

## ***The Tour to the 2010 C.H.V.A. National Tour***

This is going to be a little strange. Carolyn and I are about to embark on the C.H.V.A. National Tour and for the first time in a very long while we will be traveling without our "Garage Guru". Jerry (Screwdriver) Gorley and his bride have other plans so we will be driving to Montana without our ever present security blanket. This tends to make us just a touch nervous. Jerry has checked our car from stem to stern and thinks we should be OK, mechanically wise, but one never knows all of the quirks of a 60 year old automobile. He checks, I rub, he bleeds, I buff, he rotates, I shine, he torques, I watch...it's our normal routine. Carolyn & I fill the trunk with three weeks worth of cloths and margaritas and we are ready...I think!!!!

We're off! Powering down 'Straight Eighty' on our way to Winnemucca on the first leg of the 2010 National Tour, "The Corps of Discovery". It seems a little strange that there are 24 California couples striking out this week for the tour but for this first leg we are on our own. It's part of the mystique of C.H.V.A. that amongst the 24 cars on the road to the Tour's start in Great Falls Montana there are probably 20 different routes being considered by their occupants.

Carolyn and I and our 1960 Cadillac make only one short side trip on the first day of our trip. We stop in at the small town of Lovelock Nevada to add our pad-lock to a growing collection. For those of you who have not heard about Lovelock's attraction, I'll explain. On the back lawn of their period Court House were a couple of stanchions with a two inch chain strung between them. Someone thought that it would be a great place to put their "Love-Lock" so snapped a padlock, with their initials etched on it, onto the chain. Today there are literally tens of thousands of locks adorning many yards of chain that the Chamber of Commerce has added and more locks are added every week. If you fail to bring your own lock the Chamber will sell you one for about eight bucks and even etch the names of you and your love one on it. Ours is etched with "EB \* CB 2010, 51 Years & Counting". It's one of those little known roadside oddities that proliferate the highways and byways of America and make travel by automobile so enjoyable.



We check in to the Motel in Winnemucca only to find the Kelman's are there, as planned, but the Sutter's of Shingletown are amongst the missing. We find out that their 'Dolphin Ragtop', a beautiful 1960 Cadillac, had started spewing water & coolant in Susanville so had returned home on the AAA hook. Quick repairs are made and they

are now back on the road but about 200 miles behind us. We figure Jan will find a friendly poker machine in the Sparks area and they plan to catch up with us tomorrow.

The Cadillac has worked well with the exception of the loss of heater and a/c fan control. The purchase of a 25 amp fuse and some delicate work under the dashboard seems to have remedied the situation. A real problem fixed all by myself.....I am so proud. We dine at the casino, play a little poker and actually walk home with a couple of bucks extra in our pocket. Will wonders never cease.

The second day finds the white Cadillac and the Kelman's yellow Mustang closing in on Wells Nevada. At the exit to Highway #63 Carolyn states that the car is making a strange and increasingly loud noise. She refuses to let me turn the radio up (it works great on most noises) and we drop into a convenient restaurant parking lot to find the air-conditioning compressor has died. We say a short prayer for cool weather for the next couple of weeks and thanks to Joe's tools remove the A/C belt. This quiets that awful screeching sound and we proceed on our merry way. Approaching Jackpot Carolyn brings up the fact that we are very low on fuel. The altercation with the A/C compressor has caused me to neglect a prudent petrol purchase and we are indeed 'a little short!!' As usual I am optimistic and say we are good to go and as usual I am wrong. Two miles short of our destination, but conveniently at the entrance to a rest area the car coasts to an inglorious stop. Joe & I tell stories while we send the ladies off for some gas and they arrive back in no time with a borrowed can and 5 gallons of 'the good stuff'. We 'do lunch' in Jackpot and once again head for Pocatello.



We are running about an hour behind my roughly figured schedule and an hour time change at Jackpot doesn't help us catch up. I mull over the fact that bad things usually happen in threes so I anxiously await the third 'fickle finger of fate'. I'm not disappointed because as we enter Interstate #86 for a quick dash to Pocatello the generator light illuminates. Our GPS tells us the closest point of salvation is Baley's Service in Hazelton Idaho, Population 682. We arrive at Baley's to find one of the dirtiest garages in one of the saddest looking locations with bits and pieces of various antique motorized equipment strewn around the parking lot and our hopes plummet. When I ask if there is a mechanic on duty, one of the larger grease spots moved slightly and from under the back wheels of an eighteen wheeler and a voice growled "I certainly hope not!"

Out climbs Baley. I have yet to find out if it was his first or last name but it matters little as I spot his infectious grin. Baley is the antonym for 'Mr. Clean'. Six feet of stained coveralls, grease streaked cheeks and grubby arms, he extends a grimy hand, drops everything and asks how he can help. I explain my problem and he is under the hood with an electrical system tester in a flash. Battery checked, voltage regulator checked, belt tension checked, generator....does not check. Baley disappears into the dark depths of his unreal garage and returns with his pen knife and a fairly large ball-peen hammer. Ten minutes later he asks us to start the motor and his generator banging and brush spring adjusting has worked wonders. After a minor monetary exchange he wishes us good luck and we are off to Pocatello. I am writing this a couple of weeks and 1500 miles later and the generator is still operating fine.

In Pocatello we find a 1984 Jaguar XJS, belonging to the Williamson's, a rather shocking pink 1959 Cadillac Sedan Deville, driven by the Howard's and a 1966 Jaguar XKE driven by the newest members of the C.H.V.A. family, the Brock-Jest's. This couple was enjoying an interim stop in California on a jaunt from England to New Zealand when it was suggested they join our National Tour and get a real taste of the American west. Joe Howard lent them a Jaguar, they joined C.H.V.A. and they became instant, eager, full-fledged, tour participants.

The last 400 miles up interstate #15 is uneventful, with the exception of a little rain, and having Mick & Jan Sutter catch up and join us in Dillon is a happy event. Their "Dolphin Ragtop" is a welcome addition to our little group and it ends their long dilemma of traveling alone. As we approach Great Falls we begin to pick up other groups of tour people, talking on channel #8. They are arriving from various parts of the country and their enthusiasm is obvious. Judy Higday is heard guiding her bunch in from its tour of Glacier Park, Tony Romano heads a bunch from Georgia, Dick & Charlotte Klass along with Terry & Judy Borgmann are the Texas contingent. The sun peeks out and joins in the excitement, the plans have been laid, the cars have arrived, the people are pumped, the 2010 C.H.V.A. National is about to get underway and for a moment, at least, all is right with the world. Eric Beeby