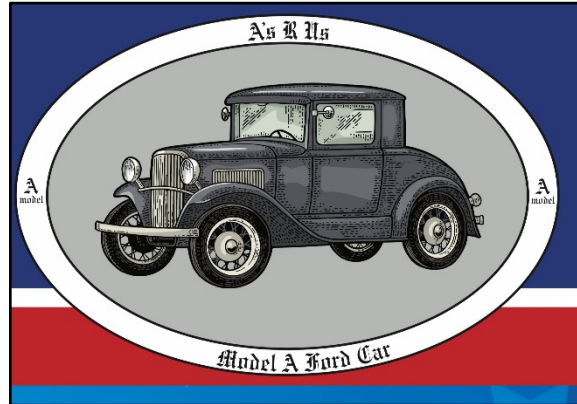

BACKFIRE

June 2020



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Well, after months of social distancing we can finally start getting back to normalcy. We will now resume our meetings at the homes of our members! There is nothing better than to be together with everyone to talk and commensurate in a normal fashion. I found the online meetings both humorous and difficult at best, and impossible to participate on the phone as I tried on our first attempt.

The next meeting, June 17th, will be held at Jon & Yvonne's home. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone there, and if you feel that you need to wear your mask please do. Planning for our "Exposure Trip" continues, and our "Fall Trip" is in the planning stages also.

See you at the meeting.

Phil

FROM MOTOR MEDIC JON

Well, a bunch of a guys decided we were cooped up long enough, so we got together at my garage and did an engine swap. Steve Coe's car was getting really tired and so he had me build him a new engine. We had a nice turn out of assistants – Bob Steinmetz, Chuck Fritz, Randy Senkpeil and friend, Tim Dione, Steve Coe, and our good buddy Tim Bots.

The old engine is out. Tim Bots is helping to strip off needed parts for the new engine and putting the old one in the cradle for Steve to take home.

We got the new one in and had a hard time starting it. I (Jon) forgot to put the fuse back in it. Then it started and ran great. Randy followed Steve home, and Steve said it was great.



LAKESIDE TRIP May 15th -17th Courtesy of Phil Serviss. Photos by Steve Coe.

Seems like some other club members got tired and decided to take the trip to Lakeside Inn. Three couples showed up – Phil and Nancy, Ray and Gerry, Steve and Kathy. Also, Ron Bonneau showed up late Saturday from his home in Michigan.



The decision to breakout of lockdown into Michigan was made by 7 club members – Steve, Kathy, Gerry, Ray, Ron, Nancy and myself (Phil). It was time to get away and relax with friends for a weekend and what a great decision to do so. Logistical problems were going to be food in a state that was still not allowing dine-in service. Our club trailer wasn't ready to go, so Ray and myself brought the tools of cooking that we would use on a camping trip, and our gals prepared the meals. As you know, the A's R Us *have never gone hungry* (now that's a shocker!) on a trip and it certainly wasn't going to happen on this weekend either.

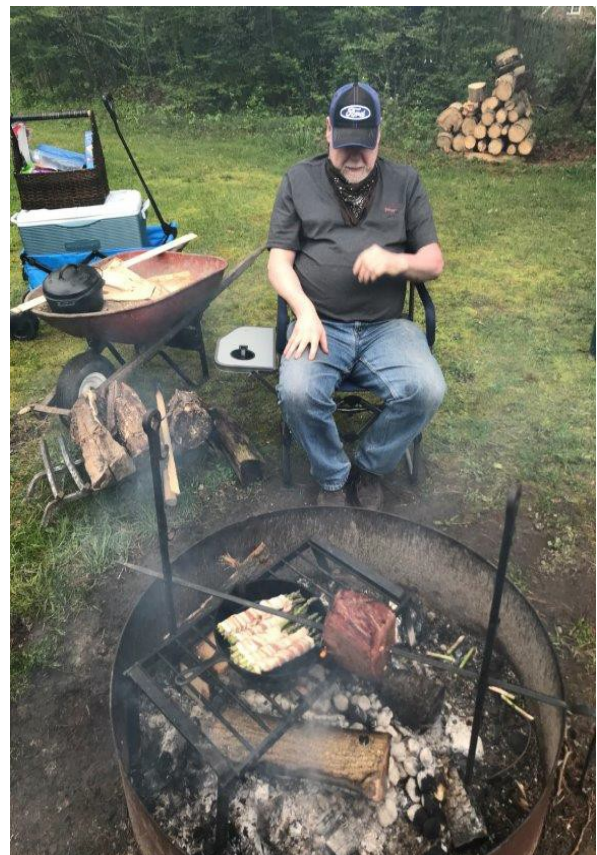
The decision was made by all that went, driving the A's wasn't going to happen as everyone would be leaving on Friday after work. On our part, we loaded the Durango to the brim along with Lucy our dog, and off we went to Lakeside. Steve and Kathy were the first to arrive and they helped unload the implements of destruction and start a fire.

