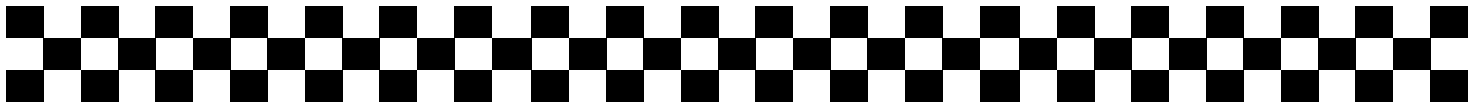


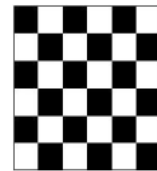
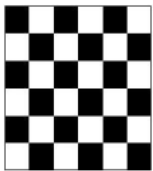
THE CHECKERBOARD

NEWS



“A Checker Owner Is Never Alone”

Summer 2009



Former Checker Dealership Charlie's Auto in Tucson, AZ.

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(A Not-For-Profit Corporation, incorporated in the State of Indiana)

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"Cab Driver"

Words and Music by C. Carson Parks
Official theme song of the
Checker Car Club of America, Inc.

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Submissions can be emailed to jweinhoft@checkercarclub.org or mailed to the editor's address listed above.

GREETINGS FROM THE EDITOR

July, 2009

This issue should be in your hands by the beginning of July. The next issue will be the normally scheduled Fall 2009 (October) edition. It may be a couple of weeks late due to other (non-Checker) already scheduled family activities I have to participate in this fall.

This year the national show is in Arcadia, California, a suburb of Los Angeles. The 2010 show is currently unscheduled. If you want to weigh in with an opinion, see page 18 on how to submit a proposal.

There are a number of interesting articles in this issue. Special thanks to Chris Olsen for his continuation of the Aero beast saga on page 4. Carroll Sickles weighs in on page 8 with his story of acquiring a 1967 A-12 from Bob Welsh. Technical information on testing your late model gas gauge starts on page 10. Finally, a list of known and suspected Checker dealerships and parts depots can be found on page 12.

I know you are probably tired of reading this paragraph every issue, but this newsletter is for you, the members, to share your stories. I write occasional technical articles to share the knowledge I have acquired from other people and by working on several Checkers. You can do the same. Every member has Checker knowledge they have acquired, usually through the school of hard knocks. You can help by contributing articles and photographs. You don't have to be a writer. Don't worry about the structure; just get the content into the article. We can edit any submission.

Ideally, submissions will be in electronic format, preferably Microsoft Word, although we also accept hard copy by mail. Photos should be original and as high a resolution as possible. All electronic submissions should be sent to: jweinhoft@checkercarclub.org

The newsletter will continue to evolve. We improve by comments from our readers. If you like what you see, tell us. If you don't like what you see, tell us also. I can be reached at the address on the left or by phone: (Home) 217-744-2986, (Verizon Cell) 217-494-2986

John Weinhoft

About the cover ... Charlie's Auto Service is the former Charlie's Auto Sales, a Checker dealership, in Tuscon, AZ. For more information on former Checker dealerships, see the article starting on page 12. Photo supplied by Ron Shull.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

July, 2009

In the Spring issue of the Checkerboard News I said I would give some numbers on the Checker Car Club of America. Would you like the good numbers or the bad numbers?

Lets start with the good numbers. About 4 or 5 years ago this Club was totally out of money. Your Board has tried to bring costs under control and add some new money ideas to keep the Club going. One was the \$10 registration fee at all National Conventions. In 2008, the Kalamazoo show produced over \$700. In July the L.A. show will raise funds also.

Another way to save, was to go to bulk mailing versus first class. Yes, it is a little slower but less money. We have had two postage increases and this issue will be the third one.

The newsletter is also being printed on plain paper rather than the much more expensive glossy paper and uses a color copy process rather than a four color print process. Yes, the print quality and appearance is slightly less than before but the cost is about one-half the previous cost. This has allowed us to print

some larger issues while keeping the cost reasonable.

Since we are on the subject of money, the present budget for the Club is about \$10,000 a year; \$2,000 for printing and mailing each issue = \$8,000 a year. That leaves about \$2,000 left to cover the expenses to run the Club. Now the best news in the last few years is that we have about \$11,500 in the bank.

The bad news. We have about 350 paid members. About 50 of them did not renew their membership in February. If they do not renew, we will lose them. Five years ago we about 550 members. Why is the membership number important? With a budget of \$10,000 per year to keep the Club going, 350 members will not cover the expenses. If 350 member paid \$25 each it would bring in about \$8,750. If they use Paypal we do not get the full \$25. Also, the foreign postage difference is more than the \$5 extra we charge. Ever since I got on the Board, I have asked for more new members or retain the renewal members.

Some members have asked for a larger newsletter. One problem is the increase in both printing and postage if the newsletter gets too big and heavy. But maybe a 24 page newsletter would be nice. Well, to have a bigger newsletter we need the members to submit information to John Weinhoeft so he has articles for the Newsletter.



Comments, Questions or even Criticism, feel free to contact me. My address and email are on the inside cover.

Or you can call me:

Home 269-782-0635,
Cell 269-462-3444.

Ron Leatz

Ed. Note — after much begging, I finally received some current photos of Ron with his Checker. I assume his wife took the photo.

SAGA OF THE AEROBEAST PART II: HOW TO “SMOG” A 1977 AEROBUS IN CALIFORNIA

by Chris Olson

(Ed. note: Part one of this continuing drama was in the Summer 2008 newsletter)

Driving the Aerobeast from Brooklyn to San Diego was the easy part. Now, the difficult and costly task was to get it licensed in California. I always say “It’s not how much you pay for a car ... it’s how much you spend on it after you get it.” I knew that getting the car “smogged” was going to be a challenge when I bought it. In 2004, our governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, stopped the rolling 30 year smog exemption and froze the exempt vehicle year at 1975 and older. So, my 1977 Aerobus must comply with the smog requirements for a 1977 Aerobus just as it did when it was first sold. Now that Arnold changed the law, I will have to get a smog check every 2 years until it stops rolling. My only choice is to do whatever it takes to get it smog certified.

