



A-Antics



Cover & page 2 & 3 photos K. Nelson

Kimber Meeting Report
Tech Tips
Rowdie Events Calendar
John Alexander's MGA



Pictures of Kimber Birthday Meet April 14, 2012. Report on Page 14



More Pictures on Back Cover...



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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right to edit material for length and content.
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History: The Chapter was established
August 14, 1976. It was NAMGAR's first
chapter. We are a low-key club, dedicated to
the preservation and enjoyment of our MGA's/
Anyone is welcome to join our chapter and
they are asked to join NAMGAR as well.

Chapter Dues: \$20 annually (\$35 for
printed newsletter)

Nickname: Rowdies

Motto: People First!

Rowdies Site: [www.mgcars.org.uk/
michiganrowdies](http://www.mgcars.org.uk/michiganrowdies)

MG Web Site: www.mgcars.org.uk

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairpersons:

1976-1980	Bruce Nichols
1981-1982	Tom Latta
1983-1984	Dick Feight
1985-1988	Dave Smith
1989-1990	Dave Quinn
1991-1994	Mark Barnhart
1995-1995	Herb Maier
1996-1996	Tom Knoy
1997-1998	Neil Griffin
1999-2002	Bruce Nichols
2003-2004	Bob Sutton
2005-2008	Gordie Bird

MEMBERS PAGE

Members Update:

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

<http://www.mgcars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

Larry Pitman's Database Report:

68 Active and Paid-Up Members

Win \$50

The Rowdies will have a drawing at each meet for a gift certificate worth \$50 in merchandise from Jeff Zorn's Little British Car Co.

We hope to see some new faces at our meets and encourage you to bring a friend to join. All paid-up members are eligible for the raffle to determine each meet's winner.

Classified Ads: Personal for sale or wanted classified ads are free to all paid-up members. Commercial ad rates Full page \$40 issue/\$200 year; 1/2 page \$25 issue/\$135 year; 1/4 page \$20 issue/\$110 year; Business Card \$10 issue/\$55 year.

Total ads may not exceed 12-1/2% (2 pgs of 16); ads accepted on first come, first served basis.

Send Email & Address Changes to Editor.

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: June 20, 2012

Please Note: The May 19th Michigan Brewery Meet is Cancelled unless a new notice is sent out.

Also remember the June 2nd "Tea In The Park" Belleville Arts Council Car Show in Victory Park. Arrive about noon. Tea and sandwiches on sale in park. See some classic 'Yank Tanks' next to your own LBC!



"Two of these just fell out of the MGA"



ROWDIES 2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

- 5 **ROWDIES** Drive Your MG Day. Fenton, MI. And GT-40 planning meeting. Larry & Mitzi Pittman host.
- 19 **ROWDIES** Brewery Tour, Weberville, MI has been *cancelled* currently. If rescheduled an announcement will be sent out.
- 18-20 Carlisle Import Show
<www.carsatcarlisle.com/events>

JUNE

- 2 **ROWDIES** Tea Party in The Park, Belleville, Neil & Thelma Griffin host. (Benefit for Arts Council of Belleville-(Rain date 6-23-12)
<www.bellevilleartscouncil.org/calendar.htm>
- 3 Fort Meigs, Perrysburg, Ohio <www.lebcc.org/>
- 15-17 MG tour to Stradford Festival, Ontario, Canada. Phil Wiltshire
- 23 The Great Race starts in Traverse City
<www.greatrace.com/news/2012-schedule.html>
- 23-24 Sloan Car Show, Flint
<www.sloanmuseum.com/car_shows.html>

JULY

- 7-8 Mad Dogs, Hickory Corners
<www.gilmorecarmuseum.org/>
- 9-13 **NAMGAR GT-37** Dayton, Ohio
<www.gt37.namgar.com/>
- 13 Rolling Sculpture Car Show, Ann Arbor
- 14 Jackson Road Cruise, Ann Arbor
<www.jrcruise.org/>
- 15 All British Car Show-Windsor-Detroit MG Club Canadian Transportation Museum and Heritage Village, Essex, Ontario <www.ctmhv.com>
- 28-29 Waterford Hills Vintage Races, Drayton Plains <www.waterfordhills.com/>

AUG

- 11 **ROWDIES** Birthday Party, White Lake, Bruce & Willy Mann host.
- 11-12 Alden Sports Car Show, Alden
<www.olderide.com/events/5064665.html>
- 18 University Motors MG Summer Party-John Twist, Douglas Walker Park, Grand Rapids, MI.
<www.universitymotorsltd.com>
- 19 MG Vintage Racers focus event, Grattan Raceway, Grattan <www.mgvr.org/>

