



# Gas Gauge Ye Olde Car Club August 2020 Newsletter

## President's Message, August 2020

This came from Don Buckles at 5:35 p.m. Wednesday:

*"Big Day in the Buckles household. Our youngest Daughter Kelsey, who at the age of 27 completed Grad School this Spring with Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering, has accepted position with NASA as an Aerospace Engineer. Needless to say, Her mother and I are quite proud of her."*

Wow Don, that is terrific. Congratulations!

So, how do we have a successful car club without meetings? It's not easy but we do keep trying. There have been non-meetings with coffee in the park, non-tours with no organized gathering at either end, and we stopped all activity for the last few weeks to cooperate with the "mask up and no gatherings" mandate intended to stop the virus so kids can go back to school and folks can go back to work. It seems to be working, our local numbers are slowly improving.

We will have meetings again. Until then, club activities are about sharing information and entertaining each other via email. Information, tips and virtual help with ongoing projects are a good thing. Anything you send me will be shared. There is more to come and please do send your own material. Car stories are always welcome.

## Ten Minute Tech has been doing well.

Some topics are too big for my weekly member message as seen with Lee Noga's recent Mystery Tools series. When needed, I'll share them individually. Member car stories are almost always shared individually.

We stopped weekly coffee gatherings in the park when local virus numbers were climbing fast and an appeal was made to have no gatherings. We'll revisit that issue soon. Our Facebook page enjoys continuous postings of club related and some non-club material.

Have you met a car guy who is not a member of YOCC? Please help them to become a member, give them my email or phone number or give me their contact information, or both.

Did you notice Randy Bunch is no longer listed as club secretary? He made a big contribution over the past seven years and recently determined that family health issues and other priorities need his attention. Thanks for all your help Randy!

Stay well,

Dennis McGillis, YOCC president

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## Bits and Pieces

\*\*\*When I say “the other day,” I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.

\*\*\*I don't mean to interrupt people, I just randomly remember things and get really excited.

\*\*\*I hate it when a couple argues in public and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.

\*\*\*When I ask for directions, please don't use words like “East.”

\*\*\*I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.

\*\*\*Sometimes someone unexpected comes into your life outta nowhere, makes your heart race and changes you forever. We call these people cops.

\*\*\*I don't care how much you liked the soap. Never walk out of a public restroom smelling your fingers.

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## The Remarkable Body

Hearing is the fastest human sense. A person can recognize a sound in as little as 0.05 seconds.

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## Where in the world.

In 2007, Scotland spent 6 months of research and \$162,972 to create a new slogan that would boost tourism. They came up with “Welcome to Scotland.”

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## Actual Label Instructions

In a microwave oven manual:  
Do not use for drying pets.

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## Fun Food Facts

Apples are more effective at waking you up in the morning than coffee.

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## Chrysler Airflow

The **Chrysler Airflow** is a full-size car produced by Chrysler from 1934 to 1937. The Airflow was one of the first full-size American production car to use streamlining as a basis for building a sleeker automobile, one less susceptible to air resistance. Chrysler made a significant effort at a fundamental change in automotive design with the Chrysler Airflow, but it was ultimately a commercial failure.

Carl Breer, along with fellow Chrysler engineers Fred Zeder and Owen Skelton, began a series of wind tunnel tests, with the cooperation of Orville Wright, to study which forms were the most efficient shape created by nature that could suit an automobile. Chrysler built a wind tunnel at the Highland Park site, and tested at least 50 scale models by April 1930. Their engineers found that then-current two-box automobile design was so aerodynamically inefficient, that it was actually more efficient turned around backwards. Applying what they had learned about shape, the engineers also began looking into unibody construction to achieve rigidity with less weight than could be achieved with the conventional separate frame and body. The strengthening was demonstrated in a publicity reel. The car thus represented a breakthrough in lightweight-yet-strong construction as well as increasing the power-to-drag ratio as the lighter, more streamlined body allowed air to flow around it instead of being caught against upright forms such as radiator grilles, headlights and windshields.

Traditional automobiles of the day were the typical two-box design, with about 65% of the weight over the rear wheels. When loaded with passengers, the weight distribution tended to become further imbalanced, rising to 75% or more over the rear wheels, resulting in unsafe handling characteristics on slippery roads. Spring rates in the rear of traditional vehicles were, therefore, necessarily higher, and passengers were subjected to a harsher ride.

