



CLASSIC HEARTBEAT

NEWS OF '55, '56 AND '57 CHEVYS IN NORTH TEXAS AND BEYOND

September 2008

Volume 32, Issue 9



PO Box 814642
Dallas, TX 75381

www.DallasClassicChevy.com
Est 1976

Current Membership -143

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – David Graves

214 738-5231 term expires 12/09

Vice Pres – Marvin Johnson

214 352-9132 term expires 12/08

Treasurer – Dean Schmidt

972 867-3255 term expires 12/08

Secretary – Greg Hedum

972 539-9886 term expires 12/09

Board Member - Dan Bunch

972 270-0461 term expires 12/08

Board Member - Alan Strong

972 624-8836 term expires 12/09

Board Member - John Rush

972 517-4247 term expires 12/08

Appointed Positions

Tech Advisor - Larry Rollow

972-960-1408

Tech Advisor - Marvin Johnson

214 352-9132

Tech Advisor - Don Andre

817 481 3468

Membership Chairman

Bill Preston

972 691-4968

Membership Information

Dues are \$25 per year,
payable to

Dallas Area Classic Chevys,
mail to the club PO Box.

To determine your renewal date,
check your mailing label, the top
right corner is the month/yr your
membership expires.

TWO BIG EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER!



SATURDAY – SEPT 13th
Noon to 3PM
Reliable Chevrolet
Arapaho and Central
Richardson



state fair of texas

DALLAS AREA CLASSIC CHEVYS

'55-'57 CHEVY DISPLAY at the
'CLASSIC CORRAL'

at the Texas State Fair

YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO SIGN UP!
CONTACT DAVID GRAVES at 214-738-5231

SUNDAY – SEPT 28th
8:30AM to 6PM
2008 State Fair Of Texas
Fair Park
Dallas

NEXT MONTH!

AGAIN – 2 BIG EVENTS in October!

October 11th Saturday

9th Annual Drive In Movie Night!
BRAZOS DRIVE IN – Granbury

October 24th-26th Weekend
15th Annual Fall Foliage Tour
Lake Texoma/Denison

These events are great traditions to
make with your Chevy
PLAN TO JOIN US!

Inside Highlights

Recap of Hot Texas Nights Show	2
Fall Tour Details	2
New DACC Members	2
September Feature Car	3
Tech Help – Lower Control Arms	4



Hot Texas Nights Car Show Highlights

Each August the Christian Classic Crusiers car club moves their monthly car show to the nighttime to avoid the excessive Texas heat, and for the past several years DACC has made this our club event for August along with a stop at Joe's Pizza and Pasta. The turnout is always good so why mess with a good thing? This year we again hit the 'Hot Texas Nights' show in N Richland Hills and we had a great turnout of Tri Five Chevys! In attendance were Bill & Diane Preston – '56 Nomad, Greg & Nick Hedum – '55 Hardtop, Bob Smolik – '57 Hardtop, George Johnson – '56 Nomad, Mike & Vickie Dodson – '56 Nomad, Carl Mitcham – '57 Convertible, Benny Zimmerman – '55 Convertible, David & Marlene Graves – '56 Corvette, Bob Blackburn – '57 Hardtop, Tommy & Stephanie Simmons – '57 Wagon, Alan Strong – '57 Sedan, Jim & Debbie Conkle – '55 Sedan, Robert & Sarah Conkle + twins – '55 Sedan, Lewis & Sandra Reynolds – '55 Sedan, Marvin & Donna Johnson – '55 Hardtop, Ron & Vickie Burdett – '57 Wagon and Terry Hitch – '57 Nomad, . Also spotted was Don & Jo Andre with their Corvair, Andy & Nina Salinas, Greg Funuchi, Wallace Kemp and Loren Baxter. Congrats to all that came out as we took the Best Club Participation Award, and winning individual awards were Mike Dodson's Nomad, David Graves' Corvette, Bill Preston's Nomad, Marvin Johnson's Hardtop, Bob Smolik's Hardtop, Carl Mitcham's Convertible! Be sure to check the photos on the club website!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

