

## The Final Word

We hope you enjoyed this second issue of the all-new Texas Takeover. A special thanks goes out to all of you who have written articles and sent in other items useful to this publication. We need to get the rest of you involved now. Please send in, drop off, mail, fax, or leave under my Eagle's wiper blade any and all things AMC that can be used as newsletter fodder. Write up your attempt at a repair (successful or not), car show experience, parts house fiasco, whatever.

Also (I know I've said it twice already elsewhere in this issue), please do your part in the Officer elections. If you don't know the folks running well enough to make a decision, call other members and get some opinions. Bottom line: VOTE!! Ramble on, dudes.....



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# 2002 The Texas Takeover



The Official Newsletter of the American Motors Club of Houston

## January - February 2002



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The American Motors Club of Houston (AMCoH) is a nonprofit organization which exists expressly for the purpose of aiding and encouraging the use, enjoyment, preservation, and restoration of all American Motors vehicles. Any suggestions in this newsletter regarding modification of your vehicle are subject to common sense compromises among safety, longevity, reliability, legality, and resale value. AMCoH will not assume or accept any liability resulting from information contained herein. Any modifications are the sole responsibility of the person(s) performing those modifications.

## Club Information

The *American Motors Club of Houston* was founded in the early 1980's with the goal of advancing the image and preservation of AMC vehicles in Southeast Texas and the surrounding area. Our Club is one of a triad of AMC organizations in Texas - the *American Motors Club of Houston*, *Alamo AMC* based in San Antonio, and *North Texas AMC* headquartered in Dallas form a strong contingent of Texas AMC fellowship, experience, and support.

We are a chapter of the American Motors Owners Association (AMO). Although we strongly suggest joining this fine organization, AMO membership is NOT required to be a member of the *American Motors Club of Houston*.

Planned activities include a large display in the annual indoor Thanksgiving Houston AutoRama Show, the annual AMO Southwest Regional Show (location rotates between Houston, San Antonio, & Dallas), family picnics, cruises, parties, races, etc. The 2001 AMO National Meet was also held in Houston!!

We have regular monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of every month (7:30 PM) at the Hickory Hollow restaurant, located at 101 Heights Blvd. (just a few blocks south of I-10). If you are not already a member, feel free to join us for a "get acquainted" session before you sign up.

Ownership of an AMC vehicle or residence in our local area is NOT required to join our group. Interest and enthusiasm are more than enough. We'll gladly help you find your own treasured AMC if you don't already have one!!

Dues are \$18 per year - we are a non-profit organization, and 100% of your dues go to supporting club activities. The club officers do not receive a salary for their efforts. Dues and an enrollment form may be submitted at our monthly meetings, or mailed to our Treasurer.

AMCoH exists specifically to support you in your AMC endeavors; and we look forward to adding your own AMC experience to our knowledge base. If you need any additional information, feel free to contact any of our club officers.

## The Club Store

Thanks to Kevin's hard-nosed negotiation style; the Club purchased a load of slightly mis-colored 2001 AMO International Convention T-shirts at a greatly-reduced price; and we are passing the savings on to you. We are asking **only \$10 each** for the first one (including postage) and **\$6 for each additional shirt** (or \$6 each for all if you pick up), and we still have plenty of all sizes. **Further discounts for BIG multiple purchases!!** These are still the first-quality Hanes Beefy T's" - coloring is the only problem. Since the photo above doesn't show a real good representation of what went wrong color-wise, I'll try to explain:



1. On the front; the "blue" in the lettering and AMC logo is purple (instead of fading across in red/white/ blue; its red/white/purple).
2. On the front, the yellow on the Javelin is just a touch brighter than we wanted.
3. On the back, the "red" areas came out more of a florescent reddish-orange, instead of the correct AMC red. These are first-come, first served; limited to stock on hand. Please contact Prez Kevin Dalley or VP George Graham to purchase these while you still can.



The Club also has a few remaining AMCoH Hats left in stock. These hats were hot sellers at the AMO meet, and we almost sold out during the show. In case you haven't seen these yet; they are red, white, & blue, with the Club logo on the front, an AMC emblem on one side, and the famous Texas Lone Star on the other side. These 3 logos are **embroidered** on the hats; not just painted on. These are **\$15 each** (plus postage).



Also for sale is our new AMCoH Golf Shirt, in both plain and fancy collar/sleeve versions (fancy shown here). \$37 for the fancy, and \$22 for the plain. Both styles have the AMC logo on the sleeve, and the Club logo on the front. The fancy shirts are very high-quality items. **Show your colors!!!**

As always; 100% of the proceeds from the sale of the above items goes directly into the Club Treasury to support Club activities.

