

NorCal AMCs Newsletter



*Edition Two
2005*

NorCal Meetings: February & March

Ross Guistino

Second meeting of 2005—February 17th.

First off, let me say what a pleasure it is to be able to relax and enjoy our Club meetings again. I simply sat in the back of the room and soaked in the event as Richard, our new Prez, expertly manned the gavel—well, if we had one to man, he would be just the guy to do it. One of these days Nolan's going to bring us one and we'll be forced to pound the desks just like all those court shows on TV. But I digress....

Present at tonight's gathering: Richard, of course, me, Mark & Terri, Sue and Butch, Walt & Angie, Tyson (late as usual, but we love you anyway Tyson), a long lost Club Member Dave Bartz and a new guy Asif Chaudhri.



(Continued on page 2)

Club Car Corner

Ross Guistino

This period I'm featuring Mark Ehinger's latest acquisition, a 1973 Hornet Hatchback. His second in less than a year. Here is his story:

The Hornet was originally purchased in Salinas by a woman who was a neighbor of Barbara M. Wright. After a couple of years the owner wanted something "sportier" (is that possible?) than the Hornet. Barbara then purchased it because the car was fairly new and seemed reliable. Barbara was a piano teacher, a piano teacher that made house calls. Traveling around the San Jose/ Sunnyvale areas, she continued to teach as long as she could until illness forced her to stop driving. Her daughter Barbara Jeanne then took over the task of caring for the car.

I saw the car on Craigslist and contacted Barbara to take a look at this rarity. To put it simply, it looked



(Continued on page 4)



NorCal Meeting—continued

(Continued from page 1)

As is the new tradition, we held a special raffle to start things off, for everyone who drove an AMC to the meeting. Tonight's contestants were: Ross with Greta, Mark with his Hornet (the old one), Sue with the Marlin, and Asif with his '73 AMX. Sue was the recipient of this month's gift certificate to Round Table Pizza Parlor. Congrats Sue! And on behalf of those who attended the meeting, I'd like to thank Sue for the yummy cookies she baked for us. They were still warm!

Due to the Treasurer working late, she was unable to attend so I gave a brief synopsis of the Club funds. We are starting off the year very well and already have \$345 in the pot after subtracting postage for the newsletter mailings and reminder postcards, and adding in a Member's dues. And speaking of dues, there are a couple of our old NorCal AMC Members who haven't paid. Please send your dues in today so you can receive a Club Calendar.

Walt told us a story that was relayed to him by Gene and Dominic who showed up at last month's meeting in a beautiful old Ambo. They are in the process of finishing the restore on it, and found the original owner's manual in the process, as well as a box-o-booze in the trunk. I won't get into the details but let's just say that the trunk has been locked for a very very long time as they did not have a key for it; what an interesting find after all these years. You just never know what to expect out of our old AMCs.

Tyson has taken on a project: He is going to approach painters and body men in the area to see if the Club can get a special deal on getting our cars worked on. We are hoping that if we can provide several Members' cars at one time to a shop, they would give us a deal. Sounds like a good idea to me. So far me, Sue and Tyson all expressed serious interest. Anyone else want to join in?

Mark E. brought us a new member tonight—Asif. Mark ended up buying a set of AMC wheels and 15" tires from him off of Craigslist. When Mark went to pick them up, he saw that Asif was a big AMC fan and invited him to the meeting. We are glad to have another enthusiastic AMX lover in the fold. You can see Asif's car on his website: <http://home.comcast.net/~asifnyc/asifnyc.html>

Third meeting of 2005—March 17th

Our fearless President Richard was feeling under the weather and asked me to run the meeting tonight. My first reaction was—OH MY GOD! I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING PREPARED!!! But I calmed down and decided to go with the flow...as it turns out, I got twisted for nothing. The meeting went swell, we had a great turn-out, and no one fell asleep during my ramblings. But don't make a habit of getting sick on meeting nights, Richard!

Tonight's crew: Terrie and I, Nolan, Sue & Butch, Mark and his daughter Paige, Tyson (who was actually on time this month!), Dave "All Auto" Pekonen, John Andrews, Walt, Asif, Dennett and Bill Bartlett.

Tonight we had a ton of great raffle items and with so many Club Members in attendance, I was determined to hold a raffle. So to get things started, I had Mark E., our Vice President and resident Raffle Ticket Giver-Outer, sell tickets. Everyone participated cuz we had such great giveaways such as: Two NOS AC oil filters donated by Mark, a Peter Max-like poster I bought from Eddie Stakes and donated to the Club as well as a set of AMC magnets I found in a funky store in Southern California, a bottle of wine sent by Richard, a massage showerhead turned in by Nolan, and a couple of nice pocket knives brought by Bill courtesy of John Deere. Thank you everyone for bringing raffle items; it is very much appreciated since raffles help pay for day-to-day operations of the Club. I encourage everyone to bring in a unique gift for our raffles. For you non-attendees, you missed a good crop of goodies.