Innovative weight distribution on the new Chrysler Airflow stemmed from the need for superior handling dynamics. The engine was moved forward over the front wheels compared with traditional automobiles of the time, and passengers were all moved forward so that rear seat passengers were seated within the wheelbase, rather than on top of the rear axle. The weight distribution had approximately 54% of the weight over the front wheels, which evened to near 50-50 with passengers, and resulted in more equal spring rates, better handling, and far superior ride quality.

Commercially, it was one of the biggest failures produced by a major manufacturer. Probably few people can say they really like its looks. Technically, however, it represents an important milestone. For the Chrysler Airflow was the first mass-produced attempt to apply the principles of aerodynamics to a motor car. With the growth of the aircraft industry and a widespread desire for modernity, the thirties

From Wikipedia

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## Big Bills

Although they exist only as curiosities stored in museums and Federal Reserve Banks now, at one point in American history, there was a piece of paper currency worth \$100,000. The bills featured the handsome face of former U.S. president Woodrow Wilson and were printed not as the result of runaway inflation, but to serve as certificates exchanged between Federal Reserve locations.

While these gold certificates were never intended for use outside of banking institutions, they served a similar function to regular paper currency in that they made the transfer of something of value, in this case gold, much easier. Rather than transport \$100,000 worth of gold to a given Federal Reserve location, the gold could be stored safely while the certificate was transferred instead.

If you're a diehard collector looking to get your hands on this piece of history, you're more than a bit out of luck, however. Unlike many other unique currency examples from U.S. History, all the surviving examples of the \$100,000 bill have been accounted for and are in possession of the U.S. government. If you want to see one in person though, you can visit the Federal Reserve Banks in either San Francisco or Richmond, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, or the Smithsonian Institute.

Other large denomination bills that are no longer in circulation (or used between Federal Reserve locations) include the \$500 bill (featuring William McKinley, the 25th U.S. President), the \$1,000 bill (featuring Grover Cleveland, the 22nd and 24th U.S. President), the \$5,000 bill (featuring James Madison, the 4th U.S. President), and the \$10,000 bill (featuring Salmon P. Chase, the 6th U.S. Chief Justice).

From HowtoGeek.com

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Four old men at breakfast in a retirement center.

Old Man #1: I had a heck of a night. I was gettin' those heart palpitations.

Old Man #2: My bladder condition is worse, believe me.

Old Man #3: You should have my stomach ulcer.

Old Man #4: Gentlemen...I must say that the day just wouldn't be the same here at Elderpark without our morning organ recital.

From The Elderberries, cartoon

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## The Lava Lamp

The colorful and motion-filled Lava Lamp, an iconic piece of design and kitsch from the 1960s, seems like the sort of thing that someone with copious amounts of LSD in their system would envision.

In reality, the groovy little lamp wasn't the product of a hallucinogenic induced epiphany, but the result of a British accountant, Edward Craven Walker, watching a pub employee's makeshift cooking timer. The timer featured a hunk of wax in a cocktail shaker that liquefied and bubbled to the surface when the heat of the food on the nearby stove melted it.

Walker set about recreating the hypnotizing effect, only this time warmed by a light bulb. After much experimenting, the Lava Lamp, almost entirely unchanged from its invention to today, was born. Although we've come to associate the lamp with 1960s counterculture, the adoption of the lamp as such was entirely organic—Walker never marketed the lamp as such and his company even produced "executive" Lava Lamps that featured walnut bases with pen and business card holders.

From howtogeek.com

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## The story behind that photo of the Pinto in front of the Mt. St. Helens eruption

By Daniel Strohl, Photo by Dick Lasher.



A towering plume of ash rises in the distance of the photo, swirling with menace and threat, lightning arcing within it. As if to accent the peril, the canyon of trees that frame the gray clouds themselves have gone dark toward their tops, occluded by unseen looming clouds of ash. One shaft of morning light still reaches the lower branches of the trees, splashing over a cut of greenery and the least probable thing in the photo: a red Ford Pinto with a blue dirt bike hitched to its bumper, angled across a forest road.

