

# news NHTSA



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Editor M. J. Noll

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Who's Who in NHTSA

## They Restore Old Cars



Craig Miller finds that keeping his 1963 Studebaker Hawk in working order requires a lot of tender loving care.

They strive to make the cars of the future safer, while they skillfully piece together the cars of the past.

Who are they? Craig Miller, Dean Niedernhofer, and Jim Small are three NHTSA employees who restore older cars in their spare time.

Craig, assistant executive secretary, has the newest of the old cars, a 1963 Studebaker Hawk.

"I never buy a new car," he says, "and I always have at least two cars."

Craig, unlike some of his colleagues, uses his car as the family car, even driving it to work.

When he purchased his Hawk in March of 1973, Craig had to tow it home. It was not until July of that year that he had his

Hawk out on the road. He spent two or three months of that time working on the body. He also had to install new brakes and a new hood and overhaul the transmission.

Parts have not been a big problem, as those that cannot be found locally can usually be obtained from the factory in South Bend, Indiana, at 1963 prices. The only drawback is that it takes a couple of weeks to get an order filled.

"My new hood only cost \$50 from the factory," Craig says.

Craig has a mental list of "Cars I've Always Wanted to Own."

"When I get a car, I don't intend to keep it," Craig said.

(See Old Cars on page 4.)



## The Genesis of NHTSA

*The following article, researched and written by Bea Dane of PACS, gives a brief and comprehensive history of NHTSA--when, why and how it came into being.*

Throughout the first quarter of this century, safety on the streets and highways was considered a state and local matter, rather than a subject of federal concern. Over this period, the number of motor vehicles proliferated from around 8,000 to nearly 18 million. Highway fatalities kept pace with traffic growth, and reached approximately 20,000 annually by 1924.

The rapidly mounting death toll sparked the first evidence of federal concern when then Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, convened the first National Conference on Street and Highway Safety.

### Then and Now

On April 25, 1901, New York became the first state in the nation to require automobiles to carry license plates. Each of the 900 registered had the owner's initials inscribed on the plates.

At the end of 1975, there were about 107,371,000 automobiles registered in the United States. This represented a 2.4 percent increase over the 104.9 million registered in 1974. For trucks and buses, 1975 registrations totaled about 26,356,000 or 5.3 percent more than in 1974.

There the matter rested as far as the federal government was concerned, until 1937 when the motor vehicle population approached 30 million and traffic accidents claimed nearly 40,000 lives (a record that was not to be exceeded until 1962). A second National Conference that year produced a report, Guide to Traffic Safety.

The next notable federal traffic safety event happened in 1946 when President Truman called the Third National Conference. This body published an Action Program for Highway Safety. Eight years later, President Eisenhower established the President's Committee for Traffic Safety which adopted the Action Program. More than half a century had passed since automobiles appeared in commercial numbers. There were now (1954) more than 58 million motor vehicles on the highways, and more than 35,500 people were killed in traffic that year.

In that half century, motoring passed from an experimental pleasure of the affluent to a flexible form of commercial and personal transportation within the reach of the working man--or woman. Numbers of vehicles remained more or less constant during World War II, and deaths declined markedly as speed and driving were curtailed. But once the war was over, vehicles of all kinds poured out of the factories in response

to pent-up consumer demand--and highway deaths increased, though irregularly.

In 1956, the first indication of Congressional interest in what had become a major public health problem was initiated by the Subcommittee on Health and Safety of the House Committee on Interstate Commerce. The following decade of Congressional consideration resulted in legislation which established: interstate compacts for traffic safety; safety standards for vehicles used by the federal government; the National Driver Register; hydraulic brake fluid specifications; seat belts; voluntary state highway safety standards; and, tire safety requirements.