SEPT

- 7-10 US Vintage Grand Prix, Watkins Glen Int'l Raceway, Watkins Glen, New York
- 8 Round Barn Winery, 17th Annual British Show, Baroda, MI (near Berrien Springs)
<www.roundbarnwinery.com/events_classes.php>
- 9 Battle of Brits, Orchard Lake
<www.detroittriumph.org>
- 20-22 Put-in-Bay Road Races Reunion, Put-in-Bay, Ohio <www.pibroadrace.com/>
- 23 Orphan Car Show, Ypsilanti
<www.ypsiautoheritage.org/events.htm>

OCT

- 20 **ROWDIES** Color Tour combined with Bill Milliken's Garage Color Tour, Ypsilanti

DEC

- 1 **ROWDIES** Christmas Party, Jackson, MI. Dave & Donna Quinn host.

2013

- FEB 23, 2013** **ROWDIES** Annual Business Meet, Holt, MI. Dave & Chari Smith host.



We want your MGA...

to be registered with NAMGAR!



Yearly membership is \$37.50 North America or \$52.50 International. The application form is available on-line at www.namgar.com or from: NAMGAR Registrar, 7522 SE 152nd Ave., Portland, OR 97236-4861



Members receive *MGA!* Magazine, the bimonthly magazine devoted exclusively to the enjoyment, care, and preservation of the MGA, Magnette and Variants; and an annual Get-Together in various locations in U.S.A. and Canada.

2010-11

Michigan Rowdies Regalia



Lapel Pin
\$4



Patch
\$4



Tee shirt
\$18-\$20 XL



Cap
\$15

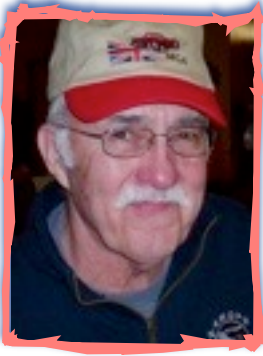


Key fob
\$5



To order: Call John McMullan @ 586-746-0148 or Brian Beery @ 810-488-1975 or email John McMullan at: mcmullan.john@yahoo.com





CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Cars have always played a huge part of my life from the first time I saw a Cadillac Allard. I was eight or nine at the time and thought it was the coolest car in the world. I dreamed of owning a sports car from that day on. There was little surprise when my first car met the goal. It was a 1963 Spitfire purchased new in Paris while in the Air Force. That was replaced with a 1963 Vette after college and that was my ride when I met the love of my life. I am proud to say we celebrated our 43rd anniversary this April. Where does the time go? It sure was a long time ago when we rented a duplex off Dixie Highway on Loon Lake. We called it Hewitt's Honeymoon Haven. There was no fancy garage. In fact, my current garage looks much nicer than the inside of the Haven. But we were happy.

With the arrival of a growing family Donna's 1968 Camaro wasn't large enough, and one of our two cars had to go, so it was the Sting Ray but in less than a year the old itch for a sports car came back. For the paltry sum of \$200 I purchased a 1960 MGA from a fellow employee where I worked. Anyone who knows my wife knows her passion is horses and we try to support each other in our passions. It took me four years to restore the car to be road worthy. Somehow, with no assistance other than books, I was able to get it running and painted red.

We attended our first chapter meet in 1976 in Stanton and for the first time met a fellow MG owner. We cannot begin to count the number of meets we've attended since but the wonderful thing is doing them together. One of the best parts of being in the Rowdies over the years has been the involvement of the ladies. Right from the start it was great finding out how many were involved.

Some of the very early ones that come to mind are Thelma Griffin, Joyce Hart Nichols,

Kathy Latta, Diane Mazurek, Jan Nichols, and who could forget Sue Witham.

As time went on we were joined in the 1980s by Penny Case, Dianne Fallon, Shirley Feight, Judy Johnson, Sue Johnson, Roseanne McMullan, Carlene Maier, Kathy Nelson, Shirley Noetzold, Nancy Nortier, Chari Smith, Stephanie Smith and many more who have made up our MG family which continued to grow in the 1990s to what we have today. We've got Marjie, Tracey, Denise, Donna Finch, Phyllis, Diana, Janice, Cathy, Willy, Mitzi, Jane, Debbie, Mary Ellen, Jan, Joni and Janice and all the other beautiful women who make being a Rowdie so enjoyable. Thank you one and all for supporting this hobby that we love so much.

On another note, Jeff Zorn asked me to remind everyone not to make checks out to him personally when paying dues. If you do he must cash the check and then write a new check to the Rowdies. **Dave Quinn**



Just a few of the women of the Rowdies that help keep their husbands's spirits up in times of despair and mechanical trials and tribulations!

