

The monthly newsletter of the
Rocky Mountain Region Cadillac & LaSalle Club



The *Dagmar*

www.rmrlc.com

August 2009

Putt Putt Away By Nancy Tucker

It was sunny and hot on the golf course when 14 of us met at Colorado Journey in Littleton. We divided into 4 teams and tackled the Pack Mule Draw course.

Gene Fenton started us off with a perfect shot into the water hazard. (See photo of him retrieving the ball.) Of course, any giggles were soon muffled as most of us followed somewhere along the course with splashes into the water and balls that went out of bounds. It is very humbling to play what appears to be an easy par 2 or 3 hole and end up with a 6!

At the end of the event we relaxed in the picnic area and enjoyed fried chicken and a large sampling of delicious side dishes. We checked the scorecards and congratulated the following winners: Greg Murphy and Nancy Tucker tied for 1st place; Bonne Pache came in 2nd; and tied for 3rd place were Janice Olson and Greg's friend Bruno. But please don't ask any of us how much we exceeded par... we're not telling!





Director's Column
By John Serfling

Let me start this month's column with a sincere apology to Neil Ricklefs. Last month I told you about all of the winners in Las Vegas from the Rocky Mountain Region, but I neglected to mention one of them. Neil won 3rd place in class P-51, 1954-1956 Cadillacs. Those of you who have been on our driving trips the past couple of summers will remember Neil and Marti's white Eldorado with a black vinyl roof. It is a lovely car. There is even room for Jack, their little terrier to sit between them. Neil and Marti were a valuable addition to the drive to Vegas. We had a lot of fun during our impromptu cocktail parties and at dinner when Marti needed 4 pairs of glasses to make it through the meal. James Sears just about lost it when she pulled out a magnifying glass. Neil on the other hand had serious problems. He kept drinking defective beer. I guess he expected the bottles to stay full, but they kept ending up empty.

During the past few weeks the board has been discussing the need to continue our monthly auctions. Very few people bring items for the auction and most people who bid on an item seem to be trying to get the item as cheaply as absolutely possible. There are a few notable exceptions to this rule. We appreciate those willing to bid reasonable sums because the money goes to our Christmas fund, which helps those less fortunate than we are. The result of our discussions is that we intend to discontinue the auctions. The board still feels that it is our duty as relatively fortunate citizens to support charitable causes. We are going to try a new way to raise money by taking a collection at each meeting, which will be our charity fund. If those attending the meetings would contribute \$2 to \$5 each month, we would end up with nearly \$1000 by the end of the year. Those of you who don't attend the meetings are welcome to send a check to Leonard Johnson, made out to the club, with a note specify the charity fund. We would also like to know what your favorite charities are, so that the Board can pick one each year. We would expect you to help out, if it is your favorite charity that is picked. Since this is your club, we would also like to hear what you think of this new plan. Please contact any board member with your comments.

On the trip home from Vegas, my '63 convertible experienced vapor lock for the first time. First on the to-do list was to install an auxiliary,

electric fuel pump near the gas tank. Since being installed, I have experience vapor lock three times. Turning on the switch to the pump at the first sign of a problem has kept the car running very well. As soon as that project was completed I raised the rear end of my '70 Eldorado to try to figure out why the air shocks weren't maintaining pressure, hoping for a hole in one of the lines. Sadly, I saw oily bubbles coming from one of the shocks, which is only two years old. It has a five year guarantee. I removed both shocks and took them back from whence they cometh. They have been rebuilt and are on their way back to me. Next I decided to try to find replacement vacuum tubes for the Guide-matic system. At John Washburn's car clinic in early June I had ascertained that one of the tubes no longer works. I found NOS tubes matching both of mine. They are on order now. I knew that when you turn the system off, the foot switch operates more or less like a normal bright/dim switch. What I didn't realize was that even with the system off, after removing the tubes, the headlights no longer go to bright. It doesn't matter if the tubes work or not, they just have to be in place.

Finally, I would like to apologize for the hot meeting room at our last meeting and probably for one more meeting. Perhaps its biggest flaw is that their swamp cooler couldn't keep up with all of our hot air. Please bear with us for the rest of the summer and continue to attend the meetings.

