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# T TIMES

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## F-O-R-D

Following the MTFCA forum over the years, I have found there are three general groups in the club. Some want the T preserved as close to original as possible. Water pumps are anathema, distributors are to be shunned, and original colors only are for them. For another group, anything goes so long as it makes for a safe and reliable ride, at a speed and comfort that they are used to in their modern cars. A third group, which I would count myself as one, is looking for an experience reminiscent of days long ago. This experience has its plusses and minuses.

In the day of the Model T, it quickly obtained a reputation as a reliable go anywhere vehicle, designed with the poor roads of rural America in mind. High

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**The Three Rivers Model T Ford Club is a chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America. Membership is recommended and encouraged. Make membership requests to: MTFCA, P.O. Box 126, Centerville, IN 47330. Annual local club dues are \$20. Monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of the month, places to be announced in the newsletter prior.**

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## 2012 Officers

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**Board Members**  
1 Year -- Russ Armstrong  
2 Year -- Fred Fraser  
3 Year -- Jim Elenbaas

ground clearance was a real benefit. Speeds of 20-30 MPH allowed the owner to travel distances in a day unthinkable by horse and buggy, let alone by foot! Anything faster would have been bone jarring, let alone downright dangerous. But best of all, this little Fliver was much more reliable than almost anything approaching its price tag. And if it did break down, it was EASY to fix by most backyard mechanics with a little mechanical knowhow. And the rural people and farmers were used to fixing things.

One of the things about the Model T that I really enjoy is the challenge of keeping it going. I have found it rather enjoyable tinkering with Daisy to see if she can get me there and back. Now, I will have to admit that many of these fixes are for problems that have occurred as a result of my inexperience or downright foolish mistakes. Take my most recent experience for example.

While I was restoring what Sharon has referred to as my "rusty tin can," we decided to move back to the Walla Walla Valley. What an opportunity, or excuse, to buy a new enclosed trailer for Daisy. After all, we could save a lot by using it to haul all of our belongings from Twin Falls to our new home in Milton-Freewater, OR. I was aware of the need for a little extra head room to clear the top so after a little research I ordered my new trailer with a 6" raised top. Well, it took me another 3 years to get Daisy finished and a new top ready to install. Due to my 6'3" frame, I got the brilliant idea of raising the top a little to better accommodate my height; two inches wouldn't be really noticeable if done right.

The top went together well, and I would have to say, no one knows the difference to look at our pride and joy! But, you guessed it I had forgotten about the measurements for the trailer. One inch too tall to fit in the trailer with the top up! On one trip to the beautiful Sawtooth Valley of central Idaho, in a rush to load the car and get down the road, I neglected to lower the top and . . . an awful crack reminded me of my mistake. Sadly, I put Daisy's top down where it remained until I could fix the broken bow. The driver side windshield post was also damaged, but I was able to pull it up straight, use a little bondo and was good to go.

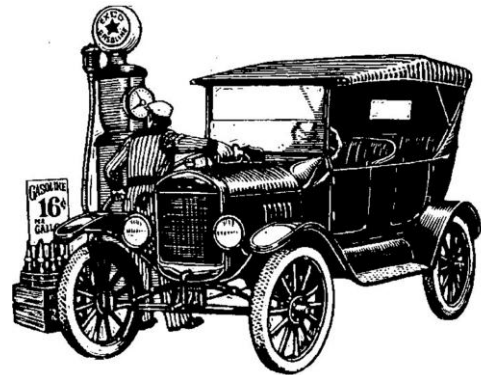
On our most recent outing to Butte, Montana we encountered some amazingly strong winds. (You can read about it in Bill's article this issue).

## Birthdays in July

**Lou Ottem July 1**  
**Paul Dione July 10**  
**Betty Paterson July 28**

## Anniversaries in July

**Jim and Betty Patterson July 7**



Dean and Wanda had their top tear and I noticed that the windshield post had again broken. Look closely at Bill's pictures and you can see the strap holding the windshield together. Lucky for me, I never throw much of anything away that could be some day useful. A windshield frame that donated a piece to the speedster was found, a piece cut out and rivets drilled out of the broken piece and it should soon be good as new.

