



DIXIE VALVE CHATTER

Official Publication of the Dixie Chapter of the Buick Club of America

Visit us on the Web at www.buickclub.org/dixie

December 2015

A word from our Director:

Hello Dixie BCA members:

Thanksgiving Day is upon us. Just think of all we should be thankful for. Our families! Our health! Our homes! Our security! Our ability to worship as we choose! It goes on and on. Frankly, we take a lot for granted. Look around the world and be Thankful.

I think I will fire up the Wildcat, drive to the airport, pick up my aunt, and drive to the grocery store to pick up the turkey and fixings that I have ordered. Yes, I am Thankful! And lastly, I am thankful to have the privilege of owning a classic Buick and have many good Buick friends.

Happy Thanksgiving,
J D

A word from our Assistant Director:

This year's **Holiday Party** will be held on Sunday December 13th at **Ippolito's Italian Restaurant**.

Address: 350 Town Center

Suwanee, Georgia 30024

678-985-4377

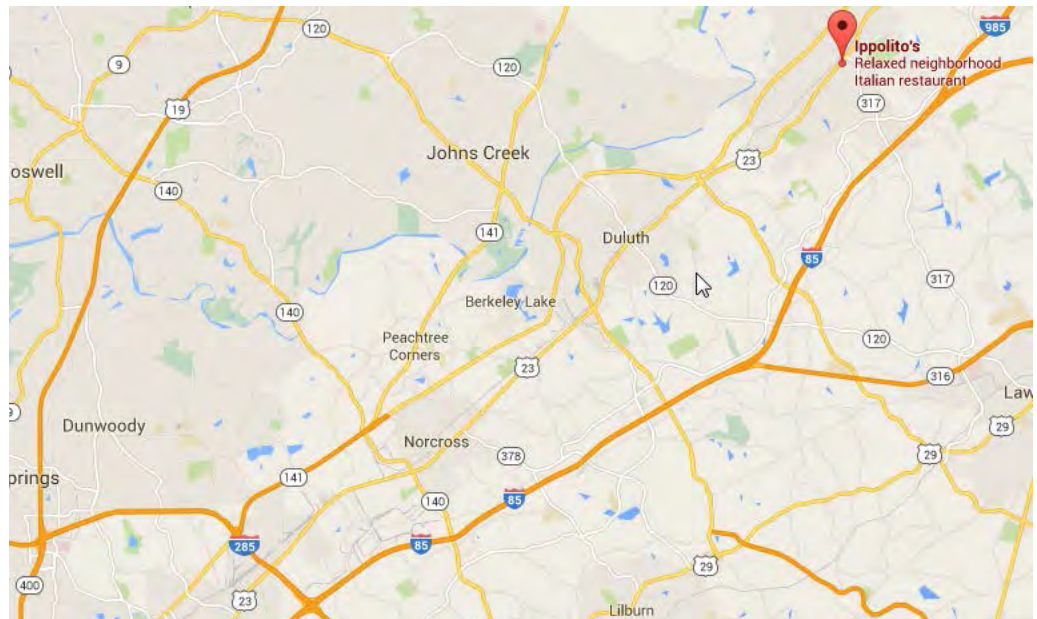
The party will start at 2:00 pm,
and continue until 5:00 pm

Dinner will be served shortly
after we arrive.

Menu: Salad, Garlic Rolls,
Lasagna, Chicken Parmesan,
Dessert and Non-alcoholic
beverages.

Alcoholic beverages will be
available in the bar area for
those interested.

The club will absorb 50% of
the cost of \$34.00 per person,
leaving each participant a
\$17.00 charge.



We will also have our annual gift exchange with a cap of \$20.00 per gift.

