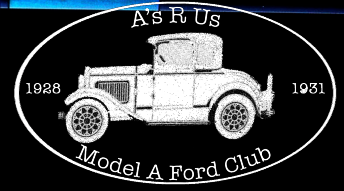
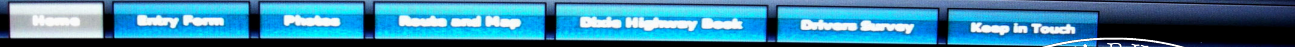


Driving the Dixie



Welcome to "Dri

# BACKFIRE

Chicago Southland Chapter, Model A Ford Club of America

VOLUME 14

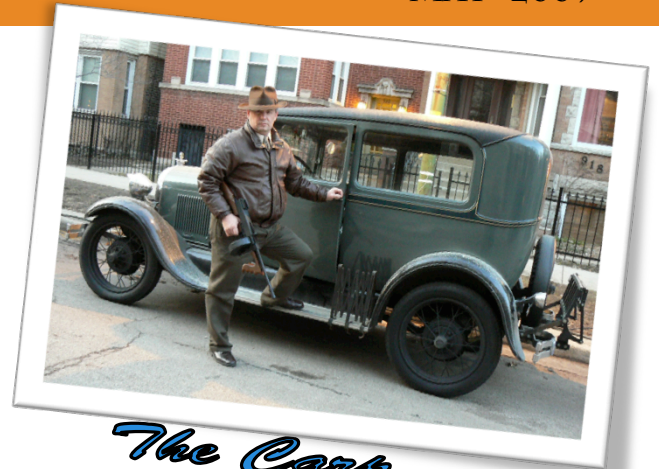
ISSUE 5

MAY 2009

## New Website!

<http://www.drivingthedixie.sinthasite.com>

Well at the last meeting I offered to setup a web site for "Drivin' the Dixie" and it is done! This will be a big help in collecting data on cars and where people come from. There also is a questionnaire to help in the feedback to try to improve what we are doing in the future. Please take a look at the site fill out the forms and see how it works. Many thanks to Karen Kolenda with advising me on how the site was looking in the PC world and Joe Krygowski for teaching me on the setup of the site. Joe has linked the A's R U's website and MAFCA to us. With a little luck this will be a great tool. Phil



*The Carp  
Editor and Chief*

### Inside this Months Issue:

- Members and friends Memory lane
- Lisota's Garage tech talk review
- Jim's Dixie History
- Meeting synopsis

**Header Picture:**

Web page open for "Driving the Dixie"