## Classifieds

Please submit all Classified requests to AMCoH VP George Graham

**For Sale:** 1970 Javelin SST 360 4-speed. Runs and drives. All new brakes and hardware (including master cylinder), new carpet, nice seats, NICE dash overlay, Torker, new 650 AFB, headers, new exhaust system, roof spoiler, vintage aluminum slot mags. Dent in RF fender. Some rust in rear trunk floor and rockers. Comes with spare Ram Air hood, 2 rust-free doors, and decent dash carrier. \$1,000 Contact AMCoH VP George Graham for details; 713-773-0931 Evenings or Email turbineguy@worldnet.att.net

**Wanted to buy:** Bucket seats for a 1977 Gremlin. Contact Randy Plotkin at 281-859-3643 or Email BRHHOUSTON@aol.com

**For Sale:** 1973 Hornet Sportabout, 304 V8/auto, Larry Roberts old car, runs and drives, I paid \$600 and I'll sell it for \$600, either I'm too big or it's too small, because it doesn't fit me too well. Contact Randy Helm at 281-578-6206 or Email NostalgicPast@aol.com or radmadrandy@aol.com

**For Sale:** 1923 T-Bucket with no eng/trans, needs finishing, no interior or paint, but it is a rolling chassis, (it has real 12 spoke American spindle mounts up front that are worth about \$600, on line) I bought it for \$2500 in San Antonio about 2 years ago and haven't done a thing with it except pay for storage for it, make me an offer. Contact Randy Helm at 281-578-6206 or Email NostalgicPast@aol.com or radmadrandy@aol.com



## 2002 AMO Southwest Regional Show Coming Up Fast

Yeah, I know; its only February. But time flies, so its time to start thinking about participating in the upcoming AMO Southwest Regional meet to be held this year on June 8 in San Antonio. This is always a good show; and usually attracts about 60 to 70 cars. Doesn't matter if you think your car is not good enough, bring it anyway; judging is optional. The San Antonio Club always shows us out-of-towners a great time.

If your car is less-than-dependable; the AMCoH folks usually try to caravan to the meet on Friday, and spend the night there. Those who can't get off work Friday will just blast over Saturday morning. The location has changed since their old haunt, Rooty's, is no longer with us. The new location is Biff Buzby's Burgers (hey, it sounds like a cool place). More details next issue.

## From the Officers:

We hope you enjoyed the prior inaugural issue of the new AMCoH newsletter. Judging from the feedback we have received; it was a success.

Starting with this issue, we are instituting a new recurring **Member Profile** feature. Each issue will have an article about one of our members; covering such items as how he or she got into the AMC hobby, family life, cars owned, prior convictions, sexual preferences, etc. We chose Tom Diehl as our first victim because he had already written an article about his start in the AMC hobby. Lazy bums that we are; this conveniently saved us quite a bit of work. If you would like to be our next guinea pig, please let us know. We will write the article if you wish; all you will need to do is pose for some photos, and tell us about yourself. Couldn't be any easier!!

Also be advised that membership renewal is in April. Start saving up for the \$18 dues now - no excuses for late dues. **Note that this year, everyone who pays their dues by April 15<sup>th</sup> will get a FREE 2001 Houston AMO Convention T-shirt!!** The shirt must be picked up at a monthly meeting (except for out-of-town members; those will be mailed). A Membership Renewal Form, Officer Election Ballot, and pre-addressed stamped envelope will be mailed to all members - we're making it as easy as it can be to pay your dues and vote in the Officers Election.

Did you hear the story about the Texan in Afghanistan?? There was a Texas soldier hunkered down behind a dune, with a whole herd of Taliban goobers about a 100 feet away. The Taliban's heard from over the dune "One Texan can take on 10 Taliban!!". The Taliban leader then gathered 10 of his best fighters, and sent them over the dune. There was a whole ruckus of noise over the dune, and then silence. A little later, the Taliban leaders heard "One Texan can take on 100 Taliban!!". The Taliban leader gathered 100 of his fighters, and sent them over the dune. Again, there was a big ruckus of noise over the dune, and then silence. A little later, the Taliban leaders heard "One Texan can take on 1,000 Taliban!!". The Taliban leader was desperate to prove the voice wrong, and sent 1,000 of his best fighters over the dune with heavy weapons. Then the fight got really loud; guns, grenades, and more. Then silence. But wait; someone is coming back over the dune!! One beat-up dying Taliban tumbled down the dune and into the Taliban camp and said; "Don't send any more men over there; it's a trick!! There are TWO Texans over there!!!".....

