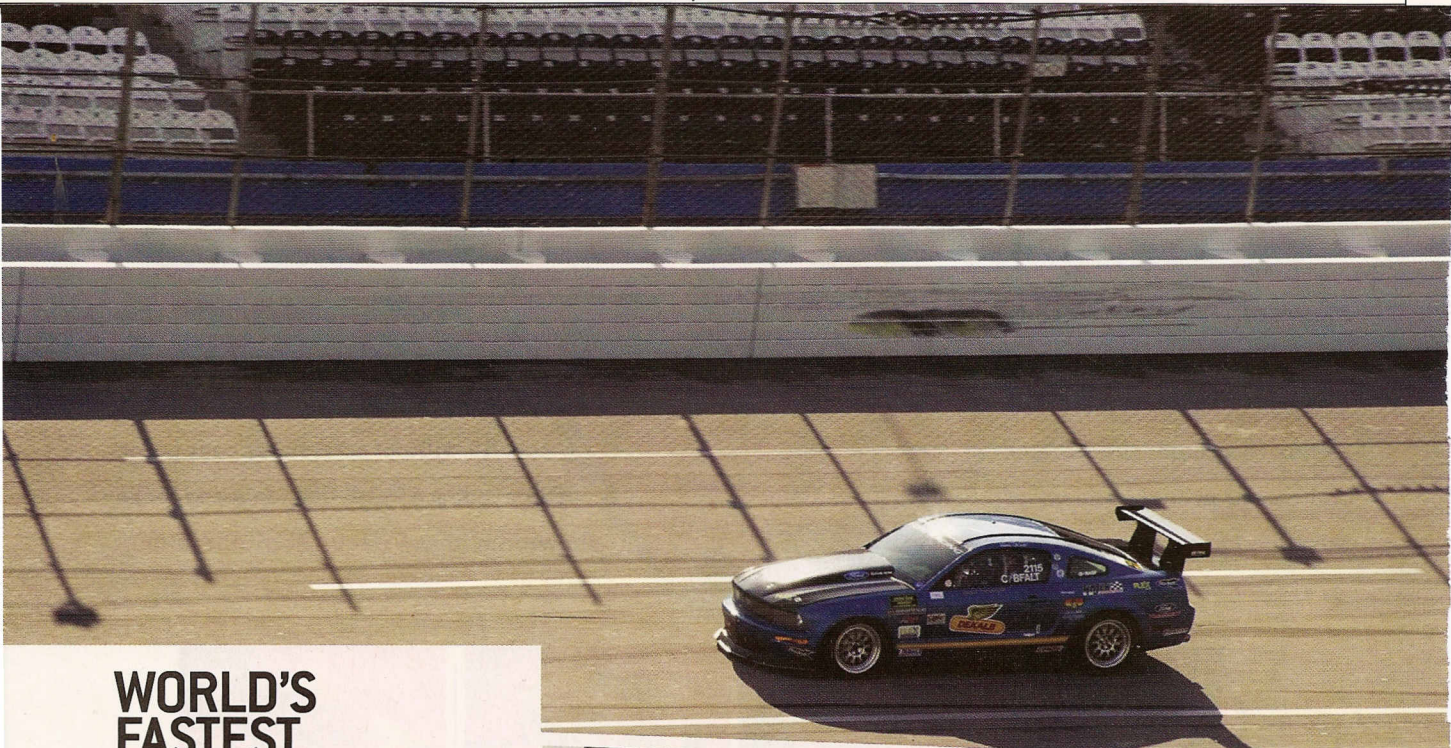


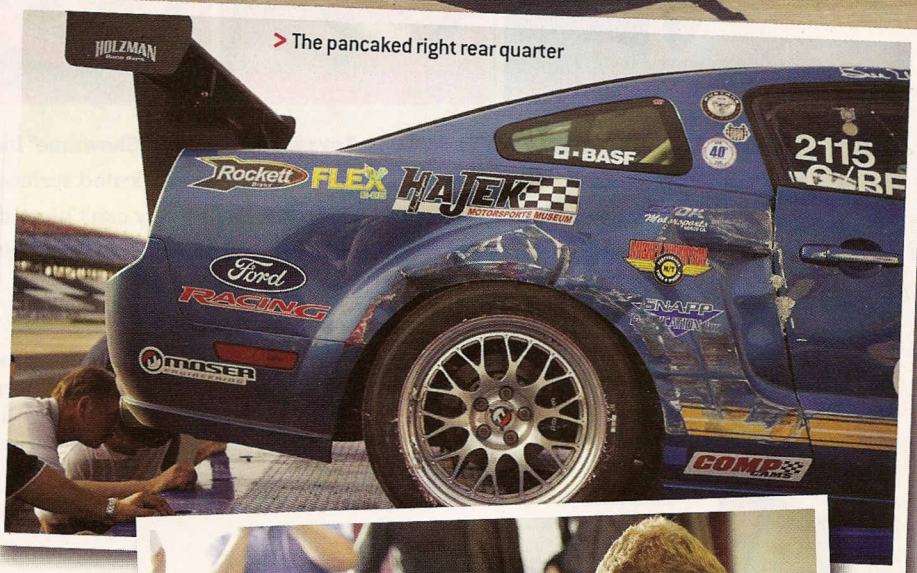
# RODDIN' AT RANDOM

SEND STUFF IN: EMAIL: HOTROD@HOTROD.com MAIL: HOT ROD, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048  
 PHOTO REQUIREMENTS: Minimum size 1,600 x 1,200 pixels MESSAGE BOARD: HOTROD.com



## WORLD'S FASTEST MUSTANG

When we were at Bonneville last year following noted Ford collector and certified wild man Brent Hajek and his Danny Thompson-driven, Rockett Brand E85-powered, FR500C Mustang on its 251-mph speed record, Brent told us his next act would be to take the car to Talladega Super Speedway in Alabama for a closed course speed record. The idea was to have Bill Elliott drive, since Bill still holds the record for the fastest qualifying time in NASCAR history, 212.809 mph, set in 1987 at Talladega. The Mustang went into the wind tunnel several times and