

# The Wishbone Alley Gazette

October, 2017

**Rainier Auto Sports Club**

## Rally News

\* The Friday Nighter, "*Friday the 13th Rally or Beware the Black Cat*," for Oct 13, is written and measured. It is a very straight-forward, typical RASC "no trap" drive in the woods - or at least what woods I could find. It is short at just a little over 2 hours including ODO and Finish transits. The finish has been arranged at Pizza Hut on 128th in South Everett.

Rally Master, Steve Richards

### **\* Tales from the Nor'Wester. Chapter 10. Back at the Ranch. By Jim Breazeale**

Well campers, we did it. Now that the dust has settled, although the car still carries plenty, I can begin. It took a village worth of people and its idiot (me) to put this rally on. So many folks put their time and energies into presenting an event worthy of a Golden Anniversary that it may take till sunrise to thank them all.

First off, I don't know whether to thank or curse Roy Ward for quietly asking me to fill in as Rally Master. I can only thank him for his years of friendship.

I can't begin to thank the Route Master, Ron Sorem, enough for his never-ending patience, experience, mentoring and passion he brings to events such as this. He truly is one of the giants of rallying in the Pacific Northwest. Working with the Route Master, Chief of Controls Steve Perret and Kathryn Hansen selected well over 100 potential checkpoints and provided worker movement plans. The competitors only saw a handful.

Eric Horst took care of registration. His easy smile and attention to the task provided the online and in person support that makes it so easy to relieve competitors of their money. He was backed up by his friend Kevin Tower.

Marvin Crippen has spent countless hours and nearly a metric ton of coffee designing, creating and continuously improving his scoring program. The future of Scoring looks brighter and takes less time because of his talents.

The spectacular trophies were created by Andy Newell who claims he was just playing with his new toys.

Fresh off of a course survey Alcan rallymaster Jerry Hines, who has had his hand in perpetuating the Nor'Wester in many forms throughout the decades made time to work check points along with longtime friend Steve Brown. Many of our other checkpoint crews like Ken and Sue Lingbloom competed in Nor'Wester's long ago and come back time and again to ensure that no car goes untimed. Another veteran

Alcanista and Sweep Kevin Barrows managed to work controls and find even more scenic routes along the way. Newer members and Alcanistas Richard and Dolores Ranhofer relished another chance to use Otis (their famous Porsche Cayenne) for its intended purpose, Fun. Radio wizard and all around nice guy, Rod Johnson made sure the disabled Cadillac crew was not left for the weasels in addition to working several controls. Repeat offenders and friends of Andy, Jesse and Debbie Hires, graciously returned to hide their Jeep and work multiple checkpoints. Even the club's newsletter editor, Mark Nolte worked checkpoints and managed to escape without a chat with LEO. Nearly every single club member either worked or competed in this event.

A special thank you goes to David Fox and Tim Tyler, who are creating a video of this event for the club. They spent the entire weekend filming as much as they could and collected drone footage from Eric and Andy. We can't wait to see the fruits of their adventure.

Not to be forgotten, competitors Brian Cary and his navigator Julie Guthrie pressed on regardless and worked through several cars worth of problems to join us. They are hardcore. Last, but not least, Thank You Cristy, Madam Treasurer and my wife of 37 years. She endures with grace and perseverance.

Special moments were given for those who passed and couldn't be with us. They will always ride in our hearts and memories.

The biggest thank you goes to the competitors. They are our friends and we do it for them. This story took 50 years to write and I hope this is not the final chapter.



**Kevin Barrows timed rallyists at an apex from up the hill**

### **\* The 2017 Nor'Wester route by Ron Sorem**

We put together a selection of roads that held the entrants attention, provided some great views, and didn't generate calls from the sheriff. Speeds were generally lower than some RASC events, in most cases due to the character of the roads, or the severity of the exposure (or the view). We had a great group of checkpoint workers and scored 78 controls. Tiebreakers weren't necessary for podium positions.

