

The Maple Lake MESSSENGER *Extra*

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Gear-Head Get Together: *From hogs and hotrods to classic cars and curiosities*

By Brenda Erdahl

The third weekend in August is fast approaching and that means it's almost time for the great Gear-Head Get Together.

A car show and much, much more, the Get Together, which celebrates its eighth year on Saturday, Aug. 18, has become a favorite event among gear-heads and non-gear-heads alike.

Last year an estimated 600 to 700 vehicles and 100-plus motorcycles were showcased at the event that took over much of Maple Lake and featured musical entertainment on multiple stages, a swap meet and an assortment of food.

This year Mega Jump BMX, a Minnesota-based group of stunt bike riders will further wow the crowd with their tricks of daring. They've performed for audiences at the Minnesota State Fair and the Wright County Fair. Besides daring stunts on everything from skateboards, BMX, scooters, inline, mountain bikes and mini motocross, they are known for tossing "fun stuff" into the crowd and giving away a pro-level bike to a lucky kid at the last show of the day.

Free to spectators and participants, the Get Together has seen tremendous growth since its inception, doubling in size its first three years, and continuing to grow each year since. It draws thousands of people from across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa for a unique display of mechanical ingenuity that, in the words of its founder Scott Chantland, offers "no plaques, no trophies, just a

bunch of gear-heads hanging out and looking at machines."

Where else can you find a 1939 motorcycle with a Chevy engine and a frame made out of Ford Model T parts, a vintage radial aircraft engine that revs up to thrill the crowd, a souped-up lawn mower and a pristine classic Corvette all in the same place.

Because of its immense popularity organizers have decided to expand to take up even more of Maple Lake. This year gear-heads will find exhibits and food at the Community Park just east of downtown on Division Street. As in years past, streets will be closed surrounding downtown Maple Lake to accommodate the multitude of shiny hot rods, collector cars, rusty re-models still in the works, motorcycles of all eras and intriguing odds and ends.

For those seeking a rest or some musical entertainment while browsing, "Crankshaft and the Gear Grinders," will perform on the Main Stage from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and "Beggars Dance," will take over from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m.

"The Whiskies" and "Heartstrings" will play at other locations on site throughout the day.

Alex "Crankshaft" Larson is the leader of his trio, "Crankshaft and the Gear Grinders." Inspired by gas station cassette tape collecting semi-truck drivers, Larson was introduced to a wide variety of music as a youth. In 1996 he traded a combination oil/wood stove to his uncle for his first electric guitar and amp. He's been performing ever since.

Business Buzz

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"Beggars Dance" plays Rock n' Blues with Sparky Anderson who's been called "one of the best harp players in the universe;" Jake Larson who plays the Bass sings and can "play anything," Leon and Steve Shifsky on drums.

Along with the nearby local restaurants, the Maple Lake Lions will serve hamburgers, hotdogs and French Fries near the main stage, at the swap meet and the park. There will be other food and refreshment booths scattered throughout downtown featuring wood fired pizza, corn dogs, ice cream, walking tacos and the Silver Creek Sportsman's Club's famous porkchops.

The swap meet will take place at Bolduan Park and the parking lot of Irish Stadium. Only gear-head items are sold at this meet and there are plenty of them. With more than 100 vendors, enthusiasts can find everything from car, motorcycle and snowmobile parts to entire cars and full motorcycles for sale. There are also lots of petroleum related items including vintage signs. "There will be no sunglasses, compression socks or Tupperware sold at this swap meet, it's all gear head items," Chantland said. Set up starts at 7 a.m. with the swap meet beginning at 8 a.m., rain or shine.



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(Photos from the Messenger archives)



Motorcycles of all eras, makes, models and condition line the streets of Maple Lake during last year's Gear-Head Get Together. The display attracted crowds of eager admirers.

Gear-Head committee members meet throughout the year to lift the get-together off the ground each summer. More volunteers are needed the big day,

but there never seems to be a shortage. Chantland emphasized that the Gear-Head Get Togethers' success, both past and future, is due to the diligent

work of many capable hands. "What makes it all possible is a very dedicated group of Gear-Head volunteers and an incredible group of sponsors."



The great Gear-Head Get Together offers a unique display of mechanical ingenuity with everything from rusty re-models still in the works to shiny hot rods, collector cars, motorcycles of all eras and intriguing odds and ends. This year's event will also feature a BMX bike show and music from "Crankshaft and the Gear Grinders" and others.



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Why switch to diesel engines?

Long-haul truckers and other commercial drivers are not the only ones filling up at the diesel pump these days. In fact, many private citizens are swapping their gasoline-powered cars for vehicles with diesel engines.