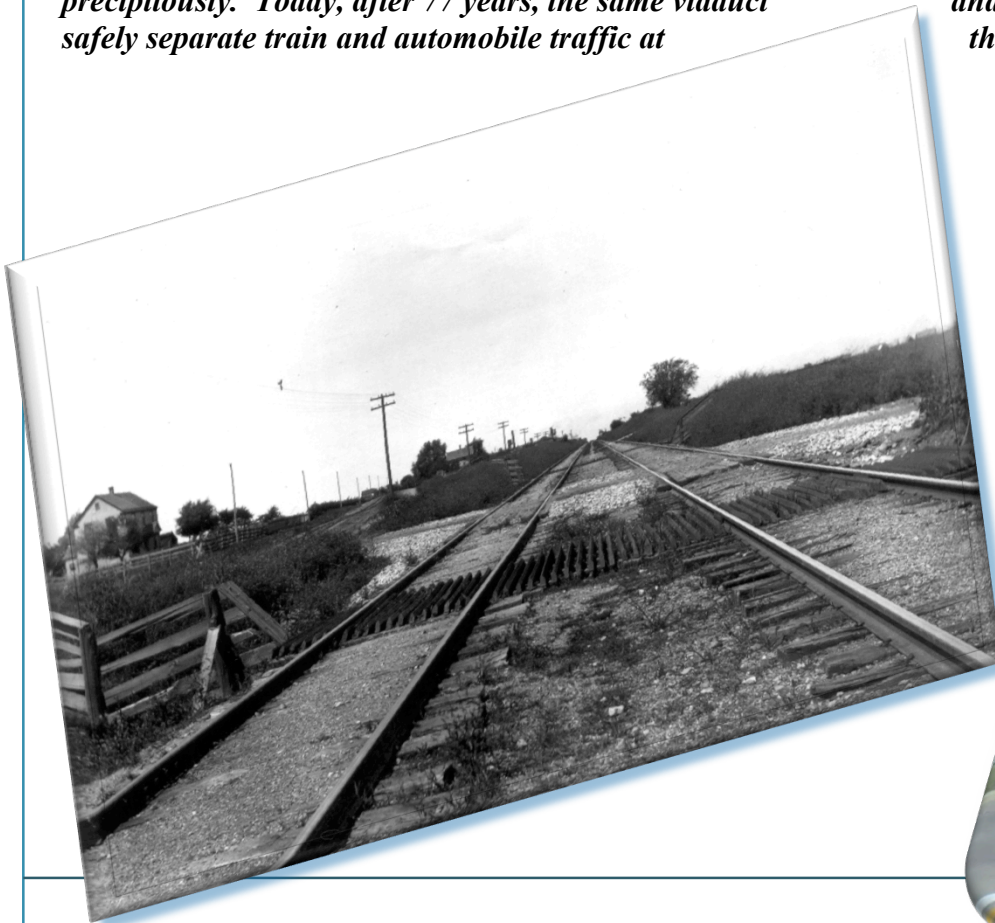
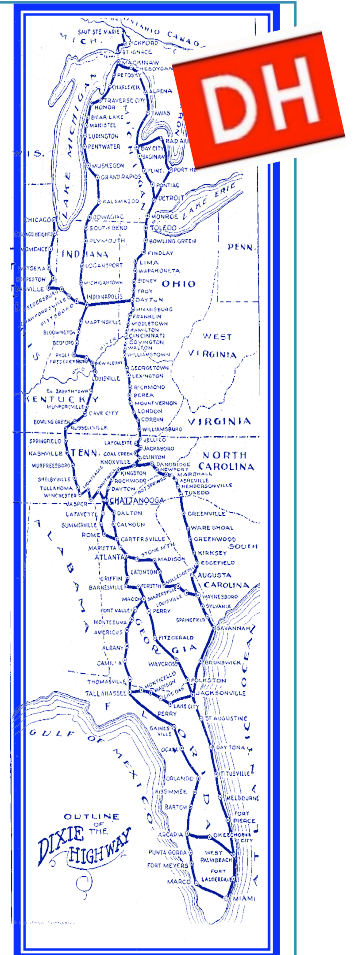
More inside!



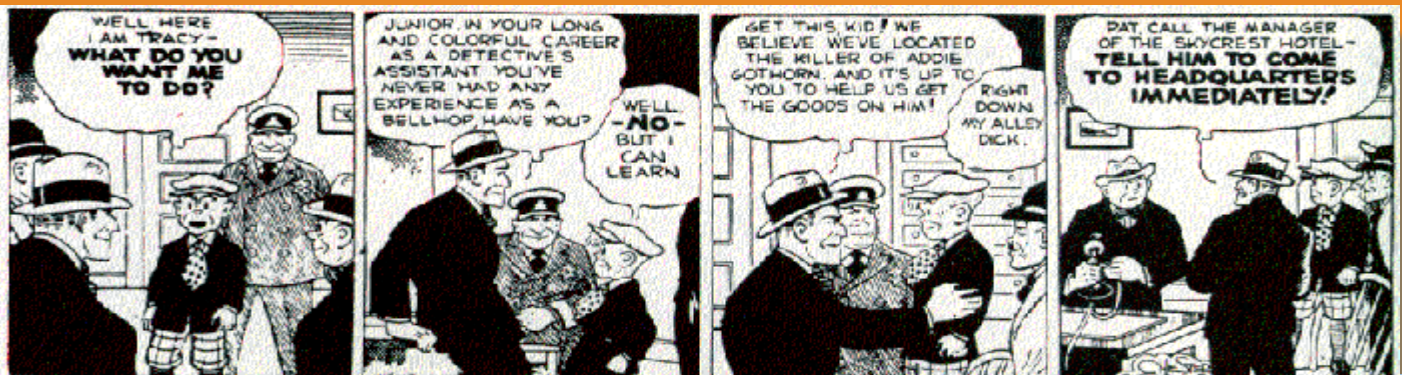
# DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright

*Over the years, locals called it "Dead Man's Crossing". Route 1/The Dixie Highway was paved north of the crossing by September 1919 and south of the crossing through Crete by June 1920. A "subway" or viaduct had been proposed for the crossing for a number of years, but work did not start on the project until August of 1922 and was completed by the end of that year. Once completed, the number of accidents at the crossing dropped precipitously. Today, after 77 years, the same viaduct and trestle still safely separate train and automobile traffic at this location.*



## Dick Tracy 1930 Strip #2



# Jon Lisota: Motor Medic



I will bring to light how the Tech Talk went in the next report with the adjustments on our headlights. See you later,  
Jon

## Members and Friends Memory lane

Phillip,

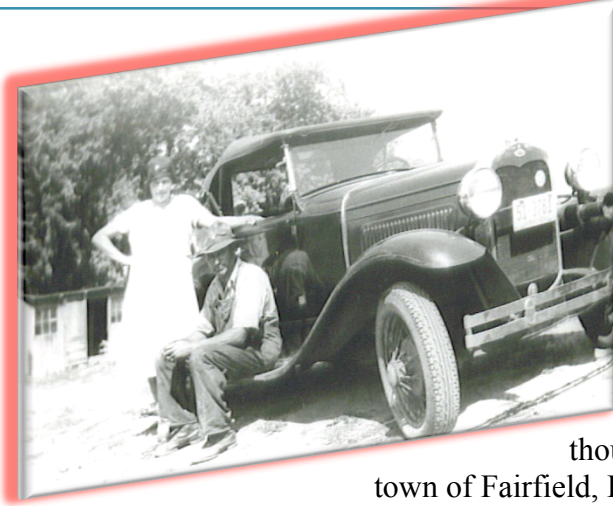
Thank you for a great newsletter. Arlene and I are still in Florida. We had planned to be headed back by April 4 but my father's health has started to fail. My father's brother Vern was the original owner of my 1930 Standard Roadster and the roadster has been in the family since new. I have several old photos of the A and our family. While my father's physical health at age 94 is failing his mind is very sharp. He has many wonderful stories about driving a Model A "back in the day" and my A in particular.

## The Surprise

Ken & Arlene McNeeley, Momence

When my Dad, Howard was in high school he was we would now consider a "caraholic". My Dad's father was a blacksmith and a farmer. A blacksmith was more than just someone who put horseshoes on horses. A blacksmith had to be able to forge weld many different types of metals in order to keep the equipment of the local farmers in operating order. The blacksmith also had to be a tinkerer, thinker and inventor. This background led all of my Dad's 13 brothers and sisters to be somewhat mechanically inclined. Dad's second eldest brother was a well-known hot rodder well before the term was invented. In addition to working on automobiles Vern, or Dude as he was known by his family and friends also worked on steam engines, threshing machines and gas driven tractors in an era when "horse power" really meant horse powered. Even during the depression Vern was able to afford a motorcycle and his own car. Howard really looked up to his older brother Vern and was himself a very capable mechanic. Howard was still in high school in April of 1930. Every day Howard would walk to and from school. And of course it was 20 miles uphill each way and snowed the year around and the snow was 3 feet deep. The struggles of walking to or from school notwithstanding, Howard would always manage to take a short cut home from school.





