

# **F** at **F**enders **F**lyer

**APRIL 2011**



# **Badgerland F100's Truck Club**

## **Honoring trucks from 1948-1972**

The Club Website is: [www.badgerlandf100s.com](http://www.badgerlandf100s.com)

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Send your article contributions, ideas, for sale or want ads, car/truck show dates, birthdays or events to the newsletter editor:

Rick Pribbenow, 206 Maple Street, Sauk City, WI 53583 or email them to [riknroz@charter.net](mailto:riknroz@charter.net)

## Club Meetings/Functions

**April – NO MEETING**

**May 7** – Dean Malin will host – Vintage Wings & Wheels Museum in Poplar Grove, IL (page 6)

**June** – Scott Jackson to host-details at a later date

**July – open**

**August** – Floyd and Rita Johnson to host – date to be determined

**September** – Dash to the Dells 22 September 16 & 17-no official club meeting

**October –**

**November –**

**December** – No official club meeting

## Birthdays

### April

4/05 Larry Brixen  
4/07 Nancy Kerznar  
4/15 Michael Jackson  
4/17 Bruce Mohr  
4/17 Linda Pofahl Holly  
4/17 Vance Krebsbach  
4/18 Dennis Wejnowski  
4/22 Barb Mohr  
4/22 Amy McDermott  
4/23 Gretchen Last  
4/28 Rick Pribbenow

### May

5/01 Shane Hilgers  
5/11 Roger McDermott  
5/14 Abby Schneider  
5/15 Megan Favor  
5/24 David Kerznar  
5/24 Roberta Rush  
5/30 Jasmine McDermott

## Email vs. Snail Mail

If you are currently receiving the newsletter by snail mail and have access to email, please consider getting the newsletter by email. This will help with the expense of printing and mailing the newsletter as well as save some time and the environment. It will also ensure that you receive it faster. Email also helps with club updates and events that occur at a moments notice so you don't get left out. If you would like to get your newsletter and updates via email, please contact Rick Pribbenow, the newsletter editor at (608) 643-2544 or email him at [riknroz@charter.net](mailto:riknroz@charter.net) . Please continue to enjoy the newsletter and feel free to send articles or events of interest you would like to share with the rest of the club. Thank you.

## No April Meeting

The next meeting is Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> near Poplar Grove, IL (see page 6 for details).

# Car & Truck Shows/Swap Meets 2011

Note: Please contact the Editor if you have any show information you would like posted in the newsletter.

## April

- 4/29-5/1 Spring Jefferson Swap Meet/Car Show, 6am-5pm – Jefferson, WI  
4/29-4/30 Vintage Torquefest – Maquoketa, IA

## May

- 5/1 J.C. Whitney Car Show – LaSalle, IL  
5/6-5/7 Boondocker's Street Rods 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Show – Concord, WI  
5/12-5/14 F-100 Supernationals – Pigeon Forge, TN  
5/14 35<sup>th</sup> Wonewoc Old Fashioned Days - Wonewoc, WI  
5/20-5/22 Goodguys Nashville Nationals @ Titan Stadium - Nashville, TN  
5/21-5/22 Dells Automotion at Noah's Ark, 8am-5pm – WI Dells, WI  
5/22 WI Early Mustangs All Ford Show & Swap – Cudahy, WI

## June

- 6/4-6/11 Hot Rod Power Tour 2011 – Starts in Cocoa Beach, FL, Valdosta, GA, Montgomery, AL, Nashville, TN, Indianapolis, IN, Muskegon, MI and ends in Detroit, MI  
ND Flatlander's Rod Run – Pontiac, IL  
6/11 Hunnert Car Heads Up Nostalgia Drag Racing, Great Lakes Dragway – Union Grove, WI  
6/11 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Scrap Drive, 1965 & older, Boone County Fairgrounds – Belvedere, IL  
6/10-6/11 30<sup>th</sup> Midwest F-100 Nationals/ Twin City F-100's – Clear Lake, IA  
6/17-6/19 Back to the 50's – MSRA, Minnesota State Fairgrounds – St. Paul, MN  
6/18-6/19 Wizards of Rods 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Fun Run – Warrens, WI  
6/22 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Rods-N-Relics Car Show, 8am-5pm – Upper Lime Kiln Park, Grafton, WI  
6/23-6/25 The Great Smoky Mountain F-100 Run – Pigeon Forge, TN  
6/25 28<sup>th</sup> Annual F-100 Western Nationals – Anaheim, CA  
6/25 Saturday in the Park Car Show – Angell Park, Sun Prairie, WI  
6/26 Cruzin' Portage Car Show, 8am-3pm – Veteran's Memorial Field – Portage, WI  
6/26 O-Town Showdown, Jaycee Park, N. Oak St., 9-4, - Oregon, WI