Here Come Da Judge By Jim Salmi

Although these days we are often admonished not to be judgmental, there are exceptions, and car meets seem to be just such occasions. At the urging of Paul Olson, I volunteered to help judge on Saturday at this summer's Grand National in Las Vegas. Volunteering was as easy as checking the box on the registration form, and it proved to be an enjoyable and, I think, enlightening experience.

I arrived in Las Vegas on the Tuesday of meet week, and spent Wednesday and Thursday on the scheduled tours to the Maloof/Shelby and Sunbelt/Imperial collections. I left Friday open and had volunteered to help at the registration desk in the afternoon. Needing to kill the morning, I wandered down to the exhibition area to look over the cars yet again. Just an innocent bystander! As I poked around the loading dock area where the cars are driven in, Dave Fornes (a great guy) from the Las Vegas region saw me, and came over to ask if I wanted to judge right away. It was so quick that it was more of a statement than a question, and before I knew it I had a clip board in my hand and was helping to judge the first sixteen items on the standard judging form.

Normally, all the judging is done on Saturday when the show field is outdoors. However, since the show was indoors in Vegas, there were safety and fire regulations that had to be observed. The cars were not permitted into the

exhibition hall with more than a quarter tank of gas. A security guard was posted at the door to check gas gauges and tape the filler caps shut as the cars arrived for placement in the hall. Consequently, we did all the items requiring a running engine as the cars came through the loading area. Most of these items were pretty straightforward and objective. Horns, lights and signals either work or they don't, after all. Business was kind of sporadic throughout the day, and I ended up working from about 8:30 AM to after 6:00 PM. Cars came in clusters, followed by idle time. Like working at the fast

lube shop, I guess. We didn't have more than three or four at any one time, and by working quickly we were able to keep everyone in out of the sun as they waited. A good thing, too, since the temperature was near a hundred degrees, and waiting out in the sun would have been a recipe for cranky owners, and worse, cranky cars. We didn't have a single case of vapor lock that I'm aware of. The day ended with a handful of no-shows, and one mid-fifties Eldo that had to be driven to the California border and back a couple of times to burn off excess fuel. The quarter tank rule.



Saturday, the day began with the judges' breakfast and briefing, and I wound up on a three person team judging six cars, ranging from a '52 sedan to a '90's Coupe deVille. We finished judging shortly after the lunch hour, which left time for the tabulation folks to do their work. That was definitely one advantage of having the first sixteen items complete before the day began. The '52 was the car I felt most familiar with, of course, but I still came away with a few authenticity questions of my own after seeing it, relating to the package shelf and sombreros. Unfortunately, there was only one '52 at the meet that I remember, so I couldn't compare it to anything. And, the authenticity manual is silent on those items. Makes things interesting.

So, what about the judging process in general? I learned that there is a lot to know and that it is not as scientific as you might think. Or as consistent. When you are looking at cars with a wide range of ages, most of us probably might miss small things on years we don't really know. Multiple judges helps, but even that is certainly not fool-proof. Judging results can give an informed general opinion of a car's authenticity and condition, but anyone thinking it is the equivalent of a thorough, expert appraisal is too optimistic. Regarding consistency, for example, we knocked points off for "incorrect" batteries, i.e. not period appearing Delcos, but were more lenient on tires, allowing non-original maker

tires if they looked correct for the period. I'll leave it to the theologians (or the message board mavens) to argue the fine philosophical points.

As for the social aspects of being a judge, I heartily recommend the experience. In addition to learning more about the cars themselves, volunteering for judging really helps the host region (who look pretty tired by the end) and allows you to meet a lot of new friends you wouldn't have gotten to know otherwise. There is much more to the hobby than cars and trophies. It is the fellowship of folks who share this strange addiction of ours. Isn't that one of the main reasons for a Grand National, anyway?





The following was on the Harry Everhart Blog. Friday, January 23, 2009 Reproduced with his kind permission

Denver was Home of the Fritchle - One of the Best Electric Cars - Way Ahead of Its Time

While touring through the Denver State Museum yesterday - I stumbled onto a most interesting car. You all know how I enjoy electric vehicles - they are so quiet - clean - and efficient. The Fritchle was way ahead of its time boasting a 100 mile range in 1905.

