

BACKFIRE

Chicago Southland Chapter, Model A Ford Club of America

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<http://www.drivingthedixie.com>

<http://asrus.homestead.com>

An 850-mile journey thru southern IN. in 6 days

Lincoln became a recurring theme on our journey into the southern reaches of Indiana. We met Lincoln on our 3rd day while driving the back-roads along the Ohio. After crossing a single lane bridge Nancy fell for this lanky fellow almost immediately. On the 4th day we met him at dinner in the parking lot and the 5th day on 9-11-2010 we attended his speech in Princeton IN. *"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown."*

Header Picture:
The president himself welcomed us to Princeton IN. on 9-11-2010

A. Lincoln
Was it providence?
Phil



Inside this Months Issue:

- Danville Friday Meeting and Breakfast times
- Meeting synopsis
- Jim's Dixie History
- Exposure Trip

Important must read!

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EXPOSURE SEPT. 6TH - 12TH 2010

Each time we begin a trip, whether it is three, five or six days, I wonder how I can possibly write a



synopsis that paints an accurate picture. This trip was no exception. I began to get curious about the day and the trip when it was announced we were going to Wally World in Lake Village, IN. Hmm! Wally Rich, we came to know, is a unique character of the world, his world. He has displays of every kind, every subject matter and appropriately dressed mannequins. His train layout is spectacular and beyond ability to describe the detail. He is a 75-year-old man who

has pursued his goals and dreams of completing several acres of land with more displays, gardens, amusement rides, and trains and on and on. Amazing! Is the only word to describe this place? Thanks to Ron Bonneau for finding him and Wally World.

We were ready for lunch. We'd previously agreed to have a picnic on the road as we did last year. There were cold cuts, breads, veggies, taco salad, crab salad, cucumber salad, chips, cookies and lemon cake for dessert. Quite a picnic! Don't remember where it was but the park was really pretty with lots of trees. The only problem was that the tables had somewhat sunk into the ground leaving the bench about 10 inches off the ground. No trouble sitting down, getting up was another story. As we were driving that afternoon near Hillsboro, IN, Phil spotted an antique tractor through the open door of a pole barn with the owner busily working on it. We pulled the usual "U"ie and went back to see what it was all about. The man and his wife were thrilled to see us pull in. There were all kinds of antique farm wagons, tractors and equipment and lots of odds and ends. He is currently in the process of building a beautiful oak wagon, with a roof and benches, on an early 1900's Koehler truck frame. The truck still has its solid rubber tires.





The next morning, day two, we were travelling south of Marshall, IN on winding county roads. It was beautiful. We passed a schoolyard with a whole lot of Amish children in their traditional dress playing as all young children do. The little boys in their black coveralls, blue shirts and straw hats looked like a drawing out of a storybook. We ultimately ended up in another schoolyard in Clay City that had been visited by the club a few years ago. Holy Moley! There were fifteen pre school children that must have mutated into three times that many. Children were crawling all over the cars, honking horns and otherwise having a great time. It was their second day of school so that will give you an idea

of their excitement.

Day three began our drive on never ending hills and winding roads that were beyond description. The hills were all like the hill climb on the way back from Galena. It was getting to the point we were looking for a mile or two of straight road but no one was complaining. Too pretty to describe. We stopped at a viewing area to see the beautiful Ohio River. Jon's car was about to run out of gas after pulling the trailer full of food, beer and luggage. We pulled in to a station just in the nick of time only to find out it was

out of



business. Out of nowhere a man showed up and told Phil he stored gas because several people stopped at the station in pretty desperate need. He hopped on Phil's running board and directed the way. Jon was able to purchase a few gallons from him. The man had owned Model A's in the past and enjoyed seeing all of us. Proves there are still nice people in the world.

Ron told us we would be eating at a restaurant called the Overlook.

Indeed it was. Very high

above the Ohio River we were able to view the barges carrying all kinds of materials. Pictures really don't fully show the beauty of the area. Wide-open vistas of amber waves of grain, blue skies, a winding river, and lunch with friends, what more could you ask for. We had another really funny and sharp waitress who made us laugh. Something about her miniature donkey named Huckleberry. Jon talked her into just leaving the whole coffeepot to save her a few steps. Jon never has enough coffee. The topper was, however, the coconut cream pie, five layer chocolate cake and carrot cake so good it should have been labeled illegal.





