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**FARM TOY & ANTIQUE TRACTOR SHOW** SATURDAY, MARCH 15 & SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025

A SUPPLEMENT TO The menota-Reporter The Ambuy News Tews-Leader Wednesday, March 5, 2025

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### **Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show**



Wednesday, March 5, 2025 Wednesday, March 5, 2025 Wednesday, March 5, 2025

### Leffelman & Associates Invites You To Sublette For A Great Toy Show!





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Village of Sublette PO Box 86 Sublette IL 61367-0086 www.subletteweb.com

On behalf of the Village of Sublette, it gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone back to Sublette's "Annual Antique Tractor and Toy Show."

The 'toy show' is made possible by the work and generosity of our committee, volunteers, exhibitors, and organizations who give their time, energy, ideas, and creativity to produce an enjoyable experience for an afternoon - or perhaps the entire weekend!

Our beautiful, little village has plenty to offer! While you are here, I encourage you to visit our businesses - ranging from restaurants with home cooking, to unique shops and more!

We are happy to see you again! Because of your unwavering loyalty, Sublette remains "The little town with the BIG toy show!"

Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful toy show! Stay awhile and come back often!

Sincerely,

John R. Stand

John R. Stenzel Village President of Sublette

### **Welcome to the Sublette Farm Toy Show**



March 15th & 16th

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### Sublette Farm Toy & **Antique Tractor Show**



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### March weather makes it hard to know what to expect; the only known fact is there will be a toy & tractor show

By BRANDON LaCHANCE

Staff writer

SUBLETTE-The weather at last year's Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show wasn't awful.

It wasn't great.

The sun was out, but all patrons wore jackets and some winter hats as the wind wiped trees and flags around at a furious pace.

As always, all involved and all wanting to attend the 43rd Anual Sublette Toy & Antique Tractor Show on March 15-16 are crossing their fingers Mother Nature doesn't ruin the party.

"We were happy with last year's toy show because we were able to have the event and there were still a lot of collectors and farm toy, farm equipment fans walking around Sublette," said firstyear Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Show Board of Directors President, Anthony Morgan.

"It was windy, but thankfully the amount of time people are outside to walk to the next building isn't too far.

"This year, hopefully, we can enjoy both, the vendors in the buildings and the antique tractors on display outside."

Weather aside, the 43nd annual toy and tractor show looks to be in fashion for large crowds, big tractors, and enormous fun.

If you ask the Village of Sublette Economic Development Coordinator, Don Dinges, the show levels up each year in terms of excitment, and crowd numbers.

"The first tractor and toy show brought in 400 people and we thought it was a huge success," said Dinges, who has been part of 40-of-the-43 shows. "Since then, it has grown from one building to five buildings, and we have close to 6,000 people in Sublette for the show each year.

"The show brings people together to work on a community project. It brings a lot of people to Sublette, which makes it a tourist event to help all of our businessses. The businesses prosper anytime there is a large group of people in town.

"It doesn't get any bigger for us than the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show."

The volunteers and committee members set up and take down tables and take money at the doors of the five different buildings housing the show, which are Main Street Repair, Jacoby Building, Sublette Farmers Elevator, Sublette Community Building, and the Ellice Dinges Center..

Evan Orzech will showcase his family's large model train display for the second year. Check out the story on the model train on Page X.

The show's shuttle, which offers pick up and delivery to each of the five buildings previously listed, will include Orzech Auto to the stop schedule so riders can check out the new choo choo train.

The show, which runs 9 a.m.-3 p.m. both Saturday, March 15 and Sunday March 16, will also include other familiar favorites.

Not oly will there be toy vendors in five builidngs and antique tractors outside, but there will also be a semi-tractor display.

The Firemen's Pancake Breakfast, hosted by the Volunteer Fire Department will be from 7 a.m.-nooor on Sunday at the Sublette Fire Station.

There will be a Pedal Pul for the kids, and food stands will be ran by the Sublette Indians and the Maytown Comets 4-H Clubs.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

March 15 & 16

Welcome To **SUBLETTE** 



U.S.A.

