

YE OLDE CAR CLUB, INC OF TRI-CITIES  
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# Gas Gauge

NOVEMBER  
2007

A publication of  
Ye Olde Car Club

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## PRESIDENT'S BACK FIRE

Well it's been a fairly active Fall. Our trip to Moses Lake revealed a really nice and extensive Car Museum "Memories R Forever" (I've enclosed a copy of the address) If you were not able to accompany us on this trip you should take a drive to go see it. I'm sure the club will return again in the future.

I wasn't able to go on the "Fall Foliage" trip and train ride, but a member who make the trip said it was beautiful. Maybe we can repeat that one too.

Kudos to our VP Ted Walters, for negotiating a club discount at Baxter Auto Parts. Thanks to another member reminding me, I saved about \$25.00 this past week. Be sure to take advantage of this savings.

Future activities are the Veterans Day Parade in West Richland at 8 a.m. on West Van Gieson & the club Christmas Party December 12, 6 p.m. at Tony Romas.

I'm pleased to report that we have added four new members to the club this Fall. We all welcome you and hope you can attend our weekly Breakfasts, 8 a.m. at The Hut restaurant in Pasco. Those who attend have a quiet highly intelligent and professional discussion about all kind of CRAP. Of course most of us are so deaf we can't hear most of what's being said, but we're

always glad to see who's still able to get out of bed and attend.

We hear that we're getting a "Temporary Building" for our museum at the old Kennewick City Shops. Maybe Fred Wattenburger will attend one of our breakfast meetings and update us on the progress. The club plans a chili and Hot Dog feed and a tour of the building when we get an approval and key.

My wife has an ongoing problem with the "Drip" in the Drive way. I tell her to get the Drip out of the drive way invite him to come in the house. Bye Bye.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov 10	Veteran's Day Parade
Dec 12	Christmas Party

### VETERAN'S DAY PARADE

This year the Veteran's Day Parade is Saturday, November 10. As usual it will be in West Richland. Staging is at 8 a.m. with the parade starting at 9:30. Check in is at the Benton REA Community Room, 6095 West Van Giesen, West Richland. Lets show our support and thanks to our Veterans. Hope to see you there.

### CONDOLENCES

Our deepest thoughts and sympathy goes out to Myrtle Nesbit and her family on the death of her husband Ken. They have been long time car club members.

### Fall Foliage Tour

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 21 folks participated in the Fall Foliage Tour in Elgin, Oregon. Nineteen of us went the day before. Some of us stayed at the Stampede Inn, some in motor homes, and some at a local bed and breakfast.

On the drive over, it had snowed at Tollgate. There was snow alongside of the road and in the tops of the trees. The sun was shining on the trees that had turned yellow and they looked like gold in the sunshine.

We met for dinner at a local restaurant. We visited and discussed what we would like to do for breakfast on Saturday morning. Bob and Delores McClary were staying at the bed and breakfast and told the owners that there was a group of us staying all over town for the night. The proprietors invited all of us to the bed and breakfast for breakfast. Nineteen of us showed up bright and early Saturday morning for a wonderful breakfast of bacon, scrambled eggs, hashbrowns, toast, coffee, tea, and juice.

We met the other two at the train depot. They drove over that morning. With the 21 of us aboard, they had the most people they have ever transported at one time on that train. We shared the dining car with some other folks that had come along for the ride. Since it was the dining car, we got to sit at tables. There were 6 or 7 cars in the train and it was full. We did not see much wildlife because it was hunting season. But, there were lots of hunters and some fishermen to be seen.

The foliage was especially beautiful closer to town. here were more of the reds mixed in with the golden leaves at lower levels. We were served a box lunch on the train about mid-way.

We stopped on the tracks at the trails head. The engine disconnected and went on to the siding track and then went to the other end to take us back down.

The trip was about 5 hours long. When we returned to the depot, most started the trip home. The Welkers decided to go exploring on their own. They reported back to us later. They had gone up a canyon outside of Elgin and saw over 100 deer and wild turkeys. The rest of us missed it.

# Swap 'til you stop

**N**ot long ago I attended a huge, so-called automotive swap meet (flea market to you folks east of the Rockies), out here in Southern California. Years ago, the term "auto parts swap meet" generally described an event where car people cleaned out their garages and rafters of all their unwanted automotive stuff and happily spread it all out on the ground for sale. It didn't matter what it was, as long as it was automotive-related. Then folks like you and me, anticipating the event like kids on Christmas Eve, would show up with lots of George Washingtons and Abe Lincolns to give them in exchange for their stuff. When you went to a meet like this, it was really all about automotive-related stuff like cars and parts, but that was years ago.