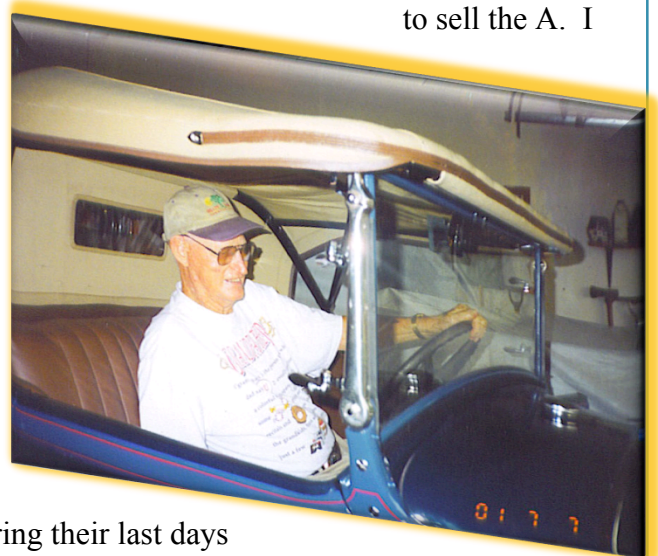
The short cut took him through the local Ford store where every day he would admire, (or drool on as he says) a brand new shiny Washington Blue Ford Model A Standard Roadster with a rumble seat and bright yellow Halsey wheels and the whole car was set off by a deep red body pin strip along the light blue painted body line. Day after day Howard would stop and admire the car and then at the family dinner table Howard would tell all of his brothers and sisters that someday he was going to drive that car. He could see it in his dreams. It was the most beautiful car he had ever seen, and probably he

thought, one of the fastest. All of the young ladies in the small town of Fairfield, IA also thought that the car was something that they would like to be seen in, or maybe if they had the chance even ride in the rumble seat. One day on the way home from school Howard took his usual shortcut through the Ford store and his dream of driving the Shiny roadster were shattered, the roadster was gone. The roadster had been sold. It was a long cold walk those 20 miles home; uphill, through the 3 feet of snow, in a blizzard, dodging dinosaur attacks. But to his surprise when Howard arrived home bleak winter turned to glorious summer in the twinkling of an eye. For there sitting in his very own driveway with its top down and its rumble seat jauntily in the open position was his brother Vern's new car, a 1930 Ford Model A Standard Roadster painted Washington Blue with bright yellow Halsey wheels and a deep red pin strip on the light blue body line. Vern had bought the dream car!

While that part of the story had a happy ending, the final part of the story did not end as well. In September of that year Vern was riding his motorcycle and was killed when a drunk driver crossed the center line and struck him head on. The Model A stayed in the family and was used by the family until the mid 1940's when it was replaced by a newer model automobile. The A then sat in a shed at the yard of one of the younger brothers until he too passed away in the early 1990's. The A's possession was given to Alan the only son of the eldest of Vern's brothers. Alan made plans to restore the A and gathered up all of the original documentation, which fortunately was still available along with newspaper articles about the purchase of the car by Vern. In fact the car was still in Vern's name. Alan was also able to purchase many new original parts for his planned restoration. Unfortunately Alan died before he could start the restoration and ownership was passed to his only child. While she project the pressures of raising a young family forced her was able to purchase the A and all of the original documentation and extra parts. With very little work I was able to start and drive the A before turning it over to a professional for a complete restoration of this completely original car. This car has been to me a dream as it was to my father before me. Playing in this car while it was still in my Uncle's shed is why I am a caraholic today. Through this car I have learned that whether you are in your 90's or like me just reminisce about your "Glory Days", everyone was, and maybe still is a teenager at heart. There is nothing more enjoyable than talking to an Aunt, now in her 90's and watching her blush like the teen she once was as she talks about the A and her Glory Days. Or, spending time with a loved one during their last days and watching their eyes light up when they talk about, "The Surprise".