Even if you haven't been up to the Johnston Ridge Observatory near Mt. St. Helens, where one of the most puzzling photos of the volcano's May 1980 eruption is prominently displayed, you've no doubt seen the photo circulating on the Internet, stripped of all context save for the date and location. You've also no doubt wondered who took the photo, what were they doing up there in the first place, and whether they made it out alive. We did too, so we set out to dig for what answers we could. Some came easy; others not so much.

To begin with, pretty much all of the Pacific Northwest knew that Mt. St. Helens was about to erupt. Settlers in the area saw it erupt in the mid-19th century, and by early 1980, seismologists were monitoring a massive bulge on the volcano's north slope. Authorities had begun evacuating area residents from their homes as a precaution, though they couldn't keep campers from ringing the base of the volcano, especially over a sunny mid-May weekend.

"Dick" Lasher spent that Saturday night packing some gear figuring he'd head out first thing in the morning to get a look at the mountain before it blew. His plan involved hitching his Yamaha IT enduro bike to the back of his Pinto, driving up to Spirit Lake, then exploring the area via dirt forest roads on the bike. He'd leave before dawn and arrive at the lake right at daybreak.

Lasher, according to Gary Cooper, one of his former co-workers at the Boeing plant in Frederickson, was a "very old school quiet type" but ended up telling the story of the Mt. St. Helens photograph to a number of

friends and coworkers over the years. He's since retired and disconnected his phone number and Facebook account. Nobody we've reached who knew him seems to know how to contact him anymore, and another of the three Richard Lashers in Washington with whom we spoke knew of the photo but didn't know of the photographer. That said, enough of the story is out there and repeated from multiple sources that we feel confident in telling it here.

Tired from packing, Lasher slept in an hour or two past his planned departure time. He swore in telling the story many years later that sleeping in that morning saved his life. Based on the angle of the photo and the surrounding terrain, it appears Lasher drove down toward Spirit Lake from the north, likely dropping down from U.S. 12 and the town of Randle into the forest roads of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. He possibly made it as far south as Forest Road 26 by 8:32 that morning. The time the volcano blew.

Had Lasher made it to Spirit Lake, he'd almost certainly have died. According to John P. Walsh's description of the eruption, Spirit Lake "met the full impact of the volcano's lateral blast. The sheer force of the blast lifted the lake out of its bed and propelled it about 85 stories into the air to splash onto adjacent mountain slopes."

Had Lasher made it even over the next ridge, he'd almost certainly have died. According to Cooper's telling of the story, "Luckily for him, and he did not realize until later just how lucky, he was on the opposite side of that ridge in front, because the entire forest was flattened from the ridge down, and he was in the lee side and protected from most of the blast."

He did, however, realize that he had to get out of there in a hurry. Though the volcano blew out a pyroclastic flow almost due north and Lasher found himself more northeast of the blast, one map shows that temperatures near where Lasher found himself rose to 680 degrees Fahrenheit. According to the same map, most of the 57 people who died that day were positioned to the north or northwest of the volcano, but at least four of them were in Lasher's vicinity.

He pulled over and attempted to turn around seeing as the ash cloud was heading his way and fast. In his hurry he bent the forks on his motorcycle. He jumped out of the car and ran up the hillside to get some pics, thinking he might just die for it, and hoping someone would find the camera at least as it was a phenomenal sight that filled the sky. The first picture he took was the one with the Pinto cocked in the road and the bent motorcycle still in the back with that HUGE cloud going up in the sky in the background.

(Cooper or Lasher may have conflated this part of the story with the fate of Robert Landsberg, a newspaper photographer who, upon realizing he wouldn't be able to escape the eruption after photographing it, carefully rewound his film, packed away his camera gear, and laid over the gear to preserve his shots.)

He made his way back down the mountain after being quickly overtaken by the ash cloud. He was completely blinded, and had to drive on the opposite side of the road steering by staying right on the opposite side of the road heading into oncoming traffic, but encountered nobody going up. The car choked out after a while and he rode his bent motorcycle out of the mountains back to the room he had rented. That, however, wasn't the end of Lasher's story.