It seems whenever we take Daisy out for a tour, there is something to fix. But isn't that part of the fun and challenge of being custodian of one of these wonderful machines? Now if I could only get the rear end to quit leaking at the pumpkin joint!

Happy touring, and get those machines ready for a great time next month on our tour of Mt Rainier.

# Montana 500 2012

by Bill Sheller



Water Pump says farewell at the top of Lolo Pass



Montana 500 winner 2003



Some of the racers, Dillon, Montana

As you might know by now, I'm working on a rather lengthy "bucket list" since I've retired from the Union Pacific. I don't want to check things off too rapidly mind you, but I've made some progress toward goal. One of the items on the list was to go to the much touted Montana 500 Model T cross country endurance run. Well, I joined the Montana Cross Country T Association and even convinced four of my closest Model T friends to join as well and come on along on a cross country Model T drive of 500 miles in one of the most beautiful states in the country. Well, to say we all had a wonderful adventure behind the wheel of a Model T Ford would be quite an understatement.

Travel distance to Butte, Montana was five to six hundred miles, so off we went on June 16<sup>th</sup>. My old '73 Ford F250 with 390,000 miles really owes me NOTHING, so just to make things interesting, the water pump started to leak rather badly going over Lolo Pass. Fortunately, it is a Ford so as long as the machine was operating at highway speeds, the water in the system was moving too fast to leak out. As soon as I stopped, well ... the coolant just poured out. I was able to make it all the way to Butte, where a new pump was ordered.

None of those attending the "500" were interested in racing, as the road less traveled is the one for us. I invested in a Montana Atlas of secondary and back roads, as I've used those for Oregon and Washington in planning enjoyable tours locally. The plan was to tour to the places the racer's went, but not take the freeways they seem to prefer for their high speed endeavors. We were all in for some unforgettable driving experiences.

I will have to admit that when we went to the original meeting for the event in the hotel meeting room, I got a very bad feeling of despair. There was no welcome, no maps, no organization

even the president seemed to have no idea where we were supposed to go or how we were supposed to get there. The meeting came to an end and I have to admit that I was really having second thoughts about dragging my friends along on what seemed to be an impending disaster!



Virginia City, Montana



Porter's blowin in the wind!



Culvert driving under free way

After the “official meeting”, we held our own meeting in the hotel lobby and checked the new back roads atlas for back road routes that would lead us to the same places as the racers were going. Monday morning at 8:00 am the Porter’s, Langdon’s, Peterson’s, Stokes’, and Me and the Model T headed out on a 220 mile back roads journey to Virginia City and back to Butte. We managed (almost) the entire route on the scenic highways. We did have to get on Interstate 15 for three miles on our way to Dillon, Montana. We stopped in the very small town of Nevada City, population 3 year round, for lunch in an old café with a wooden board walk and exquisite food. Gosh you just never know what wonderful surprises are just around the bend when you travel the back roads of America! After our tour of Virginia City we headed back to Butte. Our return trip was a memory maker to say the very least. The wind started blowing a steady 60 mph. I had to use the throttle to get down off a 6% grade from 6500 foot Pipestone Pass. Temps were in the 50’s, so folks were not only wind-blown, but quite chilled as well. The wind ripped Stokes’ top, so we put it down to avoid further damage. No small task I might add.

I missed Tuesday’s tour, as my water pump came in and I wanted to get it installed. Dean was kind enough to stay behind and give me a hand. Help I was surely grateful for. Langdon’s had some tire trouble with they’re pick up so Jim stayed behind as well and took care of business. The Porter’s and Peterson’s toured up to Deer Lodge and visited the famous Towe Auto museum and the now closed prison.