I got a call at home from Roger just before the meeting to inform us that he wouldn't be attending due to him having a very mild stroke and he was going to stay at home and rest. I would think so, Roger! In typical Roger demeanor, he took it all in stride yet there is nothing little about this. We wish you a speedy recovery my car-loving friend.



(Continued on page 3)



NorCal Meeting—continued

Our little stable of AMCs is growing. Mark E. bought himself another Hornet, just months after buying his first Hornet and showed it off in the parking lot after the meeting. He now has two '73 Hornet Hatchbacks. I think he's gotten jealous that I have two Gremlin and Nolan and Richard both have two Pacers. And Dave P. has two Gremlins. And Roger, well he has multiples of everything. Congrats, Mark, on your new AMC.

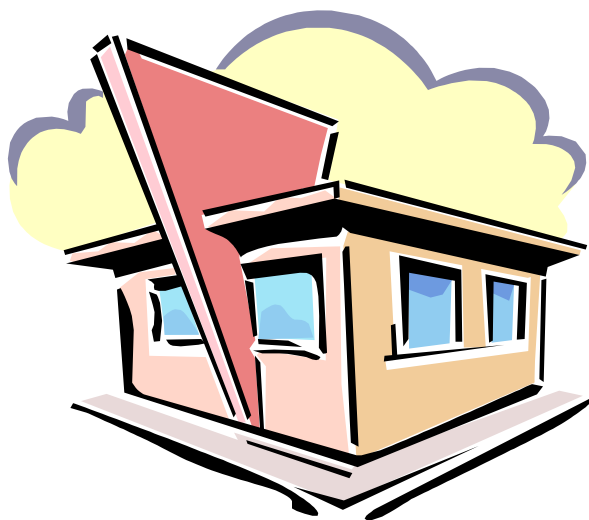
Sell of the Month: Bill was at the right place at the right time when he came across a '64 Studebaker Daytona in Cloverdale. He bought it for \$200 and turned around and sold it on eBay for \$1,200. Good job, Bill.

And not to be left out of the buying frenzy, Tyson tells us he recently acquired a '68 GTO. Not an AMC, but an old car saved from the crusher is what we're all about.

And finally, if anyone knows of any cheap monthly storage for a couple of cars, Asif would be interested in talking to you. He's been holding off buying a couple of AMCs due to lack of proper storage. Thanks, everyone, for putting up with my ramblings during the meeting. I look forward to turning things back over to Richard next month.

First Club Tour of 2005

Ross Guistino



Mark your calendars...Richard has come up with a great idea to get us out on the road with our AMCs.

**We will be making a trip out to
Route 1 Diner
14450 Highway 1
Valley Ford
on April 17th**

Plan on meeting at the usual meeting place—Round Table Pizza, 2065 Occidental Road, Santa Rosa—at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday 4/17. We will leave shortly after that time and caravan out West thru Sebastopol and onto Valley Ford. This is an easy drive out and back with a hill or two in between. We're going Rain or Shine.



After we eat lunch, we may take a drive out towards Bodega Bay or maybe the Town of Bodega which is a short jaunt down the road from Valley Ford. Hope to see you all there..

Richard also mentioned that he'd like to try and get a group of us to tour the aircraft carrier/museum The Hornet in Alameda. He'd like to plan this for perhaps October or November. Check out their website: <http://www.uss-hornet.org/index.html>

If you have any ideas for a group gathering, let Richard, Nolan or myself know.



Mark's '73 Hornet Hatchback...continued

(Continued from page 1)



great. Not perfect but a lot better than my white 73'. After test driving the car I knew it would need brakes, shocks, a radio that worked, some interior tweaks here and there and that's about it. These are the things Barbara told me they had done to the car: the passenger side door has been replaced (a pole jumped out in front of them requiring door replacement), the windshield too, and the front seat was redone in factory fabric. The car was painted in 1995, oil changed every

2,000 miles with Quaker State (Barbara likes their ads), and to top it all off, the car was garaged with a car cover! What I plan to do is to keep the car as stock as I can. On special occasions I'll put on the rally wheels to get the sporty look. The brakes have been replaced, as have the shocks. I had the opportunity to drive the car from Sunnyvale to Santa Rosa the day I bought it on March 12th. What a leap of faith. (*Editor's note: Um, Mark my friend, a leap of faith is driving a battered '75 Gremlin X from Dallas—as in Texas—to Northern California.*) But all the gauges work, the lights work, as do the wipers, defroster, heater, and high beams. Everything works!!!