had a few minor things changed (such as a NASCAR Car of Tomorrow wing and front splitter) but ran in essentially the same trim as it did at Bonneville. They got to the high banks at Talladega on May 13, and rain nearly canceled the effort. But it dried up, and Bill took the Mustang out for a few shakedown runs. Between Turns 1 and 2, the right front tire was cut down and sent the Mustang scraping against the wall, pancaking the right side of the car. Bill wasn't hurt and the damage is mostly cosmetic. They're already planning to try it again this November. Before the crash, the car recorded a 174.206-mph lap, which was certified by USAC as the fastest speed by an E85-powered car. —ROB KINNAN



> The pancaked right rear quarter



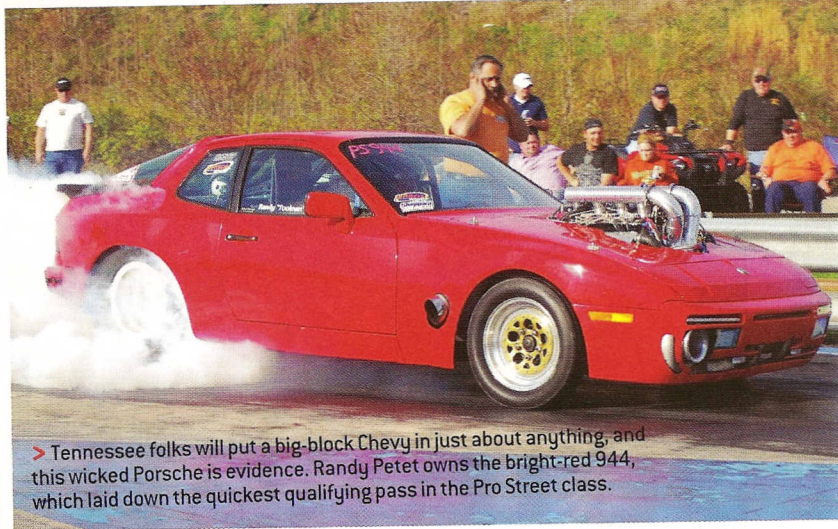
> Awesome Bill from Dawsonville also brought his record-setting '87 NASCAR T-bird to Talladega.