Okay, I do know about a couple other options. One is to find a friend in Arizona and use their address so I can register the car in Arizona, a state with more lenient registration requirements. Then, I would drive around San Diego with Arizona license plates. Hey, you see Arizona plates all over San Diego, right? Yes, there a lot of “Zonie” tourists driving around San Diego. But not in a car that gets so much attention from law enforcement! Next option: find some other junk yard Checker and relocate the VIN plates on my Aerobus. Nobody at DMV knows the difference between a 1967 Checker Marathon and a 1977 Checker Aerobus, right? Well, I don’t like the idea of jail. So, back to plan “A”.

The saga begins at the Department of Motor Vehicles in Clairemont, CA. I always enjoy watching people’s reaction when they see a black 8-door Checker drive up. Not this time! The large stern-looking woman inspector at the Vehicle Inspection Station was not phased. She stood there in her white coat with her clipboard clutched at her side and acted

like she sees cars like this everyday. I joked to her about how my car was going to make her day more challenging. She ignored my comment and said she would go look it up and come right back. I was thinking “Yeah. Right. Good Luck!” Three minutes later, the inspector came out of the building and showed me a small booklet with the title: Vehicle Specifications: 1977 Checker Aerobus. She proudly barked out several features noted in the book “350 C.I.D, 8 cylinder, 4 barrel carburetor, 8 doors, 15 passenger, etc., etc.” She looked the vehicle over, verified the VIN number, signed all the paper work and said everything was fine. Now, all I had to do was get it smog certified. She found a sticker in front of the radiator and cleaned it off. It was the original CA smog sticker. She knew right where to look. Apparently, it was smog legal for



California at one time. She noted the smog pump with the hoses cut off and multiple clamped off exhaust emission tubes. Remember, I bought this vehicle in Brooklyn, New York and the owner said he bought it from someone in Michigan. Anyway, she said “Go get smog certification and you will have your registration!”

I was so happy with this encounter I drove directly to a smog inspection station, then another one, then another one. Nobody wanted to touch it! Only one guy even lifted the hood. But, he said there was no way to know what was required for this vehicle. It is times like these I think about my friends at Fuel System Parts in South San Diego. No matter what car problem I have, Alex at FSP always says “Bring it in, We’ll take a look at it.” They have fixed everything I have thrown at them from the engine rebuild in the 1955 Studebaker to the carburetor rebuild in my 1964 Falcon. Oh, and they know my 1967 Checker Station Wagon quite well. At FSP they always figure it out.



— Alex in front of Fuel Systems Parts —

This time it was going to be a multi-step process. Alex “checked it out” and told me about step number one. He said to call and make an appointment with the State of California Smog Referee Center at Southwestern College. They will tell you what parts you need, and then FSP can put them in for you and it will pass! Thanks, Alex, I’ll do that.

Three weeks later I drove to Southwestern College for my appointment with the smog referee. The Aerobeast squeezed through the narrow campus roads and the co-eds cheered as I passed by. It felt like I was in a New Year’s Day Parade. College kids sure appreciate my ghetto limo. The referee at the test center also looked pleased to get something interesting to use as a good teaching case for his students. Mike, the referee, lifted the hood and gave a familiar statement: “You can get this car smogged! It’s just going to take time and money.” Mike’s most time consuming task was to decide what specifications and requirements he wanted to establish to measure this car against, now and in the future. In fact, he debated whether to consider it a car or a truck. He had shelves full of these big thick loose leaf binders with greasy pages. He found a few conflicting references for the vehicle and came down to a decision of whether to require a catalytic converter and or go the route of the Air Injection System (smog pump). He also said something about a Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) Valve.

Once he established the requirements he went around the car and did the “Comprehensive Visual Inspection”, making a checklist of everything I needed

to do (i.e., parts that were missing or not working). It looked like this:

1. Positive Crankcase Ventilation (PCV): Install complete system, install breather hose, install closed filler cap.
2. Thermostatic Air Cleaner (TAC): Install complete TAC system, install heated air tube, install heat shroud, install vacuum motor, install vacuum hoses.
3. Air Injection System (AIS): Install air injection pump, install vacuum hoses, install air switching valves.
4. Fuel Evaporation System (EVAP): Find and fix leak in system.
5. Install Throttle Positioner System.
6. Install Automatic Choke.

Then he did the famous Emissions Test where they stick a sensor in the exhaust pipe and run the engine through a series of RPM ranges. “Good news” he said: “You pass emissions!” When I looked at all the measurements, I actually passed by a wide margin, well under the “MAX” and even below the “Average”.

So, what does all this mean? It means my car is not a polluter but I still have to put on a bunch of smog parts. It’s the law, baby!

This whole process took about 1 ½ hours and cost \$30. The referee said to get all the work done and come back for another inspection. I threw my hands up and said “What if I can’t find the parts?” That is when he told me about the loophole. He gave me the number of the Official California Parts Locator Service. I should call there and they will give me the name of three parts suppliers and their phone numbers. If I call all three and they do not have the parts I need I will then get a SMOG EXEMPTION for this vehicle! If I get a smog exemption I do not have to do anything at all. I will be exempt! My dream come true.

Well, dream on. This is the part about “All it takes is money”. All three suppliers had all the parts and they were all expensive. You know like \$289 for the air cleaner housing with the vacuum motor. Well, they did call them parts DEALERS. I guess I could have schlepped around in junk yards to find the exact right part, the one that fits right and works right or just take the list to Alex at FSP and have him buy the parts

and make it smog legal. What did Alex say ...”We’ll do it. Just give me some time” (this is the “all it takes is time” part which really means money).

I am so glad I didn’t try to do this myself. The first thing they ran into is that all the injector tubes were rusted and frozen in the exhaust manifolds and could not be removed. So, what the heck. Let’s buy new exhaust manifolds from those parts DEALERS.

Bottom line: 4 weeks and \$2,500 to get the Aerobeast smog legal.

Alex volunteered to take it to the referee and he enjoyed all the attention he got driving it there. Guess what? The car passed both Visual Inspection and Emissions Tests. Interestingly, the emissions numbers were actually worse with the smog parts installed. Go figure. The car seems to run about the same though. Also, the referee put a permanent sticker on the door jamb that

obeast was used to transport the competitors between venues.



specifies all the requirements for this individual vehicle. With this sticker I can take it to any smog inspection place and they will know exactly what to look for. And when they enter the VIN number into the California Bureau of Auto Repair computer network it will have all the specifications to verify if I pass or not.