**SUBLETTE ANTIQUE TRACTOR & TOY** SHOW March 16 **FIREMANS PANCAKE BREAKFAST** April 19 **SUBLETTE INDIANS 4H EASTER EGG** HUNG May 23-25 **TOWN-WIDE GARAGE SALES** May 26 **MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE** June 28

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### **Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show**



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### Minneapolis-Moline Collectors ready to share their collections

By BRANDON LaCHANCE Staff writer

SUBLETTE - The Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show has become synonymous with featuring

equipment brand every year. Through the process, a rotation has begun giving every brand, whether still operating or defunct, a chance

a different tractor, farm

to showcase its legacy. This year, joining Oliver Corporation, Minneapolis-Moline is back in the fold with tractors, equipment, and

tons of history to share.

Mike Jahn (pronounced John), a native of Lee Center. has been familiar with Minneapolis-Moline tractors his entire life and has been involved with the group, Minneapolis-Moline Collectors for over 25 years.

"My grandfather, Louie Jahn, was a tractor and implement dealer in Lee Center. He started in business in the 1930s. He originally sold Oliver tractors and farm equipment until World War II," Jahn said. "After the

war was over, Oliver was late getting machinery and tractors to dealers. He got a little upset with them and found out he could get a Minneapolis-Moline dealership. He took that on and dropped the Oliver line."

"Growing up in the little town of Lee Center, it's a farm community. A lot of the kids I grew up with in the 1960's were farm kids. I ended up helping them and working with their parents on their farms. I pulled weeds, bailed hay, and a long

list of other farm duties. As I got older, I ran the tractors, which sparked my interest.

"The Minneapolis-Moline line is very popular in this area and there are a lot of them around. That's what got me going. It helps my grandfather sold them, but he passed away a long time before I started collecting. I started in the 1990s and he passed away in the 1960s. I didn't get to spend anytime on Molines with him."

The former Minneapohis former business.

Other members will help the show.

Jahn doesn't expect as many in 2025, but he expects a good showing.

& Antique Tractor Show has been around for many,

lis-Moline Collectors board member will be present at the 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show with a table sharing his collection, history, and photos of his grandfather and

spread the brand's name. In 2016, the collector's group brought 150 Minneapolis-Moline tractors to

"The Sublette Farm Toy



lis-Moline Collectors, two gentlemen are photoed with a New Oliver 70s tractors, which were the first rubber tire tractors to be delivered to Sublette in 1938.

(Photo contributed)

many years. What makes it so special is that it's a people event," Jahn said. "It's for kids and all the way up to grand folks. People attend it together as families. When you get the featured collector groups there it helps draw a particular crowd.

"The people who host the show are always so good. They're warm and friendly people, and that's the bottom

Minneapolis-Moline was created in 1929 via a merger of three companies, Minneapolis Steel & Machinery,

Minneapolis Threshing Machine Company, and the Moline Implement Company. The company had manufacturing plants in Minneapolis, Hopkins, Minnesota, and Moline.

Like Oliver, Minneapolis-Moline was purchased by the White Motor Corporation in 1963. The tractor brand name was dropped by White Motors in 1974.

The last Minneapolis-Moline tractor produced was the G-955 in 1973-74.





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### **Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show**



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### Oliver is considered the underdog tractor company



#### By BRANDON LaCHANCE Staff writer

SUBLETTE – Frank Thilgren has been a fan of tractors, farm equipment, and farm toys for a long time.

He has many brands in his collection, but one of the most exciting for him to collect is the Oliver Farm Equipment Company, better known as Oliver.

"Icollect toys, I have a couple Oliver tractors, and I work for an agronomy cooperative. I'm a fan of John Deere, but each company is interesting," Thilgren said. "I like Oliver because it's always been underrated or an underdog. No one has ever rated Oliver very high when it comes to farm equipment. The brand never took off like other brands did."

Thilgren has been the president of Midwest Oliver Collectors for the last two years and a part of the group for the last nine years.