## THE BOUNTY RACE

When it comes to street car drag racing, we've seen our share at Drag Week™, but we found an interesting monthly event held at I-40 Dragway in Crossville, Tennessee. The Bounty Race brings out a huge crowd of racers and spectators. Jim Howe Sr. owns the eighth-mile dragstrip, while his son, Jim Jr., promotes the affair. Jim Jr. devised the event to bring in the region's fastest street cars, and it didn't take long for it to explode into a must-go event. There are several classes, including Pro Street, Real Street, and Cheap Street, along with a few index classes, so the variety of cars is outstanding. Winning the Pro Street Bounty—which is what the event is based around—grants you a bye to the finals of the next event, thus putting the bounty on your head. And while the purse isn't up there with the ranks of the ORSCA and other racing organizations, the bragging rights alone keep racers coming back for more.

The tire is the limiting factor with most of the Pro Street Bounty cars, but Jim and the crew at I-40 Dragway keep the track sticky at all times. Wheelstands, wild runs, and close competition are common practice. With all the different combinations, the rules can get tricky, so check out [www.bountyrace.com](http://www.bountyrace.com) or give Jim Howe Jr. a call at 931/210-0244 for all the details. The Bounty Race is held on the last Saturday of the month from March to October. —TOMMY LEE BYRD

> Some folks need a transbrake and lots of nitrous to launch like this, but Danny Freeman didn't on this test pass. The 410ci small-block Ford provided a wild ride, carrying the wheels of Danny's Mustang more than 300 feet before he got out of the groove and smacked the wall.



> Tennessee folks will put a big-block Chevy in just about anything, and this wicked Porsche is evidence. Randy Petet owns the bright-red 944, which laid down the quickest qualifying pass in the Pro Street class.



> Todd Lyle's beautiful '69 Camaro is deadly consistent, and it was only a matter of time before he took home a win in the Pro Street class. Todd proved his driving capabilities during the March event by taking home his first Bounty Race victory.



# RODDIN' AT RANDOM



## HISTORY, A QUARTER-MILE AT A TIME

Historic dragsters, Gassers, altered, Funny Cars, stockers, and drag bikes are on exhibit at the highly respected Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan, through October 31, 2009. The exhibit was organized with the help of Dave Crane, the Battle Creek, Michigan, collector of vintage front-engine dragsters. The museum is noted as a classic car Mecca and has been chosen as national headquarters for the Pierce Arrow, Lincoln, and Franklin clubs, with separate buildings dedicated to each, as well as one exclusively for Classic Car Club of America displays. The show signage succeeds in educating the casual visitor about the history of drag racing and the significance of the different classes of cars. The museum features a cruise night every Wednesday and a full list of car activities all summer. Check out [www.gilmorecarmuseum.org](http://www.gilmorecarmuseum.org) for more information on this world-class facility. —ROGER MEINERS

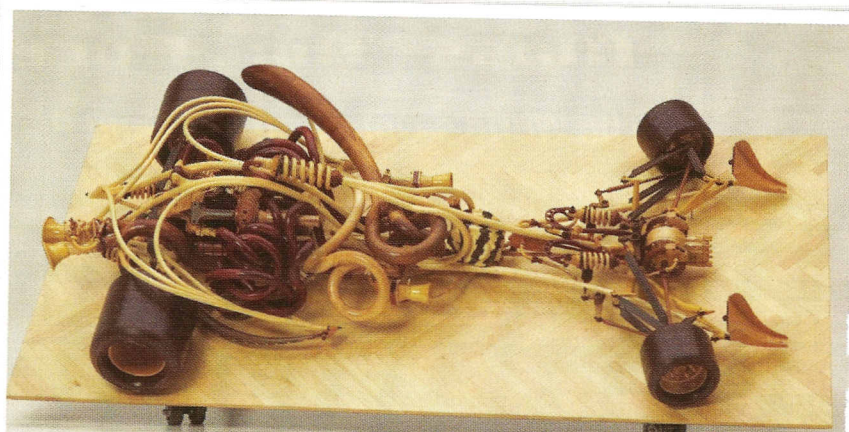
> Don Garlits sent Swamp Rat XVI, an early back-motor rail, to be exhibited with Mel Hoyh's Swamp Fox, a very late front-engine dragster. They lined up in a re-creation of the starting line at U.S. 131 Dragway in Martin, Michigan, one of the pioneer strips in the Midwest. Notice Gas Ronda's '68 Cobra Jet in the background.