Although diesel engines were once thought to be dirty and loud, such cars and trucks can actually be efficient consumers of fuel. For anyone looking to save money and help the environment, diesel cars and trucks can be well worth the look.

- No spark plugs: Diesel engines do not have spark plugs or distributors as gas-powered engines do. That means they will not require ignition tune-ups.

- Longevity: Diesel engines are prized for their ruggedness and ability to withstand higher compression. Industry experts say many diesel vehicles can

have longer life spans than gas-powered vehicles. Plus they can be driven farther before they will require major repairs.

- Efficiency: According to Carophile, diesel engines can convert more fuel into power — between 45 and 50 percent — than traditional gasoline engines, which boast conversion rates of roughly 30 percent. Many diesel vehicles get great gas mileage and can deliver similar fuel economy to some gasoline-electric hybrids.

- Cool running: Because of their efficiency, diesels run cool, offers automotive company WyoTech. This is due to relatively low heat waste being released during operation.

- More torque: The resource “For Dummies” says that, because of the way diesel vehicles burn fuel, their engines provide more torque to the driveshaft than gasoline engines.

As a result, they may have greater towing capacity and accelerate more quickly from a standing start than vehicles with gasoline engines.

- No radio frequency: Diesels do not emit radio frequency because they do not require high-voltage ignition systems. This prevents issues with a vehicle’s electronic system, including frequency interference.

- Cheaper fuel: Although diesel fuel costs more per gallon at the pump in the United States, the overall fuel cost for kilowatts runs between 30 and 50 percent lower than for gasoline-powered engines, says Carophile. That can add

up to considerable savings over time.

- Synthetic fuel acceptance: Diesel engines may run on non-petroleum-based biofuels more easily than gas engines, which will need to be significantly modified to accept alternative fuels.

- Less CO: Diesel engines produce minimal carbon monoxide, which is why diesel engines are the choice in environments where gasoline engine exhaust would be deadly, such as in closed-in spaces.

Motorists looking to reduce their automotive carbon footprints may want to give serious consideration to vehicles with diesel engines.



Although diesel engines were once thought to be dirty and loud, such cars and trucks can actually be efficient consumers of fuel. For anyone looking to save money and help the environment, diesel cars and trucks can be well worth the look. (Photo submitted)

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4 simple ways to extend the life of your vehicle

Automobiles are significant investments. According to Kelley Blue Book, the average transaction price for light vehicles was \$34,968 in January 2017, marking a 3 percent increase from just a year earlier.

The decision to spend tens of thousands of dollars on a new vehicle is not one consumers should take lightly. Once drivers purchase their new vehicles, they can protect their investments and get greater returns on those investments by prioritizing maintenance and taking simple yet effective steps to extend the lives of their cars and trucks.

1. Drive defensively.

Aggressive driving is dangerous and can have adverse effects on a vehicle. When driving, always obey posted speed limits and avoid accelerating and decelerating quickly. Such a style of driving can strain vehicle engines and drive trains while negatively affecting fuel efficiency and wearing down brakes, states the National Institute of Automotive

Service Excellence.

2. Maintain a clean vehicle.

Car washes do more than just clean a vehicle. Routine washing and waxing can remove dirt that, if left on a vehicle, can gradually scratch paint and contribute to chips and rust. Over time, rust can affect vehicle performance and may even compromise the safety of drivers and their passengers if bad enough frame rust affects structural integrity. Routine washing also can remove road salt from vehicles. Salt can build up during winter when roads are routinely treated during and after snowstorms. Road salt can be extremely corrosive and, if left unremoved from a vehicle, can contribute to rust that ultimately can cause extensive damage to a vehicle.

3. Routinely check tire pressure.

Many of today's new vehicles alert drivers when tire pressure is low. Drivers should not ignore such warnings, as low tire pressure can af-

fect engine performance by forcing it to work harder than should be necessary. Engines that are forced to work harder than they need to likely won't last as long as those that run efficiently. Low tire pressure also negatively affects fuel efficiency, potentially costing drivers substantial amounts of money over time. Drivers of older vehicles without tire pressure alerts should routinely check tire pressure and keep tires adequately inflated. Vehicles that are slow to accelerate from resting positions may not have enough air in their tires.

4. Adhere to maintenance guidelines.

Drivers may have heard that today's vehicles were built to go longer periods of time between oil changes and tuneups than the vehicles of yesteryear. But drivers should still adhere to manufacturer-recommended maintenance guidelines. Upon buying new vehicles, drivers should read their owners' manuals to



Once drivers purchase their new vehicles, they can protect their investments and get greater returns on those investments by prioritizing maintenance and taking simple yet effective steps to extend the lives of their cars and trucks. (Photo submitted)

determine recommended maintenance intervals, and stick to those intervals for as long as they have their vehicles.

