

The Choke Rod

preserving and restoring the Model A Ford since 1956

Volume 56, Issue 8

MAFCA Certificate of Merit 2005 through 2010

August 2012

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

Model A Ford Club of America



Photo by Scott Williams

Oktoberfest with the Marin A's see insert in this **Choke Rod**

Upcoming Tours

Tuesday August 7 - El Camino Centennial Tour - San Bruno

Sunday September 9 - Antique Autos History Park - San Jose

Saturday September 15 - Oktoberfest with the Marin A's - San Rafael

Friday-Sunday September 21-23 - Ironstone Concours D'Elegance - Murphys, CA

Saturday September 29 - Jimmy's Picnic - Golden Gate Park

Official Publication of the
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
MAFCA

President's Message

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Please submit any and all material to the editor by the last Monday of each month. Articles and photos may be submitted to: modela@pacbell.net or mailed to Walter Caplan at 157 Warren Drive, San Francisco, CA 94131.

TOUR CHAIR: Gary Barrango
EDITORS: Walter Caplan
Scott Williams
TECH EDITOR: Steve Owsley
MEMBERSHIP: Walter Caplan

I missed our last meeting so I am a little out of touch. I do know that September looks busy. We have the Oktoberfest hosted by the Marin A's at the Marin Rod and Gun Club and the Ironstone Concours. Walter and I have reserved rooms in Murphys. If you plan to go to the Concours and need a room give one of us a call. If you take a room you are committed for two nights. Walter and I will hold rooms until one week before the event.



The Campbell Cancer Awareness Recruitment Show on Saturday July 7, 2012 was a very enjoyable event. Al and Jenny organized and encouraged our participation. Unfortunately not many Model A Club members were able to attend. However, Walter and I had a nice visit with the Tempone family and the Marquez family and many of our friends from other Clubs.

Al and Jenny were there in their new/old 55 T- Bird. The 55, 56, and 57 Birds are some of my favorite cars. I was fifteen years old when these cars came on the scene. Their classic styling makes them just as desirable now as they were in 1955. Congratulations to Al and Jenny.

See you at the August meeting.

Barry Kinney

The San Francisco Model "A" Ford Club encourages membership in MAFCA, the National Model "A" Ford Club. Benefits include an excellent bi-monthly publication, *The Restorer*, providing technical information and free liability insurance when participating in Club Events.

MAFCA

Model A Ford Club of America, Inc.
250 South Cypress Street
La Habra CA 90631
www.mafca.com
562-697-2712



MAFCA dues are \$40 per year. Dues for new members may be paid at any time. Dues paid between November 1 and December 31 are valid for the remainder of the year paid plus the following year. Along with your check send in your name, spouse's name and complete address. An optional \$10 initiation fee includes a club pin, decal, badge, windshield card and a back issue of *"The Restorer"* magazine. If you use Mastercard or Visa, include the expiration date and your signature. Membership includes a subscription to *The Restorer*.

Marin A's Oktoberfest Saturday, September 15 Marin Rod & Gun Club - San Rafael

The Marin A's have invited the Napa A's, the Sonoma A's, and the SF Bay Area Chapter to their 2012 Oktoberfest at the Marin Rod and Gun Club in San Rafael.

The Marin A's request you bring your Model A (if possible), hat, sunscreen, sweater (could be warm, could be foggy), camera, and any adult drinks you may want. Food and drink (water and soda) provided by the Marin A's. There is no cost - we are guests of the Marin A's.

Last year we all had a great time.

See insert in this issue of **The Choke Rod**.

37th Annual 28th Avenue Block Party Sunday October 14

Club members and their families are invited to 28th Avenue between Lincoln Way and Irving Street. The street will be blocked from 8 AM to 9 PM. It is a POT LUCK – bring an appetizer, a salad, a hot dish, OR a dessert TO SHARE. Bring your beverage of choice – in case what is here runs out!! If you drive your old car, you can enter from Lincoln Way and park on 28th. Otherwise, you have to find parking elsewhere nearby. Lunch and game times will be provided closer to the event. FIREBOWL in the Mahl driveways after dark when the barricades come down.

Plan for cold after dark (remember it is San Francisco), and bring a chair (with your name on it).