Even though it cost me a lot of time and money it feels so good to have this over with. After all, “It’s only money” and now I have a California smog legal and registered 1977 A128E! How many people can say that?

Ed. Note: Chris also participates in something called the PB Tryathlon. He didn’t provide any real details but it apparently involves golf, bowling and pool (as in billiards). He sent a couple of photos where the Aer-

Finally, I’m sure there will be additional chapters to this story. I would expect part 3 sometime soon. Chris sent the following “teaser” photo (below) of the Aerobeast sitting in a body shop in Tijuana, Mexico where Enrique is apparently ready to start the body and paint work.



ANOTHER PLACE, ANOTHER TIME

By: Jim Garrison

Almost all of us in the Checker Car Club know that Kalamazoo, Michigan, was the birthplace for Checker cars. So, it is fitting that when the Club gathers for its National meet we bring our cars home to Kalamazoo. Yet, when thinking about Checkers remarkable history, it becomes clear that there are many cities -- like New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and others large and small -- where Checkers made their mark as the King of Taxicabs. Therefore, it is also fitting that we pay tribute to the other cities where Checkers ruled by holding our National meet in another location where their service was so appreciated. The Checker Car Club is looking for an interested member (or two) who is willing to host our National Meet outside of Kalamazoo.

The arrival of Summer heralds the beginning of the busy season with festivals, frolicking, and car shows. And, for those of us who help plan car shows, it's time to start putting plans together to make good ideas become realities. It can be fun and personally

rewarding, and though it is a fair bit of work, it's not as much as one might think. It requires arranging for accommodations, selecting a good location for cars to be displayed and for members to gather, planning for activities such as lectures and a banquet that the members will enjoy, and communicating with the club and officers about how the plans are proceeding. Having a committee with about six people helps and you can count on help from myself, other officers, and club members.

The Checker Car Club is probably the friendliest, most easy-going, and considerate group of car enthusiasts that ever gathered. Checkers are great cars and the public likes them especially well. If you think you might be interested in bringing the 2010 Checker National meet to your city, please contact me, Jim Garrison, our president, Ron Leatz, or the editor, John Weinhoef, at the e-mail addresses listed on the inside cover of this newsletter. We will be glad to help, and you will be happy you decided to make this great idea a reality. Now is the time to get started, so please let us know right away. See you there.

1981 Marathon with Little Guy 5 Wide 18 inch Platform Classic Package Tear Drop Camper on a test run at New Salem State Park in Petersburg, IL before heading for the 2009 National Convention in California.

We'll see you there!



EACH JOURNEY BEGINS WITH ONE STEP

By Carroll Sickles

My first step was to call Bob Welch in reference to a 1967 A-12 with noted rust. The car was “taxi-fied” at some time, but was a well optioned Marathon when new. Having been forewarned by John Weinhoeft and Bob Welch about the effects of rust on Checkers, the demon Tin Worm’s work on the car was a given. This old green Marathon was sold new in Michigan, and then spent time in Indiana and Missouri. I could tell at a glance that it was well acquainted with salt.

The original plan was to have the car shipped to me, but Bob assured me that it was roadworthy, and, besides, the ride to Alabama would be a supreme adventure.

Having much experience with Checkers, I valued Bob’s opinion, although all I really wanted was an old Marathon. The adventure part sounded a little scary.

Casting caution to the side I started gathering my landing party. My wife, Sharon, agreed to go along with our oldest son, Richard. Richard’s wife, LeAnne, volunteered to stay behind so our Cocker Spaniel “Bogie” could stay at home. Bogie prefers home to the pet palace any day any way. I gathered provisions for the trip including tools, jumper cables, motor oil, ATF, coolant, snacks, drinks and a map.

We were up and running at 4 A.M. Saturday. I didn’t sleep much being “journey proud” to the max. The trip to Indianapolis was pleasant and uneventful. My mood had evolved from journey proud to flat out excited. We arrived at Bob’s home at about 1 P.M.



Carroll (l) and Bob (r)

The car was parked outside his Office/Museum. True to the faith, it was BIG, YELLOW, and DIFFERENT. Sharon and Richard were awe-struck just by the sight of this very tall, old cab. Now, I had been warned about the rust, but when I saw about a half roll of duct tape on the left front fender, I was taken back a bit. Bob quickly reminded me that a clean fender was included with the car. That was calming ... sort of.

Next came the demonstration drive. Sitting behind that huge steering wheel, looking at the familiar dash, hearing the starter spin the engine ... this alone was worth the trip. We took a short drive around suburban Indianapolis, and visited Bob’s son, Jeff, and family. They are the proud owners of an orange, white and green A12W (shown below). It’s a



gorgeous Checker with many custom and personal touches. Our son liked the high output Chevy small block best, Sharon admired the denim upholstery, and I liked the color orange.

Soon we were back at Bob’s garage. He generously “souvenir-ed” me some goodies and we were headed for Louisville. I drove the Checker (big surprise), Richard at shotgun and “Momma” following in our “500.” Despite wind, rain and tornado warnings we traveled without incident. Because a Checker is a very large target for crosswinds, diligence at the steering wheel was essential. We got to Louisville sooner than expected and, since we were having way too much fun to quit for the day, Sharon called and cancelled our reservations. We continued south on Interstate 65, finally stopping at Munfordville, Ky. We checked into a motel, answered many questions from interested travelers and ate some of the best barbeque ever at Big Bubba Bucks Belly Bustin Bliss BBQ (they are on the web, picture on next page).

On the next leg of our journey we stopped for lunch in Spring Hill, TN at the Weber’s, home of my



Richard (standing) & Carroll at Big Bubba Bucks BBQ

sister, Susannah, and brother-in-law, Steven. Many of their neighbors and their dogs came to see the big yellow taxi in the driveway. After lunch and a brief visit



Steven, Susannah, Carroll & Richard

we loaded up a retired toy tractor and headed home. Before we cleared the driveway, my brother-in-law caught up with us and said that there was a small puddle of fluid next to the right rear tire. Being a rather small puddle, we decided to proceed. I remarked to my son, Richard, that it was either brake fluid or dog pee.

We were still about four hours from home and Richard and I were hoarse from yelling over the road and wind noise. As we traveled through Middle Ten-



Nickajack Rest Area

nessee, the sun came out and Richard felt he needed more air. He chose to open the vent window and it came off in his hand! Luckily, it fell to the inside of the car so it was more fun, more laughs, and more miles for us and the Checker.

