

THE OCTAGON NEWS

Volume LX No. 4

February 2025



MG Help Line Phone Numbers Danny Mortensen's MG TD -Featured Car

From El Presidente

Sam Hodges

As previously stated, I am taking responsibility for the snow and the cold. Just as I thought that there might be an early spring and the previous snow had melted, I'm looking out at a fresh three inches as I write. The rodent from Pennsylvania has conspired against me. So with that in mind, it's a good time to do some planning.

I'm looking at the upcoming year and plotting the events that I might want to try to attend. With the last few big NAMGAR & NAMGBR shows in Texas, Vancouver, & Oregon, with this years shows being Crystal Lake, IL and Traverse City, MI, I might have a shot. But before I get there, I need to buy some parts. There are of course the standard events of BCD which this year will be Saturday, August 2,



North American MGB Register

Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club
P.O. Box 20032 Dabel Branch
Dayton, OH 45420-0032

Club Membership Information

Membership dues of the Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club are **twenty-five (\$25.00)** per year, payable during September and October. On January 1st. the names of delinquent members are removed from the roster. See **Carole Looft** for further membership information.

MG Car Club Monthly Meeting

The Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at **Bennett's Pubical Family Sports Grill**, 67 South Main St. Miamisburg 45342, at 7:30pm. The next meeting will be:

Wed, February 26, 2025

MG Car Club Officers

President..... Sam Hodges
phone.....937-581-4767
email.....sammgb@earthlink.net
Vice President.....Ed Wolf
phone.....937-668-1298
email.....90legendl@gmail.com
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phone.....937-760-0272
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email.....jscocozzo@gmail.com
Member at Large.....Skip Peterson
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2025, and the Concours d'Elegance, Sunday, September 14, 2025. And then, there are all of the other, random upcoming shows. The cruise-ins that we will find out about, the Biscuits & Tea get together, the parades, festivals and other events that haven't made themselves known. I look forward to hearing what Eddie brings us to consider.

As I plan the upcoming driving season, I find some irony in my situation. When I bought my first MGB in 1996, the 1978 was then 18-years old. I thought, "I need to replace all the rubber bits, fluids, and anything that I deemed to be of questionable age. Now, after 29-years of owning that car, I realize that for some parts, they're the same belts & hoses that I put on in 1996. Might be time to replace those belts & hoses of questionable age again, even though I now know exactly how old they are. Don't get me started on how old my tires are.

Since this is a short month, I'll give you a short column. Enjoy your pre-season planning while I'm off to the catalog to spend more money than I had intended, but we all know that isn't going to be all that I'm going to spend.

MG Help Hotline

Need help with repair or maintenance of your MG? Call one of the club members listed below. If the person you contact cannot help, they most likely can refer you to someone who can.

- Graham Cooper 513-680-8657
- Sam Hodges 937-581-4767
- Terry Looft 937-527-7353
- Ron Parks 937-207-9009
- Skip Peterson 937-603-7601
- Steve Powell 937-470-8962
- John Scocozzo 937-231-9188
- Ed Wolf 937-668-1298

From the Editor

Ron Parks

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emember any and all appropriate contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. You can mail them to me at 4101 Grossepoint Street, Springfield, OH 45502, or E-Mail to: MGDRIVER@woh.rr.com. Either of those methods will work fine or you can call me at (937) 322-0717 and we can arrange to meet and transfer materials or conduct an interview.

February:

23 – Pub Run at “The Famous” restaurant in Centerville

26 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

March:

26 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

April:

23 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

26 – Tune-up Clinic at MG Automotive

May:

24 – Brits at the Museum car show at British Transportation Museum

28 -Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

June:

1 – British Return to Ft. Meigs (Perrysburg, OH)

2-6 – NANGAR’s GT-50 Traverse City, MI

25 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

July:

23 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

28-31 -NAMGBR’s MG2025 Crystal Lake, IL

August:

2 – BCD Dayton

27 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

September:

24 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

October:

22 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

November:

19 - Meeting (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

December:

6 – Holiday Party (Bennett’s Pubical Family Sports Grill)

Welcome New Members

By Carole Looft

Chris & Jeanne Muia

9334 Arrowhead Lane

Clarksville, Ohio 45113

937-289-2985

cjmuia@frontier.com

1974 Midget

Ohio Clubs’ Spring Tour

By Dave Smittle

I am currently planning a shared event which will include the Dayton, Columbus and Toledo clubs for a day full of activities around the New Bremen, Grand Lake State Park, St. Mary's and Celina area. The event is being planned for May 9th to this part of Ohio which is just an hour straight north of Dayton.