819
Bud & Lisbeth Webb
334 Brock St
Coppell, TX 75019
'57 Hardtop

820
Johnny and Jackie Gentry
278 Dismore
Royse City, TX 75189
'55 Pickup

821
Loren Baxter
438 S Westmoreland
Dallas, TX 75211
'56 Hardtop

822
Pfc Brandon Lee Munsey
Currently stationed in Iraq

823
Bill & Charlene Lewis
7116 Lincoln Dr
N Richland Hills, TX 76180
'56 Pickup

DACC hosts the 15th Annual Classic Chevy Fall Foliage Tour October 24-26, 2008

at Comfort Inn, Denison, Texas

Become part of a tradition this year!

No car cleaning allowed. No judging... just fun.

**This is a traveling event
& DACC is the host club
for the first time in 14 years!**

Classic Chevy owners from Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma gather every year to drive their cars and renew friendships.

Headquarters at:

Comfort Inn
801 Hwy 75 N, Denison, TX
(903) 464-0340

Event room rate: \$75

Mention "Chevy Fall Cruise" for these rates.

Hotels located on the NW quadrant of US 75 & Pottsboro Rd. (FM120) exit 69
Overflow block of rooms available til 9/24 at:

Holiday Inn Express
(903) 463-2500-\$79

or Motel 6 (903) 465-4446-\$66 (no block)

Schedule of events:

Friday:

Cruise to evening meal at 7 pm

Social gathering at the Comfort Inn afterwards

(Bring your lawn chair, cooler & visit in the parking lot)

Saturday:

Organized cruise leaves at 11 am thru the Texas side of Lake Texoma with planned stops

Lunch stop during cruise

Cruise to evening meal

Evening social gathering at the Comfort Inn

(Bring a \$5 door prize per person, bring snacks, drinks & your favorite game. Lots of poker & dominos going on.)

Car Show Bonus Kustom Kemps of America 11th Annual "Blast with the Past" Car Show will also be held Oct 24-26 at Loy Lake Park in Denison. 80-100 cars of all types on display.

**For more information call Bill or Diane Preston
(972) 691-4968, (405) 412-0502 or (405) 615-3856**



September's Feature Car Irv and Peggy Engelbrecht's '55 Chevy



Hi, I'm Irv Engelbrecht's black 55 150 2 dr utility sedan. Irv is a new member to DACC this year, but a LONG time member of Eckler's Chevy Classics (#9859) and has been thru several 55's & 57's thru the years. He and his high school sweetheart, Peggy, live in Lufkin, TX, about 180 miles from Dallas. His other hobby is singing in a barbershop quartet and chorus. Plans are for Irv to retire from the railroad at the end of this year and be able to do more singing barbershop and playing with me. Peggy is an accomplished artist and works with stained glass, fusing glass, watercolor and all kinds of other mediums.

But enough about them, this story is about ME. Of course being a gentleman, I can't tell you much about my past because a gentleman doesn't tell such secrets, so I'll only go one owner back. He's a cool guy by the name of Jamie Deason who loves speed and is a heck of a good paint and body man. He lives in El Dorado, AR and found me abandoned in a field in 1981 and decided to bring me back from certain death

at the crusher. My old rear end was replaced with a '67 Camaro 12 bolt 3:55 posi and my firewall was modified so he could put a 454 in and have a little room to work. He also cut out my rear fender wells and molded in the lips of a front fender and made it look like a Nomad. He put in some AC components, front disc brakes, electric front windows, 77 Camaro steering column and other parts from various cars before all these fancy kits came along. He also added some 210 stainless window and windshield trim because he liked the look. He built me for himself and didn't care if I am a 150 Businessmen's coupe and even added a back seat. At least he left my rear windows alone and they are still sealed. I don't remember how long it took him to do all this, but I remember he painted me with black Imron back in 1986 and I still look pretty good. Jamie used and abused me as we terrorized the streets of El Dorado and the local drag strip. Then other interests came along and I began to collect dust and overspray in the back of his body shop.

