The Newsletter Of The Mopar Club/San Diego

PentaGram

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APR 2007

What a month. The local car shows and cruises have started. Everybody's wondering who's the father of Anna's baby girl. Jim and Kay put on another great cruise and host the Club picnic in the backyard of their beautiful Ramona home. The nightly news is all about speculation as to the father of Anna's baby. It seems that half The Mopar Club went to Las Vegas, including Mike and Linda Mattern, Jim Collins, and, Loni and Bill Andrews, who trailered their show cars. Trailering an old C-body to the swap meet was Lee Meyer. He sold it, and trailered home a '65 Dodge convertible B-body in dire need of a complete restoration.Trailering race cars were John Boville and Ted Montano. Marc Viau actually drove his race car to and from the event, getting 20 mpg running the a/c. He clicked off consistent 13.6 second et's, too. He probably turned off the a/c, though. This new era of Mopar muscle is impressive, indeed. Tom Garcia, Larry and Debbie Johnson, Steve Williams, Randy Carpentier, Jim Signorelli, Joe Bourdage and Joel Minor who wrenched on a S/S Hemi Cuda, Dan and Paula Smith up from Lake Havasu, Larry and Yolanda Dewees, Steve Sedlmeyer who drove all the way from his home in Las Vegas, Milton Karahadian, and Terry Ulmer were there. Everyone I bumped into kept asking the same thing: "Who's the father of Anna's baby?" Mike and Jim collected second place trophies for their magnificent cars, and the Andrew's stunning Super Bee and Mike Mattern's Cuda were given the high honor of being displayed at the Cannery during the official Saturday night event bash. Writers from *Mopar Muscle, Mopar Action* and *Mopar Collectors Guide* were covering all three days and the Saturday night party. They kept asking us Mopar *afficionados* if we knew who was the father of Anna's baby. They also took shots of the event, too, I'm pretty sure. The midway featured lots of manufacturers from whom you could buy everything from a transmission, to a supercharger, restoration trinkets, or even a whole S/S Dart or Cuda clone. Need engine parts? Suspension upgrades? How about a shop to convert your rusty Slant Six Valiant wagon into a New Age Hemi ride with air conditioning, a fuel injected 6.1 Hemi, independent front and rear suspension, leather seats and power windows? It was all there at the midway. Yep, it was a three day sensory overload,. But the whole time I couldn't help wondering: Just who is the father of Anna's baby? -Bob Gough, Y'r 'umble Ed'tr /Prez

Cruisin, showin' & racin'!!!

Ahh, springtime in the Cuyamacas. Fresh air, green grass, wildflowers, and 26 Mopars.

The post-cruise BBQ at Casa Signorelli

Cruisemeisters Jim and Kay Signorelli planned this spring run beginning at Casa Machado Restaurant with donuts, up the hills by Lake Cuyamaca, over to Julian, and Dudley's Bakery, and stopping at a couple of wineries in between. In spite of it being a little too early for flowers, some 26 member cars turned out for the 90 mile back country cruise, many with more than one seat occupied. The convoy included vintage Mopars in High Impact colors, the Superbird of Shannon Corkill, and trucks and passenger cars of contemporary vintage. At one stop John Halpin was approached by a member of the Julian town council who wanted us to consider organizing a car show in their town.The end of the run was Casa Signorelli, where the Club provided dogs, burgers, and sodas for a civilized picnic. Jerry Keller expertly handled the grill.

Mopars At The Strip, May 28-April 1 No foolin', this event has become the biggest Mopar gathering west of the Mopar Nationals. If you like drag racing, a car show, and swap meet, this is where you wanted to be. There was a midway with displays by national suppliers, including among many others, Indy Cylinder Head, upgraded trannys from Passon Performance and Keisler Engineering, the Supercharger Store was on hand with the '64 Hemi Dodge owned by Clubmember Steve Carter on display, Year One, and Direct Connection, formerly known as Mopar Performance, showing their Charger S/S. It actually went down the strip in 11.75 seconds. And racing their cars were Clubmembers Ted Montano, John Boville and Marc Viau. On April 1st, in the eliminations, Ted and John went three rounds in the Pro class of about 200 cars, and Marc went to the final of the New Hemi Challenge, losing with a red light launch in his SRT-8 300. He picked up 475 bucks on the bracket payout, though. No foolin'.

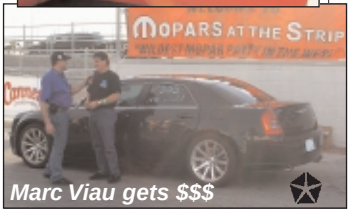
Bill and Loni Andrews Superbee.

Jim Collins' magnificent RO1 '65 Plymouth clone

John Boville

The 391 Hemi Charger S/S. I want it.