Call Jeanine Mahl for more information. 415-664-2056



Birthdays & Anniversaries



Gunard Mahl	August 2
Gary Barrango	August 4
Nick Craig	August 7
Bob Craig, Jr.	August 8
Jack Hart	August 14
Maria Asuncion Young	August 15
Bev Kling	August 16
Colleen Rosenblatt	August 16
Zach Rosenblatt	August 24
Jack Green	August 31
Barry Kinney & Coragine Savio	August 9
Gary & Cheryl Barrango	August 26

El Camino Centennial Tour Tuesday August 7

The Mid Peninsula Old Time Auto Club would like to invite you and your old car friends and club members to join us for an important anniversary celebration on the Peninsula. It is for the 100th anniversary of the creation of the first California State Highway, which amazingly was the segment of El Camino Real between San Bruno and Burlingame. We will be celebrating on Tuesday, August 7, 2012, the 100th anniversary of the exact date of the initial groundbreaking.

There will be a major gathering of old cars at 10 AM at the rear of Tanforan Shopping Center, on the east side of El Camino, just north of I-380 in San Bruno. Then we will tour down El Camino to Burlingame past a reviewing stand at the site of the original groundbreaking. We will end up with a picnic and birthday party under the oaks at Washington Park in Burlingame.

Preregistration and a nominal \$3 per car are required. A registration form is available as an attachment to July's **Choke Rod** and must be received by 7-31-12.

For more information contact

**Mark and Kay Barchas at barchas@sbcglobal.net,
or call them at 650-941-1120,
or online at <http://mpotac.org/centennial-tour.php>**

Overnighter to Murphys Ironstone Concours d'Elegance Friday - Sunday, September 21 - 23

By popular demand, for a sixth year the Club is planning another weekend tour to the gold country with stops along the way, group dinners, and a fantastic car show on the beautifully landscaped grounds of the Ironstone Winery in Murphys. A limited number of hotel rooms have been reserved by Barry Kinney for club members.

Accommodations are limited and will be on a "first come - first served" basis. Call Barry at 415-282-2789 to reserve a room.

Tour Leader: Barry Kinney

Refreshments at the July meeting were provided by
Dan Bowermaster

Gary Barrango
will provide refreshments
at the August meeting.





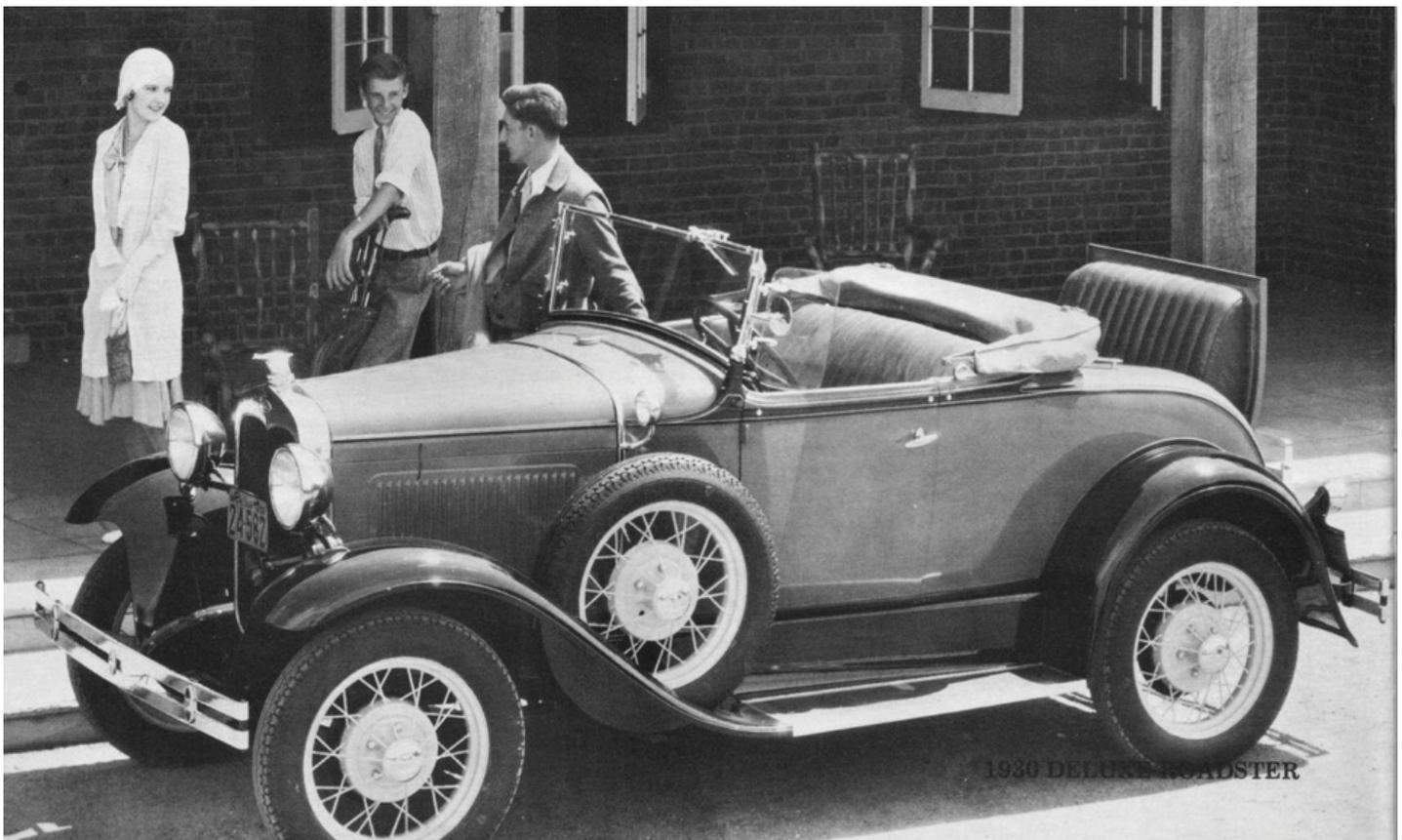
“TENNIS ANYONE”? While the young men in the photograph are obviously headed for the golf links, the pretty Miss is looking for a partner on the tennis courts. Her silk afternoon frock topped with a white crepe coat and white silk cloche will be exchanged for one of the outfits shown on the opposite page.