## July

- 7/1-7/3 Goodguys Heartland Nationals @ Iowa State Fairgrounds – Des Moines, IA  
7/2 George Barris/Volo Auto Museum Car Show – Volo, IL  
7/2 New Lisbon Am. Legion Post 110 Car Show, 8am, Hwy 80 – New Lisbon, WI (rain date 7/3)  
7/4 Deforest Auto Show – Fireman's Park, Deforest, WI  
ND Annual Armory All Car Show by WI Army National Guard – Madison, WI  
7/10 Blanchardville Car Show – Blanchardville, WI  
ND Witwen 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade – Witwen, WI  
7/7-7/10 Iola Old Car Show & Swap Meet – Iola, WI  
7/8-7/10 Goodguys PPG Nationals @ Ohio Expo Center – Columbus, OH  
7/8-7/10 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Ozarks Run/Show-Me F-100's – Branson, MO  
ND Ballweg Ford Annual Car Show – Sauk City, WI  
7/16 Reedsburg Classic Car Show & Swap Meet, Nishan Park – Reedsburg, WI  
7/16 Edgerton Tobacco Heritage Days Car & Truck Show – Edgerton, WI  
7/17 Annual Hot Rod Sunday, Free Methodist Church, 8am – La Farge, WI  
ND Friends of East Troy Airport Fly-In/Drive-In – East Troy, WI  
ND Tired Iron Promotions Swap Meet & Car Show – Edgerton, WI  
ND Hospice Alliance Car Show – Kenosha, WI  
7/23 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Fox Lake Firefighters Car Show & Swap – Fox Lake, WI  
7/31 Deerfield Rod & Gun Club Car Show, Deerfield, WI

# Car & Truck Shows/Swap Meets 2011

## August

8/6-8/7	Elkhorn Swap Meet/Car Show, 6am-5pm – Elkhorn, WI
ND	Lodi All Stop Travel Plaza Car Show & Cruise, Hwy 60 & I-90/94 – Lodi, WI
ND	Riverfest Auto Show – Watertown, WI
ND	32 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Car Show in the Park, 8am-3:30pm – Frame Park, Waukesha, WI
8/12-8/14	Goodguys Chicagoland Nationals – Joliet, IL
8/12-8/13	Symco Shakedown Traditional Hot Rod Show, Symco, WI
8/13	Walworth County Annual Poker Run Car Show – Lake Geneva, WI
8/13	Annual Coffee Break Festival Car Show – Stoughton, WI
ND	5 <sup>th</sup> Annual O'Reilly Auto Parts Car Show & Swap Meet, Rockford Speedway, Rockford, IL
8/20	Spring Green Car Show, 8-4, Downtown Spring Green, Spring Green, WI
8/20	Woodward Dream Cruise – Detroit, MI
8/27	Annual VFW Post 8483 Car Show, 8-4, 5337 Cty Hwy CV – Madison, WI
8/28	Platoon Run XXIII – Tomah, WI

## September

9/2-9/4	Goodguys Speedway Nationals @ Kansas Speedway – Kansas City, KS
9/3	Pardeeville Car Show – Pardeeville, WI
9/4	Central Illinois All Truck Show – Peoria, IL
9/10-9/11	Dodge County Swap Meet (Sat/Sun) & Car Show (Sun) – Beaver Dam, WI
9/11	Reedsburg Fall Festival Car Show, Sacred Heart Parish - Reedsburg, WI
9/16-9/17	22 <sup>nd</sup> Dash to the Dells & 8 <sup>th</sup> Unofficial Panel Nationals – WI Dells, WI
9/16-9/18	Goodguys Speedway Nationals @ Indianapolis Motor Speedway – Indianapolis, IN
9/18	Beloit Autorama Car Show – Beloit, WI
9/23-9/25	Fall Jefferson Swap Meet/Car Show, 6am-5pm – Jefferson, WI
ND	Geneva Lake Classic Car Rally, Lake Geneva, WI
ND	Bailey's Harbor Autumnfest Annual Car Show – Bailey's Harbor, WI

## October

10/8	Hunnert Car Pile-Up – Decatur, IL
ND	Annual Downtown West Allis Classic Car Show, 6:30am-3pm – West Allis, WI
10/28-10/30	Goodguys Southeastern Nationals @ Lowe's Motor Speedway – Charlotte, NC

\*\*ND – no date yet

The following websites have more information and show locations:

[www.olderide.com/events/wisconsin.html](http://www.olderide.com/events/wisconsin.html)

[www.carshowguide.com](http://www.carshowguide.com)

[www.carshowtoday.com](http://www.carshowtoday.com)

[www.wisconsincollectorcar.com](http://www.wisconsincollectorcar.com)