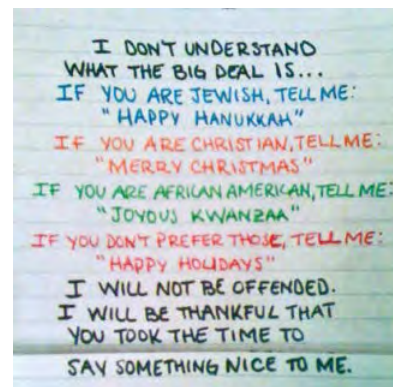
Please RSVP to Dave Gareau, buickman7185@att.net, or 404-863-9768, by December 11th.

Welcome NEW Member!

Pat & Cindy Levelle have joined the Dixie Chapter. They live in Athens, GA and have a 1970 GS 400 Convertible and a 2012 Regal GS Sedan. Please look for them and welcome them to our Chapter!

Editorial Comment:

I need to start off with a correction to the November *DVC*. The "Quiz Car" that **Andy Griffith** is shown sitting on was **incorrectly identified as a 1938 when it is in fact a 1939 Model 41C**. I'm embarrassed that I made this mistake since I've owned two 1939 Specials; both were Model 41, 4 door sedans. The 1st was actually the 1st antique car that I ever owned and was back in 1980. I had it restored completely "correct" and owned it until 1991. The 2nd time was only a few years ago when I had a 1939 "resto-rod" that I owned for less than a year before I sold it to buy the 1934 Club Sedan that I now have. Looking at the picture I was almost certain that it was a 1939, but instead of pulling out my copy of "Seventy Years of Buick" and checking I thought that the Andy Griffith website certainly would have it correct and went with it. Very often consecutive years have only very minimal exterior changes, but I obviously should have checked. Several members sent me emails pointing out my error, including **Bruce Kile** who also mentioned a very interesting connection between **Andy Griffith** and the **Dixie Chapter**. I immediately asked Bruce to write an article for the *DVC*. Look for it in this issue on page 7!



Also included in this issue is a transcript of a phone interview that **Tom Lynde**, our local radio personality, did for radio station WJGA 92.1 FM back in 2008 when the recently deceased "King of Kustoms" **George Barris** attended the World of Wheels Car Show in Atlanta. Look for it on **this** page!

I am always looking to all Dixie Chapter members for help by providing photos, article ideas, member news, cars & car "stuff" for sale and any other content that they think will be of interest to our membership. All submittals will be considered and I will use as much as possible. Please submit your ideas to me via e-mail to jerry.richstein@gmail.com or call me at 404-769-6071.

Jerry

It DIDN'T Happen in November:

The North GA Tour that **Dave & Tria** had planned for November 7th got canceled primarily due to heavy rain. In addition, there were only a few people that had called to Tria to let her know that they were planning on attending, but that also was probably due to the miserable weather forecast.

A chat with the late George Barris, by Asst. Editor Tom Lynde:

On November 5, 2015, the automotive world lost the undisputed King of Kustoms. Auto stylist **George Barris** passed away at the age of 89, leaving a legacy of some of the most famous cars in the world: The 1960's Batmobile, the Munster's Coach, and the Beverly Hillbillies' truck. Along with TV and movie cars, Barris was responsible for beautiful show cars like the Ala Kart and the Villa Riviera. I had the opportunity to interview Mr. Barris by phone and subsequently meet him in 2008 as he was attending the World of Wheels car show in Atlanta. This is the text of that phone interview.



George Barris and James Darren pose in front of the Villa Riviera.

Tom: The O'Reilly Auto Parts World of Wheels is coming to the World Congress Center in Atlanta, and one of the special guests there will be the undisputed "King of Kustoms," **George Barris**. I am honored to have **George Barris** on the line with me right now. There's so much ground I'd love to cover with you, and we have so little time. I guess I'll just dive right in. How did things get

started with you and your brother Sam Barris back there in Los Angeles in the 1940's? You guys basically kicked off the whole custom car culture there.



