



# THE SPARKPLUG



Newsletter of Deep South Region A.A.C.A. Vol. 40 No. 1 January 2006



## DSR puts sparkle in Mobile Christmas & Holiday Parade

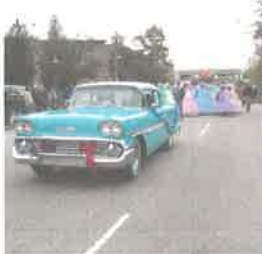
It was typical "iffy" mid-December weather on the 17<sup>th</sup> when eight members, one former member and a guest got together to add some delight and shine to the annual downtown spectacular. The skies had been heavily overcast all morning but not leaking. It was a "given" that the procession would roll unless severe rain and winds hit the area.

The group met at a location away from the staging area and caravanned to the line-up point. We went through the usual shuffle of people and cars before order came out of the chaos.

When the whistle blew, the motorcade was led by several fine examples of restored Mobile Police cars belonging to former member, Billy McGill, that were driven by Mobile Police Chief Sam Cochran, former Mobile County Sheriff Tom Purvis and other officers.

Then it was time for our group to jump into the excitement. The DSR cars were interspersed between bands and floats which allowed them to be enjoyed and admired to the fullest. Each one had a "VIP rider" who seemed to

enjoy and appreciate their transportation for the day. Drivers also had a good time telling how they happened to have that particular automobile, options it has and why it is a favorite. Lycyle Crowdus, DSR's liaison the organizers, did an outstanding job making sure the vehicles were ahead of the horse patrol, which was appreciated by every vehicle owner!!



The route wasn't excessively long but one familiar to Mobilians. Multiple holiday-themed floats and giant inflatables reminiscent of big-city parades made for a once-a-year thrill for old and young alike. With not even a breeze to hinder them, the huge balloons made it through the downtown area without incident. Throws were not a part of this parade which meant no barricades on the streets. The bands had folks clapping their hands, doing little jigs or just tapping their feet in time to "Jingle Bells" and other peppy Christmas music.

Cartoon, logo and brand-specific characters were plentiful. Pooh Bear and Ronald McDonald appeared to be the most popular, making the younger crowd scream and the older ones smile some, too.

Just as the last units reached the area set aside for disbanding, a slight mist started to fall. This got everyone moving double-time, especially getting the tops up on convertibles. Participating in the gala were **L. Crowdus, P. Dagenais, 3 Gorens, J. Henderson, D. McLaney, 2 Paquets, J. Pendergrass, R. Sloan** and a guest whose first name is Benny but I didn't get a last name.

The only downside of the entire afternoon that I am aware of was when DSR member Tracy Metclaf's 6-year-old grandson who was riding with Paul Dagenais had his hand in the door of Paul's car when it was closed. Fortunately, it wasn't a serious injury. Thanks to all who help add some color and Christmas spirit to an otherwise dreary December afternoon.



## From The Drivers Seat

I can't believe that an entire year has gone by since I wrote my first column here. Where *did* it go? Well, if it went by that quickly, we must have been having fun.

In two short months from the time you are reading this, the 2006 AACA Southeastern Division Winter Meet will be history. I can't tell you how proud I am of each and every member in this club. I know that all of you will put your best effort put into making it a success. Remember that there are lots of jobs that do not require a lot of physical stamina. There are many "sit-down" tasks to be done so don't think you have to be Superman or Superwoman in order to help. I have some really exciting news regarding funding for the Meet at the January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Don't miss it!

Your suggestions are needed for making our meetings more interesting and appealing this coming year. We can have speakers, we can have "show and tell", we can have films from the AACA Video Library and, of course, we can always have a meal with the meeting.

Most of the January meeting will be taken up with getting members and Meet tasks/duties together. There will be three days of work so let's make it as easy as possible on everyone. There are quite a few items that need to be taken care of ahead of time, too.