Local Swap Meet

This note is being passed on by Mark E. There is a car swap meet at the Veteran's Building in Santa Rosa on April 10th from 5 a.m.-1 p.m. sponsored by the Sonoma County Wheelers. Mark will be there selling some stuff. The AMC stuff includes four 14" rally wheels w/rings and caps, a set of chrome valve covers for the AMC V8, and a new set of 14" flat disc type wheel covers but they will fit any 14" wheel not just AMC. Then some Chevy, Ford and misc. stuff he has just laying around.

Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Hall
1351 Maple Avenue
Santa Rosa
For Info: 707.795.7064

There is also another swap meet here on June 26 sponsored by the Corvettes of Sonoma County. Contact Keith Swensen; 707-838-7880 or Glenn O'Neil 707-996-4759 for space rentals or other info.





Bigger, Better, Best Yet!

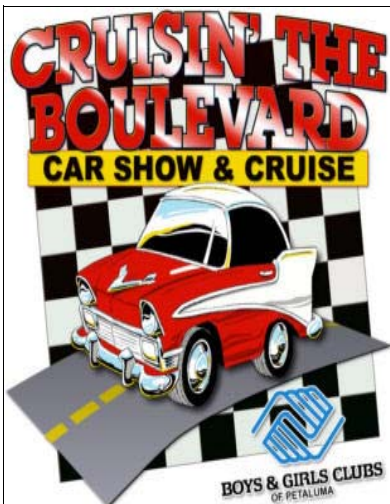
Ross Guistino



This is the 3rd Annual Show & Cruise that Peggy Sue has put on in Sonoma County. Folks, this is no small task. My hat is off to her and her crew for developing this into such an extravaganza. If you aren't registering your car in the cruise, you have to at least visit the Show and be a spectator at the Saturday night cruise. Terrie and I rode in Richard DeCroff's '35 Ford two years ago around and around and around Downtown Santa Rosa. It was a blast. Last year we missed the event but hopefully I'll be driving my own vehicle this year. I'd invite someone to ride along, but I wouldn't subject my own dog to the backseat of a Gremlin, let alone an adult. For More Info: 707-575-3267 or visit:

<http://www.peggysuescruise.com/home/>

June 9th—Cruise-In, June 10th—Poker Run & Chili cook-Off, June 11th—Show & Shine and Cruise
June 12th—Show & Shine and Awards
Santa Rosa and Windsor, Sonoma County, California



May 21st Cruisin' The Boulevard Day

- **Classic Car Show**
- **Cruiser Art Show**
- **Cruise Downtown**

As their website says "Come cruise the same streets as John Milner in the movie "American Graffiti..!" This cruise and show is a benefit for the Boys & Girls Club of Petaluma. The day begins at 10AM with a Classic Car Show at the Petaluma Village Premium Outlets. Later in the afternoon starting at 2PM, come downtown to the street in front of McNear's to see all of the 4-1/2' long fiberglass art cars that will be on display! And finally, stick around and see the classic cars as they cruise the same streets they did in the movie American Graffiti! Registration fee is \$25 and \$30 if paid after May 10th. Visit the web-site:

<http://www.petalumabgc.org>
or call 707.769.5322 or 763.6315



More Smog Threats for our Hobby or “Yet another reason why I didn’t vote for Ah-nold”

Ross Guistino

Poor California Republicans, they just don’t know how to have fun and want to spoil it for everyone else. In a recent article from the Press Democrat newspaper, comes a tale of woe for our old vehicles. I won’t relay the entire article here, but here’s the jist of it. Remind me again why we have movie stars holding powerful positions in government???

“Governor promotes car cleanup”

Given the visual limits of radio, Gov. Arnold couldn’t feature the pyrotechnic-rigged smog-spewing beater car he’d seen crushed to a pancake at a suburban Sacramento auto yard Wednesday. But the Republican governor nonetheless used his weekly radio address Saturday (*Editor’s Note: He has a weekly radio address??? Who knew?*) to repeat his proposal to remove 15,000 heavy polluting vehicles each year from the highways.

The Gov. promoted a renewed program that offers \$1,000 to car owners who voluntarily retire older vehicles that cannot meet the state’s smog control standards. Calif. will also pay \$500 towards repairing vehicles to meet smog checks.

So-called “gross polluters” account for about 10% of vehicles but half of car pollution. “Every time we ‘terminate’ even one polluting car, we take another step toward cleaner air and protecting our environment,” said Arnold. “Cleaner air helps us ‘pump up’ our economy, and it’s good for the health of everyone in CA.”

Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, a Democrat from L.A., used his weekly radio address to chide Schwarzenegger for budget proposals Nunez blamed for more than a 1000 preliminary layoff notices sent to teachers statewide last week. Schwarzenegger shouldn’t renege on the additional \$2.3 billion he promised schools during budget negotiations last year, Nunez said.

