Flatwater News

December 2007

A publication by and for the members of the Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska and Western Iowa

December 2007 Calendar:

December 7 Friday
Final Fish at Lee's Restaurant Lincoln 6:30 p.m. Pg. 3

December 13Thursday
Jackson's Pub, Gretna, Hwy 6/31 6:30 p.m.

December 15 Saturday
Breakfast at Mahoney State Park 9 a.m. or so.

December 16 Sunday
Officer meeting, Election Day and 08 Event planner. 1:30 p.m. Eiseley Library, Lincoln

December 25: Tuesday
Merry Christmas

MGB OFF-ROADIN?

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

HOLIDAY PARTY AT MISTYS SATURDAY JANUARY 19TH

Mark your calendar for this special annual event.
Cocktail hour begins at 6:30 Details on page 7

FUMES – GET READY FOR RACING PAGE 4-5

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ARE YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES PAST DUE? PAGE 5

EXTREME CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS PAGE 9

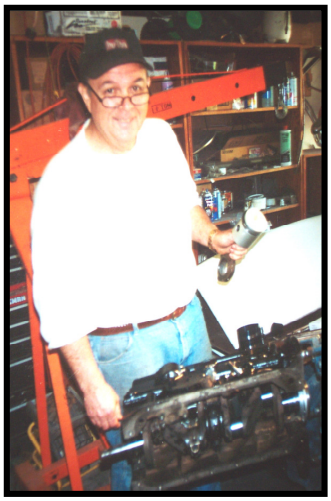
Presidential Ponderings *by Greg Lemon*

As Yogi Berra would say, "It's déjà vu all over again" seems like the year was just starting a few weeks ago, and now we are a couple weeks away from the annual election meeting and event planning party in Mid-December. Some important things for you to do: One, you should have your ballot, if you haven't sent it in please do, and sign the back of the return envelope, not the ballot, that way we can track who voted, if you don't sign it, it won't be counted. Thanks to Tim Creger and the Goldsmiths for heading up the election committee.

We had a nice November with a full slate of events, but unfortunately we did not get the garage tour going, we will definitely have one this winter or early spring though, so all isn't lost.

One more Fish, this time at a chicken place, we have had a great group of volunteers setting up events like the rotating fish, driving events, show, etc. But they won't all do it forever, we have an event planning meeting this month, an event doesn't go on the official calendar until we have someone to lead it, I am looking forward to having some new blood to help the usual suspects put on all the great ideas we have for events next year, see you there.

PITSTOP *by Joe Kueper*



Christmas came early this year. I received an E-mail telling me that the Classic Motorsports magazine spotlighted our Flatwater News as a standout club newsletter in their January edition. What an honor! It is almost shameful to get recognized just for having fun but, I guess we do it all the time as we drag home trophies for playing with our cars.

I guess the heat is now on you to keep on producing an interesting news letter. How hard can that be? It is not very hard when you keep sharing your good times with the other members. After all this newsletter is nothing more than the continuation and sharing of conversations you have with each other at our many events. I look at it as simply friends keeping in touch with friends. It is up to you to keep sharing your adventures, ideas and pictures. Me? I'll brush up the grammar, correct the spelling, crop the pictures and put it in some semblance of order. Then my proof readers will do their thing and Ron Bonnstetter and Bill Redinger will make sure it gets delivered. It is team work.

OK, so here is the deal.This is what I want for Christmas. 1. For the January newletter I want to know what project you are going to work on through the winter. 2. If you don't work on cars tell me your plans for a special 2008 road trip or any other car thing you like and would share with a friend. 3. Finally, I want a couple of people who will meet with new members and then write a little biography on them for the news letter so we can introduce them to the rest of the members.

Well, I have stuff to do. Read and enjoy, I'm heading to the garage

FINAL FISH OF 2007 December 7th

. The last Fish Friday of the year will be at Lee's Restaurant in Lincoln. This change from our normal fourth Friday date is due to the Christmas holidays. Lee's Restaurant is located at 1940 West Van Dorn and is a long time Lincoln favorite. Lee's is famous for their fried chicken but, they also have an extensive menu including fish, steak and burgers. Join us in December for car talk, socializing and pre Holiday cheer.
Please RSVP to: James & Theresa Morgan - jm93552@alltel.net
Dennis & Jane Stone - janes_54@msn.com
Rich & Pam Brunke - p_brunke@yahoo.com
Call Pam 402-438-3330 or Theresa at 402-944-2526

LOCTITE NITE ATJACKSONS

Bill Redinger spiced up November's meeting at Jacksons Pub by arranging for a presentation on Loctite products. A dozen Flatwater gear heads learned that Loctite offers more products than the usual red stuff that glues nuts and bolts together which makes taking engines apart hard.

