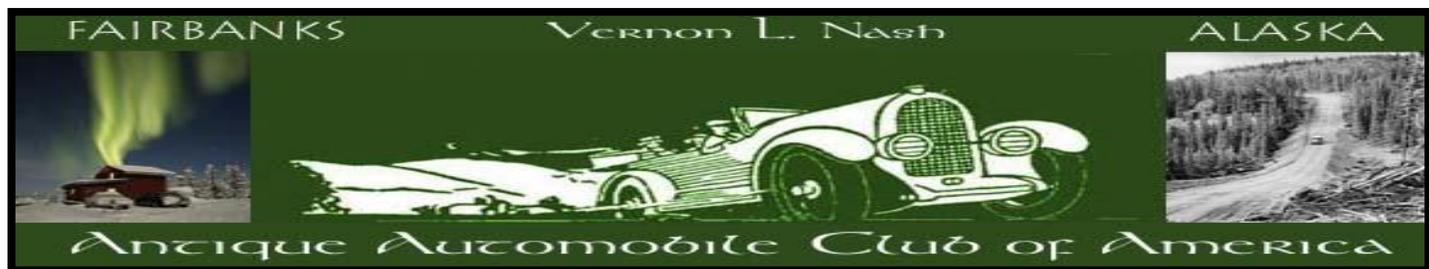


Tundra Tracks— Antique Auto news from the AACA's most northern region



February 1, 2012
Volume 41, Issue 2

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Scott Presents Check to Hospice

As was printed in the Daily News Miner:

Everyone is familiar with the Vernon L Nash Antique Auto Club as they and their cars are seen at community and

club events all around Fairbanks in the summer, starting with the Classic Car Show at the Carlson Center on Memorial Day Weekend and going through the summer with every Wednesday at Pioneer Park and of course, leading the Golden Days Parade. Golden Days parade day

also marks the day when the club gives away a club project raffle car to some lucky winner. The Club has 241 members and as they have meetings they often do 50/50 raffles or take other collections where club money proceeds are donated to charity. Club members nominate local charities who have touched their lives, or with which they are involved. This year, the recipient of that donation was selected by the club membership to be the Hospice of Tanana Valley. In the picture, Scott Culbertson, newly elected president of the car club, presents Mary Johnson, Director of Hospice of Tanana Valley with a check for \$1000 on December 1st.

Old #16 Breathes Fire Once Again

Reprinted from our club's Arctic Tracks, December 1974

This newsletter is a publication of the Vernon L. Nash Antique Auto Club of Fairbanks, which is the farthest north region of the Antique Automobile Club of America.

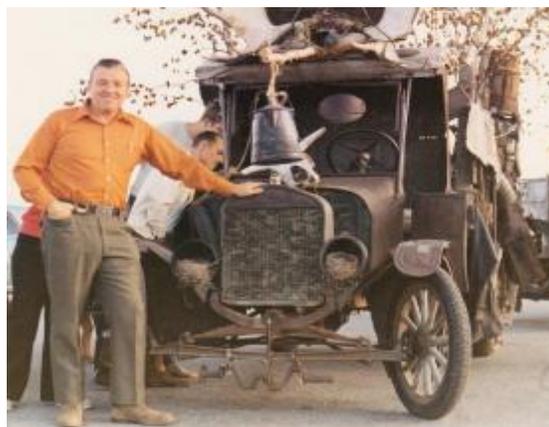


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If you have material you would like to contribute, please contact our editor, Rick Larrick, at the club email: vlnaac@gmail.com

How would you feel if you woke up some morning, looked out of your window and found Clayton's truck parked in your front yard? Would you be horrified by its presence, call the local law enforcement officials for its hasty removal to the dump, or would you be filled with a certain joy and curiosity concerning the fact that it picked your front year to rest its weary rear end in before continuing on?

Of course there would be mixed emotions over this hypothetical event. Many would curse this faithful old truck if it dared to let one drop of grease fall from its tired differential but then there would be others who would hurriedly dress and run to the front yard to more closely access and admire this old truck, perhaps even stroking the curves of its once beautiful but now drooping front fenders. Yes indeed there would be a great deal of controversy over an event such as this.



