



# T-rific T Tales



October, November, December 2019



Volume 4, Issue 4

*Newsletter of the T-Rific T's Club of West Central Wisconsin*

Happiness is the new rich. Inner peace is the new success. Health is the new wealth. Kindness is the new cool.



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<https://t-rificts.com>

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## Newsletter Info

Send newsletter items to Pauline Spiegel by email:  
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## CLUB EVENT INVITE: BUFFALO COUNTY BACK ROAD FALL TOUR - OCTOBER 4, 2019

Ken and LaVonne Ganz will host a Buffalo County back road tour on Friday, October 4, rain or shine. We will start from our home (S1440 State Road 35, Alma, WI) located approximately three miles south of Nelson, WI on highway 35, at 10:15 a.m. Watch for the log house on the left side of highway 35 two places south of Deer Creek road. Our plan is to avoid gravel roads as much as possible—almost all the roads that we will travel are paved.



Because of the numerous hills and winding roads, we suggest that more modern cars be used; we will be driving our 1967 Ford Mustang. Model Ts may not be up to Buffalo County's hilly terrain and steep roads.

We will make a stop for lunch (eating place not yet determined). Other sightseeing and points of interest will be additional stops along the way. Bring a camera if you would like.

Please RSVP Ken and LaVonne (or for questions) call 608-685-3116 or email [ken\\_ganz@yahoo.com](mailto:ken_ganz@yahoo.com). If no answer, please leave a message. We will get back to you if necessary. We will also need to know how many people will be in your car so we can plan our lunch stop.

We have done several tours like this in the past, and are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible. We have always had a great time and can assure you that you will see some beautiful country along the way.

## FAREWELL TO BOB BAKER

*Bob was a special member of our club. He will be remembered for his love of vintage cars and BIG smile. We hope some of you can attend his celebration of life October 22.*



Robert (Bob) T. Baker Sr., 80, of the Town of Hallie passed away Saturday August 24, 2019 at home after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.

Bob was born in Eau Claire, WI to LaMoine H. and Mary Jane (Melville) Baker. Bob married his wife Sally of 60 years on August 8, 1959. Before retirement he ran his own business Baker Commercial Art Service in Eau Claire for many years. Bob was a charter member of the Indianhead Old Car Club and the Chippewa Valley A's, and also a member of the Terrific T's, Rolling Wheels Vintage Motorcycle Club, National Buick Club, as well as a few others. Bob also played Tuba in the Eau Claire Municipal Band for many years under the direction of "Sarge" Boyd. With his association with these groups and others he made many friends throughout the years.

Bob is survived by his wife Sally, four sons, Robert Jr., Michael (Sheryl), Patrick (Stephanie), and David (Joni), grandchildren Logan, Cameron, Brianna, Shannon, and Paris, and step-grandchildren Alyssa, Ramie, and Robbie.

Bob is further survived by one brother and five sisters, Mary Ellen (Glenn) Moser, Joanne (Terry) Halvorson, John (Wendy) Baker, Sue Moseley, Jane Gore, and Cindy (Dan) Lavelle, nieces and nephews, good friends Dave Ulry, Randy McIlquaham, Pat Stertz, and many others.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

The family would like to thank the staff at the Mayo Cancer Center and Mayo Hospice.

A Celebration of Life will be held Sunday September 22 from 1-5 at the Eagles Club in Hallie. Family and friends may leave online condolences at [www.smithfuneralec.com](http://www.smithfuneralec.com)





## TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM

One purpose of the T-Rific T's is to get more Model T's restored and on the road. To help with this goal, members were asked to volunteer in their area of expertise so that when a fellow member needs help, he/she knows who to call:

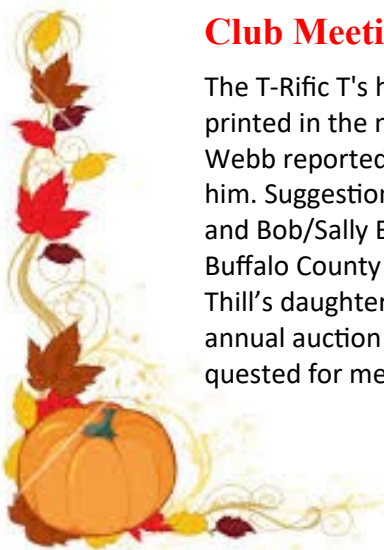
- ♦ Bill Glass: 715-723-7202 or 715-210-5530
- ♦ Del Hanson: 715-234-7308 or 715-205-9024
- ♦ Dan Doughty: 715-835-0685
- ♦ Larry Hanson: 715-837-1578
- ♦ Brian Tourville: 715-664-8830

- ♦ Ernie Loga: 715-832-7302
- ♦ Denny Mickesh (electrical): 715-723-9719
- ♦ Stephanie Culver (fuel or ignition): 715-822-4015



### Club Meeting Minutes - August 4:

The T-Rific T's held a short meeting at the Chippewa Car Show. Secretary report approved as printed in the newsletter. Treasurer's report approved as presented - \$1653.03 balance. Mike Webb reported that he has a resource that can make hard to find old car parts - just contact him. Suggestion to email members regarding sending "Thinking of You" cards to Linda Hanson and Bob/Sally Baker. Ken and LaVonne Ganz will coordinate a club fall event car tour through Buffalo County backroads. The fall club meeting will be October 13 and hosted by Jim and Nita Thill's daughter Connie Goss at Nita's home in Altoona. Nita is donating Jim's old car parts to the annual auction held at the meeting, along with items club members bring. RSVPs will be requested for meal planning.



### **CLUB EVENT INVITE:** **Fall Fling/Meeting and Auction**

Sunday, October 13, 2019

Nita Thill Home

430 S. Beach Drive, Altoona

Gather starting around noon

Lunch around 12:30 p.m.

Exchange stories about Model Ts and vintage/old cars.

Bring Items for Auction

Thill family also donating

Jim's Model T parts.

There may be a Special Raffle.

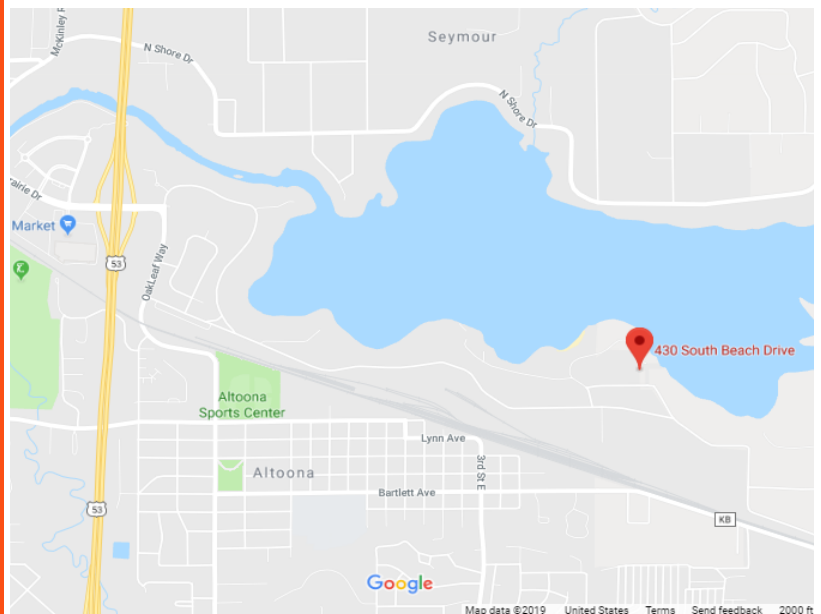
Hosted by Nita Thill and Family

Please RSVP to Pauline

715-404-5774; jpspie210@yahoo.com

Call or email Pauline if

detailed directions are needed.





