

# ROCKET RUMBLINGS

Newsletter of the New England Oldsmobile Club

Vol 25 - #3 Fall 2021

### WWW.NEOLDS.COM

## **Going After Those Gremlins**



### By Mark Misercola

One of the last gremlins on my '66 Olds Toronado is now history, thanks to a house call from retired Oldsmo-

bile electrical mechanic Charles Herles, from Shelton, CT., who wrestled for more than three hours with my finicky dash and successfully installed a recalibrated speedometer.

This was the last of several interior electrical issues plaguing the car and the one that bothered me the most because I was never sure how fast I was really going. When the speedometer said 50, I was actually going 40, when it said 65 I was doing 53, and when it was 80 the car was actually going about 65 mph.

I've learned the hard way that working behind the instrument panel on this car — as with many other classics from the '50s and '60s — is a job best not attempted alone. Lurking behind the front panel is a snake pit of brittle wires, vacuum hoses and relays that rival anything you would have found at Mission Control during the Apollo era. One wrong move and instead of one repair you could be looking at four or five.

As Clint Eastwood used to say, a "man's got to know his limitations." And tackling this alone definitely falls in that category for me.

Without Herles' assistance I would have been at it for days. The Olds service manual makes the job look fairly straight forward.



With some help from retired Oldsmobile electrical mechanic Charles Herles, the recalibrated speedometer on my Olds Toronado is now installed and working.

All you have to is drop the steering wheel, unscrew the dash panel, pull it out from the dash board, unscrew the back and front of the instrument cluster, remove the speedometer and replace it.

### **Full Speed Ahead**

Dropping the steering column and pulling the panel out from the dash board wasn't the problem. In fact, unscrewing six of the seven screws on the back of the instrument cluster was a snap.

Then came the seventh one, which was blocked by the Wonderbar AM/FM radio, which was surrounded by wires and vacuum hoses.

To get to it, Charles had to remove the brackets holding the radio in place and gently back the radio out of the dash panel. The brackets fought him for 45 minutes before they finally capitulated.

That was only the first act of the radio saga. The Wonderbar decided to fight re-entry as well, and that drama lasted almost as long (and was accompanied by a number of colorful metaphors).

(Continued on page 9)

Page 1

## **Rocket News**



See you in September: Our annual NEOC Car Show at the Southington, CT., Drive-In is just around the corner.

## **NEOC Show Car Show Update**

#### By Mike Barillaro

The New England Olds Club's 24th Annual All-Oldsmobile Car show scheduled for Sept. 19th at the Southington Drive-In is now just a few weeks away. Our recent club meeting was held at the Drive-In, and the grounds look as good as ever.

Pre-registrations are continuing to arrive, and we have already obtained some great raffle prizes, including gift certificates to Rock Auto Parts and Fusick Automotive.

#### **Welcome New Members**

NEOC welcomes the following new members to our club. It's interesting that all three own convertibles. Maybe it's a sign that it's okay to get out and about again:

- **Steve Guidice**, member #435. Steve lives in Plainville, CT., and is the proud owner of a 1968 Cutlass convertible.
- Russ Supersano, member #436. Russ lives in Old Lyme, CT., and drives a 1965 Starfire convertible.
- Mark Satlof, member #437. Mark lives in Simsbury CT., and has fun with a 1975 Delta 88 convertible.

Glen Morris
NEOC Secretary and Membership Coordinator

As noted in previous issues of the newsletter, please remember to have copies of the show flyer on hand to pass out to Olds owners you may meet at other shows, cruise nights or in your daily travels.

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### Remembering Barb Palmieri



Ed and Barb Palmieri enjoying a few laughs with their Oldsmobile family at an NEOC event.

Editor's Note: Barb Palmieri, wife of long-time NEOC member Ed Palmieri, passed on June 23. Both Ed and Barb have been active members and supporters of the NEOC since joining in 1996. Glen Morris pays tribute to their friendship, devotion and contributions to the NEOC.