In the early 1900's - the electric car was very popular with women mainly because you never had to get out to crank start it. Oliver Fritchle who was from Ohio - moved to Denver and made an electric car with incredible range. Not only did he build the cars - he also built the batteries.

The Fritchle had a battery weighing around 500 pounds and a small 8 horsepower electric motor. The car was controlled by switching the motor on and off as needed. Its elegance was its simplicity. It was steered by a tiller - but one feature way ahead of its

time was the braking system. When you applied the brakes - the wheels served as a generator to charge the battery adding even more range.

To market the car - Fritchle drove it from Nebraska to New York City. He averaged 90 miles per day on roads that in most cases proved to be unpaved horse paths. This is remarkable enough but that he did it in November when cold weather saps the battery's power - the trip seems almost miraculous today.

Fritchle built the cars and batteries in Denver and sold about 1800 cars during the 10 years he produced them. Several things led to the car's demise. First - his car cost \$2000 so when Ford produced the Model T for \$700 - people chose cheap over efficient. Second - the country did not develop a network where batteries could be charged. One had to use the car only within 50 miles of home so they could return for a re-charge. Finally - when the electric starter was invented for the gasoline engine - cars no longer required the dangerous task of crank starting.

There are only a few working Fritchle's existing today. Jay Leno - the TV entertainer owns one and drives it regularly. His wife says that it is her favorite car because she can sneak up on wildlife because the car is so quiet. The car in the Colorado National Museum is working fine 100 years later. The owner loaned it to the museum and drove it there personally from his home.

In 1923 - Fitchle built the first

hybrid car - it had a small gasoline engine to recharge the batteries if one got stranded away from home. He also marketed and sold 80 windmill generating systems to make electricity for this car and also for people that lived far from the power grid.

I presently own an electric scooter/bicycle that goes 20 mph and gets 40 miles on a charge. It may have a fancy controller and the engine is constructed right in the wheel hub - but it does not come close to matching Fritchle's range and comfort.

I was a science teacher for 33 years and one of my pet subjects was electric vehicles. PPL - the local power company in Pennsylvania had a prototype electric car that they would bring to my school to take the kids for rides. In 1974 - a company called Citicar marketed a glorified golf cart that went 25 miles at 25 mph. They sold a couple thousand - but could never compete with the power - speed - and range of gasoline powered car.

Fritchle was ahead of his time. If our colleges and government would work on finding a better battery - we could all be driving an electric car that is as quiet - dependable - and non-smelly as Fritchle's was in 1905.

As I type this story at my hotel - I can see the quiet hybrid city buses going up and down the main street - 16th Street Mall - in downtown Denver. Fritchle would have been proud.

Nationals 2009—Driving Tour



Nationals 2009—Exhibit Hall



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How to Improve Gas Mileage in Your Old Caddie

By John Cullinan

I have a '56 Eldo Coupe that has never gotten more than 9 to 11 MPG. Last year I was under my car greasing the front end in preparation for the Steamboat Springs tour. In the process, I noticed my front tires seemed to have excess wear from toe in. This wear was on a relatively new set of Diamondback radials, tires which I recommend for original appearance, and ride.

When I took my car to have the alignment checked, the caster and camber were correct but the left toe spec was .93 degrees versus the correct range of .16-.22 degrees. The right toe spec was .91 degrees versus the .16-22 degrees. The total

toe-in spec was 1.84 versus the .31 degrees to the .44 degrees normal range.

Definitely I had a toe in problem. When driving the car I must have been fighting against a lot of resistance which was reducing my miles per gallon. After getting the alignment into spec, I averaged 14 mpg on the way to Steamboat. On the return, I had an average of 17 mpg. True, we were heading down hill much of that return trip, which accounted for the 17 mpg, but the 14 mpg going up hill on the way to Steamboat was a big improvement over 9 to 11 mpg I had been averaging on trips prior to the Steamboat tour.