The next day as soon as he could, he rode his motorcycle back up into the now really hot zone with his camera to get what pics he could. He was well into the red no go zone, when a helicopter saw him, and came right down and landed in his path. He was surprised to be arrested on the spot and flown out in the chopper and to jail. They left his motorcycle lay on the mountain. They also kept him in jail for a few days without letting him call anyone or even plead his case. When he finally got out, he again went back up there, (Not sure how) and was able to get his motorcycle back and I think later his car as well.

Some of those photos that Lasher ended up taking of the aftermath, according to Cooper and fellow former co-worker Steven Firth, focused on those who didn't make it out alive and on the automotive wreckage they left behind. Both Cooper and Firth recalled Lasher showing them photos of burned-out vehicles with puddles of melted plastic underneath.

So, yes, the photographer behind that mystery photograph did survive to see it widely disseminated. Whatever became of the Pinto and the Yamaha, however, we don't know, so if you have a red Pinto hatchback with a lot of volcanic ash in the seams, get in touch with us.

Thanks to David Gerkenmeyer for this contribution.

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## Did you know?

**Twenty-five thousand** people died building the Panama Canal.

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### **Auto facts from 1927**

- \*\*Chevrolet out-produces Ford by an enormous margin, only because the Model T era finally draws to a close.
- \*\*The Little Marmon and Little Custom Playboy join the Marmon and Jordan but buyers resist pricey compacts.
- \*\*LaSalle is created as a companion brand to Cadillac: lower in price (\$2496 and up) but comparable in quality.
- \*\*Hudson's trusty six-cylinder engine, an L-head, adopts overhead intake valves creating the new F-head.
- \*\*Packard and the Little Marmon employ compact hypoid rear axles which permit a lower body profile.
- \*\*Most cars now have four-wheel brakes, air cleaners, oil and gas filters, crankcase vents, mirrors, and automatic windshield wipers.
- \*\*Studebaker celebrates its 75th Anniversary; it built carriages before making cars.
- \*\*GM stockholders receive nearly \$135 million in dividends; Chrysler stockholders divvy up a \$10 million bounty.
- \*\*Sharing success, employees now own \$20 million in Nash stock.
- \*\*The final Model T Fords are built ending an impressive 19-year run.
- \*\*An all new Model A Ford is announced on May 25, 1927 but is not unveiled until December as a 1928 model.
- \*\*Hudson develops a single-disc, cork-insert clutch and keeps that design into the 1950s.
- \*\*Packard builds a 500-acre proving ground in Utica, Michigan; the facility includes a 2.5-mile high speed track.

### **Auto facts from 1928**

- \*\*The new Model A Ford has a conventional three-speed gearbox, 40 bhp L-head four, four-wheel brakes, and shatterproof glass.
- \*\*Chrysler Corporation launches the Plymouth brand in July, DeSoto in August, both as 1929 models.
- \*\*Plymouth is the only Chrysler brand with four-cylinder engines.
- \*\*Chrysler Corporation takes over Dodge Brothers on July 30 with K.T. Keller at the helm.
- \*\*Dodge offers a pair of sixes to replace the former four: 208 cid in Standard and Victory, 224 cid in Senior.
- \*\*Graham-Paige automobiles have four-, six-, or eight-cylinder engines; most have four-speed transmissions.
- \*\*Cadillac introduces synchromesh transmission - no more need for double clutching to change gears.
- \*\*Hudson is first with a hard rubber, steel core steering wheel containing finger scallops around the rim.
- \*\*A number of makes offer factory installed radios for the first time.
- \*\*Studebaker takes control of Buffalo-based Pierce-Arrow.

### **Auto facts from 1929**

- \*\*Auto sales start the year strong, but "The Roaring Twenties" grind to a halt on October 24, "Black Thursday".
- \*\*The Great Depression begins with the stock market crash of October 29 and grips the nation until the outbreak of World War II.
- \*\*Buick introduces the \$1000 Marquette at midyear; it's an early 1930 model with an L-head six-cylinder engine.
- \*\*Duesenberg announces the Model J with a 265-bp, dual overhead cam, straight-eight engine; it's huge, fast, and expensive.
- \*\*Even non-motor enthusiast Americans soon come to appreciate the Duesenberg accolade: "It's a Duesy".
- \*\*DeSoto is officially on the market with a 174.9-cid, L-head six that cranks out 55 bhp.
- \*\*Dual taillights begin to appear but some makes keep single lights well in to the 30s.
- \*\*Chrysler incorporates downdraft carburetors for improved fuel distribution.