KENNY'S MIRACLE SEALANT GOOP

By Ken Snyder Columbia Gorge MGA Club

Miracle sealant goop manufacturers make claims about the 100% effectiveness of their products, present videos showing almost instant successful results, and demonstrate how much time and money you will save by using the miracle goop as opposed to traditional mechanical repairs.

This is my experience using three miracle goop repair products. Our 1971 MGB roadster engine began externally leaking a small trace of coolant from between the head and block between the #2 & #3 spark plugs. We drained the coolant, loosened and re-torqued the cylinder head. The leak got worse, now leaking all along the spark plug side of the head. Next, the radiator cap was changed to an old/weak 6# cap, and the leak got even worse.

Miracle Goop I:

From the MG Experience forum web site came the suggestion to use Permatex #82099 Spray N Seal aerosol leak repair (\$8.99). It is very simple, just shake the can and spray the miracle goop onto the leaking area. The goop forms a tough rubber coating and hardens quickly. The leak stopped until the engine warmed up (about two minutes). Now there is a coating of rubber crud on the side of the engine, and still leaking.



Miracle Goop I

Miracle Goop II:

It was time to put the Miracle Sealant Goop into the cooling system. NAPA Auto Parts in Battle Ground highly recommended the *Blue Devil* Head Gasket Sealant, claiming a 100% success rate. The good news is that the goop has an in-store money back guarantee; the bad news is the \$59.95 price tag. The harmless looking bright blue liquid is poured into the radiator while the engine is hot and running with no thermostat, and then the engine is fast idled for an hour with no radiator cap. Following cool down the

Miracle Goop II



thermostat and radiator cap are replaced. While idling with the radiator cap off the goop formed a huge amount of white bubbles, which flowed out of the filler neck all over the newly painted radiator. **BIG MESS!** The leaking slowedfor about 25 miles. Then the leaking returned on steroids spewing coolant spray onto the engine compartment, all over the alternator, distributor, coil, and all the way to the heater. The sprayed out harmless blue liquid turns to an indestructible white chalk like crud that is extremely difficult to remove. The white stuff disappears when wiped with a wet rag, but immediately reappears when dry. This resulted in major cleaning of the engine compartment, and there are still traces of the white crud remaining. The empty Blue Devil Head Gasket Sealant jug was returned to NAPA, and the refund used to purchase a FelPro/Payen #HS 21183 head gasket set. This head gasket is an engineering marvel; resin impregnated, copper coolant rings, and extra sealing glue on the spark plug side. The cylinder head was resurfaced, the block deck immaculately cleaned, the stud holes chamfered, threads cleaned, and the unit reassembled with a set of ARP head studs/nuts/washers (ARP 206-4202). No leaks!

Miracle Goop III:

The miracle goop fix for the seriously leaking engine rear main seal was from O'Reily Auto Parts, a quart of BAR'S LEAK Rear Main Seal Repair (#1050), for only \$19.00. You guessed it; like the miracle head gasket sealer, the miracle seal repair goop did not stop or reduce the leaking.

Miracle Goop III



So at the end of the day (actually many days/dollars/effort), the miracle goops proved not only to be worthless, but they also caused lots of extra work. Proven competent mechanical repairs and quality parts solve problems, miracle goops do not. "If something sounds too good to be true..."

(Ed Note: I have long suspected these "fixes in a bottle" only work if you don't really have a problem to start with. Here's another vote confirming that.)

SPRING DRIVE

On Drive Your MGA Day

Saturday May 5, 2012

Meet at our house at 11:00 a.m. for departure at 11:30 a.m. sharp. We're very close to US-23, exit 77, about midway between I-69 and I-96.

The drive will be about 50 miles of country roads ending at a nearby restaurant for lunch. Then feel free to return to our house afterwards. Please join us for the first drive of the season. Hopefully, the weather will treat us well.

Address: 11406 Majorca Place
Fenton, MI 48430

Our house sits on a corner with our driveway on Englishman
The "shop" is off Majorca.



hosted by Larry & Mitzi Pittman
Home: 810-750-0047, or Cell: 810-348-9318



John Alexander's MGA Rebuild-Part 2

When we left off last issue, I was 5 minutes away from welding the sill plate to the body on the right side. I clamped a straight piece of angle iron to the bottom of the sill plate to help keep it straight and flat while welding the pieces together. It's important that the sill be flat so the sill box flanges can contact the plate along its entire 52 inch length. The sill plate was supported vertically on two 2" X 4"s placed across the bottom of the chassis rail weld beads. This elevation is correct for attachment of the rocker panel and front and rear fender bottoms.