"The idea is to have each of the three clubs leave that morning from a designated starting point in their own area but rendezvous together in West Central Ohio for a series of shared events. "We'll take in some pretty scenery, visit interesting museums, see some oddball roadside attractions and have lunch together,"

"Plans are to finish up late in the afternoon in Wapakoneta at the Neil Armstrong Air and Space Museum, which is right at Interstate 75, so it can be a quick drive back, if needed, or I'll provide a back-road route if that's your preference and you don't need to be home in a hurry,"

More details will be provided in a future issue of the newsletter but feel free to mark your calendar now for Friday, May 9th.

Featured Car of the Month: Danny Mortensen's MG TD

By Danny Mortensen

Ibought my 53 MG TD in Sacramento in 1966, 59 years ago while in college. I Repainted it twice and am now on a new engine. I have never won an award and I've never attended a car show.

The longest trip I've taken in the car was from Sacramento to Phoenix and back during summer breaks from college (Arizona State University class of '68. I also drove around California on weekends from Ft. Ord on the Monterey Peninsula.

At age 78, it is now very fatiguing to drive open cockpit although I do have a new canvass canopy. I just use it now to go to the post office and the supermarket. See photos. Danny Mortensen





A-TEAM

By Ron Parks

The A-Team has made more progress towards turning the donated MGA 1600 Roadster into a nice driver that the British Transportation Museum can sell for a profit. We have reinstalled the newly painted fan and valve cover. Discovered a bad hose after the radiator was reinstalled. The battery box on the right side is gone, so we need to extend the battery cable to reach the other side. We plan fix these items and attempt to fire it up next time.

The list of reassembly items to be done will be emailed to members soon, asking for some volunteers to adopt tasks for various areas of reassembly. The hope is that we can be all over the car at the same time without getting in each other's way and make the car drivable and saleable before summer.

Editor's note: A-TEAM title, coined by Ed Wolf.

Tech Tips

By Ron Parks

If you have experienced spilling oil from your MGB spin on filter, while turning it over quickly, trying not to spill, then this tip might be for you? Usually, with the patience of a five year old, when I change the oil in my MGB, I remove the drain plug and let the oil drain until it almost stops dripping. Then I remove the aforementioned filter and spill some oil before getting it inverted. This time I got distracted and left the drain plug open overnight. The next day when I removed the filter, guess what? No oil was in the filter to spill out! Hmmm???????

The air chamber covers on my SU carburetors in my MGB have always had a dull finish. Some time spent on Steve Powell's polishing wheel made them bright and shiny!



Safety  *Fast*

MGB Side Cover Breather

by Glenn Lenhard

Recently I had some discussion with a British car shop owner about oil consumption issues that may be caused by a problem with the front engine breather plate on MGB engines. He was unsure of exactly what was causing the problem, but knew only that by replacing the cover, or modifying it, the problem would go away

There are two such plates on these engines, one at the back, which is a plain blanking plate that covers the access area for the cam followers, and one at the front which doubles as a crankcase vent. As an engine runs, there is a certain amount of backpressure from the compression and firing that is present in the crankcase. That pressure must be vented in some manner, either to atmosphere as in the case of the MGA engines using a straight inverted “J” pipe, or through a hose into the intake manifold. Early year MG B’s use a PCV valve, and later ones merely have a “y” connection and hoses that connect directly to the carburetor(s)

There were at least 2 different versions of this plate, and the early ones are directly covered over with very small holes as shown in photo 1. These early versions have been found to be dangerously full of deposits and are not serviceable. They should just be thrown away and later style procured. See photos on page 3 of this article.



