



# Blown Gasket

Oil Capitol Auto Club

P.O. Box 1861

Mills, WY 82644

We are on the Web at [www.ocac.cc](http://www.ocac.cc)

December 2023, Volume 12

The Blown Gasket is published by the Oil Capitol Auto Club. Newsletter info, pictures and interesting tidbits can be sent to Jerry Russell at [GhostMerc@qwestoffice.net](mailto:GhostMerc@qwestoffice.net) or 577-7119. Editor reserves the right to edit all copy for length, grammar, and/or style. Deadline is the Thursday after that month's meeting, which is held on the second Thursday of the month at VFW, 1800 Bryan Stock Trail, Casper, WY. **Dues are \$20 per year payable January 1st.**

## UPCOMING CLUB ACTIVITIES

**New Year's Brunch—Saturday, 1/6/24, at the Ramkota, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**OCAC Board Meeting—1/9/24, 6:00 p.m., at Perkins.**

**Regular Monthly Meeting – 1/11/24, at VFW on Bryan Stock Trail, at 7:00 p.m.**

**Sunday Morning Breakfast -- The Sunday breakfast will be at Denny's for the month of December. Arrive at 8:30 a.m. and order by 9:00. Questions: contact John Lanum at 315-4909.**

**Friday Night Dinner -- The Friday club dinner will be at 6:00 p.m. Call Arvilla Bush at 262-8989 or 265-2468 to confirm attendance.**

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**GABBY BUTLER, DEANNA DAY, JOHN ENGLISH, JUDY GOODWIN, KRISTINE KEAR,  
JACOB MATTHEWS, JOHN MERDINK, PHIL NISSEN, RICK PIERCE, ROXIE TAYLOR**

## BENEVOLENCE

Jeanine Clark's mother, Joanne Wittman, and her adoptive dad, Don Wittman, passed away recently. Please keep Jeanine and Marvin and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

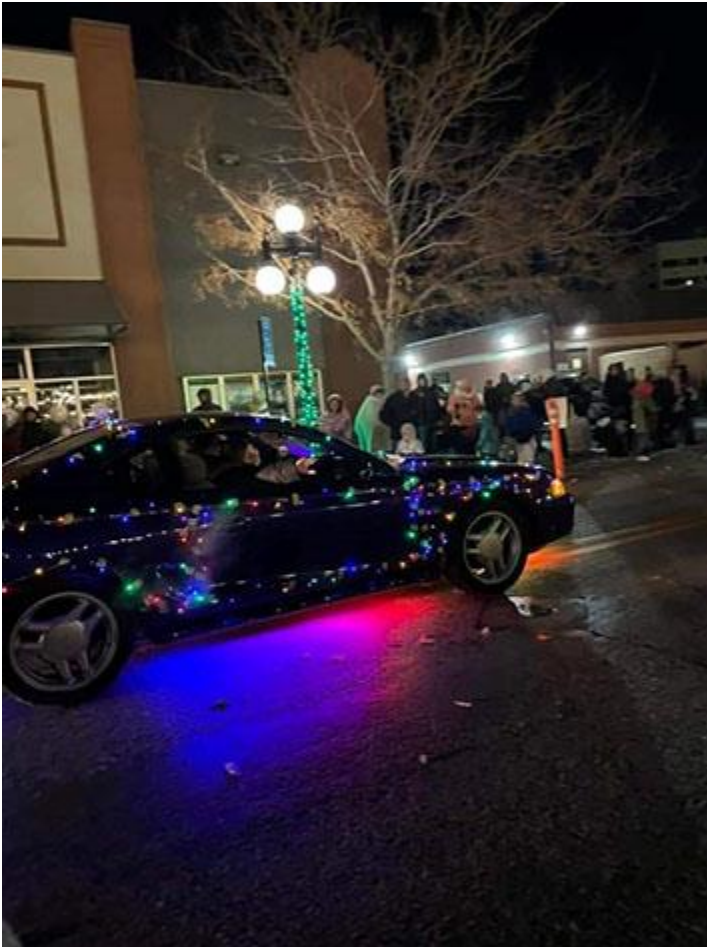
Rocky Mountain Rebels Indoor Car Show, Riverton, WY, 1/13/2024.

Tri-State Swap Meet, Denver, CO, 2/3-4/2024.

Counts 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Car/Motorcycle Show, Rapid City, SD, 2/16-18/2024.

