

The Flatwater News

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

July 2003

July 2003

9 – Gearjammers Get-together, Hwy 6, west of Ashland
12 – Breakfast at Mahoney State Park
12 – JCF Days car show in Fremont
15 – Ponca Hills Drive (replacing meeting at Cozmo's) 7 p.m.
25 – Fish at Nehawka
25 – Carthage, MO trip for Greater Ozarks All-British show

Events have elastic starting and ending times. Fish is 6:30 or so; Breakfast is 9:00 or so.

www.flatwater.org

Flatwater Web site adds member message board



The Flatwater web page keeps getting better and if you haven't checked it out lately, you should.

Got a question? Something to sell?

What you need is the FAHC Message Board. Go online to www.flatwater.org, find the Messages button on the left, click and follow the instructions.

Members may stay online or just check it frequently to see what's going on. Don Larimer has successfully sold a roll bar via the message board so give it a try. Also check out these other features:

If it's Friday, it must be...Fish?

Lost your newsletter and can't remember the next event? Find it in the web site's events listing.

Oh, the Places You'll Go!

Our site links to lots of other sites, such as that of FAHC member Bob Shaw: <http://mlcltd.com/shawsgarage/index.html>. Check out Bob's site (which has other great links) but come back and find more links from our site.

If you've got an idea for the site, send it via the feedback button.



By Marvin Marshall

From the Presidential Garage

Congratulations to all the big winners down at this year's Heartland MG Regional! As is our custom, we came back winners again this year. They are listed in this issue elsewhere.

Attendance was down this year for several good reasons. St. Louis area clubs were hosting a big MG Regional a week or two later and several of our usual band of suspects had prior commitments as well.

I won a trophy with my old faithful '65 B! Talk about a sympathy vote. Thank you to the club members who picked up our prizes for us.

I ended up donating the California Car Duster as a door prize at the North Omaha Airport Run. Russ DeVoe said I didn't have any British cars worth dusting anyhow.

We couldn't stay for the awards or banquet down at Heartland. Alicia Espelund, daughter of Steve and Deb, graduated this year so we had to head home early. This also explains why

Steve's beautiful '66 B and several other's easy first-place winners were not in attendance this year.

Up until that Friday morning I almost took the Chevelle instead of the MG. I think I could have won first place in the open class but Sue insisted we take a proper British auto.

The Chevy had a top and the B doesn't. We got caught in the rain coming home Saturday. One of Nebraska's Finest pulled us over to check our muffler but then went on about younger days and girls he knew who had one once and all the fun and stuff like that. He got nostalgia, we got wet. (And the muffler's fine.)

Sue was busy selling houses (3!!) on the Friday we all left for St. Joe so I got to go alone. Susie hitched a ride down later with Martha Johnson in Martha's white MGB-GT.

We had twelve cars go down with us in the morning bunch. Eight more

(continued next page)

Cars and Parts 4 Sale

came down that afternoon. Add a couple more stragglers and we had quite a presence again in spite of all of the gang who couldn't make it.

The evening get-together was a lot of fun as usual. Friends, food, beverages, games and lots of stories.

Flathead The Fish won the fishrace for your club. The idea was to encourage your goldfish to swim the fastest to the other end of the rain gutter by blow-ing bubbles thru a straw at it. Jane Goldsmith was the major competition until she ran out of pucker power in the last heat.

Being alone most of the evening, your complacent President got picked to cut the watermelon at the buffet table. Actually, I allowed myself to be appointed. The beer cooler was right beside the cutting board. I may be dumb, but not stupid. It also allowed me to listen to all the stories you people told. Maybe I'll repeat 'em, maybe I won't.

I will tell you this one though. Since I'm pretty much a kept man, I couldn't get a room or any of the paperwork done until Sue got there and that was late. So we ended up bunking with Bob and Martha. I also missed out on the Cherry Mash candy bars at registration!! Now our party lasted a little longer than most everyone else's that night. When we finally got to the room, Sue hit one bed, Bob, the other; and Martha and I pro-ceeded to get into some trouble with Cheetos and housekeeping. That is another story.