Actually, George Dail, the Loctite expert shared many tips on how to get the best results out of these miracle products to include easy disassembly. Other products include steel liquid and aluminum putty that can be machined, drilled and filed to fix those impossible to replace parts. George made us realize that the future of auto repair includes tools in a tube.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Two FAHC members were featured in the November MGB DRIVER the journal of the North American MGB Register bringing national recognition to our Club. Brian and Jane Goldsmith along with a "pit crew" of other members were recognized for helping rescue Mike Cook's Custom MGB "Silver Lady" which blew it's transmission on the way to the National convention in Napa California. Brian and the Pit Crew sourced a tranny and sent Mike on his way in record time with our Midwestern hospitality and Club earning a five star rating.

Jim Danielson was recognized by the editor Robert Rushing for his creativity. Jim put together a poster that features the fronts of 124 MGB's. His work has won first place in several car show photo contests. You can get a copy of this unique poster by contacting Jim.

FOR SALE

1975 MGB only 24,000 miles
Better than good. Asking $12,500
712-545-3932

1969 Triumph GT6+
All original with only 65,000 miles
Asking $1,000 Call 816-257-0744
Independence, MO

Fumes *By Terry Davis*

Helmets: What the Snell is an SA2005 anyway?

Vintage racing news (and other stuff) from the Flatwater Auto Racing Team

If you've been around or involved in motor sports, or ridden motorcycles, for any length of time you've no doubt heard of a "Snell-certified" helmet. You may have asked yourself, "What is a 'Snell,' what has it got to do with helmets, and why should I care?" The Snell Memorial Foundation was founded in 1957 in memory of William "Pete" Snell, an amateur SCCA race driver who was killed in 1956 when his Triumph TR2 rolled over during a race in Arcata, California. He was wearing a state-of-the-art "approved" driver's helmet that completely failed at protecting him and he died of severe head injuries.

His friends and fellow racers, along with physician and racer Dr. George Snively, formed the Snell Memorial Foundation (SMF) to try to improve the design and capabilities of racing helmets. The SMF Board of Directors includes physicians and Ph.D. research scientists and engineers with expertise in safety and head injuries. Snell has developed and continues to update helmet safety standards that are considered to be the most authoritative and demanding in the industry and are recognized by the SCCA, NASA Pro Racing, CART Racing, the Indianapolis 500, the American Power Boat Association (APBA), the Federation Internationale de L'Automobile (FIA), the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA), and the Federation Internationale de Motorcyclisme (FIM).

SMF is an independent testing entity, unaffiliated with any helmet manufacturer or governmental agency. Snell standards significantly surpass those of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM), and the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission. Each year Snell purchases and tests thousands of helmets, updating their standards approximately every 5 years as new research on helmet manufacturing and technology is published. In the original tests of at least 16 helmets, two were found to be "vastly superior to all others," while several were "virtually worthless with respect to head protection in a violent accident."

Snell has developed standards for auto racing helmets as well as helmets worn in karting, motorcycling, skiing, snowboarding, bicycling, in-line skating, skateboarding, harness racing, and horseback riding. To be certified for auto racing helmets must meet the "SA" standards. Helmets used for motorcycling and other motor sports must meet the "M" standards and those for karting must meet the "K" standards. Some of the differences between the standards are that SA helmets must pass a flammability test, while M and K helmets do not have to. SA and K helmets must also pass a "roll bar multi impact test." M helmets are required to have a larger visual field than SA and K helmets. In general, SA helmets are required for track driving or racing and M helmets are not acceptable. The most current version of the auto racing helmet standards is SA2005.

So how do helmets work? They typically have four components: 1. A rigid outer shell that helps spread the energy load of an impact and prevent penetration. 2. A crushable liner of expanded polystyrene (EPS) that absorbs the energy from an impact by crushing. 3. A chinstrap to help keep the helmet in place during an impact. 4. Padding for comfort, fit, and to also help keep the helmet in place. The helmet acts like a shock absorber, absorbing and dissipating the energy of an impact, and slowing down your head, so that the helmet takes the damage rather than your head and brain.
(Continued page 5)

Fumes *(from page 4)*

Helmets are considered to be "one use items," that is, during its lifetime a helmet's full protective capabilities are really only required during a single 2 to 4 millisecond impact. If your helmet is involved in an impact while wearing it, you should replace it. That does not mean that it will be damaged if you drop an empty helmet on the ground or if you occasionally bump it relatively lightly while wearing it. However, only a trained professional can determine whether or not your helmet has been damaged. If you are involved in a significant impact while wearing your helmet or if you have any questions about its integrity, it should be replaced.