The last stop of our journey was at the Nickajack Rest Area. We rested a bit, stretched our legs and enjoyed the scenery. As I was walking back to the car, a man asked if it belonged to me. I replied in the affirmative and he gave me a big smile and a warm handshake. We were finding out all over again that Checkers are as adept at making friends as the cutest puppy in the world.

We rolled into our home in Gadsden, AL at about 7 P.M. Sunday. LeAnne, our daughter-in-law, and Bogie, our Cocker, were there to meet us. We were all tired but happy with our supreme adventure. Amazingly, we made the 500 mile trip with no problems and no addition of any fluids. I remembered to check the right rear brake plate for signs of leakage ... there was none! I was glad that Steven warned me about the puddle in his driveway, because leaks under a very old car are never a good thing. We all had ourselves a pretty good laugh about the origin of that puddle!

I am pleased as punch. This car is very nearly a dead ringer to the 1967 Marathon I owned 42 years ago. The neatest thing is that this car is everything that I remembered about my first one. I had feared that my memory had embellished the experience over the years; not so, it is wonderful! The Checker, being a purpose built car for hauling passengers in an urban setting, is a truly unique car in every way

I suppose a Checker can be compared to a lot of things. As you can tell, I love dogs and cars (but most of all, my wife). My Checker reminds me of a faithful old hunting dog in that what it lacks in speed and agility, it more than compensates for in enthusiasm. An old Checker makes a great companion, and then as we ALL know "A Checker Owner Is Never Alone."

I would like to thank John Weinhoef and the administrators and contributors of the Checker Car Club of America website. I was able to gain useful information that prepared me for the purchase of my dream car.

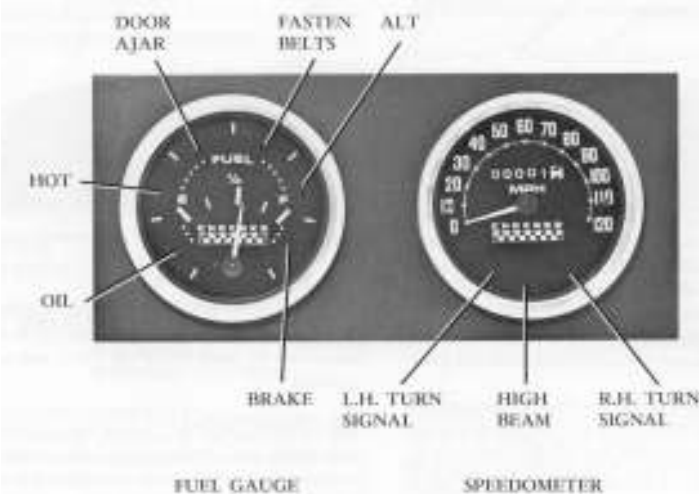
Photos by Sharon Sickles

TESTING LATE MODEL GAS GAUGES AND SENDING UNITS

by John Weinhoef

(Ed. Note: this article was compiled from various sources, including a 1999 email from Lance Alfieri and an extensive number of phone conversations with Ben Perlin over the last several years.)

A fairly common problem in Checkers is an inaccurate gas gauge. As covered in a previous article, Checker used two basic types of gauges, a 6 volt 5 gauge design from 1956 through 1972 and a 12 volt 2 gauge design from 1973 through 1982. The following test procedure is for the 2 gauge design (shown below)



and will help you easily determine which component (gauge, sending unit, or wiring) is problematic. All the tests can be done without removing the sending unit or draining the gas tank.

You will need a few simple tools, primarily a volt / ohmmeter (VOM), a pair of resistors (90 ohm, 200 ohm), and a piece of wire with alligator clips on both ends to serve as a jumper. A digital VOM is preferable but an analog one will also work. If you do not have these items, they can all be obtained at Radio Shack or other electronic parts supply store for less than \$35. If you have a VOM, the cost will be less than \$5.

You will also need a means to get under the car to access the front of the gas tank. Be sure to use the proper equipment to jack the car up, to support it using properly rated jack stands or ramps, and use the emergency brakes and / or wheel chocks to prevent the car from rolling. If you have access to a garage lift or oil

pit, so much the better. Finally, because old cars sometimes give off gasoline fumes, avoid sparks and do not smoke; do this in a well ventilated area.

Jack car up or use ramps under rear tires so you can safely access tank sending unit wire. Use emergency brake and / or chocks to prevent car from rolling. Or use a proper lift or oil pit at a garage to gain access.

1) Remove wire from sending unit at tank (shown below on upper left coming across round frame member,

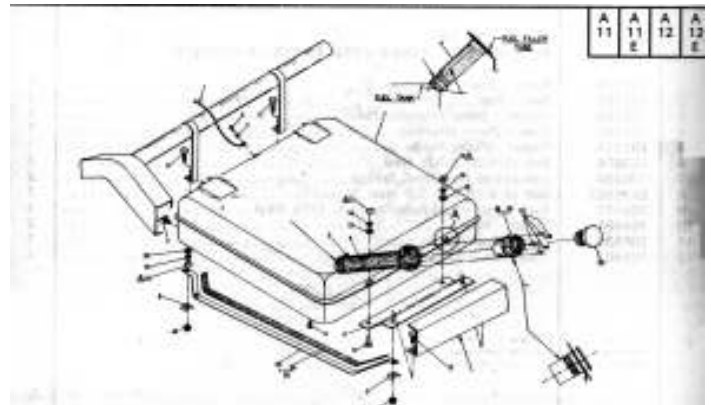


diagram # 14-16, page # 14-26 from 1978 Parts Catalog).

2) Connect the 200 ohm resistor to the wire and ground to a clean spot on the frame or run a jumper wire all the way to the negative post on the battery.

3) Turn key to "on" position; gauge should read "E".

4) Turn key "off". Remove the 200 ohm resistor and replace with 90 ohm resistor and ground.

5) Turn key "on"; gauge should read 1/2.

6) Turn key "off"; remove the 90 ohm resistor and ground.

7) Turn key "on", gauge should read "F" or over full.

8) Turn key "off".

If it passes the above tests, the gauge is good.

If it does not pass the above tests, you may still have a wiring problem between the gauge and the sending unit. You will need to move back along the wiring, testing at the connectors or go directly to the dash and test at that point. Follow procedures similar

to above at the various points.

