



# **"The River Cities Running Board"**



## **RIVER CITIES MODEL "A" FORD CLUB**

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# **RIVER CITIES MODEL "A" FORD CLUB**

This newsletter is the official publication of the River Cities Model A Ford Club, a chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America. It is mailed monthly to all members in good standing. Dues are \$25.00 per year per family. Membership in the MODEL A FORD CLUB OF AMERICA is a requirement for membership in the River Cities Model A Ford Club.

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**The River Cities Model "A" Ford Club permanent address is:**  
**P.O. Box 342, Columbus, GA 31902**

**All mail should be sent to the River Cities Model A Ford Club address above.**  
**Matters concerning the newsletter should be sent to the editor to insure timely publication.**

## **FOUNDING MEMBERS:**

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**Jim Langley Dec 2015-2017**

**Bob Smith DEC 2001-2003**  
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**Jim Langley DEC 2008-2009**  
**Al Lugo DEC 2010-2012**  
**Joe Spooner DEC 2014-2015**  
**Sharon Webb Dec 2018**

# From the Vice President...



## December 2018

**We** want to thank President Sharron Webb for accepting being our President this past year. She agreed to serve the Club even while she was selling her house and getting ready to move to North Carolina. This showed her great dedication to our Club and hobby. Sharon told us that she will be able to attend our Christmas party and we are looking forward to seeing her. We wish Sharon the best at her new home.

**Please** remember to continue to send your party reservations and 2019 dues to our Treasurer or to the club PO Box. We would like to have all reservations by December 13, 2018. Robert will be preparing a special meal so cost will be \$15.00 per person. Please try to pay before the meeting as we are trying as much as possible to avoid paying for party and dues during the Christmas Party.

**We** want to congratulate Jim Langley for accepting to serve as our 2019 President. The following officers were nominated and voted to assume the following positions:

President- Jim Langley

Vice President- Al Lugo

Treasurer- Richard Noxon

Secretary- Connie Penny

I know that Jim and his staff will continue to advance the club to new heights.

**We** wish to express our deepest sympathy to Mary Nelle and family in Paul's passing. Paul was a very active member of our club and his smile, dedication and his friendship will be greatly missed.

**As** we celebrate these great Holidays, let's reflect for a few moments and think of those in our Armed Services, serving in many places to keep us free and preserve our way of life. During this very special time of the year my family and I will like to wish all of you the best Holiday Season and "A" great New Year.

See you at the meeting,

Al

# JOIN US!

BY AL Lugo

**NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, December 20, 2018-  
6:00PM (EASTERN)

This will be our Annual Business Meeting and  
Christmas party at Woodmen of the World  
Lodge, on Highway 80, in Phenix City.

## COMING EVENTS

December 1	Tri City Christmas Parade
December 7	MATTS
December 14	Planning Meeting
December 20	Club Meeting
January 4, 2019	MATTS
January 11	Planning Meeting
January 17	Club Meeting

### CRUISE EVENINGS

Every 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday-	Cooks Hot Dog on Miller & Airport Thruway
Every 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	Jim Bob's (By Hobby Lobby)
Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	Jason Deli (Close to Sears)
Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	Country's on Broadway
Every 5 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	El Vaquero Mexican Restaurant (Stadium Drive, Phenix City)
Every 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday	Opelika Home Depot Cruise In
Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday	Phenix City Home Depot Cruise In (Starts March 18)
Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	Steak and Shake (Bradley Park Drive)
Every Sunday AM	IHOP Airport Thruway

### NATIONAL:

Nov 27-Dec 1	MAFCA National Awards Banquet- Tucson, Arizona
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# River Cities Model A Ford Club

Club Minutes  
November 15th, 2018

The November meeting of the River Cities Model A Club was held November 15, 2018 at the Woodmen Of The World building

Members present: Al Lugo, Mickey Timber, Glen Williams, Cindy Williams, Bob Smith, Dick Noxon, Jim Langley, Joe Spooner, June Spooner, Joe Carter, Pat Gamble, Mark Gamble, John Robertson, Ricki Robertson, Tom Ellis, Sharon Ellis, Skipper Barfield, Bob Penny, Connie Penny, Jason Conry, and Bill Shirley.