But now let me tell you the story of Clayton's truck and how it came to be in Fairbanks, Alaska, and then perhaps you can make up your mind as to how you would feel if someday Clayton's truck unexpectedly comes to call on you.... Clayton's truck was Henry Ford's twelve millionth tin lizzy, so to say that is one in a million is an under-

statement of some magnitude. In fact there is only one truck like Clayton's in the whole world. Born in the Ford plant in Michigan back in the year 1925, officially it was known as a Model TT one ton stake bed truck. It was shipped to the Ford agency in Fairbanks, then affiliated with Sampson Hardware and owned by the late Jim Barack. On arrival it was tuned to a state of perfection (which in some small measure still exists to this

very day) by one of Jim's talented mechanics and sold to the Fairbanks Exploration Company. As truck #16 it would serve the company faithfully in its mining operations for years. Sometime after the change of a decade it was replaced by its big

Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everyone gets busy on the proof.

(Continued from page 1) Old #16

brother the Model AA. After a fruitful career with the mining company, old #16 was declared surplus to Fairbanks Exploration Company needs and sold to famed Alaska bush pilot, Percy Hubbard. Percy figured rightfully that it would be a boon to his flying business and indeed it was. It could tote light freight and passenger baggage from downtown Fairbanks and the railroad station to the perimeter of Weeks Field, where Percy's operation was based. Old #16 was a friend to everyone and served Percy well. However late in the thirties, #16 became tired deep down in its gizzards, so Percy tried to perk it up. Tire old engine #12,000,000 was pulled and overhauled by Percy's airplane mechanic. The overhaul was never completed for Percy was involved in a horrible air crash which cost him his leg. It was nearly the end for Percy and old #16, too. Percy recovered but the strain was too much for poor old #16, so it sat in the rains and snows with its engine buried in the tall grass at the edge of Weeks Field for years and years. The tires and front wheels were pilfered by near-do-wells that roamed the area and it looked indeed like #16 was doomed to removal to the local dump, which was then on First Avenue down where the oxygen pant and armory are now. Everything went over the river bank then, and into the Chena.

Then in the summer of 1943 Clayton came to Fairbanks with PAA. George, as everybody called him then, had done a stint with the airline in Africa and after a brief stay in Whitehorse, Yukon, had been transferred to Fairbanks to help with the transition from the fabric and tube airplanes to the all metal birds. George as mechanically inclined and inspired by Henry Ford since he was 8 years old. It wasn't long before old #16 was discovered by George as he walked around the old Weeks Field, his eyes peeled for any and all relics of yesteryear. At first the potential of old #16 was overlooked by George, for he had his eye on a new girl flight instructor who had just arrived in Fairbanks, and was the talk of the flight-line. Most of George's friends started taking dual flight instruction and soon George was,

The engine turned perhaps six revolutions and a beautiful throaty roar burst forth from the four powerful cylinders beneath the rusty and battered hood.

too. As George became more interested in Virginia, he almost forgot about the old truck, but, after they were married in Ketchikan his thought returned to the rusting chassis of old #16. Soon George and Virginia were calling Fairbanks their adopted home town and were fortunate to find an acre and a half of ground to start a new life in the great land. It wasn't long before George made a deal with some of Percy's associates to remove the bones of #16 from the grasses and brush growing around it on Weeks Field. A trip to the dump proved to be the most fruitful for the old logging trailer made from a Model T truck rear end was found over the river bank but just short of the of the water. It had serviceable wheels and tires and was retrieved by a cable and truck which were successful in towing it up the river bank to the roadway above. To keep the dumpmaster as a friend who would peel his eyes for front wheels and tires and in fact any other T parts that might find their way to the dump, a price of two dollars was agreed upon as the initial payment. Front wheels for #16 were obtained as a gift from old Tom Gibson of Valdez trail fame, and tires were finally found by the dumpmaster. After the wheels and tires were installed on #16, it really looked great. George and Virginia towed it over behind the Pan American hangar where George could have

easy access to his tools and could work on his trusty truck after hours. Soon all #16 needed was a good radiation and a complete engine. George found that his neighbor in Derey Tract had been saving a serviceable model T engine to build a wood saw. However his plans had changed and he was about ready to depart on a trip outside. He gave the engine to George with his blessings before boarding PAA for the flight outside.