Light-weight material was selected as a tennis dress for the obvious reason, weather. On a hot, humid day on the courts one could only think of comfort in dress. The creation at the top is cotton, featuring a dropped waistline accented with a ribbon belt. The diagonal neckline sets off the white pique collar and sleeveless cuffs, with a matching snug fitting hat. The mute figured material shows off the pleated skirt, while giving a cool loose fitting effect. Her laced shoes complete the ensemble along with the wooden handled racquet.

Her partner waiting on the bench is wearing a soft silk multi-figured number with a draped neckline and small cap sleeves. The waistline features a double ribbon belt with tiny buckles. Again the pleated style is chosen for freedom of movement. Undoubtedly, she will remove her white cotton gloves when the match begins. Her straw cloche will be replaced with a sun shade during the activities.

The two ladies on the right (left) are waiting their turn and are more casually attired. Both are wearing full pleated cotton skirts and white cotton middies. Their white canvas strap shoes are rubber soled, add comfort during the game and look well with white silk hosiery. One player has selected a short sleeved over-blouse buttoned half way, while the other has donned a long sleeved light-weight wool sweater. Note her short hair style while her partner is wearing a cotton hat trimmed with a wide grograin ribbon.

Meanwhile back at the front of the Club House the two young gentlemen will return after their round of golf in their 1930 Deluxe Roadster. The owner of the car is wearing a knit jacket and appears to be carrying his friend's coat. The young man with the golf clubs looks comfortable in a striped cotton shirt and figured tie along with tweed knickers. The Roadster top boot is in place, indicating they plan to offer the rumble seat to at least two of the girls for a cool ride in the country. The sun glistening off the Quail radiator cap indicates the weather is great for either tennis or golf and what better way to enjoy a relaxing summer day?



The New Guy



I was fortunate enough to be born into a family of car lovers. Our great-grandpa was a service manager at a Chevy dealer, and after World War II, grandpa drove logging trucks and worked as a heavy-duty truck mechanic. Grandpa also had a few Model Ts (in parts) and a 1923 Chevrolet Touring Car.

Our dad bought his 1930 Ford Model A pickup from the original owner in 1973 – a house painter in Placerville who used the truck for his painting business. Dad did a frame-on restoration in our garage in 1974 and finished right before I was born. My brother, sister, and I each came home from the hospital as newborns in the Model A. Safety laws for kids in cars have definitely changed.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Mom and Dad were active members of Model A Clubs in the Sacramento and Eureka areas. My siblings and I have many fond memories of club activities, especially the food and great people. Mom and Dad's truck was a driver – we used it in club events, parades, birthday parties, or just errands around town. Once my siblings and I entered high school, the Model A-related activities tapered off, but it still got driven, including to senior prom.