Nancy and I first met Ed and Barb Palmieri at the 1993 OCA Nationals in Parsippany N.J. We sat together at the awards banquet, introduced ourselves, talked about our Olds and had a few drinks and lots of laughs. We never thought this would be the start of a 28-year friendship. (Continued on page 12)

## **Talk With the President**

# NEOC Members Take Top Awards at OCA Nationals



By Jeff Walsh President, NEOC

Another OCA Nationals Meet is in the record book. There were close to 300 Oldsmobiles registered at the Nationals in Murfreesboro, TN,

in August, including several from the NEOC.

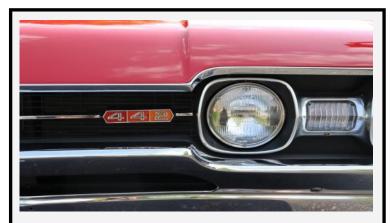
Congratulations to the following members on their awards at this year's Nationals:

- **Sal Barberi** 1st Place Award, Class 10c, 1977 Cutlass Supreme.
- Gene Miller 1st Place Award, Class 12b, 1979
   Hurst Olds.
- Larry Gagain 1st Place Award, Class 16b, 1979
   Hurst Olds.
- Glenn Johnson Best of Class Award, Class 13b, 1969 442 Convertible.
- **Earl Bancroft** Best of Class Award, Class 17b, 1967 442 Convertible.
- Jeff Walsh Best of Class Award (Senior), Class 11a, 1985 Delta 88

Also, a special congratulations to Dave Richter on being recognized as a 30 –year member in the OCA. Dave will be showing off his 30 -ear member OCA jacket at NEOC meetings later this year once the weather gets cold.

Congrats to all. I have uploaded photos of most of the cars that were on the show field to the <u>NEOC's Facebook</u> page.





### **NEOC Show Car Show Update**

(Continued from page 2)

The show is being advertised on several websites including:

- classicoldsmobile.com
- oldride.com
- Southington Patch
- Foot Hills Trader (Torrington area)
- Traveler Magazine (Southeast CT/Rhode Island)
- Hemmings
- CT Cruise News
- CT Seaport Car Club
- NewEnglandAutoShows.com

If you know of any other websites that we should be advertising the show on let us know. Also, please consider volunteering to help on the day of the show.

We always need assistance setting up on the morning of the show, show field parking and traffic control, judging, raffle ticket and merchandise sales, and clean up. The advertised start time for the show is 9 am, so the set up team usually starts arriving around 7:30 am.

As noted on the show flyer, we will leave a message regarding show status in the case of predicted weather issues by 3 pm the day before the show at 203-442-6034. We will be asking all show participants to comply with any CDC and State of Connecticut health guidelines in place at the time of the show.

If you have any feedback regarding show planning and set up, please drop me a line at mikbl@att.net. We would be happy to hear from you.

## See You in September ...

# New England Olds Club

Presents the

24th Annual All Oldsmobile Car Show

to benefit the Shriners Hospitals for Children

Largest All Olds Show on the East Coast!
Free Entry for Pre-1950 cars!



## Sunday September 19, 2021 9am-3pm

Rain date: Sunday September 26
See Rain Date Policy on back

#### Held at:

The Southington Drive-In Theatre

995 Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike, Plantsville, CT 06479

Look for the Southington Drive-In Sign

- ★ Dash plaques to the first 100 cars (incl. all pre-registered)
- \* Awards in all classes
- OTT

\* Raffle Prizes

★ Food & beverages★ Club Merchandise

★ DJ Music

\* Fun for all!