Friday's meal was provided by Ray & Gerry and what a spread it was. Tablecloths and candles too!!



That night around the campfire was noisy with three frogs croaking through the night. I watched an owl swoop down and grab a croaker for dinner. Amazing! We ended the night around 12 midnight as Ray didn't want to end the night early.

Both morning meals were provided by Kathy and Steve. This was a breakfast spread that gave the "Ritz Carlton" a run for the money. We did go to the Farmers Market Saturday and did some antique shopping in Indiana. Saturday lunch was going to be at Matie's, but they were crowded and it would be a long wait. Nancy had put together a "safety meal" in case of rain, but the weather was fantastic. We headed back to Lakeside for a fabulous taco salad compliments of Nancy.



Later on, Saturday, Ron came and had dinner with us on his way back to his Indiana home. For dinner, I finally got my turn to plug the roast and put it on the spit over the fire. Nancy wrapped asparagus in bacon, and Gerry helped with baked potatoes on the grill. Everyone sat around talking and having a great time while dinner was cooking.

I must say everyone pitched in to help in the preparation and cooking of all the meals. Also cleaning up after the meals during the weekend made the meals easier. That's what friends do. All in all, the weather was great and the company was even better.



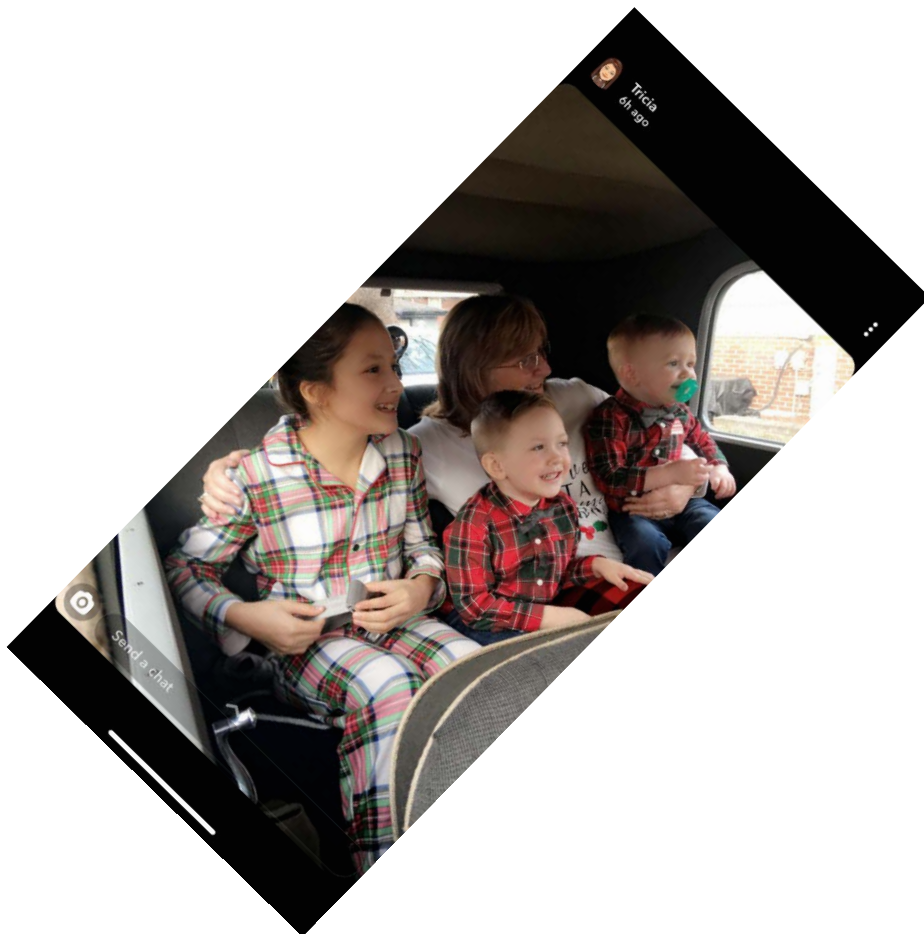


So, this month I believe we will resume our meetings as the schedule called for. June's meeting will be held at Jon & Yvonne's house. Hope to see you there! Below is meeting location/schedule for the remainder of the year:

JUNE: Jon & Yvonne Lisota
JULY: Picnic – July 26th Izaak Walton Woods – Homewood. More info to come.
AUGUST: Steve Coe
SEPTEMBER: Diane Paradiso
OCTOBER: Chuck & Linnea Fritz
NOVEMBER: Randy & Bonnie Senkpeil
DECEMBER: Christmas Party – TBD

MODEL A PARTS – Jon Lisota

Ken Chamis has collected quite a bit of Model A Parts. Dale had a couple club members go through one of the garages and itemize those parts. I will list some of the parts here. We are trying to figure out what they are worth. If you see something please notify, Bob Steinmetz or Dale of your interest. *(Please note: this is only a summary. There is an abundance of parts in my garage. As you may or may not be aware, I have given Ken's car to my youngest son Corey. Corey is learning about the car and loves driving it. As you can see by the photo below which was taken Christmas Day 2019, my grandkids love riding in the car too, so I wanted to keep the car in the family. The plan is to put together a care kit for Corey of parts he may need. Once this is done, we will put together an inventory and go from there. The remainder of the parts will be sold to anyone interested, and we will keep a small inventory of parts available. I will also be reaching out to other clubs for interest; however, first choice is always with the A's group. - Dale)*



Bumpers - 3 sets of 1928 fronts; 3 sets of 1930 fronts
Torque Tubes -1 Model A; 1 V8
1 Model A driveshaft
1 V8 driveshaft
2 rear axles for V8
2 rear axles for Model A
2 intake manifolds
2 manifold heater covers
1 manifold heater with cover (Goerlich)
1 spare tire mount
2 bell housings
1 1928 headlight bar
4 oil return tubes
3 transmissions
2 transmission towers and 3 shifting levers
2 oil pans
3 valve covers
3 heads
7 pressure plates
2 flywheels
1 ring gear
1 oil pump
3 front engine covers and cam gear covers
2 throttle linkage
2 floorboard tower covers
1 hot water heater
2 4 blade fans and pulleys
4 u-joints
1 tan spare tire cover
Garnish molding
1 oil fill tube with cap
1 crank bearing and lower plate
1 driver side rear fender for coupe, roadster or pickup (1928)
2 1930 headlight buckets
4 1928 wheels
4 1930 wheels
1 21-inch tube
1 19 -inch tube
1 1928 radiator
2 steering column spark and throttle levers



FROM OUR SECRETARY

A couple of weeks ago, Randy was over replacing the fan belt on the Model A that broke on Christmas Day. Randy wanted the car to be ready when Corey comes to take it for a ride. While he was over, we were going through some things in the garage and we came across a very large tote. To my surprise, the tote contains several photo albums of car club events going back to 1997! I will bring them to the next meeting for those wanting to take a trip down memory lane, and will also pass on to the next historian for safe keeping! This got me to thinking just how did the club evolve. I know bits and pieces, so I decided to ask all of you how you came to be a part of the club and what is your most memorable event. Here are some of the responses I received.

RON BONNEAU: "Wally Ekstrom invited him to a Crete Cruise Night in 2001. I knew Ted Griffin who had a Model A and taught me how to drive one. I joined his car but they didn't drive much so he told me that I probably needed to join A's R Us. He also told me to meet Wally and go to the Crete Cruise night and took me to one, pointed out Wally. I met Wally, had dinner with him and a few others and Wally introduced me to John Ruppel who had a Model A that needed restoration. John convinced me with Wally's support, to buy the 4-door from him.

Most Memorable Event: The trip around Lake Michigan.

TAMMY SMIT: "I joined A's R Us only because Bruce was a member and I got to tag along."

Most Memorable Event: The trip to the Rialto Theatre in Joliet for the tour backstage to see the autographed walls, to hear the ghost stories and then to hear that 200-year-old organist play all that Christmas music for us while we sat in those fancy red plush seats!" (I think Tammy meant 200-year-old organ!)

SANDY KALETA: "We joined because of Ken. He let us drive one his Model A's. We enjoyed the car, the group was friendly, so we joined about bought Red."

Most Memorable Event: There have been so many events over the years, it is hard to select only one. They have been so different in nature and in different purposes. From touring to post town signs, going to the Vets hospital, participating in parades, get away weekends just to name a few. We have both enjoyed the comradery of the club and Al enjoyed working on the cars, especially with the guys.

