

I think I remember... Two Large Draft Horses

Two very large horses were often seen in Argos. Their names were "Dick" and "Dock". The team of horses was owned, and "driven" by Earl Zehner. The family lived on a small farm at the west edge of Argos on State Route Ten. The farm was located straight south across the highway from where McDonalds is located today. The team would generally pull a wagon around town with the implements to be used that day, on the wagon. Sometimes they simply pulled the implement (mower) if that was the primary job for the day. Whatever it was, it had to have a seat for Earl to ride on as he drove the horses. The primary commands given by Earl seemed to be "Whoa" for stopping or, "Gee or Haw" if he wanted them to go right or left and "Giddup" to go. Don't remember the command for backing up. The horses were a considerable attraction for kids. Earl often stopped the team to allow kids to interact with the team of horses. This may have included simply touching/petting them and/or feeding the team an apple or carrot if one was available. They were very calm animals and seemed to enjoy the kids as much as the kids enjoyed them. The team mowed many empty lots and they plowed and prepped many gardens for planting each spring. They also used a "slip scoop" to dig foundations/basements for homes or buildings. The scoop was pulled by the horses while the driver followed the scoop and pulled up or pushed down on two handles at the rear of the scoop to load the scoop. When it was full of dirt, the team then pulled the scoop to where they wanted to unload the dirt and at that location the driver would raise the handles and dump the dirt all while the horses never stopped. They then repeated that process over and over until the hole was to the depth desired.

Earl's brother, Wayne also owned a team of horses but it was rare to see them in town. Don't remember where the stable was for those horses. Wayne lived in the corner home just to the north of the current American Legion Hall. I think that both teams, along with others, would participate in the "Horse Pulls" as part of the Marshall County Fair held in Argos. The "Horse Pull" would be held one night of the fair and the "Tractor Pull" another night.