
THE OCTAGON NEWS

Volume XXXVIII No. 10

August 2004

LOTS OF NEW MEMBERS!

LOTS OF INPUT FROM CLUB MEMBERS!!!

From the President

Sam Hodges

WE DID IT! We finally got 300 cars at this years BCD! After years of hoping, trying and flirting with that magic number, we finally made it over that hurdle. The official number being bandied about the evening of the show was that we officially had 305 registrants. *Note:* that's "registrants", not officially "cars." I think that number was 301. What a day to do it! It was 75 degrees, not a cloud in the sky and our 20th anniversary to boot. For those of you who are interested, the 300th car was a London Taxi. I have to say thank you to all of you who helped out and made this event probably the best one to date. To every one who helped out, whether it was in registration, concessions, parking, prizes, etc., this event truly would not be the event that it is without your time, patience and considerable giving.

In fact, concessions was so overstaffed at one point that I was actually forced out of the "kitchen" (*might have had something to do with a large amount of chicken and quite a few*

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Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club

Club Membership Information

Membership dues of the Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club are eighteen (\$18.00) 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 the K of C Hall, downtown Dayton, on Bainbridge Street, at 8:00pm. The next meeting will be:

Wed August 25, 2004

MG Car Club Officers

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buns going missing...). Similarly, I have to thank all of you who showed up Friday night to stuff the goody bags.

Upcoming Events

Aug:

- 22 – Picnic at Dick Goodman's home
- 25 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

Sept:

- 18 – Cruise-In for Ronald McDonald House (McDonalds on Wilmington Pike, just south of I-675)
- 19 – Concours d'Elegance
- 22 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

Oct:

- 10 – Fall Tour
- 27 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

Again, the turnout was so good, that I and several other members were free to make sure that the grass in several spots didn't grow too long the night before the show. Thank you all for all that you do.

That having been said, back to the normal frivolity and disrespect that I tend to treat this column with. I'm pleased to announce that Rocco and Crusher were not very busy on Saturday since most of you showed up at the show (*we know who didn't show up, and you will be visited as time allows*). The automotive turnout for this years BCD was different in that we had classes of cars fill up that have never been very well represented in the past. For example, take the Spitfires. We put the Spits into a row with the TR7/8's because there never really have been that many of either show up. This year, we had more Spitfires than I knew Triumph ever built. (*A lot more than I thought were still running.*) The row was full by 10:30 a.m. Turns out that we were visited by the North American Spitfire Squadron, (www.nasshq.org).

With the advent of the new Mini, there was a plethora of both old and new at the show. This was problematic only in the fact that we (*meaning "I"*) had designated the Mini row as overflow since several other rows were filling up. As with the Spitfires, the MGA's and the Midgets all needed extra space. I made an ad hock judgment call the morning of the show to put excess vehicles in the Mini row, since by 11:00 a.m. the row was only half full. How was I supposed to know that the Mini bunch apparently likes to sleep in on the weekend? By 1:30, they pretty much had claimed their row to themselves. I have to thank the TR7/8 bunch for moving down to give the Spitfires a little extra space. Also, I have to thank to the Midget and the Spitfire owners for readjusting themselves to give the late-comers extra room. Fortunately, my contingency plan was never implemented and we did not have to place any cars outside of their respective rows. All was good, no torches were lit, no pitch-forks were used, and no El Presidente was harmed in the making of this show...

Again this year, we had enough Lotuses show up to create their own class, even though we ended up grouping them into the open class. There was a late model Esprit, the mandatory Elan and Europa, and a Super Seven that I had never seen before among others.

Don't get me started on the chrome bumper MGBs. What's with you people? I know that preserving old cars is a good thing, and as one of the co-sponsors, it was nice to see such a turn out, but did you have to bring EVERY chrome bumper MGB built to the show?!? We had more of them show up at BCD than the entire turnout at some other British car shows I've attended. As the owner of rubber bumper B's I felt like my cars were rare compared to the two rows of chrome-bumpered cars in attendance.

