



***smoke in the wires***

Feb. '24

## PBCA Club Officers

President	<b>Paul Reese</b>
Vice President	<b>Paul Salm</b>
VP/Activities	<b>Bob Manske</b>
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Public Relations	<b>Tom Schmitz</b>
Parliamentarian	<b>Taber Tompkins</b>
Show Chair	<b>Fred Veenschoten</b>

## Activities Calendar

**Feb. 10, 2024**

**SABCC John Twist seminar**, Eagleson Garagemahal, 25604 Friendship Rd., Daphne, AL, 36526, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Feb. 19, 2024**

**Monthly Club Meeting**, The Hangar, Milton, eat at 6:00 p.m., meet at 7:00.

**March 2, 2024**

**Scottish Festival**, Frank Brown Park, Panama City Beach. Free entry to all participants in the British car display.

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Address comments or submissions to **Michael King**, Editor, at [smokeinthewires@gmail.com](mailto:smokeinthewires@gmail.com).

Membership in PBCA is open to anyone with an interest in classic or modern British cars, and dues are only \$20 per year. To join, visit [www.pbca1.com](http://www.pbca1.com).

### FEBRUARY 2024

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Twist Seminar
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 Club Meeting	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	1	2 Scottish Festival

**On the cover:** *Chili cookoff winner George Bruno seems alarmed at the size of the peppers on the table in front of him.*

# President's Input

Paul Reese

## British Cars and the Meaning of Life

British cars have brought us together. Sadly in the relatively short time I've been in the club we have lost more than a few members.

- **Ann Fell**, always gregarious and fun
- **Bob Lembcke**, the ultimate kind British car motorhead
- **Franz Bachmann**, engaging and always optimistic about his next project
- **George Wakeman**, a ready smile even when you knew he wasn't feeling well



*George and Bridget Wakeman*

And others I did not know. But "lost" is not the best term. "Gained" is more the reality. And the meaning of life – Live . . . and do The Hokey Pokey.

See ya' at the 19 Feb meeting!

Paul Reese

[pbca1president@gmail.com](mailto:pbca1president@gmail.com)



## Welcome New Members

- **Mark and Darby Spurrier** live in Navarre, and are the caretakers of a 1974 MGB
- **Bob Willsie** lives in Pensacola, and is the caretaker of a 1958 Austin-Healey Sprite MK1 (colloquially, a "Bugeye")

## In our Thoughts

- **Bridget Wakeman** and all the family of Command Sergeant Major **George Wakeman**, US Army (Ret.). George died January 30, 2024. His services will be held Feb. 18 in Elyria, Ohio.
- The family of **Ralph Overly**. Ralph and his wife **Peggy** were longtime members of PBCA and Peggy was for many years the top sponsor recruiter for "Brits on the Bay." Ralph died Jan. 5, 2024; a celebration of life will be held Feb. 10 at 10:00 a.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gulf Breeze.

## Recuperating Nicely

- **Tom Schmitz** recently underwent installation of a new cardiac ignition system, as his original equipment was not able to maintain an adequate tickover. "Smoke in the Wires" hears all is going well, and hopes he chose the deluxe version. We need his wisdom!

# Tight Connections

## Club and Member News

### Chili Cookoff

story by **Bob Manske**

January 20's PBCA Chili Cookoff at the Manske garage in Milton had a large crowd of 43 people (three were guests - not club members). We had 15 chili entries!

That's a lot of chili. All were yummy and it was very hard to choose/judge the best ones. Lots of other stuff was available to eat too.

I believe everyone had a good time and no one got sick! The top chilis were:

- **George Bruno's** El Diablo, First Place
- **Tim Witzigreuter's** white chicken chili, Second Place
- **Lee Salm,** Third Place



Above, from left, PBCA secretary **Monica Bachmann**, third place winner **Lee Salm**, second place winner **Tim Witzigreuter**, first place winner **George Bruno**, and PBCA president **Paul Reese** (photo by **Bob Manske**); below, outgoing president **Bill Weeks** receives his plaque from **Paul Reese** (photo by **Gail Sanders**); below left, the theme of the day (photo by **Mollie Reese**); bottom, a group shot (photo by **Bob Manske**).