Ted "El Picoso" Montano



Marc Viau gets $$$

Profile

for whom the Bel tolls

The bane of a classic Mopar restoration project is the many changes done to a car by its previous owners. The older the car, often the greater number of owners who've unleashed their best thinking that was gleaned from a car mag, throwing away what are now hard-to-find oem parts and replacing them with the chrome Goody Of The Day. And a typical forty year old muscle car can be expected to have a lot of owners like that.

This 1966 Plymouth Hemi Belvedere II hardtop was purchased by Clubmember Steve Berroth on April 1st, and is no exception. Steve has researched the car's ownership history, as he's done on his 1970 440 Superbird, by spending day and night on Yahoo people search, and by making over a hundred phone calls. Not atypical for a forty year old performance car, Steve has found that this one has had nine previous holders of its keys. And you'd be right if you guessed that a lot of changes were made.

The story of this Hemi Bel begins with Robert Henshall, a deputy sheriff in Billings, Montana. It seems that Deputy Bob used the Hemi Bel as his undercover car, a savvy use of it's Plain Jane looks and unearthly power, wouldn't you say? From there, on some unknown date the car moved into the garage of another Billings resident, Ray Warren, a collector of muscle cars. He did little with it but kept it in his garage until sometime in 1977 or 1978, when he sold the Bel to Robert Carlson for $3500.

And this is where the history gets interesting, because Robert had no intention of keeping the 425 advertised horses tied up in a barn. Robert went racing with the car. And typical of racers of the time, everything took a back seat to the number one priority of going faster in the 1/4 mile. During the two years that Robert owned the car, he made numerous changes to improve drag strip performance, including trading out the original, but tired, solid-lifter Hemi for a fresh hydraulic-lifter Hemi from a 1968 Road Runner. Of course, that new engine got a wilder camshaft. And while he was at it, he swapped the original 727 automatic tranny for a race prepped 727 with a high-stall converter and manual shift valve body, and he replaced the 8.75" axle with a Dana 60 with 4.88 gears from a 1966 Charger. He also removed the heater core, the windshield washer system, and replaced the bench seat with buckets. The original steel wheels were replaced with aluminum alloys. And to protest the Hemi ban in stock cars, Robert removed all the Plymouth and Belvedere badges, including the tail finish panel. He kept the "426"badges on the fenders, however. Thus equipped, Robert ran Stock Eliminator and B Stock Automatic at Lewistown and Glendive drag strips in Montana, among others. Robert Carlson is currently helping Steve locate the original engine, which he feels is still in the Billings area. He's 60 years of age and is still running down life a quarter mile at a time.

It was at the Lewistown drag strip that the Hemi was seen by its next owner, Jeff Claassen, who bought it in 1979 and raced it at Lewistown from 1979-1986 Jeff has agreed to send to Steve photos and time slips from when he owned and raced the car. Jeff never touched Robert's headers, the original carbs with drilled throttle plates, and radical cam. Then Scott Smith of California bought it in 1986, but it's unclear if Scott registered the car as it was quickly sold again. Since 1986 the Bel has had three additional owners in California. None did little more than hope to restore it someday, except the last owner, Bill Bonnaud, a true Mopar man. He got the car back into running shape, including swapping in a stock cam. Bill raced it at Brotherhood Raceway on Terminal Island, Carlsbad Raceway, and Pomona and has supplied Steve with pictures and time slips from every run as racers never throw away time slips! Bill reluctantly offered the car on e-Bay last month. Steve noticed the ad and phoned the owner and asked to see the car. Over a three hour meeting, Steve convinced Bill of his intention to do a proper restoration, and a deal was struck. The Bel arrived in Steve's driveway on Saturday, April 7, the very day these photos were shot.

Now, it's not unusual for a forty year old performance car to have a lot of owners, and for a couple of them to have actually used that performance. The Hemi meant to those owners that there was a new sheriff in town, or for one owner, an undercover deputy sheriff. And it's not unusual for the car to be modified for track duty. The unusual thing about this Hemi Bel is that racers Robert, Jeff and Bill saved or rediscovered all the original parts that were removed for go-fast equipment. When Robert sold it to Jeff, boxfulls of oem parts accompanied the car. And every time it changed hands, those boxes went with the car and each owner kept adding to the collection. So Steve has been happily opening up those boxes, finding the original badges, the exhaust manifolds, the windshield washer system, steel wheels and hubcaps, the whole enchilada. Even the original front bench seat was saved.