I sat down on Bob's bed to watch Speedvision since that's how the TV was positioned. Next thing I know it's morning. Let me tell you it is a sobering experience and a

FOR SALE: Help Dave Ciaccio clean out his garage and buy one or more of the following. He'll thank you and you'll get a good deal:

2 MGB seat frames in good condition (no headrests);

5 wire wheels newly repainted with Tnemec paint system. Silver. Very good condition;

2 axles with rear hubs for wire wheels. Brand new and still in pkg;

Set of front wheel bearings with shims, and set of rear wheel bearings, brand new and still in pkg;

4 brand new chrome conversion hubs for converting steel wheel cars to wires without changing the axles.

Used chrome "knock-offs" to go with them.

Front bumper from '74 MGB. Slight crease where bumper guards meet.

Also, 4 rubber-bumper guards (large over-rider type).

Contact Dave at djc53052@msn.com.

FOR SALE: Honest Jim's Used British Cars has just acquired three MGAs – a 1958, a 1959 and a 1960. Brian Goldsmith says tht if you put the three cars together, you'll get one. Call Jim for details at 402-464-3733 or send him an e-mail at jdanielson2003@yahoo.com

WANTED: Four-speed 948 transmission. E-mail Ron Bonnstetter at rjb@unl.edu.

FOR SALE: Four painted wheels for MGB. Nice shape. \$80.00. Contact Tim Smith at tsmithone@tconl.com or call him at 402-334-8141.

GARAGE SALE: If you've got parts or other for sale, and want to help with the garage sale on East Campus in Lincoln (Danielson's neighborhood) on August 16, let Barbara Rixstine know: fahcmailbag@yahoo.com.

great relief to find out the one you're cuddled up to is NOT woolly.

The North Omaha Airport racing event was a big success also. It was the second big event of the month and what a turn-out! Thank you Russ DeVoe for securing the airport for us.

Marty gave us a thrill when his throttle stuck and that engine he calls a Bugeye disappeared into the trees. The rest of us more or less stayed on the track and turned in some impressive times. We gave out door prizes and an award or two and had a fine meal to boot.

The B is running like the fine machine it is. Can't wait for the next road trip! It's back in the Presidential Palace right now waiting for Dr. Shaw to put a finish coat on the freshly repaired rear. Parked right next to the 680 sq. ft. of new wood flooring the little woman wants installed--- in her house, not the garage. (darn!)

Also, I think she's on to me when I say I need to go to the garage for a tool to work on her house and it takes me three hours to come back in. I could get away

with ... I mean, Sue was more tolerant and understanding before she started hanging with certain female club members. You know who you are. We need to talk.

Gotta go guys, I've rattled on enough this month.

Remember Gearjammers on second Wednesdays and Fish on last Fridays. Mahoney breakfast and friends in between.

Have a safe and happy 4th of July. See you all soon. God Bless America!

Marvin

P.S. Congratulations also to Ryan Hiatt. He graduated this year and already has a JOB. Randy and Eloise raised a pretty fine lad.

Flatwater Event Survey 2003

By Gary Rockel, Events Coordinator and Jesse Wubbels, Events Co-chair

We want to know what you think about Flatwater-organized events. If you like how things are now, let us know. If you want something new or have an idea you'd like to talk about, let us know. Once you've filled out the survey, cut it out and send it in. (Yes, you can send it anonymously.)

- 1) Are events satisfactory? What would bring more people to events?
- 2) Do you enjoy the poker runs and other dashes? Would you like to see more of them?
- 3) Ideas for routes and places for runs.
- 4) The FAHC All-British Show in September: Is the current set up satisfactory? If you could change things, what would you change? Ideas to increase participation of other clubs?
- 5) Do you have any ideas for events that would be fun for club members?
- 6) Anything else?

Name _____ Contact info _____

Thanks! Please return these to: **Jesse Wubbels, 3800 H Street, Lincoln, NE 68510**

More Event Info from Gary...

In the last issue, some event information was left out of Gary Rockel's story by the production manager. (Me.) Please see The Rest of The Story, as Paul Harvey would say. Barbara

October 31st is Halloween at Nehawka. Costumes are encouraged for this evening, but not necessary.

I would like to add that a lot of our events are ideas from the members and we welcome anyone's suggestions.

We will gladly help with the planning or just help you get it worked in to the schedule. Please feel free to call me at 402-420-5977 or email me at headlap@alltel.net anytime.