## Jan. 24 Garage Day

story by *Bob Manske*  
photos courtesy *Paul Reese*

Besides having fun and eating things we shouldn't (**Taber' Tompkins'** big box of doughnuts, **Eddie Toenes'** yummy homemade cookies and **Risa Manske's** chocolate-covered cookies), three cars actually received maintenance and TLC at our January garage day.

A new starter was installed in **David Anderson's** beautiful Triumph TR6. **Keith Sanders** worked on a Bugeye Sprite brake system and **Tim Witzigreuter** (think Santa at the Christmas Party) worked on some new overlays for the dashboard on his MG Midget.

new one in. It is also noteworthy that David's car broke all previous records for the total number of people standing under a car (looking up - not helping) in our garage.



*Fred Veenschoten (standing, center) discusses repair strategies.*



*Keith Sanders under the Bugeye's bonnet.*

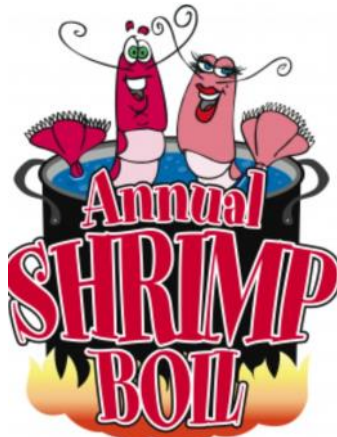
David's (fast /easy) starter install turned out to be quite a challenge with manifolds and carburetors preventing removal and installation from the top, and a firmly-welded exhaust system snug and tight under the old starter. Engine block to the left and fender/body to the right . . . **Fred Veenschoten** and **George Bruno** managed to do the install through the glove box. Only kidding. The exhaust pipes were difficult, but not impossible and were able to be pulled away just enough to maneuver the old starter out and

Happy and highly-skilled club members worked on cars from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with only one person bleeding from a labor-inflicted wound. **Keith Sanders** managed to tighten a C-clamp to where it broke in two, and his hand was the softest item in the mix. Soap, water and hydrogen peroxide fixed him right up and he was back to work in five minutes.

Just another fun day at the garage!



*Working on the recalcitrant TR6.*



PBCA held its annual shrimp boil on Sunday, Feb. 4 at Bear Lake Recreation Area, within the Blackwater River State Forest. Attendance, despite rainy weather, was 43. Since Ed. could not attend, he can say that he did not observe anyone exceeding the posted limits on the rural roads. Photos, clockwise from top left, **Noel Eagleson** (L) and **Tim Witzigreuter** wait for the pots to boil; ingredients await their big moment; the past and current presidents review sauces and sides; a wide shot of the feast; **Bob Manske** warns "Careful boys, that's hot!" (photos by **Gail Sanders** and **Noel Eagleson**)

# Wiring Diagrams

## Tech Tools and Tips

### Coolant: Cool it or lose it!

story by Mac McNamara, SABCC

How long ago did you check your coolant, I mean, beyond the “yep! thar’s flewid’s init!?” It’s been a few years for me and my Anglia, and longer for a couple of other cars. With all the other “fun” I’ve had with the car this past year, I thought I’d get a jump on preventive maintenance instead of reactive maintenance.

The cooling system is one of the least-checked items on anyone’s list, and one of the many things that can leave you stranded in a bad situation. If you’re lucky, it will be for a short time and relatively inexpensive repair. Less lucky ones will lose an engine, or worse. As the diabetes commercial states: “Too much? That’s the point.” Spend about 15 minutes and check the coolant.

Tools needed:

- Anti-freeze and coolant tester (hydrometer) - under \$5.00 at your big-box auto supply location)
- Digital voltmeter - you probably already have one
- An assistant, safety glasses and water-resistant gloves

Let’s start with the hydrometer and a cold engine. The hydrometer tests ethylene glycol on a temperature scale from -51°C to 0°C (-60°F to 32°F), indicating whether the solution is properly mixed to prevent freezing. It also provides easy visual inspection that identifies if the acids or solutions are in proper state.

Here are the steps to follow:

1. Remove radiator cap and check the following with the hydrometer:

- a. Level in radiator is acceptable
  - b. Color of extracted liquid – there should be no rust, oil, gas or other contaminants
  - c. The anti-freeze mix will supply protection for the expected temperatures for your area
2. If you have a mechanical fan clutch, rotate the fan by hand to check for excessive noise, stiffness or looseness.
  3. Inspect the fan blades for signs of damage that could lead to imbalance and eventual failure.
  4. Inspect the fan belt (and any other belts) for signs of wear, cracking or glazing, and for proper tension. Make sure all pulleys are aligned.

