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Our featured Guest Writers

Aren't we lucky to have them!

Alan Blay

Alan is a vehicle appraiser and insurance broker for decades. He has seen cars and fads come and go. Here he discusses a comparison between the 50's Chevrolet Corvette and the Ford Thunderbird!

Fred Mestrandrea Freddie is one of those guys that when you meet him, you instantly like him. He's also got some nice cars! In this issue he tells us about one that he has had for over 40 years!

Rich's Tech Tips

Check it out before you go! That's the motto from Rich, especially when it pertains to a new and unfamiliar ride you may have just acquired!

*(You know what they say..
"Better safe than sorry!")*

"A New Website!"

We have made some awesome changes!

By Peter Giordano

Editor

If you haven't already done so, you must check out our updated and enhanced website!

There is so much to see and do! So many changes and additions that you will have to come back several times to take it all in!

There is no other automotive website like it!

Besides adding a whole new level of fun and functionality, we have created new sections that will enhance the overall "browsing" experience as well as provide easy access to services from vendors and businesses.

The business advertiser area is easy to find near the top of the page, running from left to right, and is comprised of seven main sections where you can find parts, repair, and other specialty services.

Just above that are navigational buttons to quickly move you around to various sections of our comprehensive website.

On the right column, we have incorporated another row of silver buttons that link you to pages featuring new and incredible additions to Long Island Classic Cars.com!

Our new Blog, Video Page, Three New Forums, Movie Car Database Registry, Newsletter, The Archives of Past Editions, and more!!

You gotta check this all out! *Seriously!*

continued on page 2

We've also redesigned the entire Cars For Sale section of the site, along with ease of navigation containing step by step instructions on how to list or post anything that are so simple an "Occupy Wall Street" participant could follow them!

And of course, all the Car Clubs are listed and the 2016 Events Calendar is already brimming with hundreds of things to do on Long Island and in NYC this season!

Why did we do all this? For you!
The largest and greatest bunch of automotive enthusiasts on the planet!

Folks, this was a lot of hard work that took months to do, along with \$\$ and intense decision making, in order to make what we feel is the best and by far, the most comprehensive automotive website in existence! We hope you agree.

Now go enjoy it!

And let us know if there is anything else we can do to make it even better.

This past January the Auctions rang in the start of the show car season, and with that, everyone came away with new ideas about the direction of the market and the hobby. Of course, people don't agree completely on what is hot, what is not, and what something may be worth.

Part of the difficulty in assessing true value of cars is the lack of complete information the auctions give you about the condition of a car and its accuracy to originality and numbers matching. When you see two '70 Chevelle SS LS6 cars in the same auction,

one sells for 95K and another for 175K, you say; "What the heck?" and wonder what they are actually worth. Well, one may be a numbers match, original color, correct in every detail, frame-off, no-expense spared, restoration - while the other is a locally done, beautiful condition #2 or #3 show car. But without the TV announcers getting into that fine detailed description, or not being there yourself to judge it in person, you do not know all the facts, and are left to wonder.

Here's something though that is fact: Sales figures for cars that sold and bidding frenzies that took place in early 2016! When it comes to Muscle Cars, Mecum Auction is the bell-weather of value and interest in these incredible machines!

Mecum Auction: TOP TEN SALES -- Kissimmee, FL.
January 2016

No 1: 1970 Plymouth Hemi Cuda Convertible **\$2,675,000**

No 2: 1971 Plymouth Hemi Cuda Convertible **\$2,300,000**

No 3: 1970 Dodge Hemi Challenger R/T Convertible
\$1,650,000

No 4: 1971 Plymouth Hemi Cuda **\$950,000**

No 5: 1969 Dodge Hemi Coronet R/T Convertible **\$625,000**

No 6: 1970 Ford Torino King Cobra **\$525,000**

No 7: 1970 Plymouth Cuda Convertible **\$475,000**

No 8: 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T Convertible **\$450,000**

No 9: 1953 Chevrolet Corvette Roadster **\$350,000**

No 10: 1969 Chevrolet Yenko Camaro **\$330,000**

Once again we see that Mopars are king. Those sales results are undeniable.

Check our *EVENTS CALENDAR* on the website's main page for updates to the show and cruise night schedule.

Start cruisin'!!!



Long Island Classic Cars'

AUTOMOTIVE PICTURE CAPTION CONTEST

This contest is open to everyone!