## CLUB EVENT

### Joint T-Club/Old Fire Truck Club Picnic and Show July 28, 2019 Carson Park

The two clubs joined together for a FUN time, delicious picnic, and awesome show at July 28 at the Chippewa Valley Museum in Carson Park. Unfortunately, the event was shortened by rain but a good time was had by all. Also a wonderful opportunity to make some new acquaintances.

Because of the rain, John and Pauline took a tour of the museum, which was AWESOME and will share those photos in the January newsletter.

## INDIANHEAD SWAP MEET AND CAR SHOW AUGUST 4, 2019 CHIPPEWA FALLS





## CLUB MEMBER SPOTLIGHT STORY - KEN GANZ

Shortly after LaVonne and I retired from teaching in Eau Claire, we purchased property near Alma, WI, and moved there in 1998. At that time I had heard about an antique car collection owned by a gentleman by the name of Willard Brunkow that lived just about 4 miles from where we were now living. Having always had an interest in old cars, I decided to go to see him and his collection one day. Needless to say, I was very impressed with what I saw. As time went by, I continued to go back occasionally to see Bill and his cars. This eventually became a regular routine, and I was soon helping him with maintaining his cars and traveling to car shows with Bill.

Bill had a variety of cars from the early 1900's into the 1930's (that may be an article for another time). One of the cars that caught my attention at that time was a 1912 Model T Ford speedster. I think that right there and then I knew that someday I would like to build one of my own. For one reason or another, I just wasn't able to find time to concentrate on any one vehicle long enough to take on that project. Several years later I was talking to Bill Glass about Model T Fords, and I mentioned to him that I was interested in purchasing an early (pre-1915) Model T chassis that I could use for the purpose of building a speedster. I asked him if he knew of anyone who might have one for sale. A couple of months later he called me to let me know that he, indeed, had found one that would meet my needs and that the price was quite reasonable. The only catch was that the car was located in Nebraska.

After a phone call to Ashland, Nebraska, LaVonne and I were off to bring home a pickup load of parts. This was not a single car, but rather a collection of parts that could be assembled to make a complete chassis. This was real baskets and boxes of a Model T parts. Fortunately, the person we purchased it from was an experienced Model T man and he carefully made sure that we had all the parts and pieces that we needed.

When we finished loading our car parts, Mike, the person we purchased the parts from, invited us to go with him to see his friend who had a huge collection of parts and accessories that would put us on the right track for completing most of the car without having to spend endless days looking for just the right piece that we would need. This was our lucky day as this was a man by the name of Homer Edmundson. Homer was a collector. For much of his life he owned a salvage business in Lincoln, NE, and he salvaged and collected

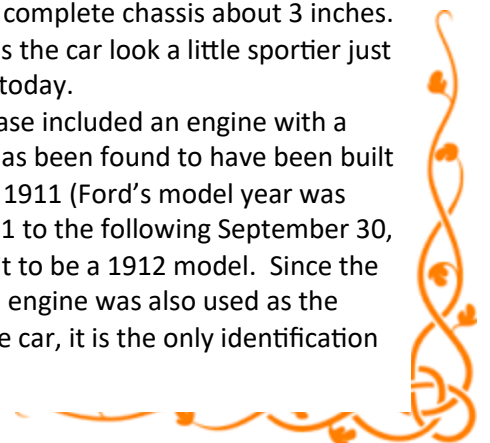
semitrailer loads of parts. We assumed that we would only be there for an hour or two—not so! I think we spent most of the rest of the day looking through his collection. There were 12 semitrailers full of parts, a large barn filled to the brim, a granary piled high with spoke wheels, and to top it all off his house was totally filled with antiques of all types. Homer loved to talk and showed us through all of it. When we left, we had five Model T spoked wheels, a set of brand new spin-off hubs with solid brass spinners, a brass horn, and memories that we will remember for the rest of our lives.

Before we move on, I think it is important to know that Henry Ford never built a Model T speedster for sale to the public. This is really an example of some very early attempts by individuals to customize the Model T to make it into something sporty, fast, and economical to build. You might say this is really an example of an early custom street rod. I don't know of any other automobile from that era that caught on with the general public, was affordable, and could easily be made into something other than what it was originally intended to be.