Want to improve your mileage? Check your alignment.



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The Dagmar:

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Deadline:

Is the 25th of each month.

Advertising:

Display ads: \$15.00 per issue, \$125.00 per year prepaid for a business-card-size ad. Larger sizes available at a discount. Contact the Editor for more information.

Classified Ads:

First three months free for Club Members (RMRCLC), after that normal rates apply. \$20.00 for three consecutive issues prepaid for nonmembers. Cadillac and LaSalle related ads only; there is a 50-word limit on each ad. Classified ads also appear on our web site at:

Check out the RMRCLC Website at:

www.rmrclc.com

and the national site at <http://www.cadillaclasalleclub.org>

Monthly Meeting:

2nd Tuesday of each month at Elks Lodge at 2475 W. 26th Ave. in Denver at 7:30 PM. Dinner at 6 PM prior to the meeting for those who wish to join us.

Cars & Parts or Sale

1997 DeVille with 72,000 miles. Emerald green body, tan top, and gold trim. Great condition and a real buy at \$5,000 (firm). Call Kathy at 303-638-3474. June

1990 Cadillac 2 Dr. Coupe DeVille. Maroon exterior color with maroon leather interior. Custom wheels with new tires. 35882 original miles. Car in like-new condition. \$5,500 asking price. Call 303-278-0576. July

Excellent 1979 Cadi Seville, 2nd owner, 128K miles, orig engine rebuilt at 100k, runs great! exterior is light tan perfect with camel interior, interior is perfect, 134 conversion on ac, new whitewall tires mounted on the original seville wire wheels, new battery, new air pump, runs perfect, uses no oil. Not working: radio have replacement, cruise control, power antenna. Asking \$2150 or best offer. Gene at 303-772-5789, 303-817-7790. August

Official List Of RMRLC Sponsored Functions

Thursday Aug. 13-16 Gunnison/Crested Butte Driving Tour (if you have not received a registration form, please contact John Cullinan—see opposite page for contact information)

Saturday Sept. 12 Regional Meet/McCaddon
Saturday Sept. 19 Colfax Cruise/picnic @ East High school
Saturday Sept. 26 (or Oct 3 if bad weather) Fall colors drive

Monday Oct. 12 Pig roast at Caddy Shack
Saturday Oct. 24 Re-schedule of wildlife sanctuary visit
?? ?? Grand Lake pontoon boat ride/lunch
?? "" Intrigue Detail/car detailing workshop

Other Events

August 25, Hot August Nights, Colorado Custom Chrome, 128 S. 2nd St., LaSalle, CO. see www.coloradocustomchrome.com

August 22, 41st Mountain States swap meet at Adams County Fairgrounds 9755 Henderson Rd. Brighton, CO

August 22-28, AACA/VMCCA Glidden Tour for pre-war vehicles (1942 and earlier)
Saturday, September 19th - The 2009 Colfax Avenue Cruise

August 22nd 3rd Annual Drive for the Kids Car Tour. For event information contact Dick Thompson 303 699-4819.

August 30th Denver Modernism Car Show "Stylish at Any Speed" featuring post-Atomic American and European Cars. National Western Complex, Hall of Education 10 am to 3 pm. Register online at: modernismcarshow.eventbrite.com

Rocky Mountain Region

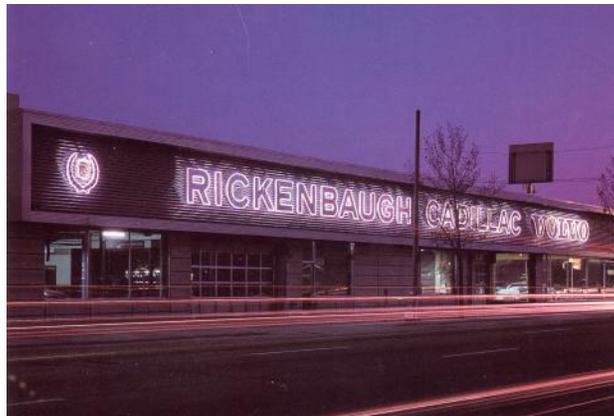
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