



The ROCKET FUEL Newsletter

Greetings from the President

Okay, so the calendar says spring but the Michigan weather says otherwise. Hopefully by our Dust-Off, I'll be able to get the old Cutlass out of hibernation. I've done a little work on the car this winter although I still have some things to do to get ready for the Nationals. How about you?

Have you worked on your car this winter? I know it's hard to work on your car when your garage is freezing. Or maybe you're one of the lucky ones who have a heated garage.

The work of the 2008 Nationals continues and it's getting close, folks. We need volunteers to contact the appropriate committee heads and sign up for a task or two.

There's a good write-up about our club in the April Cruis' news. Check it out.

Until next month, Steve

Editor's Notes:

Something interesting came across the desk via e-mail. There is now a muscle car themed board game called American Muscle Challenge. You can check out their web site at: www.AmericanMuscleChallenge.com.

We're still looking for members' articles to put in the newsletter. There must be someone in our club who would like to share their car story. Our vice-president, Dan Evans stepped up this month to share one of his. I think you'll enjoy the read.

Also please check out Alan's message regarding club dues. *Sue & Kelly*

MCR Dues:

Renewal of club dues is coming soon (June 1st). If your membership needs to be renewed, you will be getting an e-mail or snail mail as a reminder from Alan Wilcox, our treasurer in early May. The fact that you receive the e-mail or snail mail indicates that you need to re-up. If you do not receive an e-mail or snail mail, then you are in good standing.

Two e-mails will come your way (only one for snail mail). The first will ask you to renew, the second, a few weeks later, will serve as a reminder if you still have not paid. After two e-mails and no response, we will assume you no longer want to be a member and you will be dropped from our roster.

MCR One- year annual dues: \$20

MCR Two- year annual dues: \$35

Remember membership in the OCA is mandatory to join our club.

We can handle both (MCR & OCA) renewals if you want to make only one mailing.

OCA One-year annual dues: \$30

OCA Two-year annual dues: \$55

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APR 2008						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	31	1	2 GM Performance Build Center Tour, Wixom, MI	3	4	5
6	7	8 Paulette Width	9	10	11	12
13	14 Bob Jones	15	16	17	18	19 MCR/OCA Meeting, Thomas Suite, Dearborn Hyatt Hotel Sonee Lapadot
20	21	22	23	24 Pat Macaluso	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

<p>UPCOMING EVENTS:</p> <p>MAY 4 BEARING BURNERS WARREN TECH CENTER</p> <p>MAY 18 DUST OFF - HOWELL, MI</p> <p>JUN 14 LANSING HOMECOMING</p> <p>JUN 28 MCR PICNIC</p> <p>JUL 31 - AUG 3 OCA NATIONALS</p> <p>AUG 3 GRATIOT CRUISE</p> <p>AUG 3 MEADOW BROOK</p> <p>AUG 16 WOODWARD DREAM CRUISE</p>

MCR Meeting Minutes: submitted by Sue Apking

The March 15th meeting had 23 members in attendance and welcomed a new member, Brian Drake. Officers' reports followed. Our vice-president and secretary were not present because of other commitments. Alan Wilcox, our treasurer, reported that we now have 109 members and the treasury is in good standing.

Spring and summer activities were then reviewed. They include:

- May 18 Dust Off
- Jun 14 Homecoming
- Jun 28 MCR Picnic
- Jul 30 - Aug 3 2008 OCA Nationals
- Aug 3 Gratiot Cruise and Meadow Brook
- Aug 16 Woodward Dream Cruise

All these events are listed on our MCR web site. As each approaches, an e-mail with specific details will go out to members. Regarding these events, only one will require a permit and that is Woodward. Jeff Pregler will take care of this and contact the appropriate officials. Cindy Klemm gave an update on MCR merchandise. This concluded MCR business.

OCA Update:

- 257 meet registrations 248 cars registered
- Hotel rooms are filling up fast: Thursday and Friday numbers are over 600. Limit is 650.
- Meet merchandise, specifically shirt samples were presented; shirt colors are down to three.
- Bids being sought for audio / visual.
- Regarding trailer parking at the Fairlane Mall; there will be a need for trailers to have either a 2" X 10" x 10" or 2" X 12" x 12" wood pad under all legs / jacks to protect asphalt on mall lot.
- Drag racing at Milan Dragway is a go. Word was received from John Kleedorfer.
- Frames are still needed for some raffle items

FYI!