## See You in September ...

## NEW ENGLAND OLDSMOBILE CLUB

24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ALL OLDS SHOW Held at the Southington Drive-In Theater Meriden-Waterbury Rd, Southington, CT **To benefit the Shriners Hospitals for Children** 

Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 9AM-3PM Please print or type all information

NAME	
ADDRESS	_
CITY AND STATE	_
CONTACT PERSON	
NEOC MEMBER SOLICITING INFORMATION	
AMOUNT OF DONATION	

Please return this completed form, art work and donation (made out to NEOC) to Bill Black, 134 Great Hill Rd, Guilford, CT 06437. Questions? (203) 457-1459, or email, dragonflyfarm@att.net

### Information to appear in the show booklet

Donation: \$100 full page; \$50 half page; \$25 quarter page \$200 inside front cover, inside back cover, back cover

## **Rocket Archives**



Glenn Johnson, shares lessons learned from the restoration of his 1969 Olds 442 from our NEOC Look Back Files.

# Restoring a Rocket: Lessons From the Front Lines

#### By Glenn Johnson

Editor's Note: This is a reprint of the first member written article for Rocket Rumblings way back in June of 1995. Thanks to Glenn Johnson for allowing us to republish it.

Anyone who has ever completed an older car restoration not only ends up with an automotive masterpiece, but also ends up with an empty bank account and lots of stories. The stories are usually made up of exciting moments such as how a rare expensive part was located for a mere \$25, discovering the build sheet in the upholstery, or that the car ran high 13's with the stock exhaust system.

Unfortunately, there are always mistakes, failures and disasters along the way, and here are a couple of my own.

My first mistake was to start with a car that had a body so rusted, it required replacing a significant portion of the metal including the frame. After locating a rust-free frame at a local junkyard, it was sandblasted and then primed with zinc chromate. Then I decided to paint the frame with some special Dupont frame paint. That was a big mistake.

This paint was supposed to prevent chipping and cracking as the frame flexed. It looked beautiful when painted, however, I left the frame outside while I was working on the body. The sun made the paint shrink and checker. I discovered later this paint was easily softened by brake fluid (more on that later). My solution was to scuff it up and repaint it with Rustoleum.

To solve my problem with the rotted quarter panels, wheelhouses, and trunk return pieces I bought quarters cut off parts cars from out West. This turned out to be a great decision because I found all the parts I needed. Another plus was the passenger side quarter panel had been replaced with a factory part at some point and was only spot brazed on.

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Steve's Innaimo's 1968 442 can be seen in the background in this back alley production scene from the upcoming movie Call Jane that was filmed in Hartford.

# Lights! Camera! Action! A Rocket Makes its Big Screen Debut in Hartford

### By Steve Innaimo

Back in late April, I received an email from the Eastern Mass GMO Chapter requesting nominations for 1957-1968 cars to potentially be featured in a new movie being filmed in Connecticut.

Although the movie production team was specifically looking for "driver quality" cars, I thought I would take a chance and submit a few photos of my slightly above driver quality 1968 442 convertible.

Not being too optimistic about my chances for selection, I surprisingly received a call the very next day from a producer asking whether I could make myself available for four days over two weeks in May and whether I had any objections to taking a COVID test since the crew and cast were operating under very stringent COVID protocols.

The producer also explained that my car had caught the attention of the director and was possibly being considered for a "hero car" role.

After agreeing to the required filming days and COVID testing, the producer informed me that he would call back with next steps in a couple of days. Again, to my surprise, he called the very next day to let me know that my car - along with two others - was being considered for a hero car role and that I needed to bring the car to the set in Hartford the following day so that the director could make her selection.

Before committing though, I probed the producer about the subject of the movie and the specific role the car was being considered for. I learned that the film was entitled *Call Jane* and featured some very big names like Sigourney Weaver, Elizabeth Banks, Aida Turturro and a number of other big stars. The movie is set in Chicago in 1968 and the story line focuses on the pre-Roe vs Wade struggle women faced when contemplating abortion.

My 442 was specifically being considered for one of the lead characters, a brash young doctor who established a side business of performing illegal abortion procedures in an underground inner-city clinic. The women's group coordinating the effort and referring patient's to the clinic was called "The Janes" – hence the title *Call Jane*.

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## **Rocket Archives**

## **Lights! Camera! Action!**

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The next morning, I excitedly drove my car the 25 miles to Hartford so that the director could evaluate it first-hand alongside the other contenders – a 1965 Mustang coupe and a 1966 Dodge Polara sedan. While driving onto the set that morning, the director (Phyllis Nagy) stopped in her tracks and stared at my car as I rumbled onto the staging area.