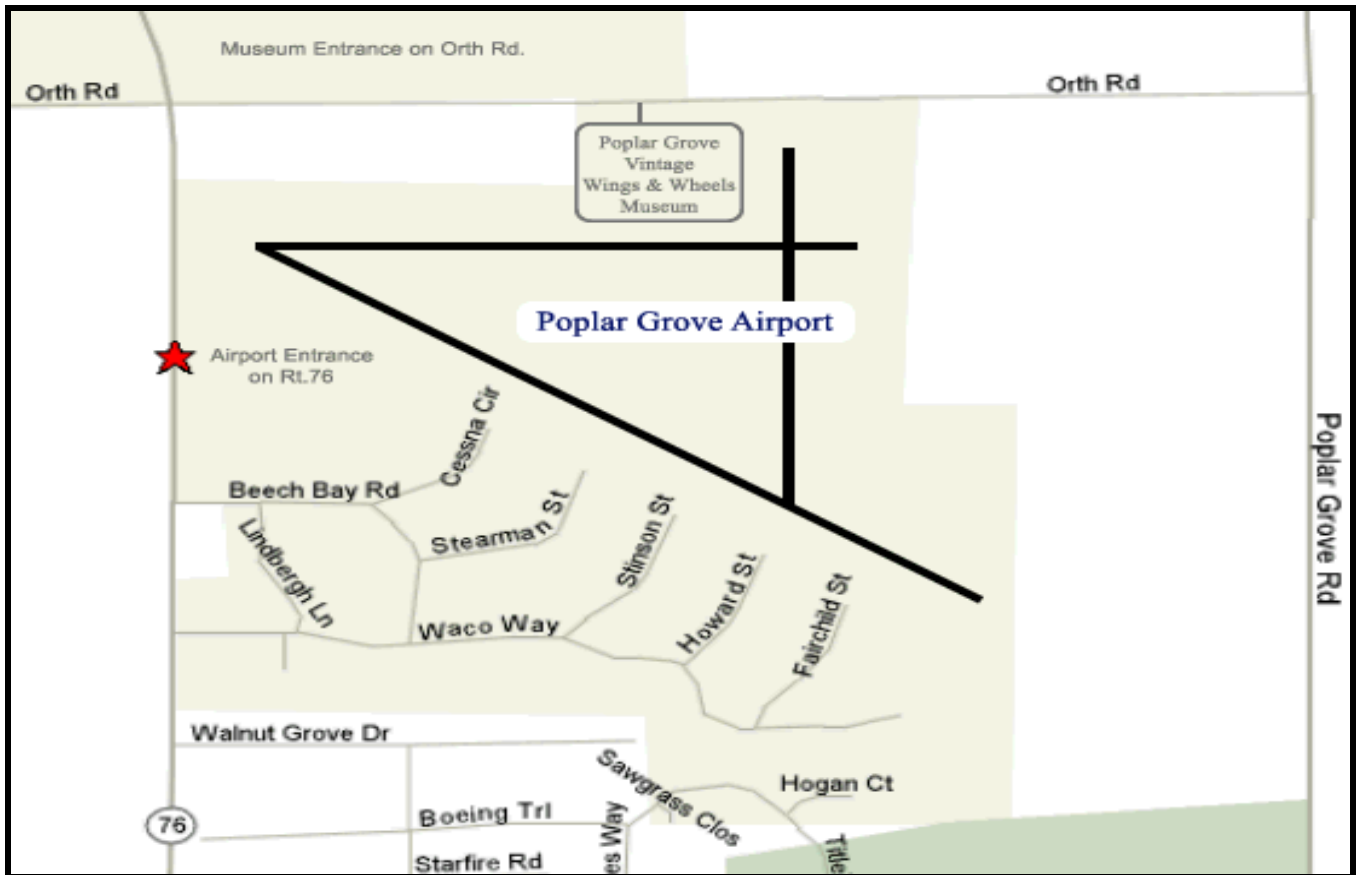
[www.carshownews.com](http://www.carshownews.com)

[www.hubcapcafe.com](http://www.hubcapcafe.com)



## The Next Meeting Is May 7th

Dean Malin will be the host of the May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting being held at the Vintage Wings and Wheels Museum off Route 76, just south of Poplar Grove, IL (approximately 20 miles south of the WI/IL state line) and just north of the Poplar Grove Airport. The museum's address is: 5151 Orth Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065. They can be found on the web at: [www.thevintagemuseum.com](http://www.thevintagemuseum.com). We will gather there at 11am and tour the museum. After the tour, a lunch of hotdogs/brats will be served and we will proceed to have our meeting. A donation of \$5.00 per person is requested for the lunch and museum tour.



From Madison, take I-94 to Janesville exit for Hwy 14 east. Follow to WI Hwy 140 and turn right and go south (changes to IL 76 at the state line) to Orth Road and turn left. Museum is half a mile on your right.

From Rockford take IL 20 east to Belvidere, then north on IL 76 to Orth Road and turn right. Museum is half a mile on your right.

From IL I-39, follow to Rockford, then take IL 20 east to Belvidere, then north on IL 76 to Orth Road and turn right. Museum is half a mile on your right.

# **The March Meeting Minutes**

The March meeting was held during the Winter Banquet at the Prairie du Sac Town Hall in Prairie du Sac, WI on March 26<sup>th</sup>. We had 21 adults, 1 child and 1 truck in attendance. Rick Linskens did the cooking of the meat once again and we ate roasted pop can chicken, tender beef brisket, and succulent pork tenderloin. The rest of us brought plenty of side dishes, salads and desserts. The food was excellent! Thanks Rick and Nate for cooking the meats, they were delicious!

The meeting was called to order at 2:05PM.

## **Reports from Officers**

**Secretary** – Rick read the minutes from the February meeting.

**Treasurer/Membership** – Chris read the balance of the club checkbook and said all of the Dash 21 expenses were paid and we are starting to spend for Dash 22. David & Carolee Emmel are our newest members with a satin black 1953 F-100. They are from Beloit, WI. Welcome to the Badgerland F-100's family. Chris passed around the club financials and the Dash 21 report.

**Vice President** – per Dave, "Got nothin' to say."

**President** – Mike asked for any old business to be discussed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Mike said a few of the club members attended Phil Pofahl's funeral. Mike told us about some of the interesting history of Phil's past. The club gave a memorial donation to the family. In other club business, Mike said the Dash 21 Thank You's are still available for anyone needing some.

Dash 22 Registration Chair, Julie Farmer, had 3 registered for the show so far. Remember to register early and often. Mike said to make sure we tell all of our friends and family about the great price on rooms at the Great Wolf Lodge during the Dash. This year, we need to fill 160 room nights. If we don't, any rooms not filled under 160, the club has to pay for. So it's very important to TELL EVERYONE. You can register at any time starting now.

