

COMINGS 'n GOINGS

Quarterly Publication of the GMC Heritage Cruisers

Covering Parts of Ontario, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, & West Virginia

www.gmcheritagecruisers.com

Spring 2019



Prez Musings

I want to share a suggestion to help brighten up your day. I had been fiddling with my phone as I was getting tired of my notifications sounding like everyone else's notifications. One of my discoveries included going into Facebook Messenger and finding that you can change the sound the app makes when a new message arrives. It turns out there's a really cute one called Baby Giggle. I made the change and didn't tell anyone so when a message arrived, my phone would 'giggle'. You just can't help but smile when it happens. We often use group chats to keep in touch with the kids and all that giggling makes it so much more fun.

So take some time and go adjust your notification sounds for your favourite apps and maybe it will brighten your day and the day of those around you. You can even change the sounds for specific people so when your spouse calls or texts you, you can have the 'Darth Vader theme' play or perhaps a song snippet of Amazing Grace.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Rustbuster rally and enjoying a glass of wine with y'all.

Cheers, *Steve*



1989 - 2019

Happy Anniversary to Us !!!

A Bit of Our History

The GMC Heritage Cruisers was originally formed under the GMC Owners Association sponsored by General Motors in the late 1970s. It was one of about two dozen all over the United States. Some of them are



still active today, such as the GMC Great Lakers, GMC Pacific Cruisers, and others.

In 1982, the GMC Owners Association was disbanded as well as some of the clubs. To fill the void the clubs joined FMCA and Ralph Luby formed a North American- wide club, GMC Motorhome International that became a chapter of FMCA as well. Today as many as six nations are represented in the GMCMI.



The First HC Rally in 1989

In the late 1980s, a group of GMC owners mainly from western New York started a club and took the name of GMC Heritage Cruisers, the club that covered that area in the 1970s. In 1989 the Club was chartered by FMCA and the first rally was held. John Evans was one of the organizers and our first President. The operating area of the current club is a 250 - mile radius of Niagara Falls.

We have enjoyed 30 years since then, reaching a membership high of 97 at one point and over 250 members over the 30 years.

Special thanks to Bill Bryant and John Evans for contributing to this history.



From the Wagon Master

We're just about to start a very full rally season that will be enjoyable for all. There are a number of deadlines that the rally masters have indicated are needed to finalize the arrangements. Please, get your rally registration to them as early as possible.



Also, as Rally Masters of the June rally, we need to know who will be going to our gun club for trap shooting so we have enough ammunition. Email or call me at steel-eyes@hotmail.com or 519-688-5987.

John Peazel, VPWM

24 – 26 May – Wellington, Ontario
Karen & Steve Lill
Casa Dea Winery
**Info Sheet Included with deadline
changed to 10 May**

20 – 23 June – Courtland, Ontario
John & Mary Peazel
Info Sheet Included

11 – 14 July – Spensorport, New York
Ernie & Cindy Dankert
**Info Sheet Included with deadline
13 June**

**2 - 5 August – Canal Days, Port Colborne,
Ontario**
Eelko & Emily Byker
**Info Sheet Included with deadline
15 June**

13 – 15 Sept - Rockwood Conservation
Area, Rockwood, Ontario
Penny & Cliff Pike

Fall GMCMI Convention -

4-10 October Mansfield, Ohio
Gathering on 2 Oct in West Seneca, NY
and convoy on 3 Oct to Mansfield

Chapter Membership List

Enclosed is the latest Membership List. Please check that all your information is correct and if there are errors or changes, send them to gmcchc@1000island.net. Also to protect other members, destroy any old copies.



Club Elections

This year is an election year for the Club. At a rally later in the year, we should set and elect our Executive, National Directors and Nominating Committee. Your Nominating Committee, Bob Paterson, Roy Carscadden, and Al Hamilton will be determining who is willing to run again and look for replacements where necessary. If you are willing to serve or have someone in mind, let a member of the Nominating Committee know.