After welding all on and grinding the excess off the plug welds, I applied masking tape to the areas where the sill box flanges would get welded on. Over all new metal was applied acid etch primer to keep surface rust at bay for awhile.

At this point, I could no longer put off the bending up of the sill boxes. I had two 60" by 9" pieces of 18 gauge steel cut, onto which I lay out my bend lines. Where the lines intersected the edges of the sheet, I filed a small notch so I could line up the brake edge when the layout line was facing down.

Well, let me tell you, a 60" long bend in 18 ga. steel is a "rather difficult operation" on a hand operated brake. I made two bends in each sheet to the approximate angles needed in the finished box. I could easily finish the flanges and final trimming at home with a hammer and saw. That's what I thought, anyway.

The sill box fabrication follows Barney Gaylord's MGA Guru website design. I built a trough of "straight" 2"x4"s glued and screwed to a 1/2" plywood base to hold the sill box width during welding of gussets and end plates.

I screwed a 5 foot long piece of 2" angle iron to my workbench edge to help in the forming of the sill box mounting flanges. After grinding off the excess metal and filing the cuts smooth, the sill was clamped to the angle iron edge on the flange bend line. I clamped about 8" and worked the bend into that area with a 2 pound hammer then moved the clamps down another 8" and whailed away again until the flange was formed. Finished up with body hammer. Two flanges took about 45 minutes and ruined my elbow.

Once the flanges were formed, the sill box was installed into the trough and pinned in place by screw heads catching the edge of the flange. It was necessary to fabricate 4 internal braces and 2 end

caps which got plug welded into the sill box while it was in the trough. Once welded, the sill box was rigid and held its dimensions so could be removed from the trough. The interior and exterior got a coating of acid etch primer.

I fit the sill box onto the sill plate using clamps and a few Clecos, making sure the fit up was OK. Removed the box so the plug weld holes could be punched into the flange areas, then replaced it and clamps for welding.

Have I mentioned my discovery of "weld-through primer"? I found this product being advertised in an on-line site and thought it would be a good idea to include on areas being plug welded as extra protection from rust. I applied it to the un-primed areas of the sill plate where the sill box flange was to be welded. I commenced the welding. Great sputtering, smoking and terrible welds were the result. Definitely not acceptable so I cleaned off the remaining weld-through primer and finished the job to the acclaim of the welding gods. The instructions don't say anything about having to wipe off the primer prior to welding. Humph! I did go back to fix the bad welds – a little grinding, etc..

The right side sill assembly was finally firmly attached just before Christmas so I took a breather until mid-January. I had to make sure the weather was going to be cold enough to make working in an unheated garage uncomfortable. When I resumed I found conditions were PERFECT!

The driver's side sill assembly was as absent as the right side had been. I fabricated the sill plate pieces, welded them on as before – things are much easier the second time, welded the sill box on, rebuilt the B pillar bottom third which was non-existent, and ground off the plug weld excess material.

After priming the sill box assembly I attacked the B pillar. The outside sheet metal strip was pretty much gone and when removed it was obvious that the rear pillar panel was also fairly thin and needing the flange replaced. I bought a shrinker/stretcher tool a few years ago. This really came in handy as, for my first project with it, I created the flange for the B pillar – a beautifully curved flange that fit perfectly. Oh Yeah!

When I get the captive nuts replaced (10-32 nuts) in the forward B pillar panel, the broken bolt out of the latch tapping plate and some rust encapsulator

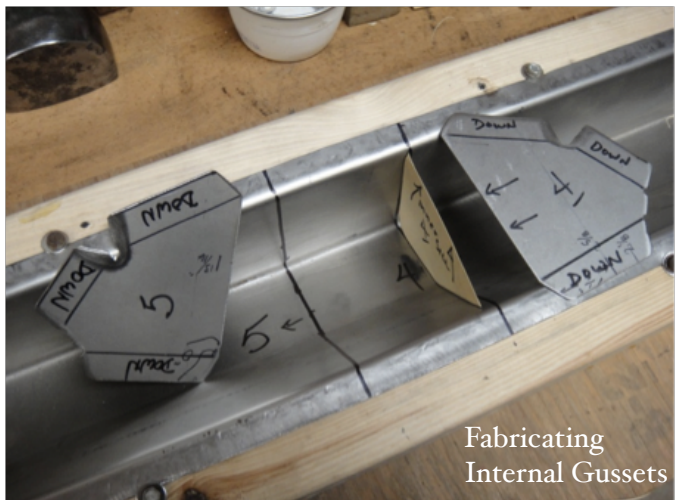
applied to the inside surfaces, I'll weld the replacement flange and outer cover piece on and begin the removal of the 9 broken fender bolts. I know that will be fun, too.