By this time, a number of federal agencies were concerned with various aspects of highway safety. These included: Health, Education and Welfare; Commerce; Post Office; Defense; General Services Administration; Interstate Commerce Commission; the Interdepartmental Highway Safety Board; the President's Committee for Traffic Safety. The efforts of federal, state and local authorities to enhance the safety of the motoring public often proceeded with little or no coordination except for federal regulation of interstate commercial drivers and vehicle standards. It was recognized that their work in traffic safety could be done more effectively if the multi-

ple aspects and responsibilities were centralized. Traffic deaths exceeded 50,000 for the first time in 1966 and there were nearly 90 million motor vehicles on the road.

President Johnson requested strong legislation to establish an "aggressive highway safety program." Two Acts, basic to the work and authority of this agency were enacted and signed into law September 9, 1966. They provided for a National Traffic Safety Agency, and a National Highway Safety Agency, both to be located in the Department of Commerce. The Department of Transportation Act, also 1966, redesignated the two agencies as Bureaus, and assigned them to the Department of Transportation. Executive Order 11357 (June 6, 1967) combined the two Bureaus under the title National Highway Safety Bureau.

The work of the Bureau went forward as one of the components of the Federal Highway Administration until 1970 when it was made an operating Administration by act of Congress and given its current designation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Legislation in 1972, 1973 and 1974\* has added to NHTSA's responsibilities in several ways of

- \*1. PL 92-513, Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act, 1972.
- 2. PL 93-87, Highway Safety Act of 1973.
- 3. PL 93-492, Motor Vehicle and Schoolbus Safety Amendments of 1974.

which some of the most important are: to reduce economic loss from damage to passenger cars through issuance of bumper standards; safeguards against tampering with odometers; application of the highway safety program to the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Indian reservations; bicycle safety; mandatory schoolbus safety standards; and the ground rules for defect notification and remedy.

### In the Regions

MVP activity is normally thought of as being associated totally with headquarters. You may not be aware that there is a great deal of this activity going on in the Regions. All ten Regions provide excellent support to MVP, especially with regard to public inquiries concerning Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Regulations particularly in the areas of standards enforcement and defects investigation. At present, five of the Regional Offices are staffed with MVP representatives.

We would like to introduce you to one of these specialists, Joseph F. Zemaitis, Region IX, at this time and hopefully in subsequent issues provide a profile of other Regional personnel. Joe, a former Headquarters' employee, was involved in the Crashworthiness program. Prior to joining the Federal service, he had a long association with

the motor vehicle industry as a supplier.

In his new environment, Joe serves as the Regional Specialist involving



Joe Zemaitis, Region IX

all aspects of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Regulations and their enforcement/compliance. He is also concerned with matters relating to safety defects and serves as trouble shooter for problems concerning the total program. In addition to all of this and the numerous consumer inquiries he handles as well as serving as liaison with other Federal governmental entities, he serves as Technical Backup to State Program Managers for various state programs, such as motor vehicle inspection. The location, San Francisco, also calls for a great deal of cooperation with Customs on importation cases.

Joe says he enjoys the challenge of the broader aspects of knowledge of NHTSA activities that this position requires and his biggest problem appears to be time. He says his work could fully occupy 24 hours a day! However, he and his wife are finding time to enjoy their new home in California overlooking the San Francisco Bay.



## Old Cars

(from page 1)

Dean, a cost and lead time engineer, has two Model-T's from 1917 and 1922 and a 1917 Buick in his present collection. Dean bought his first Model-T before he was 15, and has been restoring old cars ever since.

He says, "Restoring old cars is not a hobby but an avocation. It entails most of the crafts: painting, upholstery, metalworking, glazing, etc."

After Dean has restored a car, he generally sells it and acquires something else. But he says, "I am lucky if I can get the price of the car and parts when I do."

On many weekends during the summer months, Dean attends various car meets and flea markets.

"The car meets are geared toward the family," he states. "In fact, the whole restoration process takes a family effort. For example,



Dean Niedernhofer's 1917 Buick

my wife is an expert when it comes to tops and upholstery."

According to Dean, the Model-T's can cruise between 35 and 40 miles per hour, while he likes to keep his Buick cruising around 40 mph. Before the 55 mph speed limit, he had the Buick traveling down the road at speeds in excess of 60 mph.