With both pick-ups road ready again, on Wednesday we headed to Anaconda, Montana. I had loaned Dale my by golly plum wonderful Montana back roads atlas to help them get to Deer Lodge. Dale had done some studying with help from Mike and was ready to lead us for the days touring. The weather for Wednesday was simply perfect for touring Montana’s beautiful countryside. Dale and Mike had found us some genuine Model T roads. One of them took us right through a culvert which went under the freeway. Since I, nor anyone else, had ever driven through a culvert in the Model T





A couple of happy passengers



Peterson's "dream" cabin



The driveway could use a little work



Model T's and Montana ...  
marvelous

a photo opportunity was certainly at hand! Once through the culvert we stopped along the road where a local man and his two children stopped to look at the cars. Dale and Sharon offered the kids a ride and they were very happy about it. I would hazard a speculative guess that they had never seen a Model T Ford, let alone ridden in one. We toured to Anaconda for a rest stop and then up over a 6800 foot mountain pass that was a scenic overload. Once past the summit we stopped for a photo opportunity at Mt. Haggin. While there taking in the beauty of it all, the search and rescue team showed up and set off up the mountain side. Must have been a climber in trouble. Way up in the Rockies of Montana is a bad place to be lost! It is truly big sky country! We had another photo session at an abandoned cabin, to which Dale just drove across the grass lands. A Model T Ford is right at home in the wilderness and vastness of this great country. It truly will take you there and bring you back, as advertised 100 plus years ago. We arrived at Wise River, another very small settlement with a wooden structure and an old café sign out front. It was lunch time and there were quite a few pick-up parked out front, so ... wow, another wonderful surprise from small town America. Wooden floors, huge portions, clean rest room, a bar, and ...yep believe it or not a complete ice cream parlor. We were all too full to have ice cream, but...

All in all, the Montana 500 was well worth attending, even if none of us were into going fast on the freeway. When we attended the opening meeting, I was sure I had lead everyone astray, but it turned out to be a great Montana adventure. One that I would return to again, because ...

Henry built a darn good car ... Yes he did!

## Tours and activities

### Mount Rainier Tour

Plans are well underway for the August 6-9 tour to Mt Rainier. All of the rooms at the Packwood Hotel are spoken for. If you have not reserved a place with Dale Peterson, contact us soon so we can try to find alternative lodging for you. Everyone should also have called Whistling Jack's for reservations by this time. Dean and Dale will be working out the route this month.

The tour is to leave from the Stokes' ranch in Sunnyside at 9:00 AM with a drive on mostly back roads to Naches for lunch and then on to Packwood where we will be based for the next two nights. Day 2 will be a trip to Paradise, over the hill on a secondary road. Day 3 we will pack up and drive to Sunrise for lunch and then down to Whistling Jack's for the night. Day 4 will be our return to Sunnyside with a chance to sleep in or enjoy a relaxing breakfast first.

Members of the Model A club from Pendleton have asked if they could join us and an invitation has been sent. They will be on their own to find accommodations, but we look forward to having them along.

### July Meeting at Jim and Sandi Elenbaas' home

There was no June meeting of TRMTFCA due to so many of us being away on out of town tours. However, we are in for a real treat when we meet July 19 at 3:00 PM at the Elenbaas home for the July meeting and a barbecue. Their address is 1104 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Granger, WA.

### East-West Reliability Run

This is the third year that the east side and west side clubs have met in a challenge to see who can muster the most "Flat Heads" in Vantage, WA. I contacted Mike Robison from the Inland Empire T's in Spokane, and he would like to have us join in. The plan is to meet in Vantage at 12 noon Sept. 15 for lunch at a local burger joint to enjoy visiting before returning home. It sounds like a great chance to meet other old car people from our area as well as an excuse to drive our cars.

## Roster Corrections

**I must apologize for an oversight in the club roster. Marlene Coder was not recognized for her service of 2 terms as club president. Thank you for your service and continued support of our great club.**

### Additions to the Roster:

**Ralph and June Anderson** 1676 Shelton, Walla Walla, WA 99362. Ph. # 509 525-7258

**Paul and Joan Dionne** 2053 Hudson Avenue, Richland, WA 99354, Ph. 3 509 946-1121

**Terry and Edris Shegrud**, 214503 E 200 P.R.S.E., Kennewick, WA 99337, Ph. # 509 586-3946