Door Prize Chair (no chair as of yet-someone please step up to help), the beg letters are available and the mass mailing will take place shortly. Rick Linskens will be doing the food once again and we are currently working on a new menu.

Trophy Chair, "Wally Again", "Wally". It was mentioned that Sinclair, last years vendor may be coming back again. The club has sent him a registration form.

Mike asked for any other old business – hearing none we moved to new business.

Continued on next page.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Wally had a question. Wally said his cousin has pancreatic cancer and wondered how the club would feel about making a donation. It was discussed and Randy Roelke made a motion that the club make a \$25.00 donation, Scott Jackson seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor. Ruthanne made a suggestion of what about having our Christmas party in July? She said maybe more would come since the weather is nice and no snow. This is food for thought, so let's get some feedback from our members over the next few meetings.

We took a short intermission to vote for officers and traveling trophies for 2011. The results are:

Chris Connor – Treasurer  
Wally Zeien – Secretary  
Dave Farmer – Vice President  
Mike Connor – President

Mike then handed out Dash 21 Thank You's:

Wally Zeien – Trophy Chair  
Chuck & Megan Blanchard – Door Prize Chairs and Kids Games  
Bill Watkins – Registration Chair  
Rick Pribbenow – Trailering people/vehicles to/from the show  
Dave Farmer – for making the large plaques  
Rick Linskens – for making the food  
Greg Masters – Racing Chair (valve covers & Hot Wheels)

## **Traveling Trophies**

<b><u>Award</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>
<b>Stock Truck</b>	Paul Hilgers
<b>Custom Truck</b>	Floyd Johnson
<b>Most Improved Truck</b>	Todd Showers
<b>Truck of the Year</b>	Rick Linskens
<b>Member of the Year</b>	Rick Pribbenow
<b>Family Award</b>	The Todd Showers Family

Rick Linskens held a meat raffle to give away 7lbs. of meat – donations go to the club. Mark Favor won the raffle.

Mike asked for any other new business. Hearing none, we moved to adjourn.

A motion was made to adjourn by Greg Masters - seconded by Julie Zeien. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45PM.

On to the fun awards!



## Winter Banquet Photos



Rick Linskens and Nate grilling our dinner (L), club, members bench racing, Megan Blanchard giving Dave Farmer his new F100 height adjustment tools (various sizes of beer cans).



Mike Connor transforming Rick Pribbenow into "Trailer Man", Wally Zeien giving Ruthanne Koeshall tools and tips for the road, and Rick Linskens receiving the Truck of the Year award.



Paul Hilgers receiving the Stock Truck of the Year award, Dave Farmer holding the Most Improved Truck of the Year award for Todd Showers (absent), and Rick Pribbenow receiving the Member of the Year award.



Floyd Johnson receiving the Custom Truck of the Year award, Rick Pribbenow presenting the Family of the Year award to the Todd Showers Family (absent), Nate giving Chuck Blanchard safety gloves so not to cut his hands again.

## Ramblings From The Vice President

Fellow Fordiacs,

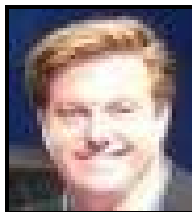
I'm taking a few minutes away from working on my Uni to share the joy of learning with you. At the Winter Banquet there was a virtual Cornucopia of wisdom flowing throughout the venue. Vanessa Blanchard learned to say "fine", just ask her the next time you see her, her mom is so proud. I learned that Greg Schneider likes to build houses almost as much as he likes to build trucks. They say, "third time's the charm". I learned that Floyd has as good a sense of humor as anyone and can dish it out pretty good. We learned that the club can run it self, just ask Greg Masters his opinion on the ballot. Ruthanne is going to be moving and tried to leave us with some sage wisdom. She tried to convince us that "A Buick in the hand, is worth two at Boucher". Nobody really bought into it and thought she'd have an easier time getting us to believe she was going to miss us. I'm sure there was more that managed to escape the grasp of my razor sharp brain but there were a lot of shiny things all over the place so I may have lost a couple of items. Be that as it may, I need to bid you farewell and return to the garage and continue welding away. I have managed to rough in a floor-pan on my channeled Uni and need to tie it all together. I am hoping to finish off the firewall this weekend (4-8 through 4-10) as my wife will be in Appleton competing with her chorus. Break a lip honey!! I have quite a ways to go to be ready for the Dells. I'll not make boastful or foolish claims and promises as I have in the past, but, I think I will meet my goal and have the Uni at the show. I hope some more of you guys with second or new projects can join me. With gas going through the roof, staying home and getting in the garage may just be easier than ever. I have made a ton of progress and am feeling good about my advances in the truck as well as in my skills and ability to plan. I'm not up to the same level as Chip Foose or Gandhi, but I think I'm somewhere in the middle.

Catch you in the shop,

Dave Farmer, Vice President.



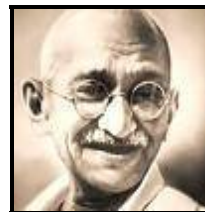
Dave's unibody



Chip



Dave



Gandhi

## In The Garage

Fellow members:

Spring has sprung! We sure had a nice weekend for the Badgerland F100's Winter Banquet. What a great time! Who'd have thought the weather would be so nice for us? Kind of makes you get the itch to get those trucks on the road doesn't it? Well, as I write this (April 19), we are getting snow again. But, looking to the bright side, it's Wisconsin and the weather will change like it or not.