Prior to starting this restoration, I had my doubts as to whether I was up to the task of sill assembly

replacement. I now feel that I can handle any sheet metal restoration. Hope I don't have to eat those words! We'll see.

Onward to Summer!

See Related Pictures with Captions Below:

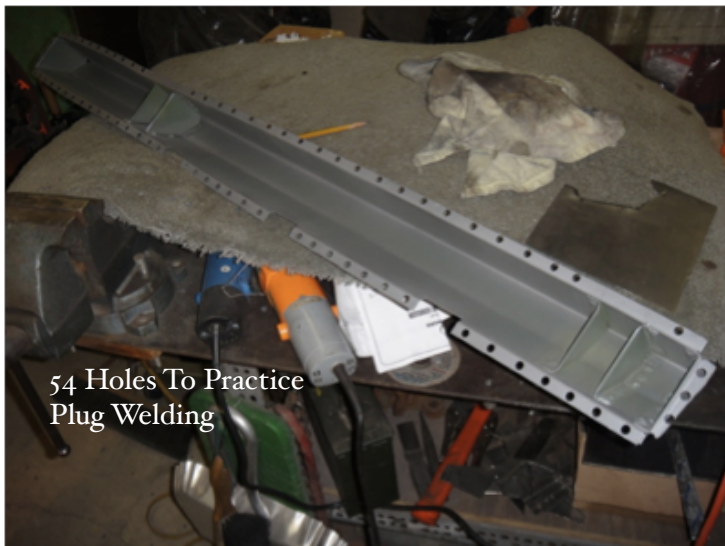




Good Fit Up



Interior Primed



54 Holes To Practice Plug Welding



You Can Never Have Too Many Clamps



First Hurdle Complete



Fitting Up The New "B" Pillar Bottom



Southeast Michigan Austin Healey Club 2012 Happy for Spring Drive

When: Sunday May 20, 2012 at 11:00 am

The Southeast Michigan Austin Healey Club is doing a spring drive.

Where: Start: Meijer parking lot at the corner of 8 mile and Haggerty Roads, near I-275 exit. Finish: Zukey Lake Tavern on M-36 east of Pinckney, MI.

Why: Because it's spring and time to get our British cars out and dust them off!

There will be a short driver's meeting at 11:00 in the northeast part of the Meijer's parking lot near the gas station. You will be given written driving instructions and sent on your way. You may go in groups or on your own as there are no planned stops along the route for the group. You may stop anywhere you like on your own. There is no time limit, just a nice drive on some country roads. What, your LBC isn't ready yet? No problem, drive what you have. After all, mine isn't ready yet either! (Call John Alexander for more details:734-665-0682)

There will also be a 33 1/3 raffle. 1/3 goes to the winner, 1/3 goes to SEMAHC, and 1/3 goes to Drive Away Cancer (<http://driveawaycancer.org/>)

Kimber Meet April 21, 2012

Chairman Dave Quinn promised us excellent weather for this year's Kimber meet with sunshine and temps in the mid to upper 60's and Dave doesn't lie. He just doesn't include all the details.

So Saturday morning saw convoys of MG's driving from all corners of Michigan to converge on the Delhi Cafe in Holt, MI. Any of the smart ones had their tops up and side curtains in place, for it was a veritable deluge fit for an Indian Monsoon season for most travelers. Bruce Nichols from Three Rivers, MI found his local roads turned into more than just the three his city was named for. He finally gave up trying to fit oars and an outboard motor to his MGA and came in a Chevy which wasn't quite as likely to float away. The Windsor-Detroit MGClub contingent travelled as a group to Holt, and I didn't see one top down amongst them or any of the Rowdies' MG's. The only MG with a top down was a gentleman and his wife (whose names I didn't catch) driving an MG-TC. I guess the older the MG the heartier are the folks who drive them.

After a nice lunch at the Delhi, followed by the usual introductions, Happy Birthday song, and cake cutting, Dave finally came good on his predictions and the sun started shining. So he claimed an accurate weather prediction on his part and did his best to convince all that he was right on the forecast. Among the Rowdies he was convincing were Gordy and Tracy Bird, Larry Pittman, Bruce Nichols, Ken and Kathy Nelson, Bill and

MaryEllen Weakley, Mark and Margi Barnhart, Neil and Thelma Griffin, Dave and Chari Smith, Pat Schwartz, Brian Beery, John McMullan, Jeff Smith, and Donna Quinn (who wasn't having any of it-she'd been there, heard about it, and been caught by it before).