Acting President Al Lugo fulfilling Sharon Webb term has moved to North Carolina opened the meeting with the Pledge and prayer by Joe Spooner. After acknowledging our members who are under the weather: Paul Singer who is in Hospice, Mary Ann and Russell Lester and Howard and Barbara Ruddick's daughter who lives in California and is in danger of the fires out there. Prayers to all.

**Nominating Committee report:** The Nominating Committee reported a slate of officers to be accepted by members for officers for the 2019 year. Nominated President Jim Langley, Vice President Al Lugo, Treasurer Richard Noxon and Secretary Connie Penny. Nominations were open to members and no one was nominated. John Robertson made a motion that these persons be voted on. Bob Smith second the motion, Motion passed. Officers will be installed at the December Meeting.

September minutes were approved as read in the newsletter. Motion by James Langley and seconded by Tom Ellis. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer's report was given by Dick Noxon. Tom Ellis a motion to approve report second by Joe Carter. Motion passes.

**Old Business:** Mileage of Model A is due to Dick Noxon today at the meeting. Veterans Parade was not well attended by Members. Jason and Tiffany Conry were only members present. Tri- City Christmas Parade will be December 1. Toy drive continues and will end at our December meeting. It was decided to donate toys to the Salvation Army. Motion by Bill Shirley. Second by Bob Penny. Treasurer reminded members' dues are due by December 31, 2019.

**New Business:** Reservations for the December Christmas meeting need to be made by December 13 in order to ensure food.

Pat Gamble and Mickey Timbes are planning great activities and decorations for the Christmas dinner.

Tom Ellis volunteered to donate Any funds needed for decorations.

Christmas bonus for Robert and Margie will be \$125.00. Motion by John Robertson and second by Tom Ellis. Motion passed.

MAFCA Directors and Officers insurance to be paid by January 1, 2019. A fee of \$75.00 to be paid. Motion by Tom Ellis second by John Robertson. Motion Passed.

Southern A's has invited our club to participate in driving at Fantasy of Lights at Callaway Gardens December 17 at the 6:00 slot. Tickets should be bought by members wishing to go before event for, Callaway Gardens The Gambles said anyone wanted to trailer their Model A can part trailers at the house.

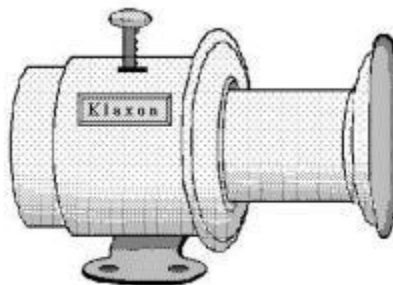
**Program:** Al Lugo gave a slide program of the Blue Bird no 1 and Fordlandia. It was enjoyed by everyone. After the program Joe Spooner gave a report on the Sweet Home Alabama our in which Joe and June attended. Next MATTS will be December 7,2018. Next Board Meeting will be December 14, 2018 at Burger King in Wynton Road in Columbus, Ga.

No other further business meeting was adjourned.  
Submitted by Connie Penny for Mary Nell Singer.

## **ANNIVERSARIES**



## **BIRTHDAYS**



**DECEMBER 1- Kathleen Walden**  
**DECEMBER 25- Chris LaClair**  
**DECEMBER 27- Mary Ann Lester**  
**DECEMBER 27- Gloria Willett**  
**DECEMBER 30- Maxine Williams**



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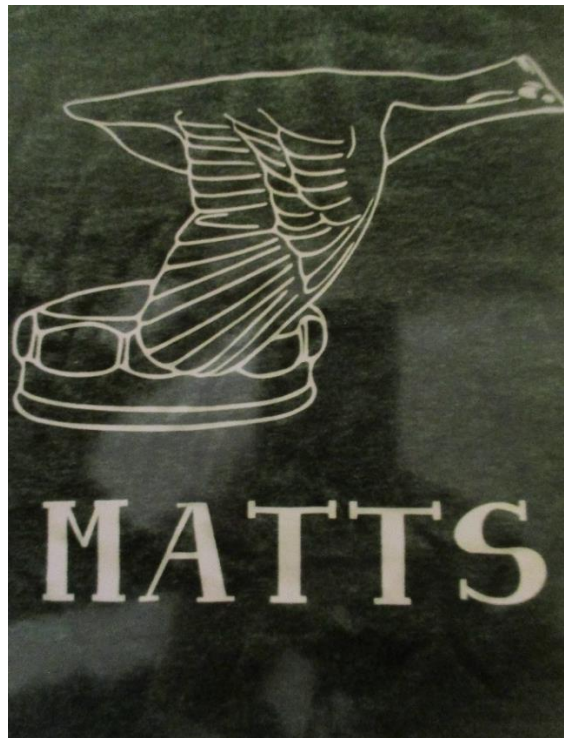
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**MATTS**