While attending these meets and flea markets, he is always on the lookout for spare parts. Those parts that can't be

found must be handmade, which can become quite expensive.

Compared to Dean's cars, Jim's are quite new. Yet his 1936 Nash is still a good deal older than Craig's Hawk.

Jim, administrative officer for MVP, actually has three Nashes; the 1936 Nash Ambassador, a 1947 Nash Ambassador and a 1935 Nash 400.

"As a kid I grew up with Nashes," Jim says, "and I've always been interested in seeing old things fixed up and put to use."

The amount of time that it has taken Jim to get a car in good working order has varied from car to car, depending on the condition it was in when he got it. His '36 Nash had very low mileage on it when he got it and repairs consisted of replacing brakes and some rewiring.

His '35 Nash has been a different story. He got it about a year and a half ago and is still working on it, as he has had to restore it from the ground up.



Jim Small's 1936 Nash Ambassador

Parts, he says, do present problems at times. The mechanical parts are easier to find than the body parts. The Nash Club has a quarterly magazine. An ad in the "parts wanted" section usually brings results.

Jim has Historic Use Tags on his car and thus can only use his cars in shows and parades, going to and from them, and taking the car to get repairs or gas. He cannot even stop to pick up a quart of milk while on the way.

If you would like to get involved in restoring old cars, Dean's advice is to join a club that deals with the type of car you like. As a member, you can go to shows, see what appeals to you and what you can afford.

Dean feels it is good to start with a Model-T, which is easy to work on. There are enough around that it shouldn't get too costly. Some of the more exotic cars can become quite expensive. As a member, you will also be able to see how much time is involved in restoring a particular model of car.

Jim says, "A club is the best way to find out about a car. You find someone who has a car like yours and then pick his brains."

"A club is also a good way, and in some cases the only way, you can find the parts you need," says Craig.

A club is also a good way to find the car you are looking for, according to Dean, who traces down every lead that he hears about.

## Speed



by John Carson  
Motor Vehicle Programs

1974 proved that a very effective way to reduce highway fatalities is to reduce speed. With 1974 showing 9,500 fewer motor vehicle-related fatalities than in 1973, the value of lower speeds is clear. Several recent studies of the effects of the nationwide 55 mph speed limit have concluded that slower and more uniform speeds, not reduced travel, are primarily responsible for the 17-percent drop in the fatality rate. Better vehicles, lower traffic densities, and higher vehicle occupancy rates all contributed, but the dominant factor was slower speeds.

In making the 55 mph limit permanent, Congress recognized not only the fatality reduction and fuel conservation benefit of the limit, but also the generally favorable public reaction to lower speeds. Another important development is the Government's Energy Resources Council initiated goal of a 40-percent increase in gasoline mileage for new cars by 1980.

While there are various ways to achieve this goal, it conflicts with continued emphasis on high speed by manufacturers.

A safety hazard is created by driving at excessive speeds. Although 55 mph is the legal speed limit most of the present day cars have maximum speed indications of 100 mph or more. Besides having no practical value, these high speed-ometer markings may encourage people, especially youngsters, to drive fast to "test" the speed capability of the car. Recent statistical data show that one-third of the high speed fatalities occur to the younger generation, yet they constitute only 20-percent of the driving public. Also, accidents at speeds of 75 mph and higher have a greater fatality rate than those at lower speeds.

There are ways to reduce speed. Drivers can be influenced to travel more slowly—for example, by enforcement of the lower speed limit. Some domestic manufacturers have already reduced the maximum speedometer indication on at least some models to 85 mph. NHTSA endorses this move.

### The Successful Toastmaster

The very first step towards success in any occupation is to become interested in it.

Sir William Osler



## It's a Struggle, But Training Can Help

Not many of us are superhuman and can leap over tall buildings in a single bound. To most, the struggle up the ladder of success is, or at least seems to be, a slow, tedious process. Some, of course, climb more adeptly and quickly than others; some never make it at all.