I have waited just as long as you have to get the trucks uncovered, started and out of storage to see how they survived the winter. I was at my storage shed recently making mental notes of just what needs to be repaired to be road ready for spring (of course with the recent snow, they will need to wait a little longer).

It takes time to get them going again, oil changes, tune-ups, checking tires, washing, waxing, etc. Most all of us know the routine, but that's the fun of owning these trucks. We work on them and get our hands dirty. Then wash up and go for a cruise. For those of us still working on our projects, we can start/continue grinding, welding, painting and wrenching again and be proud of what we may have accomplished that day to bring us closer to the finished product.

So, for all of you with FORD truck fever and projects that need work, it only takes a little time here and there before your trucks take shape and come closer to being driven. Or, for those of you with finished projects (who is really ever finished with their trucks?), get them out, get them going and have some fun. Fire'em up, hear/feel the rumble. As the back of Mike Connors truck says, "Let's Roll!"

Remember, your club members are a great source for information or a helping hand. Call one sometime. You'll be glad you did!

See you down the road!

Rick Pribbenow





# Y-Block History

Planning at Ford for a newer V-8 had been going on since 1948, but the company made hundreds of trial engines for testing and didn't finalize a production version until the Y-block design (so nicknamed because of the deep skirt at the bottom of the block) debuted in 1952 in the [Lincoln](#). The overall company plan was to use overhead-valve technology in all FoMoCo applications, but the new OHV six-cylinder and Lincoln V-8 arrived in dealerships first, then two years later in the Ford line for the masses.

Ford was in heated competition with rivals GM and [Chrysler](#) for the whole period of the 1950s and 1960s. It was a time of optimism, consumerism, and a burgeoning American economy. Buyers expected truly "new" car designs almost every year, with more chrome and options, and of course, increasing horsepower to back up the road-yacht image. GM started the horsepower race with the '49 [Cadillac](#) OHV Kettering-design 331ci V-8, followed by similar-but-different V-8s from [Oldsmobile](#), [Buick](#), [Pontiac](#), and of course, [Chevrolet](#)'s distinctively different small-block V-8s. [Chrysler](#) had introduced its wildly successful (looking in the rearview mirror with a hot rod perspective) Hemi-headed V-8s beginning in 1951, but as the number two manufacturer out of the three, Ford was most interested in staying ahead of Chevrolet.

The new Y-block in the Ford line was substantially improved in almost every way when compared with the Flathead. The crankshaft was not only supported by the deep skirt of the block, but it had five main bearings, better oiling, and better cooling. From the start, they had the "oversquare" approach, with a bore larger than the stroke (3.50-inch bore and 3.10-inch stroke), but the compression was a weak 7.2:1, and the heads weren't the best for performance, although an enormous improvement over a Flathead in terms of breathing and chamber function.

Ford had only to worry about staying competitive with its three lines of cars-Ford, [Mercury](#), and Lincoln-while GM and Chrysler both had five lines to worry about. In all of the Big Three companies, each line had to be perceived as having its own engines, even if the only difference between the models was that the higher-line cars had more cubic inches in the same engine design. Looking at the '54 Y-block engines, the Ford line started with a 239, the Mercurys had a 256, and the Lincolns continued the 317-incher they introduced in 1952.

For 1957, Ford took its Y-block game to its zenith, with a full lineup of powerplants. The base 272 now sported 190 hp, the 292 came in with 212, and the list of 312 options included a 245hp base four-barrel version and dual-quad models (now in [passenger cars](#)) with 270hp and 285hp levels. For the true hot rod gearhead, though, the ultimate T-bird option for 1957 was the 312 with a factory-installed Paxton/McCulloch centrifugal supercharger.

The compression ratio was held back a little to 8.5:1 to allow for 6 pounds of boost, and the blown Y-block still achieved an advertised 300 hp! We can't imagine any esteemed automobile manufacturer would flirt with the truth, but many contemporary observers of track times suggest theses were somewhat underrated. Some made 340 hp or more with a few "adjustments." All this was despite Ford realizing by 1957 that most [Thunderbird](#) buyers preferred a comfortable-but-distinctive country-club car over a potential road-race competitor, such as the [Corvette](#). Only a little more than 200 blown 'Birds were sold. We all know the direction Thunderbirds went after that, but to give the Ford planners their due, the bigger and heavier '58 Thunderbirds with back seats sold almost as fast as Ford could produce them.

The Y-block had proven to be a successful powerplant for Ford, but the "bigger is better" handwriting was on the wall at Engineering, and in 1958 a new engine design, in 332ci and 352ci versions, was introduced and sold right alongside models with Y-blocks. We refer to that new engine design today as the great FE series (the subject of a later article in this series), which had the potential to be enlarged to greater

displacements over its time in the marketplace, plus other improvements over the Y-block design. Over the next few years, the only passenger-car Y-blocks available were lower-horsepower versions of the 292, which eventually bowed out in 1962 in cars but continued a while after that in truck applications.

From showrooms across the country to heavy-duty trucking to NASCAR and speed records at Daytona Beach, the Y-blocks had proved worthy during their time in the combat-like competition between the automakers of the 1950s. It made a great successor to the venerable Flathead and bravely served "on point" for the legions of later Ford overhead engines to come.