I felt then that my chances of being selected were quite good. And sure enough, after about 30 minutes of inspection and lively discussion amongst the production team, the consensus was that the 442 convertible best fit the bill for a brash young doctor earning extra cash through his side venture.

The second scene was filmed two days later at Dean's house in the suburbs (East Hartford). In this scene, the car can be seen parked near the actors

A bit later, Dean leaves the clinic, gets in the 442 and drives away. considering *Call Jane* is now in the post-production stage, I do not know for sure whether either of the scenes will make the final cut. I guess we will need to wait patiently until the movie is finally released (no release timeline yet). In any event, it was a fun couple of days where I got to directly experience how a high-dollar movie production is actually made.

The actor cast as Dean - Cory Michael Smith - was super humble and actually asked me if we could take a picture together in front of the car. Of course, I quickly agreed and took it a step further by asking him to sign the inside of my glove box. Who knows...that signature and a possible appearance in a major motion picture could add to the provenance and value of my Olds! The opportunity also provided some very good visibility for a classic Oldsmobile!





Above, Steve's 1968 Olds 442 takes a pretty picture from any camera angle. The film's producer and crew, below left, took an immediate liking to the car and chose it for one of the movie's lead characters, played by actor Corey Michael Smith, who posed with Steve, below right during a break in the action.





## **Parting Shots**

## **Going After Those Gremlins**

(Continued from page 1)

The good news is the recalibrated speedometer is working as it should. Best of all, we didn't lose any of the other dash board controls, such as the turn signals, heater fan, or windshield wipers in the process.

### Mirror, Mirror: What a Pain

The not-so-good-news is my remote outside mirror. The pitted one that came with the car looked like it had been through a war. The chrome plating was nearly gone around the mirror bezel. It's also not the correct mirror for my car. (A little research on the part number revealed it was used on some Pontiac, Buick and Oldsmobile models from 1965-'68 and are much easier to find than the one-year mirrors that Olds produced in 1966.)

Nevertheless, I found the correct remote outside mirror off a '66 parts car a year ago with no pitting and perfect chrome, and the game plan was to have it installed when the car was repainted in the fall.

What I didn't know at the time was the interior remote knob was not working and could not be swapped out with the one already on the car. This was my mistake. I should have checked it more carefully when it came in.

So when the car was being repainted, the owner of the collision shop called with the bad news. When I picked it up, he said if "you get another one you have to find one exactly like the one that's on the car because the base is a different size and we'd have to do some patch work on the door to drill new holes and repaint the door to cover up the imprint from the base gasket."

That's not what I wanted to hear and I've been kicking myself ever since. There are old Pontiac mirrors exactly like the one I need floating around on the internet at reasonable prices, but they would all need to be rechromed.

New reproductions are available from Original Parts Company and that would solve the problem, but before I drop \$200 on a new unit I have to make sure the base of the mirror is the same and it will fit in the holes on the door. If not, then I have to used the mirror that came with the car will need to be re-chromed.

I also have a gorgeous remote mirror from a '67 Toronado that would work as well. But it's got a different base configuration that would involve surgery and repainting the door. That's Option B.

As frustrating as this it, it's not the first time I have had problems with outside mirrors. My '60 Olds came with a really nice driver side mirror from a '58 Chevy. It's actually better looking than the mirror that came with the car. If I replaced it with the correct model, I would have to re-drill the holes and repaint the driver's door. At shows, an astute judge could ding me for not having the original bright work on the car. But at some point you have to ask yourself how much are two points on the score card worth?

So stay tuned. I'm hoping my chrome guy in Hartford will be able to re-chrome the mirror that came with the car. If he can't, then it's on to Option B.

### **NEOC Meeting Minutes**

The NEOC held a "live" meeting on June 12 at the site of our annual car show, the Southington Drive-In Theater. Typical New England weather influenced attendance.