The radiator was the hardest item to come by. There were lots of radiators around town but they had all be damaged or frozen several times and plugged with oatmean and stop-leak of many brands. George was at his wits end in this seem-



ingly futile search, but then he found what appeared to be a good radiator on a tired truck on the edge of the slough over in Graehl. After filling it with water it was found not to leak so much as one drop. This was indeed good news. Now get ready for the bad news. George had to purchase the whole truck just to obtain that long-sought-after radiator. It was a very expensive item at \$25, but George was glad to get it for it meant that old #16 would soon breathe fire once again. Ignition coils were the next hardest item to find, but were found in Nome, Alaska, in an old second hand store. They were checked out and found to function beautifully, throwing out a spark of close to 1/2 of an inch. The coils were the give of a Pan American pilot who knew of George's love for the old truck and had located them on one of his trips to Nome. It was an exciting day when a gallon of gas was poured into the oval tank beneath the seat of old #16. A tow rope was firmly attached to the front axle and all final arrangements for ignition, coolant, band adjustment, and timing were in order. Everything was a last double checked and in readiness for the test. The tow rope became gently taunt and the signal to roll was given. The engine turned perhaps six revolutions and a beautiful throaty roar burst forth from the four powerful cylinders beneath the rusty and battered hood. It was wonderful to hear old #16 run again and to see the blue flame flicker from the open exhaust manifold. A slight adjustment of the needle valve and that engine idled just like it must have back in '25. It sounded like a tugboat, so evenly spaced were the power impulses. George claimed its fabulous performance was the product of perfect compression. Whatever it was, it was uncanny the way it ran then and the way it still runs today. George and Virginia used that truck in daily service, hauling lumber and wood, sawdust and clearing the land where their home slowly expanded into what it is today. George taught Virginia the basic principles of the planetary and soloed her in

(Continued on page 3)

New Look / New Newsletter Name?

I am very happy to be your newsletter editor for 2012. Cindy Helms did a great job last year, and especially has my thanks for a job very well done!

I was researching old newsletters from the club (that's where I found the wonderful article that George Clayton wrote about #16 way back in 1974), and I found that the letter usually had a name. But our newsletter has been *nameless* for the last several years. I tried out a combination of the old names with this new format that I am also trying out, and I would like your feedback.

Old newsletter names include its first name, ARCTIC TRACKS, with the "non skid" logo emblazoned across the bottom of the front page, - that was the early newsletter from Horseless Carriage Club times, Later it was TREADS ON THE TUNDRA, and , starting with a contest by the editor in 1997 (Sherry Camarata), it was once

named the PUDDLE JUMPER GAZETTE. The newsletter appears to have been nameless since about ten years ago.

As far as the name, we should make it a contest, with a vote on the most liked name at the April membership meeting. Please send your suggestions to the club email at vlnaacf@gmail.com and I will publish them in the March and April newsletters. One choice will be to remain nameless as now, others will be based on nominations (...one of my favorites from Sherry's contest was "Arctic Exhaust".....).

Last year as President, I wrote a lot about "sharing the driving" - now I need help with sharing the newsletter writing. Please get in the habit of sending me photos and brief write-ups



that you think should go in the upcoming newsletter, and I will try my best to use everything. The newsletter deadline is still the 20th of every month, so that we can get the newsletter out by the start of the issue month.

- Rick Larrick

"Our newsletter has been nameless for the last several years"

Editors should be nameless— newsletters should have names...

