The Newsletter Of The Mopar Club/San Diego

PentaGram

www.moparclubsandiego.org

JULY 2007

Last month I raved about the SRT Experience that I did at Las Vegas Speedway. The program, hosted by Be Petty pro drivers was a hoot. They not only looked out for everyone's safety, but they made sure that we had a lot of fun. First class, all the way.

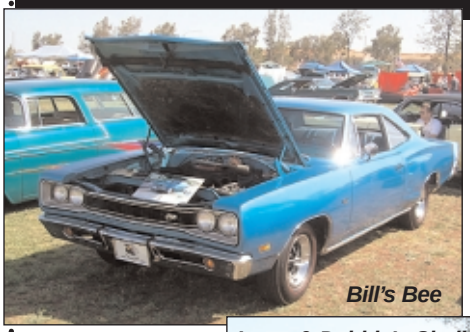
Well, this month's rant is about the SRT cars that we drove. If you are thinking about a new car in the $40 k range, you could do a lot worse than an SRT/6 Crossfire or SRT/8 Chrysler 300, Dodge Magnum, or all-wheel drive Jeep. The Viper is in a class that is above my station. But so are the others, now that I think about it

But what cars. The two seater supercharged Crossfire is at true luxury sports car. I don't think my six foot frame could ever get used to the small cabin, which is too bad because the car has all the performance I'd want. It was actually the quicker in the drag race event then the SRT/8 cars. It felt like it was on rails in the turns, and it stopped on a dime. All four wheels, it seemed like. As I said, it's small.

The SRT/8's all offered serious performance, too. But all were all different. The Magnum gives huge interior room. The Charger delivers a four door sedan configuration, as does the 300, but it's more upscale in its appointments. The Jeep has the baddest persona of the bunch, squatted down on its huge tires. On the road course, all the SRT/8's haul the mail with 425 horsepower. Each has an interior featuring a rich blend of faux brushed metal, carbon fiber and wood. Each have seats with lots of bolstering (you need it) and un-faux suede leather inserts. The Jeep was very impressive but stiff riding. All of them all accelerated, handled and braked like no known 4500 pound vehicle. Interestingly, I liked the 300 best. Turns out its suspension is a little softer then the others. I figured I must be getting old. But I think I liked it because it had a little more body roll then the others. I guess I've grown used to my 40 year old Barracuda, which I now realize has a ton of body roll. It would probably be a good drag race against the SRT/8's, but it doesn't brake worth a hoot. As for mileage, my 17 mpg doesn't compare with the 25mpg of the newer lineup. And my vinyl seats, ergonomically speaking, suck.

Oh, yeah. If you like really efficient a/c while you thrash your car, splendid sounds from the surround speakers connected to the magnificent Sirius radio, and the security of a gps NAV system, well, don't buy a 'Cuda. -Bob Gough, Y'r 'umble Ed'tr /Prez

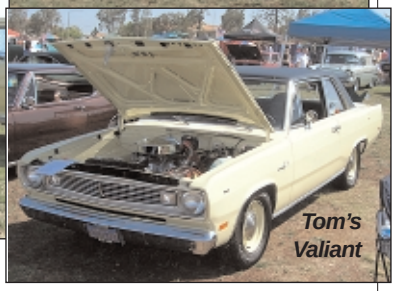
Whole lotta racin'!!!