Photo 1. Early Cover



Photo 2 Later Cover

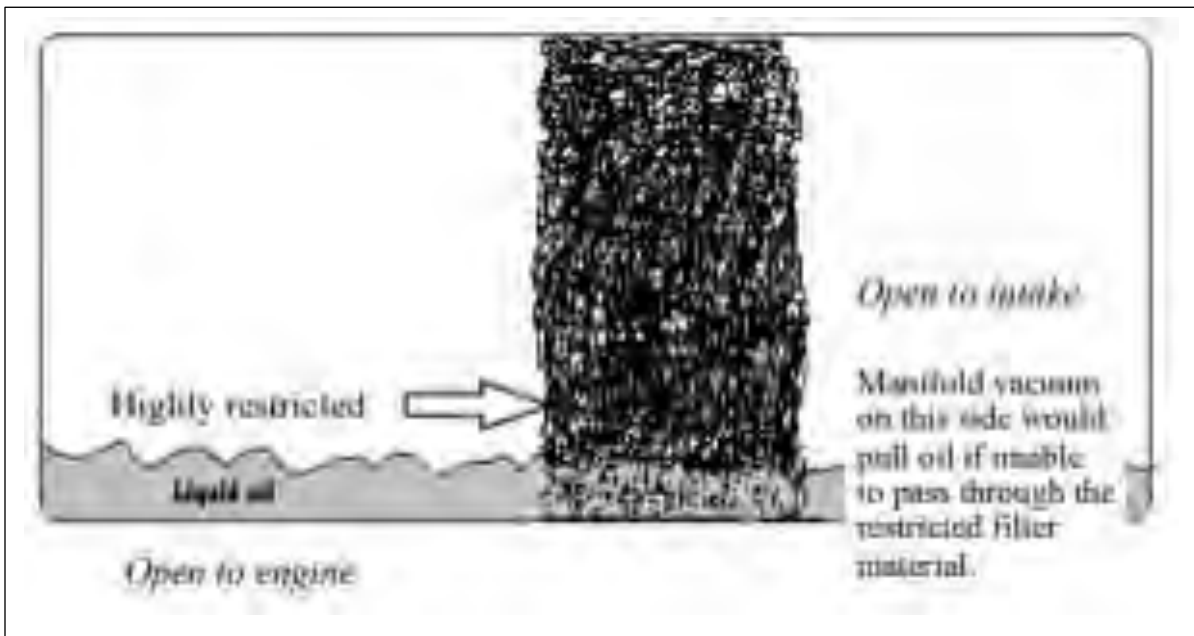
Inside this assembly is a wire mesh that allows vapor to pass through. Any liquid oil present is trapped by this mesh, which then can flow back to the engine. In many cases, this mesh has been totally blocked by hard carbon deposits that prevent it from doing its job. We have tried many different ways of testing for this problem. The easiest thing is to just blow through the pipe with your mouth making sure it blows easily. This however only makes sure the oil separator is not completely plugged, causing excessive crankcase blow-by. This blow-by can then force oil out of seals and gaskets and possibly cause oil consumption by oil entering the combustion chamber upwards past the rings.

Un-vented style oil cap hooked to vacuum gauge. The factory manual states that there should be a slight negative pressure (vacuum) present in the engine at all times. The simple device shown in the photo below can test this. We usually see 1 or 2 inches of vacuum in this manner depending on engine speed if all is well.



However the pressure test and bowing through the breather will not uncover the problem that seems to be the most severe manifestation, one that we have encountered on a very small number of engines, but that when encountered causes extreme amounts of oil to enter the combustion chamber by traveling out of the breather pipe and directly into the carburetor body, or past the early style PCV valve.

This phenomenon occurs when only the upper portion of the oil separator mesh is plugged by deposits, leaving the lower area clear. The side cover is normally filled in the bottom with liquid oil that is splashed in by the valve train. When the upper mesh is plugged, the oil is actually pulled up out of the lower area by the intake manifold depression and is pulled directly into the engine.



It has been suggested that a remedy for this is to cut open and simply remove the oil separator material. We do not recommend this, as the separator serves another purpose; that of a flame arrestor. During intake manifold backfiring that could occur under certain conditions, a flame is produced in the manifold that could easily travel back to the engine crankcase and ignite the oil and fuel vapors present. Many engines have a similar type of “flame trap”. The most well known in the automotive trade is the one used by Volvo for many years, that also had a chronic tendency to sludge up, causing excessive crankcase pressure. This was an inexpensive part and was usually replaced as a regular maintenance item by experienced Volvo shops.