We headed down more hills and valleys and forests to a “a one car at a time” trestle bridge high above a river. It was built in 1868. Nancy and Ron got out to take pictures of each of us as we crossed. There were a couple of boats down below, one with a man in a top hat waving to us. Nancy jumped on Phil’s running board to meet us down at the parking area close to the river. Not a very far distance but on a downhill gravel slope. She just about made it to the bottom and lost her grip. Yep! She managed to tuck her arms in and roll. Phil hit the brakes and jumped out of the car. The guys ran toward her while the rest of us were in shock. I was in the process of video taping her ride down the hill and didn’t expect to view that image. After the cloud of dust settled, she just laid there for a second. We were all sure she had broken something. She sat up and assured us she was all right, just a couple of scratches on her arms. Phil had some first aid materials with him and cleaned the scrapes. Her watch did more damage than the gravel. About that time we noticed the man in the top hat had walked up to see if we needed help. Honest to God, he looked like a

younger circuit rider type Abraham Lincoln. Kind of rough around the edges. He was, in fact, a person who portrayed Lincoln in parades and other events. That just made the whole scene more unsettling than it already was. Of course, we took pictures. I should have known then, the rest of the trip was going to get strange.

The reliable GPS had actually been behaving pretty well. More and more miles of winding county roads. Soon it was beginning to look like we may have made a wrong turn. Sure enough, we ended up in a farmer’s actual front yard. Come to find out, there had been a county road there. The county failed to maintain it and the road was given to the farmer who just plowed it under. He said he had heard we were around but never expected to see us in his yard. We didn’t expect to be there either.



Down the road we pulled in to a parking area right next to the locks on the Ohio River. A huge tugboat and barges were in the process of going through the locks. It’s a long process with so many barges to line up. We were within talking distance to a person riding on the barge, very close. I believe there is only about 12 inches or less on either side between the barges and the concrete walls of the locks. The captain blew an air horn at us. We reciprocated by blowing all of our horns at him. Lots of fun! Shortly before we were ready to leave, three dockworkers came over on a motorized cart of some kind. Curiosity had gotten the best of them and they just had to visit with us. Another supervisor type also rode over to see what was going on. Nice visit and way to wrap up the day before heading back to the hotel and dinner.

On Friday we left Tell City, IN and stopped at Troy IN. to see an old building called Nester House c. 1863. The building had been part of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War days. It is right on the Ohio River and placed on the National Register. The side of the building identified the years the Ohio flooded and how high the water had risen. In 1937 the water came mid way up the second floor windows. In 1945, 1964 and 1997 the water rose at the first floor windows.



The most beautiful stop on the entire trip was the St. Meinhard Abbey. The Archabbey Church was constructed in the late 1800's and completed in 1904. The campus, which includes many chapels, schools, farms, et al covers acres of land. It was well worth the visit. We noted on our walk of the campus that students come from almost every one of the states to get their education. The entire area has such a peaceful and welcoming spirit. This was the day we stopped at a strange little restaurant. Their menu was quite explicit about the number of pieces of bacon on a BLT (3) and one slice of ham and one piece of cheese on two pieces of bread on a grilled cheese sandwich.

Ham or turkeys were two pieces only on three slices of toast. Interesting is all I can say.

We arrived at the Hampton Inn in Princeton, IN. No one was hungry after such a big lunch so we pulled out the chairs and circled the wagons in a far corner of the parking lot. Somehow it became the Jon and Joe Comedy Hour. Something about a ventriloquist and a dummy named Akmed. That was the beginning of one crazy evening. We were laughing so hard our ribs ached. One of those, "you had to be there" events with no logic at all. A tall figure came walking across the darkened parking lot toward us. The closer he got the more we began to laugh. It was, in fact, Abraham Lincoln. Again! He was obviously a more professional type actor. He was in Princeton for a Civil War Ceremony on 9/11 at Archer Cemetery. Mr. Lincoln had quite an interest in Model A's and who we were and where we were going. He joined in the fun and ended up sitting in Jon's car that was pretty funny. The scene was beginning to really get weird when Joe started playing Battle Hymn of the Republic while walking behind Abe. We were all laughing and enjoying the situation when I looked up and saw General Grant coming across the lot to join us. That was just too much. The whole scene shot past laughing to hysteria. I think Mr. Lincoln asked how we would explain this when we got home. The scene was compounded later when Nancy went into the lobby and saw Mr. Lincoln sitting at the computer mapping out the way to Archer Cemetery. The next morning we headed off to Archer Cemetery and watched some of the re-enactors in period dress walking up the lane. Kind of neat. Another lady in period costume arrived in her SUV and informed us the venue had been changed to the park because of the threat of rain. After putting flags on the graves of some Civil War veterans we left for the park. Sure enough, Abe, General Grant and his aide Bill were there and greeted us like old friends. We watched the speech and toured the grounds and of course took more pictures of and with our new historic friends.