Thanks.

Ken McNeeley



intended to complete her fathers  
to sell the A. I

**April Meeting** was a quick change from Bob's Garage and held at Jon and Yvonne's house. A BIG thanks from all of the club.

**Old business:** Discussion included how to attract more members to the banquet event in the future will be held on our spring trip, as we should have almost everyone there. 20 rooms are reserved. Chuck bought another set of radios for the shake down cruise to test. Hope to see you there on Saturday! Ron Bonneau and crew are ready to go on the spring trip. This may be the largest group yet!

**New business:** Wally talked to Jerry Wicker from MAFCA about insurance coverage for the "Drivin the Dixie" event and the club will have an umbrella for us individually. We also have made a disclaimer on the registration that is new for this year along with a non-parade event. A permit is in hand for the picnic. Discussion on a possible meeting place on Torrance Ave at **Pick-Ups Bar** and Organ Emporium. A ground floor back room and the ability to have dinner and drinks has been offered to us and the room would be at no charge.

**EXTRA!! Mass Explosion of A's Babies. Next month I will have a Grandbaby report!**

**No Stinking Badges fines: \$0:00 Not so forgetful this month!**

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> of May Meeting**

7:00PM meeting at Jon and Yvonne's home in Crete.  
511 West Stanton Lane  
Crete IL. 60417

**Up Coming Calendar of 2009 Events**

**Wednesday April 22<sup>nd</sup>** "Tech Talk" at Bob's garage in Frankfort. Headlights will be in focus for the night.

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup>, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> and, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> of May**

Spring Tour with your hosts Chuck Fritz, Ron Bonneau and, Jon lasota. Destination Dixon, Illinois. The Hotel reservations for the 20 rooms are booked. I can't wait it will be a great time!

**Monday May 25<sup>th</sup>** Memorial Day parade in Crete

**Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>** Blue Island for a TGIF night. Cars show movie and food. Looks like a donation may be made to the club to attend.

**Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup>** Sharon Wisconsin for model A days.

**Saturday June 20<sup>th</sup>** Driving the Dixie starting in Blue Island at 7:00 for set up and ending up in Momence around 4:00PM for relaxation. We may as in the past go for pizza as a club afterwards.

**Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup>** St. James Church

**New:** Crete Cruse Night is back 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and Beecher 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of the month. Young people now have a place to go and there should be many fewer problems in Crete.

**Manhattan Car Club Cruse Night.** 1009 W Laraway Rd. 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays of June, July and August.

**April 2009**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	<b>15</b>	16	16	<b>18</b>
19	20	21	<b>22</b>	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

**May 2009**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	<b>20</b>	21	22	23
24	<b>25</b>	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**June 2009**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					<b>5</b>	6
<b>7</b>	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	<b>17</b>	18	19	<b>20</b>
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<b>28</b>	29	30				

# A's R Us officers and Staff

President – Chuck Fritz Vice President – Jim Wright Treasure – Tim Dionne Secretary – Dale Chamis

Member relations – Joe Krygowski Web Page – Joe Krygowski Newsletter – Phillip Serviss

Parade Coordinator – Wally Ekstrom Director of Safety – Ron Bonneau

Nat'l Rep. – Marlene Krygowski Historian – Tim Bots

Sgt. At Arms Steve Coe Motor Medic - Jon Lisota

Banquet Queen – Robin Rodriguez

Please send **Backfire** articles or items of interest to:

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Beecher, Il 60401

E Mail to: [taxserviss@att.net](mailto:taxserviss@att.net)



Herman Senkpeil and his 4 door on the shakedown cruise. More next month

**BACKFIRE**

P.O. Box 3

Crete, Illinois 60417