Next, we’ll utilize the voltmeter to verify the condition of the coolant. The radiator cap should still be off for this test, which takes a while because your car must be warm, circulating the coolant.

1. Set the voltmeter to 12 VDC setting.
2. Connect the battery ground to your voltmeter. If you have a positive ground car (like mine), that’s the positive lead of the voltmeter, otherwise it’s the other way around. Shouldn’t have to type it, but better safe than sorry!
3. When the coolant begins circulating, rev the car to around 2,000 RPM and keep it steady for about 30 seconds.
4. Carefully place the other meter lead into the circulating water and look at the average reading over about 20 seconds. If the reading is above 0.4 VDC, it is time to change the fluid.

When you change the coolant on your vehicle, you need to verify the type needed, but most older cars will utilize the traditional green antifreeze. It is recommended you premix full-strength antifreeze with distilled water prior to filling the radiator. Most auto stores will take the used antifreeze [*call first, AutoZone doesn’t-Ed.*].

The Best of

# Pierre's Wisdom

Pierre Fontana

Ever think of driving an “exotic?” Probably my most exotic car was a 1931 Lagonda super-charged low chassis, a mouth full. The same age I was, I traded with Pensacola’s mayor, giving him my

1931 Packard town car landaulet.

The car had an



*Pierre with the Lagonda*

aluminum body, was leather covered to the cowl, had a green leather interior, and a four-cylinder, dual overhead cam engine with a cross flow head. A big Roots supercharger was mounted vertical in front of engine which was a one problem. The car had no fan and no place to put one. In 1931, light traffic condition and a wealthy owner having other wheels to get there meant no problem, maybe. Really, the car was only good to get your picture in the newspaper.

The tranny was full non-synchro, and it took me a few days to master up and down shifting, if you missed timing, you might as well stop and



*Lagonda engine*

start over. That is why I ended up with the car — you had to learn how to drive it. The shifter and hand brakes were outside the car, and it no door on that side. With a four-speed slide type gear-box, all sorts of switches and gauges, and levers to control everything from spark to mixture, it was a mechanic's dream. It also offered no pro-



*All photos courtesy Pierre Fontana*

tection from the weather or engine heat. The clutch housing was open because of a clutch brake that could be used to help get it in gear when lost. I never figured that one out. The moral of the story: the exotic isn't always good, but it is nice to look at.

My second example of this is a 1914 French Leyat. A French “go-getter” named Marcel Leyat was nuts about airplanes; he designed,



*1914 Leyat*

built, and flew his own in 1909. He formed a company that started building cars at end of WW I and was selling them by 1919. Can you see the terror of French pedestrians looking at that thing coming at them? It was light, with no tranny or rear end. A young French student at University of South Alabama owned this contraption and we became friends while he was here. He later worked for the planning division of Peugeot. This is another exotic best driven on Sunday, away from crowds.

*Pierre Fontana is a technical advisor for SABCC. This column is from January 2015.*



# Spare Wires

News from the British Car World

## “Little British Cars” Top Hagerty’s List of “5 Fantastic First Project Cars”

An [article](#) on Hagerty Media put “Little British Cars” at the top of its list of best projects for the novice, noting:

*A cheap British sports car can offer plenty of, uh, opportunities to bond with the mechanically inclined owner. The nice thing is that there were tens of millions of Austin-Healeys, Triumphs, and MGs produced during the 1960s and '70s that share much in terms of maintenance parts and techniques. The cars are relatively affordable, and thus, so are the parts. The biggest boon: support and knowledge provided by other enthusiasts. British car clubs are often large and helpful – perfect for a newbie to the genre.*

While *Ed.* might argue with the “tens of millions” number, the rest of the article seems spot-on. Others making the list were the VW Beetle, the Ford Model A or T, trucks of the ‘70’s or ‘80’s, and “anything you don’t expect to daily drive.”



[The Autopian](#) published a story Feb. 7 on the new gas-powered MINI Cooper S, whose styling is much simpler (no hood scoop or fender gills). Unfortunately, the manual gearbox is also gone.