Gary Rockel



John C. Fremont Days Car Show Set for Saturday, July 12

By John Ulrich, Membership Chair

For those who would like to attend the Fremont Days Car Show, here is the scoop from our hosts Leo and Joanne Thietje, of Fremont.

Lincoln folks should meet at what used to be "Whealers" at 56th and Cornhusker. We need to be there by 7:15 A.M. to be sure we are at Leo's in Fremont by 8:30.

Omaha people can make caravan arrangements on their own, but shoot for the same arrival time.

Because they park cars in the order they arrive, and we British folks want to park together, Joe Guinan will lead us caravan style from Thietjes to the show's entry point. The car show is on Main St. between 2nd and 6th or thereabouts.

If you pre-register your car it's \$12; \$15 if you register that day. Call (402) 727-9428 for show information. The class for our cars is "N". i.e.: pre-1986 two-seat sports cars.

If you get lost, or miss the caravan, the Thietjes live at 1535 West Linden. Driving north on Main St., you will come to 11th St., 12th St., and then Linden instead of 13th. Turn west on Linden, and keep going until you see the British flag and a bunch of LBCs.

After the awards are given downtown, we'll head back to Leo and Joanne's for a barbeque and something cold to drink. Mike and Elaine Cerny are helping host the food portion of the event.

Membership chairman's note: This has always been a way to say "thank you" to our Fremont members for driving to events in Lincoln and Omaha. We'd love to see you there.

Interested in JCF Days But Not The Car Show?

If you're interested in going to the club breakfast AND John C. Fremont Days – but not the car show – let Jesse Wubbels know and he'll try to work out a caravan from Mahoney. JCF Days offers many activities: antique shops, music, food, etc. If you have friends or family attending the show, you may want to join them at Thietjes later. Whichever of those options you choose, contact Jesse at wubbelsfamily@alltel.net or you can call him at 402-489-8229.

McArt Dart Planned for Joslyn On August 3

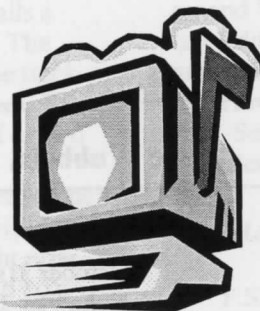


Art Darters won't want to miss the opportunity to view French Impressionist masterpieces, on loan from a Glasgow gallery only until September. (Dr. Shaw always spoke of Scots having good taste and class. But we thought he was talking about liquor.)

See paintings by such world-renowned artists as Bonnard, Cassatt, Cézanne, Courbet, Gauguin, Matisse, Millet, Monet, Picasso, Renoir, Rousseau, Seurat, Van Gogh, and more. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition, as well as numerous special events.

Joslyn Art Museum is one of only seven museums in the United States included in the tour of this extra-ordinary collection, and the only Midwest venue. It's organized by the American Federation of Arts (AFA) and Glasgow Museums, Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove.

FAHC members and guests will meet in the front lobby a little after noon on Sunday, August 24 and tour the exhibition with a brunch or dinner afterward. Call Barbara Rixstine at 402-464-3733 if you have questions.



**Want to
get the
newsletter
via e-mail?
It's easy!**

If you'd like to see your newsletter in your inbox, instead of your mailbox, it's easy!

Just send a note to fahcmailb@yahoo.com. I'll add you to the list. And remember, the newsletter is always up on the club website.

Barbara

Carthage, Missouri Tour Set for July 25 to 27

By Gary Rockel, Events Coordinator

We've been invited to the Greater Ozarks British Motoring Club's fourth annual All-British Show July 25, 26 and 27.

The show is in Carthage, Missouri, which is about three hours south of Kansas City on Highway 71.

Carthage is a beautiful, historic town with the show held at the town square.

Merchants will hold a sidewalk sale and late afternoon offers a 1½-hour driving tour with banquet and awards that evening.

Cozmo's In July: Ponca Hills Tour

By Jane Stone, FAHC member

The Cozmo's crowd continues to grow in our new each-third-Tuesday event at 84th and Center in Omaha. Last time we had 11 cars and about 21 people including Mike Nelson, Gerry and Chrissy Conant, Don Petrick, Mike and Pat Barnes, Brian and Jane Goldsmith, Judy and Bruce Cratty, and Mike and Pat Linn.