**Patt Paquet, President**

**You get there your way; I'll get there mine!  
P.S. This broom has dual exhaust.**



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The *Sparkplug* is non-profit and published for the information of our members and friends. DEEP SOUTH REGION meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the clubhouse located at 951 Forest Hill Drive. Membership in the Antique Automobile Club of America is required to be a member of this Region. Annual local dues are \$15.00 and AACA national dues are \$30.00 Views expressed in the *Sparkplug* are not necessarily those of the Region officers or AACA. Permission to copy material is hereby granted provided source is disclosed and credit given to author. Some material maybe copyrighted and permission to use granted to this publication only. Contributions to the *Sparkplug* are welcome and encouraged. The editor reserves the right to edit material that may not be suitable for publication.



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## From the editor...

Here we are folks, starting another year together. I sure hope 2006 will be better for those who didn't fare too well this past year. Let's all think

positive and have fun.

The first thing on my Editor's "To Do List" is say thanks to all of you who contributed in any way to the Sparkplug last year. I'm not sure what brought it about, but I have received a letter from the AACA Vice President of Publications that I have received a Master Editor Award. I don't know exactly what it is but I will get it at the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA on February 11<sup>th</sup>. What I do know from talking with fellow editors is that our *Sparkplug* was selected as one of the best newsletters of 2005. This award belongs to each of you who helped me during the year as well as Patt who did nearly all the typing. (Can I blame all the typo errors on her? Nah, better not. She might quit or ask for a raise and then I'd really be in trouble!)

The second thing on the To-Do list is tell you that I have decided to make a few changes in our publication. A new feature, as shown in the next column, will be "Member Spotlight". It will focus on one member or family unit each month to let others know what they do besides being involved in DSR/AACA. There will be no specific order to who is highlighted when but you can expect to be contacted and grilled by this old ex-deputy sheriff.

The minutes of the monthly meetings will be moved a few pages on over into the newsletter. Undoubtedly, they are important but I think we can use the "up front" space to better advantage.

You can look forward to more items this next year about AACA and its workings. The Library and Research Center is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. That will be the first one for you to learn more about.

I want to encourage each of you to write articles for the *Sparkplug*. I get tired of reading my own thoughts and writing. Please, offer suggestions for those things you are interested in and I will do my best to research and find out what you want to know.

Hope to see you at the January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting!

## Who said she wouldn't retire?

Martha Smith Fuller is not one to actually sit back and totally chill out. If nothing more, she will borrow a couple of the "grands" for a few days just to keep herself active plus have some fun, too.

Martha married Walt Fuller on June 26, 1960, while they were living in Chickasaw, Alabama. They have three children; Paige Fuller Oliver from Semmes, AL; Brad Fuller from Mobile and Shannon Fuller Hope who lives in Ocala, Florida. Rounding out the family is five grandsons.

The Fullers have lived in Red Bank, NJ, Wurzburg, Germany, Augusta, GA, Huntsville, AL, Lubbock and Dallas Texas. If that's not a well-traveled family, I don't know what is.

Martha worked for Misys Healthcare Systems for 23 years as a Senior Account Manager. She taught employees of various medical institutions to use new software programs.

Her life, to this writer, at least, seems to have been mostly on airplanes, in rental cars and a heck of a lot of hotel rooms. She says her favorite place, in all of this traveling, is San Francisco, CA. However, her traveling isn't done yet. She and Walt are planning a trip to Ireland in the near future as well as Ocala, Orlando and Daytona, Florida.

She enjoys participating in DSR events and outings as well as being a member of the GCMAFC. Her mother lives in an assisted living center here in Mobile and retirement will allow Martha to spend more time with her.

Walt was overheard last year to say that Martha's first year of retirement will be hers; to do whatever she wishes. I'm not sure how good that is for those guys out there whose wife is thinking about ending her career. Walt may have gotten a lot of fellows into trouble with that remark!

Her children held a retirement party in Martha's honor on Saturday, January 7, 2006. Her "best Mobile girlfriend", Joan Johnson, and her "best Dallas girlfriend" were on hand to share in the happiness and dry a few tears occasionally.

A week later, she is still tying up loose ends, but with a lilt in her voice and a gleam in her eye that is long overdue. At least she's not packing a bag and heading to the airport. Congratulations and best wishes, Martha!