## **Y-Blocks In Street Rods**

In comparison to the two engines previously examined in this series, the Y-block as a candidate for street rod use is more practical and popular than the semi-Hemi Mopars, although less utilized than the 348-409 Chevys. That last fact is one of the reasons you might consider a Ford Y-block for your next project. We've already seen increasing use of Y-blocks in cars featured within these pages, but selecting one of these engines will never categorize your ride as a bellybutton rod by a long shot. Good power, great looks, and decent power-to-weight ratio are all assets of the Y-block engines, and they fit better in most rod compartments than some of the big GM overheads.

Perhaps from their high profile in racing, Y-blocks stirred the imagination of rodders almost from the time they were introduced, so hungry were traditional guys for something Blue Oval to replace the Flathead and compete with the GM powerplants at the drags and street races. Hot Rod magazine and the little books had a number of articles about the Y-blocks, extolling the virtues of the five-main bearings, deep-skirted block, overhead valves, full-flow oiling, quench-type chambers, and a chaindrive camshaft (as opposed to the Flathead's geardrive).

The 1950s was a great period of socioeconomic change and a time when Americans were fascinated with the continuous parade of new technologies in travel, communications, entertainment, labor-saving devices for the homemaker, and of course, **new cars** every year. The Big Three did not disappoint, with "longer, lower, more powerful" being the bywords of each year's crop of new cars. Younger readers may not comprehend this, but in those heady days, families would surround the local dealerships as soon as the car carriers dropped off a load at intro time, and there were actually crowds at dealerships of every marque. The dads all did their research ahead of time, reading Tom McCahill's automotive columns in *Mechanix Illustrated*.

Motorsports was part of the process, as the hottest new cars duked it out on NASCAR tracks, when the race cars really were "stock cars." The Rocket 88 Oldsmobiles had their time in the sun for a year or two, then Hudsons ruled with their fast-off-the-corner six-cylinders. Ford was back in the game with the larger versions of its Y-blocks by the mid-1950s. Drivers such as Curtis Turner, Junior Johnson, Parnelli Jones, and Joe Weatherly were cleaning up with dual-quad Y-blocks. Besides all the Y-block wins in the regular races, NASCAR also ran a series from 1956-1959 that was all convertibles, and 26 of the 47 races were in Ford's win column in 1956, 22 of those by Curtis Turner. Chevrolet had introduced its lightweight small-block V-8 in 1955, but the 265 wasn't strong enough for the larger displacement competition. When its 283 V-8 came out in 1957, especially the rare "factory race cars" with the Rochester mechanical fuel injection, Chevrolet proved to be better competition; but Ford still outsold Chevrolet in 1957 on the streets and in the dealerships. In those days, it really was a case of "win on Sunday, sell on Monday."

As the oil companies struggled to come up with higher-octane fuels, the car manufacturers kept raising their compressions ratios to produce more power from the same basic engines. That was one way to escalate the advertised-horsepower stakes. The other was to increase the displacement. All the manufacturers had brought out new overhead V-8s during the 1950s, and in some cases, the original

bore spacing and other design features of the first engines didn't allow for the accelerated growth that would take place over the next five years.

The Ford Y-block was one of those engine designs that, although a huge improvement over the Flathead, couldn't keep up with the constant displacement increases. It was increased to 272 ci for 1955 (just enough to be bigger than its rival's 265), and power increased to 162 hp, plus a "special" 272 with four-barrel, dual exhausts, and one-step-higher compression for a rated 182 hp. A 292-cube version was made available in the two-seater Thunderbirds introduced in 1955 that developed 198 hp. It wasn't the T-bird alone that drew crowds to the showrooms; the entire Ford line was radically restyled with bodies that remain as clean as any shapes produced in the mid-1950s, and assuredly collectible today. To be more competitive in NASCAR, a late addition to the 1955 engine lineup included a new 292ci version listed as a 205hp "police interceptor" option.

The following year was perhaps the "glory year" for Ford Y-blocks, with the introduction of the preeminent Y-block at 312 ci, in T-birds first and then in passenger cars. At compression ratios of 8.4:1 and 9.0:1, these babies produced 215 and 225 hp with a single four-barrel and dual exhausts, with a dual-quad option on the T-birds offering 245 hp. These were legendary engines on street, drag, and oval track venues. We know a few teenagers who ran them in Victorias in the 1960s with their street successes marred only by the number of annihilated clutches and stock three-speeds that littered the discard pile behind their garages. The solid-lifter Y-blocks could rev!

The speed equipment business, although not perhaps the "industry" it is today, was smaller and more responsive to new ideas, and the Southern California speed merchants were quick to experiment with the new [Ford](#) engines, quickly introducing intake manifolds, cams, and other goodies to further improve them. Luckily for hot rodders, chief Y-block designer Victor Raviolo planned for the new engine design to fit where a Flathead had resided in the company's '53 [Fords](#). Offenhauser and other companies quickly set about to make cast-aluminum bellhousing adapters to attach 272-292-312 motors to traditional Ford transmissions, easing the transition from a Flathead to an overhead. Since brand-new engines take some time to trickle down to the wrecking yards where hot rodders mined for transplant horsepower, use of Y-blocks in hot rods continued well into the 1960s.