Everyone seems to want to go for a ride, not just sit and eat. So on July 15, we will meet at the Home Depot at 72nd and Ames in Omaha and Dennis and I will organize an informal 30- to 45-minute drive through the Ponca Hills area, from Standing Bear Lake to the Missouri River.

We will finish at Zesto's, another ice cream place, at 8608 North 30th Street at around 8:15. Interested folks can either join us for the drive or meet later at Zesto's. For August, I was thinking about an Old Fashioned Ice Cream soda shop in Springfield. I'll let you know what the plans are in the August newsletter.

David Thorn of the Greater Ozarks Club tells me that last year they had a total of 101 cars and cycles.

I'm planning to attend the show, but will be traveling a day or two ahead of the show.

If anyone would like more information, or the address to access registration forms or to check into a possible caravan, please contact me at 420-5977 or e-mail me at headlap@alltel.net.

Misc Sputterings, cont. from pg 7

is accepted truth that local street racers will top out at the respective speed limits. Then it dawned on me that the very polite Japanese may well consider it rude to win a street-race. In an outcome-based society, everyone is a winner.

These observations—made in good fun—have been made by one individual who has been jaded by the American way of driving.

As one who has had some pretty ugly experiences, I have to look in awe at what the Japanese have been able to do automotively. Vehicles are reliable and efficient, roads are smooth and in good repair, drivers are courteous and even-tempered, and traffic violations and accidents are few.

This is no small feat on an island of 450 square-miles and a population of just over a million people. As easily as it is to look with amusement at Japanese vehicular "truths," it is apparent to me that this culture has got its act together.

And that's a fact.



Economy & Performance

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Kevin Gilbert, Owner/Mgr

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Marilyn Michel
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Elmwood, NE 68349
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We Came, We Saw, We Ate, And We (mostly) Conquered: Heartland Regional MG 2003

By John Ulrich, membership chair

They say there are two things you can count on in life. I would suggest that Heartland Regional makes three, and is way more fun than the first two.

This year's event was no exception. Several "first timers" like the Rockels, Garnharts and Wubbles, were impressed with the show, and the level of hospitality extended to the "invaders from the North." After all, we sweep down from the frozen tundra, eat everything in sight, and take home the lion's share of the trophies.

Marvin talked about the event in his "Presidential Garage" column, so I'll try not to rattle on. "Just the facts, ma'am" as they said on *Dragnet*.

First place winners were: Ken Grant - MK II MGA; Jerry Trainer - 79 MGB; Jesse Wubbles - MK II Midget; Terry Davis - Bugeye, and yours truly in my MGB-GTV8. This was the first show for Jesse's and Terry's cars!

"Flathead the Goldfish" was also first in the Friday night fish race, thanks to a great game plan by Coach Jerry Tessin. Check the website for photo.

Second places went to:

Marvin Marshall - 65 MGB; Leo Thietje - 74 MGB; Mike Cerny in his 1979 MGB; Russ DeVoe - 74 MGB GT; and Don Petrick - 76 Midget.

Third places were won by Bill Evans - 72 MGB; Brian Goldsmith in Jane's MGB; Martha Johnson - 74 MGB GT; and Jim Danielson in his Mk I, II, III and IV Frankensprite.

Ferne Evans won a centerpiece as a door prize, the "Usual Suspects" T-shirt donated by Bob Shaw and Martha Johnson went to a Kansan, and the Flatwater gift basket of products from Nebraska was won by a nice little girl from Missouri. She promised to share the wine with her parents.

Several of us tried the Missouri county road route both to St. Jo and home, and pronounced it first-rate. The twisty, hilly and wooded roads made following Terry Davis' pristine Bugeye even more fun. As an added bonus, we got to see the Goodyear Blimp (really!), and run over a snake! I wanted to go back and nail the slithering serpent a few more times, but as usual there were Philly cheese steaks and hot beef sandwiches waiting for us down the road.

Life sure is full of compromises.

North Omaha Run Results

By Jim Danielson, FAHC founder

If you're like some members of the Flatwater club, autocrossing is the next best thing to xxx. The North Omaha Airport race certainly qualified on that score with 25 cars rolling onto the taxiway for the pace laps. Nearly all of them remembered the course well enough to complete the one-lap event that followed.

Exclude Marty Klein's off-course adventure when his throttle stuck going into the 180-degree turn at the south end and he plummeted off the track down the 20-foot embankment and across the highway. Nothing hurt but he had great time going in his V-8 Sprite. Next year, look out.