## Auction Roundup: Post-Abingdon

[Auction Roundup has been featuring a different MG series each month, to honor the MG Centenary. This is the final installment-Ed.]

### 1994 MG RV8



**Sold** for \$30,000 on Bring a Trailer

Most of the 2000 RV8s built were sent to Japan, and this car is no exception. With just 44k kilometers, or 27k miles, this green over ivory example had just minor flaws. The luxurious RV8 was powered by a 190 hp, 3.9L Rover V8, and offered leather seat covers, air conditioning, and a burlwood dash. The cars were built using modified MG Heritage body shells, but 75 percent of the parts were not shared with the original MGB.

### 1996 MGF



**Sold** for \$5,780 on Bring a Trailer

Finished in Volcano over black, this Japanese-market example had non-functioning A/C and various blemishes, but only 46k km (28k mi).

### 1997 MGF



**Sold** for \$9,688 on Cars and Bids

In British Racing Green over black, this 25k-mile MGF had some exterior scratches, wear on the seat bolsters, some loose upholstery, and 10-year-old tires, but otherwise presented quite well, and offered air conditioning – and a Japanese toll card reader.

# Wire Nut

Michael King

## Fun or Folly?

At what point does a car project become, well, pointless? When one spends more than the car will ever be worth? When the ravages of the tin worm are such that no amount of cutting, welding, patching, or (yikes) Bondo will ever result in a sound car? Or when one realizes that they have simply lost interest in ever finishing?

My first project car was a rolling refurbishment of a 1979 MG Midget. At the bottom of the British car “food chain,” the rubber-bumper Midgets, with their Triumph 1500 engines, will probably never bring the big bucks on the Barrett-Jackson stage. Nonetheless, possessed of a high level of interest, lots of support from my car club friends, and a decent financial situation, I proceeded to pour way more time and money into the car than it likely deserved. When I finally did sell it, I recouped less than half what I had spent, but I had fun, learned a lot, and, I’m proud to say, passed it on to a young man who is still driving and enjoying it.

On the preceding page of this issue, I noted an article from Hagerty Media which suggests that a “little British car” is the first choice for a novice enthusiast (the accompanying photo is a square Sprite, the Midget’s close cousin). The other cars specifically listed – VW Beetles, Model As and Model Ts, and old trucks – all share a basic characteristic with the LBC. They are basic. Parts are cheap and generally available, systems are uncomplicated, and plastics are used sparingly.

But then Hagerty lists their last option: anything you don’t plan to drive every day. That’s obviously a broad category. I’ll suggest that some project vehicles would fall into another group –

cars that you, at some point, might not be able to drive, ever again.

As most of you know, I own three Jaguars – a 2001 and two 2011s. These cars are fiendishly complicated. All have dual overhead cam, four-valve-per-cylinder V8 engines, full electronic ignition and fuel management, electronically-controlled transmissions, climate control systems, “infotainment” systems, antilock brakes, traction control, and a full array of power accessories. Two have superchargers.

Writing for the website The Autopian, Stephen Walter Gossin, who loves to rescue old “beaters,” lamented the cost of parts on many newer cars. In his [article](#), Gossin cites some car price horror stories, including Cadillac XLR taillamps (\$1600-\$1900 each), Buick Reatta windcreens (\$1500), and 1993-2002 Pontiac Trans Am taillamps (\$1000 for a used pair). At what point does a DIY-er toss in the towel?

I’m facing a dilemma with the timing chain tensioners on my Jaguars. The 4-liter engine in my 2001 has a history of failed plastic tensioners, which can torpedo the engine. A midcycle upgrade was done before my car was built, but the final fix was not until the next model year. With just 61,000 miles and no noise on cold start, I’m hoping mine are OK, because replacing them could run \$2000 – \$3000. Even worse, the issue allegedly resurfaced with the 5-liter engines in my two newer cars.

So do we have any hope? In a word, yes. To paraphrase the Hagerty article, don’t have a car project you need to drive every day. Have a backup plan! Second, I’m encouraged by the development of new technologies, specifically 3-D printing, which could become a source of parts currently made of “unobtainium.” And finally, we can remind ourselves – *it’s just a car*. Don’t be afraid to walk away if the costs become prohibitive or the interest wanes. I won’t judge.