Midwest Oliver Collectors, which has 43 members across Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, hopes to have four or five representatives at the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show.

"We try to promote Oliver tractors and the equipment whenever we can," said Thilgren, who is the furthest north of the group's members as he resides in Belmont, Wis. "We restored an Oliver tractor in the Charles City Museum in Charles City, Iowa, which had an old Oliver manufacturing plant. We get everyone together once a year to chat about tractors. It's like having another family.

"I've never been to the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show, so this year will be my first time. I've always heard good things about the event. We lost a member, Craig Montgomery, about a year ago and he always promoted this toy show. Someone told me, the Midwest Oliver Collectors first meeting was held at the Sublette Toy Show.

Thilgren said he tries to get to two or three different shows a year including the National Toy Show in Dyersville, Iowa. Midwest Oliver Collectors members Craig Montgomery and Bruce Myer are adamant to get to as many shows as they can.

All of them help share their love for the Oliver brand.

Oliver Farm Equipment Company was formed in 1929 as a result of a merger between the American Seeding Machine Company of Richmond, Indiana, Oliver Chilled plow Works of South Bend, Indiana, Hart-Parr Tractor Company of Charles City, Iowa, and Nichols and Shepard Company of Battle Creek, Michigan.

Oliver also acquired McKenzie Manufacturing Company in 1930, Ann Arbor Agricultural Machine Company in 1943, Cletrac in 1944, and A.B. Farquhar Company in 1952.

Oliver Farm Equipment

Company became the Oliver Corporation in 1944. The corporation was purchased on Nov. 1, 1960 by the White Motor Corporation of Cleveland. The last Oliver tractor, a model 2255, was produced in 1976.

Don Dinges, Village of Sublette Economic Development Coordinator, Don Dinges, has been a part of 40 of the 43 toy shows in Sublette.

Although he is trying to limit himself of toy purchases because his collection is getting too large, he is excited to see Olivertractors at the show.

"We had an Oliver dealer in Sublette for almost 75 years. Oliver has been popular in this area. Minneapolis-Moline Collectors is a real good group," Dinges said. "They bring us the biggest show in terms of the number of antique tractors. These featured tractors have been here within the last six years because they're a fixture in the rotation."



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### **Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show**



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#### Sublette Fire Dept. to cook up pancakes & sausages

One of the popular events of the Sublette Toy Show is the annual Pancake and Sausage Breakfast served by the Sublette Volunteer Fire Department. The breakfast is served on the Sunday of the show from 7 a.m. until noon at the Sublette Fire Department. It's a great opportunity to start your day with a good breakfast and help out the local fire department.



### Did you miss your exit? Not to worry. Look for Sublette's "Next 4 Exit" signs

When approaching Sublette on U.S. 52 from either direction, be sure to watch for the "Next 4 Exits" signs. These tongue-in-cheek signs were erected years ago for a community celebration and have been so popular that they are left up all year long. The signs have brought smiles to many travelers as they approach Sublette. So when you get to Sublette,

be sure to take the correct exit.

You will also notice the recreated Burma Shave signs that are located one-half mile southeast of town along U.S. 52. These signs are the only "official" set of Burma Shave signs in Illinois. They were awarded to Sublette by Reminisce magazine following a contest held a number of years ago.

### **WELCOME!**

to everyone attending the

### **Sublette Farm Toy Show!**

Please join us for these & other upcoming events!

- Mendota Easter Hop April 12, 9am-11am
  - Sweet Corn Festival Golf Outing June 1
    - Fireworks at Lake Mendota June 28
- 78th annual Mendota Sweet Corn Festival -Aug. 7-10

www.sweetcornfestival.com

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- Diaz Grocery and Taco
- 1314 Meriden St.
- El Rey Del Taco
- 604 Sixth St.
- El Zarape Rt. 251
- El Torito Mexican Grill 604 6th St.
- 714 Main St. • McDonald's 1503 13th Ave.
  - U.S. 34 East • Mendota Moose Lodge 211 E. 12th St.