The sending unit wire comes up through the trunk floor and is pink (circuit #30 on the 1981 wiring diagram). There is a plug in connector in the trunk on the driver's side inner fender where you can also conduct a test to eliminate the wire down to the sending unit. Then proceed tracing the pink line forward to under the dash where another connector exists.

Assuming the gauge passed the test, then either you have a bad ground from the gas tank to the frame or the sending unit is going bad.

First thing to check is that a good ground exists between the tank and the frame. The only thing providing a ground are the bolts and straps holding the tank up and the related bolts holding the straps to the frame. Since these parts are exposed to the weather, corrosion and rust are common. Use an ohmmeter and check for resistance between the sending unit metal flange and a clean spot on the frame (you may have to file off rust to have a clean spot). If you have resistance, then the ground is not clean. If you have zero resistance, then you have a good ground.

The sending unit can be checked without removing it by connecting an ohmmeter to the connection and the metal flange. If you have a full tank, resistance should be zero or very close to it. If you have 1/2 tank, resistance should be 90 ohms and empty should be 200 ohms. These readings may not be 100% accurate since you will have the car off level on jack stands but if the readings are close you can assume the sending unit is functioning correctly. Follow up by testing between the sending unit and the frame to again ensure you have a good ground for the gas tank. (Note: the same readings would apply if the sending unit were removed but the gasket for the sending unit is not available separately so I do not recommend removing the sending unit unless you are actually replacing it.)

New sending units with gasket included and gauges are available from both Joe Pollard and Ben Perlin. Ben also rebuilds gauges. If you call Ben and talk to him, he can test a gauge and sending unit combination for you as a working set before shipping.

While under the car, check the vapor capture hoses for cracks, etc. They are often the cause of a lingering gas smell around the back of the car. On emissions equipped cars (1974—1982), the vapor capture hoses are the ones that connect to the two upper front corners of the gas tank, run to a junction block above the axle, and then run one hose up to the charcoal can-

CLUB MEMBER VICTIM OF MURDER

by John Weinhoef

(Ed. Note: this report was compiled from a number of printed and online sources but was originally brought to my attention in an article written by Kia Hall Haynes and published in the Times-Picayune of New Orleans, LA. On April 12, 2009)

Club member Robin Matteson of Slidell, LA., was killed Monday, April 6, 2009 while on a call in the early morning hours driving his recently acquired 1973 Checker. Robin was co-owner of Parish Cab, Inc. with his wife Linda Matteson, for over 22 years. He is survived by two sons, two daughters, and five grandchildren. At least one of the daughters also drives for the cab service.

Robin was a well known member of the community. He was also known for giving back to the community, including letting people who were short on money slide on their cab fare. He is going to be sorely missed by the entire "north shore" community.

Along with being a member of the Checker Car Club of America, Robin was also a member of the Northshore Corvette Club and the Misfits Car Club of Bay St. Louis, MS.

While this is the second killing this year in the "north shore" area of Lake Pontchartrain, it was reportedly the first killing of a taxi driver in the area in over 20 years. The area is generally considered safe. Police have arrested a suspect, an 18 year old who was a regular customer of the cab service and has reportedly admitted to the killing. The suspect is being held without bond and is charged with first degree murder.

In lieu of flowers, the family established a "Parish Cab Fund" at the Bank of Louisiana, 3180 Pontchartrain, Slidell, LA, 70458 to help defray funeral expenses. The club expresses their condolences to Robin's family.

CLUB MEMORABILIA:

Club logo **belt buckles** \$8.00, Logo **patches** \$2.50, Window **decals** \$1.50. All shipped First Class, Postpaid! Don McHenry, 460 Tremaine Avenue, Kenmore, NY 14217

CHECKER DEALERSHIPS

by John Weinhoeft

Below: Factory showroom on N. Pitcher Street in Kalamazoo



Besides the well known company operations in Kalamazoo, New York and Chicago, Checker generally relied on a network of existing independent new and used car dealerships. One of the best known was Southeast Florida Checker which is often referred to as the Winkoff dealership after the family that operated it. But there were quite a few other dealerships scattered around the country.

Rick Buck recently acquired an assortment of Checker literature. While going through it, I discovered a listing of Checker dealerships circa 1972. Here is that list, ordered by state and dealership name within the state.

Alaska Checker Sales & Service
208 Wendell Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska, 99701

Charlie's Auto Sales
(aka "Checker Charlie" Broder)
228 East Sixth Street
Tucson, Arizona, 85705

Checker Western Sales
14723 Aetna Street
Van Nuys, California, 91401

Pacific Coach & Ambulance Sales Co.
1540 Bayshore Highway
Burlingame, California, 94010

Colorado Checker Sales
3455 Ringsby Court
Denver, Colorado, 80216

Libby's Sales and Service
60 Printers Lane
New Haven, Connecticut, 06519

Flood Pontiac Company
4221 Connecticut Avenue N.W.
Washington, District of Columbia, 20008

Checker Auto Sales
511 24th Street
West Palm Beach, Florida, 33401

Checker Motors Sales Corporation
109 South Racine Avenue
Chicago, Illinois, 60607

Checker Towne U.S.A.
232 North Cicero Avenue
Chicago, Illinois, 60639

Lahne's Trailers and Appliances
322 North 6th Street
Chillicothe, Illinois, 61523

Lipe Motors
1298 East Eldorado Street
Decatur, Illinois, 62521

Rich Truck Sales & Service
13610 South Cicero Avenue
Crestwood, Illinois, 60445

Shor-Line Motors, Inc.
1111 Chicago Avenue
Evanston, Illinois, 60202

B & L Motors Sales
301 East Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa, 50309

The City Chevrolet Company
2400 North Howard Street
Baltimore, Maryland, 21218

Checker Motors Sales Corporation
75 Washington Street
Boorline, Massachusetts, 02146

Taber Motors Inc.
1338 Pleasant Street
East Weymouth, Massachusetts, 02189

Hiawatha Auto Service
1004 Main Street
Red Wing, Minnesota, 55066

Lyndale Automotive Company
3610 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55409

Montana Checker Sales
20 Seventh Street South
Great Falls, Montana, 59401

Ray & Bill Auto Sales & Service
84 State Highway 10
Hanover, New Jersey, 07936

Checker Motors Sales Corporation
35-30 38th Street
Long Island City, New York, 11101

