



Virginia's Peninsula Tractor Organization has nearly 100 members from several states, bonded together by 60 and 70-year-old tractors, ageless steam equipment, promoting agriculture, and rebuilding a century-old sawmill.

Peninsula Collectors Celebrate Vintage Ag Equipment

Virginia's Peninsula Tractor Organization (PTO) doesn't have your typical "farmer-centric" membership. It isn't located in a hotbed of agricultural production, but that hasn't stopped it from growing to more than 100 members in 2024.

"We're not in the corn belt, the wheat belt or any other belt for that matter," says real-life farmer and PTO secretary Laurie Dryden, whose husband Richard is the organization's president. "We're in a small county of less than 10,000 people on a narrow wisp of land surrounded by Chesapeake Bay on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other. Norfolk, Va., is to our south, and Washington, D.C., is to our northwest. Our members love old tractors and old equipment and love to share the Delmarva Peninsula's agricultural heritage."

The PTO has members from Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New York, the Carolinas and Florida. Laurie Dryden says one supporter is even a wheat producer in Kansas. Members share a love of preserving old tractors and machinery, and they host events to demonstrate plowing, grinding and shelling corn.

Garrison "Doc" Brown says the PTO is

just plain fun, with members owning many different models and colors of tractors, most built in the 40s and 50s. Laurie Dryden, a sixth-generation farmer, says the members all agree that once vintage iron is in your blood, you just can't get it out. Her husband has 20 tractors, and Brown has nearly 100, many restored and running. Others are biding their time waiting for attention. John Soderberg has a 1/3rd-scale steam tractor and a rare hay press.

Every year, PTO members drive their tractors in parades, show their gas engines at community events, and host a stock tractor pull and a plowing demonstration. They also run educational events and are restoring a 19th-century sawmill in Nassawadox, Va.

"We're a non-profit organization with regular monthly meetings and a long list of things to work on," says Laurie Dryden. "It's a fun and worthwhile group that keeps growing with new members joining every year."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Laurie Dryden, Peninsula Tractor Organization, 8104 Sunset Cove Dr., Exmore, Va. 23350 (www.peninsulatractor.org).