I've been regularly attending this event for more than three decades and I think I have finally had it. The parking and entry fee has steadily climbed into obnoxiousness, while the chance of finding anything not Ford or Chevy has plummeted into obscurity. Now there are almost as many retailers selling out of big commercial trailers as there are model-car vendors, grandparents selling knick-knacks, imported tools, thousands of new wheels and tires, etc. The first several rows are toys, sunglasses, waxes, hats, posters, etc., then comes several Chevy rows, the next several are Ford, then you cruise into the all-Corvette section with miscellaneous stuff scattered in between. Waaaaay out at the far end are a few rows of the junk we're all searching for. The rusty, cool old stuff!

I remember the days when you could attend this meet and find almost any type of replacement or performance part you could possibly want. Stuff for just about any American antique or classic car or truck ever made. I've found any number of Model A, Corvette or muscle car parts over the years, and this meet was the Left Coast's

cornucopia of reasonably priced items. Individuals would bring in trailers piled high full of all kinds of stuff from Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, etc. Some professional swap meeters even came from Eastern and Mid-Western states. You could walk the rows and find used car parts. A few friends and myself once bought a well-used hand truck just so we could move all the heavy items we acquired out to the car a half mile or so away. Cast iron stuff is really heavy! It was parts heaven, but that was years ago.

Today, you can buy anything from miniature stock car models to dolls and walk several miles doing it. Unfortunately, many of my peers have quit going completely, but I still make a few meets a year just for the social aspect. I truly can't remember the last time I found anything I needed lying on the blacktop. Nonetheless, the place is packed with neophyte enthusiasts and sightseers.

Another disappointing mutation of the meet is the cars for sale corral. Once upon a time you could walk long rows of all the various makes and find a vehicle from the early 'teens up through the Seventies at a realistic price. Currently, I find 10 percent of the cars are quite nice and have a realistic price tag. Another 20 percent are mediocre and overpriced, and the other 70 percent are fixer uppers with astronomical asking prices for their condition, with some being just plain ridiculous. I notice this particularly with almost any muscle car and the first-generation Camaros. Not long ago you could buy a decent 1967-'69 small-block, four-gear Camaro for \$5,000 to \$8,000. Nothing exotic, but a nice driver ready to be restored. Now that same car is \$12,000 to \$15,000 and it still needs a ton of work.

A lot of so-called "restorations" are really mislabeled by the seller. Running your car through a cheapo paint shop, squirting on some engine color and hosing out the engine compartment isn't a restoration, but many consider it so. Painting over door dings and sporting quarters so wavy you get seasick looking at them isn't restoring, but the price tag sure reflects a professional restoration. It seems that anyone who owns a vehicle from the Sixties thinks it's a rolling gold mine regardless of condition. There was a day when a vehicle was priced fairly according to condition.

I know several people who, for uncounted years, made their living buying and selling used muscle car parts. Many times these folks saved my project with fairly priced items it needed. I still see these guys occasionally at shows, etc. and they are all just about out of business. The parts supply has dried up to the point they can't find anything in salvage yards to sell. The Internet has changed the whole complexion of parts selling and the stuff goes for more money auctioned off electronically. The Internet and vehicle auction scene have also been a contributor to the unreal asking prices we see now for both cars and parts. Like the Camaro example, car owners use auction and Internet prices to gauge what to ask for their cars, basically regardless of condition, which causes an artificial inflation, overpricing and no sale.

I think that this phenomenon will self-destruct in the near future, as the prices for even rusted-out rat traps will be too high for the average enthusiast. Historically, when sales stop, prices drop, it's the normal ebb and flow of the economy. It happens in real estate and almost every other commodity we deal with. The problem currently is that this is OUR commodity and none of us are very happy about overpaying for a part we need and know should cost less. The basic infrastructure of the cars-and-parts hobby is changing rapidly, and personally I prefer the old days when price gouging was considered dishonest and true market value prevailed at a swap meet. 📌

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**YE OLDE CAR CLUB**



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TW-10/24/07

### Antique Show at the TRAC in Pasco

Three Rivers Transportation Museum asked some of us to bring cars over to the TRAC for the Antique Show on October 12, 13, & 14. This was to assist in advertising the museum and to get donations. Phil Prather brought his Model A. Vern Shreve took his Dodge pickup and Martha took her 25 Hupmobile for display. Vern and Phil spent a lot of hours visiting with people and watching over their precious vehicles.

Fred Wattenberger had a display explaining the museum. He had a little peddle car and information board. Fred spent many more hours there promoting the museum.

Editor's note. For those of you who have articles to be placed in the newsletter, can you please get them to me either by e-mail ([quilterathart@verizon.net](mailto:quilterathart@verizon.net)), or by phone (509-628-3611) or mail, 29204 S 887 PRSE, Kennewick, WA 99338 by the 20th of each month. This way I can get the newsletter out in a timely manner. Thanks, Cyndy Underwood

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