## CASPER CHRISTMAS PARADE

This year's Christmas Parade was held in Casper on Saturday, November 25. The theme was "Christmas in Toyland." Oil Capitol Auto Club was a winner as "Best Decorated Automobile."



*Casper Christmas Parade*  
**WINNERS**

<b>GRAND PRIZE</b> CITY OF MILLS	<b>BEST DECORATED FLOAT</b> NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS CENTER
<b>BEST WALKING GROUP</b> KELLY WALSH MC JROTC	<b>BEST DECORATED VEHICLE</b> CASPER SHRINE CLUB-TALLIOPE CLOWN UNIT
<b>PEOPLE'S CHOICE</b> NEWS ARMY JROTC	<b>BEST DECORATED AUTOMOBILE</b> OIL CAPITOL AUTO CLUB

*Casper Christmas*  
**TOYLAND**

## DIE CAST CAR SHOW

The Die Cast Car Show was held prior to dinner at the Christmas Party at the Ramkota. A very nice turn out!



## CHRISTMAS PARTY & DINNER

The 2023 OCAC Christmas Party & Dinner was held on Saturday, December 16. A delicious dinner of roast baron of beef and honey glazed ham was enjoyed by all. A Crazy Gift Exchange followed the dinner.





## ODDS AND ENDS

**First:** The Christmas Party was a great success, and many members went home with quite unusual gifts. The food was great, and there were a lot of full tummies. Many thanks to Ken Lantta for organizing the event. I sincerely hope to see everyone at this event next year.

**Second:** As you can see from the November meeting minutes, a leader of our group is still needed. Many thanks are extended to the current slate of officers for their service now and in the future. However, they could use some help, so let's get in there and pitch. I am sure that there is a future President out there somewhere, and I am sure that the New Year will reveal that person.

**Third:** The New Year's Brunch will be the next major club function, and it will take place on 1/6/24 at the Ramkota. Please contact any of the officers for more information and remember to bring your **dues**. Membership renewal is important, so I will see all of you at Brunch. **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**Fourth:** For those members who did not attend the Christmas Party, you missed a pretty impressive car show. Frankly, I was very surprised at the number of members who brought cars to the show and the number of cars was impressive. There were all of the usual entrants, but there was also a Studebaker dealer model and a Duesenberg. All were very nicely presented, and the entire event was quite entertaining. Congratulations to John Lanum on his organization of the show and to all of the winners. I look forward to the next one.

**Fifth:** Seeing that it is the end of the year, certain members should be recognized for their outstanding appearance at the latest club function. Mark Pitts, Dennis Day, and Mike Kennedy deserve special recognition for those Christmas Party outfits. Please refer to the photos of this event in this newsletter, and you will see what I mean.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

J. R. Russell, Editor

## **“IF IT AIN’T BROKE, FIX IT ‘TIL IT IS”**

Many of you have likely heard this phrase before. Maybe you can even identify with it. It’s one that I know well. In fact, it has become my mantra when working on my Nomad. Allow me to explain. Back in the mid 1990’s the thought came to me that it had been nineteen years since I had gone through the braking system on Gypsy, my 55 Nomad. So, I ordered four wheel cylinder rebuild kits and on a pleasant Saturday Mike Kennedy and I jacked the old girl up and went to work deconstructing the perfectly functioning brake system.

Mike went at the wheel cylinders with exuberance using a drill and hone to break the glaze and remove any pitting from the bore of the cylinders. I left the power booster rebuild for another day while we concentrated on the wheel cylinders. By the end of the weekend we had her back together and brakes bled. A ride around the block found us scratching our heads as the brake pedal just didn’t feel right. The next weekend found the Nomad up in the air again and the brakes apart. We found two of the cylinders with pistons cocked in their cylinder bores due to excessive honing. Dang. Time to order new replacement wheel cylinders!

In the meantime, I ordered a “rebuilt” treadle vac booster from Danchuk Classic Chevy Parts, sent my perfectly functioning unit in as an exchange core, and when it and the new wheel cylinders arrived, I bled the brakes. The experience of bleeding a brake system with treadle vac proved to be a frustrating saga. I never was satisfied with the brake pedal feel but nevertheless took off for a Rocky Mountain Classic Chevy show in Denver. The “rebuilt” master cylinder failed completely in Denver but before the show. After some arguing with Danchuk they reluctantly agreed to exchange the defective power booster and master cylinder. I went home and returned the 300 miles back to Denver the next weekend and installed the replacement booster. I pushed a half gallon of brake fluid through the master cylinder but never achieved a smooth and firm pedal, but felt it was safe enough to drive back to Wyoming. Back home I took the booster apart and I could see the inside of the unit was terribly pitted and worn. Giving up on Danchuk I ended up sending it to White Post Restorations (lifetime guarantee) where the master cylinder was sleeved in brass and the vacuum canister replaced. Pressure bleeding gave me a good brake pedal at last. You would think I had learned my lesson. Ha!