Y-block engines are not that hard to find these days; we've seen a few at swap meets and in local classified-ad tabloids, ranging in price from \$300 to \$600 for a complete. The most desirable are the bigger 292 and 312 versions, although a 272 with a few improvements will do. If you're going to pursue one, you'd be well-advised to search first for the back issues of STREET RODDER from the year 1999 that contain the excellent 10-part series Doc Frohmader did on building a Y-block, called "Y-Notta Y-Block." Although all but a few truck Y-blocks ('58-and-later heavy-duty 292s) had cast crankshafts, the block rigidity and crankshaft support of the Y-block's skirt makes a non-issue of using the stock crankshaft, with proper clearances and a professional balancing job.

Mounting a Y-block in your street rod chassis is not a problem, either. Ford used two designs. The [passenger cars](#) all had side mounts on the block and a single trans mount to make up a pretty standard three-point support, while 'Birds and trucks used two somewhat close-together mounts on a bracket bolted through the front cover and two wide-spread mounts from the bellhousing, like early small-block Chevys. When mounting a modern transmission to a Y-block, it's desirable to make your engine mounts to fit the side-mount bosses on the block, and use a trans crossmember that accepts that transmission's mount. If you want to use a "small enough to fit where a stick goes" and dead-reliable C4 automatic, Flat-o Products (Salem, Oregon) makes a complete kit, and the company has a bellhousing with the two required mount ears on it for F-100 applications.

Wilcap (Pismo Beach, California) has a kit that will mount a GM TH350 behind the Y-block, plus a way to mount a '63-78 [Ford](#) Top Loader four-speed to your original Y-block stick bellhousing. Weir Products

(American [Canyon](#), California) has made its bones making adapter bellhousings to put late-model GM T56 six-speed transmissions behind vintage engines, and has been considering doing a model for the Y-blocks if enough interest is shown by customers. John Mummert (El Cajon, California) offers an adapter to mount the readily available T5 five-speed trans to a '54-64 Y bellhousing, including the S-10 T5 version that has the shifter in the right place for an early rod.

Performance for the Y-block, as with any engine, depends on your requirements and can be planned for with proper selection of camshaft, compression, and intake/exhaust components. All of the Y-blocks used solid-lifter camshafts with mushroom-type lifters, and grinds are still available from Clay Smith Cams, Red's Headers, and John Mummert. Cautions on camshafts are four-fold. Some cam catalogs listing Y-block offerings have a weak Stage 1 cam, then jump to grinds that are too wild. You want a stick with no more than 108-110 degrees of lobe separation for an engine with around 9:1 compression. Second, these engines have valve rotators, which will only work if the cam lobes have a slight side-to-side taper that induces the rotation, and the right amount of that taper isn't found on all available grinds. Third, the oiling for the rocker arms (lack of such is one of the original urban legends about Y-blocks) come from a passage leading upward from the center camshaft journal. In the old days, non-detergent oil, lack of maintenance, and absence of a PCV system could cause these passages to clog, starving the rockers. Y-block camshafts are made with an oil groove around the center journal, but the groove is too shallow on some contemporary grinds. Check the depth, and if it isn't 0.030- to 0.035-inch deep, turn the cam on a lathe to this dimension for proper oiling. Fourth, and this is important, remember that mushroom lifters are the first items installed in a Y-block rebuild, then the cam!

With a Web address like [www.ford-y-block.com](http://www.ford-y-block.com), it's no surprise Mummert has a full line of equipment for these engines, including rebuild kits, stroker kits, forged pistons, aluminum water pumps, high-ratio rocker arms, dress-up pieces, and even reproductions of the dual-quad air cleaners and cool ram-horns cast exhaust manifolds that were used on some truck engines. Red's Headers sells aluminum front timing covers for Y-blocks, and our friends at Sanderson (South San Francisco, California) have two headers designed for the Y-block applications. The guys at Gear Drive Speed & Custom (Lakeville, Minnesota) can set you up with kit or finished lakes-style outside headers.

The intake on Y-block engines is somewhat unusual, in that the ports are laid on top of each other—in other words, there are two groups of two ports on each side and each group is not side by side but over and under. Unless you find a period Ford single-four-barrel or dual-quad intake manifold, you have only two other choices: Scour the same swap meets or eBay for an Offenhauser or Edelbrock period aluminum Tri-power manifold (they're out there), or purchase a new Blue Thunder aluminum four-barrel manifold from John Mummert, whose company is just finishing development of a new aluminum manifold and aluminum Y-block heads. STREET RODDER will bring you details of these new products as soon as they're available.

Choosing a Y-block is relatively simple. Disregard the original 239-inch '54 engines, and look for a 272 or a 292, both of which can be made to meet your needs for a traditional street rod powerplant. Ah yes, the 312 is the largest of the Ford variants, but it's the most sought after, thus more costly. Additionally, the 312 was the only Ford Y-block with an asbestos-rope rear main seal, and they are prone to oil leaks here (ask any two-seater [Thunderbird](#) owner); all others had a lip seal, which works great. Another source of Y-block engines is your local boat yard, since many boats used inboard marine adaptations of the Y-block, often with dual-Carter one-barrel carbs just like the '53-54 Corvettes.