Unfortunately for me, Diana fell in love with the Austin Healey 100-4s. She's been pricing them ever since, so my MG's are covering in the garage right now. (*Relax, they're safe, unless you're reading this Diana...*) With that said, I'm brought to the topic of our next outing. Unless my calendar's off, I think that the next thing that we as a club will be involved with is the Annual Goodman Summer Picnic. This event is scheduled for August 22, 2004 at the Goodman residence. Stay tuned to your e-mail for further details. As always this event promises to be a great time for all. Just so that you don't let your cars get too out of shape, don't forget that the Concours d'Elegance is just around the corner, September 19, 2004 to be exact. Mark your calendars accordingly.

Our 100th Member!!!

By Carole Looft

A We reached a milestone this year at BCD when we registered our 100th member to the MG Car Club Southwestern Ohio Centre. The honor went to someone who has been around our club functions for several years, Kathy Goodman. Kathy, along with her father, Dick, have graciously hosted our summer picnic for the last several years. Presently, Kathy does not own an MG but is following up on several nice ones that were for sale at the car show. Maybe she will have something to show us at the picnic!!!

New Member Profile

By Carole Looft

A At our July meeting we were introduced to Mike and Teresa Jones who live in the Dayton area. Mike is a Logistics Management Specialist at Wright Patterson Air Force base and they own a 1947 MG TC.

The Jones' have owned the car for three years and bought it from an elderly gentleman who was selling off his collection. The car was in a barn and looked a little rough in those surroundings, but as Mike said, 'looked great to him'. The car was restored in England in 1976 and its body is mostly aluminum. It came to the States in 1980.

In talking to Mike and Teresa, they told of how they drove the car to Ohio from Georgia! Nearly 700 miles in eighteen hours! We can only imagine what a trip that was! Isn't that great?

The TC is not the only car that holds the Jones' attention. They have a collection of 10 various vehicles, which include a Model T Ford, a 1958 Renault 4CV, a Triumph Spitfire, and a 1941 Chrysler New Yorker. They are hoping to acquire a '55 or '56 Packard. They, too, had to build a building for their vehicles!!

Mike and Theresa already made it to BCD with their MG TC, and we are looking forward to seeing them at our upcoming events. Welcome!



Welcome New Members

Eddie Cole

490 Mustang Dr.
Walton, Ky 41094
(859)485-6108
edmgcars@one.net
1980 MGB LE

Jeff Fields

14430 Meadow Creek
LaGrange, Ohio 44050
(440) 355 MGMG
(440) 315-6380
jfield@leeca.org
1949 MG TC

Mike & Teresa Jones

838 Silverleaf Dr.
Dayton, Ohio 45431
(937) 252 8328
mkj1469@hotmail.com
1947 MG TC

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Candice Cole (daughter)
MG Midget

1960 MGA
1969 MGC GT

Kathy Goodman
832 Spring Lake Cr.
Enon, Ohio 45323
(937) 864-5499
1953 MG TD (shared w/Dad)
(Looking for an MGB)

Stan Rogers
935-L Wilmington Ave
Dayton, Ohio 45420
stanley.rogers@wpafb.af.mil
1973 MGB

All Ohio MG Picnic

By Carole Looft

A group of us drove up to Columbus on Saturday, July 31st to attend the 3rd annual All Ohio MG Picnic. We met in Xenia at the Kmart parking lot, and the weather was looking pretty overcast and threatening rain. It was a nice drive as usual, though, and when we arrived at the park, there were just a handful of cars at that point. As the day wore on, and the weather improved, more MGs showed up and all and all another good turnout for this annual event.



The winning team The LocoBrits, from left to right, Bill Oliver, Billy Oliver, George Wakeman, and Jeff Fields.

The Aunt Sally competition was set up and several of the clubs vied for this year's trophy – unfortunately, our 'star' thrower was unable to join us this year, and we were unable to bring the trophy home. The winning club was The LocoBrits of Northeastern Ohio. I guess we'll have to wait until next year---

Convertible Top Straps

By Ron Parks

Velcro has many uses on an MG from holding carpet in place to extending your convertible top straps, which is the subject of this article. When I got my new top, I also bought two new, super soft cotton bath towels to place on either side of plastic back window before rolling it around the folded top when putting the top down. The theory is that this will prevent some scratching of the clear plastic window and I think it does help. This, however, makes a fatter package out of the folded top with the window rolled around it, thus making the straps that fit around it too short. These straps are attached just above the rear panel on each side. Your MGB originally had them even though it may not now. These straps have snaps and fit around the folded and rolled top to keep it from dropping down to take up space in the compartment behind the seats. My

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straps were a tight fit before with my old top, without the towels. There was no way they were going around the top with the two bath towels embedded. They needed to be made longer.