Thanks to all those that worked at timing and as course judges, setting up the course and teching the cars. Timing was handled by "Jane Smith" and a band of unknown members who wish to stay unknown. Jonathan Linn was the starter and performed flawlessly all morning.

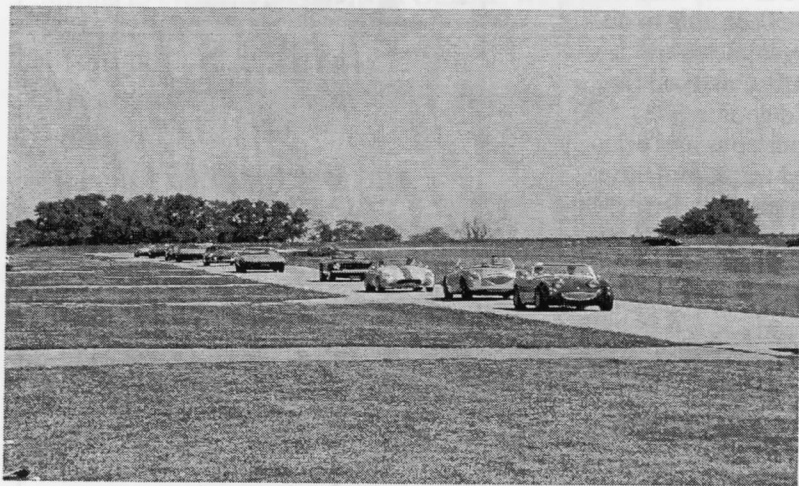
Special thanks to Russ DeVoe for making the whole thing possible. Thanks also to the airport management and our food vendor for the very fine lunch we had.

Now for the serious stuff...the winners. All winners received nearly equal applause. The long straight-aways favored the big horsepower drivers, but the little cars made their mark not very far down.

The top ten:

1. Dennis Stone: Jensen-Healey
2. John Patten: TR-6
3. Rod Chvatal: Spitfire
4. Gerry Conant: TR-7
5. Michael Linn: Jensen-Healey
6. Troy Saunders: A-H Sprite
7. Martha Johnson: MGB
8. Jay Fluehr: Lotus
9. John Ulrich: A-H Sprite
10. Greg Lemon: A-H 100

Times for above will be on the web site soon. For those of us that were not so fast...wait until August when we do it again in Lincoln.



Little cars all lined up to race. Photo credit: Devon Runyon



Miscellaneous Sputterings

By FAHC member John Rued

Dateline: A Forward Deployed, Undisclosed Japanese-island Location

The other night, on a veranda overlooking the East China Sea—over drinks and cigars—our senior Electronic Warfare Officer asked what the difference between “fact” and “truth” was.

Those favoring the brandy sat back and pondered the question in agonizing silence. Those — me, actually — that favored the tequila quit fantasizing about the spinning instructor’s awesome legs and fired back immediately: “Truth is culturally biased; fact is not.”

When asked to clarify, I responded thusly: facts are incontrovertible throughout humankind, i.e., the three laws of Newtonian physics; truths, however, are subjugated by those who create them, i.e., those “truths” held “to be self-evident” were created by a bunch of Euro-centric separatists and probably have no place in India or China or some other non-Euro-centric culture.

The automobile is universal. That’s a fact. The employment of the automobile is cultural. That’s a truth. Let’s consider some of the “truths” surrounding the automotive world of the Japanese:

Size. Don’t be fooled, size is important. And, gentlemen, smaller is better. The Japanese islands — especially the Ryukyus — are small. Land is at a premium, and so are the means with which to exploit this limited resource. Roads are small—even the highways. Lane width appears to be approximately 30-percent smaller than the lane width found in the states.

So, to create the impression of larger, more luxurious lanes, the Japanese build small vehicles. Passenger cars, busses, construction equipment are small. We’re talking half-scale here and I’m not joking.

Vehicle Configuration. That’s not to say you can’t have a “big” car because you can. Though “big” probably isn’t the correct word. How about “tall?” Yes, you can have a tall car. An axiom to the “size” truth is that you can have a car that is taller than it is wide — up to two times as tall as wide. And many folks—none of them Shriners—do.