**December 2018**

**Photos by Howard Ruddick**

**We met on a clear Friday to enjoy fellowship and kick tires.**



**Al Lugo brought something special. See the Dunkin Donuts box!**



**Al and Jim in serious discussion. Also see our new member, Chris LaClair.  
Hey Chris!**



**A hearty welcome to Louie Willett, a longtime member.**



**Lookie Here! See the size of this connecting rod used in some large marine engines made by Caterpillar as shown by Bobby Penny.**

**Come join us on the first Friday of each month at Bobby's shop. We offer hot coffee, doughnuts, a chair, and fellowship as we learn about how we can keep our Model 'A's on the road.**



**Seasons Greetings from the MATTs Crew.**



**Club member Bill Shirley Teaching a little Model A Ford/Henry Ford history at Blackmon Middle School Columbus Georgia**



# More than just a car, the Ramblin' Wreck spearheads tradition at Georgia Tech



By [Tori McElhaney](#) Nov 6, 2018  11 

As fans take to their seats, players make their final pregame preparations and the final moments tick by before yet another football game at Georgia Tech, deep within the echoing tunnels of Bobby Dodd Stadium a group of students clad in matching golden collared shirts gathers beside an equally golden car. But if you think this golden car is just that — a car — anyone who has any connection to Georgia Tech would be quick to tell you that you are without question, absolutely, positively ... wrong. She is way more than a car.

The Ramblin' Wreck is Georgia Tech in a manner of speaking. It is the university's mechanical mascot, a call back to the Institute's engineering culture and the spearhead of tradition at the school. For every home game since 1961, the Wreck has made the same trek out onto the field, with the football team following in her tracks with a "Give 'em hell, Tech" flag flying off the front of her hood.

The Wreck is a school icon, a historic figure driving through the streets around the Georgia Tech campus. But more than anything else, the Wreck is and likely always will be if the Reck Club has anything to say



about it, one of the greatest traditions at Georgia Tech (the club prefers Reck as the spelling, while the Institute uses Wreck and has a trademark on "Ramblin' Wreck").

#### The Car

The Wreck is a 1930 Ford Model A Sports Coupe, and at the onset of the 1960s, it took Jim Dull, the dean of students, around a year to find her. But really, she ended up being right where she belonged when he finally did. She was parked right outside the Towers resident hall, right in the heart of Georgia Tech's campus, and when Dull saw her, he knew immediately what she could become.

At the time, she was owned by Ted Johnson. The story goes that he was on campus that fall day in 1960 to take in a track meet when Dull first saw the car. When he was first approached by Dull about the possibility of the university buying his car, Johnson was hesitant. It took Dull months of convincing before the car finally was purchased from Johnson for \$1,000 in May of 1961.

"The guy said no," former Wreck Driver Hillary Degenkolb said, recalling her favorite story about the Wreck. "We almost didn't have that car." Four months later, however, the Wreck rolled onto the field for her first football game. On that September day in 1961, Georgia Tech beat Rice 24-0, and thus the tradition was born. Since then, the Wreck has seen a lot in her days — some days better than others.

For instance: Tennessee students vandalized her when they broke into her garage at Neyland Stadium and painted her orange in the 1960s. Throughout the 1970s, fans of Georgia and Navy attempted to steal her (a few times, in fact).

Legend even has it that to make sure the Wreck was allowed into Sanford Stadium for the 1976 Georgia-Georgia Tech game in Athens, Bobby Dodd said Georgia's beloved, non-mechanical mascot, Uga, would never step foot in Atlanta again if the Wreck was not allowed inside the stadium.