My solution was to have about three inches of Velcro stitched to the end of the straps. Actually, that translates to about six inches of Velcro, three inches to be stitched onto the strap and three inches overhanging, extending the length of the strap. **This is important!** *Care must be taken to position the working side of the Velcro to match the working side of the old male and female snaps.* The adhesive backing on the Velcro is not strong enough to hold it on the strap, but stitching it on works well. The exposed back side of the Velcro didn't look all that great, so I cut some pieces of black vinyl left over from my dash board covering adventures and had it stitched on to cover the back side of the Velcro. I took the straps to my local upholstery shop and got the stitching done for \$5. The straps look pretty good, not perfect, but pretty good. They are plenty long enough to hold my top bundle and the Velcro is much easier to fasten than the old snaps were. Now it's very easy and holds the top in place quite well. See photos below.



A Vacation in the “B”

Graham & Diana Cooper

Having had our 1969 MGB for almost one year, and having done a number of rallies and other trips of steadily increasing distance, we felt that we had the confidence to take a short vacation in it and visit the Smokey Mountains, one of our favorite places. Townsend, TN was the destination. It just so happened that there was a timely British car show there to give us an excuse.

So it was on the Thursday before Mother's Day this year that we collected a weekends worth of gear together, when I went to pull the car out to load it would not start. It wouldn't even try. After a number of attempts I could smell that characteristic electrical burning smell. Investigation found smoke coming out of the distributor, where the Petronix electronic ignition had fried itself. (It appears to have been a short, the insulation on one of the connecting leads was worn through.) Luckily I still had the set of points I took off the car when I fitted the Petronix after fitting those, the car started easily.

We loaded our gear and headed south. The weather could not have been better. It was a nearly cloudless sky with temperatures in the low 80's. Since we'd set off later than expected, we took I-75 straight south rather than enjoy a leisurely drive on secondary roads. We arrived in Townsend, 325 miles distant, almost exactly 5 hours later. The car had been happy cruising at 65-70 mph, but I really do need to get that overdrive fitted.

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We rented a cabin in Townsend, just outside the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. Our trip being twofold, to hike one of our favorite trails in the park on Friday (about 7 miles) and attend the annual Blount British Car show on Saturday.



Graham and Diana Cooper's MGB upon arrival at the Great Smokey Mountains National Park

The event was held at the Talley Ho motel. Approximately 150 cars attended, of which about 50 were MGs. We were told attendance is usually higher, but there was a show in Atlanta on the same day. This event is normally held a week earlier, during the Old Timers festival in Townsend, which includes bluegrass music, local country craft demonstrations, etc. It was a beautiful sunny day but very little shade, which someone remarked was entirely taken up by the Healy people. Most of the entries were from the Blount British Car club, and therefore most of the winners were their members.

We were parked next to a man (named Dale) who had driven about 40 miles to the show and was showing his 1972 MGB for the first time after complete restoration, of which he did all of the work, and it was very good. He took home third prize. Although in my opinion, he should have won. He was beaten by a Blount British Car club member who couldn't tell enough people that his complete restoration had taken less than 3 months.



Many chrome bumper "B's" were on display

We made many comparisons during the show to our own club's event and found that ours was far superior in terms of food and overall organization. There was a drive through the mountains advertised that never materialized. So we made up our own. We drove around Cade's Cove, an 11 mile loop within the park that is teeming with deer at dusk. And along Little River Rd. to Gatlinburg.

When we packed to return home on Sunday we seemed to be able to get a lot more stuff in the trunk than we had on the way down. But this caused our second problem. When we attempted to open the trunk just before leaving, we found that it would not open. There was small threat of rain for the trip home, and the top, spare tire, tools, etc., were all in there.