### DSR helps kick off GMAC Bowl

by Patt Paquet



Don't you just hate it when you say to yourself all day "I really wish I didn't have to do this; it's so \*%^ cold and windy! Gonna freeze my

off down there tonight!!" But then you go on, get the car and yourself ready to go and before you know it, the weather isn't totally intolerable and you're having fun with friends plus making some new ones.

The fourth annual GMAC Bowl pitted the University of Toledo Rockets against the University of Texas-El Paso Miners. It saddens my Texas heart to admit a defeat of 45-13 in the game. However, the night prior, Dec. 20, downtown Mobile looked like Mardi Gras blew in early. There were a large number of floats; both Universities had their bands, flag corps and dance teams and, just for good measure, a couple of local high school bands were on hand to help out, too.

For all the wrench-heads on hand, the stunning array of General Motor cars, vintage up to current year, made all of us totally forget anything else. Along with the local Vette lovers/owners, there were some from

Atlanta, GA who came to help out. When a large number of auto enthusiasts get together, they can put out enough hot air to keep nearly everything warm.

We had to be at the Mobile Civic Center parking lot at 4 p.m. but the parade didn't begin until 6:30. Having "been there, done that" before our "Automotive Coordinator", Jim Henderson, had me arrange for some heavy snacks and soft drinks for everyone who was participating. (Can you say chicken tenders?)

There was a biggie of a motorhome belonging to GMAC Finance Corp parked in the lot and we used it for shelter to set up the table with the food. Luckily, we were finished and clearing up when they decided to move it. The parade started on time, and as is the custom, the cars were spread out between floats and bands so parade-goers could enjoy them to their fullest. This parade is in the tradition of all Mardi Gras parades, in that cars and floats had all manner of "throws"; from beads to buckets and candy to cups. The VIP riders had exhausted both arms



by the time the procession was over. Participating in the festivity were DSR members J. Henderson, S. Henderson, and 2 Paquets

along with former members Dave & Jeanne Hepler and Bud Moseley. It was almost 10 o'clock when we got home, colder than when we left, but glad we had taken part. (Buddy promised to the heater fixed ASAP!!)



### 2006 Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction

When this event is over on Sunday, Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>, there will have been over 1,000 "No Reserve" automobiles sold. There will have been over 350 vendors and exhibitors on site. It's over six acres (That's more than five football fields.) and more like a small town dedicated to admiring the finer things in life.

This year there is a new HUGE tend with a giant American Flag painted on it. It's the largest "clear-span, metal framed tension fabric structure" in North America and has doubled the space from past years.

The atmosphere is incredible and the sights and sounds found all over the grounds are very unique.

When you first walk into the tent, you'll see car manufacturer's displays of new cars, proto-type vehicles and specialty cars you just never see elsewhere. As you walk further into the tent, you'll find hundreds of vendors offering automobilia beyond belief. Restored vintage gas pumps, street signs and lights; anything that would look cool in a garage that holds 20+ cars. Not everything has to do with cars, though. Clothes, jewelry, art and auto-graphed celebrity collectibles are offered by vendors.

Outside the ten are more vendors and places to eat. Once outside, you walk down onto the polo field that has about 10 tents filled with cars that are waiting their turn to be auctioned off. That's where you get to stand right next to all these great cars, look in, take pictures and drool.

One lucky bidder at the auction will drive away with one of the most unique concept cars ever designed; Harley Earl's 1954 Pontiac Bonneville Special. This car is one of only two built for promotional touring. It was planned to display the two simultaneously at Los Angles and Detroit Auto Shows. The car offered at B-J Auction is the one from California. This unique car, and its counterpart, somehow managed to survive the date with the crusher.

## What is AACA anyway?

by Buddy Paquet

*What, exactly, is all this AACA National Meet stuff we've been talking about for nearly a year and you've been reading about in the newsletter?*

*What is AACA really, anyway? Why is an AACA meet different than any other car meet?*

*How do I get my car into an AACA meet? What should I expect at that meet?*

Well, let's look at some answers to the above questions.

First, the **Antique Automobile Club of America - AACA** - was founded in 1935 and is the world's largest automotive historical society with over 60,000 members and 400 regional clubs worldwide. The AACA is dedicated to perpetuating the memories of early automobiles by encouraging their history, collection and use.