With the onset of winter and a desire to get started, my goal at that time was to complete the cleaning, rebuilding of many of the parts, and assembling and painting the chassis by the next spring. This would be the completion of phase one of the speedster chassis restoration.

With the exception of the hood, firewall, fenders, and the complete chassis, the body is completely custom built. This was available from the Rootlieb, Inc. Company in California. We ordered the complete kit that we assembled onto the chassis to complete that portion of the car. I did also receive a drop front axle along with the conversion kit. This allows the builder to lower the complete chassis about 3 inches. Of course that makes the car look a little sportier just as we still see them today.

My original purchase included an engine with a serial number that has been found to have been built late in November of 1911 (Ford's model year was from October 1, 1911 to the following September 30, 1912) which makes it to be a 1912 model. Since the serial number of the engine was also used as the serial number for the car, it is the only identification that I have.



**SPOTLIGHT STORY CONTINUED**

Model T's from that era did not have any type of identifying serial number stamped on any other part of the car. Along with the engine I also received a frame, a transmission, a radiator, front and rear axles, steering components, and other miscellaneous parts and pieces. Fenders and any other sheet metal that I needed were purchased through mail order suppliers and/or private individuals.

With any one hundred year old car, just about every piece needs to be cleaned of layers of dirt, rust, grease, or other accumulated coatings that may have collected over time. In addition, most parts need to be completely rebuilt and/or refurbished to make them serviceable once again. That certainly is true of what I had to do with this car. It did not occur to me at the time that I purchased the parts that I may need pictures of what I bought. The only photos that I have are a few that were taken during the time that I was preassembling the car to be sure that I had everything that I needed and that they would fit together properly before I began the painting and my final assembly.

The engine I received proved to be more of a problem than I expected. It turned out to be stuck and refused to turn over even with my best efforts. It sat on my shop floor for the better part of 3 months before it finally gave in to my constant badgering and hammering to get it to turn over. I used every solvent, rust remover, and elixir known to mankind to break it loose. Every time I walked past it I would take a heavy hammer and a short two by four in each cylinder and try to persuade it to budge. Finally, after all my efforts, I noticed a slight movement of one of the pistons as I was once again hammering. I could hardly believe my eyes when it reluctantly gave in to my continued and persistent efforts. I felt like I had finally concord all the obstacles that nature could present me with.

It was obvious that the engine needed a complete overhauling. That is when I approached Larry Hanson to see if I could persuade him to take on yet another engine in need of rebuilding. Being the really nice guy that he is and the fact that Larry just can't say "no" to anyone, he somewhat reluctantly agreed to help me out. But first he had other jobs waiting to be done plus he was trying to find time to complete a restoration on one of his own vehicles. Patience paid off, and Larry finally completed my engine. Thank you, Larry. What would we do without you? He did find a hairline crack in the block, but that was easily

corrected and welded. I was now ready to complete the assembly of the engine and install it on to the frame. This is when I ran into another bump in the road. After having installed the oil pan, I discovered that one of the back motor mounts was bent, and it would not line up with the mounting holes in the frame. Bill Glass cautioned me about trying to bend the motor mount as that could easily cause the oil pan to warp and that would lead to more headaches with oil leaks that may not be easy to stop. He did offer to help me to correct it. It just happens that he has a special table that is used just for the purpose of straightening this kind of problem. A little pulling, hammering, and heating soon brought everything back into shape. Now I was just about ready to move on to my next step. That was to rebuild the transmission and attach it to the engine.

By this time, I had finally decided that I could tackle the transmission on my own knowing that all the experts I may need were just a phone call away if I should find myself in over my head on this project. With my invaluable Ford restoration book ready at hand, I disassembled the transmission, cleaned and decided what parts I needed to replace. At this point I concluded that I would try replacing the Ford transmission disks with modern Chevrolet automatic transmission disks.