continued on page 5



TECH HELP

We are fortunate to have many experienced and well versed members in the club that have extensive knowledge about the '55-'57 Chevy. Whether it is a question about how a car was originally from the factory or how to put a big block in that shoebox, there are members in the club that can help. Larry Rollow is one of our designated Tech Advisors of the club and shares this story on -

INSTALLING TUBULAR LOWER CONTROL ARMS By Larry Rollow



Recently while doing some work on my '57 Chevy, I noticed that the front tires were wearing excessively on the inside portion of the tread. I went by Discount Tire (where I purchased them) and asked them what they thought. They said they thought it was an alignment problem, probably camber. He recommended I visit Dallas Frame and Alignment who has a great reputation for this line of work. So I got up early in the morning and went over to see what they could do. After my car was on the rack for a short while the technician came in and asked me to come out to the shop area. There, he showed me that all of the lower control arm bushings were shot. He also said the ball joints were marginal. This came as sort of a shock as I had replaced all the bushings and ball joints when I rebuilt the car some 13,700 miles ago, (the uppers are in good shape).

After getting an estimate for them to do all the work, I took the car home. After thinking it over for a while, I decided to look into replacing the factory lower control arms with aftermarket tubular arms, as I didn't want to use the factory type bushings again. I logged on the internet and began researching tubular lower control arms. After looking at many, comparing price versus perceived quality, I decided on arms from CPP (Classic Performance Products). They advertised .120 wall tubing and "non-squeak, patented plastic bushings" as well as new ball joints. They came completely assembled, ready to install. I should note that I had already installed tubular upper control arms when I first built the car. The primary reason for this was to be able to get more caster on the alignment settings. This is a good idea when using one of the after market power steering systems on your Tri-Five. So, I ordered a set of CPP tubular lower control arms

They arrived 5 days after the order was placed, and I began the installation process. While waiting for the new ones to arrive I had removed the old lower control arms. I placed the old and new side by side and immediately noticed that there was no place to mount the rubber bumper, whose purpose is to soften the "bump" when the suspension bottoms out. I was perplexed about this so I got on the phone to CPP to ask about it. The tech guy I talked with said their engineers had decided you

didn't need really them and that metal to metal contact was OK. My answer was I don't think so. They also advertise that they will fit "most" sway bars. Well, I can tell you that the Hellwig sway bar I have isn't one of them. I hung up the phone and strongly considered sending them back.

My main problem was that I really didn't have the time to send them back and then get either another brand of tubular arms or obtain the parts necessary to rebuild the factory arms since my wife and I were leaving for the Hot August Nights show in Reno, NV in just over a week and a half. I went in the house and messed around on the computer looking at control arms and called a buddy to commiserate. I decided to keep them and accept the challenge to get them to work properly. I went back to the garage and stared at it and then it hit me. I would just reverse them, i.e., drill a hole in the part of the frame where they contact when the suspension bottoms out. There is about 1/2 inch of space available to put the nut on the bumper. So that was solved. The next thing was to drill the holes where the links would go for the sway bar. After mounting the control arm without the spring several times, I got the dimension right and drilled the holes. As I was mounting then for the final fit, still without springs, I noticed that there was no steering stop. The steering stop is a piece of metal welded on the lower control arm to allow the steering to go just so far. You can imagine what would happen if the steering went too far, the tires could rub the fenders. And, more importantly, the tie rods could, in the worst case scenario, go over center and cause the car to be uncontrollable. There must be a slight angle between the tie rod and the steering arm when the steering wheel is either turned hard right or left. The steering arm is actually a lever and is bolted to the spindle and turns the wheel as the steering (tie rods and drag link) mechanism moves side to side.

So it was back to the drawing boards once again. I tried to make a stop similar to the factory one, but given the tubular shape of the arms, it just wouldn't work. So I mounted the arm yet again without the spring and stared at it. I decided to see if I could make a stop out of 1/4 inch steel about 2 inches by 1 1/2 inches and then weld it to the arm to become the stop. This showed some promise, so I turned the steering wheel so that the steering was full left and then looked at the angle made by the steering arm and the tie rod, as well as header clearance. When I felt it was right, I tacked it on with my MIG welder and then took it off to take it to the bench for final welding. This hurt, as the powder coating must be filed or ground off so you get a good weld. When I was happy with the position, I welded it on; making a couple of passes to be sure I got good penetration. Then I did the same thing to the other side. I should note that I also drilled two 1/4 inch holes near the top of each new steering stop so, if it turned out the steering was going too far, I could simply bolt another piece of metal and therefore, reduce the travel of the steering arm. So far it appears that I got it right the first time.