BOB STEINMETZ: "I joined the club a couple of months after the club was formed at the insistence of John Ruppel. He and I were friends for several years before the club started. In fact, we made two trips with four couples before the club started."

Most Memorable Event: The trip to Nappanee when we went to the round barn theatre.

PENNY STEINMETZ: "I was an A before it was named but I didn't know it."

Most Memorable Event: At the Lakeside hanging out with all of you."

KAY EKSTROM: "I don't think it was called A's R Us when Wally and I started hanging out with and taking the first trips with a few other model A folks. Guess the answer would be John Ruppel and Bob Steinmetz, is how we got involved. Don't know what Wally would say."

Most Memorable Event: there are so many memorable events. Our roadster being hit broadside and going upside down in Milwaukee would be one for me for sure. The night in Galena when the whole line of A's was (I thought) racing a train back to Chestnut Mountain Lodge, And I was so sure Ruppel was going to be hit by the train at the Crossing. Stomping my foot on the floor boards of our car, I was hoping my "braking" could stop him, or the train! And all the great fellowship, laughs, roadside

breakdowns, parties, the dress malfunction of one of our ladies while doing the limbo! Just all the love shared is forever memorable.

DIANE PARADISO: "I googled Model A clubs. Ken's called me and sold me on the fun fact that when/if the cars break down the women drink wine while the men work on the car. I always travelled with a bottle of wine just in case."

Most Memorable Event: To me all the trips I participated in, made me feel like family.

KAREN KOLENDA: "Wally and Co got together with Luke Pascal and started Crete Cruise nights. Bill Thornburg was into Crete politics and he met Wally. Bill and Linda went with the Ekstrom's on a weekend. They came back, bought an A and told me what fun it was and asked if I wanted to go the next time. After returning from our first weekend with this "crazy bunch" I knew I wanted to join. The next day Bill Thornburg heard about an A in Steger for sale and I bought it. As they say, "the rest is history."

Most Memorable Event: "Is a little harder."

NANCY POULSON: "Claude – John Ruppel (Carl Wolf was a guy Claude worked with and told him about John). Claude bought a 1925 Ford Model T.

Most Memorable Event: "We have two: Our first trip to Milwaukee. That was Kirk & Travis' first trip with us, and Kirk broke the transmission driving the car up a hill. We never thought Kirk would come with us again. The 2nd was when the battery blew up in our car. And my ass (Nancy) go out so fast even before the car stopped. Ask Bob S., he was behind us.!"

CHUCK FRITZ: "We bought our Model A at a used car lot (Frankie's) in South Chicago Heights. Chuck then went to a cruise night where he met Wally, Jon, Tim, Bob and Joe from the club.

Most Memorable Event: "All the events are memorable, but we really enjoyed going around Lake Michigan.

HENRY JASICA: "about 22 years ago, my friend Jim Wright said he was going to central Indian (Turkey Run State Park) on a Friday to hook up with the A's R Us car club. I somehow decided to meet him there on the following Saturday.

Most Memorable Event: "It occurred that Saturday evening. I rode in the back of Phil Serviss' Model A to a small country club for dinner with the club. This was first time in the back of a Model A. I was impressed how comfortable and roomy was the ride over barely improved country roads. Upon arrival we were seated at one very long table for dinner in a somewhat narrow room. The country club was short staffed that night and a lightening storm soon knocked out the lights. Wally Ekstrom rose to this occasion by reassuring us that all was well, complimenting the serving wench for her hard work under these circumstances. We were eventually served our dinners. Wally was again effusive in his praise of our server and the kitchen, and urged the members to be generous in their gratuities. Through all of this I never heard a discouraging word from anyone. No whining, no complaining. That was stunning. So, I thought to myself "this is a group of folks I'd like to hang with." I don't ever recall "joining the Model A Car Club, I just stuck around and seemed to be accepted."