### **Auto facts from 1930**

- \*\*As the Great Depression grips the nation, industry volume skids to 2,910,187 cars and 599,991 trucks.
- \*\*A sign of things to come: Many General Motors cars sport rakish tilted windshields.
- \*\*Studebaker pioneers "freewheeling," a drive-train system that allows clutchless shifts after leaving first gear.
- \*\*Cadillac ups the power ante offering V-12 and V-16 engines plus power brakes.
- \*\*Hupmobile claims to be the first American built car with an oil cooler.
- \*\*Cadillac engines have automatic hydraulic tappet-clearance adjustment to reduce maintenance and noise.
- \*\*The American Austin Car Company is formed to build a variant of the British Austin Seven in the U.S.
- \*\*Willys adds a new straight-eight engine; Whippet disappears early in 1931.
- \*\*Essex and Hudson launch "Sun Sedan," a two-door convertible sedan body style.

Taken from 100 Years, The American Auto

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# WOMEN'S CORNER

## SMART WOMAN

The doctor, after an examination, sighed and said, 'I've got some bad news. You have cancer, and you'd best put your affairs in order.'

The woman was shocked, but managed to compose herself and walk into the waiting room where her daughter had been waiting.

'Well, Sweetie, we women celebrate when things are good, and we celebrate when things don't go so well. In this case, things aren't well. I have cancer. So, let's head to the club and have a martini.'

After 3 or 4 martinis, the two were feeling a little less somber. There were some laughs and more martinis. They were approached by some of the woman's old friends, who were curious as to what they were celebrating.

The woman told her friends they were drinking to her impending end, 'I've been diagnosed with AIDS.' The friends were aghast, gave the woman their condolences, and beat a hasty retreat.

After the friends left, the woman's daughter leaned over and whispered, 'Momma, I thought you said you were dying of cancer, and you just told your friends you were dying of AIDS! Why did you do that??'

'Because, I don't want any of them sleeping with your father after I'm gone.'

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And THAT, my friends, is what is called, 'Putting Your Affairs In Order.'

## DIVORCE VS. MURDER

A nice, calm and respectable lady went into the pharmacy, walked up to the pharmacist, looked straight into his eyes, and said, "I would like to buy some cyanide." The pharmacist asked, "Why in the world do you need cyanide?" The lady replied, "I need it to poison my husband." The pharmacist's eyes got big and he exclaimed, "Lord have mercy! I can't give you cyanide to kill your husband. That's against the law! I'll lose my license! They'll throw both of us in jail! Bad things will happen. Absolutely not! You CANNOT have any cyanide!"

The lady reached into her purse and pulled out a picture of her husband in bed with the pharmacist's wife. The pharmacist looked at the picture and replied, "You didn't tell me you had a prescription."

Thanks to my friend Pam for this hilarious story.

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"Have you heard of Murphy's Law?"

"Yeah. What is it?"

"If something can go wrong, it will go wrong."

"Right. Have you heard of Cole's Law?"

"No, what is it?"

"Thinly sliced cabbage."

## Birthdays and Anniversaries in August



### Birthdays

|                  |           |               |           |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| Delores Benson   | August 26 | Gary Boehnke  | August 15 |
| Donald Freeman   | August 11 | Bruce Ginther | August 5  |
| Roger Gress      | August 16 | Cory Hannah   | August 4  |
| Debbi Hannah     | August 15 | Robb King     | August 25 |
| Elaine Kutrowski | August 1  | John Madden   | August 28 |
| Peggy Madden     | August 5  | Gayle Noga    | August 22 |
| Lynn Patterson   | August 19 | Marva Randall | August 28 |
| Paul Rascon      | August 26 | Rick Rickard  | August 24 |



### Anniversaries

|                         |           |                      |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| Thomas & Laura Beaver   | August 29 | Randy & Jean Bunch   | August 23 |
| Dave & Debbi Hannah     | August 29 | Bill & Linda Jarrard | August 13 |
| Clarence & Norma Kummer | August 10 | John & Peggy Madden  | August 1  |
| Tom & Ingrid Smith      | August 28 | Jay & Barbara Thomas | August 27 |

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