Anyone interested in a 1966 Olds Starfire? Patti Aronhalt recently contacted us on behalf of her father. Because of her dad's failing health, he is no longer able to show his 1966 Olds Starfire so he would like to sell it. She is trying to help him in that endeavor. The car is in Amherst, Ohio near Oberlin/Lorain. Patti can be contacted via e-mail or phone.

Patti Aronhalt

(614) 921-1771 Hm

paronhalt@columbus.rr.com

From Parts Car to Show Car

by Dan Evans, MCR Vice President

I have told this story to many people over the years, so here it is in Black and White. Some time back, around 1977, I was in pursuit of a 1964 ½ Ford Mustang Convertible to restore. I was all of 13 years old and had been around cars and body shops since I could walk. As was true to their nickname, "Rustang", I couldn't get my hands on a decent car to start with.

My dad and I came across a 1968 Oldsmobile Cutlass convertible in Toledo. It ran and was in pretty decent shape, it had the typical rust around the wheel openings on the rear quarters and it was far from being a showpiece. My dad didn't think I was serious about fixing something up, but he didn't realize that it was in my blood.

We picked up this Cutlass for \$125.00, not bad for something that could be driven home. I started on this project by cleaning it up and giving it all of the mechanical treatments that it needed. First thing was a tune up and an oil change. After that it ran great and I wanted to take it out on the road. Too bad I was only 13. I had plenty of driving experience since I was always moving cars around the body shop and in and out of the garages. The first real vehicle I drove (other than tractors) was a 1962 Ford Pick Up with 3 on the tree when I was about 11. We had a large open yard and I was always careful, (besides, if I hit something I would not have heard the end of it.)

Back to the Oldsmobile stuff; I started fixing up the body of the Cutlass, now I wasn't being all that critical, I just wanted the car to be watertight and stop the rust issue. I did, however, find a perfect rear bumper for it at a local junkyard for \$40.00. I was so happy to find it, and I immediately put it on the car. Things were starting to take shape, and this project was beginning to show some progress. Now this was my car, but it was in my dad's name and he paid the initial \$125.00 but I did have money from working odd jobs for people. My mom drove the car after I began the work on it and we all enjoyed it.

Then came the turning point and the story takes off from here. My cousins were up from West Virginia and 6 of us went to church on a Saturday in the summer of 1978. We were leaving church and my mom had to stop for a Stop sign. About 3 seconds later everyone but me had whiplash. Some moron in a Ford pick up 4x4 slammed us in the rear! Remember that perfect bumper I had just put on?! Well that was nearly the end of my Cutlass project. I was so upset, especially seeing the "V" shape that was now in the rear bumper and all of my work destroyed. So I let the car sit in the driveway for a day and let things cool off (thanks to Michigan No Fault Insurance, the Jerk got off without even being cited for hitting us!).

I pried and beat on the deck lid to separate it from the bumper and after 20 minutes the trunk was open. We put the poor Cutlass up on the Chief Easy-Liner frame machine at the shop and pulled on my recently perfect bumper. It was somewhat straight again and the trunk latched without leaking. So the Olds became a driver for the time, and I began searching for another bumper.

Now it's 1979 and I found a '68 Cutlass Convertible in the "Tradin' Post" for sale as "Parts or Whole". Not knowing what was left, my neighbor and I hopped on our bikes and went to check it out. There sat a Jade Gold 1968 Cutlass convertible in sad shape. The top was in shreds as were the seats, and the carpet was gone. The nose was pushed in and the grill was lying on the back seat (a 442 grill at that). The doors were both caved in and I wasn't sure if I could use anything off the car. Then I checked out the rear bumper, it was straight and I wanted it! I asked the guy how much he wanted for the bumper and he told me something that completely surprised me. "I want to get rid of the car, we were drag racing it for a while at Norwalk, but I want to get my Vette back on the road. I'll let you have it for \$50.00, but I want my Vette engine out of it and the Wheels too". Sweet, I thought to myself, and I immediately asked him if he had the title. He did and I gave him \$50.00. He said he would pull the engine, and I told him I would be back with a truck in 1 hour.