Fast forward to November 2010. I purchased the Model A from my folks who were downsizing after purchasing a 1939 Buick Special. I hope to give the Model A a good home and create new memories as they did. I immediately joined the San Francisco Model A Club and am now doing some tinkering on the Model A. My first project is refinishing the oak wood strips in the bed. This column will follow my efforts.

This is part 2 of building a Model A clock from a pile of old dash parts and a clock saved from a garage sale.

So with the help of duct tape, I installed the fuel gauge and speedometer. The ammeter slipped in easily. Lightly pressuring down the foldable tabs kept the ammeter in place. Putting in the ignition switch was simple: adjust the



backing nut to get to the correct depth so the threads poke through gauge plate and thread on the opposing external nut. Pretty simple. Finally I installed the clock mechanism. Then problems emerged.

The protruding ignition switch interfered with the second hand of the clock, so I glued a few washers as shims on the mechanism to angle it away. Finally, there were no direct fasteners to hold the clock mechanism to the back of the gauge plate. Metal straps or some kind of bracket are

potential solutions. Another issue is to how to mount it. I originally planned to hang the clock directly on the wall, but now I am thinking of refinishing a block of wood and mounting the clock on that to hang on the wall. That would resolve the issue of holding the clock mechanism to the gauge plate. Finally, I am not happy with how the digital pictures of the fuel and speedometer look. They simply are too big. Time to find that software to downsize them.

In the meantime, I found an old redwood board to use as the mounting board. I measured, cut off a section, sanded, sealed, and stained the wood. That went much more



quickly than redoing the bed boards in the back of the pickup. Nearing completion, I built a stack of small boards to prop up the clock mechanism



against the mounting board. Finally, a brace of wood screws were used to attach the dash plate to the wood props and ultimately the redwood mounting board. Success! One problem – during the

process, I damaged the clock mechanism and the hands no longer turned accurately. Time to go to another garage sale!

Maybe next month I'll interview one of you guys to learn how you go into old cars and write down one of your favorite Model A stories or two. Any volunteers?



Dan Bowermaster

Ford at Iron Mountain - part two

David Featherston, American Woodys

When Ford introduced its 1929 Model A station wagon, the mills in Northern Michigan were cutting all the timber used in the assembly of station wagons. The graders at the mill were very fastidious about what timber they selected. At first the timber was rough cut and then later it was trimmed to finished sizes and surface contours before it was shipped to Briggs Manufacturing, Murray in Detroit, or Baker-Raulang in Cleveland. These companies provided the assembly and stamping work on the many Ford cars and all of their wood-bodied station wagons. Production of the new station wagon did not really get rolling until well into the 1929 model year and only 5,200 were delivered.

The method of providing outside body builders with raw materials to build the station wagons continued for some time but Henry Ford found that he could have the Mingel Company in Louisville, Kentucky, make the wood parts cheaper, with Briggs and Murray still doing the assembly. Surprisingly, Iron Mountain's waste wood products division remained very profitable especially with such sidelines as charcoal briquettes. These were used in many industrial processes and for domestic cooking and heat.

However, Ford's first scheme to provide wood to build his automobiles was fading quickly as automobiles were using less and less wood in their construction. This led to less mill time and idle workers which, combined with the effects of the Great Depression, took a large toll on the Iron Mountain plant and its workers.

As Ford had created a highly skilled labor force he felt responsible for them. The Ford sawmills managed to keep running, milling other wood products, providing pre-cut timber patterns for aircraft manufacturers, ship building, railroad cars and the mining industry. At the height of the Depression Ford's policy was to take only workers from local welfare lists who had families to support.

In 1938 Ford's contracts with Briggs Manufacturing were canceled and the station wagon production moved to the Iron Mountain wood shop. With this change, Ford redesigned the plant to bring full body production to Iron Mountain during 1937 to 1939.

By late '39 Ford was assembling the 1940 station wagon using 445 board feet of lumber including gum or mahogany for paneling, birch and maple for framing, and basswood for the inner roof slats. To build the 1940 station wagon, the Rouge Plant in Dearborn shipped Iron Mountain 25 box cars a day containing the steel parts for the station wagon which included a floorpan, inner rear wheel panels, rear fenders, a yowl, a front windshield frame plus a selection of smaller hardware needed. to assemble the wagon.