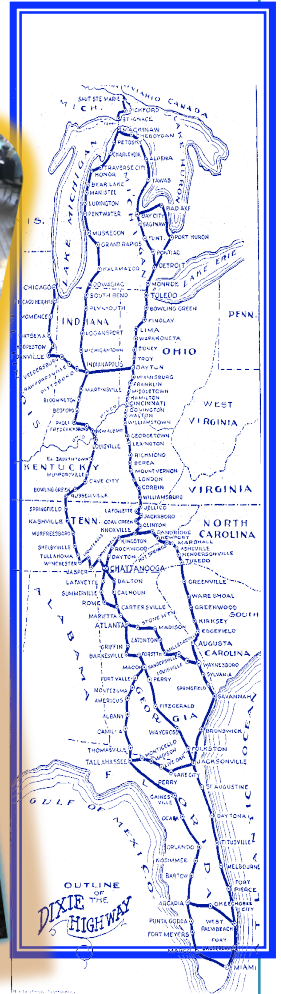
At Vincennes, IN we stopped at Denny's for lunch and afterwards attended a tour at the Revolutionary War Monument to George Rogers Clark. We were able to see a video of the hardships suffered and how Clark was able to capture the British held Fort Sackville at Vincennes, IN. in 1779. Our own Phil Serviss is in that movie but you have to look quick. It's a beautiful historic site and worth a visit. Around 4:00 we headed north on the Lincoln Trail Rt. 33 for our last night on the road to Terre Haute. We arrived to the sounds of stock car racing just blocks from the hotel. We finished the food from the picnic lunches sitting in the parking lot and retired for the night. Sunday morning we left about 8:30am up Rt. 63 to 41 on the first straight roads of the trip. We didn't meet Mr. Lincoln this time. We must have had a great tailwind because we arrived in Beecher about 12:30 p.m. just in time to have a sandwich and ice cream at Buddy's. Some 864 miles later we actually hated to have the trip end. It was a great week and over way too soon.

Thanks, Ron, Phil & Nancy



DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright



Campgrounds were common sites along well traveled roadways, like the Dixie Highway, in the early days of automobile tourism. Most camps were located near a town or city limit and provided rudimentary facilities. This campground was located in Danville just east of the Dixie Highway. Signage on the tree at right indicates "*Free Camp-Time Limit Three Days-Special Permit For Extended Time*", No doubt the time limit was to discourage undesirables from overstaying their welcome. The photo illustrates a variety of camping methods from tents to the early motor home in the center rear to the man preparing his meal next to only his car. As roadside cabins, hotels and later motels became more popular; tourist campgrounds like these began to gradually disappear.

A's R Us Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2010

Meeting Location: Steinmetz Garage
Call to Order: 7:05 pm - 28 members attending;

Meeting was called to order by President Chuck Fritz. Minutes from the June meeting were read and approved.

Member News: Tim Borchert and Bob Steinmetz are both doing well recuperating from recent medical concerns. A Happy 30th Anniversary to Bob and Robin Rodriguez.

Treasurers Report was read by Jim Wright. Expenses for picnic were paid. A motion to accept by Wally, 2nd by Joe.

GUEST: Bob Granko Jr introduced Tim Rogers, owner of Rogers Towing Service. He will be hosting a car show in January at the Tinley Park Convention Center. The event will be a fund raiser for the Lincolnway Special Rec Center. 100% of proceeds going to the cause. Fees are undetermined at this point. Dates are January 15th & 16th, with the 15th being a V.I.P (black tie) event. More information to come later.

OLD BUSINESS:

JOLIET JACKHAMMERS GAME: 24 individuals attended with a special surprise for Wally.

PICNIC: Jim Wright sent an email to the Highland Club for picnic expenses. No response as of yet; Jim will follow up with a 2nd correspondence. Wally presented a copy of the Highland Club newsletter, which contained photos from the picnic.

