

The Flivver Flash

The Official Newsletter of the Space City T's - Houston, TX

1909 Boyer Fire Apparatus

by Bobby Wright

It all started with an episode of American Pickers. The local Fire Chief saw the Pickers make a stop in Brady, Texas, where a person had a rather large collection of fire and automobile collectibles. One item he saw was a twin cylinder Chemical Cart that appeared to be like the first fire apparatus of the Alta Loma Volunteer Fire Department (today, it's Santa Fe Fire and Rescue).



For more Space City T's of Houston info:

Website: www.spacecityts.org

Email: ModelT@spacecityts.org

The Chief contacted me and we looked up the episode and studied the brief shots of the apparatus in question and conferred with the only known person alive that remembers the original Alta Loma apparatus. The conclusion was this was exactly like the original apparatus or dang close.



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Turns out I had been by the place in Brady a few months earlier, but unable to get inside the building and had spent some time looking through the windows.



The Fire Chief went about contacting the person that owned the collection and after couple of weeks of phone calls and discussions they agreed on a purchase price of the apparatus. So, the Chief and I are off for a round trip to Brady to pick up the apparatus. Five hours each way plus loading. Long day but we got it done.



Now what? The Chief talked me into restoring the apparatus. This apparatus is a 1909 Boyer Fire Apparatus manufactured by The Obencain-Boyer Company in



Logansport, Indiana. It has twin chemical tanks on two 55-inch wooden wagon wheels with a drawbar pulled by hand by a crew of two or four persons. The chemical tanks are filled with soda water and each tank has a bottle of acid that is spilled into the soda water by a hammer and pin which actually breaks the glass bottle. The resulting mixture is basically water under pressure that can be controlled by valves and hoses to put out a fire.



So, I bring the apparatus to my house to start the restoration, and the pandemic starts.

I started the disassembly of the apparatus and soon learned the wheels were junk and needed to be rebuilt. Now what? I thought about some of the Model T wheel builders but found a wagon wheel builder in Gonzales, Texas. After contacting Texas Wagon Works, we agreed to bring the wheels there for rebuild.

Again, we are in a pandemic. Not much is open, and another round trip in one day is in order to deliver the wheels and again to pick them up. So,



Rebecca and I are off for a road trip. It is only three hours to Gonzales so at least this is a shorter trip, but we will have to do it twice.



In between the trips to Texas Wagon Works, the disassembled parts went to Gulf Coast Powder Coating in Santa Fe to be painted (same time as my Sequester Speedster parts).



While waiting for the new wheels, I got most the apparatus reassembled and ready for installing the new wheels.



As soon as I got the wheels back and the apparatus rolling again, I had to move it off my covered back porch to the barn because we thought we were going to have a hurricane.



I am now about 95% done and will have it done by October 1st. After completion, it will be on display in the Santa Fe Fire and Rescue Station One lobby.



Odds and Ends

from Jim Davis

I found a Model T pricing guide on the MTFCA forum that has been referred many times by folks trying to get a base line in pricing. I have found it to be a fairly accurate and a pretty good ball park estimator:

"This Model T Price general guide was posted by David Grant Stewart on the Model T Ford Club of America Forum in 2003 and is still pretty accurate. Selling prices have not changed much since then, despite the high asking prices often advertised.

Ignoring the impossibility of such a request, I [David] submit my observations in the hope that they may provide some orientation to some uninitiated soul who would like some guidance without having to become an expert. Model T Values - Thumbnail sketch, in United States 48 contiguous states as of Monday 10 March 2003:

Cars and original depot hacks and pie wagons 1917-27:

Parts car only, not restorable: <\$1000
Not complete, restorable with a lot of work, engine may or may not run: \$1,000
Mostly complete, correct, disassembled, restorable: \$2,000.
Mostly complete, correct, recently assembled, restorable: \$2,500.
Complete, correct, never disassembled, restorable: \$3,500.
Runs, drives, correct, needs total restoration \$4,500
Runs and drives, mostly correct, looks like a 10 year old used car: \$6,000.

Everything works, not correct (wrong year engine, etc.), looks decent: \$6,000.

Everything works, almost all correct, looks decent: \$7,500.

Show room condition, correct, needs nothing functionally or cosmetically: \$10,000.

Completely "restored" but with incorrect "upgrades" such as pre-1919 starter, incorrect accessories, etc.: \$10,000 but buyers will be a different group than previous item.

