



The Red Clay Rambler



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FROM THE PRES

...by Jeff Puras

Well, another Southeast AMO Regional is in the books. It was just a few weeks ago when we were wondering how the show would turn out. Pre-registrations were slow, and the room count wasn't looking good. The only thing we were sure of was the weather. We knew it would be a perfect October day. And it was. And as it turned out, the show was great! With attendees from our local area and the South Carolina and Florida clubs we ended up with the good problem of starting to run out of prime parking spaces on the show field.

I would like to thank all the folks who attended the show and all of our loyal Peach State AMO members who pulled together to make this show a success. I would especially like to thank our show director Theresa Barfield who was assisted in a major way by Mr. Jeff Barfield. Thank you, thank you, and thank you!

Next year the Southeast Regional will be held in Florida. Official announcements will be made as soon as all the details are set.

Our Christmas party, and next official club meeting, will be held in the home of Karen and Steve O'Neal. Rumor has it that another renovation is in progress for all of us to enjoy. The highlight of our party has become the ornament exchange. It always brings out the best in us. Deviousness, sneakiness and plain old greed is the order of the day. Don't miss it. It's a ton of fun!

The holiday season is upon us already. There are lots of folks out there with everything on their minds except driving this time of year. So be careful and watch out for the other guy. It might be me trying to figure out what that clunking is in the back of the '68 AMX!

Cheers!

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CHRISTMAS PARTY!!!

...by Karen O'Neal

Our next meeting will be our annual Christmas party at the O'Neal's on December 10th at 6:00 pm. If you never attend meetings this is the one you should attend! Great food, camaraderie and the ever-so-entertaining ornament exchange. This is where you get to know more about everyone than just the AMC they drive (things you may be able to use for blackmail at a later time!). Be sure to purchase your one ornament per person or per couple. Trust me, the more the merrier. Use your imagination and choose something entertaining! The club will provide a Honey Baked Ham and everyone else will be asked to provide a side dish. Did I mention what great cooks we have in this club? I will contact everyone closer to the date of the party to find out what great dish you plan to share!

NEW MEMBERS

At the SE Regional, we had 2 people sign up to be a part of our club:

Charles Landry from Temple, GA. He owns a 1974 Orange Matador 304.

Randy Galloway from Marietta, GA. He owns a 1974 Copper Matador 360

We welcome you both to the club!

1960 NASH METROPOLITAN – FROM JUNK TO JEWEL

...by Jim Graubard

I am writing this exactly one year to the date that we purchased our 1960 Nash Metropolitan. After failed negotiations on a Met in Tennessee we found this one on an on line auction sale in Seattle, WA. It had been billed as a fully restored Met and needed only a new carpet set. Pictures, as they always seem to, made the car look great. I started to make plans on flying out to Seattle to look at the car before buying but after my wife and I talked to the owner we felt confident that it was all it was billed to be. So we took the plunge and bought the car sight unseen, arranged for a shipping company to pick her up and deliver her here to us in Georgia.

The car arrived 3 days ahead of schedule and we met the van driver over in Dalton on I-75 so he would not have to drive the large auto transport over to the Ellijay area. We tried to meet him before dark came but when we finally did it was dark, transferred the car from his transport to our trailer and back home we went. The following day we were able to fully take in what we had purchased and boy were we surprised, and not in a good way. Yes the car needed carpet but it also needed a host of other things. Paint had a ton of orange peel, lots of runs in the paint, a few rust spots here and there as well. Pin stripping had been applied all over the car including the prior owner's name painted on the side, a "feature" she failed to tell us about and tactfully kept out of the pictures we had seen. The headliner was not great and the upholstery was falling apart as well. The engine bay was in sad condition, the undercarriage was a rusty mess and the gas tank looked like it had been beat on with a sledge hammer.

Now up to the point of the car arriving I had been in contact with the owner on a daily basis. She talked about the car, how great it has been, how well received it was as she used it in her fund raising efforts on the behalf of breast cancer research. That explained why the car, when "restored" was converted from its original black and white paint to pink and white. She had lots of pictures of the car on her company web site (she owns a small insurance company in Washington). We had become Facebook friends; she was so excited that the car was going to a new owner, an AMC person, etc. After the car arrived I e-mailed her with this one question, just to see how she would react and how much she cared. The driver door did not open easily and I asked her about it and she

said that happens once in a while. That was it, I never ever heard from her again, nothing, nadda, zilch which told me she knew she pulled one over on us. She never asked how we liked the car, did it arrive in good condition, etc. never one follow up call or e-mail as to how the car is doing. It has now been one year and I still have never had any contact with her. Needless to say after a month I took her off of face book. Yes she pulled one over on us but, but as with any car purchase, it is my fault, my responsibility. You think I would have learned my lesson after the same thing sort of happened when I purchased my Javelin AMX back in 2007.