So is all this stuff really that important? Should you really worry that much about whether or not your helmet is Snell-certified and fits properly? For one thing, you will not be allowed to race or drive on the track without a proper, approved helmet. More importantly, how much are your head and brain worth to you?

For more information about the Snell Foundation, their helmet safety standards, and their testing procedures, go to www.smf.org. Next month – How to buy a properly fitting helmet. See you in the paddock! Terry Davis

OFFICER ELECTIONS AND EVENTS PLANNER FOR 2008

The monthly officers meeting, elections and 2008 events planning session will all occur on Sunday December 16th at the Eiseley Library Room 1 starting at 1:30 – events planner starts about 2:30. The library is located at 1530 Superior Street in Lincoln. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The event will start with the officers meeting and the handling of normal business items. The election committee will commence opening and counting the ballots during the meeting and announce the results as the last item of business. Finally the officers and members will review the 2007 calendar of events and draft plans for 2008. It is important that you attend or contact your officers with your input to the process if you can't attend.

The club thrives on members who step up to take charge to run activities. New ideas and events are always welcome. Members should review last years calendar and consider which events they want to help run so 2008 is as great as 2007 has been.

Signup For 2008 Membership Year

With the advent of the bylaws approved in 2005, the membership year now runs from October 1st to September 30th (i.e. October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008) for the 2008 membership year. Back in September you should have received a letter in the mail outlining the membership renewal process. Please review the data sheet that you received as it contains pertinent membership information that Flatwater Austin Healey Club (FAHC) presently has on file for you. Mark on the sheet any additions, changes and/or corrections that need to be made and return the sheet to us in the enclosed envelope, along with a check for your 2008 dues. (I have already received 107 responses and wish to thank those people for their prompt action!!!) Dues for the 2008 membership year are $15 for local dues to FAHC. As stated in the letter National dues should be paid separately when you receive the annual invoice.

If you have any questions (or have not received a letter) please feel free to contact me, either by telephone or email. After a great 2007 membership year we are all looking forward to 2008. We look forward to hearing from you!!!!

Gary Lien
Membership Chair – FAHC

MGB's Are Not For Off-Roadin' or…. How To Replace a Fuel Tank

By

Phil and Tracy Brauer

MGB's are not made for off-roading. That's what Tracy concluded. We were taking a nice Sunday drive a few weeks ago and decided to look at a house for sale located on a hill (it had a 40 X 60' out building!). The driveway was gravel and because of earlier heavy rains, it had several gullies. Because I wasn't paying close attention I failed to straddle one of the gullies and we both heard a short scraping sound. We didn't pay too much attention to it, as every MGB owner knows the muffler usually takes the pounding. So we continued on our way, did some shopping, and upon our return home, parked the car in the garage.

Several hours later in the evening, I went back into the garage detected the strong odor of gasoline. Eventually, I found a small puddle of gasoline dripping from the gas tank. Obviously, we had put a small hole in the tank and there was a slow but steady leak. Of course, the tank was practically full. Luckily, Tracy's SUV needed gas. So we used a small (luckily empty) 2-gallon gas can to empty the tank. I used the MGB's fuel pump to move the gas into the can because I could control the flow of gas better. I connected a 4-foot length of spare fuel line to the fuel filter and ran it to the can, the fuel filter keeping any rust and dirt in our MGB's tank from being transferred into the truck. The hardest part was emptying the gas into the SUV (a funnel and a bit of hose made for minimal spillage).

The next morning the tank came out. It was easy. After waving the options, I decided to buy a new fuel tank rather than having this one fixed. New ones listed on Ebay were quite a bit less expensive than those from the usual MG suppliers. And based on comments on the web, they were of decent quality. So, I placed and won my bid and after about 7 business days, the tank arrived. It was a shiny steel tank made in Canada. I noticed this new tank seemed smaller than the previous one that was in the car and that made a lot of sense because I always thought it was oversized (it held 14 gallons). This new tank appeared to be a 12-gallon tank, which I believe is correct for our year B.

