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cover photos by Tom Gunsher & Gary Swiatowy

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**5 SHOWANDCRUISENEWS.COM JANUARY 2019**
Time sure does fly, I can’t believe this show has been going on for 20 years. I myself have been involved for 17 of those years. But I have to give a mention to Karen Krysa from Cornell Cooperative Extension who has been the driving force of this show for all of those 20 years. Karen is the one who does all the logistics, arranges awards, solicits sponsorships and door prizes, makes all arrangements with the other fairground personnel, and deals with all the “issues” which may arise. Karen also recruited and took care of the volunteers needed to man the gate and help with registration. This is a lot of work and an unsung dedication to this event. Karen has announced that she is retiring from her position after 27 years of being at Cornell Cooperative Extension. I am fairly sure no one is in place to take over running of the Car Show, so it appears very likely that 2018 was the last one.

For all those years, we had many loyal supporters who came out every year, even the many times we had “damp” weather. We always had some new people showing up and checking out the fair. And the turnout for this year was very respectable considering all the competition we had from other shows. This show has always held up, and we have received many accolades from participants over the years.

And I would also thank all those over the years who have helped with the show judging so participants could enjoy the fair’s attractions -- Keith, Ed, and all the others who helped in the rain or heat to get the job done, and always asked if there was anything else they could do. We never could have done it without you.

Here are some pictures of the 2018 show.
20th Annual Niagara County Fair Car Show
20th Annual Niagara County Fair Car Show

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Well the new year is here and I hope everyone enjoyed 2018 as much as I did. Several local events and a couple road trips highlighted a great summer. I finally topped 1,000 miles with my hot rod Model A Roadster after two summers and my winter project is to go over the car with a fine tooth comb. No doubt there will be a loose bolt or two and a few adjustments needed here and there.

All in all the car was a lot of fun with the trip to the Relix Riot at the Gilmore Museum in western Michigan being the icing on the cake. I made several new friends from the Midwest and was happy to bring a little Western New York out to the fine folks who gathered. There’s nothing like sharing your hot rod passion with like-minded people. Hopefully I convinced some of them to make the trip out to the Niagara Frontier next summer.

Being fortunate enough to also own a fat fendered ’50 Pontiac convertible full custom, I was invited to the Custom Revival in Indianapolis. Man! What a gathering that was! Some of the best and most radical customs in the country were in attendance styling and profiling at the host hotel on Friday and strutting their stuff at a ’50s era diner nearby. I always thought my car was a damn nice example of ’50s era customizing art but, wow! At Indy I was just another flower in the garden if you get my drift. Again I made several good friends and had a chance to help a Pennsylvania fellow fix an electrical problem in his ’40 Ford convertible. I’m sure many of us know the frustration of being broke down far away from home, I know I do. So it was very satisfying to be able to be on the other side of the equation. Kind of like the Lone Ranger, I saw some trouble, made it right and melted back into the crowd. Ha, ha! Maybe that’s over the top but it felt good to help someone out and my only reward was to ask the Ford’s owner to pay it forward.

I’ve been involved in a motorhead community most of my life. Hell, the first time I got pulled over by the fuzz, I was 13 driving my cousin’s ’54 Ford Tudor. The people I’ve met over the decades have been some of the best on earth. Looking for friends? Get a vintage car and attend some of the many events over the summer and I guarantee you will have a few new buddies before the autumn leaves fall.

Of course summer is still pretty far off but we are fortunate to have some of the best indoor car shows in the country within driving distance. Buffalo, Syracuse, Cleveland, and Detroit provide an opportunity to see some of the best hot rods, customs, antiques, bikes and race-prepared vehicles in the country. For more than half a century I have been immersed in the car culture and never regretted one minute of it. Yes I’ve been broken down on the side of the road more than once, been caught in a rainstorm driving an open roadster, and been insulted by folks who thought the make of car I owned was inferior to theirs but none of it overshadows the 99.9 percent of good times and good camaraderie I enjoyed.

I know winter can be a tough time for car enthusiasts here in the great White North but being a life long resident and a bit of a garage rat, I find this time of year can also be very satisfying. As I mentioned before, my roadster is in the garage up on jack stands and getting some much-needed attention. The freezin’ season also means I have few distractions so I am making progress on my ’64 GTO project car. You know you’re having fun when you bang your head and scrape a knuckle or two all for a good cause. Right?

How about you? What’s gonna help you get through the tussel with Old Man Winter? Beyond doing repairs or upgrades on your cherished ride, there are a large amount of great books and movies related to the car hobby that can keep many a hot rodder’s heart warm on a cold nasty winter night. Santa Claus brought this good boy some nifty reads and watches to while away the evening hours.

There’s nothing like curling up with a Henry Gregor Felson novel and an adult beverage on a snowy night. So stay warm, stay enthused and enjoy the season as best you can because spring will be here before you know it.