Although there was at one point a four-way tie for dead last.

Friday included a test of Time Dec skills right off the bat. Idaho has made a "retirement" job of repaving some highways. I swear they were close to completion of paving that section in June. No major crises. The first hill climb didn't bring out pitchforks or shotguns (and no sheriff) with a 10mph crawl past a ranch house. A break at Dworshak Dam afforded a stretch or relief. The paved transit to and from the dam kept the tires warm. More narrow gravel, more agriculture, more construction. Another brief break then a climb up Coyote Gulch with RASC's usual checkpoints hiding in plain sight. The finale for Friday was the favorite downhill of Old Spiral Highway. Photo opps caught many cars well into the TSD from the viewpoint.

Saturday climbed Weissenfels Ridge with a tougher than you'd think speed of 24... Once on top and into the wheat field we stepped it up a bit, finishing the TSD at 48. "The Rattlesnake" is a favorite cycle route, knees down at a bit over the speed limit. We were a bit more sedate and careful. Again, our paved transits kept drivers entertained. The Grande Ronde river road, then the gravel climb to Grouse Flats. Running through the woods now. A couple of split checkpoints, and a downhill with switchbacks and exposures to Troy. Troy has seen better times. The resort and store are closed. For sale, and perhaps our next world headquarters.

Troy to Wallowa was not a course-following challenge, but the various road conditions and speeds kept drivers busy. Moving checkpoint crews was a bit problematic, including yet another errant GPS route taking a cp crew away from the intended, shorter, and printed route. The delay let the rally get ahead of this crew. A welcomed break in Wallowa, then into the hills again before lunch in Enterprise. It seems our schedule crossed paths with a softball team at the Subway. We also crossed paths with a wedding that we nearly crashed. (As in uninvited). Probably the largest traffic count Flora Oregon has seen in years.

One of our new favorite RASC roads is Redmond Grade. At 27, then 24, the repeated hairpins were challenging. We did get some spectacular drone footage, which should be available soon. Back to "The Rattlesnake" for our paved hillclimb transit. The Speed Limit on survey was 50. The state has lowered that to 35... Riiiiight. More twisty though the woods. A short (distance AND time) transit then down off the plateau through Sherry Grade to the Snake River, Asotin, and the hotel.

Saturday night's banquet was well received and food was plentiful. History of rally veterans in the room brought some great stories. Including Carl and

Carolyn Anderson who were on the original event in 1967. On their honeymoon.

Sunday retraced the Hwy 12 route, without paving delays. The first TSD was long. We managed eight checkpoints with five cars. A short break in Lapwai, then another long TSD onto the plateau. ORV use is ubiquitous in rural Idaho, and a local poker run was happening on our route, including at least one checkpoint where we needed to be. Conversations with their organizers got both events on the same page and there were minimal "surprises". Later on, one of our crews, and the Zero Car got a friendly wave from the Sheriff. Advance notice of our plans, schedule, and route brought no surprises to Law Enforcement. Down off the plateau with another eight checkpoints by five cars. Well done!

The Quality Inn opened their Quay restaurant just for the rally. Great cooperation with the hotel and staff kept the tired and hungry from storming the scoring table. A bit of Nor'Wester trivia held them at bay for a while longer.

Scores and Awards. Lots of smiles.

Congratulations to Paul and Yulia. Complete results and daily detailed scores at the Nor'Wester page on <https://www.rainierautosports.com/events/2017/norwester/>

### **Submitted By Wishbone Alley Gazette Idaho Stringer Correspondent**

William McRae's dream has wanted to run a Nor'Wester for a long time, since 1978.

Fast forward to 2017 and the 50th anniversary of Nor'Wester. William felt that in true tradition, a contrarian's vehicle must be rustled up and quickly for the 50th year anniversary Nor'Wester. What shall it be? With no Hudsons or Studebakers found in Craig's List, a more reasonable shopping list was: front wheel drive, rack and pinion steering, four-wheel independent suspension, four-wheel disks - but every car has those these days.