Happily, the rain stayed away and the return trip was uneventful. When we arrived home I was able to use a pry bar to move the trunk lid around enough to release the catch. Tech tip: Don't stuff your trunk full of soft items.

We drove a total of 823 trouble free miles, other than the ignition problem.

THINGS TO REMEMBER (Words of Wisdom)

Editor's note – Phil Johnson found these valuable tips in "*How to Run an Automobile*" by Victor W. Page, M.E., published in 1917! You just can't go wrong with this type of valuable information!

- Don't attempt to start the engine with the switch turned off or without gasoline in the tank.

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- Don't fill the lubricator in the engine, and neglect to lubricate all other parts of the car.
- Don't neglect the lubrication of any other part of the car.
- Don't advance the spark when starting the engine.
- Don't allow the clutch to engage suddenly.
- Don't apply the brakes suddenly unless absolutely necessary.
- Don't neglect to inspect the level of the acid in the storage battery, at least every two weeks, and supply distilled water if needed.
- Don't neglect to keep the radiator filled with water, or with a good anti-freezing solution in cold weather.
- Don't attempt to shift reverse gear when the car is moving ahead.
- Don't attempt to shift from third to second or first gear when car is running at a high rate of speed.
- Don't attempt to shift from second to first gear unless the car is running very slowly.
- Don't neglect to investigate any unusual sound which may develop in the car.
- Don't drive fast or attempt to stop suddenly on wet pavement.
- Don't neglect to keep the tires properly inflated.
- Don't release clutch when the throttle is open very wide.
- Don't let every Tom, Dick and Harry drive your car.
- Don't let every mechanic, or so-called repair man, make you believe that he knows more about the way the car ought to be built by the manufacturer.
- Don't use the starter to run the car. The excessive overload on the battery is very injurious.
- Don't blame the starter when the engine doesn't start— look in the gas tank.
- Don't push in starting button when the engine is running.
- Don't forget that using the starting button a certain number of times will exhaust the supply of current in the battery, unless the engine is run sufficiently to recharge it.
- Don't allow your car to stand in puddles of oil or water, as neither one is good for your tires
- Remember that the pan, engine and other mechanical parts of the car should be kept clean.
- Don't turn corners too fast. While this may seem spectacular, it is always hard on tires.
- Never open the throttle too quickly, but give the motor a chance to pick up gradually.
- Keep your brakes adjusted.
- Familiarize yourself with the use of the hand lever brake and thus be prepared for emergencies.
- Be sure to release the clutch before shifting gears.
- Don't accelerate too quickly; this causes the car to jump and the motor to pound.
- Examine the car occasionally for loose nuts and bolts.
- Don't race your engine under any circumstances.
- Remember that a squeak from your car means oil needed.
- Never take your car out until you are sure it is properly lubricated.
- Be sure your brakes are released before attempting to move car.
- When you undertake to make any adjustments on your car, be sure that you are right, then go ahead.
- Never fold the top back when it is wet, as this will cause it to deteriorate rapidly.
- Don't let your engine labor going up a steep hill: drop back to a lower gear if necessary.
- Don't fail to cover the radiator and hood with a blanket or robe when the car is left standing in the cold. This keeps much of the heat in the cooling system and facilitates the starting of the motor.

Why We (British) Drive On The Left

Ian Cunningham

(Caution: information in this article will justify fumbling with the clothing of strangers!)

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Two thousand years ago, Man walked to work from his cave along a track in the forest. There were many thieves and no policemen, so he had to be able to defend himself. His wife stayed at home and looked after the washing and ironing. Most people are right-handed; indeed, the Latin word for right-handed is dexter, as in dexterity (Latin for left-handed is sinister, as in sinister). If Man used a weapon with his right hand he had far better reach if he used it out to his right; if he used it to his left he reduced the effective range. The best place to keep this weapon - a cudgel or a sword - was on his left hip, available for quick action.

Imagine the scene: Man is walking down the track through the forest and sees someone approaching. He may have to defend himself - he moves over to the left so that his right hand will have the best range. Then he sees that the stranger is harmless. He leaves his weapon on his belt and reassures the stranger by showing that he has nothing in his right hand. They shake hands - right hand to right hand. Fact: throughout the world, to this day, everyone shakes the right hand.