For cylinder heads, there were three intake valve sizes (all exhausts were the same at 1.510 inch): 1.64, '60-62 292s; 1.78, all '55-56; and the biggest at 1.93 inch were said to be only on the blown T-bird but were also used in '57-59 truck engines. When shopping for heads, bring your vernier calipers. Compression ratios were factory-achieved with different chamber volumes, but low-compression truck heads can be brought back up with the use of the right aftermarket piston domes. A standard performance treatment

with heads and intake manifold port-matched to the gaskets and a three-angle valve job are a suggested part of your rebuild.

One of the traditional problems with Y-blocks has been cooling, but this can be addressed without much trouble. One of the reasons was the valve arrangement on the heads, where the exhaust valves for the two middle cylinders on each bank were immediately next to each other, causing a hot spot. The John Mummert aluminum water pump flows more water, which helps, but drilling two matching holes in the head and block deck helps this out further and at no cost. Using a head gasket as a template, mark the two holes between the two middle cylinders (see SR, Nov. '99) and drill the holes on the exhaust side to 1/4-inch, and the holes toward the intake side to 1/8-inch, then to 11/64-inch.

Cool valve covers are every street rodder's must-have, and for eyewash, we're all in luck here with the Y-block Fords. To someone who is a total Ford fan, there is no nicer OEM rocker cover on any engine to match the finned, polished-aluminum valve covers on the Thunderbirds, with that turquoise field for the 'Bird emblem. Originals can be found, and most of the Thunderbird restoration supply catalogs have a current reproduction of this. For the custom look, Offenhauser (see Exeter Auto Supply) still makes its polished cast-aluminum valve covers from the day, and Speedway Motors has chromed, repop OE steel covers and an ever-expanding group of cool Y-block parts in its catalog. To complete the impression, O'Brien Truckers (Charlton, MA) makes a nice finned-aluminum valley cover.

Y-block Ford engines were well thought of by gearheads back in the 1950s, and they can be even better with today's increasing availability of improved components. The modern transmission choices will allow you to put the engine in the powerband you want, without strain, and those solid lifters do sound more hot-rod than the sewing-machine-perfect modern crate engines. As Doc Frohmader said, "Y-not a Y-block" for your next traditional street rod.

### **A Ramble About The Burble**

Sound Observations From A Former Y-Blocker

The Y-block is probably one of the prettiest-sounding engines when run through cast-iron exhaust manifolds (the larger '57-and-later models for dual pipes are the best), car-length 2-inch pipes, and medium-length glasspacks installed roughly halfway along the pipe. Even though it may hurt torque a bit, resist the urge to install a balance tube or X between the pipes. Similarly, resist the urge to use chambered mufflers or large-diameter pipes. It's the wrong era and wrong sound for a Y-block, and neither will make a low-speed engine make any more power than the small pipes with 'packs will.

When set up that way, old dogs like Y-blocks have a smooth growl when cruising and have a pretty good bark when kicked with the right foot. In fact, without the balance tube, the pipes will rap under hard acceleration. You'll find yourself driving among high-rise buildings late at night just so you can hear the sound. It's pretty close to glorious. It's almost reason enough to own a Y-block-powered **car**. I miss the sound since I sold mine.

Read more: <http://streetrodder.automotive.com/85573/0809sr-vintage-engines-fomoco-y-blocks/y-block-performance.html#ixzz1Izpu4X4I>



# Charles "Pat" Madden Estate Sale

## Fri. Sat. Sun. June 3, 4, 5

### 8am-5pm each day

Location: W7851 Larson Rd. Mauston, WI (between Mauston and Elroy, WI)(Take Hwy G south out of Mauston, turn right on Cheese Factory Road, left on Duffy Rd, then right on Larson Rd. to the farm.

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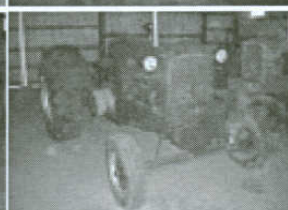
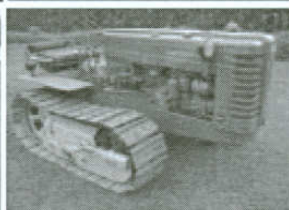
1935 Ford 5 Window Coupe  
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#### **Tractors for sale:**

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(Some of the cars, trucks and tractors are pictured below)



## For Sale/Wanted

(Please notify the editor when your item is sold/found so your ad can be removed.)

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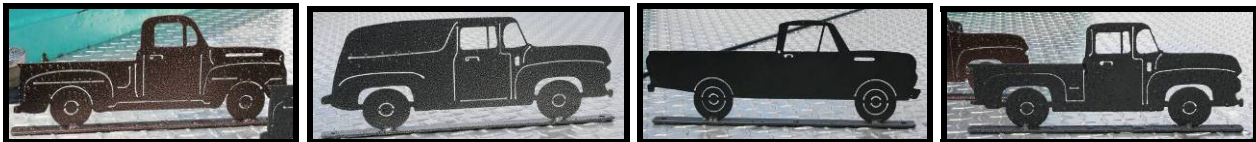
Any free, used, old truck show and car show t-shirts for a project. Will take any size, automotive related, Ford script, etc. If you have some, please call Megan Blanchard @ (608) 513-1211 (WI)

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**1953-1956 Hood Tilt Kits** - \$250.00 each. Call Greg Schneider @ (309) 231-3232 (IL)

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Please bring this application to our next meeting or if you are unable to attend, please mail to our membership chairperson listed on the sheet enclosed in this mailing. If you have any further questions or comments, feel free to contact any of the officers of the club (also listed on sheet enclosed).





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