> The Michigan Madman, E.J. Potter, visited the museum to see two of his famous bikes, Bloody Mary 2, now owned by Clyde Hensley of Canton, Michigan, and Widow Maker 7, loaned by Speedy Bill Smith's Speedway Motors museum. E.J. famously drove them off the ends of dragstrips at 170 mph all over America and England. The backdrop shows vintage photos of his motorcycle exploits.

> The Ingenue, a glass-bodied flopper built by Brooklyn Speed and Machine, features an all-Buick drivetrain. Owner Nick Hardie of Holland, Michigan, a graphics designer, created the new barn-find paint scheme and graphics. Notice the Funny Cars in the background. The first is the Walt's Puffer Monza that served as Wild Willie Borsch's last nitro ride, according to owner Wally Knoch, and farther back is Roland Leong's Hawaiian Punch car.





> Gunrunner

## HUNNERT CAR HEADS UP

If you're into the traditional hot rod and vintage drag racing scene, there's a new event happening right after you read this. Put on by the Chrome Czars Motor Club, the same crew that brought you the Hunnert Car Pileup (Mar. '09 issue), the Hunnert Car Heads Up is a nostalgia drag race coming to Great Lakes Dragaway in Union Grove, Wisconsin, on August 9. Drag cars are restricted to '64-and-earlier hot rods, customs, super stocks, A/FX cars, Gassers, and front-engine dragsters. The eight quickest vehicles will be entered into a Quick 8 shootout, but as the club says, "It's all for fun, so bring it out and run it, Slick." There are no prizes, no trophies, and no payouts—they're doing it for bragging rights. —ROB KINNAN



> Dick Long's '37 Ford dash

Photos: Mike Chase

## SEMA CARES

If you're in Southern California on August 1, check out the SEMA Cares Car Show at the Pasadena Convention Center. There should be more than 200 vehicles representing every facet of the car culture, from hot rods and muscle cars to exotics, trucks, and fart pipe-equipped sport compacts. "We hope this enthusiast car show will become the showcase event of the summer and grow each year so we can raise more money for two deserving children's charities," says Mike Spagnola, chairman of the SEMA Cruisin' Old Town Car Show and president of Street Scene Equipment based in Costa Mesa, California. "Our emphasis is to support Childhelp and Victory Junction Gang Camp." Proceeds will benefit the two groups. Founded in 1959, Childhelp provides services to abused and neglected children, while the Victory Junction Gang Camp provides life-changing camping experiences for disabled and chronically ill children. —ROB KINNAN

## WAY BEYOND A WOODIE

Take an ordinary material like wood and put it in the hands of a hot rodding sculptor like Mike Cooper ([www.michaelcooper.us](http://www.michaelcooper.us)) and odds are you'll want whatever he creates, even if you're not entirely sure what it is—like Gunrunner. The Sebastopol, California, artist spent 4,000 hours turning little strips of wood into this endlessly fascinating sculpture. From the crazy pretzel headers to the independent suspension, the exotic creation looks as if it actually could be driven in some alternate reality. Though Cooper prefers the purely creative world of sculpture, he does work on real vehicles, too. His own truck, a '33 Ford called The Tubester, boasts his signature headers, along with a stunning bent-laminate bed. The dash and door panels particularly reveal his sculptor's hand with incredibly complex shapes hand-molded from six different kinds of wood. Cooper also accepts commissions, like the

stunning dashboards he built simultaneously for two of Dick Long's hot rods. The one he did for Long's '37 Ford Cabriolet has a voluptuous quilted maple dash that embraces the driver with a waterfall console, while Long's Willys woodie has a more masculine, symmetrical look with a wenge and sycamore-stripped top portion and a curly maple bottom. Cooper's work with wood is so unique he's had to create his own jigs and techniques for bending, twisting, and molding the material into things like coil springs and U-joints. Now he's busy playing with metal and pneumatics in an effort to make a futuristic, go-kartesque contraption fly like a helicopter. Plus, he's been dreaming up a Can-Am-inspired '32 roadster. Cooper is looking for a benefactor to help create this admittedly unusual amalgam, which he envisions performing at the highest levels—in competition for the Ridler Award, America's Most Beautiful Roadster, and on race-tracks, too. —SUE ELLIOTT