KEN MCNEELEY: Not really sure how long we've been members of A's R Us but it had been a while. Many years ago, I was helping a friend build a home along the Kankakee River near Momence, Illinois. I had recently completed a restoration of my Uncle's 1930 Ford Standard Roadster. My uncle had purchased the car new in August 1930. Unfortunately, while riding his motorcycle in September of 1930 a drink driver crossed the middle of the road and struck and killed my uncle. The car which was still brand new was parked and only used moderately for the next few years and then parked in a barn she'd for the next several decades by a younger brother of the uncle that had originally purchased it. This uncle owned a piece of property where old vehicles and equipment went to retire. Having been raised by a pioneering family and surviving the early 20th century tribulations everything had value and nothing was thrown away. It was simply saved until needed. The roadster survived several decades in this manner even through myself and most of my numerous cousins playing in the car. After time the

uncle passed away and the car passed to another uncle who also having been born in the early 1900's passed away. A cousin purchased the car from the estate of the last uncle and had intentions of restoring the car so the car was placed in another farm shed where it sat for several years untouched. Bad luck followed the car and this cousin died in an accident. The daughter of the cousin had no use or desire for the car and heard through the family grapevine that I had an interest in the car. She called me to tell me about the car and asked if I wanted the car. Before I could control myself, I blurted out what turned out to be an offer that was much more generous than it needed to be or should have been. Surprisingly, she said yes and I became the owner of a 1930 Ford Standard Roadster with all of the original paperwork. I left almost immediately to pick up the car to bring it to Illinois from Iowa. Stopping for gas I got an offer from a stranger to purchase the car. Although the offer was generous it wasn't near enough to pry the title of this piece of family history from my hands. After I got the car home, I hooked up a battery and a fuel source and got the car started. Jubilation! I had at that time restored several cars. The roadster basically needed a good cleaning and interior and top but was much too important of a family history piece for me to attempt the restoration. I heard of a well-known Model A restorer who lived only a couple of miles from me and contacted him regarding the restoration. He said he would do the restoration and with the condition that the car was in the restoration should only take a few weeks. Two plus years later I had to get a lawyer involved to get the as yet unfinished car back. Soon after I got the car back and met the A's R Us on tour group, Joe Krygowski. I told Joe about the car and he invited me to a club meeting, which turned out to be only a few blocks from my house. The club was welcoming to me and Arlene and we were immediately at ease with the group. We were invited to the spring shake-down cruise and since the roadster had just been finished and never yet driven, I thought what better way to find out about the car than a road trip with people who knew about Model A's. The trip was to Fowler, Indiana and had been planned for back roads. I got a copy of the itinerary and noticed that it was routed over a bridge that I knew to be closed. I contacted Phil and offered an alternate route which also gave me an opportunity to meet the group on the route. This trip became my most memorable trip with the club. The roadster had not been driven since the restoration and I really didn't know the ins and outs of driving a Model A. I stopped at a gas station at US 41 and Indiana Route 10 that was also the agreed upon meeting spot. The group arrived while I was gassing up the car, which was a good thing because the gas was running out from the carb and under the dash as fast as I was putting it in the car. Jon, Ken, Randy and several other people swarmed over the car and stopped the multiple leaks. Leaks stopped we set out to go east on Indiana Route 10. The car began to backfire and miss and stutter and gas again began pouring out from under the dash and onto Arlene's lap and legs. Since the car wouldn't run anymore and gas was running all over. We pulled over to the side of the road. The whole group stopped to help, something that I was not used to in other clubs. Again, I thought this is a wonderful group of people. At this point we were only a few miles away from my home and we decided to end the trip and go home. Several of the group offered to help us home and they would rejoin the group later. Again, where do you find these kinds of friends? Well, we were close enough to home we decided to try it on our own and made it by driving very slowly and getting passed by a lot of angry truck drivers. So, my most memorable trip with the club was my very first trip, the one that we didn't take.

DALE CHAMIS: "I became a part of this group of crazy, fun people with Ken. I had no clue what a Model A was and was not so sure about riding in the car. 13 years later and many fun times later, here we are. Most Memorable Event: "As many of you shared, there are so many. How do you choose? I would have to say the trip to Nashville is in the top 5. It was so hot. As soon as we arrived at the hotels on our way to Nashville, many of us immediately donned our swimsuits and hit the pool for some fun pool volleyball. Our trip around the lake was a lot of fun too. Nancy Serviss and I were shopping in the gift shop at Tahquamenon Falls State Park and came across a display of men's boxers with funny cartoons. We were laughing so hard we about wet our pants, and everyone OUTSIDE could hear us laughing. One pair was for Bob Steinmetz and it had something to do with the "log jammer", and the other were for

Ken as it had a skunk on it. Nancy, Bonnie and I found ourselves laughing again (I have no clue where we were) at a store over a rag doll. It was called the "Dammit Doll." When you were mad, you could just slam that doll against a wall, desk, inanimate object or person, to take out your frustrations! Or two years ago on our annual trip to Lakeside when we stopped at the Michigan City Lighthouse Mall for some retail therapy. Ken somehow lost the keys to the car and was backtracking to find them. As we came back to the group after finding the keys, the group was huddled around our trailer enjoying the homemade chocolate chip cookies I had made for the trip. Turns out Phil's key opened our car! Or the time Phyllis (one of Bob's sister wives) was so excited because the outhouse had a purse holder. Turns out the purse holder was actually a urinal! Or at our Christmas party this past December when everyone came together to help Henry and Marie when Henry fell ill. I could go on and on with memories over the last 13 years, but as Kay said the great fellowships, laughs, roadside breakdowns, parties, parades are all memories we will have forever. I for one have forged some wonderful friendships that are very dear to me and I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this group of crazy and fun people!