Move the calendar ahead to July 2022 - CNA Convention in Reno coming up. Maybe it would be wise to replace my faithful 11 year old fuel pump, I thought. But thanks to the pandemic and its effect on the supply lines I couldn’t find a good quality new pump. I settled for using a rebuild kit Mike Johnson had and with his help we overhauled an old pump – ironically another operable pump I had replaced 11 years ago!

I took a 200 mile test drive to and from Wheatland. The first 100 miles were great. For the return leg I filled up with what was branded as non-ethanol and hit the highway. It started missing and seemed to be vapor-locking. My guess was I had bought gas with ethanol on which Gypsy does not run well. I spent the next week burning the “bad gas” and filled up with known pure gas the night before departing for Reno.

We made it 75 miles up the road when the engine again started acting like it was vapor-locking. Dang! We turned around and limped home. The fuel pump I had rebuilt was defective. We were sooooo bummed. I had fixed it ‘til it was broken yet again.

Fast forward to February 2023. My gas gauge had over the last several years become more and more inaccurate. It would still be showing full after a one-hundred-mile drive and show 1/8 tank when it ran out of gas. I was able to find a genuine GM sending unit and ordered a new filter screen and cork gasket. I waited until August to replace the sending unit. It went smoothly. I filled the tank and took off for an evening car show downtown. I was soon given a heads-up by Mike Kennedy that the Nomad was leaking gas like crazy! Crawling underneath with a flashlight I could see gas streaming out around the sending unit and dripping in a torrent off the differential! I tried to tighten the screws attaching the sending unit, but they were snug. With a full tank of gas, the only expedient option was to hit the interstate and make a 50-mile run to a nearby town and return, hoping the fuel level would be lower than the sending unit.

A day or so later I removed the sending unit expecting that I had somehow damaged the gasket on installation. But a new issue arose. In removing the unit, I inadvertently knocked the float off and into the tank! Dang! Oh well, how much grief can an extra little float cause? I decided to use the float from my original sending unit. The gasket looked okay to me, but I asked Mike Johnson to give it a look. He agreed the gasket looked okay but found the mounting flange on the sending unit to be significantly distorted. Even though it was a NOS unit it was the cause of the leak; not the gasket. After a little work with a small ball peen hammer and vice he had the flange flat enough to seal. Just in case, I had ordered another gasket from my parts supplier who felt sorry for me and sent it free of charge, nice guy that he is.

The reinstallation went without issue even though maneuvering the float arm and pick up tube into the small hole with the tank still in place and having to work above the differential isn't a fun exercise. I filled the tank a few gallons at a time Mike lay underneath to watch for leaks and to have me cease with my filling the tank if needed. Everything was looking good. No leaks from around the gasket and flange, but then Mike yelled "Stop!" Gas was seeping out around the inlet tubing which had a small split along its length. Dang! (The reader will realize that other words besides "dang" were turning the gasoline-tinged air blue).

I called my parts guy the next day and, on his recommendation, ordered a new reproduction sending unit. However, he was out of stock and his supplier had issues of their own with a recent hurricane that slowed shipping to him. A couple weeks passed but gave me time to drain the tank and remove the defective POS NOS sending unit. In doing so, "PING" into the bowels of the tank went the second float! Dang! Double dirty dang! !@##\$%\$%^&&\*\*

At this point I decided to remove the tank and empty the two floats from within and while the tank was out, I'd have a better chance of installing the new sending unit without knocking the float off. It was October 24<sup>th</sup> when Mike helped me with this chore. Snow and single digit temperatures were forecast. If you're never removed a tank from a Nomad, you're in for a few hours' work – or several hours if your custom tailpipes were run too close to the gas tank!

Anyway, some five hours and eleven weeks later there I was with a functioning, hopefully accurate sending unit and a leak free gas tank. Was it broken? Was this preventative maintenance? That's debatable. Did I fix it? Yes! 'Til it was broken. A little traveling music Otis!.....

Phil Nissen



*Happy  
New Year*