Let me just repeat this to all: **DO NOT, EVER, NEVER BUY A CAR SIGHT UNSEEN!!!!!!**

Thus the journey began, to find a paint shop, upholstery shop, etc. I won't bore you with that journey, but I will say my bad luck continued. I chose a paint shop based on price, bad idea. I chose an upholstery shop based on what they had in the shop and their sales pitch, poor choice. That shop, who "knew Metropolitans" did some other work, like pulling the engine so I could work on it and the engine bay, and they also re-installed all the windows, trim, etc. What I discovered when I finally got the car home is they did not know jack about Metropolitans. I then spent the next few months correcting things they had done, doing things they had promised to do and so forth.

When the car was painted I supplied the paint code for the white and asked them to make sure they used that so I could do touch ups and so forth down the road, they of course, did not. I had also asked them for a good supply of paint in both colors for future use and, of course, got nothing. I took pieces of the car with both paint colors to a couple of auto paint shops to match the paint and so far it is close but no one can match what is on there now.

Months of fixing what other shops had done followed, working on the undercarriage of the car to repair, repaint and replace things. I also learned how to airbrush which helped quite a bit on the small areas that needed paint attention. There are some things that have been done to the car I can never get right but what I have learned with these cars that they were not built great to begin with as they were produced in England for sale in the U.S. by AMC: low cost construction for low cost sales.

After going through this journey with the Met she officially (in my eyes) rolled out of the garage on October 7th, which was 359 days since we first bought her. She was loaded onto my trailer for the trip to Norcross (we had a lot of stuff to bring and the Met does not have much room). On the day of the SE Regional show she came out of hiding and into the sunshine, took her place on the show field and shined like a new penny. The end of the day saw the final jewel in this year long trip as she was crowned "Best of Show" which really caught both my wife and I by surprise.

At the regional show the car had a good shine to her, but this is one area I had not worked on as of yet. Now with the regional show behind us I can concentrate on polishing her paint, getting good wax and shine on and getting the metal to dazzle as well. I will need to do this as her next stop will be on the show field at the Hilton Head Concours d'Elegance on November 6th Wish her luck!



GET WINTER WEATHER READY

...by Jeff Reeves

Okay, all you AMC-ophiles, winter is coming (or is already here for some of us), and it's time to make sure your AMC is ready to weather the season.

Probably one of the most important things to do with your car to prep it for the cold months ahead is to ensure that the coolant is up to snuff. That mysterious, smelly green fluid not only helps keep your car running cool, it prevents the engine from freezing in really cold weather. But, it only does its job if it's mixed properly. If it's too diluted, it won't protect your engine from freezing.

I'll take this opportunity to give you a primer on cooling system maintenance. A coolant flush-and-fill would probably be a good idea for most of us, as the cooling system seldom gets much maintenance until it gives problems. This is a procedure that requires only moderate mechanical skills, so you weekend warriors can handle this easily.

First, do a thorough visual inspection of your cooling system parts under hood. Inspect all the radiator and heater hoses for unusual bulges or soft spots. Either could indicate impending hose failure. Also, your hoses should be pliable and flex easily. If the hoses "crunch" when you squeeze or move them, it's time to replace them. Three-to-five years is a reasonable life span for most coolant hoses and they should be replaced accordingly.

Inspect the radiator core and tanks for leaks. This commonly will show up as wet spots, green fluid, or bluish-green corrosion. Any of these indicate leakage and the radiator should be repaired or replaced. In most all cars, it's impossible to inspect the heater core without major disassembly of dash or heater components. Usually you just have to deal with a bad heater core when it starts leaking into the floorboard or you constantly smell coolant inside the car.

The water pump should be dry as well. If it shows leakage or it wobbles when the car is running or it makes strange noises, replace it. Servicing the cooling system provides an optimal time to replace the thermostat. While yours might be perfectly functional, this is a very easy part to replace and is generally very inexpensive. This might help head off a future problem if you replace it beforehand.