(LI Classic Cars.com paid personnel, regular column writers, and business advertisers are not eligible.)

Winners will be notified by e-mail and/or phone.

Please submit all entries by the 1st of the next month. (Ex: for July's contest the entries are due by Aug 1st)

No substitutions of prizes will be allowed.

In the event of prize choices, winner will be given the opportunity to select the one they want.

All decisions are final and are made by the paid personnel of Long Island Classic Cars.com

Winners must claim their prizes within 30 days of contest end or forfeit the prize to the runner up.

If there are multiple correct entries on puzzle, matching, fill-in, or Q&A contests - winner will be randomly selected from all correct entries.

A few simple rules:

- 1) Be funny and creative!**
- 2) Keep it somewhat clean!**



Here's the winner of the last contest.

Rod Steurmann

Rod won a "Car Detail Kit"!
Congrats Rod!!

"I'm glad I have nine lives 'cause this one's about to end! Wait - that's the damned cat!"

Here is this month's Picture Caption Contest image....



Send in your caption by 5/1/16 and be in the running to win the prize!

Cruise Night Information!



“EXTRA EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!!”

Here are locations from 2014. They sometimes change. Let us know if you have info on any of them.
Updates will be posted in the next Newsletter

- MONDAYS: Main St. East Rockaway, NY (*June-August*)
\$3 Admission. Various Charity Fundraisers.
- TUESDAYS: Dogwood Avenue. Franklin Square, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- TUESDAYS: Yaphank FD. Yaphank, NY.
Sponsored by Yaphank Fire Department - FREE
- TUESDAYS: Tri-County Flea Market. Hempstead Turnpike, Levittown, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- WEDNESDAYS: Nathan's. Long Beach Rd, Oceanside, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- WEDNESDAYS: BLD's Restaurant. Hawkins Ave. Ronkonkoma, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- THURSDAYS: Wendy's Shopping Center. Montauk Hwy and Locust Ave, Oakdale, NY
Sponsored by Still Cruisin' Car Club. FREE
- THURSDAYS: Kings Park Plaza-Located on Indian Head Rd & Meadow Rd. Kings Park, NY
Sponsored by Kings Park Chamber of Commerce and Professor's Diner. FREE
- THURSDAYS: Atlantic Avenue between Merrick Rd and Sunrise Hwy. Lynbrook, NY (*June-August*)
Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce for "Community Chest" soup kitchen. \$3 to charity.
- THURSDAYS: Main St. Peconic River Front, Riverhead, NY
Sponsored by The Chamber of Commerce. FREE (*June-August*)
- THURSDAYS: Sea Cliff FD, Sea Cliff Ave., Sea Cliff, NY
\$5 Admission. Sponsored by The Sea Cliff Fire Dept..
- FRIDAYS: Bellmore Train Station. Sunrise Highway. Bellmore, NY
Now run by...?.. some local group now charging \$5 - expensive - any info about this ??
- FRIDAYS: Massapequa Train Station. Sunrise Highway. Massapequa, NY
Sponsored by Massapequa Chamber of Commerce. Two cans or more of food – to charity. (*July - August*)
- FRIDAYS: Meschutt Beach @ The Beach Hut. Canal Rd. Hampton Bays, NY.
Public Gathering. FREE after 5PM
- SATURDAYS: Cedar Beach @ The Beach Hut. Ocean Parkway, Cedar Beach, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- SATURDAYS: Super Stop & Shop. Rt 25 (1/4 mile east of the Bull), Smithtown, NY
Permission from Stop & Shop. FREE
- SUNDAYS: *AM Cruise* Ocean Pkwy, Captree Beach thru May, then at OBI. Babylon, NY
Public Gathering. FREE

What about Brooklyn & Queens? They are part of LI too!
Anyone have info about Cruise Nights being held there?

**Let us know about Cruise Nights being held in the Bronx, we'll list those as well
since for some Long Islanders, it is just a quick hop over a bridge to get there!**

1950's American Sports Car Comparison

By Alan Blay
Guest Writer

Several years ago I wrote about a survey of Corvette Owners published in Popular Mechanic's Magazine in October 1954. Most owners loved the 6 cylinder Corvette of 1953 and 1954, which were the cars surveyed, with the exception of the side windows and leaky convertible top in inclement weather. Other than this survey, I found nothing about opinions on the early Corvettes from the consumer's point of view - until now!