Then added to the list was "quad cams, 32 valves, and 300 horsepower and under \$2000" and "examples only driven by old spinsters/grandma". In the end it was a short list - 90's Cadillac DeVille.

So Rally DeVille II is born, purchased just the week before Nor'Wester, and just for the event for over one million old French Francs (about \$1700). It was thought that front wheel drive would be perfect for Totem (and for one more shot at T-bird). And the selectable, two-temperature seat heaters will come in handy in the harsh Canadian winter...

A two-owner car, the last owner squiring it for a full 15 years, and driven only by grandma/grandpa until they passed had managed to accumulate less than 6000 miles per year. Everything worked - the car was an absolute steal. The remaining problem then

was to find a navigator. Fellow Western alumni/rally-bug infector (and now Sea Fair pirate) Walter Toucher was first choice, but being a Sea Fair pirate has its schedule issues during August/September. During a casual bar encounter, the maître d' of the just-closed-for-remodeling Space Needle was press-ganged to fill the right seat at the last second. He was merely promised, "you are going to have an adventure..."

For a week it was Nor'Wester OR BUST in the William paddock. Silly sticker & decal production went into overdrive, a William rally car tradition. A Nor'Wester registration under the name "Nom de Plume" (as previously negotiated with his insurance company) was quickly dispatched to RASC HQ, promptly earning him the coveted car number "car last".

Day one of Nor'Wester was all about blowing out those old rally cobwebs and trying to figure out how to get the 90's era CD changer in the trunk working. The DeVille proved to be remarkably dust tight and the in-seat massagers effectively counter-acted the washboard roads of the first day. Respectable scores were to be had in the last two sections of the day by some accident, so it was thought Saturday was going to be the bright dawn of a new Cadillac era...

Escorted in the early morning light to the city limits by not one but three local Lewiston gendarmes, Saturday started with a whimper waiting for a bang. The Saturday first section climb up from the valley of Snake River found the Cadillac to be a wide car, a very wide car, especially with those 1000-foot drop offs on the navigator's side.

Once the grade was climbed and the ridge road was achieved, the Rally DeVille settled down. Literally, as the rear suspension leveling system still had no air pressure. The Cadillac was in its element on the high, undulating ridge road, merrily galloping along (there was not time to change the shocks before the event). Then came an ominous "BANG-THUNK" which sounded like bocce ball was coming through the firewall, followed by a ricochet staccato tour of the full chassis undersides. And then, ominously -- no power. Roll to stop. Rally over.

It happened so fast there was only one code on the Cadillac in-dash OBD display "ENGINE NOT RUNNING". Thanks for clarifying.

Quickly the mood moved to contemplation time. What is the value of rally sweep? Well, as last car, high on a ridge in the wiles of an unknown state (which AAA to call?) and with no cell coverage, sweep is, er, priceless. Nolte drives by and shouts, "There only one more crew behind -- good luck !"

Rod Johnson, forsaking CP duties, picked them up and took them to what was thought to be civilization,

a town with only a post office with a phone (but closing in ten minutes) and still no cell coverage. An expanded definition of civilization was hastily re-negotiated and the duo parted ways with Rod at Asotin (a fine town, with all the mod con's - bank machine, coffee, internet to find a Cadillac dealer somewhere west of Laramie, and taxi service to Lewiston. Oh, and cell service- 3 bars).

Arriving in Lewiston by taxi, a half-day was wasted with AAA (don't get William started on this). Time that could have been wasted in a perfectly good bar.

But the duo kept on-message. The worlds nicest and most ethical tow truck driver was located and around about midnight, as the song goes, the Rally DeVille II moved under borrowed International Harvester diesel power back down the same Snake River valley switchback to Lewiston to the local Chevy/GMC/Cadillac/LaSalle dealer. Keys were hastily stuffed in the service slot "It's the one with all the stickers on it"), and Rally DeVille II was left to the wiles of Mr. Goodwrench.