The Story of Ernestine

A long time ago in a far away land there were two GMC motorhomes in a family. They were name Bert and Ernie, which is short for Roberta and Ernestine because coaches are female !! Bert passed away and became parts for others to keep going. So, Ernie became "Ernie the Coach" from "Cheers" and continues to carry its owners all around the continent. Names withheld at the request of the family !!! LOL



Reducing Part of Springfield Ignition

Recent EPA regulations has caused Dick Paterson to stop the engine rebuilding of GMC 455 and 403 engines. The other services of Springfield Ignition will continue such as carburetor rebuilding, distributor work, and sale of spark plug wire sets, etc. The loss of this high quality service to the GMC community is a big blow to keeping the classic GMC on the road.

He will be selling off 455/403 blocks, heads, intake manifolds, and complete "buildable" cores. Send Dick an email for what you want and he will put your tag on it.

In Memoriam

Alex Sirum passed away in hospital in early April. He & Romona had been members of the Heritage Cruisers from the beginning 30 years ago. Alex established one of the GMC specialty repair and refurbishing facility in Okeechobee, Florida. Their help and assistance to the GMC community has been second to none and their son Jeff is continuing the business and maintaining the reputation built up by Alex & Romona. They are in the photo on the first page of the attendees at the first Club rally in 1989.



Tech Talk

Onan Generator Troubleshooting

By Bruce Hislop, VP Tech

The OEM generator is a simple and reliable piece of equipment, but it can be temperamental now that it is 40+ years old. The Onan consists of two main parts, the engine and the generator. For this article we will concentrate on why the engine won't run.

Assuming your Onan has no mechanical problems, that leaves two reasons for not starting... no fuel or no spark. For troubleshooting you will need a jumper wire with a gator-clip on each end to bypass the control board.



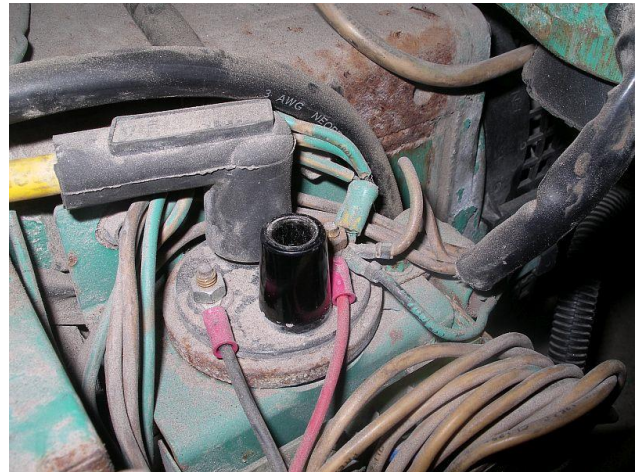
Jumper Wire

First, be sure you have more than 1/4 tank of fuel in the main tank. The fuel pickup is set so that the Onan won't completely drain your tanks of fuel and leave you stranded.

Check Control Board:

- Jump 12 volts from the battery cable

on the starter to the + terminal of the coil (this is the coil terminal with several wires attached to it).



- These are easier connection points to get to rather than control board connections.
- Press and Hold Start Button on the Control Panel and see if Onan starts
 - Onan Starts and Runs:
 - Pull Jumper from battery cable & coil
 - Onan continues to run
 - Fault in Control Board that prevents it from starting under its control. (Repair or replace)
 - Onan stops running
 - Check for voltage from the Onan's flywheel alternator (should be > 20 V)
 - No engine oil pressure (check oil level, pressure sensor or control board)
 - Fault in Control Board (repair or replace)
 - Onan will not start:
 - Check for Spark and Fuel

Check for Spark: (assuming you have good clean spark plugs installed)

- Note: the spark is very weak on the Onan. Be sure the spark plug gap is

set to 0.20" You may need to shade the spark plug to see the spark in the test below.

- Pull one spark plug wire and use a spark tester or spark plug with its shell grounded
- Jumper 12 volts from the battery cable on the starter to the + terminal of the coil
- Press and Hold Start Button on Control panel. Watch for spark while cranking.
 - No Spark
 - Faulty ignition coil (replace)
 - Faulty points or Electronic Ignition Module EIM (if equipped)
 - Set or replace points
 - Troubleshoot EIM (is the magnet missing, module faulty etc)

Fuel Supply:

The fuel tanks must be above 1/4 full for the Onan to get fuel, be sure you have more than 1/4 tank of fuel!