I purchased an October 1955 issue of Consumer Reports from SACC member Steve Sokoloff, and right on the cover is a consumer's comparison of the Ford Thunderbird and Chevrolet Corvette. Also discussed were the Jaguar XK-140 (tested in Nov 1954) and Porsche Continental, which evolved into the 356 model. These were the four major sports cars available in the 48 United States at the time the article was written.

{It must be noted here that Consumer Reports probably has never been a motor sports enthusiast's magazine, but rather, looks at autos as to their practical side, function, safety, and economy of operation}

The Corvette tested was a 1955 V-8 model obtained in late Spring 1955, perhaps not newer than Vehicle ID #400 out of 700 units produced that model year. They stated the automatic transmission was the only transmission available, which emphasizes what my research was all along; that in 1955, three speed manual transmissions were fitted to the last twenty

four jobs and none prior, as far as production cars sold to a consumer and purchased through a dealer. Also noted by the reviewers, was that the paint did not have a mirror-like finish, so perhaps the Nitrocellulose Lacquer paint job needed either a good compounding or waxing. A third item that they did not like, was that the V-8 kept fouling spark plugs, so they fitted the engine with the hottest plugs, as they did mostly urban type driving on the road test, and stated cooler plugs were better suited for highway driving.

But in the summary section they mentioned the Corvette was available with either a V-8 or an inline 6 cylinder. This is very important as it proves the six cylinder Corvette in 1955 was available as a choice, and gives credibility to the half dozen or so that were sold.



They did not road test the six cylinder Corvette, but here is what they said about it in their publication to advise potential sports car customers:
"It is the judgment of CU's (Consumer's Union, who publishes Consumer Reports) consultants that as a 6, the Corvette is so lacking in the outstanding sports car characteristic - power - as to be not worth considering compared with the V-8."

They did not even test one, and they arrive at this conclusion!! CU was never accused of being fair and impartial in their tests, and research from their founding in 1936 until the present day could yield more conclusions like this without a test of the comparable model. True, the 6 cylinder was outdated compared to the V-8 in late 1955, but the 6 cylinder cars were also discounted at dealers more than the V-8, and we know how CU loves saving money. This aspect was not discussed either.

They tout the Jaguar XK-140 as being a far better true sports car than either the Corvette or Thunderbird, and selling at about the same price, but criticize its servicing as only available through a few experts in a small selection of dealers, whereas Ford and Chevrolet dealers were everywhere.



They go on to criticize the Porsche as being a tiny car lacking prestige value and having a small underpowered engine requiring lots of gear shifting. In 1955 motorists were looking toward less gear shifting in their driving.

The Ford Thunderbird was described as a sports car most like a regular passenger car, with drawbacks such as a difficult to erect soft top and a strange automatic transmission shifter. It was not close to purist sports car design, and many of its parts were like Ford passenger cars, such as the Mercury engine, steering system and rear axle.

Corvette got the approval of having a better ride with more comfortable seats and suspension, better cornering, and you have to admit the V-8 was a major selling point in throttle response.

However, in conclusion, CU liked the Thunderbird best because it was a sports car most closest to a regular passenger car. Even though the Corvette was a better performer, Ford offered security too, as standard passenger cars of 1955 and before made occupants slide around and hold on when going around curves. Therefore CU regarded sports cars as safer than regular sedans for that reason alone.

Today's test writers take much more into consideration when evaluating vehicles. So enjoy this look back, and take it for what it was at the time. A writer's comparison between two American Sports cars that became icons.



My Car Story



By Fred Mestrandrea

I consider myself very old school and the car I am about to describe was built way back in the 60's when you pretty much had to do everything yourself and with the help of other talented hot rod friends - and may I add, on a small budget! Usually this money was saved up by working in somebody's garage or at Wetsons so you could learn as much as you could about car repair. So friends, if you think you're going to read about a custom, show quality rebuild, forget it.

This 55 Chevy 2 door 150 wagon was produced from as many old parts that I could find and some that came from other junk yard cars and, so here's the story....

I got hold of this car in the early 60's and actually it was for my brother-in-law, who was 16 and looking for a project to work on. One of my friends at that time was selling it with a small block motor and a turbo 400 trans coupled to a 4:56 posi. A great start, except for the smoke and fumes from the motor, which could kill you in 20 minutes - and the paint, which looked like it belonged on a Checker cab. We tried to fix the problems and finally rebuilt the engine which lasted about two months, when the piston smacked into a valve!