The early forecast was sunny and warm enough to bring the Olds, but the day of the meeting turned out to be rainy and raw. Five members attended. Prez Jeff Walsh got things started at 10:15 a.m.



He reported that the OCA Nationals were going forward with pre-registration at 267. About a half dozen NEOC members were planning to attend. The Northeast Zone Show was also moving forward and it was hoped that more NEOC members would attend as it is only a four-hour ride from our area.

(Continued on page 12)

## **Retro Archives**

# Restoring a Rocket: Lessons From the Front Lines

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I was able to heat up the braze to remove the quarter and I didn't have to drill any spot welds out.

The installer of this quarter cut off the door jamb por-

tion, leaving a lip to overlap the existing jamb (like a repo quarter). This is how I had to install it on my car. I fit and welded it to my car with the door off for convenience. When the door was reinstalled, I was surprised to see that part of the quarter was pushed in too far and some of it even bulged out! (in relation to the door). I had to grind the welds off at the door jamb to position it correctly.

My mistake was not lining up the quarter panel with the door in place. I was lucky because I also had the trunk lid off when I installed the quarters, but I had no problems there.

#### **Painting the Master Cylinder**

One of the most annoying problems began with a rebuilt master cylinder I installed. I painted it and the power brake booster as well. Unfortunately, it leaked out under the cover and ruined the paint on the booster and some of the frame below which is when I discovered the frame paint under the Rustoleum dissolves when exposed to brake fluid.

I returned the rebuilt unit and purchased a brand new one, which happened to have a defective rear seal and it leaked too (after I had already fixed the paint on the booster and frame). At this point I purchased a replated booster so that the brake fluid wouldn't hurt it and fixed the frame paint AGAIN!

I began driving the car up and down the driveway and discovered the rear brakes locked up before the front discs began working. The problem was a bad metering valve.

When I removed the brake lines from the metering valve, naturally the brake fluid got on the frame and made a mess of the paint (again) and installed a different metering valve, only to find out it too was bad and had to be removed, which created the same problem.

At this point I bought a new one from GM, which worked fine. In addition, I switched to silicone brake fluid (it doesn't harm paint). It's a lot of work to switch brake fluid because the system has to be drained of the old conventional DOT 3 fluid, but it has worked out well for me

tional DOT 3 fluid, but it has worked out well for me.

Next, the body work had to be done, the door jambs needed to be painted, and then the car is running and ready for paint. I registered it and took it for a ride. I had not yet installed the secondary (safety) hood latch. After a stop at a local gas station, I

headed down the road at about 50 mph and all of a sudden, the hood flies up!

Evidently, I didn't have the primary hood latch adjusted low enough to grab properly. When I recovered from a near suicidal state, I resumed work on the car. The hood and hinges were beyond repair and the fenders were bent where the hinges bolt on.

Remember, the car was all ready for paint! I could straighten one fender, but I had to remove the inner piece where the hinge bolts on to and weld in one from another fender. The lesson here should be obvious.

### **Murphy Looked the Other Way**

Not everything went wrong during the restoration. In fact, some things worked out better than I hoped. At times, Murphy's Law looked the other way and I had good luck. And, of course, I found some great deals on parts and found three build sheets in the upholstery. I haven't yet been to the drag strip; that will come soon enough though.

Remember, keep the shiny side up and, oh yeah, make sure your hood is securely latched.

# **Rocket Retrospectives**

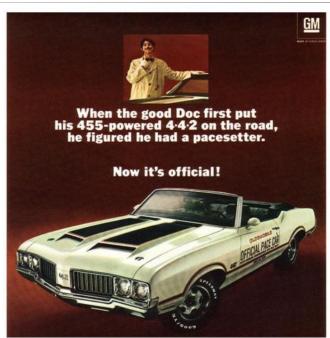




Drive a youngmobile from Oldsmobile



Rocket Rumblings looks back every issue at some of the classic ads that rocketed Olds to fame over the decades .



The motion-minded folks at Indy have just anamed 4-2 the official pace are for this year's classic.

