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Tractors will chug farther south

Heritage Tractor Adventure does not include Morris in itinerary for 2013

By: Herald Writers - news@morrisdailyherald.com

Created: Saturday, April 6, 2013 12:00 p.m. CDT

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ROMEOVILLE — The 12th annual Heritage Tractor Adventure, which last year passed through Morris as it has almost every year since its inception, will bypass the town this year.

“We try to spread [our stops] around each year,” said Mary Beth DeGrush, the event’s coordinator. “We felt it was time to move it further south.”

This year will also be unique in that participants will also attend other events along the route.



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“It will grow both our event and theirs,” DeGrush said.

Participants in the Heritage Tractor Adventure pull out of the Grundy County Fairgrounds Friday afternoon on their way to Seneca.

The Heritage Tractor Adventure, which will run from June 7 to June 10, will be based in Streator, with stops in Ottawa, Sheridan and Pontiac.

DeGrush said she expects the revised route to draw a record number of vintage tractors, drivers and visitors, as it incorporates new entertainment, agricultural and tourism opportunities.

“This annual event is another example of how the Corridor offers ‘heritage with a twist’ for all ages and interests,” said DeGrush.

Fans and followers of the popular annual pilgrimage can enjoy the tractors and visit with drivers along the route, which includes classic small-town America, according to DeGrush, vice president of the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau.

DeGrush encouraged interested parties to register by May 20 so that driver details can be arranged. To participate, tractors need to travel at least 10 mph, and be at least 30 years old.

Highlights of this year’s event will include the Ottawa Two Rivers Wine, Jazz and Lobster Festival on Friday evening.

Tractors will be parked on display in historic Washington Square Park. Drivers and followers can enjoy food, a Farmers Market, music, vendor booths and downtown Ottawa shops.

Saturday, the tractors will visit and tour the Spirit Family Farm in Sheridan.

Evening activities back in Streator feature an always-popular show by nationally-recognized agriculture reporters Max Armstrong and Orion Samuelson of WGN 720 AM Radio.

Samuelson will be part of a book signing for his book, “You Can’t Dream Big Enough.” Musical entertainment in the new City Park Band Shell will also be provided Saturday evening.

Sunday afternoon, the Tractor Adventure will proceed to Pontiac’s Town Square and will include the Route 66 Museum for tours, as well as a live broadcast by The Mother Road Radio Tour.

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Tractor drivers interested in participating can learn about event details and complete registration at www.HeritageTractorAdventure.com, or by calling 866-6-TRACTOR.

For additional information, or to volunteer, contact DeGrush at (630) 226-1764, or email her at Maryde@hccvbil.com.

Registration for the 12th annual Heritage Tractor Adventure is \$175 (second driver \$75). Registration includes an official HTA hat, T-shirt and pin, fuel during HTA, and transportation to and from CVB-arranged lodging during the ride.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner meals are offered at an additional cost. Meals are provided by, and proceeds benefit, local community organizations, including Rotary Clubs and FFA. Upon registration, drivers will receive a detailed itinerary, information on meal purchases and hotel blocks, and have lodging arranged by the HTA coordinators.

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Call for Volunteers

In the past, an average of 200 vintage tractors from as far as Florida and Canada, and across the United States, have been involved in this event. The Heritage Corridor CVB has issued a call for volunteers to assist in all areas of the event. Agriculture enthusiasts, historians, farmers, students and community organizations are urged to contact DeGrush for information on volunteer opportunities.

“For the tractor drivers, spectators, local towns and volunteers, a great time is had by all,” said DeGrush, who has served as coordinator for all 12 years. “Just like farming, it’s a lot of work, but worth it, so we welcome helping hands.”

Volunteers are needed to support logistics, lodging and meal coordination, and offer driver support before and during the event.

The Heritage Tractor Adventure is coordinated by the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau, which promotes economic development and tourism along the counties and communities within the 94-mile historic Illinois and Michigan Canal.

For information on CVB members, trip ideas and special events for all ages and interests, go to www.HeritageCorridorCVB.com, or call (800) 926-CANAL.

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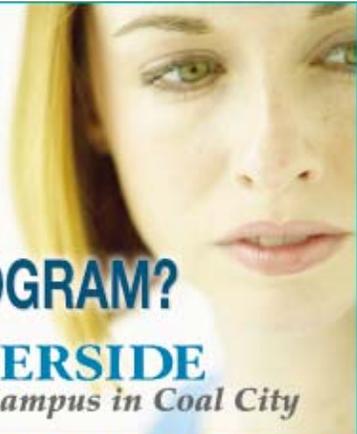
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