Now they were finally ready to be installed on the car, and one of my friends came over and helped me install them. For those who have never done this job, you must compress the spring to the point where you can reconnect the ball joints to the spindle. A compressed spring has a tremendous amount of energy in it and is not to be trifled with. Think about it, if your car weighs

continued on page 5



Irv's '55 Story continued from page 3 -



Fast forward to 2000....Jamie decided he needed to raise some cash for expansion of this body shop, so he put me on eBay and see what kind of interest I would bring. My good buddy Irv just happened to come across my listing and liked what he saw. He made a bid, but was soon outbid. Before bidding any more he came to see me for himself and looked beyond the layers of overspray and liked what he saw. Then Jamie took him for a ride and that did it, Irv was in love with me! They stopped the auction right then and there and I've been Irv's ever since. He has replaced the 454 with another one, Sanderson headers, changed transmissions to a beefed up 700r4, new springs, front end kit, bumpers re-chromed, B&M shifter and pulled that back seat out. He is still rubbing on that overspray and if he ever has me repainted, those stainless pieces will be removed, too. When we go to a car show Irv has a lot of American Graffiti items that he likes to display with me because I look a little like the cool '55 that Harrison Ford drove in the movie. Ahhh, it is great to be loved, I think I found my HOME!



Tech Help Continued from page 4

3500 pounds, probably 1900 to 2000 of that is on the front springs, so each spring must hold up about 1000 pounds or so. I have a home made spring compressor that consists of a ½ inch diameter threaded rod connected to an eye bolt on the lower end. This end is fastened to the shock absorber mount in the lower control arm using a shock mount pirated from a dead shock. The upper end goes through the upper shock mount and with a couple of washers and a nut that is tightened, thereby compressing the spring. It is time consuming, but it works.

At last, the new lower control arms were in the car. Now it was time to install the shocks, brakes and sway bar. It was really going along smoothly now. But wait, the shocks won't go through the hole in the lower control arm with the little spring clip nuts they give you to bolt in the shocks. I should note that I have heavy duty shocks on the car and they are a little bigger than standard shock absorbers. The clips could not be moved away from the hole enough for clearance because the spring was there. The factory control arms use nuts that are welded in. If I known this before I could have easily done the same. But I was not about to remove them at this point, so I simply used a nut and washer and that worked OK. It was a little difficult to get them in and tighten them, but I preserved and got it done. I reinstalled the brakes, wheels and was now ready to try the alignment shop again.

I have to give Dallas Frame and Alignment high marks. The technician really took his time and did a very thorough job. They do not have all the high tech laser type of equipment, but do have very experienced men who know how to use the equipment they have. And I didn't think their prices were out of line especially considering the tech spent nearly 3 ½ hours on my car. The car drives very well, tracks the road straight and handles like it should.

So was it all worth it? Yes and no (mostly yes). I got what I wanted in improved lower control arm bushings, and the car handles great. But it was a lot of work having to re-engineer the product in a few areas. As a general statement, I like CPP products, and the tubular lower controls are very well made. I have their 500 power steering box in my car and I love it. But, one thing I noticed was that they seemed heavier then the factory units. So I weighed them. My feeling was correct, they are several pounds heavier. In an ideal situation, you want to have as little unsprung weight as possible. Unsprung weight is, like the word says, all those parts whose weight is not carried by the springs. However, since we don't usually autocross our cars or participate in other handling type events, it is probably not significant. After it was all done, I did some more research on tubular lower control arms, and there are a few that come with all the things on them that I added; the steering stop and a place for the bumper to mount. They are also nearly twice the price of the CPP arms. So like the man says, it's either time or money!





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