# PANHANDLE BRITISH CAR ASSOCIATION

2023 "Brits on the Bay" All British Car Show

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# Classifieds

## 1960 Triumph TR3

Stored in rear of my shop for the past few years. Too many new projects. This one needs to go.

- Frame clean, straight, painted a few years ago. no rust
- Tires, brakes, and wheel bearings new
- Engine turns free but has not been run in many years
- Gearbox shifts easily
- Body is off the car; floor pans and door sills are rough, but rest of the sheet metal is pretty straight.
- Lots of new parts included
- Carbs were rebuilt by Mike Darby a few years back

I also have a spare TR3 engine and two TR3 gearboxes that I will include or can sell separately.

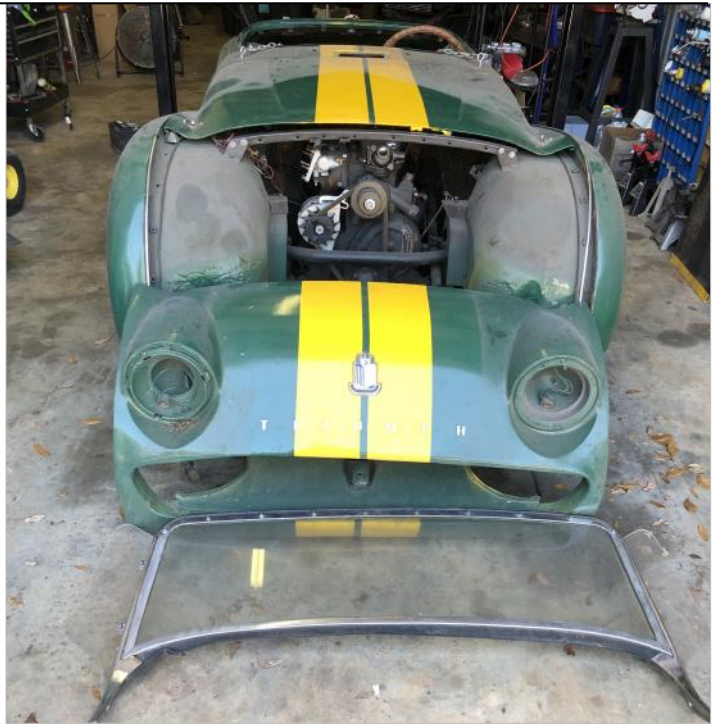
Car can be seen in Daphne. I have lots more photos if anyone is interested.

I'm asking \$2500 for the lot. Let's talk.

*Laramie Dixey*

251-472-6446

*planetdixey@gmail.com*



3 quarts of Redline MT90 75W90 GL4 manual transmission lubricant and one of high performance 75W90 gear oil for sale, \$10 each. They are old, but should be good. **Bob Bulfin, [Bobbulfin@gmail.com](mailto:Bobbulfin@gmail.com)**

## 1980 Triumph Spitfire 1500

Pageant Blue. Runs and drives, but needs restoration work. New mechanical fuel pump, rear brake parts except drums, seat belts and hardware, gas cap seal and gas filters, windshield wipers, and hood prop rods. Needs convertible top, rust area repair around the trunk lid corner and bottom, interior work. Rubber bumpers in bad shape, so started conversion to chrome; rear complete, front not done. Previous owners used older seats without headrests and a stripe on the hood with the "Triumph" wreath logo. \$3500.



Mike Japp, [webmaster@pbca1.org](mailto:webmaster@pbca1.org)

## 1948 MG TC



Matching numbers; less than 2,000 miles since frame-off restoration. Many upgrades to engine and drive train. \$29,000.

Text 251-752-4434

## 1993 Jaguar XJS Coupe

"Facelift" Jaguar coupe featuring smooth, durable 4.0-litre inline six and four-speed automatic. Full power accessories, "basketweave" alloy wheels, climate control, and trip computer. 138,000 miles. Boot lid requires repainting, and driver's seat and console lid need recovering. Good running and driving condition. \$2200.



Bob Henson, 251-962-4617



## Just one more thing, please . . .



*SABCC president Ben Cummings shared this picture of a TR3 (or perhaps a TR2, please correct me if I'm wrong). He says it might be a future "Diamond in the Rough" winner at the Fairhope show. Ben, Ed. is afraid this one is just an old lump of coal.*



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