After lunch and tire kicking were finished, Dave and Chari Smith once again kindly invited all interested to stop by their house for some more good Rowdy fellowship. The men had an opportunity to hone their tall-tale-telling skills for a summer of MG car meets over a beverage of their choice. Everyone had a good time as the ladies congregated in the living room, and the men/boys gathered in the garage around Dave Smith's race car.

Having achieved the goal of kicking off another good driving season and MGA camaraderie, we headed for home, amidst Dave Quinn's perfect weather prediction. *Nigel Snively*

See Pictures on cover and pages 2 & 20



Looks like Chairman Dave came prepared for a bit more than the sunshine he originally predicted!

The Choke-reprinted from the MGA-Announcer April 2012

By Keith Ansell

How do you use one properly? There are a few things that make the choke easy to use, let car start quickly and proper use of the choke will extend the life of your engine:

#1 When you pull the choke out it opens the throttle a small bit at the same time (IF it has been properly set). Want to make it easier pulling out the choke? Push the throttle (Accelerator Pedal) about half way open (Down toward the floor) BEFORE pulling out the knob. You will find that it usually pulls easier and will lock easier. Take your foot of the accelerator pedal and then hit the starter.

#2 There is no accelerator pump on a S.U. or Stromberg carburetor. Pumping the accelerator will not assist in starting such as happens on American or Weber carburetors. Got Weber(s) on your car? When starting on a cold day, pull on the choke, pump the accelerator three times quickly to the floor, set the throttle about 1/4 to the floor and hit the starter. Varrrooom!

#3 If the choke knob tends to rotate out of the lock position you will need to loosen the cable clamp at the carburetors and twist it so that it tends to turn the knob to the lock position. Many times people install choke cables without this step. This step IS necessary to give a good lock. The locking mechanism on choke cables will wear out and sometimes the cables do need to be replaced.

#4 You only need to use the choke when the engine is very cold and then pull it out ALL THE WAY. A partial choke doesn't work well. Have someone check that the choke is working properly. Temperature over 140 degrees, you don't need the choke.

#5 After the car starts you need to consider pushing the choke partway in. What you are looking for is that the engine starts to run smoothly as you SLOWLY push the choke in. As soon as you can feel and hear it running relatively smoothly you will need to pull the choke back out just a little. Now start to drive.

#6 ALWAYS drive the car immediately after you start it. A idling car is destroying the engine, cold or hot! A lot of lubrication is done by engine speed throwing oil around in the engine, an idling engine does not oil the pistons, rings, camshaft and many other parts. Don't idle the engine, if you MUST keep the engine running for long times, accelerate the engine to 1700 Rpm or higher for short times about every 30 seconds. These "blips of the throttle" throw oil up where it is needed.

#7 When you see the temperature gauge starting to move (140 degrees) it's time to release the choke completely and just drive! If the car bucks, misses or just doesn't immediately drive well when it is cold, something is wrong: either you are not using the choke correctly or the carbs need adjusting.



Ethanol Blended Gasoline

By Ed Mallowney

The U.S. House Science Committee has approved a bill (H.R. 3199) directing the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a scientific assessment on how gasoline blended with 15 to 20 percent ethanol (E15 and E20) may impact gasoline powered engines, vehicles and related equipment. If the bill is passed the National Academy of Sciences would have 18 months to conduct its analysis. The bill will also prevent the EPA from permitting the sale of E15 before the report has been submitted to the House Science Committee. H.R. 3199 will now be considered by the full House of Representatives. It is known that E15 causes corrosion with incompatible parts. Ethanol increases water formation which can then create formic acid and corrode metals, plastics and rubber. The EPA wants to allow use of E15 in 2001 and newer vehicles, but has agreed to put a "warning label" on gasoline pumps stating that it should not be used in pre- 2001 vehicles. The U.S. House Science Committee has determined that a warning label is not enough to protect consumers from accidentally mis-fueling pre-2001 vehicles. They created H.R. 3199 to try and protect millions of vehicles and engines that can be harmed from use of E15 blended gasoline. You can contact your member of the U.S. House of Representatives to request their support of H.R. 3199. Dick Mason of the Central Oregon British Car Club has written a Systematic Review of Ethanol Fuel Use in Vintage Automobiles. The six-page article can be found on the club website. Interesting reading.