With just a slight amount of modification, the disks went in with very little difficulty. Everything else went rather smoothly. That was about the time that I was thinking that nothing else could stop me now! I was sure that I was ready for anything that may come next. That was when I discovered that I wanted to put a starter on this engine, but I didn't have anywhere to mount it. I called a friend who I knew had miscellaneous Model T parts at his shop and discovered that I needed a different housing and magneto for my transmission to accommodate the starter. As luck would have it, he had a complete 1919 engine and transmission that he would sell to me. Once again, thanks to Bill Glass, I was able to rebuild the magneto coils and get everything assembled and aligned and ready to go for the starter. One never knows where the road will lead when you take these things apart and attempt to rebuild them.

The assembly of the rear axle and differential were next on my list. Once again, Murphy's Law reared its ugly head, and I found myself faced with the need for a new pinion gear bearing and drive shaft bushings, etc. At about that time I decided it probably would be best if I replaced the rear axle bearings while I had everything apart. Surely, that would be the next thing that needed attention. Eventually it all came together and was ready for final assembly.

## SPOTLIGHT STORY CONTINUED

While all this was going on, I had the seats upholstered and they were now wearing beautiful red leather-like fabric. All of the brass (headlights, side lights, tail light, steering column, hand brake, gas tank filler cap, radiator, windshield frame and miscellaneous brackets and bolts) had been plated and/or polished and were awaiting the assembly of the body. I was now ready to tackle the body as the complete chassis was assembled and ready to go. Even though the body and fenders came as a kit, there was no guarantee that everything would simply bolt together without a hitch and it all would be just fine.

That just isn't the way things go with old cars. Since we did not have original fenders, it meant that the fenders wouldn't just bolt on without some adjustments. We needed to rework the fender brackets, make accommodations for the running boards, modify the rear springs, and adjust things to match up with the dropped front axle. The springs were the most difficult to deal with. The problem was that the back of the car now sat about 3 inches higher than the front of the car. Nobody told me that I needed to lower the back to make up for the difference between the front axle and the back axle. After searching the internet for information on how to go about doing this, I finally found a picture of a Model T speedster that showed a view of the back of the car. The springs needed to have the ends bent upward to allow the back of the car to drop down the needed amount to level it off with the front. With luck, I found a welding shop in Winona, MN, that could do that for me. Once again, we met that challenge and were ready to move on with the project.

Eventually everything finally came together, and completion was approaching without much more hassle. The main things were to get the wire wheels respoked and balanced, powder coated, new tires mounted, and put on the car. The seats needed to be put in place, and all the wiring needed to be completed.

At that point, all that was left to do was to get our club expert pin striping artist, Fred Shiffer, to come and do his magic with his little long bristled brush and apply the finishing touches. As usual, Fred did another outstanding job of pin striping on my car. If there is one thing that I have learned from this project, it is that the little things are what are important to doing a really nice job. It is the big things that make it look like progress has been made. There is no doubt that this project has been a real learning

experience. One just doesn't think of a Model T as being anything but an extremely simple automobile. It takes a project like this to give you an appreciation for the engineering and design that actually went into building these automobiles considering the knowledge, experience, and technology that was available to the automobile industry back in the early 1900's.

There is always a great deal of satisfaction in seeing everything come together to complete a project such as this. At the same time, it isn't just having the completed car when all is finished. The experience of taking a pickup load of parts and pieces and cleaning them, refurbishing them, and assembling them and making something out of it all leaves you with something that anyone can be

proud to say, "I did it myself."

**Photos on Next Page**



**1927 Model T Roadster**  
Great Shape  
Call Don DeSanto  
for more information  
**218-348-1126**

**2020 T-rific T Club Calendars**

Get your 2020 club calendar filled with pictures of T-rific T members, cars, and events.

Orders will be taken at the club tour October 4, the Fall Fling October 13 or by contacting Pauline Spiegel  
Phone: 715-382-4350 or 715-404-5774  
Email: [jpspie210@yahoo.com](mailto:jpspie210@yahoo.com)



PHOTOS TO COMPLEMENT SPOTLIGHT STORY