The first thing I had to decide was whether to add a drain plug to the tank before installing it. Many cars have them but I decided not to add one because I reasoned that if I had to drain the gas out of a tank, I would prefer having a means of controlling the outflow. Using a siphon tube or the fuel pump as I had done earlier to empty a tank made more sense for me. Time will tell if I made a bad choice. After cleaning off the oily residue on the outer surface with mineral spirits, I decided that rather than priming and painting the tank, I would cover it with several coats spray-on trunk bed liner. It has a nice look to it and would offer a bit of added protection as well. After coating the tank, I then attached new rubber strips along the top of the tank using a spray-on adhesive to keep them in place when installing the tank. I believe these strips prevent the boot from rubbing holes through the top of the tank (of course my DPO never put them in).

After cleaning up the underside of the trunk, killing the rust, priming and painting it, and then undercoating it, it was time to install the tank. I took the opportunity to also add a new fuel line between the pump and the sending unit. A locking ring holds the sending unit up against the tank. An intervening rubber gasket keeps the tank from leaking out. If you tap the tabs on the ring to move the ring counterclockwise, the ring comes off and frees up the sending unit. To replace the sending unit or move it to the new tank, reverse the procedure but use a new gasket. To put the tank in, I used a jack and a 2 X 2' piece of particleboard to lift it into position. Once in place, it was a simple matter of bolting it back in, reconnecting the fuel line and sending unit wire, and reattaching the fuel filler tube. The true test came when I started putting fuel back into the car. After adding sufficient fuel to cover the sending unit, I inspected it for leaks. Luckily, there weren't any. (I had a contingency plan—an empty gas can and a car that needed gas.) I guess the lesson we learned was to keep the off-roading to 4X4's and the MGB's on-roading.

CRUISE CONTROL – FRIEND OR FOE *By Barbara Rixstine*

Editors note: Cruise control post dates our British cars but, many owners are installing after market units in their cars for those long treks to car shows. Additionally, most modern cars that we drive today have cruise as a standard feature. The following story applies to all of us especially with the advent of winter driving.

A young 36-year-old female had an accident several weeks ago and totaled her car. A resident of Kilgore, Texas, she was traveling between Gladewater & Kilgore. It was raining, though not excessively, when her car suddenly began to hydroplane and literally flew through the air. She was not seriously injured but very stunned at the sudden occurrence.

When she explained to the highway patrolman what had happened, he told her something that every driver should know - NEVER DRIVE IN THE RAIN WITH YOURCRUISE CONTROL ON. She had thought she was being cautious by setting the cruise control and maintaining a safe consistent speed in the rain. But the highway patrolman told her that if the cruise control is on and your car begins to hydroplane, when your tires lose contact with the pavement your car will accelerate to a higher rate of speed, and you take off like an airplane. She told the patrolman that was exactly what had occurred.

The patrolman said this warning should be listed on the driver's seat sun-visor - NEVER USE THE CRUISE CONTROL WHEN THE PAVEMENT IS WET OR ICY along with the
airbag warning. We tell our teenagers to set the cruise control and drive a safe speed - but we don't tell them to use the cruise control only when the pavement is dry.

NOTE: On some vehicles, such as the Toyota Sienns Limited XLE, when the windshield wipers are on, you cannot set the cruise control.

IT'S PARTY TIME !!!!!!!! JANUARY 19TH

The FAHC Holiday Party has been set for January 19th at Misty's restaurant 6235 Havelock Avenue in Northeast Lincoln, The cash bar will open at 6:30 with a buffet dinner at 7:00 or so.

The party will also feature award presentations for what will then be last year (2007).

This is always a well attended event, we had over 100 last year, old members can catch up with old friends, and freshman members can make new ones. Cost per person will be about $20 and we will pay at the door on the way in. **Please RSVP for the event, we do need a head count, get your RSVPs in at least a week prior. You can RSVP to Carrol Lemon, crlmn@neb.rr.com**

Also this year we will have a slide show featuring the events and people of the club in 2007. **Kay Kasl is putting the show together, and she needs your pictures to make it work, digital only please, e-mail to kaykasl@gmail.com**

Please note there are two Misty's in Lincoln, one downtown, and the original in Havelock at the above address, don't go to the downtown one. The Northeast location is closer for our members coming from Omaha and all points east as an added benefit. Thanks to Treasurer Brent Kasl for setting this up.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Greg Lemon

AN MG ON CHRISTMAS EVE

(With Apologies to Clement Clarke Moore "A Visit From St. Nicholas")

Contributed by the Midwest MGA Group

`Twas the night before Christmas and outside some dive,
An MG sat waiting for its driver to drive.
But the starter was quiet; the 12 volts gone flat.
The lights had been left on. The driver just sat.