## Member Profile -- Tom Diehl

Welcome to this first attempt at our new *Member Profile* feature. This issue's victim is one of our more active members; Tom Diehl. Any of you who regularly attend the monthly Club meetings know Tom. He's always there ready to help out the Club in any way he can. During the up-front work on the Houston AMO show, he went way beyond the call of member duty; not only helping out with all of the grunt work before and during the show, but also burning up his own resources by supplying goodie-bag items and printing out hundreds of dash info cards (and humble person that he is; never asking for any thanks or recognition).

Tom is 54 years old, married to his wonderful wife Dee, and has raised 4 kids (explains the gray hair). Beside the silver '69 AMX 390 he now drives, Tom has previously owned a '68 AMX 343, and a '63 Amboat. He is currently working his way toward retirement at Shell Oil.

Tom is a self-taught mechanic whose exploits are the stuff legends are made of. He is not afraid to jump into anything - previous knowledge and experience on any particular repair problem is not a requirement (but that's the best way to learn anything!!). This will become clear in the following how-I-got-into-the-AMC-thing article that follows (authored by Tom; it was published in the latest AMO *American Motoring* newsletter!!). He has also recently caught the drag racing bug; and has been making many improvements in his AMX performance (hoping to spank David Vasquez' 401 Gremmie at the Baytown Raceway Brackets).

That's about it for the glowing tribute. Those of you who don't know Tom personally; come on out to a monthly meeting or any Club activity and meet him in person. He's a great guy to hang with (are you blushing yet, Tom??). Now on to his article:

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### *With A Lot of Help from My Friends;* by Tom Diehl

In 1968, I purchased a demo model 1968 AMX with a 343 V-8 engine and an automatic transmission. It was great fun but I secretly envied my friends with the 390 four-speeds who could run much stronger. Thirty years later, I fulfilled my dream and bought 1969 AMX with a 390 V-8 and a four speed. Over the next 3 years, the car absorbed many hours and dollars and I finally showed it at the 1999 San Antonio Regional and received a Bronze award. The following year, I showed it at the Dallas and again received a Bronze award. After the show, I listened to all the engine talk amongst the car owners and realized how little I really knew about my car.

## Presidential Perspectives, by Kevin Dalley, AMCoH President

First, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy & Healthy New Year. 2001 was a very challenging, yet successful, year for the Club. I would like to thank and congratulate all of our members on their hard work and dedication to the Club that made 2001 a rousing success.

We started last year with a very successful February bowling event that attracted 20+ members (and 5 AMC's) to the lanes. And best of all, the Club treasury paid the lane fees!!

Next came a Spring cruise to the League City Park for an event hosted by the Space City Cruisers. Randy Marino's '70 Machine took the top trophy there. Some of the group also attended a Spring Show & Shine and picnic at the San Jacinto Battleground Park with more fun being had by all.

Sadly, it was during this time we also lost two of our members; Bill Hughes and Cathy Davis (Ted's wife). Bill had been on a heart transplant list ever since he joined the Club; and as such was not able to travel to some of our activities and shows since he could only go so far from the Hospital (in case a donor was found). Bill was really looking forward to the Houston AMO Show, and was doing so much better physically that he was taken off of the transplant list, and had gone back to work and traveling. He was traveing out of the country when a sudden illness took his life. Bill was a great person, and one of the happiest and upbeat people I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. Prior to Bill's passing, we also lost the wife of Ted Davis (Ted is one of the Club's founders), Cathy Davis, after a long battle against Leukemia. Until she became ill, Cathy was very active with the Club, and had always contributed a lot. Bill and Cathy will be greatly missed by all of our members.

In between all of these Club activities, the AMO Convention was being planned, and was being constantly worked on by a group of very dedicated members. All of the hard work paid off, and we had a very successful Show, cruise, and banquet. The Club and its members received numerous compliments about how well the Show was run, and how much fun was had by all who attended. There was not one single negative comment from anyone regarding the Show!! GREAT JOB EVERYONE!!! Nearly every member pitched in to help in some manner; and that's what made the Show so successful.