(Continued from page 2) Old #16

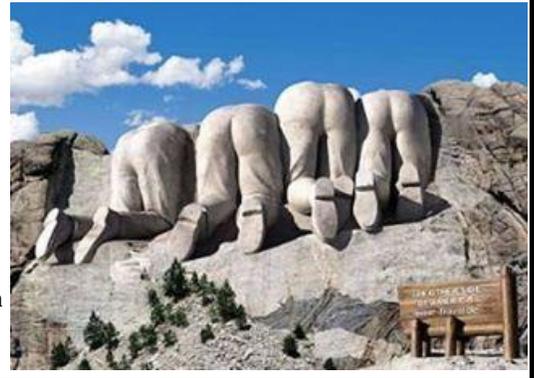
old #16 back in '46. That was to get even with her for soloing him in a J3 Cub in 1943. Although Virginia never became a virtuoso of the planetary transmission, she became a good wife and mother of three children, all of whom grew to love that Model T truck as they all played on it from the time they were babies. George made progress with the airlines from the day Virginia soloed him and has been flying the flagships of Wien for over five million miles. George never turned down a chance to run old #16 in any parade or civic event. Golden Days has always featured this wonderful truck and the Chamber of Commerce has sent it to anchorage on two occasions for the fur Rendezvous. It helped to promote the production of Oklahoma when it came to Fairbanks and has picked up the high potentate of the Shriners, who had the time of his life riding on the roof from the airport to the Travelers' Inn. For years the truck had a beautiful upright piano as standard equipment installed just behind the cab. It was pure joy to hear the wonderful sound of music emit from old #16 when a good piano player was aboard. Even George was no slouch when it came to getting some sweet tones to come out of that old piano on his truck. Unfortunately the piano was later lost in the great flood of '67. Old #16 was on display then just in front of the Nenana at what is now Alaskaland. The ravaging waters inundated the old truck and the piano never sang again. It would have been the end of old #16 also, had George not arrived the minute the water went down and drained the river silt from its gizzards and flushed it out with soothing light oil.

It was truly amazing how old #16 snapped out of such an unwarranted ducking! The secret of saving old #16 was to get her turning and belching fire as soon as possible after the flood waters went down.

One of the funniest things that happened with the old truck was when Hubert Humphrey, (then Vice-President) came

With one certain member of our club in mind, I first thought this must be a picture of PLYMOUTH ROCK -

But then I found out it was really Mt. Rushmore from the Canadian side...



to Fairbanks to give a speech. It was to be held on a podium down at the A67 site. Old #16 was on hand for the big event. Soon the secret service men were scouring the area as a security measure. They spied old #16 and started going over it with a fine tooth comb. Now if there is anything the secret service hates more than guns, it is exposed wire. The sight of wire will drive on of these well-meaning gentlemen right up a wall. Now old #16 has lots of wires running around her bed and up to the coil box. Just the sight of those four vibrating ignition coils was enough to scare a secret service man to death, especially if he were afraid of explosives. Well then he saw the wires and the large 12 volt battery resting menacingly in the bed, he could hardly keep his mind. He followed the wires to a point back of the piano and that was all it took for him to flip. He was sure that old #16 was placed there as a booby trap for Hubert Humphrey, and that the piano was filled with at least 600 pounds of dynamite. He summoned all his aides and the area was frantically canvassed to

(Continued on page 6)

Birthdays

Darnell Weaver Feb 6
Vonna Husby Feb 8
Claudia Hall Feb 11
Mebble Hansen Feb 12
Richard Gresham Feb 14
Debra Dussman Feb 15
Eugene Wescott Feb 15
Fred Husby Feb 16
John Smith Feb 18
Cindy Lyon Feb 20
Betty Carlson Feb 21
Shirley Franklin Feb 27
Ardis Bourque Feb 28



Anniversaries

Ed & Laurel MaLaughlin Feb 1
Dick & Joni Ellsworth Feb 2
Loran (Squeeky) &
Marion Benham Feb 12
Dan & Ellie Tempel Feb 12



Sunshine Club

Ruth Ann Domke reports.....

Gary Nash is still undergoing treatments, but is progressing well. Give him a call (456-2103)—we're sure he'd appreciate it!