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The 25th Annual Convention of the International Thunderbird Club was hosted by the Buffalo Thunderbird Club at the new Hyatt Place Hotel in Williamsville, NY, on August 7-12, 2018.

Participants could enjoy a wide range of events including a trip to the Buffalo Transportation Museum, a Cruise on the Buffalo Waterfront, a tour of the Darwin Martin House, and of course a trip to Niagara Falls including a ride on the Maid of the Mist. This makes Buffalo a "Destination" for the car guy who wants more than just a car show. It also makes the trip more enjoyable for the spouse who may be getting tired of just another car show.

I stopped in for some pictures the day of the Concours, and they sure had a good turnout. Most series of "Birds" were well represented at the show. I also understand Richard Lentinello from Hemming’s Classic Car was there for a photo shoot and article.

Here’s some of the pictures I took.
25th Annual International Thunderbird Club Convention
Bowling Green Adventure

PHOTOS BY TOM GUNSHER
BOWLING GREEN, KY

If you love Gasser race cars, Vintage Dragsters, a car show and good old fashion drag racing, a trip to Bowling Green will fill the bill.

The weekend was filled with old and new gasser race cars, a car show and a cackle fest. Many of the gassers were reproductions of those that ran in the 60’s and 70’s. Built as tribute cars, they honored the great ones that gave spectators some of the best racing ever seen. Some were the actual vehicles that have been restored to their original state. Some of the original front engine dragsters that have been restored were also there.

Here are photos from that event.

Our friend, Al Nosse

Al’s Willys

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)
Well here we are, 2019. Many were glad 2018 was over and are hoping for a much better 2019; however if you look at it realistically, it’s only the next day, and what magical barrier did we hop over to make 2018 disappear?

Well for one, there are the proverbial resolutions. You know those things we promise others or ourselves that will help make the New Year better. Let’s analyze the general resolution promises.

I’ll eat better and lose weight in the New Year. Well I’m sure the first part is easy. After all, look at what we just went through, Thanksgiving, with all the great food that is put before us and is easily consumed because all of our family and friends are doing the same thing so we didn’t feel guilty. And of course all the leftovers that carry us through the rest of the week, Turkey, Dressing, Potatoes (usually 2 or 3 kinds), and of course the vast variety of desserts.

We barely have time to digest all of that when the Christmas parties begin, and again the consumption of weight gaining alcohol, snacks, desserts and anything else put in front of us to help the festivities continue. And of course the New Year’s Eve parties and again the consumption of comfort calories. So as I said, the first part, eating better, is easy because for most of the year we don’t continuously dine on so many calories. And the weight you promise to lose is usually that which you gained during the holidays, so in effect you’re back to square one.

Another popular resolution is to try and save more money for the future and not be wasteful with your spending. Well that resolution usually goes out the window when the first parts catalog arrives in the mail.

I could go on and on with the different resolutions that are usually made on New Year’s Eve and broken within the first 30 days of the New Year, but what the hell, we are only human and we know there is only one go around in life and so long it doesn’t put you or your family in harm’s way, live life as you see fit. If your goal is weighing what you were in high school, good for you, if it’s taking an expensive vacation with your family to create lasting memories, do it, and if building your dream hot rod, go for it, so long as it doesn’t get you thrown out of the house. I hope everyone has a very Happy New Year.

A Unique Individual

Every so often a person comes into your life that leaves a lasting impression. A unique individual who for some reason leaves a very lasting impression on you. One such person recently passed a way, but not before leaving a lasting legacy on the WNY automobile hobbyist.

George Baldwin passed away just before Christmas and was well know by Western New Yorkers for his unique and unusual builds. I met George a number of years ago when he put his first of many creations in the “Cavalcade of Cars” car show. The first one he put in was called the “Alien,” a pod shaped 3-wheel motorcycle. George passed out guitar pic-size cutouts of an alien’s head to those who stopped by to gaze at his creation and talk about it.

Over the years George put several other unique builds in the show, and personally I liked his “Ford-a-lac.” It was a ’49 Ford body on a Caddy chassis with a scissor like mechanism that raised the body off the chassis. It had no real purpose but George felt it would create attention, as there wasn’t another vehicle that did that. It certainly drew a lot of attention at the show.

George’s close friend for over 50 years was Robert Viala, and when one of George’s creations was picked for the “Gene Winfield Great 6” to be displayed at the “Syracuse Nationals,” Robert hauled the vehicle for George to Syracuse. Gene Winfield was really impressed with George’s work as his vehicle was one of six picked for display with over 150 entrants put before Gene. Robert said that George was in his glory talking to everyone at the banquet about his builds.

Just before George passed away he was working on a 4-passenger cycle, which was to sport a Volvo S60 turbo motor. His son has the cycle now and hopes to finish it someday. George passed away at the age of 79 from Parkinson’s disease.

A unique builder who will be missed by many.

(SEE PHOTOS ON NEXT PAGE)
Bowling Green Adventure

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16)
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