For those who do achieve their individual goals, training often plays an important role. One manager who advanced rather rapidly to the position he now holds attributes a large part of his success to a planned training program. Planned in that he established a long-range training program for himself and then stuck to it. And with his focus still on the future, he has set up another five-year training plan for himself.

There are a variety of educational institutions and schools that offer training to improve present skills, prepare employees for jobs in different fields, or provide them with knowledge that will help increase their



Larry Pavlinski, TSP, obtained an Advanced Certificate of Accomplishment from the USDA Graduate School by taking a course or two each semester over a period of several years.

opportunities for advancement to management positions.

In the Washington, D.C. area, local colleges and universities--such as American, Howard, Georgetown and George Washington--service a large number of government employees. Many are working toward degrees, either bachelor or advanced, by taking evening courses. Others prefer to take courses here and there to expand

their knowledge in their given professions. For information and entrance requirements, contact the registrar's office of the university or college of your choice.

The Civil Service Commission, as most of us are aware, offers courses for the government employee in a broad range of categories. Most of these are given during the day, and, of course, must be planned with and agreed to by your supervisor. Catalogs of available courses are kept in the Office of Personnel Management.

Recognizing the need for employees to continue their education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture officially established the USDA Graduate School in 1921. Today this school is widely recognized as a valuable center for learning. Most of the courses it offers (which are many and varied) are given during the evening and sometimes on weekends. Although the Graduate School does not grant degrees and has never sought that authority, it does cooperate with degree-granting institutions. Some colleges and universities will give academic credit for courses taken in the Graduate School, but a student who does want to use these courses in this way should consult in advance of registration with the college or university of his choice. Also, the Civil Service Commission accepts the credits of the Graduate School for examination and

qualification purposes, on the same basis as those from accredited colleges and universities.

In addition, if desired, a person can work toward a certificate of accomplishment from the Graduate School in his chosen field of study. Certificates of accomplishment are offered in accounting, administrative procedures, automatic data processing, editorial practices, general engineering, and public administration, to name a few. One NHTSA person who was awarded an advanced certificate of accomplishment in Public Administration is Larry Pavlinski of TSP. Larry said that over the past several years he has taken a course or two each semester to obtain this certificate. Information about the USDA Graduate School is available in OPM or you can call 447-4419.

If transportation is a problem or you must spend your evenings at home because of family or other responsibilities, you may want to consider an at-home study course or program. The USDA Graduate School has a program of this type. Its Independent Study Program offers courses by correspondence to adults in and out of Washington and overseas. A person can register for this program at any time and usually has a year to complete a course. For information about this program, call (202) 447-7123. There are also other institutions that offer courses of this type. For a listing of accredited schools, see Frank Duffy or Beverly Smith in the Office of

Personnel Management or call the Civil Service Commission.

The YWCA, Catholic University, the Jewish Community Center and many other local organizations and schools offer everything from "Current Events" to "Assertive Training." All are non-credit adult education courses, most of which are taken by individuals for self-improvement in subjects of particular interest to them.

There are also a number of specialized schools, such as computer training centers, that concentrate on training persons for jobs in a particular, specialized field. You will find a long list of these in the yellow pages of your phone book. However, we do caution you to check out the accreditation of these schools before enrollment.

During the past year, the Office of Personnel Management has conducted in-house training in writing improvement, typing, transactional analysis, contract technical management, and English improvement. In addition, OPM has paid for a variety of after-hours technical and professional courses at colleges and junior colleges. From January through September more than 430 NHTSA employees had received training either paid for or sponsored by OPM. All training through OPM must be approved by your supervisor.

Education is a continuing process. It can help us achieve success on

the job or help us grow as individuals. But it's up to each one of us to want it, to seek it, to get it and then to use it. Now's the time to develop your own personal training program for the next five years.

