

Tractors, trucks strut their stuff at Butler Mall

BY BARBARA RADER
Staff Correspondent

BUTLER — For the first time, tractors and trucks were on display at the Butler Mall, as members of the Western Pa. Tractor and Truck Pullers Association showcased their fire-breathing machinery during a recent Mall show for all to see.

Vehicles competed for the viewing public's votes to receive honors in each of the truck and tractor categories. Joseph Pullano Jr., of Butler, was on hand to represent Professional Technology of America, Inc., and to present \$150-worth of the company's Pro-Tec lubrication to winning entrants.

Best of Show winners were Scott Ketterer, Zelenople, with his 1963 Farmall 560 tractor, and Ches Nicklas of Renfrew with a 1978 GMC 4WD truck. Both successful pullers in their respective classes, Ketterer and Nicklas displayed numerous trophies and awards with their machinery.

Ketterer acquired his Farmall four years ago, and pulls in the

5,500 and 7,500 modified stock classes. His wins include a third-place in state competition, and a first-place in 7,500-class Northwest Pulling Club competition.

Ches Nicklas' jet-black winning truck entry named "The Undertaker" attracted plenty of attention. Pulling since 1976, Nicklas says his GMC 4x4 generates about 500 horsepower from its 402-cubic-inch engine. The truck competes in the 5,500 and 6,500 super stock classes.

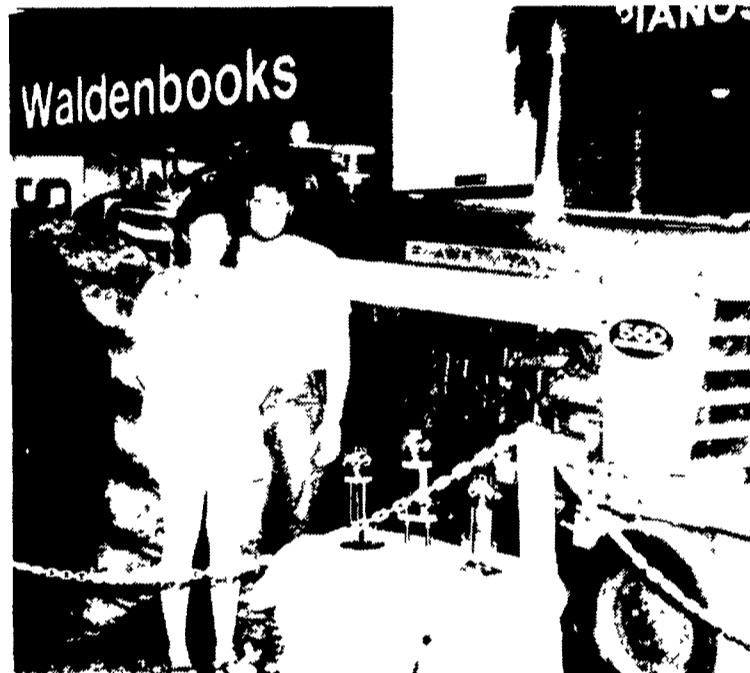
A 1929 John Deere GP named "Flower Power" was the oldest tractor on display. Owned by Vernon "Boff" Foertsch of Saxonburg, and well-known on the pulling circuit, the tractor is, "mainly retired now, but she's still used in various parades and sometimes on the farm," according to Foertsch.

Among other entries was a homemade tractor owned by Bill Larimer, Jr., of Hadley. Sporting twin 460-cubic-inch Ford engines, the tractor's huge rear tires nearly prevented its crew from wedging it through the mall lobby.

Young Bill was introduced to the



Randy Kummer, vice-president of WPTTPA and organizer of the tractor and truck display at the Butler Mall, shows off his 1959 Allis-Chalmers D17 gas tractor.



Scott and Tina Ketterer proudly show their 1963 Farmall 560, named "Best of Show" at the Butler Mall's Western Pa. Tractor and Truck Pullers Association's display.

sport of pulling through his father, Bill Sr., who began competing in 1954. The father-son team has won many competitions sponsored by the Northwest Tractor Pullers Association, and the Western Pa. organization.

The smallest tractor on display was a mini-modified, Chevy-powered unit called "The Mule". Owned by Mark Kozma of Sarver, the tractor boasts 600 horsepower and competes in both the mini-modified and open classes.

Randy Kummer, the event's organizer and vice-president of the Western Pa. Tractor and Truck Pullers Association, noted that the WPTTPA got its start in 1979, and currently has about 200 members. The group is run by nine directors, all but three being active truck or tractor pullers.

The Association's 47,000-pound sled was fabricated from a Mack truck and is available on a rental basis by contacting Kummer. Anyone participating in a pulling event using the WPTTPA sled and (Turn to Page D11)



It takes a wide set of tires to tame all the "horses" generated by Bill Larimer's twin 460-cubic-inch Ford engines. Standing with the homemade tractor is Bill's father, Bill, Sr., a veteran of 30 years on the pulling circuit.

Tobacco

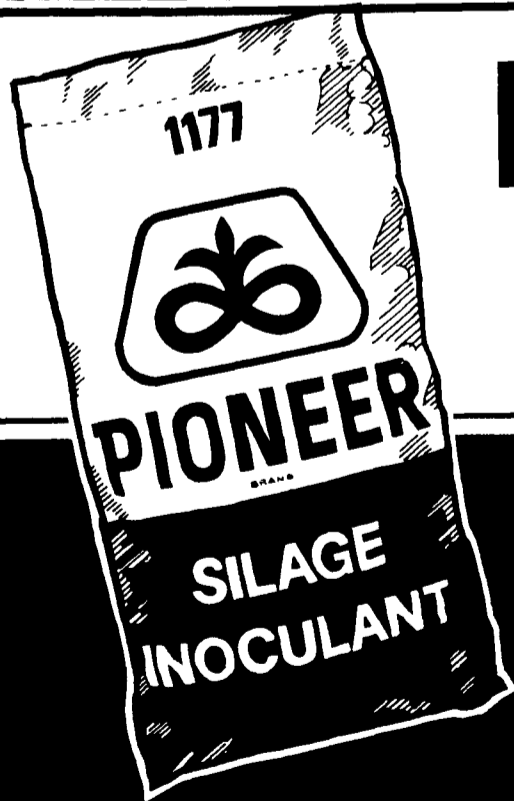
assessment

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Burley tobacco producers will be called upon to participate in the no-net-cost program by contributing 9 cents per pound on all tobacco sold in 1984, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official has said.

Everett Rank, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said the 9-cent assessment is necessary to cover projected government losses on the 1984 crop, plus a portion of the losses expected on the 1983 crop.

The remainder of the projected 1983 losses will be covered by assessments in future years after the initial impact of the program is analyzed, he said.

Producers who elect not to contribute to the no-net-cost program will not be eligible for price support loans on their 1984-crop burley tobacco, Rank said.



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