Bill's Bee

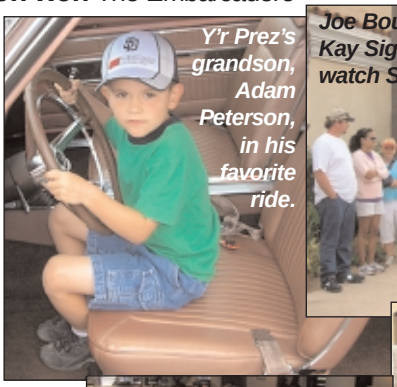
Jessie Bowers

Larry & Debbie's Challenger



Tom's Valiant

Sat June 16 Miramar Marine Air Station Jessie Bowers, Tom Ferreira, Larry & Debbie Johnson and Bill Widman were there. Bill won $50, which he returned to the charity. **Sun June 17 Pontiac Pow Wow** The Embarcadero had lots of cars, and Dave Lancaster and Bill Baugh attended. His Hemi took President's Choice. **Sun June 24 Mopars @ The Fair** Terry Ulmer, Jim & Kay Signorelli, Shannon and Cheryl Corkill, and Dave Lancaster got in for free that day. Steve Berroth's 'Bird was on display inside. **Fri July 7 Escondido Cruise** Kristy Keller took a trophy with her bad Hemi Pro Street. **Ted "Diego" Montano** reports that his stroked small block Duster is going faster. At **Famosa** in Bakersfield, Ted got a 10.41 @ 128 mph (from a previous best 10.54 @ 127). **Sat July 28 Club Photo Day** Robert Genat will shoot our Club at the trolley station behind Qualcomm Stadium at 4:30pm. Dust off your ride and get in the shot!



Y'r Prez's grandson, Adam Peterson, in his favorite ride.

Joe Bourdage, Cheryl Corkill, Kay Signorelli & Brendon watch Shannon buff his 'Bird

Terry's Hot Cuda

Steve's 'Bird @ the indoor display

Jim & Kay's Duster

Dave "The King" Lancaster & Edie

Profile

get by with a little help from my friends

Teamwork. It's the buzzword of management consultants. Build teamwork and success in your venture is a slam dunk. But among Mopar enthusiasts, independence is more the norm. After all, the car hobby is dominated by Chevys. Mopar fans are the True Free Thinkers and tend to go our own way.

So, imagine trying to restore a vintage Mopar with a team of folks that share equally in ownership, time spent on the restoration, and driving time of the car. Impossible, you say?

Well, this three owner, team-built 1970 Plymouth AAR 'Cuda is a success story because the team consists of members have different expertise, and each shares the final vision for the project. But mostly because they are friends. And they want to keep it that way.

Actually, two are father and son: Woody Widman and his dad Bill. The third member of the troika is Curt Bogdan. And this story begins with Curt.

Back in Chicago in 1980, it was, that Curt, a junior in high school, bought this then ten year old AAR. It had all the stuff that a young hot rodder wanted,starting with the venerable 340c.i. T/A V-8 with Six-Pack carburation, four speed, and High Impact paint in the Tor-Red hue. But it had seen a beater's life. The car had 4.30 rear gears, headers, and lots of rubber in the rear wheel houses, and 50k on the odo. Unafraid, Curt plunked down his life's savings of $3 thousand bucks onto the fender and was proudly driven home in his first car by his buddy, as Curt was too young to have a license.. When his dad saw, or rather heard, them pull into the driveway, he told Curt "Buying that thing is the biggest mistake of your life."

Over the next seven years, Curt managed to get a repaint of the sheetmetal in the AAR's original color, using the best lacquer of the day, but losing the "Shockwave" and AAR emblems. And he pulled the engine and rebuilt it with new parts, retaining the stock bore. In 1987, he and his AAR then moved west to the San Diego area. Here, he met Woody and the two quickly became good friends, a friendship built around their mutual interest in vintage Mopars. Curt's interest was in the things that he could put a wrench or screwdriver to, while Woody was interested in the historical aspects of Mopar Correctness. He was influenced by his dad, Bill, who owns the '68 Superbee (*PentaGram* July 2003), bought new as the family Widman's basic transportation, that is resplendent in it's original paint, interior and drivetrain to this day, a testament to Bill's prowess in car maintenance and detailing.

But Curt needed cash to set himself up in a business, and reluctantly decided the he needed to sacrifice his AAR. The car would have to go to a good home, however, and he figured that Woody and Bill would be perfect. Curt lobbied the Widman's for a couple of years to buy his 'Cuda, but other car projects had them tied up. Besides, they knew that Curt would soon regret selling the first car he ever owned, and they didn't want that to happen, especially if the car wound up in their garage. Finally, Woody proposed a radical idea to Curt and his dad: a three way equal ownership. Curt would receive the cash he needed, he would still retain a share of ownership, and the AAR would benefit from the combined interest in completing the restoration. It was win-win. And win. Besides, they had a successful 3-way ownership of a Challenger, already.