There is one member who went way beyond the call of duty in Show preparation, and has not received nearly enough credit. That exceptional Club member is my VP, George Graham. George came up with numerous ideas to make the Show more professional; and any time I needed something done, he was right there to do it. All of the letters and printed material for the Show were designed by George. And much more!! He came up with the idea for the Banquet Bingo game, and designed and made all of the Bingo materials. This was by far the best part of the banquet. I would like to use this venue to personally thank him for his efforts.

Well, you'd think that with the AMO Show over, we would just sit back and do nothing for a while. Not so!! The next show to attend was the River Oaks MOPAR cruise in; which just happened to be the same day as the annual AMCoH Pool Party at my house. We started out with 7 AMC's showing up at the MOPAR show, then a group of us had a lunch-and-BS session across the street. This group and a number of other members then descended on my place for the Pool Party and an abundance of food and fun. Once again the Club treasury paid for everything!! I personally had a blast entertaining David Vasquez' 5-year-old daughter in the pool. My daughters are 19 and 22, and I was missing having a little one around. You would think that this was enough for one AMC day - WRONG!! A group of us then popped over to a big weekend cruise at a Pasadena Kroger lot. Usually 200 cars are there, and any AMC's get a lot of attention. The house finally cleared out about midnight. A full AMC day.

Next was the annual MOPAR/AMC Show at the Baytown Houston Raceway Park. During the 2-day event, the Club was represented by a number of members and their cars. David Vasquez had the MOPAR guys sweating bullets at the bracket races. He landed a second place; but watch out next year for his 401 Gremmie transplant.

The last event of the year was the Houston AutoRama. See the details elsewhere in this issue.

What a great and busy year!! Hope you were art of it. Make sure you are involved in 2002. Those \$18 dues will get you lots of activities, food, fun, and AMC fellowship. Well worth the price of admission!! Please pay your dues promptly, and be sure to vote in the Officer elections. I hope to see you all involved this year. AMC RULES!!

**Kevin**

*Houston AutoRama - continued from Page 7*

We almost won the "Most Dangerous Club Display" award since so many spectators tripped over our rope stanchion bases. We plan to fix that for next year using some of the funds we made from the July AMO show.

Other notables from the show were (1) George Barris signing copies of his book (next to our display), (2) some ex-Survivor bimbo signing autographs for \$10 each (was a row over from us) - only saw 2 people take her up on that, and (3) some wrestling babe (Chyna, I think) also signing autographs for an undisclosed amount. People were lined out the door for that - pretty sorry comment on society as a whole when a person has popularity of that magnitude based solely on the fact that she blew out 3 implants during her career. Geez - get a life people!! Sorry; I'm ranting again.....

Also unveiled this year was Ted Davis' new display case to show off his Lil' AMC collection. Very nice addition to the Club display.

The Club Officers also want to extend a special thanks to all who took time out from their Holiday break to help with display setup and tear down, and to those hard-core AMC'ers who pried open their wallets to pony up the entry fee for their car (the AutoRama ain't cheap) - that's above and beyond the call of duty. We will be working to improve the display for next year (will be in a new building) with such items as a new banner and new stanchions. Please feel free to share any other improvement ideas you may have.



## **New AMCoH web site is up and running!!!**

After a few months of being without a host for our Club web site, we have now secured a new service provider (funded through our AMO show proceeds). Our web guru, Lindsay Johnson, has loaded all of our data to the new site; and is currently working out the bugs. The new site address is [www.AMCofHouston.com](http://www.AMCofHouston.com)

Pop in and check it out. If you have any suggestions for improving the site, or have photos of your cars, etc.; please let Lindsay know.