Jill Larrick had surgery and is soon to be undergoing radiation therapy—I'm sure she'd also like a card or a call. (457-4344)

Ron Stephenson could use some get-well cheer—call him up to wish him well (452-7728)



Please call Ruth Ann at 374-6973 (or Sherry Camarata if Ruth Ann is on one of her *frequent* winter trips to Hawaii) if you know of someone needing a little sunshine!



AAMA and VLNAACF

2012 Joint Meeting

June 8-9-10, 2012



Please plan on attending the annual Antique Auto Musers of Alaska and the Vern L Nash Antique Auto Club – Fairbanks joint meet in Cantwell.

Base of operations: Backwoods Lodge, Cantwell. (www.backwoodslodge.com).

This lodge is on the Denali Highway about ½ mile from the Parks Highway junction in Cantwell. The lodge has 10 Motel rooms and 2 cabins. Rates for the rooms are discounted 10% for the car club members. Rates vary from \$144 (including tax) with three beds to slightly less for smaller rooms. I am hoping that we can book all the rooms well in advance so we have the lodge to our self for the weekend. AT this time the Saturday banquet will be held at the Cantwell Lodge, next to the railroad tracks. There is an area here that can be used for the car games. There is other lodging available in the area as well, and Scott Grundy has the info on those options ranging from \$45 a night and up.

JOINT MEET DRAFT ITINERARY

Friday evening: Meet up at the Backwoods Lodge for the BBQ. Steaks will be provided for grilling on the Gas grills by the rooms. As the porches are covered, we should be good – Rain or shine.

Saturday: Breakfast on your own. There are several restaurants. Including the Cantwell Lodge and the Bluesberry Inn. A TBD tour or car show in the area and Car Games will fill the day. Howard Hanson has offered to come up with some new challenges for the games this year. Lunch can probably be held at the Backwoods lodge using the leftovers from the Friday dinner. **Sat Evening** a Banquet at the Cantwell Lodge / Cantwell Café.

Sunday Morning. Breakfast and return home. As some of the Fairbanks folks will be continuing on to Seward as part of their Long Distance tour, there may be a sizeable group going back to Anchorage.

Please make your reservations soon, so we can lock up the rooms for that week end. There are limited rooms available and they will get hit with summer reservations starting in March or April. As Scott Grundy points out, this is the 50th anniversary of The Antique Auto Musher's Club, and they are going to serve us **steaks** at the Friday night BBQ! Scott Hulse of the Anchorage Club is chairing this celebratory event for the AAMA and promises car games and other activities on Saturday that are certain to entertain us before the awards banquet that evening.

Please contact Scott Grundy of our club if you intend to participate (457-3526, grundy@mosquitonet.com). Scott Hulse's excellent flyer that addresses all aspects of the event will be forwarded to you. Housing with an in-room toilet is limited, so don't procrastinate if a potty is important to you.

This event promises to be special - don't miss it.

RAFFLE CAR

January turned out to be a very productive month for the club raffle car.

Four car club members braved the frigid weather on January 14th to start repairs and adjustments on the 1970 Chevelle raffle car. This was our first club member work session. Under the direction of Terry Whitedge, the crew consisted of Rod Benson, Charlie Bourque and John McCarthy. We worked on finishing the interior carpet placement and the



final fastening of the front seat in the Chevelle. We assessed the placement of radio speakers, the need for some engine fine tuning and the repair of a transmission pan oil leak. We also have to accomplish some dash board paint work and install a dash pad overlay that will compliment the new interior installed by A&A Upholstery. This work will be done at a future work session.

On January 16th, the car was delivered to our friends at Frontier Glass for a windshield replacement. This ended being a time consuming replacement as there was some rust under the windshield seal that they needed to repair. Sam and his crew got the job done. What a difference driving an old car with a new windshield!

On January 18th, the car was dropped off at Jose Body and Paint where the car is undergoing an exterior face lift. Jose will take care of a cosmetic redo of the dings, scratches, dents and corrosion issues. The car should be back to us sometime around the delivery of this newsletter.