It's easy to see why. Its standard V-8 has a pace-setting 455-cu-in. displacement. Nobody in its class offers more. Its valvesystem is revolutionary, featuring performance, longer engine life. Its standard to the performance, longer engine life. Its stabliblizars' Fab becoming the most initiated in the business.

Ready to set a pace of your own? See your Cids dealer and test-drive a 4-42-or other Clds. You'll find that great

Torque, Ib-81. 500 at 3x00 rpm
bern a stircke, in. 4,125 at 200
bern a stircke, in. 4,125
bern a stircke, in. 4

Axie (Sync). 3.08 ratio
Exhaust system Full duals
suspension. FE2
Has hed springs, shocks, rear control
Wheels. Hed 14 with 7 rim
Tires. G70
bias-belted with while stripe.
Strato Bucket Seats. Std Lightweight Birtprilass
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Oldsmobile 442





## **Rocket Chips**

### **Remembering Barb Palmieri**

(Continued from page 2)

We continued to meet at several future National events after they joined the NEOC in 1996. Nancy and Barb bonded, and they became great Olds friends. This was a good thing for me because Nancy now looked forward to Olds shows when Barb was there. Of course, Ed and I bonded over beers and our Oldsmobiles too.

Ed and Barb volunteered to manage the trips, buses, tickets, and associated reservations for our 2010 Nationals in Sturbridge. In addition, Barb and Nancy also organized the ladies' luncheon for this event. This was an extraordinary effort that was very successful and appreciated by all.

Picnics, parties, car shows, and casual get-togethers continued as Ed and Barb became welcome friends to all who knew them. We were last together at the OCA Nationals in Gettysburg in 2018 and our holiday party in 2019. Barb was ill but fighting onward. Barb left us all on June 23<sup>rd</sup> creating a huge void in Ed's life, as well as ours and our Olds family. We will miss her dearly. May she rest in peace and keep the garage door open for Ed and his 1970 442.

### **NEOC Meeting Minutes**

(Continued from page 9)

Our own Glenn Johnson is coming out of retirement to serve as head judge for this show!

As far as our 24th annual all Olds car show in September, everything is moving along. The DJ and food vendor are locked in. We are still looking for show support members, raffle items, and any other donations to support our show. We agreed that we need to re-visit the organization of the show since we lost a year to the pandemic and may be in a New England fog.

Jeff will continue with monthly meetings the first Thursday of every month. The plan for now is to hold the meeting at the Southington Drive-In in at 7 p.m. PLEASE make an effort to attend. Jeff will update us as needed.

**Glen Morris** 

**NEOC Secretary and Membership Coordinator** 

# **Rocket Advertising**



## **Rocket Classifieds**

For Sale: Sanborn Air Compressor, 5 HP, single stage, 230 volt, single phase, 15 amp, 60-gallon tank. Runs well, upgraded mine and don't really need two! \$300 OBO. Jim 860-485-8788 Email: Jim70442w30@aol.com



For Sale: 1973 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme interior door panels. Interior panels for 73 Cutlass Supreme 2-door (red interior) including dash, upper and lower door panels, front and rear kick panels, A-Pillar panels and Sail Panels. \$300 for everything. Please contact Mike at mikbl@att.net.

If any club members have or work for a business that would like to advertise in the newsletter, please email me. Many members here WANT to take their pride and joy to someone who understands the investment and pride that we have in these vehicles.

Members are also entitled to one free classified ad per issue. Insert a photograph for better results. Please submit ads by the 15th of the month. Email submissions are preferred, but snail mail is fine. If you need photos scanned and returned, please include a SASE.

## Mew England Oldsmobile Club

Wallingford, CT. 06492 77 West Dayton Hill Road Mew England Oldsmobile Club



Wouldn't it be nice to have an Escape Machine? 12-hour day. Meetings. Memos. The midnight oil.

Secretary - Glen Morris Treasurer - Bill Black Vice President - Jim Schmitz President - Jeff Walsh Executive Board:

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