Same scene, but now it is winter and Man needs to stay warm. He covers himself with a bear skin, draped over his shoulders and doubled across the front. If the left flap is put over the right flap, just lifting the one left flap will give access to his weapon on the belt beneath. If the right flap is over the left flap, it will take longer to draw his weapon - a potentially deadly delay. Fact: throughout the world, to this day, men's clothing buttons left over right.

As Man became richer he took to riding four-legged beasts. With a weapon worn on his left side, Man had to mount an animal on its left side, otherwise man's weapon would dig the animal's ribs inappropriately. The left side, or mounting side of a riding animal is called the near side, the opposite is the off side of the animal. Fact: throughout the world, to this day, riding animals are trained to be mounted from their left, or near, side.

Mrs. Man would naturally mount her animal by climbing up the left side and modestly ride with the right knee and right shoulder to the front. Mrs. Man did not carry a weapon and if she wore a bearskin coat the same way as Man did, she suffered from a terrible draught down her front and a chilly left breast - she therefore doubled the right flap over the left and stayed warm. Fashion was set by ladies of society who could afford horses, the others followed. Fact: throughout the world, to this day, women's clothing buttons right over left.

For centuries, people everywhere walked, rode horses and drove their carts on the left side of the road. Then the French had their revolution, stormed the Bastille in 1789, and Napoleon took charge; a major war against Britain broke out. The French and their allies fought against the British and their allies; all the armies involved wore colorful uniforms that were almost undistinguishable at a distance. Napoleon introduced a new legal system, and metric measurement, and another revolutionary act was to oblige his people and his allies to march on the opposite (right) side of the road. This enabled both sides in the conflict to recognize French troops at a distance, even though most roads were hardly highways. Some say that Napoleon was left-handed, drawing his sword from his right belt.

Thanks to Napoleon's military successes on land, French influence spread throughout Europe; most European countries – and their colonies - took to the right side of the road. However, Britain and her large number of colonies remained on the left. Japan, which was influenced by neither side, continued the natural custom and to this day drives on the left.

In America the former colonialists had another war against Britain in 1812 and the French general Lafayette went over to lend a hand. The Americans were persuaded that they were now revolutionaries and should walk and drive on the right, although this did not become standard throughout all the States until the 20th century and the influence of the motor car.

However, none of these people (Americans, Europeans) have changed their ways of dressing or their way of greeting each other - which they should have done if they had thought it through logically! The sad thing is that

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most of us (British) who drive on the left are unaware of the perfectly sensible historic and natural reasons for doing so. We (British) have nothing about which to feel ashamed or defensive, and there is no reason to change - whatever the Europeans (and Americans) may say.

Nevertheless, the next time Johnny Foreigner (an American) derides you for driving on what he calls the wrong side of the road, seize the wretch by the shirtfront with one hand and his wife by the blousefront with the other. Examine these garments carefully, noting how they are fastened. Ask her how she rides side-saddle and ask him how he holds his sword - and explain to them the error of their ways. When they gratefully bid you farewell, give a superior British sneer and offer your left hand to be shaken - that should fix them; however, take care when you depart which side of the road you drive on - it may be what someone calls the 'wrong' side."

Classifieds

For Sale: 1962 MGA 1600 Mark II roadster, red with black leather interior and red leather trim. Cincinnati area. Digital photos available. \$7000. thunderm3@yahoo.com.

For Sale: 1960 MGA in process of frame-off restoration. Frame was chemically dipped, primed, rustproofed on the inside of the rails, correctly welded (such as with original battery trays), and painted in black hammerite paint. The body was braced, chemically dipped, and primed. The body will require the typical lower reconstruction. All other components are pretty much as removed. I have tons of new parts including most hardware, gaskets, and some interiors, and metal. Also, wire wheels with knock offs, and a few original lenses and goodies. Contact Joe Morgan, 724-457-2880 or joemorgan12345@cs.com

For Sale: Zenith-Stromberg carburetor off '79 MGB, including manual choke conversion, airfilter and manifold \$150.