I then took ownership of the car and decided I would do whatever I could to repair it.

First there was a lot of interior and body sealing done to prevent those fumes from finishing off the aforementioned killing. Plus a new set of headers and exhaust. The next thing was finding an engine - so I got in touch with one of my very old acquaintances, a guy named Joe Jill, who owned a speed shop named Speedwin Automotive. I knew Joe because we both ran Super Stock 426 Mopar Max Wedges back in the day!

I asked if he had any engines that were within my budget and lo and behold, I bought a rebuilt 1962 327 cu. in. short block and figured I would finish the build up from there. I completed the engine by adding a Crane Fireball cam, Holley carb and used the car like that for about twenty years with no mechanical problems. Most of my friends could not believe this thing stayed together that long while beating it up in C Gas class drag races in the 60's.





After owning it for almost forty years, I decided it deserved a new paint job. The car had been painted about six times by friends and whoever owned a spray gun, and it never really had a shine. So I called in a bead blaster, who arrived at my home and he put my car in a tent and turned it into what reminded me of a stainless steel Delorean finish. Then came body repair, and new stainless trim. The car was done in turquoise and white and I then bought a new Be Cool system, Power disc brake setup, then an Ididit complete power steering system, which took many nights of lying on my back and figuring out what the hell I was doing. Remember folks, I ain't a kid anymore!



After tons of cuts and band aids and inventing new curse words, I moved on to the interior. I found a limo company that was going out of business and bought Cadillac 6 way power bucket seats to put in the car. One of my buddies made a bracket so I could lift these seats in order to get in the back of the car. Once this was done, I gave the car to my friend Don, known to most people on Long Island as Figgie the Pinstriper.

(I actually grew up street racing with Don, primarily on Bar Beach road under the Roslyn bypass bridge.)



Figgie also convinced me that a forty year old electrical system needed to be replaced so the car wouldn't go up in flames. Remember, when I put it together forty plus years ago, I used whatever wire I could find to fix things! The occasional sparks under the dash usually scared most of my friends!

So with the rewire all new and correctly done - my '55 has run even better than ever. Plus all systems work and are completely reliable. And now my friends don't have to bring along a change of underwear when we go cruisin'.

The point of this story is really to say that I spent many hours learning while building my baby and have kept it until today. I certainly received help from my friends as well. There's nothing like working on a car yourself, not just because of the fun and satisfaction you get, but also because of all you learn and the skills you develop while doing it.



Again, this is not a show car, but a real nice driver that is fun and reliable. And when I get in it I feel like I am 17 again, and I can tell you about most any part of the car. (*Unfortunately my real age is just the reverse of 17, but I love to fool myself, so I point the rear view mirror away from me and drive on!*)



I have a few other classics - some of them are top show quality vehicles that make the scene at big car shows and do well. I drive them also, but not with impunity! That is one thing I love about my '55 - I can take it anywhere and enjoy it without worrying about every little thing that may or may not happen! Hit a few moths and flies while cruising - no big deal, just turn on the wipers and smudge 'em off! An occasional overhead pigeon making its presence know to me - that's OK - I have a hose at home.

This car is usually floating around cruise nights and shows, it doesn't sit still in a garage somewhere. After so many years, it still retains the same 327 engine (never rebuilt) and runs great with the crossram intake and twin AFB carbs.

Could I change this one a bit and make it a full off resto? Yes, but that is not the point as I said before. This car is fun!

As Yogi once said "It is what it is."

Thanks everyone and "Drive on!"

(Awesome to have it so long Freddie! Real nice! *Pete*)



Ah ha! ... so you have read through the Newsletter. Page by page. And you have found this unannounced content!

Good for you!
Now, what will you do with it?

Don't tell anyone you found it, it is a secret contest to see who reads and pays attention to all the Newsletter features! The less people who enter, the more chance you have of winning a prize! Everyone who gets it right - and gets their answers in fast - will get a prize! But, there are a limited number of these prizes, so - get your answers in quickly! The contest is limited to ten winning discount certificates!!

So - on with the clues and the sleuthing!

1) On our main page, there is a link that takes you to our new VIDEOS page. In there, in the video about the "Wide Track" cars, according to the video we made, the Swingin' 60's were all about what? _____

2) Next, go check out our NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES... the February 2005 Newsletter featured what car in our MY CAR STORY feature?

3) In the December 2010 edition, what racing venue here on Long Island was written about? And who was it's author?