Vintage Au Grattan
MGVR Focus Event with VSCDA
August 16-19, 2012



All Roads Lead To Grattan Raceway this August when VSCDA hosts MGVR's 2012 Focus Event in Belding Michigan! VSCDA event chair and MG vintage racer Scott Fohrman is burning the midnight oil to make this event *one for the ages!* While plans are still in progress, you will find all the track time, paddock socializing, and All MG racing that you expect at our focus events. At this event, *you get even more.* Read on.

VSCDA's Au Grattan event is being held this year in conjunction with University Motors' Summer Party, where MGs from across the country gather for a weekend of socializing, touring, learning, and enjoying the vintage race scene. John Twist has plenty on tap for those among us who want to enjoy both events-the festivities at both venues begin on Thursday and continue through Sunday. Back to racing-VSCDA is bucking tradition at this event by introducing their Group 1-Vertical Grill race group-perfect for MG T Types of the VSCCA variety. While only tentative, the schedule calls for a Thursday test day, followed by MGVR's traditional meet and greet Wine and Cheese party at MGVR Central Thursday 6 PM. Friday is practice and qualifying, followed by the Friday night pool party/mixer and buffet at the Grattan pool (yes, there is a pool at the track) with VSCDA. Saturday features group racing and an ALL MG race, followed by the MGVR/VSCDA banquet Saturday evening where we will award the MGVR Spirit Award, the Copper Bucket, along with the Parish *Master of Speed Deception* award and a new award, known as the *Doff of the Cap* award (more on this next bulletin). Sunday is a special day at Grattan when the University Motors Party comes to Grattan to join us in the fun. Sunday is group racing, another ALL MG race and *lunchtime Charity Rides!*

Accommodations are easy to find, convenient and plentiful. Event Headquarters Hotel is 20 minutes from the track in Grand Rapids, directly across the street from University Motors Summer Party Headquarters Hotel. More on hotel information in Bulletin 2. Grattan Raceway permits paddock camping and tent camping AND they have a pool (did I already mention that?!)

MGVR and VSCDA share a common view of vintage racing. MGVR takes pride in working with vintage race organizations to provide safe, fun and competitive racing coupled with a family friendly after hours program. VSCDA delivers on all points. Even though MG vintage racers come from more than a dozen different vintage race organizations, each with its own set of prep rules, VSCDA accommodates our diverse group! You will find no better race action in a vintage friendly environment than racing with VSCDA at Au Grattan.

There is much yet to be revealed about this event-all of it good! Event entry forms are due out mid April. Stay tuned. Any questions, please contact one of the event organizers noted below. I hope to see you at Au Grattan this August!

MGVR Focus Event with VSCDA at Grattan

Points of Contact:

MGVR-

MGVR Publicity

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Greg Prehodka MGRacer53@aol.com

VSCDA Event Chair:

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University Motors

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Sports Car Racing Returns to Put-in-Bay, Ohio for 2012 PiB Road Races Reunion-- Sept 20-22



- **Registration Materials Coming Soon!**

March 8, 2012 — Organizers of the Put-in-Bay Road Races Reunion (PIBRRR) are making plans for the fourth consecutive year of offering one of the most enjoyable events on the vintage sports car / vintage racing scene. PIBRRR is a relaxed, low-key event that celebrates the early days of U.S. post-war road racing by mixing a variety of activities all around the theme of capturing the memory of the races that took place back in the '50s and early '60s on the public roads of historic South Bass Island -- a few miles offshore in Lake Erie near Sandusky, Ohio.

The big news for 2012 is as follows:

- **New date!** The event has moved to a Thursday, Friday, Saturday format on September 20-22, 2012. (Previous PIBRRRs took place on the Monday-Wednesday prior to the Fourth of July weekend.)
- **Sports car racing returns!** Following a successful demonstration race in 2011, PIBRRR 2012 will introduce a day of "road course" racing for qualified cars on a temporary course at the Put-in-Bay Airport on Friday. (An extra cost option. See the "Forms" tab at www.pibroadrace.com for car and driver eligibility.)

In addition, the Put-in-Bay Road Races Reunion continues to offer an environment that attendees seem to like. That's because PIBRRR is an event where big egos are left on the mainland, winning is superfluous, unstructured time is valued, and the atmosphere and experience are as much as possible like the original Put-in-Bay races themselves and what vintage races were like when the sport was just getting started in North America. In addition to the vintage race event, activities include:

- The opportunity to hear the stories of people who "were there," racing on the public roads of Put-in-Bay "back in the day" through panel discussions, slide shows, and "open mic" sessions (primarily on Thursday).
- Using your vintage race car (if you choose to bring one) as your primary transportation mode while on the island just like they did "back in the day."
- Touring the original course which was one of the most challenging sports car racing venues in existence in the early days of U.S. post-war sports car racing.
- Taking part in an "on-your-own" rally, a popular-vote car show (Saturday) and other diversions at historic Put-in-Bay, an island little changed since the '50s.

