Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America.

Online condolences may be expressed at www.carsonandson.com.

2026 Calendar of Events

January 1-4—Office Closed
 January 5—Campground letters go out
 February 10—Campground Reservations Open to the Public
 March 11—2026 Entertainment Announcement
 April 22—School Tours Begin
 April 25-26—Steam School
 May 22-23—Swap Meet
 May 22-24—Gun Show
 May 26—Heritage Museums | OT Gift Shop open 7 days/week
 May 30 —Trolley School
 July 4—Mt. Pleasant Community 4th of July Celebration
 July 14-20—Henry County Fair
 August 7-9—Western Illinois Threshers
 August 13-23—Iowa State Fair
 August 19—OT Briefing Meeting
 August 22—OT Campground Opens
 September 2—Harvest Day Parade
 September 3-7—2026 Midwest Old Threshers Reunion
 September 17-19—Printers' Fair
 October 8-10, 15-17, 22-24, 29-31—Thrashers House of Terror
 October 16-17, 23-24, 30-31—Haunted Rails
 November 14—OT Annual Meeting | Foundation Annual Meeting
 November 21-22—Festival of Lights Holiday Light Stroll
 November 25-December 31—Festival of Lights



Old Threshers Reunion

Sept. 3 - 7, 2026 * Mount Pleasant, Iowa



RESTORATION STORIES WANTED

Are you currently restoring a tractor, gas engine, steam engine or other piece of equipment? We'd love to hear your story and publish your progress in *The Chaff*.

Restoration projects aren't just limited to machinery. Cars, buildings, quilts, tools, the list goes on. Send a photo and a description of your project to otchaff@oldthreshers.org or mail to The Chaff, 405 E. Thresher Rd, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641