4) Go check out our new REGISTER YOUR CAR FOR TV/MOVIES page. (*And while you are there, why not list your vehicles!*) How many vehicle images can be uploaded on the registration page?

5) In our COMMUNITY FORUM link, how many "Topic Sections" are there for you to use in the rectangular blue bordered box? And - what is the name of the last one? _____, _____

Lastly....

6) In the EVENTS CALENDAR, on April 24th, 2016, how many cars will get Dash Plaques at the LI Street Rod Show? (*Hint: click on the event to open it up*)

That was easy! Now, send in your answers and you will get a gift worth some \$\$! Just be one of the first ten people to get your correct answers in to us! You can email them to:
newsletter@liclassiccars.com

Printing of this page is not necessary, although you could do so and keep it for your records.

Oh, and by the way, the prize is worth \$50 ... or more!

See - it PAYS to read our whole Newsletter! And, it's entertaining too!

Pete Giordano
Editor

Rich's Tech Tips



By Rich Fiore
Staff Writer

IS THE NEW RIDE READY TO TAKE YOU THERE AND BACK ?

So you have just bought the Collector car of your dreams and you can't wait to drive it. Well not so fast there Jimmy. Not trying to pop yer euphoric bubble here, but it's not a bad time to run through the new toy for the sake of safety and reliability. Even if you looked it over prior to purchase, now would be the best time to give it a very thorough inspection and do some maintenance.

I always start with the Safety items like brakes, steering and suspension. Inspect all brake pads/shoes, drums, rotors and lines. If you have to open the hydraulics up it might not be a bad time to flush out and go silicone. Make sure you flush out well and do not mix the silicone with the old fluid. They don't mix!



For the steering get the car up in the air and have a friend shake that tire side to side while you look at the linkage. Replace anything loose. Put a jack under the lower control arm and drop the car a bit to unload the ball joint. Put a pry bar under the tire and lift up and look for play in the ball joints. Check the shocks for leakage, and the stabilizer bar bushings. Give the tires a quick once over and look for uneven wear. Check for leaks in the oil & trans pans, the power steering, radiator and water pump.



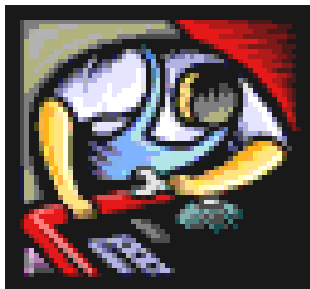
Now for the sake of reliability it's not a bad idea to change the oil/filter and the coolant using distilled water. You can use a flush but I like to remove the old thermostat, flush and replace with a new one. While the system is empty, it's not a bad idea to replace the hoses and look at the belts too.

There are two schools of thought when it comes to replacing transmission fluid; some say replace it and some say leave it alone since the new fluid - being high in detergent - will break up a lot of the old sludge. I tend to agree with the latter. Obviously get the correct type if you are changing it. *(Always properly dispose of all fluids and oils. Car guys can be environmentally conscious also.)*

Check the battery and fill 1/4" above the plates with distilled water. Clean or replace the air filter and PCV Valve, and replace the fuel filter. Visually inspect the distributor cap, rotor, and points (if so equipped). Pull a plug or two and check the electrodes. They should be a light tan. You can test the plug wires with a spray bottle of water while it is running and look for leakage.

Remove and clean the battery terminals and cover with the grease to prevent acid buildup. Remove and clean all grounds. Fuel pumps can fail nowadays due to the ethanol fuels. A good idea would be to pressure test. Check your manual but they are usually 5-7 lbs. I keep a spare stock pump - and an electric pump for roadside repairs. *(Handy in the trunk at times!)*

This spare electric pump would be quickly clamped to the passenger frame rail for a roadside breakdown. The fuel lines are then attached and you are ready to go. The power feed would be fed directly from the alternator (since it is close) and the ground to the inside of the car with an inline fuse.
(Hopefully I never need this)



Techniques like this can save you a tow and get you back to home base grinning and unscathed. Plus your wallet will be happier and heavier!

Check the spare tire and the jack. Make sure the spare is in good condition and has a few extra pounds of air. Make sure there is a good jack/lug wrench in the trunk. I prefer the small portable floor jack with a piece of wood. Make sure there is a wheel lock key available.