## ATTENTION-GETTING DISPLAY

The impending merger of Chrysler and Fiat is intended to combine the resources of the storied Detroit automaker and the Italian industrial giant. Of course, all us die-hard drag racers know there has long been a very prominent example of combined Anglo-Italian technology: Hemi-powered Fiat Topolinos. So in the best tradition of an April Fools' prank, and through the miracle of Adobe Photoshop, the advertising madmen at Holland Communications have come up with what might make an attention-getting display at upcoming car shows.

Bill Holland  
Chatsworth, CA

P.S. My apologies to Phil Lukens for borrowing heavily from his awesome blown Hemi/Fiat Altered.

## GET OFF THE XBOX

I have a bone to pick about today's young guns. First of all, too much emphasis is being placed on crate engines, which suppresses mechanical skills. When a kid learns to rebuild an engine, he learns organization, technical skill, and creativity, not to mention the satisfaction of seeing a powerplant that he created fire up. We need our young guns to get off the damn Xbox and get a set of sockets and a toolbox—and maybe even a creeper. The second issue I have are the idiots who buy foreign-built cars then sit in a recliner scratching their butts because they lost their job. If you had told me back in the '60s and '70s that the Big Three would come to this, I would have thought you were on LSD. This whole mess is because people were not taught that you need to buy American to support our way of life. Buy American vehicles to create American jobs. It's time for America to start hitting below the belt for the sake of its own economical survival.

Edward Lapinkas  
Via email

We couldn't agree more, Edward.

## MUSCLE TRUCK

Keep the Muscle Truck (June and July '09 issues) ugly and get her to hook. I'd love to see an all-go/no-show pickup running high 11s to low 12s. I've got a '78 Chevy Fleetside in worse shape than your truck, and that's what I would do if I had the cash. Git'er done! By the way, rust holes are speed holes—they shave weight. Everyone knows that.

William Luckenbaugh  
Via email

We were completely blown away by the volume of email we've received on the Muscle Truck. That project really struck a nerve, so we'll most likely revisit it every now and again. It's a blank slate really, so let us know what you want to see done to it.

## BETTER JUNK LYING AROUND

Keep going with the Muscle Truck. I don't love it yet, but it is a project vehicle that we can all relate to and is being built with stuff from other projects and spare cash (although you guys have better junk lying around than I do). It is kind of a realistic project. I would hate to see it go all high dollar, and yet I want to see it finished and then modified after it's done 'cause we all know they are never truly done. Do this year's body and paint how-to on this truck, use it for the test mule on some new performance part, make it a part of HRM for a few years, then sell it and get another POS and start over. Isn't that what your readers really do anyway?