We have tried chemical cleaning (carburetor immersion tank, Safety Kleen, etc.) with negative results. The preferable method of repair is to cut open the breather as shown in photo 4. Remove the mesh, then install the new material and fold the flap back down. There is no need to braze or weld this shut again. The best component we have found for this purpose is the common kitchen Chore Boy brass pad found in any grocery store. One complete Chore Boy will fit into the cavity and should give many miles of service.



Photo 4 Cut Open



2 in a box

The next time you find liquid oil on top of pistons after removing a cylinder head on an MGB, be sure to give this repair a try. You will not be disappointed. We have had two engines here so far that were consuming oil to the extent of 1 quart in 50 miles that were cured by this repair. In both cases, you could blow through the pipe, and the sludge was only marginally apparent from visual inspection, but when cut open the element was found to be almost totally restricted. We have started performing this on any side cover that even looks marginal on visual inspection. This amount of oil consumption is unusual, but I believe we will see more and more of these plugged side covers in the future.

Glenn Lenhard
Glenn's MG Repair
St. Petersburg, FL

Additional Photos:



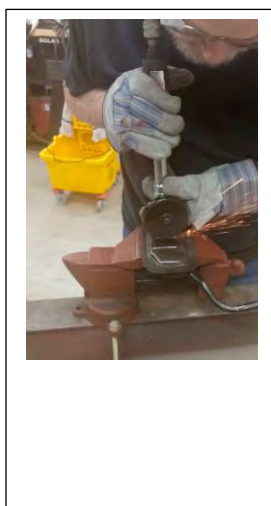
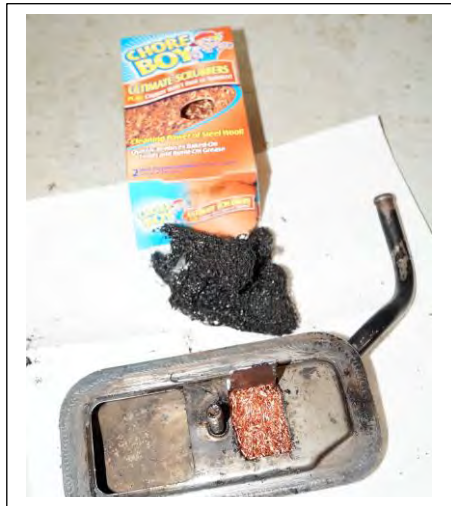
This is the old filter material and hard carbon deposits from a late style cover. These deposits will not melt out with any solvent and just need to be removed by cutting open the cover.



This is what came out of an early style side cover. Just throw these away and locate a later style cover.

Editor's Note: This job is not merely: "Take out the cover and fix it." To get to the side cover breather and remove it, you must first remove the air filters, the carburetors, the intake manifold the heat shield and loosen the exhaust manifold. May have been able to remove the side cover breather without loosening the exhaust manifold? I would try that first, before loosening.

The old material removed from my cover, shown in the photo on the left was caked very hard with carbon deposits. Air would not have passed through it. I had to break it up and dig it out with a screwdriver. The copper Chore Boy scrubber is shown packed into the open cavity. The photo in the center shows the tab bent back in place covering the Chore Boy scrubber. If you anticipate doing this, don't buy Chore Boy scrubbers, I have an extra one. There were two in the package and I will keep the extra one in my garage for you. My neighbor cut the tab with cutting wheel.



MG Jamaica showcases rich roots with 1979 Roadster display at MG HS 2025 launch

Sandena James, Digital media specialist; February 9, 2025

Submitted by Dave Gribler

A striking carmine red 1979 MGB Roadster stole the spotlight as MG, a Chinese-owned automobile maker with British roots, blended its rich heritage with modern innovation at the launch of its MG HS 2025 in the Jamaican market on Friday.

The event, held at the MG Jamaica showroom on Old Hope Road in St Andrew, reinforced the brand's reliability and lasting appeal as it continues to establish itself locally.

Nigel McFarlane, second vice-president of the Jamaica Classic Car Club and owner of the pristine vintage vehicle, drove it to the event himself in a showcase of the enduring quality of MG's engineering. The classic roadster still boasts its original 1.8-litre BMC engine and an unaltered body, standing as a testament to the brand's craftsmanship.

