

The Gas Line

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From the President's Corner:

Hello, and thanks to those who were able to attend our November meeting at the Idaho Falls Library. We solicited additional nominees for President, Vice President without success. Ginger volunteered to work with Joy to assume the role of secretary/treasurer when Joy moves. Since there was only one nominee who accepted the nominations, the President decided to hold the elections at the November meeting and allow everyone to enjoy the Christmas party without have to complete the elections. Four individuals were identified for the Board of Directors.

On November 9, 2024, the annual membership drive and garage tours were enjoyed by several members. The weather cooperated. The garages of Lou Rounds and Jon Walrath were toured. After the tour, the participants enjoyed lunch and each other's company at Papa Tom's Pizza. On November 13, 2024, Gary, Doug and I attended the Shelley City Council meeting and obtained approval to use the Shelley City Park for the Father's Day week-end swap meet and car show in 2025. The swap meet and car show will be on June 14th with the preparation being completed on June 13th. Thanks to Gary for taking the lead and addressing the Shelley City Council. I hope to see you at the Christmas party on December 7th at Valerie Hall at the North Hiway Café.

Bob Thompson



CHAPTER EVENTS

Dec 7: Christmas Party
See details in the meeting minutes section.

MEETING TREATS

Dec Christmas Party

NATIONAL EVENTS

EIVMCCA Meeting Minutes – 11-9-24

Minutes for the November meeting will be presented by Joy Eagle at our December meeting.

Eastern Idaho Chapter VMCCA Welcomes you to the

Yee-Ha! It's a Cowboy Christmas Party

December 7th, 12pm to 2pm, cost \$25/person



North Hi-Way Cafe
in the Valarie Hall,
460 Northgate Mile,
Idaho Falls
(Parking available
off of Cleveland St.)

MENU

Turkey dinner including
beans, tossed salad,
mashed potatoes, roll,
coffee, lemonade, or
water, and delicious pie
for dessert.

Western wear is encouraged!

Featuring - White Elephant Gift Exchange -

Visiting with friends about cars

Country Christmas Music

Collecting canned foods (or cash) for the Food Bank including a raffle

And a raffle item specifically for the ladies in our group!

If you can attend, please let us know by December 1st, we need a rough headcount.

Joy Eagle - joyfuleagle@aol.com - call or text 208-521-9344

For Love and Mercurys – 1954 Mercury Custom

By Daniel Strohl Updated March 26, 2024 in Classics, Hemmings Classic Car, Magazine

Most blind dates don't turn into love at first sight, but something clicked for Bernie Olds and Sandy McBride when Bernie's buddies set the two up to go to a Christmas party in 1957. "She loved the car," Bernie said. "I guess I was okay, too." See, Bernie picked Sandy up in his 1954 Mercury Custom two-door sedan, painted Parklane Green and fitted with Mercury's new overhead-valve V-8. Fresh from a stint in the Army, Bernie must have made an impression on Sandy as well; they dated for three years, married in 1960 and went on to have three children.

And the Mercury remained with them—at least up until the kids came along. "We had moved into the station wagon era," Bernie said. "The Mercury had to go; it was badly rusted, but had served us well, so after we purchased a station wagon, I cut the Mercury up and sent it to the scrap yard. I gave the engine—a 245hp 312-cu.in. V-8 that was a Ford-authorized rebuild—to my brother-in-law. I kept nothing else." Yet once the kids all left the house, Sandy informed Bernie, "We're going to have another 1954 Mercury someday."



With those marching orders, Bernie began looking for one back around 1990. "Not much of a selection to choose from," he said, noting that they didn't want a car with an automatic transmission, or any model from the Monterey series. That left just the 85,067 two-door hardtops, two-door sedans and four-door sedans in the Custom series to choose from. "Most were far away and impossible for us to see, much less pay for transportation."

Nevertheless, they eventually found a three-speed 1954 Mercury Custom two-door hardtop for sale in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. It was close enough to check out, but the \$4,200 asking price didn't jibe with their budget, especially considering the rusted floor and gobs of filler hiding underneath the relatively recent gray paint. A strap held down the front seat, so if you hit the gas, you all of a sudden went into the back seat," Bernie said. The stock 161hp 256-cu.in. Y-block V-8 ran well, though, and the seller had treated the car to new brakes. Bernie left his phone number with the seller, along with his \$2,800 offer. Two weeks later, the seller called to tell Bernie to come get the car.

With the filler removed, Bernie discovered that the floor, floor supports, and rocker panels all looked like so much Swiss cheese. (By the way, before we go much further, we should probably mention that Bernie had never performed any restoration work on an old car before he bought this Mercury; he ended up teaching himself—after starting this project at age 53—most of what he needed to know.) Bernie and Sandy had a number of parts on their wish list to find. "Many days we walked in the rain looking for a missing Mercury part," Bernie said. "Some years we would make a vacation out of our shopping trips."

Bernie and Sandy completed the Mercury's restoration in 2005 with a road trip to the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan—some 650 miles away—for the International Mercury Owners Association's annual convention. Bernie and Sandy, by the way, still act like newlyweds more than 50 years after first meeting. So maybe Sandy did stick around for more than just the car. Or perhaps she always knew they'd have another Mercury to cruise around in.

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Send me your car photos
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**Eastern Idaho VMCCA Garage Tour:
November 9, 2024**