Steve's now trying to locate the owner of the 1968 Road Runner that donated its Hemi to the Bel. It's his intention to re-unite that car with its original engine, and find his original or a correct date code Hemi block for the Bel. This will not violate the integrity of the restoration, as Chrysler did not match engine and chassis numbers until 1968. Meanwhile, Steve thinks he's located the original tranny, still on Robert's shelf in Montana. As for the sheetmetal and trim, it's all in remarkably straight condition, attesting to the car never suffering the indignity of a parking lot or prolonged outdoor storage. Only a ding on the left front fender and a ding on the hood, which was acquired when it was slammed shut on a wrench atop the chrome air cleaner, need straightening. No doubt it's a battlefield injury that occurred between dragstrip laps.

Currently, Steve is wrestling with the restoration philosophy for his new project. Sure, Steve intends to re-install all the original parts to an "as-delivered" condition, and get the car properly repainted. That approach befits a car as rare as this Hemi Belvedere.

But what to do with those numbers on the rear quarter windows? Hot dang, they are cool.

Steve Berroth bought this '66 Hemi Plymouth Belvedere II hardtop on April 1st, of this year and there's no jokin' about it. The car was a serious contender in Stock Eliminator and B Stock Automatic in the Montana region during the late '70's. At Carlsbad Raceway during the '95 Antique Drags, the car posted 11.5 second e.t's at 116 mph. Still in its race trim, minus the Plymouth badges that were removed by a previous owner to protest the ban on Hemi's, Steve is planning a full restoration of the B-Body back to "as-delivered" condition. Interestingly, many of the oem parts were replaced by race pieces over the years, but the past owners kept all the original parts, down to the original steel wheels and hubcaps.

Right: the bench seat interior is augmented by three gauges, clamped onto the steering column.

A very happy Steve and his "66HEMI"

The rear tail finish panel was also removed. and the "Street Racer " street slicks in size L70 x 15's present the Belvedere with an aggressive stance.

Right: the venerable 426 Hemi that resides between the fenders of the Belvedere is from a '66 Charger, one of many changes by a previous owner who was more interested in low e.t.'s than in historical correctness. Steve is on the trail of the owner of that Charger to re-unite that car with its original engine, and he's tracking down the whereabouts of the Belvedere's original engine, as well. The carbs, linkage, air cleaner and all accessories, however, are original to the '66 Belvedere.

Upcoming Events

- **RaceLegal 1/8 Mile Drags** At the Q, 6p-12, Fridays May 11 & 25 www.racelegal.com
- **San Diego Motorcycle & Hot Rod Expo** Apr 14-15 @ The Q, 10a-10p Sat, 10a-6p Sun, $15/day, $25 weekend, RaceLegal 1/8 mile drags
- **1st East County Cruisers Poker Run** Sat Apr 14, 9a @ Pinnacle Peak Restaurant, 7927 Mission Gorge Rd, 70 mi, $10 entry www.eastcountycruisers.com
- **1st Credit Unions & Cars for Kids** car show Sun Apr 22, 9-2p Fun Bike Center, 5755 Kearny Villa Rd. $30 reg by Apr 1, $40 after www.sdcapter.org, 619/588-9155
- **Auto Products Recycling Event** Sat Apr 28, 9a-1p MWWD Operatins Cntr, 5571 Topaz Way @ Kearny Villa Rd, get rid of your old mtr oil, filters, coolant, batteries
- **Motor Cars on Min Street** 10a-3p Isabella & Orange Ave in Coronado, $20 preApr22, $25 after, pre-'73, www.coronadomainstreet.com
- **Heartbeat Classic** Sun Apr 29 9a-3p, Bates Nut Farm, 15954 Woods Valley Rd, $25 pre Apr25, $30 after, www.heartbeatclassicchevys.com
- **2nd Rev'd Up 4 Kidz** Sun Apr 18, 10a-3p, Vic Edelbrock's Garage 501Madrid Ave, Torrance, $40 entry, www.revvedup4kidz.com
- **Spring Fling XXI** Woodley Park, Van Nuys, May 5-6, show & swap, www.cpwclub.com Call Bob 858/292-5344 for caravan info
- **SoCal Shootout** May 26-27, California Speedway Fontana show, drags, swap www.moparshootout.com
- **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 760/723-4020
- **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 Dr.
- **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, food/cash
- **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 Apr 11, 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: '06 Dodge Magnum SRT8, 13k miles, $39,950.00, pristine condition, always garaged/detailed monthly, SRT option group 1 & 111, Sirius radio, GPS, side air bag, power sun roof, Mods: (excess of $5k) KW adjustable coil & shocks, Flowmasters, GS Motorsports fan mod & ESP mngt., 180 thermostat, Mopar cold air intake, SRT 8 floor mats, clear bra, tinted front glass, '07 slotted rotors dustless C-TEK brake pads, Marc @ 760-902-4800

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