Rip van Wrinkle: Car stored inside since new, less than 1000 miles: \$20,000.

Complete factory type restoration, every nut and bolt reconditioned, completely correct: Ought to be worth \$20,000, but the market will not pay much more than \$12,000.

Trucks other than original pie wagons: Deduct 50%

Depot hacks, reproduction bodies: Deduct 50%

Speedsters, reproduction bodies: Deduct 50%

Town cars with original bodies: Add 100%

Pre-1917: Add \$1000 for each year down to 1909.

Body only: 60% of the value of the car.

Chassis only: 40% of the value of the car.

Generally, cars needing total restoration are overpriced because they are a liability, not an asset, and the cost of restoring them far exceeds their finished value. This is unfair, but true. Generally, cars restored with thousands of hours of expert work are under-priced, but no one will pay their true value. Again, it's unfair, but true. If you want to make money restoring cars, the best way to do it is to buy a car that is complete, original, and basically sound, but does not run. Spend 50 hours and \$500 on it fixing only what is broken and give it a nice paint job so that when you're done it runs, everything works, and it looks decent, and advertise it for twice what you paid for it. If you want to do it right (partial translation: take everything completely apart), forget about making money. Subsidize it with your regular job. Buy a good working car to enjoy until you

get this one done. It will take longer than you thought. It will cost more than you thought. It is impossible to restore any part without complete dismantling. You never know what you have until you take it apart. Caution: For any car that has been "restored" request a photographic record of each stage, and information on the experience, background, and motivation of the restorer. The word means ten different things to ten different people."



Another helpful price guide is Bob Coiro's [Dauntless Geezer - Model T Buyers Guide](#)

Some cars fool you though. When someone really wants it or an auction goes into a bidding war, all bets are off. I think the 50% deduction for reproduction bodies on trucks, pie wagons and hacks is too much, speedsters probably right? What I am seeing lately is the only model Ts that sell fast are priced around \$6000 or less and that's for a running vehicle. Recently, a running 25 Tudor was listed in the MTFCA Forum classified ads for over a week and price reduced selling for a little over \$4000 running in pretty good condition needing a

little work on door upholstery. A center door recently sold for about \$8000 the same day it was listed, and there was probably over a \$1000 in shipping charges added to it. When it comes to buying a Model T or any other car, the devil is in the details, if you can't inspect the car in person or have someone you trust check it out. You must depend on the description in the ad. A discussion with the seller is most helpful telling you the history of the car. Some cars have been owned by the same person or family for years, others not very long. Some cars are bought by flippers that may or may not know much about the car, but feel like they can buy low and sell high? In today's fickle market that's a gamble, and the deal killer is the transportation costs, with \$1.35 to \$1.50 per mile charged by the popular car haulers. A good deal on a car in California or on the East coast is quickly trashed when you add over \$2000 in shipping charges, and suddenly the good deal is not that good.

I am still fairly new to the Model T world but have been checking Model Ts for sale ads on Craigslist, eBay, MTFCA & MTFCAI websites and magazines for the last five years or so. This is what I have observed, subject to interpretation. The cars that sell the fastest, even the over-priced ones, are those that have a YouTube video of the engine running and the car being driven. They don't stay on the market for too long in most cases.

Also, a [Model T Ford Ignition article](#) was referred to me on the MTFCA Forum. It was written by Ron Patterson and Steve Coniff. It seemed like a very good article on the ignition system and spark timing. Jim

The Flivver Flash is published by the Space City T's chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America in Houston, Texas twelve times per year. This newsletter is produced for the education and enjoyment of members and those expressing interest in joining the Space City T's. Said education and enjoyment is as it pertains to the Model T Ford automobile. The Flash is also shared with other antique auto clubs. Other clubs may use articles from this publication with credit to this newsletter or the original source. News, articles, ads or anything of interest to the club must be submitted to the editor by the 20th of the month preceding the month of publication. Emailing takes place the last week of the month. Annual dues are \$25 per year.