Thanks to all that are busy selling tickets. Rochelle Larson tells me that we are about half way through with our ticket sales. This car should be one of our most attractive and desirable raffle cars to date. It sure generates a lot of attention.

Remember these businesses that are helping our club when you need work done on your vehicle. Thank them for supporting the Vernon L. Nash Antique Auto Club.



Vernon L. Nash Antique Auto Club of Fairbanks

Wedgewood Resort &
Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum



Midnight Sun Cruise-In
June 22-23, 2012

Wedgewood Resort, Fairbanks, Alaska

Alaska's Hottest Classic Car Celebration

CAR SHOW June 23rd
Includes antique steam & electric car demonstrations

DUES WERE DUE DECEMBER 31ST—SOME NOT PAID YET

Despite incentives such as a free pin or half price hat, some members haven't paid up for this year yet!

But the good news is that 201 members have paid up as of this week, leaving only 39 unpaid memberships.

Send your money to the club PO box, or drop it off with Rochelle at Larson's Locksmith

(Continued from page 3) Old #16

find the owner of the truck for the appointed hour of Humphrey's speech was fast approaching. Finally George was located at the ice cream parlor and agreed to talk to the frantic agent about the truck. George was tickled pink to find that his truck was causing such a commotion and seized upon the opportunity to tease the agent who no doubt had a fire cracker go off in his hand when he was a baby. No amount of reasoning could convince the agent that old #16 was a peaceful Alaskan citizen that had been around since Calvin Coolidge was making speeches. Of course it had toted a lot of dynamite when it worked for the F.E. Co., but that didn't mean it had been saving it up for an opportunity like this. After all, old #16 had its own body to think about. The agent wanted the truck driven away immediately. George told the agent that the truck was very old and tired and that it might take hours and a lot of luck to even get it to run, that old #16 was usually towed to position for display purposed only. He said that perhaps it could be pushed backward to a safe distance away and to get several secret service men to push on the front of the truck. Well, one additional complication came up. A four-wheel trailer was hooked on behind old #16. This was filled with hay and the agents frantically started going through the hay, looking for dynamite which they were sure lay hidden beneath the hay. As the truck rolled backward, the trailer hitch jack-knifed and brought all movement to a halt. The agent now almost in tears begged George to try and start the truck and drive it away. Well, George by this time feeling sorry for the agent agreed to try and start the truck. He pulled up repeatedly on the crank in a display of hopelessness, but all the while he was really choking and winding in a combustible mixture charge for when the time was appropriate to turn on the ignition, the lack of which had not been apparent to the agent, being a secret between George and old #16. Tired of cranking by this time, George stopped to rest while an agent tried his skill at the crank. Soon the agent was willing to call it quits as his breath was coming in short puffs. George said sometimes it starts if I talk gently to it, and proceeded to whisper something in its coil box area. Just then he turned on the ignition and retarded the spark. Old #16 burst

(Continued on page 7)

I always wanted to be a procrastinator, but I never got around to it.

(Continued from page 6) Old #16

into life, George jumped into the driver's seat and took off in a cloud of dust leaving a good number of bug-eyed and bewildered secret service agents behind. Thirty or more of the town folks got a good natured laugh watching old #16 perform that afternoon.

The day we almost had a disaster with this wonderful truck was back in '66. Don Hulshizer and I had just rigged up a first class still on the back of the bed. The Golden Days parade was on and we were in full swing. Don has a fire in the still and we were running at about 300 gallons per day capacity. The mash and sugar trailer was entowed by several beautiful girls perched on top of the sacks. We were all in old timer's costumes and feeling no pain as the operation was exceedingly smooth. George was running with the spark retarded for full effectiveness on the crowd which lined both sides of Cushman Street in the vicinity of the old high school. The carburetor was very hot and when George faked an engine failure by retarding the spark excessively, the resulting back fire engulfed the carburetor with flames. The float stuck and gasoline started flooding the street under the truck. The tank under the seat was full of gasoline which mad us a bit nervous as the crowd pressed closer for a better look. They seemed to think that it was all part of the act and didn't want to miss out on a bit of the show. George told them to clear the area as this was not part of the act and it might blow up at any minute. The street was burning under the truck so we tried to push the truck backwards off the hot asphalt and gasoline. The trailer tongue jack-knifed and prevented us from getting completely clear of the flames but George was able to dart under the truck and shut off the gasoline valve. Next we started pouring the contents of the still on the carburetor but could not put it out. Don handed George a wool blanket to smother the flames but gasoline is difficult to put out and soon the blanket had holes in it and was itself on fire. Indeed it looked like old #16 was in deep trouble this time. It