(Editor’s Note: Ok, let me get this straight...let’s kick out the teachers, have a bunch of dumb kids and kick the old car hobbist in the ass. This sounds like a great agenda. Can someone explain to me how laying off teachers helps the economy in the long run? Can someone explain to me why we can have over-the-top Hummers tearing up the roads and sucking up all our precious gas but we can’t have our hobby cars that are on the road, what? A couple thousand miles a year? Can someone please explain to me why we have a movie star in Office? What is wrong with people?)

...And SEMA’s two cents....



SPECIALTY EQUIPMENT MARKET ASSOCIATION

SMOG CHECK PROGRAM:

The Inspection and Maintenance Review Committee (IMRC), an advisory board created by the California Legislature and Governor is currently considering a number of potentially harmful measures to reform the California Smog Check program. These proposals include annual versus biennial inspections of vehicles more than 15 years old; smoking inspections, which would further discriminate against older cars; and stricter re-test standards for vehicles that fail emissions tests. Unreasonable re-test standards, or "cut points" would make it increasingly expensive to keep older vehicles on the road, leading many owners to scrap them instead. IMRC also seeks to continue current scrappage programs, which provide for the destruction of older vehicles and their parts, regardless of how rare or valuable they might be to enthusiasts and collectors. SEMA contends that these costly and counterproductive measures will yield no measurable change in air quality, as IMRC fails to account for the small number of vehicles still on the roadway, their condition and how much they are actually driven.

More Info On Repair Assistance

Forwarded by Nolan Dehner

CA Dep. Consumer Affairs- Bur. Automotive Repair - Bureau of Automotive Repair

California Home

Thursday, March 10, 2005

Welcome to *California*

Department of Consumer Affairs

Bureau of Automotive Repair



Consumer Assistance Program Factsheet

[Dept. Consumer Affairs](#)

[Bureau of Auto. Repair](#)

Reference Library:

- [Using This Site](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- [News](#)
- [About BAR](#)
- [Fact Sheets](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [SmogCheck Advisories](#)
- [Repair Reporter](#)
- [Other Information](#)
- [Other Web Sites](#)
- [Statistics](#)
- [Laws & Regulations](#)
- [Regulatory Actions](#)
- [Verify A License](#)
- [Auto. Consumer I / M Review](#)
- [SmogCheck Technicians & Stations](#)
- [Contacts](#)
- [Station Locator](#)
- [Site Search](#)
- [Site Table of contents](#)
- [Feedback](#)

The Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) offers two options to help California consumers whose vehicles fail their biennial (every other year) Smog Check. If you intend to apply to the Consumer Assistance Program, do not have any repairs performed on your vehicle. **CAP programs are limited to available funds.**

REPAIR ASSISTANCE

Qualified motorists can receive **up to \$500** in emissions-related repairs through CAP's Repair Assistance Program. Eligible consumers must take their vehicles to Gold Shield repair stations which are authorized to perform repair assistance services. Motorists may qualify for Repair Assistance in one of two ways:

- **Income Eligible** – Motorists whose household incomes are at or below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines qualify for repair assistance. For example, a family of four whose income does not exceed \$2,906 per month, or \$34,873 per year, would qualify for up to \$500 in repair assistance. Qualified consumers must pay the first \$20 towards diagnosis and/or emissions-related repairs.
- **Test-Only Eligible** – Certain vehicles are required to have their Smog Checks done at stations that perform only tests, and no repairs. If your vehicle's DMV registration renewal notice requires a Test-Only inspection, your vehicle may qualify for **up to \$500** in repair assistance. Qualified consumers must pay the first \$100 towards diagnosis and/or emissions-related repairs.

VEHICLE RETIREMENT

The Vehicle Retirement Program is available to motorists who want to voluntarily retire their vehicle rather than repair it. Eligible consumers can receive **\$500** in exchange for their vehicle. Approved vehicles must be driven to one of the state's authorized dismantlers where they are crushed.

APPLY FIRST

You must first submit an application and have it approved, making you and your car eligible for the program. You will then receive a list of participating stations or dismantlers where you can take your car to have it repaired or retired.

Click [here](#) to obtain a **CAP application**. For more information on the Bureau of Automotive Repair, visit us at www.smogcheck.ca.gov, and remember to "Drive Smart California."

September 2004

Famous Obits

Ross Guistino

A little known fact that some folks don't know about me is my fascination with Obituaries of the Rich and Famous. One that happens to stand out in my mind, and is car related, is the passing of the founder of another independent car company, John Z. DeLorean. The following are excerpts from an article from The Associated press and in the New York Times, March 21, 2005. I admire Mr. DeLorean, not necessarily for his unique car, but for what he stood for...that is, a small independent car maker, not unlike our beloved AMC.

NEWARK, N.J. - John Z. DeLorean, the innovative automaker who left a promising career in Detroit to develop the gull-winged sports cars featured as a souped-up time travel machine in the *Back to the Future* movies, has died. He was 80. Mr. DeLorean died late Saturday at Overlook Hospital in Summit, N.J., of complications from a recent stroke.