Erhart Motor Car Company
115 Broad Street
Tonawanda, New York, 14150

Taylor Chevrolet Corporation
175 Winton Road North
Rochester, New York, 14610

Turnpike Super Service, Inc.
(aka Erich Lachman Sr. & Jr.)
495 North Street
Middletown, New York, 10940

Checker Auto Sales, Inc.
214 Hunt Street (PO Box 115)
Durham, North Carolina, 27701

The DeWitt Motor Company, Inc.
465 North Main Street
Akron, Ohio, 44310

Hillis Motor Company
933 N.E. 82 Avenue
Portland, Oregon, 97220

E-Z Service Station
7th & Oak Street
Akron, Pennsylvania, 17501

DeLabar, Inc.
231 State Avenue
Emmaus, Pennsylvania, 18049

Frank C. Videon
3737 West Chester Pke
Newton Square, Pennsylvania, 19073

E. Gray Smith
1405 Broadway
Nashville, Tennessee, 37203

C. W. Needham
Texas Checker Sales & Service
1010 Stayton Street
Fort Worth, Texas, 76107

Hawthorne Sales & Leasing Corp.
4204 West Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia, 23230

Able GMC, Incorporated
East 25 Third Avenue
Spokane, Washington, 99210

Tveten Motor Company
4340 Pacific Avenue
Tacoma, Washington, 98408

Variety Motors
1554 West National Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53204

In addition to the above 1972 list, there are a number of other confirmed dealerships (note: in some cases, the dealership was included in the previous list but at a different address):

Healey Motors
21-25 New Haven Ave.
Derby, Connecticut, 06418

Huxley Motors
266 S. Main St.
Cheshire, Connecticut

Libby Sales
1098 Chapel St.
New Haven, Connecticut, 06510

Zuraitis Auto
158 Falls Ave.
New Haven, Connecticut, 06524

Southeast Florida Checker
(aka Winkoff)
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida



Checker Motor Sales Corp.
1157 W. Monroe St.
Chicago, Illinois, 60607

Checker Towne USA
2100 N. Cicero Ave.
Chicago, Illinois, 60639

Chev-Villa Motors, Inc.
1824 W. Northwest Hwy.
Arlington Heights, Illinois, 60004

Hecker of Evanston
1111 Chicago Ave.
Evanston, Illinois, 60202

Knauz Motor Sales, Inc.
1060 N. Western Ave.
Lake Forest, Illinois, 60045

Lenny Shermeta's
47th & Cass Ave.
Westmont, Illinois, 60559

Parkey Checker
6201 S. Western Ave.
Chicago, Illinois, 60636

Pocus Motor Sales
100 S. River St.
Aurora, Illinois, 60506

Rich Truck Sales and Service
10220 Kedzie Ave.
Evergreen Park, Illinois, 60805

Valor Auto Sales
523 S. Genessee
Waukegan, Illinois, 60085

Colonial Motors
9304 Wicker Park Blvd.
Highland, Indiana, 46322

Checker D.C. Sales Corp.
Sales & Service
111 Congressional Lane
Rockville, Maryland, 20852

Michigan Motor Cars
6277 West River NE
Belmont, Michigan, 49306

Checker of North Jersey
1849 Morris Ave.
Union, New Jersey, 07083

Dom's Auto Sales
US Route 22
Greenbrook, New Jersey

Don Miller Auto Sales
Route 88
Point Pleasant, New Jersey

Raritan Garage
S. Main St.
Keyport, New Jersey, 07735

Checker Motor Sales
419 East 60th St.
New York, New York, 10022

Emmick Motor Co.
219-211 West Main St.
Montour Falls, New York, 14865

Erhart Motor Sales
Route 1
Scotia, New York

Imported Cars of Huntington, Ltd.
1249 E. Jericho Turnpike
Huntington, New York, 11743

International Motors Sales, Ltd.
One East Post Rd.
White Plains, New York, 10601

Long Island Checker Sales Company
898 Roanoke Ave.
Riverhead, New York, 11901

Mid-Island Imports
284 Old Country Road
Hicksville, New York, 11801

North Side Motors Inc.
(aka Lowell Teisbergs)
705 Ruskin St.
Madison, Wisconsin, 53704

There were overseas dealers also:

Evans Continental Ltd.
Alexandra Rd, S.W. 19
United Kingdom

P.A. Seton & Co. AB
Birger Jarlsgatan 102
Stockholm, Sweden

Seton Aktiebolag
Sturegatan 48
Stockholm, Sweden

Bil-Gota AB
Rantmastargatan 8
Goteborg, Sweden

AB Malmo Trafikservice
Mariedalsvagen 51
Malmo, Sweden

Bergs Forenade Bil
Sjalevad 1
Ornskoldsvik, Sweden

In addition to the above list, there are several other suspected dealerships:

corner of Plymouth and Evergreen, (photo below).
Grand River
Farmington Hills, Michigan



Spitszenberger's Inc.
O'Neill, Nebraska

If any club members have additional dealerships to add, please let me know.

RENEWAL REMINDER

If your envelope label has a date of 07/2009 or 10/2009, you need to renew now in the amount shown by sending a check to Tony Mattern. Due to the increased expense of both printing and mailing, we no longer "carry" anyone past their renewal date.

CHECKER PARTS DISTRIBUTION SITES

by John Weinhoef

In addition to both company and franchise dealerships, Checker operated a parts distribution organization. It was a separate division / subsidiary known as Cab Service & Parts Corporation. I recently ran across a list of factory parts sites and associated parts depots located around the country dated January 1, 1959. Sharp eyed readers of the previous article and this article will note some of the locations, especially the company locations, are the same.

