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MAY | ISSUE |
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■ SPRING HAS SPRUNG?!?!?!

As you read this we will be beginning to load the trailers for the Import and Kit Car Nationals in Carlisle Pa. (www.carlisleevents.com). Our intense show schedule begins with that weekend and will continue until the end of June, with only 1 or 2 weekends off during that time.



The one weekend we have off is June 11th & 12th , and we intend to do a buggy ride and test some new suspension stuff at AOAA on Saturday the 11th. That day will be a group ride organized by our friend Hans. The group includes Jeeps, Rock Crawlers and Buggies. Everyone is invited, we meet in the AOAA parking lot at 8:30, split into like minded groups (casual, intense, & insane) and have an enjoyable day. Anyone who wants to ride in the buggy group with the Berrien Buggy guys may want to consider an extra change of clothes, as we tend to get wet and muddy. For more info about the AOAA venue go to www.aoatrails.com.



We just finished the first production model of our "Ball Joint to Link Pin" front beam

conversion. I did a successful test around our property, and will do the extreme test on June 11th. This new product lets you mount our Mid Travel front beam in a ball joint frame, but retain link pin arms and spindles for use in extreme off road use. We spread the tubes to fit a ball joint frame, using forged 1X2 1/2 forged arms. In that configuration we ended up with 2 degrees positive camber (the king pins leaned forward 2 degrees), the car was virtually impossible to drive safely. We then modified the arms and now have 4 degrees negative caster (king pin leans back 4 degrees). It works great! Now if you have a ball joint rail, and want to go more extreme with front suspension travel, without welding a completely new front frame section onto your existing frame, we have the parts to do it, and it's bolt on ready.



Last month I said I would "spill the beans" on the Gob Stopper Project, so, here goes.

A few newsletters ago I talked about age and the younger generation. That thinking about our future younger customers, and more than one missed sale due to a lack of an automatic transmission, led to the decision to embark on a major addition to our product lines. This new effort was named the Gob Stopper Project by Tyler, and involves Tank, Tyler, Bob, Little John and myself.

In order to provide an automatic transmission and an engine that is more familiar to our younger customers, we will be offering a separate line of our fiberglass buggies with the power train from a Chevrolet Cobalt, HHR, and most Saturn cars. This is the Eco Tec engine, mated to

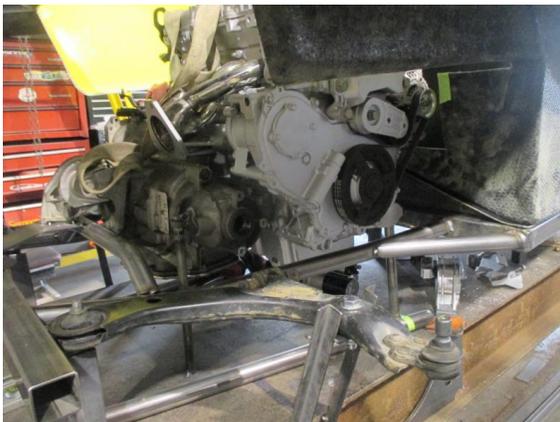
the stock GM auto transmission, mounted transversely at the rear. The car actually now becomes mid engine. We are taking a front wheel drive unit and moving it to rear wheel drive!

The ground rules for the project were;

1. Use our existing bodies, no new body molds to be created. Trim and make panels as necessary to accommodate the new power train.
2. Modify our basic Nostalgia and Genesis frames.
3. Make the build as customer friendly as possible
4. Keep the cost close to, or even with, the VW powered cars.
5. Use readily available salvage car parts as much as possible. There is a rather large quantity of these cars available in the \$1000.00 to \$2000.00 range.
6. The cars are to look like the existing VW based dune buggies.

The prototype is based on our Lancer body and the Nostalgia frame. The Lancer because we had one in stock, it is my favorite body style, and, Acme Composites was very busy and we didn't want to wait for a Nostalgia body, or butt inline ahead of a customer order. The Nostalgia frame because the 80" wheel base cars are our biggest seller.

The original idea was to use the complete sub frame assembly from a Cobalt, but that didn't work because the wheels would have been too far rearward. We decided to design our own rear frame section and as I write this Tank has most of the critical mounts designed and tacked or welded into place. The idea is to take all the parts off the donor car sub frame and bolt onto our frame (less the steering rack). This should expand the list of available donor cars.



Body wise we have cut out most of the rear deck section, and are in the process of designing the new firewall sections, and engine cover. The object here is to modify a current production body to use the Eco Tec. In the process of doing these modifications the decision was made to design a Tonneau cover to use as the engine cover. The off shoot of that is we are now going to be offering these covers for all 3 body styles with one version having dual headrests (pictured) and a flat version for the Nostalgia/Genesis, as well as one with dual headrests. These will be available mid July for resale.



Electric and computer issues are being worked out with Alpha Fab industries of Brighton, Michigan www.alphafabindustries.com . It was their engine we picked up at the Michigan Buggy Builders Show, and was destined for this project. We intend to offer a reprogrammed computer and modified wiring harness for these cars. The guys at Alpha Fab Industries are Eco Tec experts and have been a great help with this project.



Realistically I don't think we will be offering the completed versions of the Gob Stopper Project before January 2017. I am hoping for something sooner but my experience tells me that sooner may not be achievable. This new version of our buggies will be the GTX model, i.e. Nostalgia GTX, Genesis GTX and Lancer GTX. The pictures show the car in the very early stages of development. We have about one month till the Carlisle show and hope to have the car rolling by that time, if only slightly.



When we have completed the project we expect to have accomplished the following;

1. 1. A fiberglass dune buggy with retro looks that can be driven by anyone who can drive a car.
2. 2. A car that can be serviced or have it's drive train repaired at any repair shop (it will have an OBD II reader).
3. 3. A fiberglass Dune Buggy which will lend itself to use in a buggy rental business. Besides the automatic transmission, modern electronics will lend itself to tracking/disabling which make buggy rentals practical.
4. 4. A much more balanced car in terms of front to rear weight distribution.
5. 5. Plenty of horsepower, starting with a base of 170 hp.

As we move forward, I will be giving monthly updates on our progress. I do want to make sure there is no mistake that these cars will be an addition to our current offerings. We are not dropping, nor will we be backing away from the traditional Volkswagen based cars we currently are offering.

The first body in the new "electric" colors is now built. We went with Electric Orange. The body will be on display at Carlisle.

Until next month,

John

Featured Products for May.

C007-PP113101481FGR



PPI Valve Cover Gaskets

\$0.95

C030-BB340



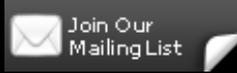
Berrien Buggy Windshield Mounting Kit.

\$46.50

** You must mention the newsletter to get this pricing!

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