Mr. DeLorean was among just a handful of U.S. entrepreneurs who dared start a car company in the last 75 years. Nearly all faded away, but his crashed spectacularly amid federal drug charges. A Detroit native, Mr. DeLorean "broke the mold" of staid Midwestern auto executives by "going Hollywood" and pushed General Motors Corp. to offer smaller models, auto historians said. While at GM, he created what some consider the first "muscle car" in 1964 by cramming a V-8 engine into a Pontiac Tempest and calling it the GTO, fondly dubbed the "Goat" by auto enthusiasts.

"John DeLorean was one of Detroit's larger-than-life figures who secured a noteworthy place in our industry's history," GM Chairman and CEO Rick Wagoner said Sunday. "He made a name for himself through his talent, creativity, innovation and daring. At GM, he will always be remembered as the father of the Pontiac GTO, which really started the muscle-car craze of the '60s."



'65 GTO

Mr. DeLorean was a rising if unconventional executive at GM who many believe was destined for its presidency before he quit in 1973 to launch DeLorean Motor Car Co. in Northern Ireland with the backing of investors like Johnny Carson and Sammy Davis Jr. Its hallmarks, such as an unpainted stainless steel skin and the gull-wing doors, have been ignored by mainstream automakers. The angular design, however, earned it a cult following, and the car was a time-traveling vehicle for Michael J. Fox in the popular *Back to the Future* films of the late 1980s.



A 1981 DeLorean, one owner car, now 4 sale in Kansas City
\$14,900

Email Mike@roberts-Engineering.com

Phone (816) 942-8121

Website: <http://www.roberts-engineering.com/delorean/>

He opened a factory in Dunmurry, Northern Ireland, in early 1981, which was to produce his \$25,000 sports car, at a time when the average vehicle cost about \$10,000. The British government sank \$120 million into the \$200 million project. But with the DeLorean plagued by quality problems, the company fell into financial trouble and was the subject of a British government investigation into financial irregularities. The inquiry found no evidence of criminal conduct, but on Oct. 19, 1982, the British government announced the factory would be closed.

The factory produced only about 8,900 cars in three years, estimated John Truscott, membership director of the DeLorean Owners Association. That figure was dwarfed by the major automakers, who sell more than 1 million vehicles a month. Mr. DeLorean's company collapsed in 1983, a year after he was arrested in Los Angeles and accused of conspiring to sell \$24 million of cocaine to salvage his venture. Mr. DeLorean used an entrapment defense to win acquittal on the drug charges in 1984, despite a videotape in which he called a suitcase full of

(Continued on page 9)

Obits...continued

Ross Guistino

(Continued from page 8)

cocaine "good as gold." The British government lost the equivalent of \$94 million over its heavy subsidies for the plant in West Belfast, Northern Ireland, granted with the hope that the venture's 2,000 jobs would weaken support for the Irish Republican Army, which was then fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

Mr. DeLorean was later cleared of defrauding investors, but continuing legal entanglements kept him on the sidelines of the automotive world, although his passion for cars did not abate. After declaring bankruptcy in 1999, he said he wanted to produce a speedy plastic sports car selling for only \$20,000. "We are striving to bring the performance of a million-dollar Ferrari, McLaren or Mercedes to younger people of modest means," Mr. DeLorean said.

John Zachary DeLorean was born as the first of four sons to a Ford Motor Co. foundry worker in Detroit. After his parents divorced, he grew up there and in Los Angeles. He played saxophone in a jazz band and won a music scholarship to Detroit's Lawrence Institute of Technology in Detroit. He shifted to engineering, and after graduating in 1948 was hired by Chrysler. Mr. DeLorean later earned advanced degrees in engineering and business administration.

He joined the small Packard Motor Car Company as an engineer in 1952. With ambition, insight and an eye for the unconventional, he became a rising star, first at Packard, and starting in 1956, within G.M., the world's largest automaker. At 40, he became the youngest general manager of G.M.'s Pontiac division, and four years later the youngest manager of Chevrolet. In 1972, at 48, he became a G.M. vice president. His patents included the recessed windshield wiper and the overhead cam engine. He helped shift Detroit toward smaller, more efficient autos, such as the Vega 2300 in 1970. Mr. DeLorean was a GM vice president in charge of all North American car and truck operations when he quit in 1973.

The namesake car he created in the early '80s featured a rear-mounted, aluminum 2.8-liter V-6 fuel-injected engine that produced 130 horsepower and went 0-60 mph in less than eight seconds. Independent four-wheel suspension, a broad 62-inch stance and front wheels smaller than the rear set made for tight handling, aficionados said. "Twenty years later, it's still just as modern as anything coming out of the factories now," Truscott said. The two-seater originally sold for \$33,000 and was available with either automatic or 5-speed manual transmissions. Some are now available for less than \$20,000.