The AAR owned by Clubmembers Curt Bogdan and Woody and Bill Widman came from the factory with Tor Red paint and a four speed Pistol Grip shifter with console. When the time is right, the console will be re-installed. Chrome side exit exhaust tips were part of the AAR package. Below Right: Woody and Curt with the AAR, and far right, Bill with his Superbee at the Miramar show. Bill won $50 which he returned to the charity.

Well, as the AAR project commenced under new management, the goal has changed along the way. Yeah, Woody wanted the correct graphics and Bill wanted the car cleaned up and the nearly 20-year old paint buffed up. All that was done, but Curt wanted a little more power and drivability for the street. Well, Woody and Bill liked that idea, too. So, a plan was formulated. And it centered around a road trip to Houston where the 35th anniversary of T/A cars was to celebrated at the Lone Star Shoot Out in the summer of 2005. First to go were the beat up headers and deep rear gears. Replacing them were a primo set of vintage Hooker headers and a 3.55 differential with Sure Grip. Curt then proposed to bolt on some horsepower in the form of a pair of Edelbrock aluminum cylinder heads with closed chambers. He also installed a set of Harland-Sharp roller rockers, and to ensure an engine friendly with pump gas, thick Cometic head gaskets were installed that yield a compression ratio of around 9:1. Curt also installed a new clutch and rebuilt the carbs.

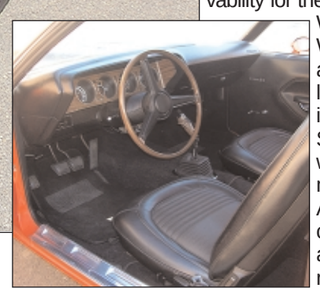
Meanwhile, Woody busied himself with the correctness of the exterior and interior, and Bill massaged the finishes to a gleaming shine. The car was deemed ready for the road at 9pm the day before the Curt and Woody left for Houston at 5am. Bill would meet them later at the airport. His experience told him that the Cuda's lack of space in the rear seat and trunk might jeopardize the friendship.

Well, the AAR got them to Houston without a hitch. And the three partners each enjoyed equal stints at the wheel. But the car show event fell short of their expectations as the chaos of Hurricane Katrina resulted in a meager turnout of the rare cars from Plymouth and Dodge.

So progress has been made and the AAR has proven to be a driver with some respectable street performance with a proper Mopar look and a show-car condition. Future plans call for a proper rotisserie resto worthy of concours status, with all the original parts. But Curt, Woody and Bill are currently having too much fun driving the 'Cuda, and who wouldn't?

Sounds like three way car ownership is just the way to foster a great friendship.

In 1970, Plymouth built about 2500 AAR 'Cudas and Dodge built a similar number of T/A Challengers as street versions of their Trans Am race cars. The 'Cudas were prepared and raced by Dan Gurney's All American Racers, hence the AAR emblem. Mopar pulled the plug on the race and street car programs after the first year. The blacked out hood is fiberglass and the scoop is functional.



Left: the T/A engine is a special casting of the 340 c.i. small block and features adjustable offset rockers and Six Pack induction.