At one point, the Wreck was a "cheddar cheese" gold, not her sleek Georgia Tech gold sparkle of today. Like the times, she has evolved and changed.

All these stories, the good and the bad, have been passed from generation to generation, written about in books about Georgia Tech traditions and history. She has many stories to tell because ...

"Everyone has a story with her," Degenkolb said.

#### The Driver

When it comes to the Wreck, she has a tradition within her own tradition: The Wreck Driver.

Since 1967, the Reck Club has been the sole caretaker of the Wreck — and every year, the club elects a Wreck Driver. And as the Club is the sole caretaker of the Wreck, that person is the sole driver of the Wreck for that year. If the current Driver is unable to drive the Wreck to a certain event, the Driver must find a former Driver to take his or her place.

The Drivers' responsibilities are numerous. Their schedules are booked with appearances at campus events, game-day duties, weddings and of course, taking the time to drive around campus during the week. But the work, as many former Drivers likely would say, is well worth it.

"I love being able to continue the tradition of the Wreck — that's the main point of the Driver, of course, to take care of the Wreck and to continue the tradition that has been a part of our school since 1961," current Driver Hannah Todd said. "It's such a crazy thing to think that you are worthy of such a position, and I am just in awe every time I get to drive the Wreck." This time last year, however, Todd wouldn't have even been able to drive the Wreck. She didn't know how to drive a car with a manual transmission before being elected to the position of Driver.

The same can be said for Degenkolb — the 2015 Driver.



The Ramblin' Wreck made her football debut before a Georgia Tech win over Rice in 1961. (Brett Davis-USA TODAY Sports)

For Todd, a few glances through the book "Automobiles for Dummies," a quick Google search of, "How does a 1930 Model A work?" and a few drives around campus with the Driver before her were enough to prepare her to take over the job. For Degenkolb, a few lessons with the Driver from 1984 got her right on track to learn the ends and outs of the Wreck itself.

"Being a 1930s car, it was like nothing I had experienced, so there was a lot of training," Degenkolb said. "There were lots and lots of failures, lots of stalls. It was definitely a learning experience throughout the whole thing." On top of all of that there is the actual maintenance of the Wreck, and while Degenkolb said the Wreck's engine is "a wonderfully simple engine" and that a full mechanical engineering degree isn't needed to fix it, sometimes things just go wrong. For many former Drivers, being the Driver isn't always as glamorous as it sounds. Degenkolb always will remember her first game day as the Driver — it's a day that would be hard for her to forget.

Georgia Tech was preparing to play Alcorn State for the first home game of the 2015 season. As the day progressed and the time ticked closer to the Wreck's grand entrance into Bobby Dodd Stadium for the first time that season, Degenkolb was rushing to make sure that the Wreck was able to actually do just that.

That day, the carburetor on the Wreck malfunctioned, and it was too late in the day to call the Wreck's mechanic in Maysville to come fix her before. But if there is one thing to know about Wreck Drivers, they are prepared to do whatever she needs when she calls because of their love for the Wreck.

So Degenkolb went out in search of former Drivers tailgating on the Georgia Tech campus because she needed reinforcements. With the help of about four former Drivers, a temporary part from a local Home Depot and a few zip ties, the Wreck made her way out onto the field with no one the wiser.

"That was a good introductory day," Degenkolb said with a laugh about the memory.

It's this connection between the past and present Drivers that Todd said gave her the most confidence entering her year as the Driver. Every year right before the start of the football season, the former Drivers all get together for the "Driver Dinner" to celebrate the start of the new Driver's year. Stories are shared, and advice is given, but more than anything, a community of small pieces of a larger Georgia Tech tradition is brought together.

The one theme that stretches across every individual Driver's experience is their shared ability to spread joy when sitting behind the wheel of the Wreck.

"I think a lot of the reasons why I love (being the Driver) comes down to the interactions that you can have with people when you are with the Wreck," Todd said. "I've had some really cool memories, whether it be giving a student their first ride around campus or getting to see somebody touch the Wreck for the first time."

Degenkolb always remembers the smiles.

"It means you got to bring something really special and unique and is a part of Georgia Tech history to individuals," Degenkolb said. "I get to keep those memories of people smiling at it, people waving at it — knowing that it meant something to them and knowing that (the Wreck) was in that spot because you sat it there. That was cool for me. It's something that I will be able to tell my kids about: this whole experience and the tradition and importance of it all."