ORCA Club members Derek Mitchell & Pat Biggar were kind enough to get the intrepid boys back to Seattle via trusty Subaru. William asked a lot of questions about used Subaru's and pricing on the trip. He may be converted.

There had been no word on the fate of the Cadillac as the press deadline of the Wishbone Alley Gazette neared, when the phone rang and this correspondent received further details as relayed from Mr. Goodwrench in Lewiston. Mental calculations were made, "how many valves have to bend to sound like a baby petrified dinosaur egg bouncing around the engine compartment?" but the Service Department Agent said he had good news. The good news was that the Lewiston Chevy dealer service department was going to make a good profit in October.

It turns out the engine is whole. All 32 valves lived to drop another day. Best as can be re-constructed it seems that on the first day, the air line to the self leveling suspension had come off, effectively collapsing the rear suspension (the golf clubs and the complete Frank Sinatra CD collection that came with the car, plus the two un-mounted studded spares in the trunk didn't help).

The fuel pump had a bad day. Impact damage was suffered. However curiously, GM fuel pumps generally live inside the fuel tank. It seems this one had taken quite a knock from...*something outside*.

William recalls a particularly nasty frost heave making an unsettling noise (on a transit -- this was on pavement) just coming out of the (damn) dam visitors area on day one. Later inspection found this Titanic iceberg-size heave had left a permanent mark on the

dual mufflers (now much flatter and tucked/bent much further out of the way), but good sleuthing at the Chevy dealer also found some of this road-heave energy was apparently also absorbed by the polyethylene gas tank, just before it got to the mufflers. Apparently if you hit a Cadillac gas tank just right, it will take out the fuel pump. The best guess is that the frost heave started the process, but it was the final petrified dinosaur egg/ bocce ball size rock thrown up on that high ridge road the following day (probably by a Subaru) was what finally did it in.

So in short, “no fuel pump, no fuel, no go”. But engine OK. But all silver linings have a cost – in good GM practice, you must remove the rear exhaust and drop the fuel tank to reach the fuel pump because it’s easier to manufacture that way. Thanks GM.

However the good news is, Rally DeVille II will be ready for Totem once the new skid plate is installed and Hakkapeliittas are mounted. The rally Cadillac lives on, to fight another day.

**Numbers:** Friday: 141 mile, 4:49, 21 CP’s; Saturday: 270 miles, 9:49, 31 CP’s; Sunday: 165 miles, 5:54, 24 CP’s. Total: 576.93 miles, 20:32, 76 CP’s

\* Alcan 5000 (August 20-28, 2018) Chairman Jerry Hines is quite happy with entry requests, more than the event can accommodate. He expects a few to drop out between now and August. Firming up motel rooms is taking up his time.

<https://www.alcan5000.com/2018entry.htm>

\* Doo Wop (September 23) was a single-day stage rally, with 3 roads (Frisken [3.83 miles], Schafer [9.51 mi.] & Kuhle [6.41 mi.]) run twice. The rallyists were expected to print their own RI’s, then rece’d in the morning. One team *didn’t get the memo* and borrowed some RI’s.

Marcus Hansen did the scoring, from the “rally HQ” of a big parking lot. A “hot spot” was set up to link to the internet and NASA rallysport’s scoring system. Nook™ tablets run a car timing system, with times collected by a sweep vehicle, then transferred to Marcus’ laptop. Wirelessly...

No big offs, and the weather was nice.

## **Club News**

\* The 2018 RASC election has begun with vetting of members to be candidates for the November election. Of the 19 club members, 9 live too far away to participate in club meetings.

The RASC method is to be run by 6 elected members of “The Board”, with the past-President and Treasurer carry-over from the previous year. Four new Board members will be elected at the November

meeting, and then the new Board meets to decide who fills the 4 officer positions.