Upcoming Events

- **Mopar Club All American Car Show IX** Sat July 14 in Carlsbad at Westfield's Camino Real Plaza in thw SW parking lot by Sears auto repair. Bring yout ride & help out w/ the show!! call Tom 760-458-5780
- **Mopar Club Photo Day** Sat July 29, 4:30p Qualcomm Trolley Station. 1 car/membership, call Bob 858/292-5344
- **Main Street America,** Sun July 29, 8a-2p, Embarcadero Park North, $20 before 7/23, $30 after, 619/660-8071
- **Park In The Park** Sat Aug 4, 9a-2p, Clairemont Community Park, $10 pre 7/24, $15 gate, info CNC-SD@san.rr.com
- **Mopar Club Nite @ Blast From The Past**, Tues Aug 7th, 5p-8p, Park @ 3rd Ave. Chula Vista by Fuddruckers. Cruise on down!
- **Mopar Club Nite @ Cruisin' Grand,** Escondido Fri Aug 17, preferred parking 4-8p call Bob 858/292-5344
- **Run To The Hills Barona Casino,** Sat Aug 18 8:30-4p, $15 pre July 15/$20 after 619/607-7626
- **Picnic By The Bay** Sun Aug 26, Embarcadero Park North,9a-2:30p, $25 pre 8/18, $30 after, 858/569-0738
- **Monday Nite Car Club** 6:30p Tuesdays VFW Hall 12650 Lindo Lane, Lakeside www.mncc.cc
- **East County Cruisers** 6:30p Tuesdays, Tyler's taste of Texas BBQ 576 N. 2nd St, El Cajon
- **Fallbrook Rods & Relics** 7-9p, Sat. Sunrize Cafe, State Rt 76 @ Mission Rd. Bonsall
- **La Mesa Cruise** Thur 4-8p
- **Clairemont Cruisers** 5-8p 4th Sat Woodies Chili Dogs Clairemont Town Square
- **Santee Lakes** every Fri. 4-8p, $2 for entry
- **Crusin' Italian Style,** Pernicano's, 1588 E. Main, El Cajon, ea. Thur nite 619/338-5225
- **Chicken Pie Diner,** 14727 Pomerado Rd., Poway, ea. Wed, 6-9p
- **The Malt Shop** Every Friday, 6p, 3615 Midway
- **Home Town Buffet** 1st Sat each month 9am, Main St. El Cajon, host King Pins
- **Dalton's Roadhouse** 1st Sunday each month Noon-4p 775 Center Dr. San Marcos
- **Cruise Nite Ramona** 5-7p Sun, Denny's State Rt 76 @ Main St. 760/789-0513
- **Boll Weevil/Chief Auto Parts** 6-8p last Tues of month, 169 Rancho Santa Fe Rd, San Marcos
- **Fred's Old Fashioned Burgers** 1st, 3rd & 5th Sat ea. month, 2754 Alpine Blvd, Alpine, 5p, **Clairemont Cruisers** 4th Sat 5-p, Woody's Hot Dogs in Cl'mont Town Square
- **Monday Nite Car Club** Tues 6:30p, VFW Hall 12650 Lindo Lane, Lakeside
- **East County Cruisers,** Tues 6:30p, Tylers Texas BBQ 576 N. 2nd St, El Cajon
- **Coco's Restaurant** 11a-3p 3rd Sun 16759 Bernardo Center Drive, Rancho Bernardo
- **Casa De Oro Cafe** 5p 2nd & 4th Sat, 9809 Campo Rd, Spring Valley
- **Cajon Classic Cruise**, Wed 5-8pm

Classifieds

As a tangible benefit to being a member of The Mopar Club, you get free ads. Give Bob a fax 858/292-5344 or better e-mail dgough1@san.rr.com

For Sale: '03 Dodge Grand Caravan Sport 55kmi., $15,900.00 3.8 L. V6, white/gray exc. condition, always garaged/factory maintained,100k trans. factory ext. warranty, new Michelin tires, brakes/rotors,16" alloys,Touring Suspension, power sliding door/gate, roof rack, bra, cargo tray, Marc @ 760-902-4800

For Sale: Slant 6 engines, $500 & $600; 331 hemi, comp/apart $2000; (2)-'56 Chrysler 300's, (2)-'55 Imperial coupes; '64 Dodge Polara conv., $15k; '63 Dart conv., $4500 Slant 6 in car + 273 V-8, all need resto. For info send SASE to William Francis, PO Box 518, Alpine, CA 91903 619/445-0901

For Sale: Dodge Ram, 137k miles, extras, $12k call Bobby cell 760/685-1858, home 760/787-9772

For Sale: A complete 273 cubic inch engine and Torqueflite transmission from a '65 Dodge Coronet. This engine has 70,000 easy miles and runs beautifully. It is complete from air cleaner to oil pan and includes the starter, exhaust manifolds, distributor, alternator, pulleys and fan. This engine has factory adjustable rocker arms. $300 for the entire package. Call Robert Genat at 760-633-4878

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