## 'Round About NHTSA

It's nice to know that Don Bischoff, RD, is back. Don had a motorcycle accident and was out about 3 weeks. Although he is back to work, his leg is in a cast, and he doesn't get out of the office very often. Welcome back, Don.

The holiday season has its moments of sorrow as well as happiness. Mr. Nobel M. Dutton, a member of the Region VI staff of Fort Worth, Texas, died on December 7. He will be missed by all.

## Personnel

### Welcome Aboard

Marge I. Ridley, Clerk-Typist, PACS, 11-9.

Larry C. Majerus, Program Asst., Reg VIII, 12-2.

Christine E. Campbell, Consumer Info. Respondent, PACS, 12-3.

### Congrats on Promotion

Stephen Sacks, Safety Stds. Engineer, MVP, 11-23.

John Austin, Safety Stds. Engineer, MVP, 11-23.

## graffiti

Every year it takes less time to fly across the Atlantic and more time to drive to the office.

Anonymous

## Still a "Best Seller"

The booklet titled "Automobile Jacks," mentioned in Volume 1, Number 8 of NHTSA News, is still on the "bestseller list."

The Universal Tool & Stamping Co., Inc., of Butler, Indiana, has requested a supply of 35,000 of this pamphlet per month so that it could include a pamphlet with each jack it produces.

You can imagine the reaction of Eleanor Kitts, head of the distribution office, when Bernie Ames (PACS), who authored the booklet, handed her this request and said "do it."

Bernie, though, had already planned to send Universal Tool and Stamping Company a set of negatives. Aren't you glad, Eleanor?



## They Helped NHTSA Find A Better Way



Dr. Gregory presents cash award checks for \$50 each to Robert Hornickle, Technical Reference Division (center), and David Talley, Office of Budget (right) for suggestions which have been adopted within NHTSA. Bob's award winning idea was for a process for recycling office supplies. Dave suggested the adoption of a form to verify accounting reports.

If you have a suggestion which will reduce costs or improve efficiency of operations, submit it on Form HS-356 to John Budnik, NHTSA Incentive Award Coordinator, OPM, room 5306.

## NHTSA Job Openings

For complete details on these job openings, see the official vacancy announcements. Vacancy announcements are posted on the NHTSA Bulletin Boards at both the Nassif and Transpoint Buildings. They are also distributed to each Office Director.

Correspondence Analyst, GS-301-5/6, Exec. Sec. Opens: 12-12, Closes: 1-6. NHTSA 76-24.

Administrative Officer, GS-341-11, AD. Opens: 12-

11, Closes: 1-6. NHTSA 76-26.

Safety Standards Eng., GS-801-15, MVP. Opens: 12-19, Closes: 1-14. NHTSA 76-31.

Safety Standards Eng., GS-801-15, MVP. Opens: 12-17, Closes: 1-9. NHTSA 76-29.

Accountant, GS-510-9, Reg. IX. Opens: 12-19, Closes: 1-14. NHTSA 76-30.

Accounting Technician, GS-525-7, Reg. IX. Opens: 12-12, Closes: 1-15. NHTSA 76-28.

## Overtime

The Department has issued an order (DOT 3600.5, Department Policy on the Use of Fractional Hours for Overtime and Leave, dated 10/15/75) that establishes a uniform method of crediting overtime work under the Fair Labor Standards Act and Title 5.

In this order, six minutes or multiples thereof is established as the fraction of an hour for use in the Department for crediting overtime work. It further states that employees must be compensated for every minute of regularly scheduled overtime work and that administrations should ensure that an employee will not be required to work in increments of time less than the full fraction established.

All irregular, unscheduled overtime work performed, except for the two hour minimum overtime pay guaranteed under the call back provision (5 U.S.C. 5542 (b)(1)) will be accumulated on a workweek basis. Periods of time worked which do not satisfy the full fraction established will be dropped at the end of the workweek.

## Retirement Info

Retirement information is available in the Office of Personnel Management. Employees planning retirement should contact Adell Betts on 426-1594.