After the DeLorean car venture failed, he was involved in some 40 legal cases, including his 1985 divorce from model and talk show personality Cristina Ferrare - his third wife - after a 12-year marriage.

He was an anomaly in an industry then dominated by buttoned-down executives. He dyed his hair jet black, wore shirts open to the navel, married a teenage starlet and subsequently a supermodel, and became a wonder at self-promotion. He wore long sideburns that violated the company's unwritten dress code, and even had the president of Ford act as best man at his second wedding. He also owned, for a time, an interest in the San Diego Chargers and played the jazz saxophone. "He once told me that he placed enjoying life very high in his list of priorities, and he felt that contrasted with many other executives," said J. Patrick Wright, who collaborated with Mr. DeLorean on a book called "On a Clear Day You Can See General Motors."

Legal troubles drained Mr. DeLorean's resources over the years. By 2000, he sold off his estate in Bedminster, which is now part of a golf course operated by Donald Trump.

Although Mr. DeLorean's company long ago stopped producing cars, it survives today as a company in Texas that bought all of the remaining DeLorean parts, and repairs and refurbishes cars for collectors. "You can't discount the value of the 'Back to the Future' movies," James Espey, the vice president of DeLorean Motor, said yesterday. "People who saw the cars in the movies in their teens, these are people in their early, mid 30's, well established, and they now can get the car they wanted when they were a kid."

Although Mr. DeLorean was not involved with the company, Mr. Espey said he spoke to Mr. DeLorean once a month, including a talk Thursday shortly before the stroke. Mr. Espey said Mr. DeLorean was concerned about financial troubles of G.M. "He had said that there were too many bean counters and not enough engineers in the management," said Mr. Espey.

Mark DeLorean, a nephew of Mr. DeLorean's, said Mr. DeLorean was concerned that automakers were relying too much on rebates to sell cars that were not much to look at. "John's attitude was always, 'I want people's eyes to light up when they walk through the showroom,'" Mark DeLorean said.

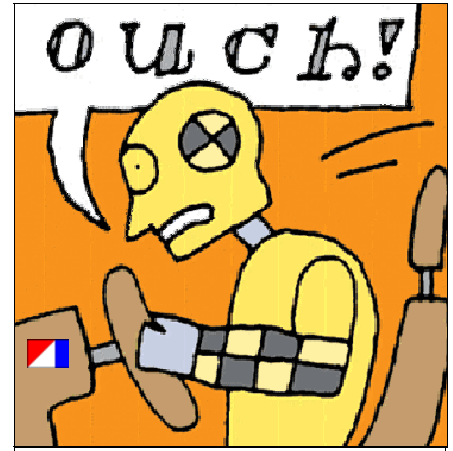


Lesser-Known Obit

MARINA DEL REY, California (AP)

Samuel W. Alderson.

A physicist and engineer, in the 1950s Alderson developed the "anthropomorphic test device" to help NASA and the U.S. Air Force test ejection seats in high-performance aircraft. But few called them "A.T.D.s", preferring instead "crash test dummy". Alderson campaigned for the dummies to be more widely used, such as to help design safer automobiles. His first design made specifically for automotive testing was produced in 1968, replacing what was previously used in crash tests: cadavers, and ushered in a new era of vastly improved automotive safety. There was little interest in his first automobile test dummy, he once said, until publication of Ralph Nader's consumer protection book "Unsafe at Any Speed" in 1965. The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act was passed a year later. He died February 11 at home in Los Angeles from myelofibrosis, a bone marrow disorder. He was 90.



A tough job, but someone's gotta do it

Old Car Features That New Cars Should Have

By Eric Peters

Submitted via AOL from Nolan Dehner

Looking for retro features? Wouldn't it be great if some of the features that made old cars neat could be fitted to today's cars and trucks? Personality and reliability all in the same package? A car that starts up every time, never stalls and doesn't leak or sprout rust before the note's paid off but which isn't just another magnificently well-engineered-and completely boring-appliance? Granted, it's pretty much impossible to graft Harley Earl-style '59 Caddy fins onto an '05 Malibu-for taste's sake not to mention the problem of making it past government bumper impact/impalement standards. But there's no reason why some of the best features of the past couldn't be retro-fitted to the cars of today.

For example:

Wing vent windows: Before A/C became common, cars had vent windows that canted outward to provide a cooling (and deflected) breeze as you drove. Without vent windows, your only choice is to roll down the windows and get a hair-mussing windstorm or crank up the AC. Bringing back wing vent windows would add a retro touch and functionality to modern cars.