This allows the locals to go out and buy that outsize furniture, tip it on end, and drive it down the very narrow streets to their very small homes.

Garages. Again, in an effort to exploit space, the Japanese build their garages “up.” This means that, through a combination of lifts, you can be

over your neighbor’s car. This requires neighborly coordination since I am sure that not everyone works the same hours. And the Japanese are very polite people.

Styles. The Japanese have long been regarded as copycats. I don’t intend to be disparaging here, but I do see attempts on the part of the Japanese to copy vehicular designs. Take the Mitsuoka Viewt. When I first saw it, I swore I was looking at an Asian export version of the S-Type Jag. Or a Mark II Jag built under license. The attention to detail is awesome: It has an oval grill with the major axis vertically centered, faired-in bucket headlamps (with Lucas tripod lenses), the traditional Jag rear-window curve, and rocker panel rust. It, too, is half-scale.

Road Signs. Signs are predominantly Japanese. The few signs that are in English are posted by the tourism board in an attempt to divert revenue to more culturally significant enterprises as well as to culturally elevate our more provincial brothers-in-arms, the Marines.

That said, it takes real talent to be able to decipher the Kanji characters on road signs, compare them to those on an incomplete road map, and find other parts of the island where Marines aren’t appreciated. Driving in “twos” is highly encouraged to make this task safer, more efficient, and more entertaining.

Road-Configuration. There are no cardinal directions in the Japanese culture. Or, if there are, they carry the same names as some of the local cities. I have discerned that Naha means South, that Nago means North, that Ishigawa means East, and that Zanpas means West.

If you see these words on road signs, you have a big-picture idea of where you are. No road is straight-shot, all are circuitous, and all spin off tributaries that can put you anywhere but where you wanted to go.

Speeds. Because the island is small, and the cars are small, the Japanese have embraced the metric system in an attempt to make everything larger and faster. The max speed on highways is 60 kilometer-per-hour. Sounds fast, huh? The expressway allows travel at speeds of up to 80 kilometers per hour. Hang on! Even time has been modified to create the illusion of size; with stop lights every couple of blocks, it can easily take two hours to drive 47 kilometers. Faster, farther, and longer. I feel right at home.

Rules. The Japanese are sticklers for rules. Traffic cops? There are none; none are needed. Everyone drives 60 clicks on the highways, 80 clicks on the expressway. Which confused me as to why locals would modify their Hondas and Toyotas into things “Fast and Furious” when it

(continued on page 5)

Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska

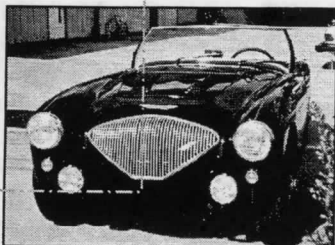
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Lincoln, NE 68503-2040

an affiliate of the national Austin-Healey Club of America

INSIDE:

JCF Days Car Show,
Ponca Hills Tour,
Caravan to Carthage –
They're all July events



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The Flatwater News is published monthly. Members are welcome and encouraged to contribute items to: fahcmailbag@yahoo.com. All submissions may be edited for length and information.

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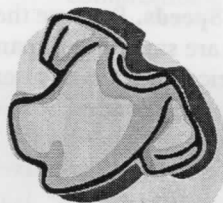


The Flatwater News is published for members like –

Mike and Pat Barnes, shown here at a Cozmo's night with their 1972 MGB.

Mike and Pat are very active in the Omaha Fife and Drum Corps and are regulars at our Fish at Nehawka nights.

Thanks for being members, Mike and Pat!



FAHC Club T-Shirts, Polo Shirts Let You Show Off Your Membership

Tell everyone you belong to the Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska with club shirts.

T-shirts: Mike Nelson's the guy who got us those great Flatwater Austin-Healey Club t-shirts you've been seeing. Gray with black FAHC lettering, Mike's got two XXL sizes left for \$15, but would consider re-ordering with pre-paid orders. Send him an e-mail at mike@spitfireguy.com or call him at 402-498-4320.

Polo shirts: Nicolette Bonnstetter has ordered three-button polo shirts in dusty blue with the logo over the left chest. Cost is about \$25 (shirt cost plus share of setup fee). Send Nicolette an e-mail at nkb@unlserve.unl.edu or call her at 402-423-9138.

Now available wherever fine club events are held.