An AACA National Meet is a judging meet. When you bring your vehicle to an AACA meet to be judged, the standard it is judged against is the way it left the factory. **Not the dealership.**

If you would like to participate in an AACA meet with your vehicle, and I highly recommend you do, it is truly an educational and fun event. **First, you must belong to the AACA at a cost of \$30 per year for membership.** AACA publishes a top-of-the-line bi-monthly publication that is well worth the membership fee in itself. The vehicle you wish to enter

must be 25 years old or more and should be as close as you can get to the way it left the factory and have an approved fire extinguisher. (No CO<sup>2</sup> extinguishers allowed.)

Early on sunny (hopefully!) Saturday morning, you will drive your vehicle onto the AACA show field for the first time. You will be greeted by a senior member (usually the Executive Vice President) to receive your dash plaque. A member of the hosting club will direct you to your designated parking space in the correct class for your vehicle.

At 11 o'clock, judging will start. A Judging Team will arrive at your car. A team is comprised of a Team Captain and four field judges. Each field judge is assigned a category to judge; interior, exterior, engine and chassis. They will spend approximately 10 minutes judging your vehicle then move on to the next one. You should not attempt to talk with them while they are judging your vehicle.

To win a National Award, your vehicle must end up with a certain number of points. Let's see how this point system works and what the national awards consist of. First, you must get an AACA First Junior Award. To receive this, the vehicle must score a minimum of 365 points out of 400 or be within 10 points of the highest scoring car in your class. You can get a Second Junior Award with 330 points or a Third Junior

Award with 295, and in both cases be within 10 points of the highest scoring vehicle in your class, but let's concentrate on your getting a First Junior. Next come the AACA Senior Award, which requires a minimum of 375 points or within 10 points of the highest scoring car in the class. In order to obtain an AACA Grand National First, which is actually a special meet each year, you must receive 380 or be within 5 points of the highest scoring car in the class.

I know this all sounds a little confusing, but it works quite well. If you have any questions about what class your vehicle should be entered in, please don't hesitate to contact me. This article may have raised more questions than it has answered. However, I hope it gives you some background into how AACA meets function.

If you would like to learn more about the official judging rules and guidelines, a school will be held on Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at the Ashbury, our host hotel. You can attend the Judging School, and on Saturday, go through the apprentice training program if you wish.

**Editor's Note:** The preceding was written in part by Bob Sturdevant, Chairman of the 2005 Central Division Fall Meet. I have added my thoughts to it. This is the first in a series of articles that will cover the various areas in the AACA. I hope you will enjoy reading about your club as well as learn some things you don't know.



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## Dates to Remember 2006

Jan.	26	DSR Meeting at the clubhouse 7:00 p.m.
Feb.	9-11	AACA Annual Business Meeting—Philadelphia, PA
Feb.	11	Westminster Retirement Center's Mardi Gras Parade (Details at 1/26 meeting)
Feb.	14	Valentine's Day (Don't forget your sweetie)
Feb.	18	Valentine's Day Brunch at Clubhouse? (Sound interesting?) Details at 1/26 meeting
Feb.	23	DSR Meeting at the Clubhouse—7:00 p.m.
Feb.	28	Mardi Gras Day
Mar.	11	"A Day at Charlie's" Charlie Henderson Ford — 105 Hwy 90 Waveland, MS Info: jffitche@msn.com or (228) 864-7847
Mar.	16-18	AACA Southeastern Division Winter Meet Hosted by THE DEEP SOUTH REGION
Mar.	23	DSR Meeting at the Clubhouse—7:00 p.m.
Apr.	1	Camellia Classic at Bellingrath Gardens sponsored by MBMC—Info: 666-3761
Apr.	22	Old South Antique Car Club Show—Abba Temple Shrine at Schilling & Hitt Roads Info: 457-2339
Apr.	29	Mopars at the Battleship—Info: 653-1071 or 653-5154

Deep South Region  
Antique Automobile Club of America  
4963 Freeway Lane  
Mobile, AL 36619-1716

A red "X" in the box means your dues are not paid and this will be your last newsletter.



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