High-beam button on the floorboard: A great idea that's gone away and ought to be brought back. It's much more convenient, when you want high beam, to just tap your left foot instead of having to fidget with a multi-function stalk that turns on the windshield wipers every other time instead of the brights-or engages some other function you weren't looking for and didn't want. In the hands (or feet, as the case might be) of any competent driver, a floorboard button switch is faster and thus safer to hit than the stalk-type. People who have a problem "accidentally" turning on their brights with a floor-mounted button are the type who also "accidentally" hit the gas when they want the brake-and drive through the local donut shop's plate glass window. Instead of idiot (and lawyer) proofing new cars, automakers should stick with solutions that are simple and work.

Rotary knobs and levers for the A/C: Certain functions are not improved by making their operation more complex than it needs to be. Turning a dial or knob from "cold" to "hot" is a lot less hassle than punching in a number and fiddling with a digital display, "touch screen" or "mouse input" to get the fan to work. You can walk around the block to cross the street, too, if you like--it just doesn't get the job done any faster. And down the road when stuff begins to not work it's a sure bet you'll spend less in time, hassle and money to replace a broken knob or cable than you will for a new ECU, flat-screen display or "mouse input."

Cool design steering wheels: Air bags have all but ruined what used to be one of the most expressive features of a new car. The highly individualized spokes and horn buttons of the past have been replaced by a generic bulging plastic housings for the air bag--the only "safety" device, incidentally, that is known to have killed several hundred people and injured thousands more. On aesthetic grounds alone, air bags should be made optional equipment; for those who don't mind risking torn retinas and snapped vertebrae not to mention the sure bet of an eyesore steering wheel.

Bench seats/low-back buckets: It's easy to sit three across--or two "cozy"--when you've got a bench seat instead of the rump-cradling "sport buckets" used in everything from Ferraris to minivans. There's a lot to be said for being able to slide across a seat without having to climb over a center console. It's easier to get in and out, too. And low-back seats may be a whiplash risk but there's nothing like being able to spread out like in the good old days--one hand on the wheel, the other draped casually over the top of the seat back. Like a double bacon cheeseburger, sometimes things that may not be totally safe are a heckuva lot more enjoyable and

(Continued on page 11)



Humor

Ross Guistino



New Fuel Gauge

A bit of humor forwarded from Nolan. Unfortunately for us AMC owners w/21 gallon fuel tanks, this gauge is pretty accurate.

More humor from Nolan:

A few days ago I was having some work done at my local garage. A blonde came in and asked for a seven-hundred-ten. We all looked at each other and another customer asked, "What is a seven-hundred-ten?" She replied, "You know, the little piece in the middle of the engine, I have lost it and need a new one." She replied that she did not know what it was, but this piece had always been there. He gave her a piece of paper and a pen and asked her to draw what the piece looked like. She drew a circle and in the middle of it wrote 710. He then took her over to another car which had it hood up and asked "is there a 710 on this car?" She pointed and said, "Of course, its right there."

Here's what she saw>>>>>



Sale Stuff

Ross Guistino

This notice was originally sent to Alan Cardin who passed it on to me and now I'm passing it on to you: "Hello, our father was a longtime road map collector and a member of the Road Map Collectors Association until his death. Our family has decided to liquidate his collection of some 6000 road maps. The maps are from the 1930's through the 1970's and cover a huge selection of regions, states and localities of the USA and Canada. They are generally in good used condition, some are mint, a few show their age. The majority are priced by decade (rare maps are individually priced): 1930's-\$8, 1940's-\$5, 1950's-\$4, 1960's-\$3, 1970's-\$2. Actual postage to be added. Email contacts are most efficient, but for those not on-line please see the mailing address below. We can attach the lists (MS Excel) to a reply, and there is no minimum purchase required. All maps are on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Avila Beach, CA 93424
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(Continued from page 10)

thus worth the risk. In any case, it ought to be up to car buyers not professional busybodies who nag the government to peck at the automakers on behalf of "consumers." (Editor's Note: or as Dave P. likes to say... "Those damn Democrats...")

Brand-correct engines: There was a time when you bought a Buick and got a Buick-built engine, not a generic "GM" powerplant identical to the ones powering Chevys and Pontiacs (brands which also once had their own unique engines, too). Sure, it's more cost-effective to use the same engine in multiple vehicles but you do so at the cost of soul. The best example of this is the new GTO. A fierce performer that's quicker and faster than any classic-era GTO of the 1960s. But its Chevy-sourced engine and bland styling make it sound, feel and drive just like a Corvette or Camaro--nothing like the 389 Tri-Power "Goats" of the good old days. A Pontiac should have a Pontiac engine otherwise it's just a Chevy in drag.