The Board also decides who will be the NWRC (NorthWest Rally Council) representative. Other positions such as Keeper of the Relics and RASC Brand, newsletter editor, and Inventory Manager are sometimes designated by the Board. -MN

### \* September 2017 Meeting Minutes

Secretary’s Note: While cleaning up my desk after Nor’Wester, I apparently threw out my meeting notes. What follows is a vague recollection.

The meeting, held at the trial venue Mod Pizza, was gaveled to Order by HRH Charles around 7:30 with the usual group of members and several Nor’Wester check pointers.

The previous meeting minutes were approved as read.

Madam Treasurer reported the club’s account reflected a substantial increase after a PayPal transfer.

### RALLY REPORTS

Alcan 5000 2018- Post survey tales included the usual mechanical challenges and solutions, the stunning beauty and the impressions of the overnight stays. The entry field remains strong with enough demand that the waiting list will fill out any initial dropouts as the event nears.

No Alibi 2018- The continuing efforts are working out day 2’s route avoiding Forest Service roads. With the soothing sound of Crickets in the background, an idea was proposed to allow club members to choose a task that interested them and create a rally by committee, eliminating the perceived overwhelming title of Rally Master. Comments were generally on the positive side with honest feedback.

Raindrop Rally 2018- This was blended in with the above and included potential routes and discussions of county speed limits. Island County may have the briskest limits on the west side of the Cascades.

Nor’Wester Rally, the following weekend- Details were either wrapped or brought up. Items on lists were either crossed off or added on. The checkpoint crews who came to the meeting were thanked in advance. Display and handing out of the event decals and new RASC anniversary stickers was met with enthusiasm except by one. The Route Master’s level of stress was elevated due to route book printing issues, Marvin held a training class for the updated electronic scoring program and double checked the printer compatibility and we agreed that things were generally good to go.

The Friday Niter Rally- RM Steve Richards indicated the majority of the work had been done and was soliciting ideas and help with the dash plaques and trophies. The event date falls on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>,

so there were plenty of suggestions. Richard and Dolores took the lead with smiles and an evil glint in their eyes.

#### OLD BUSINESS-

The 2017 Holiday Party/Meeting had more suggestions with the new McMenamins and Shawn O'Donnell's topping the lists. Awaiting details.

#### NEW BUSINESS-

Club elections came up. Ron Sorem and Mark Nolte will reprise their previous role of recruiting Board candidates.

The call to Adjourn and seconding was around 8:30. Training for scoring, Friday Niter trophy idea collaboration, Nor'Wester details and gossip ensued.

### ***Trivia***

\* Rod Johnson on driving in Italy:

Our travelling companions upgraded their car rental, and wound up with a 2.5L TD Alfa Romeo Giulietta. I settled for the basic Fiat Panda, with a 1.2L petrol motor. I shift a lot more, and spend a lot more time above 4K (red line is 7K), but I must admit it is a pretty fun little car to thrash.

It handles pretty well.

There are many makes we do not see on the US, and that is probably a good thing, but there are also some quite interesting vehicles.

It is a bit strange to see diesel powered Minis and very small Mercedes (C120), and a lot of the little SMART models.

Virtually nobody pays much attention to posted speed limits, if road conditions are good enough for the vehicle to handle them.

STOP signs are treated as Yield signs, meaning you apparently do not need to even slow down if you have a safe line of sight, and do not see a policeman.

Yield signs mean you have to have at least 1.6 car lengths before merging, unless it is a large truck you are trying to merge ahead of.

In that case, consider the speed of the large truck and the amount of damage he might just inflict on your roof, which will likely be the first point of contact with his vehicle.

In many cases the fastest route between places takes you on a toll road, but the shortest distance, an paved roads is by far the most enjoyable for the driver...*not so much for the passenger, unless married to an old rally person.* Back seat passengers have very little say in the matter, but in driving the Fiat, it is always fun to pull over for a picturesque photo, so you can play catch-up with your more casual Alfa driving friends.