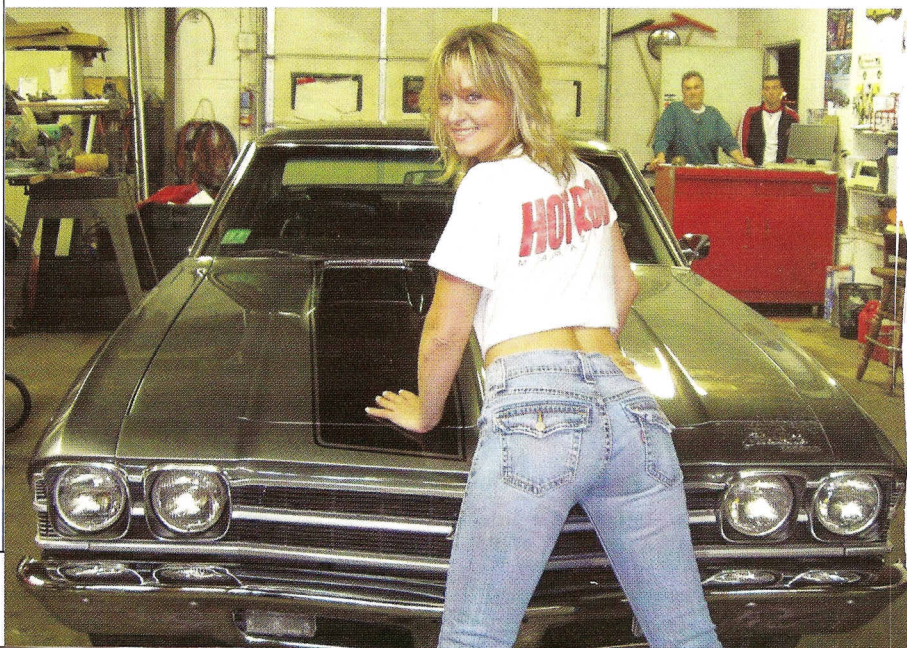
Rob Felts  
South Jordan, UT

## DREAM IS COMPLETE

Well, here it is, boys. My Chevelle is finally done. I can't even begin to tell you how it felt to actually sit in that driver seat and turn that key. I was finally reunited with my love. His 454 growls stronger than ever before. The thing that probably caught me off guard the most was the motor. I have waited, very patiently, for almost five years for my car to be restored. I never put too much emotion [at least I thought] into the revealing of it until the moment I opened my eyes and saw my motor all together for the first time. I couldn't help the tears from falling, and if you know me at all, it takes a lot for me to wear my emotions on my sleeve. That's how beautiful it was. I just wanted to send out a special thank you to the people who made my dream come true. To Jimmy Reynolds, my mechanic from Reynolds Auto Service, and his sidekicks, Jon Goss and his fiance, Kim, who are getting married this August at New England Dragway—thank you guys. A very big thank you to my dad for making me who I am today and inspiring my love for hot rods. And thank you, HOT ROD, for printing my letter. I have received so many letters, phone calls, and emails of encouragement from awesome men all over the United States who truly love the thought of a woman rebuilding her hot rod. Now that my dream is complete, I need to say thank you, guys.

Tricia Topping  
TMT Machine  
Tewksbury, MA

You may remember Tricia from her letter in the Oct. '08 issue of HOT ROD. Glad to see the car is done, Tricia. Now get out and drive it.





## THE MUSCLE TRUCK, AGAIN

I think it's about time we see more trucks in HOT ROD. I personally love old trucks and their hot rod potential. I'm 23 years old and have quite a collection of cars for my age, like my '67 Camaro with a 412 stroker, '02 WS6 Trans Am, '66 C10, and '65 C10 farm truck (above, my daily driver). The truck has a 350 with Corvette heads and intake with a three-speed on the floor and breathes through a Flowmaster exhaust. The interior is stock right down to the radio delete. I'm a Honda technician by trade but grew up in nothing but a Chevrolet household.

Joe Weavil  
Walburg, NC

## OUTGREEN THE GREENIES

Whenever your local, hip, Johnny-trend-jumper hops on his or her soapbox and maligns you for not driving a hybrid, or worse, directly attacks your hot rod, you probably feel like running to the local Sunoco station to water your lawn with a good batch of C16 leaded, all while releasing your collection of vintage CFC-containing hair sprays into their precious atmosphere. I understand. They've done an excellent job of turning off me as well. It's for this reason and the ebb-and-flow nature of public opinion that the zealots very well may come out of favor; and despite my vivid retaliation described above, it's a shame.

Fundamentally, the idea of clean, renewable energy independent of barons and despots is a good thing. I don't think many hot rodders would bat an eye at the proposition of the disappearance of oil and gas altogether, as long as there's a suitable replacement. That is, until factoring in the ill effect left on those not included in the environmentalist "if you're not with us, you're against us" tactics. I've seen many logical people, out of spite, take the opposite approach, seizing all opportunities to pollute and immediately dismissing any solution that even vaguely smacks of green.