Test fuel supply and pump

Remove fuel line from the carburetor and run the line into a container to catch the gas.



12 Volts (Red)

Jump 12 volts from the battery wire on the starter to the + terminal of the ignition coil as above. You should hear the pump running and soon have fuel flowing into the container.

- No Fuel:
 - As noted above, do you have more than 1/4 tank of fuel!
 - Clogged fuel filter (replace)
 - Faulty pump (replace with a low pressure fuel pump)
 - Faulty fuel solenoid (remove, its not needed for our application)
 - Faulty rubber fuel line (replace with new Ethanol rated fuel line (30R9))
- Fuel flow is OK
 - If you have spark and fuel flow as tested above then you likely have a carburetor issue.
 - Float or needle valve sticking (see links for repair info)
 - dirt in needle valve (clean carburetor)

If your starter seems crash and grind, it could be the starter mounting bracket is broken. An improved replacement bracket is available from Ragusa and others.

One easy way to improve the starting of the Onan is with a Primer Button Switch (see photo). This button provides 12V to the fuel pump so that you can prime the pump and fill the carb with gas without having to crank the engine. Contact me for details on how to wire and use this switch.



Primer Button

An excellent upgrade is Electronic Ignition. A kit to do this is available. Check the Idiot's Guide link below for more information. The electronic ignition provides a "hotter spark" and steady ignition timing for a smoother running engine.

After 40+ years the rubber shock mounts are likely to be fatigued. I installed new mounts and found my Onan ran much smoother with less vibration inside the coach.

You can find more information on troubleshooting and repairing the Onan on these pages:

<https://www.gmcmi.com/generators/>
<http://www.gmcidiotsguide.com/chapter-5---trouble-shooting-the-onan--the-gmc-genset.html>

Rally Photos

If you have rally photos that you would like to share, send them to Cliff Pike, the Club Historian, so they can be included in the archives, digital edition. Cliff takes lots of photos at rallies and you can see them at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/133356126@N03/albums>. There is also a link to the rally photos on our web site.



Classified

For Sale: Here is a list of the parts from Dan Stuckey - stuckey@brktel.on.ca or 519-844-2083 :

Macerator kits - only three remaining - \$350 US ea.

One engine sub frame galvanized - \$1795 US .

One rear sub frame galvanized - \$500 US

Four frame cross members galvanized - \$250 US ea.

For Sale: Here also is a list of the remaining parts that Paul Lambke has - 519-443-7543 or phlambke@aol.com:

NEW PARTS

2 sets Moog upper control arm bushings @ \$35.00 = \$70.00

2 sets Moog offset upper control arm bushings @ \$ 41.00 = \$82.00

2 Moog upper ball joints @ \$55.00 = \$110.00

1 Moog lower ball joint @ \$119.00

1 GMC final drive Pinion bearing set @ \$ 135.00

1 Tilton HD gear reduction starter motor @ \$ 525.00

USED PARTS

1 right front wheel knuckle (core) @ \$75.00

1 left front wheel knuckle (core) @ \$75.00

1 final drive assembly (Toro 2.73 ratio) @ \$150.00

2 GMC transmission assemblies \$150.00 = \$300.00

1 drive axle assembly, inner& outer CV joints cleaned, checked, repacked with grease and fitted with new outer boot @ \$125.00

All prices in Cdn dollars.

For Sale – There are two Story Boards left from the last printing. They are \$39.55 Cdn. Allan Hamilton - akh@1000island.net.

For Sale - New, never installed, GMC holding tank for sale, Ardemco model GMC-1. <https://ardemco.com/gmc-1-waste-tank/>
Bruce Hislop – 519-274-2000 – bruce@perthcomm.com



Listing of GMC-related items for sale is available to HC members and will only appear for two issues unless otherwise arranged.



2019 Newsletter

Submissions for the Summer 2019 Edition of the “Comings ‘n Goings” are due by 7 July to the Editor, Al Hamilton at akh@1000island.net.

Enclosures:

May Rally Registration
June Rally Registration
July Rally Registration
August Rally Registration
Membership List - 1 May