Shop

1206 6th Ave.

Main Street Station

- Pizzas by Marchelloni 1210 Meriden St.
- Rosati's Sports Pub 801 Sixth St.

- Subway
- Rt. 251 North
- Ziggie's Family Restaurant Rt. 34 East

#### Food Trucks

(locations may vary)

- Salinas Mexican Food Truck
- Tacos Guzman
- Flo's on Pulaski

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- Quality Inn & Suites Rt. 34 East at I-39
- Super 8 Motel 2601 E. 12th St.

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#### Shop in Sublette during the Toy & Tractor Show

The Sublette Mini Mall as well as numerous other Sublette businesses will be open during the Sublette Toy Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show. This is a great opportunity to explore the many businesses that make up the community.

In the Mini Mall, Ellie

Rae's is a quaint boutique offering gifts and clothing. while Little Ruth's Boutique offers custom, handmade, and unique children's cloth-

Local Cup and Cake is the place to get your special cup of coffee along with cupcakes and muffins. The shop is listed on the Blackhawk Chocolate Trail, so you may find some special chocolate items on the menu.

Suds Yer Duds, Sublette's laundromat, is also located in the Mini Mall and vows that "we're cleaning up the town."

#### Volunteers of all generations. locations thanked for their hard work in making the toy show a success

An event as large as the Sublette Toy Show could not be done without a lot of volunteers. It takes volunteers to plan, volunteers to set up, volunteers to work at the show and volunteers to clean up.

It is estimated between 150 and 200 volunteers are involved annually in staging the show. These volunteers are not just from Sublette,

but many of the neighboring communities, and some even travel for many miles to help with the show as they enjoy the small-town atmosphere and farm-related activities.

Also helping at the twoday event will be 6-12 FFA members from both Amboy High School and Mendota High School. They will help set up Saturday morning and take down on Sunday.





### Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show



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### Anthony Morgan takes over as Toy & Tractor Show president

#### By BRANDON LaCHANCE

Staff writer

SUBLETTE – For the last few years, Maurice Zimmerlein has been leading the way for the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show as the acting president.

However, this year, a different name and face hold the president title.

Anthony Morgan, 40, a Sublette native, isn't expecting any major differences in the toy show for this year or the immediate future.

"Maurice just wanted off and I was elected to take his place. The rest of the board and myself have been involved for a while and we want to keep this thing going," said Mogan, who has been on the board since 2020. "I have plenty of stuff going on with my business, Main Street Repair. I obviously want to keep my shop and the show going. It's a lot to take on, but everyone pitches in to make it work, and it works pretty well.

"Hopefully, this toy and tractor show goes the same as the previous ones. Being president is more of a title than anything. It doesn't really change anything for me."

Morgan has found out how far the Sublette Toy & Tractor Show actually reaches.

The president received a call from Charley, a man from southern Vermont, who saw the advertisement for the show in the Toy Farmer Magazine. He called Morgan looking for a toy Oliver Forage Wagon. The nearest toy show to the Vermont resident is 45 miles away with the second closest being four hours away in New York.

Charley asked Morgan is he could be on the lookout for the requested toy.

The first of many reminders of the legacy of the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show.

Also on the tractor and toy show board of directors are secretary John Stenzel, treasurer Evan Bickett, Mark Henkel, Jeremy Zapf, and Alex Leffelman.





**Enjoy the Toy Show!** 

Stop by during the toy show and check out our train display!!

# We look forward to seeing you at the Toy Show





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### Chugga, chugga...model train rolls through Orzech Auto again

By BRANDON LaCHANCE Staff writer

SUBLETTE - Every year there is something different at the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show.

Sometimes it's a new vender.

Or a new product from a vender.

Last year, there was a new attraction with a large model train display at Orzech Auto Truck and Towing. It is chugging through the shop once again during the 43rd annual toy and tractor show.