No doubt that the pub crawl had been a bad thought.
He'd got here already with more than he'd ought.
With diminished capacity he'd gone into that bar,
And left the lights burning - now he wouldn't go far..

But then he remembered old Cecil's "plan B."
The MG will start with a crank, don't you see?
So, with hardly a pause he fell out of the door,
And he found the old crank in the back, on the floor.

Now, how was this done? He had never done this.
And besides all the beer made him want to go piss.
So he watered a wheel, then pondered his plight,
While out of the sky came a frightening sight.

He wasn't so sure if it was not the beer.
He beheld a huge sled pulled by tiny reindeer!
It landed real smooth and pulled up by his car,
And a fat guy in red laughed, "Now, off to the bar

"This package delivery is boring you know,"
He boomed as he hitched up a rope for a tow.
An elf sprang from somewhere - tied the rope to the car.
"Now hold it!" the man screamed, "You're going too far!"

But before he could hinder the well-meaning pair,
The elf was inside; the car in first gear.
"Switched on and clutch in," the elf hollered to Nick.
"Alright!" bellowed Santa, "Let's get on with this trick!"

The sled it leapt forward; the rope it went tight.
The reindeer were strong, so the MG was light.
The elf let the clutch out and pulled on the choke.
The gear box was whining and so was our bloke.

For under the car there arose such a clatter,
He knew without seeing just what was the matter.
For old Santa had broken Kimber's First Rule:
Never roll start an MG, not by push or by pull.

With the gearbox in pieces, the elf cried, "Hey, quit!"
Santa complied and the car came to sit,
At the end of a trail of bright pinions and gears.
And the man started sobbing some terrible tears.

"I think we'll be off now," said Santa, "Ho! Ho!"
The elf grabbed the rope and away they did go.
Our lad stood there stunned but soon he was thinking
how his sad misadventure had started with drinking.

So we've got us two morals to learn if you please,
The first is our gearbox - it's softer than cheese.
The second is better for staying alive:
This Christmas - or ever - please don't drink and drive.

AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT

EXTREME CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

MGB + ALUMA CRAFT =??????

Although many of the traditional British marques have been scattered to other countries, the Brits continue to challenge the automotive market. Perhaps their latest endeavor was inspired by the fact that they live on an island and want the freedom to travel across the English Channel at will. Their latest creation is a new twist on an old idea.

Amphibious cars are nothing new, the best of these being the Amphicar. With its bobbed proportions and telltale propeller, the Amphicar was popular enough in lake regions of the U.S. by the 1960s to be an accepted novelty

The U.K.-based Gibbs Technologies is defining a market for a car that exceeds 100 mph on land and 30 mph on water. You can water ski behind this one.The push of a single button stows or extends the Aquada's suspension, brakes and wheels in less than 12 seconds.

Secret service agents would seem logical customers, and the not-quite idle rich would love being seen in such a toy in summer, but could the larger group of frustrated commuters and economizing recreation buffs take to the machine?

This Christmas stocking stuffer is about $125,000.

Take your basic two car garage add two Christmas present lifts ($2,000 each) and you get a 5 car garage for little British cars. Expressions on the faces of your neighbors.

PRICELESS!!!

GO TOPLESS IN A ROLLS ROYCE

Rolls Royce is very proud of their new drop head roadster. Just lay down $400,000 and some change and you can be one of 200 drivers who will own a 2008 Rolls-Royce Drop head coup which is now built by BMW. The pocket change is for the teak wood tonneau. Other unusual features include an aluminum frame and suicide doors.

This 5,770 pound vehicle is hauled around by a 6.75 liter V-12 that develops 453 horsepower and transfers it through a six-speed automatic transmission. What is the gas mileage for this four-seater you ask? You pay $400,000 for a vehicle and are concerned about gas mileage? Ok, 11 in town and 18 on the road. Is that a deal breaker? If not, get out your checkbook but, don't expect to find it under your Christmas tree this year. You'll wait for 18 months or more and be lucky to get it next Christmas.

2+2=5

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A crisp fall night and a cozy fireplace was served up by Dave and Susie Erickson on the final third Friday of the month party of the year party for LBC drivers.

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