Chrome bumpers: We haven't seen them on passenger cars in decades. Instead, new cars uniformly get body color "fascias" made of urethane or some other plastic composite material instead of the impact and dent-resistant chrome and steel that used to be industry norm. The "bumperless" look may look good in the showroom but it's as vulnerable as Michael Jackson in prison out in the real world. Even minor fender-benders can result in hundreds (if not thousands) of dollars in accident damage. And painted bumpers invariably chip and scuff within just a few years uglifying the car and hurting its resale value. Old-style chrome bumpers not only offered much better protection, they looked great, too--setting off the cars lines, demarcating the front and rear ends from the rest of the vehicle, adding flash. They still look great on trucks and would look great on cars, too.

Bring 'em back!



NorCal AMC Roster

John Andrews	60 Rambler American	howlee21@comcast.net	Mechanic
Tyson Barbera	'73 Javelin AMX Piere Cardin '64 BelAir 2-door Custom '48-49 Ford F3 Duelly Chop Top		Graphic Art Vinyl Work
Bill & Connie Bartlett	66 Pontiac LeMans Convertible '64 Harley Davidson Servicar '60 Custom Ford Pickup	borderlab@earthlink.net	
Dave Bartz	69-1/2 AMX Project (California "500 Special")	dbartz@pacbell.net	All About Classics
John Black & Janet	79 MGB	black_j@sbcglobal.net	Mechanical, Auto Body, Upholstery
Roger Brannan	68 AMX (2), '69 AMX (3) '70 AMX (2) + Lincolns, Caddys, Fierros...		Tour Site
Alan & Kelly Cardin	66 American Rogue, '70 AMX '69 Mercury Cougar XR-7	cardin@sonic.net	
Chad & Nancie Chadwick	69 Javelin '66 Buick Skylark Convertable	chadchadwick@mail.com	
Dennett Colescott	51 Hudson Pacemaker '65 Marlin, '69 AMX Eagle Wagon		Custom Finishing
David Coyle	'72 Javelin	dcoyle@sonic.net	
Sue Davis & Butch	66 Marlin	johnamsden8@netzero.net	
Richard DeCoff	76 Pacer DL '75 Pacer Parts Car '35 Ford Flat head		President
Nolan & Grace Dehner	76 Pacer Standard '76 Pacer DL	pacer6113@comcast.net	Public Relations & Co- Events Coordinator
Mark & Terri Ehinger	73 Hornet Hatchback '73 Hornet X Hatchback	lahinge51@sbcglobal.net	Vice President
Tom Galli	69 Javelin '66 Bug '65 Mustang '69 Mangusta		
Ross & Terrie Guistino	75 Gremlin X '73 Gremlin 304	rossg@sonic.net	Newsletter Editor Treasurer
Fred Hyre, Sr.	82 AMC Eagle 4x4 Wagon	flhyresr@aol.com	Mechanical, Paint
Dave Pekonen	'75 Levi Gremlin Drag/Street '75 Levi Gremlin 258 '76 Pacer '66 Rambler Classic Wagon '69 AMX Drag/Street '70 Javelin Oval Track Racer '69 Javelin Project	pekonen@sbcglobal.net	Owner--All Auto & Tech Advisor
Denis & Marsha Roberge	Ramblers, Ambassadors Hornets, Gremlins '70 AMX, '72 Javelin Too many to list here!	oddrod54@msn.com	
Walt Smith & Angie	72 Ambassador '91 Chrysler TC Masserati Coupe '77 Cadi Seville	bigguy7@sonic.net	Groth Motors Auto Sales (707) 546-3857
Aleta Stark	69 Javelin	starkallie@yahoo.com	



NorCal AMCs Car Club

Newsletter Editor: Ross Guistino
Email: rossg@sonic.net

Newsletter suggestions, articles and pictures are always welcomed and encouraged. Send your information via the email address noted above or mail your thoughts to:

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Rohnert Park, CA 94928
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"Dedicated To The Proliferation And Enjoyment Of All Things AMC"

Rambler, Nash, Hudson...AMC! Do you or someone you know own or used to own an old Rambler, or perhaps a Gremlin? You're not alone. There is a small group of car owners who are proud of their American Motors heritage and meet the third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at Round Table Pizza, 2065 Occidental Road in Santa Rosa. We call ourselves the NorCal AMCs. Everyone is welcome to attend. Don't have or never heard of an AMC? No problem. Do you have a passion for old cars and want to see them re-stored? Need that hard-to-find part? Stop in and talk with us, maybe we can help. If you think you'd be interested in joining our Club, then feel free to contact us via email, snail mail or cell phone. Thanks!

Membership Application:
http://www.sonic.net/rossg/NorCal/NorCal_Application.pdf

NorCal AMC Meeting Dates for 2005

- Thursday January 20 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday February 17 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday March 17 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday April 21 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday May 19 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday June 16 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday July 21 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday August 18 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday September 15 - 7 p.m.
- Thursday October 20 - 7 p.m.
- No meeting in November and December

Meetings held at Round Table Pizza, 2065 Occidental Road, Santa Rosa