With the teeter-totter nature of the mob, it's very likely these gut reactions to the greenies

will push things further when the public opinion sways, getting away with more dirty habits, and to me that is sad. It doesn't speak well for the critical thinking of our kind if we can't see past a few righteous hipsters and notice that we had been practicing sound environmental concepts of reduce, reuse, and recycle for years. Anytime the fenders came off a Model A or B, they inevitably end up at a swap meet. It's a small jump, really, to impose a concern for the planet along with elapsed times and g-force enhancements. That is, until the stubborn resentment builds between the popular ecological promoters and hot rodders. Therein lies the saddest truth; two groups that could have a common and agreeable thread will only acknowledge the other side as unreasonably immovable, negating any hope of cooperative efforts that very well could lead to an amiable solution for all.

So the next time your annoying coworker or neighbor belittles you for your big-block, carbureted, Earth-killing hot rod, keep that leaded dino juice off your lawn, the classic aerosols on the shelf, and don't hit your nearest storm drain with your used oil. Understand and transcend their shortsightedness. Show them with your actions that one need not buy into the green fashion statement to save the world. Run corn fuel in your ride until waste cellulose fuels become available, biodiesel in your tow rig, recycle your oil and household refuse, turn off your lights when you leave a room. Hell, stick a short-duration cam and a couple of turbos on that big-block and casually mention your impressively low carbon footprint the next time he talks about having to drive 45 mph to get his advertised mileage. If you outgreen the greenie, there just may be a big-block in his driveway one day. Just my two cents.

Jon Crowder  
Brownington, MO



## BARN FIND

I thought you might be interested in what I recently pulled out of a local garage. It's a fire-red '71 Buick GS 350 convertible with a white interior and top. It is a two-owner Georgia car with 77,000 miles and has been parked in the same spot in the garage shown for 24 years. The exceptionally nice 75-year-old owner's son started on the motor in 1984 and was kind enough to save every piece. Lamar Walden's unbelievable old-school machine shop is going to start on the engine and trans right away. I cannot wait to go for a top-down, starry-evening cruise in the GS with my wife and sons.

Mike Champness  
Via email

## RESPONSIBLE FOR MY DECISION

I want a copy of the first full-color cover of HOT ROD magazine. It has a red '32 Ford roadster, no hood, and is parked in a driveway with an attractive couple smiling at it. That photograph is responsible for my decision to move to California, and I never regretted it.

R.D. FitzGibbon  
Camarillo, CA

R.D., all HOT ROD covers are available for viewing and download on [www.HOTROD.com](http://www.HOTROD.com), but only medium-resolution images are available. At least it'll give you the information on what month and year the cover was, so you can find an issue online or at a swap meet.

## FOR PETE'S SAKE

I'm a little tired of the gloom and doom, "no more affordable projects" mentality. This idea that the average guy has to go out and look for mid-'70s four-door rust buckets to afford a project is ridiculous. If you want '60s muscle, there is still an abundance of first-gen Mustang coupes, restorable Mopars, Camaros, Malibu/Chevilles, first-gen Firebirds, LeMans, you name it, for less than 10 grand that desperately need to be brought back to life. Are you going to buy a driver big-block '69 Camaro in that range? Obviously not. But all it takes is a scan of eBay listings or an *Auto Trader* to see that old muscle is still in the realm of the garage project. Big Three big-blocks aren't particularly hard to find, and small-blocks are all but growing on trees these days. The aftermarket support is better than it ever was. You can make a 460 into a Boss 429, and the 400M even has aftermarket support now. The market for Chevy is nuts. You can pretty much build a hot 350 with change out of your ashtray. Come on. I'm not rich. I'm a junior enlisted man in the Navy, but I'm not going to buy a '76 Nova for \$3,500 when I can buy a '64 Malibu driver for \$9,000 (no offense to those who are into mid-'70s Novas). Yeah, the days of the \$500 roller muscle car are gone, but the cars are still out there. So get to searching already. Buy it, build it, and drive it, for Pete's sake.