EXPOSURE TOUR: 850 miles traveled, with a special visit from Honest Abe and General Grant. Two breakdowns to speak of with Marvin's points, and our very own motor medic experiencing problems with his radiator. More details to be included in the newsletter.

FALL TRIP: 10/8,10/9, &10/10. We will meet for breakfast at the Egg & I located in Chicago Heights at Volmer Rd & Dixie Highway. Departure will be 8:45 am. It was decided to have some of our meals provided by the Chuck Wagon. Chuck will do shopping and divide the cost among members.

HOMWOOD CRUISE NIGHTS: The final car show of the summer will be September 16th.

BREAKFAST MTG: September 18th, Peachtree Restaurant 8:30 am.

MAFCA: Renewals due. Please bring money into Jim at our next meeting.

MILITARY DONATIONS: After some difficulty with the post office., packages have been shipped. No word yet on arrival.

POULSON FAMILY: Thanks to the efforts of Marlene Krygowski for being instrumental in the Poulson's being recognized in the Restorer and the Daily Southtown Star feature on their truck.

BUDGET: Members were presented with a "draft budget" and have been asked to review for further discussion at our next meeting.

BANQUET: Suggestions were made regarding eliminating prizes, what to do to make the banquet more appealing, to have more members attend. Tim Rogers suggested we incorporate our banquet with his event in January.

CHRISTMAS PARTY: It was unanimously decided to have our event at Beggars Pizza in Oak Forest again this year. Cost is \$10.95 for adults, \$8.95 for kids. The date is December 8th at 6:30 pm. The room is available for 2 hours, and an added charge of \$25 for an extra hour. A deposit is needed to hold the room. Motion to accept by Bob Steinmetz, 2nd by Jon. Bob S. will drop off check.

October meeting to be held at the home of Wally and Kay Ekstrom which will include chili, hot dogs, and our annual auction.

There were 3 No Badge Fines; \$46 to Ken Chamis for split the pot.

OCTOBER MEETING: HOME OF WALLY AND KAY EKSTROM

NOVEMBER MEETING: HOME OF KEN AND DALE CHAMIS

DECEMBER MEETING: CHRISTMAS PARTY –BEGGARS PIZZA IN OAK FOREST. DECEMBER 8TH 6:30 PM.

Danville Excitement!

Fall Trip 2010 will depart from the Egg and I Restaurant, 222 Dixie Highway, (Vollmer Road and Dixie Highway) Chicago Heights at 8:45 am on Friday October 8, 2010. The restaurant opens at 6:30 am and will have tables available for us. Their phone number is (708) 754-0909.

On Saturday afternoon, we will visit the Danville Veterans Administration facility, a large complex in a park like setting where many buildings date to 1898. Residents will have the opportunity to view our cars from 2:00 to 3:00 pm. For those who would like to donate items to the residents, the staff suggests:

Personal comfort items: disposable razors, shampoo, liquid hand soap, toothpaste, tooth brush, tooth brush holders, shaving cream, pre-shave, after shave, alcohol free mouth was, pre-shave and after-shave

Pocket combs, laundry soap (powder) – need chemical free soap also (Cheer-free, Tide-free)

Coffee (decaf and regular) 2-3 pound containers

Individual snacks and candy

Phone cards (no more than 30 minutes)

Gas cards (no more than \$10.00)

Stamps

Paperback books, puzzle books

Up and coming meeting locations:

Oct: Wally & Kay Ekstrom

Nov: Ken & Dale Chamis

Dec: Beggars Pizza, Oak Forest

Up Coming Calendar of 2010 Events

Friday, Saturday, Sunday October 8th, 9th, and 10th
Fall Trip to Danville, IL

Wednesday December 8th: Christmas Party, Beggars Pizza in
Oak Forest



Wally's
brother Jerry
meets him
and Kay at the
Jack Hammers
Ball game.

October 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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31						

November 2010

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

December 2010

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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

A's R Us officers and Staff

President – Chuck Fritz Vice President – Tim Botts Treasure – Jim Wright 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 Botts

Sgt. At Arms Steve Coe

Motor Medic - Jon Lisota

Banquet Queen – Robin Rodriguez



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

E Mail to: taxserviss@att.net

BACKFIRE

P.O. Box 3

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Nancy showing kids the car at a Pre-school in Clay City, IN



Mail To:

