

# The Flivver Flash

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

## The Model T Won in A Raffle

By Terry A. Woods

On a Fall night in 1929, my aunt Hattie Alline Roberts won a NEW 1927 Model T Roadster in a raffle sponsored by the local Ford agency, Katy Motor Company, in my hometown of Katy, Texas. The small (at that time) farming community of Katy is located in far west Harris County, about 30 miles west of downtown Houston.

The town of Katy was only about 19 years old when Mr. Oliver Lee Miller added a car dealership to his blacksmith shop in 1915. Mr. Miller was 27 years old at that time and had only a fourth grade education. Originally, his new business, named Katy Auto Company, sold Maxwell, Chandler, and Chalmers automobiles, but he sold the business, and after the business changed owners a couple of times, he bought it back.



Katy Motor Company

For more Space City T's of Houston info:

[How to join the Space City T's of Houston, TX](#)

[Space City T's Photos & Videos Gallery](#)

In 1921, he added a Ford Motor Company franchise, and by the mid-twenties, he had discontinued all the original lines and renamed the dealership, Katy Motor Company. The location of Katy Motor Company in the 1920's was at the corner of First Street and Avenue A, which was just across First Street and the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT) railroad tracks. The MKT train depot was where the boxcars delivering new Model T's arrived and were unloaded. The current address would be 5510 First Street, where Katy Christian Ministries Thrift Shop is located today. The Katy Motor Company building shown in the opposite photo existed until at least the mid 1950's. I can remember going into the building with my Dad when he bought a new 1956 Chevrolet sedan from Mr. Miller.

One problem that Mr. Miller (and other Ford dealers) had was that Ford did not extend credit to its dealers for their 'in stock' vehicles. All deliveries of inventory to a dealer were Cash On Delivery or paid by loans financed by banks. This would have been a small problem to a large city dealer, but they were a major problem to a dealer in a small town of only 250 residents. Mr. Miller sometimes had to go to his banker to get a loan to pay Ford, so that a vehicle could be unloaded from a railcar, and then turn around and sell the same vehicle to a customer waiting in his dealership.

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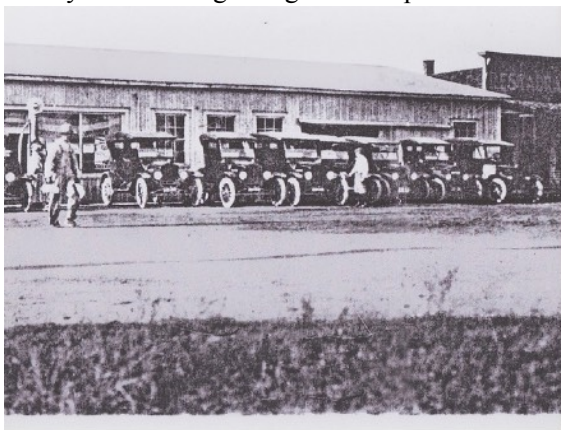
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Since 1924, Ford sales had been dropping, and Ford had been promising its dealers and the buying public a new and improved car. Very late in 1927, that car, the Model A, came out, but they were in very short supply to dealers. The new improved, more powerful Model A was an immediate success, and a lot of dealers, even as late as 1929, had Model T's still in stock that they couldn't move or sell. This put small Ford dealers in a precarious financial position, especially after the beginning of the depression.



Model T's outside Katy Motor Company

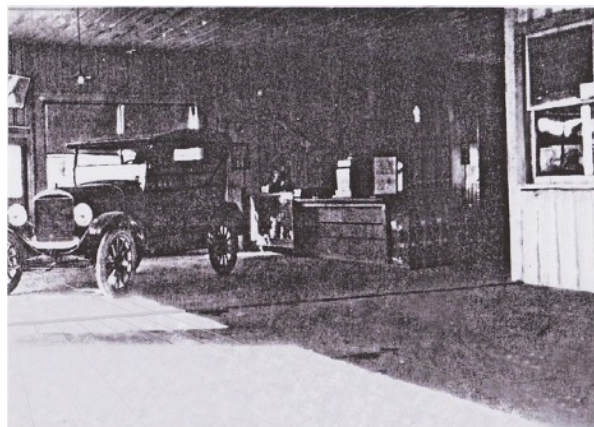
Mr. Miller came up with a scheme that would provide him with needed capital to operate his business. He offered to sell his customers prepaid service coupons, and for a certain number of purchased coupons, he would give the customer a raffle ticket on a new 1927 Model T, which he still had in his inventory. On the night of the raffle, the tickets would be drawn one by one, and the last ticket left would be the winner. This was done to create suspense in determining the winner.



Model T inside showroom at Katy Motor Company

My uncle, Ralph Addison 'Buster' Roberts, was one of those customers who had obtained a raffle ticket. On the day of the drawing, he decided to go into Houston that night with some of his friends. As he left the Roberts home, aunt Alline and my mother, Ruby Orlena Roberts, were sitting at the kitchen table. 'Buster' threw the ticket down on the table. Someone asked him if he wasn't going to the

drawing and he replied, "No, I wouldn't win it anyway". My mother and my aunt, immediately reached for the ticket, but my aunt was closer.



Model T inside showroom of Katy Motor Company

The two sisters went off to the drawing with their brother's ticket. The person chosen by Mr. Miller to draw the tickets was Mr. Cecil 'Shorty' Cott, a vertically challenged adult of the community.

According to Ms. Frances Miller Holman, the daughter of O.L. 'Ollie' Miller, owner of Katy Motor Company, the dealership sponsored a semi-pro baseball team which played similar teams from towns and cities in the area. This was done as advertisement, and because in Katy, at the time, there was no other type of community entertainment. The local schools had yet to field athletic teams and the nearest movie theaters were in downtown Houston, 30 miles away by a dirt road.



In the photo above, O.L. 'Ollie' Miller is the man standing at far right with a necktie in the second row. Cecil 'Shorty' Cott was the team mascot, standing at the far left in the first row with a striped necktie. Shorty would play a major role in my mother's winning of the Model T from the dealership.

As the tickets were drawn by Shorty and the numbers were called aloud, the suspense was intense. Some people left, and others stayed to see who the winner would be. When all but the last two tickets were drawn, only two people had a

chance to win. Neither my aunt, nor 'Shorty' Cott, the man drawing the tickets, had yet to pull their tickets, and each knew they had a chance to win. 'Shorty' slipped his hand into the box and pulled out a ticket. It turned out to be his own! The last ticket in the box belonged to my Aunt and it was ticket number 13!

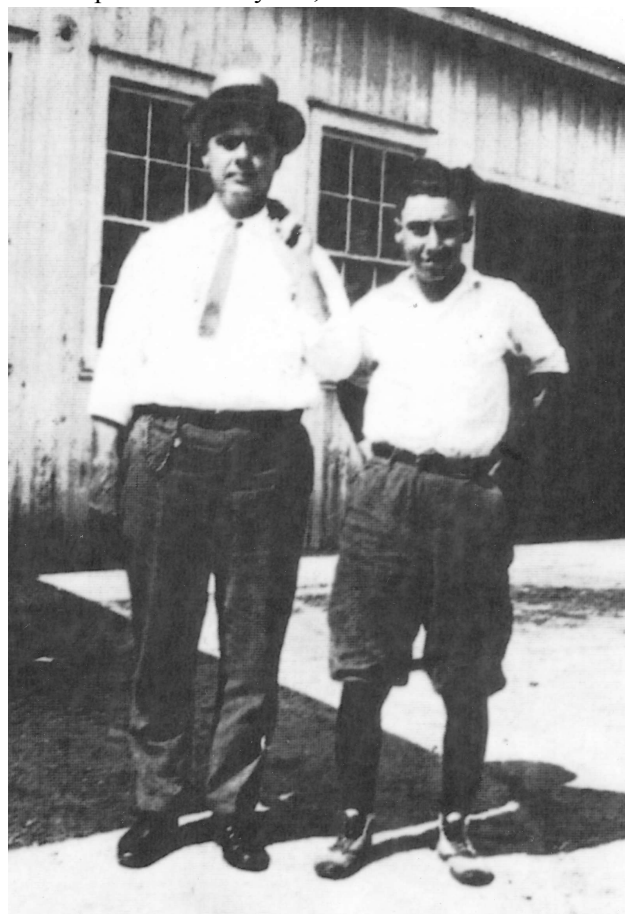
My aunt already had a car, and my mother was fresh out of college and was beginning her first job as a country one-room school teacher, so her father, Melvin Colter Roberts, persuaded his daughter, Alline, to give the car to my mother, Ruby Orlena Roberts. Winter weather, even near Houston, Texas, could be rainy and cold, so my grandfather paid Mr. Miller a small fee not exceeding \$20.00, to move my mother up into an enclosed coupe. That is the story of the Model T won in a raffle.



This is my Mother, Ruby Roberts, in the photo above, at the wheel of her 1927 Model T Coupe, won with a raffle ticket from Katy Motor Company, Katy, TX. The passenger was one of her girlfriends, Loy McCord.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** In 1934, Oliver L. Miller disassociated himself from Ford Motor Company over a business disagreement and took on a Chevrolet franchise. He continued to sell Chevrolets until retiring in 1945. At that time, he turned his dealership over to his son, Arthur Oliver Miller. Arthur Miller continued to sell Chevrolets up into the 1980's when he had planned to retire.

Arthur had been grooming one of his son-in-law's to take over the dealership, when the son-in-law died suddenly from a heart attack. Within a short period of time after the son-in-law's death, Arthur Miller was able to achieve retirement when a fire (of unknown origin to this writer, but known to be termed 'not suspicious') destroyed the showroom, main shop area, and parts department. Among the parts destroyed were new old stock Ford parts, ranging from the 1920's to 1933 from the original dealership that were stored in the attic of the parts department. An employee of the dealership, known to this writer, said that numerous people had approached Mr. Miller about buying some the parts over the years, but he had refused to sell.



The two men in the photo above are Oliver Lee 'Ollie' Miller (on left) and his son, Arthur Oliver Miller (on right).

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** As the sole holder, all photos are submitted with the authors permission. All photos, except the one of the authors Mother, Ruby Roberts, are U.S. Copyright applied for: Copyright Pending.



## Ok, It Is A Love Story

By Bill Severn

It was the spring of 1977. I had been a member of The Space City T's since the beginning, but did not have a Model T of my own. None were for sale in the local area, but then an ad popped up in the Houston Chronicle. It was a Model T for sale in El Paso. It was a 1914 Touring car, but as you can see in the photo, it was in terrible condition. Like a fool, I bought it anyway. Although listed as a 1914, it was a very early car with an engine from 1913.



Lots of parts were missing so I set about to round them up. Basically, there was no body, no windshield, no coil box, no radiator, no hood, and the list went on. Restoring the body was far beyond my abilities, so I'd have to find one somewhere. I finally found a complete 1913 windshield and decided to build the car up as a 1913 Touring car. I contacted The Craftsman, a California company owned by Ray Wells, and ordered a 1913 Touring body. From another California man, I think Fred Stiver was his name, I ordered a radiator. Long story short, I ended up with a 1913 Touring car that I just loved. I drove it every week.

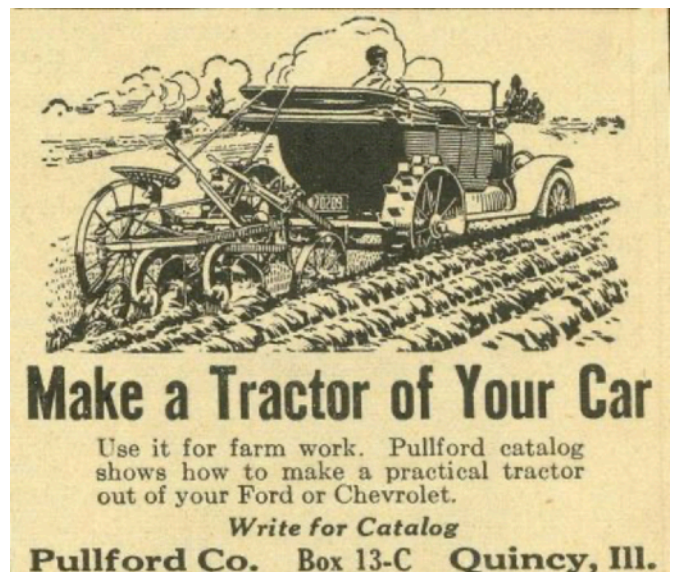


The 1913 Touring car was sold before I moved the family to Saudi Arabia in 1985.

Now, zoom forward to the Spring of 2022. A group of 4 cars assembled at Scott Grants place for a little one-day tour. That's where I first saw Mike Schlitzkus's fully restored 1913 Southern Wide Track Touring car. What a beautiful thing to behold.



Even though it broke down on the tour, I was in love again. When Mike mentioned that he was interested in selling the car, I knew I'd have to find a way. Well, I did, and now this beautiful car lives with me. Thank you, Mike, I'll take good care of it.







# 45th



# Texas T Party

**SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 1, 2022**

## Hallettsville

**Host Hotel:**

**Hotel Texas 361-798-5900**

**Secondary Hotel:**

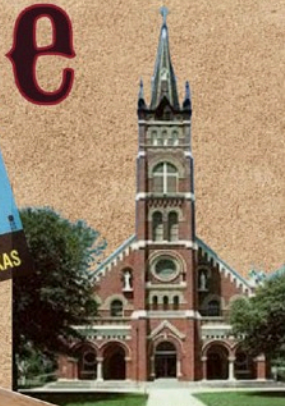
**Best Western Executive Inn**

**361-798-9200**

**RV Park:**

**Lavaca Co Expo Center**

**361-798-1600**



**Chairperson**

**Jeff & Farrah Cordes**

**361-772-5767**

**Co-Chair**

**Jim & Sandra Ruhmann**

**979-292-5658**



# 2022 Texas T Party

## SEP 28 AT 8 AM – OCT 1 AT 10 PM

JOIN US FOR THE 45TH ANNUAL TEXAS T PARTY! HALLETTSVILLE TEXAS, "THE CITY OF HOSPITALITY" WILL BE THE AREA OF EXPLORATION THIS YEAR. THIS RURAL COMMUNITY OF POPULATION 2550 IS THE COUNTY SEAT FOR LAVACA COUNTY. RICH IN HISTORY, SCENIC ROLLING HILLS AND SMALL TOWN CHARM WILL MAKE THIS A MEMORABLE TOUR FOR OUR BELOVED T FAMILY! WE WILL ALSO VENTURE OVER TO "THE CLEANEST LITTLE CITY IN TEXAS" - SHINER, CUERO (LEATHER IN SPANISH) AND PARTS OF NEIGHBORING FAYETTE COUNTY.



**\*THIS EVENT WILL BE LIMITED TO 75 VEHICLES\***

**\*Wednesday will be a full day of touring\***

**[Download Hallettsville PDF Registration Form](#)**

#### **Host Hotel:**

Hotel Texas 361-798-5900

1632 N. Texana St

[hoteltexas.net](http://hoteltexas.net)

Single King: 95.95 +tax

Double Queen: 100.95 +tax

**Moderate truck/trailer parking**

#### **Secondary Hotel:**

[Best Western Executive Inn](#)

361-798-9200

207 US HWY 77 South

69.99 + tax

**Truck/trailer parking for guests**

#### **Lavaca County Expo Center/RV Park**

1/4 mile from Host Hotel also has overflow truck and trailer parking

<https://www.lavacaexpo.com/rv-park.html>

361-798-1600

#### **Chairperson**

**Jeff & Farrah Cordes**

**361-772-5767**

#### **Co-Chair**

**Jim & Sandra Ruhmann**

**979-292-5658**

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 Flivver 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 25th of the month preceding the month of publication. Emailing takes place the last week of the month. Annual club dues are \$25 per year.

#### 2022 Space City Club Officers and Board Members

|                |                   |              |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| President      | Dave Lucas        | 281-388-0761 |
| Vice President | David Carter      | 713-875-1049 |
| Secretary      | Bruce Carter      | 713-703-2958 |
| Treasurer      | Jerry Smith       | 281-461-9906 |
| Board Member   | Rick McCracken    | 281-726-5695 |
| Board Member   | Bobby Wright      | 409-771-5548 |
| Board Member   | Anthony J. Marino | 281-482-4156 |

### THE FLIVVER FLASH

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

email: [modelt@spacecityts.org](mailto:modelt@spacecityts.org)

website: [www.spacecityts.org](http://www.spacecityts.org)

## New Members Wanted

Please visit our [Space City T's of Houston Texas web site](#). If interested in becoming a member, please provide your name, address, mobile phone, & email, and make a \$25 check payable to the:

### Space City T's

Please mail your [information form](#) and check to the Treasurer at:

Jerry Smith  
13723 Llano Lake Court  
Houston, TX 77059

*A special "Thank You" to all club members who paid their 2022 dues!*

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: [rachel@mtfca.com](mailto:rachel@mtfca.com)

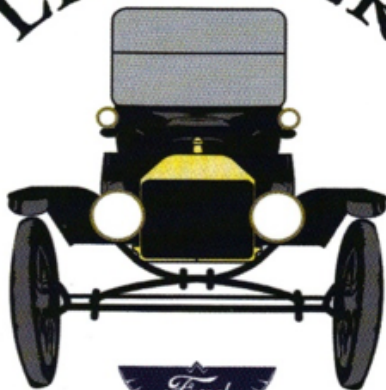
\$40 annual dues includes six issues of the Vintage Ford  
Join MTFCA at: [www.mtfca.com](http://www.mtfca.com)

## 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, [videos](#), or [links](#) to: [topkick7@outlook.com](mailto:topkick7@outlook.com)

# LILLEKER



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WWW.MRMODEL.T.COM

### For Sale: 1920 Model T Center Door Sedan



Recently rebuilt engine and transmission.  
Flat tube Brass Works radiator, new upholstery kits ordered, 12v, new firewall and floorboards

## \$10,000

Eric "Gator" Gould  
Hm: 251-765-2677 (AL)

Check your email to see if our **June 8, 2022** Meeting is at Demeris BBQ and the Lazy Brook Baptist Church



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

located at

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

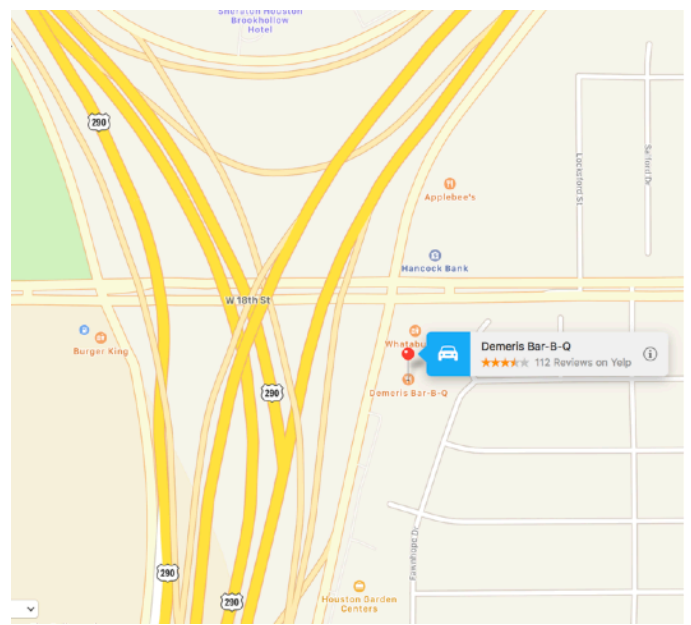
Then attend the  
Space City T's Meeting at 7:30 P.M.

Place:

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

Website: [www.spacecityts.org](http://www.spacecityts.org)

Email: [modelt@spacecityts.org](mailto:modelt@spacecityts.org)

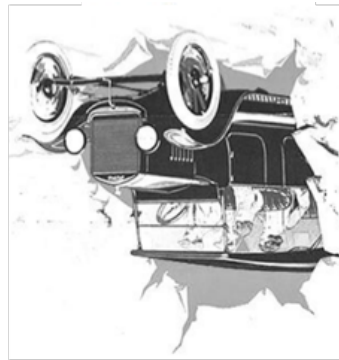


**Directions to Demeris BBQ**

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**



Space City T's of Houston  
Anthony J. Marino  
302 Torrey Court  
League City, Texas 77573

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