These parts were acid dipped, then pressure washed with hot water and dried in an infra-red baking oven. They were

spot welded on the assembly line and painted before being moved into the station wagon line. The floor pan was painted black and the external sheet metal was finished in body color. This floorpan assembly was set on a framing fixture and the cowl was attached by hand. The "B" and "C" pillars were installed and the roof was set in place. The assembly was then set in a fixture to make sure the side panels were in complete alignment before the doors were installed.

The assembly of each wagon required 167 sizes and shapes of wood from long stingers to tiny framing blocks. The bodies also require a further 750 different parts from screws to safety glass.

Once the body was finished it was cleaned with a wash of Naptha gas. Then it was sent into the varnishing booth for its first coat. The varnish was dried, sanded and re-varnished twice more. From there it went to the trim line for interior fittings, minor electrical work and the installation of the seats.

The station wagon assembly line employed about 300 workers who turned out 70 to 80 finished wagons a day. The line was 500 feet long with 2,000 feet of conveyor belts feeding it. By the end of each day, eight to ten box cars of finished station wagons were shipped out.

The move to the Iron Mountain wood shop was apparently a great moral booster for the workers who had previously seen their pre-cut wood parts shipped south for assembly. The workers took great pride in creating a finished product which resulted in a dramatic improvement in fit and finish of the bodies.

The 1941 and 1942 models followed but, with the advent of World War II, many employees signed up or were drafted for military service. This loss of manpower brought about the closure of several saw mills including ,the giant Iron Mountain mill and wood working shop. During the peak of its activity, 1800 men worked at Iron Mountain. This included woodworkers, metal fabricators, painters, seat builders, upholstery makers, electricians and installers.

In mid-1942, Iron Mountain closed and was opened again in 1943 as a glider factory using Iron Mountain's remaining highly-skilled wood workers. These craftsmen built 15 and 30 passenger gliders for the Army Air Force which were used for the Allied invasion of Europe after D-day when masses of troops were flown into France, Belgium, and Holland. During the (following two years the factory built over 4,200 gliders.

At the end of the war the face of Ford changed. Henry retired and Henry Ford II took over operations. Ford II immediately returned the company to civilian automobile production using facelifted 1942 models. Henry also immediately started selling off his grandfather's unprofitable sideline

businesses, including most of the timber mills, towns, mines and forests in the Upper Peninsula.

Station wagon building resumed at Iron Mountain and all of the Ford and Mercury station wagons and Sportsmen convertibles were built here. The station wagons were four-door and lasted until the new 1949 model which was only available as a two-door. With the introduction of the "New Generation" Ford, the amount of timber used in the station wagons was cut around 85 percent. No structural wood was required as the wagon bodies were steel structured with mahogany-skinned panel work and maple framing.

Mercury also used the same body for their wagon but the doors were cleverly restyled to flow into the wider front sheet metal of the Mercury. The new design was the work of E.T. "Bob" Gregorie and his team at Ford.

The steel body structures were built in Detroit and then shipped by rail to Iron Mountain. Here the wood panels were installed and the bodies were painted. The work required a lot of hand assembly to make the doors and side panels fit cleanly.

The panels for these New-Generation wagons were assembled using advanced fabrication methods with one of the first microwave curing processes. Some section framings were created out of six loose layers of ash with a two layer overlay of maple.

The door and side panels were then formed in a press using loose wood-ply topped with a thin layer of Honduran mahogany. This jig-formed panel was then put into a micro-wave bonding oven under pressure. At the time, this process was referred to as "radio frequency bonding." The new process cured the panel in five minutes rather than the 48 hours it normally took! Once the bodies were completed they were shipped out by rail to assembly plants around the country.

The final run of Ford's "wood" Station Wagons looked somewhat similar from 1949 to 1951; however, there were many small differences in the wagons. These were the years of the "single and twin-spinner" Fords and in 1950 there was an attempt to lower the production costs when

Ford dropped the wood graining on the tailgate and replaced it with a painted tailgate. The rear quarter windows were eliminated, the interior trimming was changed, with wood-grained Masonite door panels and a painted dash board replacing the wood graining. Other running changes were made with some items re-introduced and then dropped again on the 1951 model. As so many minor changes were made to this series of station wagons, restorers have a hard time determining exactly what a correct year model should or should not have.