2020 Space City Club Officers and Board Members

President	Dave Lucas	281-388-0761
Vice President	Rick McCracken	281-351-0701
Secretary	Rosemarie Stokley	281-574-7850
Treasurer	Jerry Smith	281-461-9906
Board Member	Nancy Carter	713-580-3368
Board Member	Bobby Wright	409-771-5548
Board Member	Bill Severn	936-273-3592

THE FLIVVER FLASH

Anthony J. Marino
302 Torrey Court
League City, TX 77573
281-482-4156

email: modelt@spacecityts.org

Officer Nominations Wanted

Please communicate your 2021 club officer nominations to Dave Lucas at (713) 299-3059 or daverlucas@yahoo.com as soon as possible.

New Members Wanted

Please visit our [Space City T's of Houston Texas web site](#) and view our club future and past Model T Ford events and activities.

If interested, please provide your name, address, mobile phone, & email, and make a \$25 check payable to:

Space City T's

Please mail your information and check to the Treasurer at:

Jerry Smith
13723 Llano Lake Court
Houston, TX 77059

The Space City T's Club is the Houston, Texas chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America. All questions concerning membership, The Vintage Ford magazine, the MTFCA library, chapter insurance, purchase of manuals, back magazine issues, or store items can be directed to the following:

Model T Ford Club of America

309 N. 8th Street, PO BOX 996
Richmond, IN 47375-0996
Phone: 765-855-5248

Email: susan@mtfca.com

\$40 annual dues includes six issues of the Vintage Ford

Join MTFCA at: www.mtfca.com



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Anthony J. Marino
832-607-8528 mobile or
281-482-4156 home,
leave a message or
topkick7@gmail.com

FLIVVER FLASH INPUTS NEEDED

Do you have something to share? A barn find, funny or not so funny Model T stories? Tour photos, or articles about Model T's? Your Model T acquisition stories, restoration photos or swap meet finds? A special interest article?

Please email ads, articles, photos, stories, etc. etc. to: topkick7@outlook.com

Next Meeting Cancelled

October 14, 2020



**Dine with Friends at
Demeris BBQ at 6:00 P.M.**

located at

**1702 West Loop North,
Suite A, Houston, TX 77008**

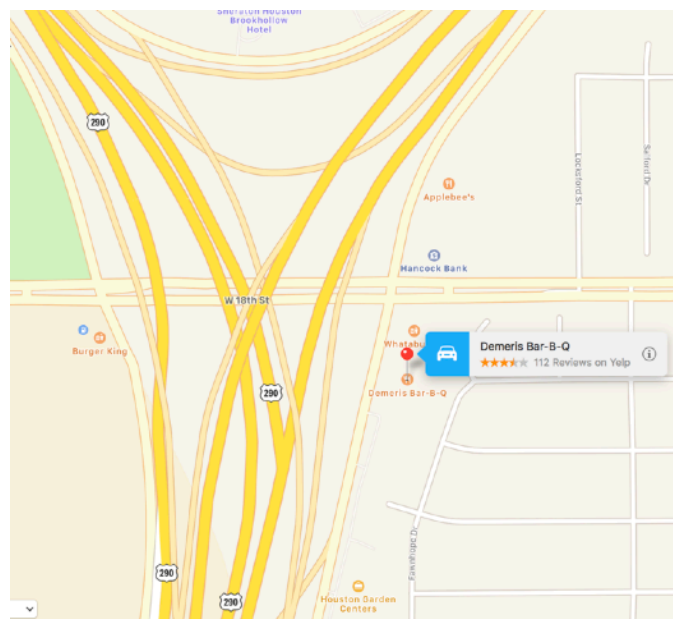
**Then attend the
Space City T's Meeting at 7:30 P.M.**

Place:

**Lazy Brook Baptist Church
—1822 West 18th Street in the
Heights**

Website: www.spacecityts.org

Email: modelt@spacecityts.org



Directions to Demeris BBQ

From the east or west on I-10 or the south side of downtown, take the I-610 West Loop North and get off at the 18th Street Exit. Demeris BBQ will be immediately on the right after Houston Garden Nursery.

From the west on Highway 290, exit at Mangum and turn right to 18th Street. At 18th, turn left, cross under West Loop and turn into the Whataburger parking lot on the right. Proceed to Demeris BBQ after the Whataburger.

From the north on I-45, take the 610 North Loop West around to the I-610 West Loop South to the Hempstead Highway exit. Make a U-turn under I-610 and proceed north on the frontage road to just before 18th Street, Demeris BBQ will be on your right after Houston Garden Center.



First Class Mail



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302 Torrey Court
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