Brad Bickers  
Kailua, HI

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Please help! Our hobby is in danger of becoming extinct. Up here in Nova Scotia, the government is pushing to eliminate all the older vehicles from the road. They've outlawed lowering kits, lift kits, and aftermarket lighting on vehicles. I am a dedicated hobbyist, and this all worries me. What's next? No antique or vintage vehicles allowed on the roads? We can't let the government up here ruin it for everyone. It's nothing but a money grab, but I have no idea who to contact or where to even begin. There is a great following of the hobby in Nova Scotia, and I fear this will hurt the industry. It's hard enough for the little guy to keep a vehicle on the road in these hard times, but now this?

Phil Miles  
Stewiacke, Nova Scotia, Canada

Phil, SEMA ([www.sema.org](http://www.sema.org)) has been working on legislation in Canada, as it does in the U.S.

## DARWIN LAID THE GROUNDWORK

I just read Kinnan's Starting Line column in the June '09 issue about how people can't drive and had to share. I am going back to Germany

for a visit in two months. Does unlimited speed on one of the most well-kept highways in the world with well-above-average drivers sound like nirvana to you gearheads? German drivers are the result of very tough licensing requirements. Handheld cell phone use is banned, and I have no idea what they do to chicks extending eyelashes while driving, but I never see any. It is too late for us in the U.S. Our roads are clogged with mediocre drivers who received licenses in Cracker Jack boxes and regard hurtling a 2-ton machine at killer speeds a pastime you squeeze in among socializing with a passenger, checking teeth for lipstick smear, and helping tie the kids' soccer shoes. I have a less-than-elegant solution. Darwin laid the groundwork. Eliminate all speed limits on U.S. freeways. The carnage will be intense for a brief time, but the net result will be a total annihilation of the hazardous drivers jacking up our insurance rates and making driving even to the store a frustrating and dangerous proposition.

Pete Gruber  
Via email

We like it, Pete!

## THE LITTLE SURPRISES

You hit the nail on the head in describing a car guy's lust for living in his shop (Starting Line, May '09 issue). My husband, Chris, has dreamed of a day when he could live in his speed shop, a business he started six years ago. Last month his wish finally came true when we decided to move into the shop, dog and two cats in tow. Due in part to the economy and in part to the fact that we practically lived there already, we converted some office space at the shop into an apartment. We added an oven, a shower, gave away half of our stuff, and rented out our condo. No one would have thought twice if Chris had told them he was moving into the shop, but I was the wild card in this deal. Everyone's first question was: "What does your wife think about this?" I will admit, I've always been a little resistant to the idea. To fully understand why, you'd have to know that I've spent the last six years working in the interior design industry. Our condo was my castle, and it was beautiful. So now I'm getting used to the little surprises of living in a speed shop. There are ball joints in my freezer alongside the frozen dinners, our hallway and "foyer" is lined with vintage racing posters and fuel additive banners, and we now clean parts of our home with a shop vac. Surprisingly, though, things are not as different as I had expected. We still have everything that really matters to us, and our new apartment is still beautifully decorated. Our life is much simpler now, and we sure do save a lot on gas. I suppose in the end we both got what we'd always wanted. My husband finally lives at his shop and

can tinker day and night. And I got my big place out in the country with a huge glassed-in front porch and the world's largest attached garage.

Kerri Sneed  
Sneed's Speed Shop  
Pfafftown, NC

You have a sister, Kerri?

## I'D BUY THIS CAR RIGHT NOW

For the last couple of months, you've been torturing me (and undoubtedly countless others) with small blurbs on the totally cool, new Mustang Cobra Jet. And now, after the coverage in the June '09 issue, compounded by Tim Smith's letter, I have to be heard. Why isn't a version of this car generally available for use on public roads? I would buy it right now if it could be had for low-to-mid-30K dollars. Build it with base Mustang trim throughout, the only options being A/C, auto trans, and tunes—same quarter louvers and hood scoop. Maybe black out the hood, but that's it. Keep it simple and most important, effective. Some would say, "Just buy a GT500." The GT500 is certainly covetable but way out of my price range—not to mention the high visibility and insurance that goes with the snake. Give me Cobra Jet!

Dave Voth  
Via email

The car was never meant to be road legal, Dave, and the engineering development that would have been required to do so is just prohibitively expensive, especially in this economy. But what's stopping you from building one for yourself? Buy a base V-6 Mustang and check out Ford Racing Performance Parts. Do it!