#### The Club

Whenever there is a home game at Bobby Dodd Stadium, the morning of — right at 8 regardless of what time the game kicks off — current members of the Reck Club line the tables and booths at a Waffle House near the stadium. The Wreck sits parked outside as the members of the club in charge of taking care of her refuel for a busy day ahead.

Like the Wreck itself, the Club runs like a well-oiled machine — and at its core, the club is steadfast in its vow to continue the tradition of the Wreck. But it's important to note that the Club does not actually own the Wreck.

"The car isn't owned by the Institute or owned by any individual. We always say that it's the students' car," said Matt DeJonge, the president of the Club. "It's owned by the students, and it's for the students."

The members of the Club take that responsibility to heart, putting much of their pride in being ambassadors for the student body —connecting Georgia Tech students across decades, not just across campus.

"It connects you to such a rich past — a past that we are so lucky to have here at Georgia Tech," said Jake Grant, a four-semester member. "If not us, then who? That's kind of how I see it. If there was no Ramblin' Reck Club, would we still be so connected to the past? Would we be so connected to this identity?"

It's an identity that Georgia Tech has molded itself around. It's an identity that the members of the Club want to continue to push to the forefront of people's minds whenever their thoughts drift to Georgia Tech.

A lot of that is shown on game days, with the Wreck leading the football team down Yellow Jacket Alley and into Bobby Dodd Stadium or in the moments underneath the bowels of the stadium with fans cheering as the Wreck prepares to lead the team on the field.

"Maybe we don't cause fumbles or make passes or run the option, but at the end of the day, we still do our little part to help the team succeed because it's about more than the 11 guys on the field. It's about everybody showing up to support the team," Grant said. "The game is the culmination of everything else we do. The game *is* the Wreck. It is Georgia Tech all in one place and all of us together, be it an alum or a fan who didn't go to Tech or a current student."



The Ramblin' Wreck leads the Georgia Tech football team onto the field before home games at Bobby Dodd Stadium. (Jason Getz-USA TODAY Sports)

Being a part of the Club is one of the most sought-after memberships on campus. Written in the bylaws of the club, it is stated that there can be no more than 50 voting members who can be a part of the Club at one time. According to DeJonge, the Club can expect anywhere from 80 to 130 applicants every spring during the recruitment period. Of those applicants, there can only be about 20 who are rewarded probate status, which is kind of like being in limbo for the members: a year-long, non-voting membership before being voted into the Club at the end of that year.

Like the Wreck itself, the Club has many working parts. There is a seven-person executive board, as well as a multitude of chairmen and chairwomen who focus on specific aspects of the club (campus outreach, football games, homecoming, traditions, etc.). But more than anything, the Club's members hold their positions to transform the Wreck into more than just a car or a story. For many Georgia Tech students, alumni and fans, the Wreck is a living part of the Institute's past and traditions — and it's the job of the Club to make sure that sentiment remains.

"It's about making traditions not just stories but actual things that people can interact with," said Ebie McDonnell, the club's traditions chair. "For me, it makes Georgia Tech a lot more than just a school. We are in a community of living history, and for me, that has made my college



experience so much more than solely about learning something in a classroom."

While the responsibility to do so — to make Georgia Tech a community of living history — is great, as long as the Club is around, the traditions and history of Georgia Tech will not be lost any time soon. At the end of the day, it has been the work of the Club and its members that has solidified the Wreck as being more than just *some car*. It's the very foundation of tradition at Georgia Tech.

"It is important for us to maintain these traditions and make sure that they are innovating with the times but still not going anywhere," DeJonge said. "At the end of the day, the traditions are what gives the school a lot of its identity, and Georgia Tech has become synonymous with the Ramblin' Wreck.

"You see it, and you know right away that this *is* Georgia Tech."



# Tech Tip

By Al Lugo



**NOTE:**

These tips appeared in the booklet: "Henry "A" sez: 20 tips and tricks for the Model "A" owner", compiled and illustrated by Gene Patrick. I purchased the rights to publish this when I was in my Club in Texas so I was able to use in club newsletters.