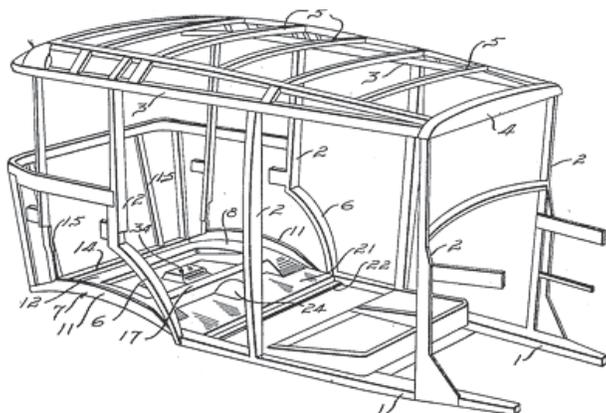
Around October 1950, the mahogany paneling on the station wagons was replaced with Di-Noc plastic vinyl sheeting bonded to steel panels. Chrysler had been using this trimming idea on their Town and Country's since 1948. Chrysler dropped Di-Noc and converted over to body color panels and wood framing in mid-1949.

Ford continued building the Ford and Mercury station wagons at the Iron Mountain plant until December 1951, when the plant was closed and 3,500 workers were laid off. To take up the loss of production of Ford and Mercury station wagons, production was moved to Mitchell-Bentley in Ionia, Michigan.

With the introduction of the '54 Ford station wagon, production returned to Ford, however Mitchell continued building station wagons for Mercury into the later part of the Fifties until the model was absorbed into normal production lines.

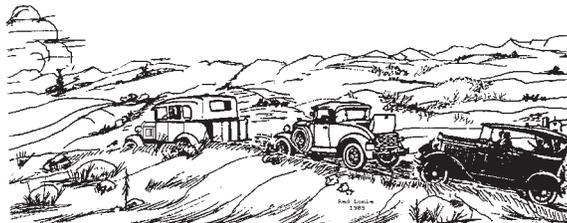
By 1955 virtually everything that Henry had invested in, or created in this section of Northern Michigan, had been sold or closed. The Iron Mountain property was acquired by the Kingsford Chemical Company who eventually closed up or sold off the facilities by 1961.

The history of Iron Mountain on Michigan's Upper Peninsula is an entangled tale of a business endeavor driven by Henry Ford's wish to contribute to people's lives with clever social ideas mixed with business savvy. While Ford's dream of a great empire in Northern Michigan did not last into the second half of the century, it has left us the legacy of these delightful wooded station wagons and convertibles.



2012 SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA MAFCA TOURS

It's THE JOURNEY! NOT THE DESTINATION!

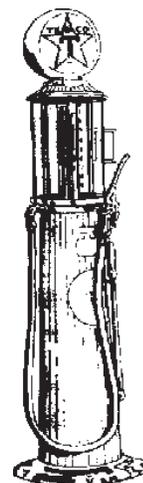


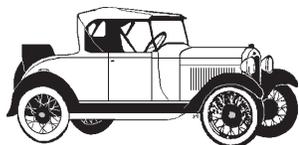
MONTH	DAY	TOUR LEADER	TOUR
JAN	29	BARRY KINNEY	PRESIDENT'S BRUNCH
MARCH	3 SATURDAY	SF MODEL A FORD CLUB	CRAB FEED - MONTE CRISTO CLUB
MARCH	17 SATURDAY	THUNDERBIRD CLUBS	A DAY AT THE RACES
MARCH	24 SATURDAY	KINNEY	GREEK CULTURAL FESTIVAL
APRIL	27-29	KINNEY	SPRING SPEED WEEKEND - AUBURN, CA
APRIL	28-29	SF MODEL A FORD CLUB	DREAM MACHINES - HALF MOON BAY
MAY	19 SATURDAY	THUNDERBIRD CLUBS	ANNUAL T'BIRD MIGRATION - RICHMOND
MAY	20	KINNEY	FRIENDSHIP DAY - CAÑADA COLLEGE
MAY	28 MONDAY	CAPLAN	MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE - PRESIDIO
JUNE	16 SATURDAY	CAPLAN / OWSLEY	ST. ANNE'S HOME - FATHER'S DAY WEEKEND
JUNE	24	CAPLAN / OWSLEY	PRIDE PARADE - SAN FRANCISCO
JULY	7 SATURDAY	KINNEY	CANCER AWARENESS SHOW, CAMPBELL, CA
AUG	7 TUESDAY	MID-PENINSULA OLD TIME AUTOS	EL CAMINO CENTENNIAL - SAN BRUNO
SEPT	9	KINNEY	ANTIQUÉ AUTOS HISTORY PARK - SAN JOSE
SEPT	15 SATURDAY	MARIN A'S	ANNUAL "OKTOBERFEST" CELEBRATION
SEPT	21-23	CAPLAN / OWSLEY / MACHADO	OVERNIGHTER MURPHYS-IRONSTONE CONCOURS
SEPT	29 SATURDAY	CAPLAN / OWSLEY	JIMMY'S OLD CAR PICNIC IN GOLDEN GATE PARK
OCT	7	BARRANGO	COLUMBUS DAY PARADE
OCT	14	MAHL	37 TH ANNUAL 28 TH AVENUE BLOCK PARTY
NOV	11	GREG MARTINEZ	VETERAN'S DAY PARADE ON MARKET STREET
DEC	8 SATURDAY	SF MODEL A CLUB	CHRISTMAS BANQUET - BASQUE CULTURAL CTR.