General Offices, Service & Parts

Cab Service & Parts Corporation
419 E. 60th St.
New York, New York

Cab Service & Parts Division
300 North Des Plaines ST.
Chicago, Illinois

Cab Service & Parts Division
75 Washington St.
Brookline, Massachusetts

Cab Service & Parts Division
15631 Plymouth Rd.
Detroit, Michigan

Parts Depots

Mobile Cab & Baggage Company, Inc.
107 Elmira St.
Mobile, Alabama

Zone Cab Company
2254 Lafayette St.
Denver, Colorado

Nolan J. Potter
1017 N. Capital St.
Washington, District of Columbia

Davis & Poor
376 Mitchell Street, S.W.
Jackson, Georgia

Taxi Supply & Maintenance Company
605 Eight St.
Fairfax, Georgia

Regal Cab Company
36- South 20th St.
East St. Louis, Illinois

H.P. Parts Service Company
125 Jackson St.
Topeka, Kansas

Checker Cab Company
2025 St. Claude At.
New Orleans, Louisiana

Michigan Cab Company
715 River St.
Lansing, Michigan

Yellow Taxi Company
127 First Avenue, N.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Yellow Cab Company
1420-26th Avenue
Gulfport, Mississippi

P.R. Gorham & Associates
2611 Minnesota Ave.
Billings, Montana

Yellow Cab Company
615-625 South 20th St.
Omaha, Nebraska

Hackensack Taxi Service
City Bus Terminal
Hackensack, New Jersey

NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CALIFORNIA— JULY 25, 2009

The 2009 National Convention will be hosted by the California Chapter of the Checker Club. Joe Pollard and Kathryn Bassett are providing the “on the ground” planning and coordination.

The meet itself will be a one day show from 8 AM to 3 PM. It will be inside (and outside if needed) the Ayres Building at The Arboretum of Los Angeles County located just off I-210 (Foothill Freeway) at 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, CA, 91007.

Due to the (obvious) traffic congestion problems in the LA area, there are no formal tours planned. There are a number of important and interesting automotive sites nearby that could be visited in the days before or after the convention. The Petersen Automotive Museum is located at 6060 Wilshire Blvd.(at Fairfax,) Los Angeles, CA 90036. Info: <http://petersen.org/> The Nethercutt Collection is located at 15151 & 15200 Bledsoe Street, Sylmar, CA, 91342 and has one of the best automotive collections in the country. Info: <http://nethercuttcollection.org/>

There are a large number of hotels in various price ranges conveniently located nearby. There is no “official” convention hotel although Joe Pollard did arrange for a small block of hotel rooms at The Santa Anita Inn where the dinner will be held. Call the hotel direct at 626-446-5211, ask for Sergio and be sure to mention the Checker Car Club. Other hotels are in the area; rather than list all the available hotels, you can Google the address above for near-by hotels or check with your favorite hotel chain.

A Saturday evening dinner / get together has been planned. It will be a catered gourmet meal at The Santa Anita Inn. Cost will be \$45 per person.

Additional information, maps, and a registration form are now on the web site. To find the maps, go to Photo Gallery, National Shows, 2009 California Meet. A registration form is enclosed with this newsletter. You can also find a printable copy of the registration form in PDF format on the club web site by using the left side menu for Manuals, Marketing Materials. If you can reach them, Joe Pollard and Kathryn Bassett will also have additional information.

Albany Diamond Cab Company
87 West St.
Albany, New York

Blue Bird Cab Company
502—504 N. Barry St.
Olean, New York

Circle Sales & Serice Company
405 Harrison St.
Springfield, Ohio

Tulsa Checker Parts
16 N. Boston Ave.
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Yellow Cab Company
1414 W. Main St.
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Penn Radio Cab
525—35 W. Sedwick Ave.
Germantown, Pennsylvania

Quick Service Taxi Company
741 N. New St.
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Yellow Cab Company of Pittsburg
601 W. General Robinson St.
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

Checker Cab Company
2230 Commerce Dr.
Columbia, South Carolina

Ft. Worth Cab & Baggage Company
1030 Burnett St.
Ft. Worth, Texas

Yellow Cab Company
209 N. Oneida St.
Appleton, Wisconsin

If any club member has additional parts depots to add, please let me know.

WHERE DO YOU WANT THE 2010 CONVENTION ?

There will be a short board meeting at the 2009 convention in California. The major topic that will be discussed and decided is the location of the 2010 convention. (Note: the 2011 convention is currently scheduled for Springfield, IL.) The board wants to expose the club to new people and would prefer a location that has not be used in the past; in other words, not California, Illinois or Michigan.

To submit a suggestion or proposal, you should include the following:

- 1) Location
- 2) Length of event
- 3) Proposed activities, including a rough schedule or agenda
- 4) Optional non-Checker related tourist opportunities for the whole family. Examples might include historical attractions, unique shopping opportunities, recreational activities, etc.
- 5) Name of the person or persons who serve as the on-site coordinator. Note: the club has people with convention planning experience who can assist but experience has shown there MUST be a local person or committee to provide coordination.
- 6) Anticipated assistance, if any, from your local convention and visitor's bureau.
- 7) Anticipated costs, if any, for a show location

To have a suggestion or proposal considered, please send it to Ron Leatz prior to the board meeting. The proposal can be mailed to Ron Leatz, 402 Main St., Dowagiac, MI, 49047-1709. He can be reached by email at rrlfire@aol.com Finally, you can phone Ron at either 269-782-0635 (home) or 269-462-3444 (cell) but he still will need a written proposal by the board meeting.

CARS WANTED:

1930's or 1940's Taxi - Any make is acceptable. Must be an authentic taxi model. Prefer 7 passenger but will consider other configurations. Will consider any condition. Phone Bob Welsh at 317-780-1937 or email Bob at CheckerCab-Nut@aol.com

CARS FOR SALE:

1965 Checker - I am selling my first Checker, good glass & windshield, decent doors and fenders, floor, trunk and rockers properly welded and repaired, hood rough, has 283 Chevy motor, auto trans, newer Dana rear axle, good project car ... too many projects, must sell ... has been in inside storage for 20 years \$1,500. Toronto, Canada. Phone 416-762-4562 or email Larry at p.priorities@gmail.com

1976 A-12 - 105,000 miles \$14,000 - Super nice A12. Front and rear seats freshly redone with stitching to match factory design. Excellent condition throughout. Nearly all service records. Only driven occasionally by a very small old lady from San Leandro..(really!). Located in Hayward, CA. Phone 510-589-7410 or email bill@tallgrass.net

1972 Checker A-11 - 1-owner New Mexico car. 155K miles; 10K on new 350 V8 engine and rebuilt automatic transmission. This car with jump seats was my mom's pride and joy, but she passed away last year and it needs a new loving home. \$14,000. Phone 505-845-9421 or email dchardi@sandia.gov