One last item to cover before we close the newsletter. As you are all aware, the July 4th parades in Homewood and Beecher have been cancelled this year. A couple of our members are working behind the scene planning an event for July 4th. The plan is to do a drive-by parade in the Model A cars to Manteno Veterans home. After the drive-by, Phil & Nancy will be hosting a family friendly bbq/party at their home. Phil & Nancy will graciously provide the main course and would like to ask those who come to please bring a dish to share whether it be an appetizer, side dish or dessert. We will have additional information at the June meeting.

2020 A's R Us Officers and Staff

- President Phil Serviss
- Vice President Ron Bonneau
- Secretary Dale Chamis
- Treasurer Jim Wright
- Sgt. At Arms Steve Coe
- Motor Medic Jon Lisota
- Web Page Al Betschart
- Newsletter Jon Lisota

A'S R US MEETING MINUTES
May 20th, 2020
Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by president Phil Serviss at 7:10 pm. Once again, a virtual meeting was held with 22 members attending. Kay joined us from sunny and sweltering Arizona!

***MEMBER NEWS:** Arlene McNeeley is doing better. She remains hospitalized, but is progressing with the hope of going home this week with home health. Ken is able to visit with her daily. Paul Hankowicz recently had a procedure on his diaphragm to aid in his breathing. He hopes to have knee replacement surgery in the next couple of months. Dale welcomed a new granddaughter May 16th, and her dad is doing well. Carol Dione's surgery has been postponed for a couple of weeks. The memorial for Wally has been rescheduled for August 29th. The "birthday celebration" is tentative based on the shelter in place restrictions. The memorial service will be held even if the birthday celebration cannot be. More information to follow as we get closer to the date.

***TREASURERS REPORT:** Jim reported the A's checkbook balance of \$6776.03 and a balance of \$4995.04 in the Dixie account. Jim received payment from 4 club members for the 25th anniversary decals from Ron.

*** EXPOSURE TOUR 2020:** Dates are 9/7-9/16. Hotel information was sent out. If you have not made your reservations, please do so. For the hotel stay in Louisville, you will need to speak with Joe to make your reservation. For Nashville, Country Inn Suites, speak with Tamera. The cut-off date for the Holiday Inn Express is July 27th. You can always cancel if you decide not to go.

***DIXIE UPDATE:** No update to report.

*** MICHIGAN:** 7 members went to Lakeside, Phil & Nancy, Ron, Ray & Gerry, Kathy and Steve. Much of the time was spent relaxing at the hotel by the fire. Next year's dates are 4/30-5-2. Phil will provide some photos and an article in our next newsletter.

***BRIDGE TEEN CENTER:** Everything is on hold at this time. They are hoping to re-open in July. Bob will update if the event is rescheduled.

***FALL TRIP:** White Pines resort is closed. Randy and Ron are planning our fall trip. Destination: Peoria IL. Information to follow at a later date. Date of trip is Oct 16-18.

***GRINDERS GAME:** We are tentatively set for 8/23. Tim and Pat will update if anything changes.

*** 25TH ANNIVERSARY CAR DECALS:** To date, 4 members have purchased decals. Anyone wishing to do so, please send payment to Jim Wright. The cost is \$15.

*** BREAKFAST MEETING:** Cancelled for May. Will reschedule in June as our shelter in place restrictions are lifted.

*** GILMORE MODEL A DAYS:** September 19th-21st if anyone is interested in attending.

*** NEWSLETTER:** Dale thanked Jon Lisota for taking this on. If anyone has an article or photos they would like to share, please send them to Jon Lisota.

*** TECH TALK:** Tuesday May 26th 9:00 am at Jon Lisota's home. An engine to be installed in Steve's car. Anyone wishing to attend, please do.

*** 50/50:** N/A

***BADGE FINES:** N/A

NEXT MEETING: June 17th at the home of Jon & Yvonne Lisota. Meeting Adjourned