\* Tim Chovanak needed a truck for Black Pond Farm. He solved the need with a red Ford Raptor.

\* Brian Cary says his 2004 Ford Focus needs a special battery, since the system puts out 16.4 volts.

### **For Sale/Wanted**

\* **1993 Legacy Super Sport** turbo sedan (Rare-maybe one of 25 imported). Burgundy, 5-speed, 153,000 miles. Set up for TSD with wiring and goodies. "Alcan proven". \$4000 (*Dramatic price reduction!*) Car is fine, just running out of parking spots. Steve Brown, 206-954-4267

\* For Saleness: 4 Brand new (never been mounted, labels still on) Falken Eurowinter HS449 studless Winter radial snow tires, size 225/55R17, V rated. Asking \$250. [roy.ward@frontier.com](mailto:roy.ward@frontier.com)

\* Radios For Sale:

- Icom IC-25A, ham 2 meter, \$40
- Icom IC-27H, ham 2 meter, \$60
- Yaesu FT1900, ham 2 meter, \$125

Roy Ward, [roy.ward@frontier.com](mailto:roy.ward@frontier.com), 425-485-6225

FREE: Exotic imported dash cam with *G-sense* something. Suction cup mount, Not Very Big. Includes instruction manual translated from Chinese into some obscure language that appears to be a blend of Middle English and Welsh. Roy Ward [roy.ward@frontier.com](mailto:roy.ward@frontier.com)

\* >> For Free: Five-gallon buckets (multiple buckets) of semi-truck tire chains. Used, may be rusty. Mostly 295/75R22.5 Many alternative uses.... Probably 20# per chain. Will hold a lot of things down...

>> More Free: CABLE CHAINS small SUV or Jeep...

#3027-WBTC NOS (New Old Stock) fits 11-15LT to 31x11.50-16.5 & 31x15.5-15LT.

>> Yet more free: CABLE CHAINS...And (more likely small car sizes) Two sets NOS (New Old Stock) #1026 fits 175-13 to 205/60-14 and up to -390, but there aren't any of those tires around any more... >>

\* Winter is only three months away! Offered by [ronsorem@gmail.com](mailto:ronsorem@gmail.com)

\* 2013 Mini Countryman, already listed on Nevada Craigslist. 40,900 miles, 6 speed. Jerry Hines (206) 227-6343

### **RASC Calendar**

(Thanks to Ron Sorem for keeping track of just about all events west of the Rockies)

#### Stage events

Oct 12-14 – Pacific Forest, CRC, Merritt, BC Moved due to wildfire danger

Oct 28 – Mendocino Rally, Willows, CA (one day event)

Dec 8-10 – Big White Winter, CRC, Kelowna, BC

#### Canada TSD

Nov 18-19 - Totem, Cache Creek, BC

Washington TSD (Friday Nighters are 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday)

Oct 13 - NWRC Friday Nighter by RASC



# RAINIER AUTO SPORTS CLUB

will meet this coming Monday, October 9, at 7:30 PM at MOD Pizza, 14309 NE 20th St., Bellevue, WA 98007. The new venue doesn't have table service, so plan to arrive early and order your salad in time to be ready for the meeting.

Monthly meetings are *usually* the second Monday of each month. Past Members, visitors, and spectators are welcomed.

Agenda: Nor'Wester stories. Drafting Friday Niter workers (a RASC tradition since 1968).  
Consternation over the Canadians scheduling a stage rally on top of our Friday Niter will be muted.  
Yet more discussion of a family-friendly holiday party site.

## **2017 Board Members:**

President: Charles Aggenbach: [charles@aggenbach.us](mailto:charles@aggenbach.us)  
Vice President: Marvin Crippen: [mandos@gmail.com](mailto:mandos@gmail.com)  
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