Cognizant of the sizable investments they're making when buying new vehicles, many drivers want to get as many miles out of their vehi-

cles as possible. Simple maintenance and safe driving habits can go a long way toward keeping vehicles on the road for years to come.

How to fix leaky vehicles without breaking the bank

Drivers expect to experience a few bumps in the road as their vehicles age. While certain issues, such as worn shocks or engine troubles, are best left to the professionals, drivers can address many other issues that commonly affect aging vehicles on their own.

Fluid leaks are one of the more routine problems that plague older vehicles. While leaks are not necessarily a sign of doom and gloom, they tend to distress vehicle owners and can

affect drivability. In addition, automotive fluids that seep out of vehicles can prove harmful to the environment.

Leaks may not be a concern for drivers of new vehicles, but studies show that drivers are keeping their vehicles for longer than ever before, suggesting that leaks are becoming a greater issue for more and more motorists. A 2016 study from the Institute for Highway Safety found that the average age of vehicles on the road in the United

States is nearly 12 years. By 2021, the IHS expects a 30 percent increase in vehicles that are 16 years or older.

So how can drivers address leaky vehicles before they contribute to potentially larger, more costly problems? Fortunately, leaks can be a relatively simple fix, which should assuage any fears drivers may have as the numbers on their odometers continue to rise.

Identifying leaks

Identifying leaks is the first step toward fixing them. According to CRC Industries, a global leader in specialty maintenance and repair chemicals, including K&W brand Stop Leak products, the simplest way to identify which fluid is leaking is to determine its color. CRC notes that red fluid suggests a leak in the power steering system or transmission, while black fluid typically indicates old oil or transmission fluid that has gone bad. If the leaky fluid is

green or yellow, then it's likely engine coolant.

Fixing leaks

Once drivers have identified which fluid is leaking, they can then take steps to fix the leak. Unlike other problems that plague older vehicles, leaks can typically be fixed quickly and affordably.

"Stop leak products can really save the day, especially if the leak means that you have to stop driving the vehicle," says CRC Technical Service Manager Scott Brownstein. "Our K&W Stop Leak solutions are designed to provide faster, less expensive alternatives for drivers who may be facing costly mechanical repairs."

Stop leak products can be especially valuable to drivers of older vehicles, who may not want to pay for repairs that could very well exceed the value of their cars and trucks. In addition, replacement parts for older vehicles are oftentimes not read-

ily available. In such instances, stop leak products can help drivers keep their cars on the road until replacement parts are found. Stop leak products also can be valuable in the face of emergencies, giving drivers time to get their vehicles to their mechanics.

K&W Stop Leak products are available to address any type of leak drivers may encounter, and drivers need not be car savvy or mechanically inclined to use the products without professional assistance. For example, K&W's Super Turbo™ Engine Oil Stop Leak and Steer-XTM Power Steering Stop Leak employ a "Pour & Go" formula that can get drivers and their vehicles back on the road in 10 minutes.

As more and more drivers look to extend the life of their vehicles, leaks figure to factor

more heavily in the lives of motorists. Addressing such leaks can be easy, quick and affordable. Learn more about fixing leaks

at www.stopautoleaks.com/metro.

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				• Legion Riders Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Legion Club • 7th Grade Choir Concert, 7:30 p.m.		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	• Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m.	• Silver Creek Township Meeting, 7 p.m.	• Hasty-Silver Creek Sportsman's Club Meeting, 7 p.m. • Maple Lake Chamber of Commerce meeting at Madigan's, 12 p.m.	• Sons of the American Legion, 8 p.m. • Lions Club Meeting, 7 p.m. at The V		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	• School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.	• Chatham Township Meeting, 7 p.m. • American Legion Meeting, 7:30 p.m.		• Wright Saddle Club Meeting, 7:30 p.m. • Maple Lake Legion Auxiliary, 7 p.m.		 Gear-Head Get together
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	• Gardening World Wide Meeting, 6:30 p.m. • Summer Storytime with Marie, 9:30 a.m. at the McHugh Building • Summer Reading with Rowdy, 9:30 a.m. at the Library	• Maple Lake City Council Meeting, 7 p.m. • Albion Township Meeting, 7 p.m. • Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m. • Maple Lake Township Meeting, 7 p.m.		• Knights of Columbus Meeting, 7 p.m. at St. Timothy's Church		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
• Bridging Zambia Pancake Breakfast 8:30 a.m. to Noon at the Legion	• Summer Storytime with Marie, 9:30 a.m. at the McHugh Building • Summer Reading with Rowdy, 9:30 a.m. at the Library	• Wright County Snowmobile Assoc. Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Legion Club				

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