If you would like to lead a tour, please call **Gary Barrango** at **415-821-2628**
We encourage Club Members to plan additional **driving tours** throughout the year.
There is room for more than one activity or tour per month.

Schedule of Events 2012

Jan 28-29	Turlock Swap Meet
Mar 22-25	Model A's are Swell in 2012 - Laughlin NV, Pomona Valley Model A Club
May 25-27	NCRG Roundup hosted by the Sonora A's - www.ncrgmafca.com
Jun 14-19	Northwest Regional Group Meet - Boise Idaho
Dec 9-12	MAFCA Annual Membership Meeting & Awards Banquet Charleston, SC - Host Palmetto A's





San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
Model A Ford Club of America
July 12, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 pm by Vice President Gunard Mahl. There were no guests. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

Reports of Officers

President: No report

Vice President: No report

Treasurer: Balance amounts from current statements were provided.

Secretary: No report

Editor: No report

Tour Chair: No report

For The Good Of The Order: No report

Mike Cunneen reported on Father's Day gathering at St. Anne's Home on June 16. It was a big success and a lot of folks had a fun day.

Gary Barrango reported on the Pride Parade on June 24. A number of our members drove their cars. Bob Faber suggested that the cars would display better if they were not asked to drive two abreast.

There was no report on the Cancer Awareness Car Show on July 7.

It was suggested that perhaps there should be no summer meetings — for at least one of the months — due to people being gone. The subject was tabled until a meeting when more members are present.

The idea of a "pasta and pizza feed" for club members was brought up. Arrangements will be discussed at a later meeting.

Barry once again brought car related books for members to purchase. Proceeds to go to the club treasury.

Jeanine Mahl reminded those present of the upcoming tours that are listed in the current **Choke Rod**. She added that the Mahl Block Party is scheduled for October 14. Watch for information in an upcoming issue of **The Choke Rod**.

Dan Bowermaster brought the snacks this month and Gary Barrango will bring them next month.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

The next monthly Meeting will be Thursday August 9 at the Monte Cristo Club at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Jeanine Mahl, Treasurer

SF Model A Club Monthly Meetings:

The meetings continue to be held monthly, the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm.

The location is the Monte Cristo Club at 136 Missouri Street in San Francisco.

The meeting place is located in a safe neighborhood and parking is convenient.

If you have questions or need directions, call Gary at (415) 821-2628 (daytime)

The next scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, August 9, 2012

A number of club members gather together for dinner before the monthly meeting at 6 pm.

Please feel free to join us – dinner location will be at Goat Hill Pizza at 18th & Connecticut.

The Choke Rod
is available online in color
www.sfmodelclub.org



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Choke Rod

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Insert:

Oktoberfest with the Marin A's



www.sfmodelclub.org

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
Model A Ford Club of America
PO Box 31387
San Francisco, CA 94131-0387
415-621-0500

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday September 15, 2012
Oktoberfest with the Marin A's

AUGUST MEETING
Thursday August 9, 2012
7:30 pm - Monte Cristo Club
136 Missouri Street (Potrero Hill)
San Francisco