For more information about the event please visit www.pibroadrace.com.

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Pace lap of the first race of the day, 1959 – David Elder of Rochester, NY in the #94 Alfa Romeo leads Ed Lidgard of Royal Oak, MI in the #61 VW, Al Miller of Akron, OH in the #33 Fairthorpe Electron, and Ivan Trofimov of Cleveland, OH in the #8 Alfa. The group is shown rounding turn 6 past the Columns Hotel onto Delaware Street before the actual start of the G and J Production race. Elder and Trofimov would finish second and third respectively to an Alfa driven by Chuck Stoddard that day. Stoddard was an honored guest at the 2011 PIBRRR. (Contact Manley Ford at manley776@yahoo.com for a hi-resolution version of this or many other '50s era or recent Put-in-Bay Road Races Reunion photographs.)

Doing The Valve Job... by Ken Nelson

I've been putting off getting back inside the engine of my RM Riley for at least 2-3 years, even as the poor thing has progressively started wheezing and gasping for air like a tired horse struggling to get up a hill with a loaded wagon on its back. I've always had a good excuse for another project instead, but last fall I finally bit the bullet to restore it to its former semblance of power. I have long suspected that the head gasket had blown between two cylinders, since 2 cylinders had 20 and 40 lbs pressure while the 2 others read 110-120 lbs. But I did a further diagnostic ring compression test by pouring an ounce of oil in each cylinder and the pressure came up in all 4. So it seemed more inner workings were damaged than just a gasket. Upon pulling the head it was obvious that the gasket was intact but 2 of the pistons had started to break up. I spent much time honing the cylinders and finding NOS .030" pistons and rings to rebuild the short block. The big end and little end bearings were replaced and all was bolted up together.



I then turned my attention to the cylinder head and did a leak test of the valves. Inverting the cylinder head and filling the cylinder heads with kerosene showed which valves were leaking when fluid came out the intake and exhaust ports. Two of the exhaust valves were the worst, but I planned to go over all the valves. The cylinder head was fairly carboned up, so I set to scraping that away with a dull knife blade. Once clear of the carbon I set to with a valve spring compressor. One end slips over the top of the valve stem and the other end tightens like a clamp onto the head of the valve. Once the spring is compressed fully, the two semi-circular keepers can be removed from the valve stem. The top heavy washer can then be slowly released as the compressor is unscrewed and the springs and valves removed. See the accompanying pictures on the next

page, but remember to number the valves and keep them in the same location they came out of.

There was a fair amount of carbon on the valve heads, worse on the exhaust than the intake as would be expected. This was cleaned off, taking care not to scratch or abrade the area of the stems that run in the guides. I didn't feel any significant amount of sideways play in the valves at their normal position and felt that I could reuse them in the same guides. Since this engine will lead a bit of a sheltered life by not having to make long and labored cross country runs I did not plan to replace the valve seats with hardened ones, which meant that all of this work could be accomplished within the confines of my garage and without the aid of a machine shop.

With that thought in mind I purchased a valve lapping tool from NAPA. This is really just a stick with two rubber suction cups at either end. The suction cups are used to stick onto the top of the valve head so that the valve may be rotated back and forth by sliding your palms back and forth with the stick in between. A small amount of valve grinding paste is then placed on the edge of the valve and cylinder seat, so that the two surfaces are lapped or ground together making a tight seal when closed. I let my garage apprentice have an opportunity to perform this duty, but any passing Boy Scout who is used to starting a fire without matches should be able to do the job equally well. Be sure not to get the grinding paste on the valve stem while doing this.

The goal here is to produce a dull mat like finish equally smooth all around on both mating surfaces. You can test this using Prussian Blue when done. Apply some, then spin the valve round again and pull it quickly up to see that there are no high or low spots or pits remaining. Then clean everything up thoroughly, oil the valve stems and reassemble everything again and you're ready to go. A nice fresh coat of engine paint now makes it all look as nice as it should run once completed.



Cylinder Head Just Off Engine

British "Coke Head"

Valve Spring Compressor

Carbon and Pitting on Valves

Carbon Partially Scraped Off Head

Exhaust valve seat on the right with uneven slightly pitted surface

Lap, Lap, Lap Your Valves, Gently 'til They're Clean...

Merrily Merrily, Merrily, Merrily...

Smooth Even covering with Prussian Blue

Lapped In Nicely

Four little valves in a row all ready to go

Pictures by Ken Nelson.