1977 A-12 - 38,000 miles \$24,000 - The front seat will tell you just about everything you need to know about the mileage on a Checker. By 100,000 miles, the driver's seat on a well kept Checker will be starting to crack. When you see one in this condition, you know it's a nearly new car. The owner purchased this car for his retirement when he was 65, but then the bank hired him as a consultant and he worked another 10 years before he really retired. When he finally started driving it, he did less than 2000 miles per year. We know this because we have the build sheet with his name on it. And because he was a bean counter, he kept a notebook, so we have dates for nearly every fill-up and oil change. Located in Hayward, CA. Phone 510-589-7410 or email bill@tallgrass.net

1981 A-11 - 36k original miles - very good condition - no rust or body damage/repair -V6 3.8 Liter. Located in Duluth, MN, \$14,000 firm. Phone 218-727-8873 or email wlong@dumn.edu

1968 Marathon - 5,700 original miles. This car is like new, 327 Chevy 4 barrel original engine car. Has been repainted. We think this is the lowest mileage Checker in the world. Located in Struthers, OH. Phone 330-755-3403 or email Lou at steelvalleydesign@live.com

PARTS DETAILING:

Ben's Automotive Painting Service - Specializing in the painting of Checker Motor Corporation Hood Emblems and Hubcap Emblems. For more information, please phone 207-847-3218 or email: bspaul41@yahoo.com

PARTS FOR SALE:

**CHECKER
PARTS**

New weather strip, windshields, gauges, front end parts, fenders, decals, lenses, gas tanks, more. We have a Checker only wrecking yard. Visit us at www.checkerparts.com
Or phone Joe at: **818-477-4386** or **818- 999-1485**

Gauges for All Checker Models - Original gas/oil/water temp gauges, all sending units, speedometers, gauge repairs, Pro-Tec modules to protect your early 2" gauges, misc. parts, etc. Have new 55—62 Corvette flex plates. Just call CheckerBen in CA. Ben Perlin **818-882-4670**

1978 Checker Parts - 2 used windshields in excellent condition. 4 doors complete, no rust. left & right front fenders, fair condition. Good trunk lid. Located in Phoenix, AZ. Priced to sell. Ed Torel Phone **602-768-4156** or email bkset@live.com

1964 Checker 6 Door in CA - Don't make me crush this car, too many parts someone can use. Mostly complete, body rough condition, just sold my 69 Checker Areobus and don't need parts now. \$500 takes all OBO. Phone **805-714-7558** or email eddie@eddiestanfield.com

1964 Auto Trans - Was bolted to a Perkins, condition unknown, \$50. Toronto, Ont, Canada. Phone Larry **416-762-4562** or email p.priorities@gmail.com

CARS FOR SALE:

Lost Storage - Must Sell 1971 A-12 - Make an Offer. Passenger vehicle, runs good, has some rust. Needs a little TLC, but not bad overall. Located in upstate New York. Was asking \$3,500, now I have no storage so make an offer. Will consider trade. Can drive it home! Phone **845-434-8262** or email checker52@verizon.net

1978 Checker Marathon - factory power sun roof, A/C, power locks, new V-8, auto, opera windows, bumper guards, chrome package, jump seats & more. Needs landau top & interior work. Strong runner, body & paint completed. Located in Phoenix, AZ \$6,900 or best offer, possibly trade for tin woodie station wagon. Ed Torel Phone **602-768-4156** or email bkset@live.com

1978 Checker Taxicab - Was a taxi. Purchased new in Phoenix, no rust ever. Chevy 6, auto, A/c, P/S, P/B, body & paint work completed. Located in Phoenix, AZ. \$5,900 obo Ed Torel Phone **602-768-4156** or email bkset@live.com

1962 Checker Marathon 4 Door Sedan - automatic, one owner, not a taxi, 27306 miles, 6 cylinder, Continental overhead valve engine, rebuilt carburetor, new fuel pump, 4 new tires, motor runs rough (no power), good paint, some extra parts. Garaged for last 25 years. I can no longer work on it due to back and leg problems. I would like it to go to a club member who appreciates old Checkers. Asking \$5,500 or make offers. Located in central PA **570-672-9767** or email: joburba@evenlink.com

1969 Checker Marathon - Green, brown / maroon interior, 2 bbl 327 V-8, B-W auto, Chevy drum brakes, recently added Vintage Air A/C. Runs good, body in good condition, some surface rust starting. 2 owner car, came from Arkansas / Missouri border. Good enough to drive home. Too many projects so the Checker needs a new home and a bit of TLC. Comes with manuals and a bunch of parts including 4 bbl carb and intake manifold, power steering gear box and pump, 700R4 automatic transmission. \$5,000 or best offer. Located in central Illinois. Phone **217-364-4383** or email Rick at 55wills@live.com

Surge Checker #18 \$1,000 - project car located in San Antonio, TX. Call Kyle at **210-867-3725** for additional details or email Kyle at geggleston@satx.rr.com

1981 Checker - Less than 70,000 original miles! - This car has over \$22,000 invested ... brand new 350 crate motor with 0 miles, rebuilt automatic transmission, over \$3,000 in new parts from Joe the Checker Guru (new chromed bumpers & Grill), re-drilled door hinges and more. Times are hard and money is gone, if you're looking for a 1/2 completed project car than this is your lucky day. Please feel free to ask any questions you have, the car is currently located in Park City, UT with my parents in a heated garage while I'm living in LA. Price - Make an offer !!! Phone **435-901-0262** or email Nick at nickbreton89@gmail.com

1971 Checker Aerobus - S/N A12W8M-268-1013, fair shape for it's age. Small rust hole in the floor board under the brake pedal. Body has some filler in it. Some small dents but no big ones. Missing front grill but we have made one from heavy mesh. Looks OK. One cracked side glass. The speedometer don't work but I have a working factory replacement that will be included. Gas gauge doesn't work. Heater works good. Chevy 350 motor, 3 speed on the column, dana rear end, new brakes and good tires. 3 of the seats have been recovered in gray upholstery cloth in the same design as factory. Cloth for 4th seat will be included. Car runs good; driven everywhere we take lots of people. We take it to high school sporting events, parades, weddings. Located in Indianola, NE. Please call me for questions at **308-350-0853**, email tkindne@gpcom.net \$3,500

continued page 18 ...

Checkermania from Sweden - These photos were sent to the editor by Mats-Einer Jakobsson of a 2005 Power Meet and were part of a "I'll get around to using them sometime" pile. I was looking for something colorful for the back cover and found these photos. So here they are, a few years later.