*With A Lot of Help from My Friends -- continued from previous page:*

Upon returning home, I borrowed a lift and an engine stand and began disconnecting and unbolting things that I couldn't even name. Shortly after, I had the motor out and, well, now what? I unbolted this and that and it seemed like I had parts everywhere. I bought a shop manual from American Performance so I could at least name the parts that were now scattered about my garage. I began asking club members for a lot of advice and they were happy to share their experiences with me. I remember how excited I was when I got down to the crankshaft and began disconnecting the main caps. About that same time, and having no real direction, I thought it would be fun to disassemble, clean and reassemble some of the smaller pumps and engine accessories. I later found out that this wasn't such a hot idea. Everything was really clean but the virtually nothing worked. I may also be the only person in history to have reinstalled the fuel pump with the shaft over the cam. It really doesn't work well that way and it leaks a lot of oil. I also lost some parts from the power steering unit, had the fuel filter in backwards and the electronics, let's say, ultimately had a very interesting affect on everything. Surely the larger items on the motor would be easier to work on than the smaller pumps and accessories. Perhaps, but I went through several valley pan and exhaust manifold gaskets, and snapped a couple of bolts until I turned to some club members and got proper directions. With a lot of help from my AMC friends, I finally reassembled everything but broke down on the way to Houston's July Convention. Arriving on the "hook" was embarrassing but one of the Alamo AMC members fixed my timing and I was running better than ever in a few minutes. To my fellow clubmembers at AMC of Houston and Alamo AMC, thanks for your patience and assistance. I could never have gotten my car back together without your help. So, if you're sitting out there like I was, and don't know squat about cars, just begin and ask your club members for help. I'm sure they'll help you too. One last thing. As a member of the host club to Houston's July convention, I'd heard rumors that the AMO folks had a very strict agenda and could be difficult to deal with. However, at registration, I met an AMO official that renewed memberships and made me laugh so hard that I forgot how hard we were working at the show. I met another official that drove 1600 miles from Canada, just to fulfill his obligation as a judge. Overall, I found them to be very professional and a lot of fun. So, like my knowledge of cars, I had it all wrong. I'm very proud to be a member of the AMO organization and especially AMC of Houston and Alamo AMC.

Sincerely,

# Tom Diehl

## Annual Officer Elections Coming Up

As you may know, the American Motors Club of Houston has annual Officer Elections at dues renewal time in April. We did not have any Election last year due to the AMO Convention - we didn't want a "changing of the guard" right before the Show. This year its back to normal; and election time is upon us.

We would like to invite each and every one of our members to consider serving a term. See what its like to run a Club and be a part of the "inner circle". The open Officer positions are President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Activities Director. The Newsletter Editor is not an Officer position this year, as we are working out the bugs in the new newsletter. Nominations are now open to all. Feel free to nominate yourself if interested. Hats in the ring so far are:

President - Kevin Dalley (incumbent).  
Vice President - George Graham (incumbent)  
Treasurer - Charlie Fisbeck (incumbent)  
Secretary - Tom Diehl, Ted Davis  
Activities Director - David Vasquez



If you wish to nominate yourself or someone else, please contact Kevin Dalley or George Graham as soon as possible. We need to have a complete list of nominations in time for the next newsletter. **Cutoff time for nominations is March 15.** As stated elsewhere in this issue, an Officer Election Ballot/Dues Renewal Form and pre-addressed stamped envelope will be mailed to all current members - we're making it as easy as it can be to vote in the Officers' Election, and re-up your Club membership. **Please do your duty!!**

## Collectable Corner



If any of you diecast collectors have been to a Houston area Wal-Mart lately, you may have noticed yet another iteration of ERTL's 1/24 scale AMX; this time in a new box. This kit is our old favorite with the hole in the hood and minimal detail; and is finished in yellow with some weird "Draggin' Dragon" graphics, giving the kit a sort of Oriental flair. Price is \$14.97 for the kit. Remember the earlier purple and RWB kits were priced at \$15.88; so they have made a small adjustment for the tanking economy. Grab one while you can.

## Houston AutoRama Report



The American Motors Club of Houston fared very well at the 42nd annual Houston ISCA AutoRama over the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend. The AutoRama is billed as the largest indoor classic/custom/rod show in the country (though I don't know if that's really still true), and is worth a visit if you can get away from the Holiday's mooching relatives for a while.

The Club had its usual 6-car display; with each of the 6 cars in a different class. All 6 cars placed either "Best" (first), "Outstanding" (second), or "Place" (third or lower) in their respective classes. This is such a large show that there are a bazillion classes - my car was in something called "Current Restored '58 thru '64 Built During a Blizzard under a Full Moon on a Leap Year". Just kidding there; but there were a lot of classes.

The results were:

David Olsen - "Outstanding" with his '70 AMX race car.  
Randy Marino - "Outstanding" with his '70 RWB Machine.  
Larry Roberts (AMCoH Secretary) - "Place" with his original-owner '69 Javelin SST (yep, he bought it new!!).  
Tom Diehl - "Place" with his '69 AMX.  
Martin Brahm - "Place" with his '66 Ambo 4-door (its for sale by the way - nice car).  
George Graham (AMCoH VP) - "Best" with a '64 American (listen real close and you can hear my own bell ringing!!).

Dale & Jane Ott also unveiled their new little red Metropolitan in a separate display. They plan to campaign this car in the ISCA series shows, so they were not allowed to be part of the Club display. I hope everyone had a chance to see this beauty; its perfect!!

*Continued on Page 8*