We road our bikes back home and I told my dad what I had done. He thought I was nuts, and that I had bought another piece of junk (what does he know?). We hooked the car with a chain and I steered it home! Now remember this is going to be my parts car. I started looking it over real good and checking the quarters for bondo. I ended up with axel grease all over my hands; someone had packed the quarters with grease! Very, Very Smart Move!!! The quarter panels





were like new! I checked the rest of the car in, out, up, down. No Rust! But the frame was full of sand. I must have spent 5 hours running water in the frame, jacking the car up from each corner, and letting it all drain out (I'll tell you about that later). What was this, a forgotten time capsule?! The odometer read 11,000 miles, and the car was 11 years old. It just didn't add up, so I went back over to talk with the guy that I bought it from; check this out.

The car was built in Lansing, and took delivery in Texas. A young woman bought the car and drove it, that's all. Well after about 9,000 miles on the original oil, the original 350 "Gave Up the Ghost". I'm sure there was a loud Bang on some road in Texas. The car was all done, that is until her uncle from Metamora, Ohio paid a visit. He bought the car from her and took it home. He is the one that packed grease in the quarters. It sat in his barn expecting a new engine some day. That day only came after a friend of his nephew was interested in it for, you guessed it, Drag Racing. I didn't find out about the doors until many years later. When they weren't racing the Cutlass, they were driving down the roads at night, opening the doors and hitting garbage cans. The sand was from Lake Erie! The old farmer was letting his chickens use the Cutlass, I guess to have parties in because the guy I bought it from said there was so much chicken s#@t in the car they couldn't wash it out with a hose. So they took it out to Point Place (Toledo) and backed it down a boat launch and left it there for 2 or 3 days to soak. Well it worked, and they were able to clean the car out (that 20 pounds of sand probably screwed with their times at Norwalk though).

Well as I was saying; this WAS going to be my parts car. This was a real 11,000 mile 1968 Cutlass!! This turned into my Project Car! I gutted it, but never pulled it off the frame. Many of you will recall this had a Chevy in line 6, (there goes my dad again!). It was 1980 and gas was on the rise. By 1981 gas had reached .76 cents a half gallon (it was being sold by 1/2 gallons due to the lack of a \$1.00 digit on the old gas pumps). That 6 cylinder did get 29 miles to the gallon, but I hated it!

I had bought several '68 Cutlasses along the way for parts, and I sold that original one to keep the project going. By 1982 I had the car ready to shoot the final paint on it. I also graduated from High School that year.

My Cutlass has been with me now the better part of my life. I have some very fond memories of working on it, and going to shows. I especially remember the Woodward Dream Cruises that it has been to. It is even better now since I put an Original Rocket 350 with a 4bbl back in it! It may only get 14 miles to the gallon, but I love every one of those miles! The odometer now has 40,000 miles on it, and those are original! Not bad for a \$50.00 Parts car?!

Editors' Note: Dan told us that Jerry Garfield made him write this article. We're glad he did. It made a special addition to the newsletter. Thanks to both Dan & Jerry.

2008 NATIONALS VOLUNTEER CONTACT LIST

Committee	Head	E-Mail	# of volunteers needed <u>for the week</u>
Registration	Jeff Pregler	jjmpregler@yahoo.com	22
Showfield	Doug Width	pdwidth@aol.com	50
Tours	Ken Kress	kkress7737@aol.com	44
Banquet	Paulette Width	pdwidth@aol.com	35
Security	Dave Tucker	dwtucker@ameritech.net	44
Ladies Lunch	Kelly Ferry	mrmdux@aim.com	4
Trailer Parking	Lanny Yankee	cutlass442@prodigy.net	10
Raffle	Dennis Piskorowski	dennis1970@yahoo.com	15
Tabulation of Judging	Jenn Ferry-Cronin	pamprdrbrat2676@yahoo.com	8

MCR SERVICE TEAM

President	Steve Apking	president@motorcityrockets.com
Vice President	Dan Evans	vicepresident@motorcityrockets.com
Treasurer	Alan Wilcox	treasurer@motorcityrockets.com
Secretary	Tom Bejma	secretary@motorcityrockets.com
Newsletter	Sue Apking	editor@motorcityrockets.com
	Kelly Ferry	
Activities	Jeff Pregler	events@motorcityrockets.com
Merchandise	Cindy Klemm	merchandise@motorcityrockets.com
Historian	Dorothy Maseles	historian@motorcityrockets.com
Webmaster	Brian Lorway	webmaster@motorcityrockets.com