was even more serious than George and Don first thought. Fortunately for all concerned a Fairbanks fireman arrived on the scene with a powder type fire extinguisher and it really did the trick. We were extremely grateful that old #16 had been saved and he let us use the extinguisher for the rest of the afternoon. At first we were of the opinion that old #16 would not finish out the parade as the coil box became contaminated with some of the contents of the still. A sympathetic friend with a tow chain got us moving again after several revolution of the engine began to cough and spit and soon began to run very roughly. This was good for it generated heat which was needed to dry the coil box. Within 15 minutes we were running on all four and off for the races once again. Don discovered that it

was great sport to shoot the powder filled extinguisher at the crowd. At one point he let some poor soul have it and when we drove off it looked like that fellow just came from a 16 hour shift at the lime plant. After this frightening experience we now always carry a 15 pound CO2 fire extinguisher with us as standard equipment. Old #16 is almost 50 years old now if it could talk it could tell a lot of stories. Birds have nests in the headlights and moss grows from the river silt in the board of her bed; rust had tried to creep in here and there, yet there is a lot of go-power in that truck yet. They say twenty horsepower was under the hood when new and with the trailer it could move a hundred bushels of wheat across flat country. To help conquer the hills a two-speed rux-

stell rear end was factory installed. The real reason old #16 has held up for so long is because it was made from vanadium steel. The very best metal. They say that Henry Ford got the most out of the metal and he surely did. Of course the real secret of the success of old #16 is because so many people love that old truck. The Claytons sure gave that old truck a lot of love and it is our hope should you every wake up some morning, look out your window and see Clayton's truck sitting in your front yard, you won't be too horribly upset, and perhaps you might even show a little love for old #16, too.

- George Clayton

George and Virginia Clayton were charter and long time members of this club and were the parents of Club Secretary Nancy Peterson, who still drives #16 in every Golden Days Parade.

ADVENTURE BEFORE DEMENTIA TOUR (June 10 – 14)

This driving tour to Seward and other special places is separate from the joint meet but the dates are contiguous. You **do not** have to participate in the joint meet to join this nifty tour. I anticipate a group will either depart Fairbanks on Saturday, June 9 to drive part way to Seward and/or a group will drive the entire 489 miles on Sunday, June 10.

The tour itinerary printed in our January newsletter has two minor changes. Our visit to the incredible Brown's vehicle and automobelia collection will occur on our return through Anchorage. And secondly, for those interested, I have added the option of an approximate one hour round-trip hike to view a unique geological phenomena that occurs in only one other location in North America!

Contact Scott Grundy for information or to join the always-fun cast of characters on these trips at 457-3526 or grundy@mosquinet.com.

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NEXT MEETINGS

The General Membership Meeting is always the second Thursday of the month. This month the membership meeting is on **Thursday, February 11th** at The Bakery Restaurant on College Road. Dinner starts at 6:00 pm—order dinner from the menu. The meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

The Board Meeting is at 6:30 PM at Sams Sourdough café on the Tuesday before the membership meeting. This month it is on Tuesday February 9th. / Dinner is B4. Everyone is also welcome to attend.

I am your Newsletter EDITOR

—not the newsletter WRITER.

Please submit tips, ideas, ARTICLES, notes, pictures, or thoughts you would like published in YOUR newsletter. Please also tell me what you like and especially tell me what you DON'T like about the newsletter or its content. Make sure I have your stuff by the 20th of the month if you want it published in the newsletter scheduled to come out by the first of the next month. Thanks in advance for your help! - Rick Larrick



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