Another important thing to keep are tools and spare parts in the trunk. Get a good sturdy box! Everything from duct tape to old ignition parts, belts and hoses. Many times when your parts fail you can them whip out one of these "pre-used" units and get yourself back on the road! Then all your smart-ass friends who grinned at all the stuff you carry around won't be laughing anymore!

(Editor's note: I've seen this happen many a time! It happened to me once on the Meadowbrook Pkwy at midnight!)

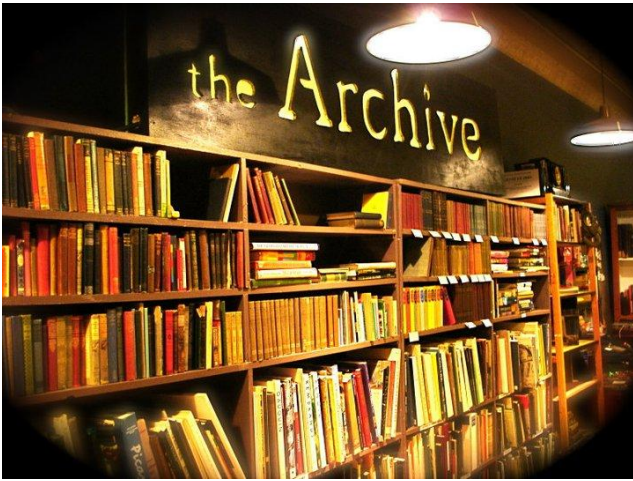


So with just a little preparation, and a checklist like this guy runs through, your new ride can be safe and reliable for the upcoming season. Happy motoring !!!

Quick and Dirty: When was the last time you checked the glove box for spare fuses and a flashlight that works ?

Smoke 'em if you got 'em !!!





Here is where we keep the past records of all our old Newsletter editions. You will never find them on your own, as they are kept at a secret and secure location inside an impenetrable vault.

These are the latest pictures of our facility.



Once inside, access is only obtained by permission of our crack staff of security and record-keeping personnel.

WARNING: They are highly trained in all forms of martial arts and weapons use. Though they might not look the part, these are serious individuals. Be forewarned!



On occasion we will surreptitiously move the contents to other secure locations we have contracted to use. Our documents are very valuable and their protection is of paramount importance to the Collector Car Hobby.

Here is a picture of "Ed". He is one of our top Archivists. He is experienced, having been involved in the car hobby since 1947. He is also a former Green Beret and was an NSA auditor.



Here is a link you can use to view these old materials.....enjoy!

<http://www.liclassiccars.com/Newsletter/>

"Closing Comments"

'Bout time!!

By Peter Giordano
Editor

Some years, more than others, you can hardly wait for the car season to begin. For me, this is one of them.

We have had warm weather come early, and with that, the proliferation of older cars being driven on nice days. When I see that, it stirs me to get mine out! I have one that is a driver condition car, so I do not worry about the sand and residual grit on the roads from the winter so much, I have had that one out several times. Two others are top quality show cars, so they have been started, backed out of the garage and moved about my long driveway. And yes, taken down the local road that is clean. But carefully!

A few more good soaking rains to clean the roads, seeing all the patchwork get done from the highway crews (who always leave hundreds of little asphalt pebbles unattached and kicking up all over your car), and some bright sunshine will no doubt make way for the cream of the crop cars to start appearing!

There is something to be said for owning cars of both kinds. Enjoy driving one kind to the fullest, and showing the other. Give me a bigger garage and lots and lots of money, and I'd have a collection the size of Rhode Island! (After of course setting up accounts for Charities and supporting others - gotta do what's right first!)

On another note -

We are looking for new writers who have ideas and would like to try their hand at it. You can write just a one-time column if you like, or a series, or even become a regular on a part-time basis!

Don't worry about being an English major or perfect writer or speller, that is my job. I will make you look good!

We are actively seeking submissions for the MY CAR STORY features!

If you have a classic or specialty car or truck - let us know. We would love to do a feature on it!

One more thing --

Last year we started a database of cars for TV, movie, commercial, print and production companies!

I get calls and emails many times during the year from production companies. They need specialty cars and will pay you for your time and vehicle usage!

So - go now to the "Register Your Car" link on the website's main page and put in your information and some GOOD pictures of your car! We will keep them on file (privately), and when these production companies call, they will get to see your vehicle. It's free to register! Don't wait, do it now! Right after reading this Newsletter!!

You never know when someone will call!

Thanks for reading!