Wanted: Pair of seat frames for MGB MkI (1962-68). Dieter Eckel, deckel@emag.de, Tel. 01149-1727341572 (I will call you back!)

Red 1953 MGTD. It has a new top, new brakes front and rear, new steering wheel and recently tuned up. All work was done by Steve Miller of MG Automotive. Will sell for \$12,500.00. Also I have a 9 piece set of Whitworth Socket Set, 3/4, sale for \$95.00, Fender guards-2 for \$25.00, TD workshop manual with complete wiring diagram for TD's, \$25.00 and a Service Part list Book, \$20.00. John Carter., jabba8811@aol.com, Phone number is 1-937-947-1647

1975(?) MG Midget - rubber bumper parts car. No title. Wheels, suspension, rack, engine (1500), trans, doors, windshield, fenders, trunk deck still on the car. Also has a good top frame but I heard rumors that Skip has first dibs on that item. Some rust in the usual spots...rockers, floors, lower fenders but not quite a total rust bucket yet. 1977(?) MG Midget - rubber bumper project car. Also no title. 1972 MG Midget. Make offer. Call Dan at 937-426-9839 for more details.

'75 MGB, overheated last summer, and hasn't run or been driven since. Original car except for repaint in non original green. Stored inside since overheating. Car is in Cincinnati Contact Dave Davis at 513-271-9413

'79 MGB, Orange with black top, 70,000 miles, runs and looks good, dependable driver, car located in Loveland. Contact Carol Colclasure 513-683-1920, ext 504 or colclaca@loveland.k12.oh.us

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Rick Cutright

8:00pm – Meeting called to order by Dick Smith.

President's Report – El Presidente Fidel Hodgriguez was absent, which I'm sure will be his excuse for not presenting a report. Rumor has it he was overthrown by a bloody coupe (or a cheeky saloon).

Vice President's Report – VP Dick Smith reports that Sam Hodges will not be present, therefore there will be no President's report.

Treasurer's Report – Steve Veris' plane from Ibiza was delayed, but he is expected to arrive soon.

Minutes for June – as published in the July newsletter: it works OK.

Membership Report – New members Mike & Teresa Jones and their 1947 MG TC joined. Welcome! Also, good participation at the 2nd OSH Gathering at Harrigan's (42 members) and at the British meet at Edgewater (21 members).

Treasurer's Report – Bolivia was OK, but St. Tropez and Ibiza were to die for! Watch E! for Steve's appearance on "Wild on.....". All that and he was still able to report an account balance of \$1800.

Sunshine Committee – The Club extends Sympathies to Bill Hammond in the loss of his sister. Gary Kinney had leg surgery and appears to be recovering well.

Activities – September 10 is Jimmy Buffet Night at the Bainbridge KofC. The Knights would like the membership to bring their cars to enhance the festivities.

September 18 is a Cruise-in at McDonalds downtown. This is a charity event.

September 19 is The Concours d' Elegance at the Boonshoft Museum (of Discovery).

"Activities Tim" Oricko on behalf of the club extends a heartfelt Thank You to Skip Peterson for a successful Old Speckled Hen event. Skip admits it was nothing.

Beer Break – 8:24 to 8:38

Old Business – The Boonshoft Concours committee asks MGCCSWOC members to volunteer their time. Club volunteers will be handsomely rewarded with pink shirts and a free hot dog. Sam will bring the donuts. Eventually. Bill Hammond proposed The Club sponsor 2 awards, one on behalf of the British Museum of Transportation. The MGCC award would be for early European sportscars, and the BMofT award would be for pre-war Bentley. Motion made and approved. Extra admission tickets are available and it was suggested they be donated to the VA Center. Motion made by Bill Goodman, and approved.

New Business - there is no new business.

Tech Tips – advice was sought regarding clitter-clatter noise from a Midget engine. Apparently the experts on hand agreed that additional sound absorption will do the trick.

NAMGAR Report – Dave Gribler reported on a good meet where he won 2nd in the Funkana and tied for 1st in the Rallye.

NAMGBR – Bill Hammond reports that he walked in on a naked lady who did not seem to feel threatened.