"For what advertisement we did last year, there were quite a bit of people who came to the shop to see the train. There are plenty of people who have told me they regret not seeing it last year," said Ethan Orzech, 31, a Compton native who moved to Sublette a year ago. "I've been into model trains for over 20 years. This model is part of a larger group, the Midwest Train Collectors Association. This is what my dad, Henry Orzech, and I own. What we have is 30x15, but it could 200x150 if everyone put their stuff together.

"My dad and my grandfather, Stanley Orzech (no longer with us), are the ones who got me interested and involved. I worked at a hobby shop for almost 10 years during high school and college. That's where a lot of it was bought."

Orzech has been involved in the midwest division of the national train collector's club for 15 years.

Through the club he's picked up new pieces and has seen many more he may add to his collection. But it all started with his grandfather's pieces from the 1930's.

As Evan will say, you can start with family handme-down trains and gradually increase the collection by paying \$1,500 for one piece if you wanted.

The Orzech model train has over 100 pieces. That's just the train pieces, not the additional scenery and landscaping.

"My entire family has worked on the train display because you can't just go to the store and buy the finished product," Orzech said. It's all handbuilt, hand-painted, and hand-created. It's become a family tradition.

"We don't have anywhere to put the whole thing up, so this is really the only time we have an excuse to set it up and enjoy it for a week."

One aspect of last year's toy and tractor show Orzech enjoyed was the different visitors.

He anticipates an even wider variety this year.

"In Sublette and at the Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show, it's a

different atmosphere than our setup and all setups. going to a train show," They're not impressed. Orzech said. "It's the same demographic at each train

"But people coming here and seeing what they could buy and set up, it's neat seeing a different audience appreciating the train. Last year, we had two or three people walk through the shop four or five different times. They saw something new or

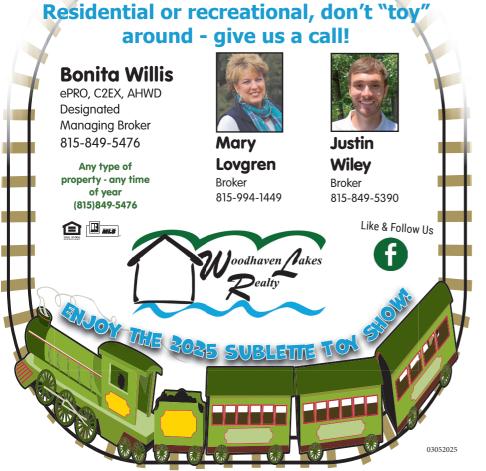
"It's not something you can fully take in on one pass."

different each time.

Ethan is still adding pieces to the model as it will never look the same as the year before. However, if you ever see a brandnew rotator tow truck in the parking lot of Orzech Auto, vou know he sold the model.

But... he's not interested in selling.

"It's a lifelong hobby," Orzech said. "Seeing kids, and even adults, reactions to it is just as rewarding as setting it up."







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#### What's on the menu?

The Sublette Toy and Antique Tractor Show is one of the longest-running shows in the Midwest. It will be celebrating its 42nd anniversary this year.

The first show was held in just one building and drew over 600 visitors. From there, the show has continued to grow to where it covers five buildings and displays throughout the town.

The show includes toys, crafts, an outdoor tractor show, a model train display (new this year at Orzech Towing), a semi-tractor

show and plenty of food. The Maytown Comets 4-H Club and the Sub-Let Indians 4-H Club will both have food stands open Saturday and Sunday, and the volunteer fire department will be serving a pancake breakfast at the fire station on Sunday of the show.

Food is also available at local establishments: Rt. 52 Roadhouse, La Fiesta, Local Cup and Cake, Sublette BP, Bonnell's General Store and Sublette Saloon, located three miles northwest of town on Tower Road.



#### Toy & Tractor Show uses many buildings to house displays

Many buildings around Sublette will be utilized for the Toy Show. They include:

- Sublette Community Building – toys, 4-H food stand
- Ellice Dinges Center craft vendors, toys
- Main Street Repair Building – toys, bake sale
  - Jacoby Building toys
     Sublette Elevator
- Sublette Elevator Building – toys, 4-H food stand
- Orzech Auto Truck & Towing LLC – model train
- Craft show items will be located at numerous buildings throughout the show.