If your system has been functioning well and passes all the visual checks, you probably just need to flush and fill it. Here is a procedure for that:

1. Buy some fresh antifreeze coolant. The standard green ethylene glycol is all you need for vintage AMCs. The orangey red coolant is designed for newer models with extensive aluminum components in the engine.
2. Buy a bottle of cooling system flush. There are a variety of brands, I like either Peak or Prestone but store brands are fine too.
3. Open the petcock on the bottom of the radiator and allow the old coolant to drain into a catch pan. Allow the entire system to drain into the catch pan. Collect this fluid and take it to a local recycler. This stuff is environmentally harmful, so please don't dump it out.
4. Using a garden hose, run clean water through the system until the water coming out looks clear. I usually remove one of the heater hoses and use this as an access point to insert the garden hose since this allows access to the back of the engine as well as the heater core.
5. Close the system back up and pour in the flush solvent you bought previously. Follow the directions on the flush bottle. Generally you'll fill the coolant system with the flush and water and drive it for a little while.

6. After the prescribed time, again drain the coolant system and flush once more with clean water until what comes out looks clean. For very neglected cooling systems the flush process might need to be repeated. Your goal is to have clean water coming from all parts of the cooling system.

7. Once your flush is clean, seal the cooling system up again and fill it with antifreeze coolant. The optimal dilution for coolant is 50/50 (half coolant and half water). You can actually buy this coolant pre-mixed at your parts retailer if you don't want to dilute it yourself. Fill the cooling system as full as you can with the engine off. You will need to stop several times while filling and allow air to escape the system. Once the radiator appears to be full, start the engine and allow it to run for a few minutes. This will circulate the coolant throughout the cooling system and help expel air. You might need to add more coolant as this occurs. Don't forget to turn the heater on while doing this to force air out of the heater core and hoses. Be very careful while doing this and make sure you don't get burned by a splash of hot coolant.

8. Once it appears the coolant level has stabilized, replace the radiator cap and operate the engine until it reaches operating temperature. Check for leaks, both at the petcock and at any hose connections you may have removed.

9. Once the engine has reached full operating temperature shut it down and let it cool off. Check the radiator again and top it off accordingly with more coolant. Old AMCs should end up with the coolant about a half-inch to one full inch below the filler neck.

This is the basic flush procedure that would apply to most all vintage AMCs. Some modern cars have specialized coolant fill procedures, but AMCs are fairly low-tech in that aspect.

The 50-50 coolant mix I mentioned should be sufficient for all but the most extreme of conditions. In those situations a modified ratio might be needed. Test the coolant with a coolant tester available at most auto parts stores. It will tell you what level of protection you have based on the dilution you have installed.

This is a nutshell explanation of cooling system service. A thorough procedure is usually available in your car's service manual (and indeed, some owner's manuals) that will cover any finer points I may have glossed over. As with any automotive procedure, please use care while working with hot coolant and please be sure to capture and recycle any used coolant.

Happy AMC-ing!

UPCOMING MEETING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10TH AT 6:00 P.M.

The O'Neal's
2629 Summerfield Way
Lawrenceville, GA 30044
(770) 638-9674

UPCOMING CAR SHOWS AND ADDITIONAL CLUB INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE:

<http://www.peachstateamc.com>

If you would like to add an event please email Jim at jsgchg201@yahoo.com

CARS FOR SALE:

GO POSTAL--FOR SALE 1976 Dj5 Postal Delivery Jeep. 232 engine, 727 transmission. \$1,500.00. Contact Doug Baker drxbaker@charter.net or ph# 404-307-9166 for more information and additional photos.



PARTS FOR SALE:

1971-1974 Javelin/AMX AMC 20 rear end - 3.15 open (not a "posi"). Complete with drum brakes. Super clean with no rust or pitting (from a low mile California car). \$100.

1971-1974 Javelin/AMX Blackstone radiator - dated August 1970 - from factory Z code 401 automatic car. Excellent condition! \$200.

Complete front suspension from super clean 71 Javelin (no rust or pitting), including upper and lower control arms, strut rods, sway bar, etc. No brakes or spindles. Comes with some steering components but no steering box. \$200 for everything or will separate.

1971-1974 Javelin/AMX tick tock tach gauge cluster. Average condition. \$150.

All parts can be picked up in Columbus, Georgia. Please contact by Scott Walters at (919) 478-1663 (cell)

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