Link to article: <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/2025/02/09/mg-jamaica-showcases-rich-roots-1979-roadster-display-mg-hs-2025-launch/>



MG Jamaica representatives pose for a photo around the MG HS 2025 at the vehicle's launch in the island on Friday, February 7, 2025. (Photo: Sandena James)



Photo combination of the red 1979 MGE Roadster at the launch of the MG HS 2025 in the market on Friday, February 7, 2025. (Photo: Sandena James)

Classified Ads

Wanted: I have a '53 TD in need of a differential. Rick Jobe rtjobe@jobenet.net (8/24)

For sale: 1 right & 1 left front latch pillar for the MG TD,.Moss catalog #450-820 & 450-825. Selling as a pair for 1/2 the catalog value - \$94. Brand new. Free shipping. Danny Mortensen 859-384-7821 or agsdanny@aol.com (9/24)

For Rent: Car storage in Wilmington, Ohio. \$30/mo for one car, \$50/mo for two cars for club members. Non-club members \$35/mo per car. Indoor heated. Electric for battery maintainers. Please bring chargers and extension cord. Terry Looft 937-527-7353 or tlooft@earthlink.net. (9/24)

Free classified policy: We are happy to run your auto-related ad for three months free of charge but may cut older and non-MG related ads as space requires. If you wish to continue the ad for an additional three months, contact Ron Parks MGdriver@woh.rr.com or 937-322-0717

Larger ads may be purchased for inclusion in the Octagon News for the following annual prices for 11 issues: full page ad - \$100, half page - \$ 75, quarter page - \$50, & Business card size - \$25.

Minutes from January Club Meeting

By Diana Hodges

El Presidente Sam Hodges called the January meeting of the MGCC SWOC to order, for the hardy few that braved the cold at 7:32. There were only 16 in attendance. The heat in the building has failed so the room is being heated with a series of small space heaters. “‘That table’ couldn’t get the heater to work, but they were ok. There’s plenty of hot air anyway...” El Presidente continued, “I started working on the MGA. I was able to get the broken stud on the water cooler housing out, but then I broke one of the other studs. Otherwise, nothing new to report..”

Next on the agenda is the **Vice President’s Report**. Vice President Ed Wolf, “Unleaded regular is 2.91, diesel is \$3.59.”

Minutes we’re the next thing on the list. Sam, “Thanks to Ron, the highly decorated, ‘acting’ (*I used air quotes*) editor for life for filling in and taking notes and generating the most accurate Minutes since 2005.” Carole Looft motioned to approve the Minutes

Sue Scocozzo seconded. Minutes were approved. No one opposed, not even me.

Treasurer’s Report was next on the agenda. Treasurer John Scocozzo, “Since we didn’t have a December meeting, this is a combined report for January and December. January is easy. We had income of Membership Dues (\$16.00). That’s it for January. For December, we had income of Membership Dues (\$300.00) + BCD Revenue sharing (\$1,800.00) for a total gain to the MGCC for both months of \$2,116.00. We had total expenses of: Holiday Party expenses (\$\$1,161.73) + Annual Donations (\$400.00) + Gumball Rally cash (\$20.00) + Website renewal (\$25.67) for a total loss to the MGCC of \$1,607.40 for both months. Total losses when subtracted from the gains means a total gain to the MGCC of \$508.60. When added to our beginning balance of \$1,753.71, leaves the MGCC with an ending balance of \$2,262.31 in the primary checking account. Since I put the extra money into the savings account, and we’ve been doing pretty good with our interest, I moved another \$1,000 over to the savings account. Now the savings account has \$4,383.42 after the application of \$0.18 in interest, and after the extra \$1,000 move, the Checking account now has an ending balance of \$1,262.31. Cash-on-hand is \$50.00. Total ending balance of all accounts was \$5695.91.” Ron Parks motioned to accept the Treasurer’s report. Terry Looft seconded. MGCC voted. Treasurer’s report approved. Steve Veris, “Did you bet on the game?” John continued, “We were talking at the last meeting about possibly putting our money into a CD. I’ve been looking into Universal One Credit Union since they allow CDs for commercial accounts. There are some filing and other paperwork requirements that I’m working on.” Sam H. “I contacted the IRS to get a copy of our EO determination letter. The office that the letter has to be sent to is

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on the 6th floor of the Cincinnati Federal building. FYI, my office is on the 6th floor of the Cincinnati Federal building.” Ed Wolf, “did you actually waste a stamp on that envelope?”

Membership Chairwoman Carole Looft was next. Carole, “We actually got a new member. Chris Muia from Clarksville has a 1974 Midget. Diana Hodges, “Is anyone else humming the ‘Last Train to Clarksville’ by The Monkees all of a sudden??” Carole continued, “We currently have 56 members. with 3 renewals.”

Birthdays in December: Art Barnes, Janet Shoviak, Joy Veris, and Diana Cooper.

January birthdays: Ed Wolf, Lois Gribler, and Rick Shields.

Sunshine Committee: Jennifer Peterson is having knee surgery. Cathy Barnes is doing well after being run over by her husband, Art. She’s been home for a month and is almost back to normal. Art, “She’ll be in physical therapy for at least 2 more months going twice per week.” The MGCC analyzed the accident and pointed out that his problem was that he started the roll too close. He should have started from outside the garage at the very least.

Activities with Eddie. Eddie Hill was not one of the hardy souls tonight.

NAMGAR 2025 is June 2-6 in Traverse City, Michigan

NAMGBR 2025 is July 28-31 in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

After some discussion, the MGCC has decided that we will have a Pub Run on Feb. 23, 2025 at The Famous in Centerville. Time of the meet up will be 5pm.

Newsletter Editor-for-Life, Ron Parks, “Since I was filling in as the Secretary, I had to send myself an unfriendly reminder. Otherwise, keep the articles coming unless you really want another article about my Triumph.”

Webmaster John Scocozzo, “I’ve added traditional events to the schedule. Otherwise, the internet is still there.”

Beer Brake called at 7:49:27

Back from Break 7:49:28 (*yes, there wasn’t one*).

Old Business. Who’s the oldest one there? Steve Powell agreed to accept the position.

We had discussed the possibility of having some sort of Resource for technical help on website, what about a help line? Sam H., “I have a number that works well.” (*Proceeded to give out Terry Looft’s number*). But seriously, what we need is to have a list of ‘phone a friends’.” Terry Looft, “I’m ok with having my number on a list.” Ron, “I’ll put an article in newsletter asking for volunteers. Maybe it should be people who actually have running cars?” Sam, “Diana, remind me to pull the distributors out when I get home.”

New Business. There was an email sent to several club members about doing a ride sometime around 4/26/25 or 5/9/25 around the Lake St. Mary’s / Wapokeneta area. Lake Erie British Car Club in connection with the Central Ohio MG Owners. It was decided to table this discussion until more people were present to make a final determination.

Tech Tips. Lois Gribler, “We’ve had a spate of car issues. We wrecked a Toyota Camry wagon and I was driving another car until I wasn’t. Coming home, we lost power steering and power brakes. Grismer couldn’t fix it. The only car that we had left was the MGC GT. Then we got two flat tires on that car. It has tubeless, but they still had to be fixed.” Dave Johnson, “Where’s the

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tech tip, where are we going?” Lois, “The tech tip in all that tale of woe, check the tires and make sure they’re on the rim. We had to have them remounted.”

Nothing For Sale

Wanted: Ed Wolf wants cars for new drivers. Preferably a 10-y.o. Camry, Accord, Buick would do nicely. I pointed out that this is the wrong club for that as I just last year replaced my 17.y.o. Buick Lucerne after it dropped a valve. And even then I seriously thought about just repairing it instead.

Gumball Rallye. Steve Powell won Gumball.

Next Meeting is February 26, 2025 here at Bennett’s Pubical.

Motion to Adjourn: Ron Parks & Dave Johnson. Meeting adjourned 8:12.

MiniMania

MG AUTOMOTIVE

Parts, Service and Restoration for
MG, Triumph, Austin Healey and
Related Autos



Steve Miller

3733 Wilmington Pike

Kettering, Ohio 45429

(937) 294-7623

e-mail: MgAutomotive1@aol.com

Does a perfect man
really exist, Mom?



Of course, Darling.
They all drive MG's.