It is anticipated that there will be 180 tables of toys and other merchandise utilized at this year's show, up four from 2022.









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### **Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show**



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Mark your calendar to attend the **Sublette Toy & Tractor** Show on Saturday, March 15 & Sunday, March 16!



Schedule an appointment or stop in. For all your diesel engine needs think KERR DIESEL SERVICE!

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Enjoy the Sublette Antique Tractor and Toy Show!



Sunday, March 9th, 2025 9am - 2pm

**Tractor Show** 

Public Consignment Welcome Antique Tractors on Display Pedal Pull Competition at Noon FFA Food Concession Stand Admission \$3.00 (kids under 10 free)

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### Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Show



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### Sublette houses one of the largest, most attended tractor and toy shows in Midwest

It has been 42 years since the first Sublette Farm Toy Show was hosted in the village.

Several people were discussing the possibility of having a toy show in Sublette. No one was quite sure if it was a good idea as no one had any experience in planning a show.

Finally, Dan Tastad said, "You will never know unless you try it."

That is what set the ball rolling. The group made plans for a one-day show at the community building. When over 600 people attended, it was deemed a success and from there the show has continued to grow. It has spread over eight buildings and another building houses a craft show. Other events that have taken place over the years include a farm

tractor show, a semi-tractor show and an operating train layout.

Visitors usually represent about 15 states. Many attendees travel for many hours to see the tractors and toys. The show has become one of the largest shows in the Midwest.

The show usually has over 150 volunteers helping to make it a huge success

### Sublette's show coincides with National Agriculture Week

Since 1973, the United States has set one week aside, March 17-23, and designated it National Agriculture Week. Ag Week is a celebration to honor the millions of men and women responsible for producing the most abundant, highest quality and most reasonably priced food and fiber in the world.

Since Sublette lies in one of the richest agriculture regions in the Midwest, it is fitting that the Sublette Toy Show is always held during Ag Week.

This year is also the 42nd anniversary of the show, and as usual, is expected to draw people to the tiny community of Sublette from all over the Midwest.



### Get your 50/50 tickets!

Take the opportunity to add to your wallet while giving back to the community as the other half is used for community projects

Each year the Sublette Toy Show committee sells 50/50 tickets to help fund local community projects. They are sold by committee members and at local businesses prior to the show. Then on toy show days, tickets are sold at a trailer located at

the corner of Main Street and John Street. The winner of the drawing will receive one-half of the money taken in. Each year the fund reaches a higher level. Be sure to get your tickets so you have a chance at being the big winner.



# Churches welcome all visitors, here are the hours

The local churches welcome visitors to worship during the Toy Show weekend.

Grace Fellowship Church has Sunday School at 8:30 a.m. and morning worship at 10:30 Perpetual Help Catholic Church has Mass at 4 p.m. on Saturday and at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday. St. Patrick Catholic Church in Maytown has Sunday Mass at 8 a.m.

a.m. Our Lady of

## Toy show funds allows five scholarships

Each year the Sublette Tov Show awards five scholarships using some of the funds generated at the show. One scholarship is awarded to a member of the two local 4-H clubs – the Sub-Let Indians and the Maytown Comets. One scholarship is given to a member of the Amboy FFA Chapter and one scholarship is given to a member of the Mendota FFA

Chapter in memory of Dan Tastad, one of the original toy show promoters.

This will be the second year of the Dean Stephenitch Memorial Scholarship in memory of one of the original founders of the Sublette Antique Tractor & Toy Show.

All of the remaining money from the toy show is used for local community projects and charities.

How many of the 43 Sublette Farm Toy & Antique Tractor Shows have you visited?

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### Welcome to the Sublette Farm Toy & Tractor Show



**Brian Florschuetz, Owner** 344 US Rt. 52, Sublette, IL 61367 Shop: 815-849-9090 Cell: 815-739-8121 Email: sublettecollissioncenter@yahoo.com



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