Alfred Romero, George Barris & Tom Lynde (L-R)

Barris: I guess I was fortunate to be an American boy back then who was into cars. Instead of being in the restaurant, I decided of having dishes I would rather have wheels. **So my parents gave me their 1925 Buick and I customized it.** From there it went on to the Deuce roadsters and right on up to the fat-fendered Fords. But, it was kind of a fun thing because of the cars, we got into doing cars for the movie industry and then on into TV. That was the big time. First it was The Beverley Hillbillies, and then the Munsters, Batman and Knight Rider, Dukes of Hazzard

and Starsky and Hutch. So, from all of these wild looking cars, I had a lot of fun as any American young boy would like to have had.

Tom: Let's talk about the history of the Southern California custom car scene. You and your brother Sam are credited with being the first to chop the top of a 1949 Mercury. Is that true?

Barris: Yes, we bought a brand new one; it had five miles on it. As soon as we got it down to the shop we got the hacksaws out, got the top off and started to figure out how it was going to go back together better than it was.

Tom: I guess it was different then than the custom car scene today, as the cars you built back then were street driven and often the owner's daily driver and only transportation the owner would have. For example, there was Bob Hirohata's Merc. That was a daily driven car.

Barris: Absolutely, and so was my brother's. Even while we were chopping the top and were welding it up, we were able to pop in the windshield and still go back and forth home. That was this fun thing in all of this. We were pioneering and doing all of this, we could learn how to do it and still made it a car that we were driving a lot.

Tom: How do you think the custom car culture is doing today? We've got Boyd Coddington and Chip Foose and others. Are they carrying on the torch, so to speak?

Barris: The new kids on the block are doing terrific. They have the equipment and they have more time than we ever had before. They have the luxury of sheet metal rollers, big welders, and shapers. We had good old sand bag and wooden mallet and we whacked away at the metal to shape it. There are a lot of creative guys out there, not just the Fooses and the Coddingtons. The kids out here in the East and the Midwest are doing terrific work. Walking through the show this morning, it was such a delight to see the beautiful cars, the craftsmanship, and the things going into them. The creativity is there. The Atlanta area is really very big and I was thrilled to talk to the owners and the families of the participants. And it does my heart good to see the car culture going off in different directions. Growing in leaps and bounds.

Tom: What do you think about the Tuner scene? Is it a grandchild of the custom car movement?

Barris: They are the new kids on the block. I worked on Fast and the Furious and Fast and Furious, 2. It's just another part of the car culture. Kids from 18 to 35, this is what they want to do. When I was the same age, it was the '32 Fords and '40 Fords. They were the tuner cars of the day. Of course now it's not just the tuners; we have the rat rods, too. They are just taking their car and doing what they can with the amount of money they have. They don't paint it or chrome it. They put an old Indian blanket over the seat, and away they go. There's just so many ways the hobby is going and it makes it more interesting.

Tom: You mentioned the movie cars. You not only did cars for movies, you did cars for movie stars. You had a lot of A-list clients back in the '50s and the '60s.

Barris: Yeah, we had Bobby Darrin, Clark Gable, John Travolta and Farrah Fawcett, Zaza Gabor, and of course Elvis Presley and The Beatles. We were able to do their private cars.

Tom: You even did a golf cart for Bob Hope.

Barris: (Laughs) We put a five foot ski jump nose on the front of it. Then Bing Crosby says that he wants a cart, too. So we did one for him with a five foot pipe.

Tom: And I understand that John Wayne had you modify several cars for him, not so much for personalization, but so that he could have a comfortable car to drive.

Barris: Yeah, for the Duke we did a Pontiac wagon that had the doors raised three inches and the roof raised six inches. Because he said (in a John Wayne voice): "When I get in my motorcar, I want to slide on in and not have to bend over."

Tom: Then there are the movie and TV cars. If I mention the 1955 Lincoln Futura, not very many folks would know about what I am talking about. But it became one of the most famous cars in America.

Barris: Yeah, I would say it is. Because we were able to make it that great old Batmobile! The one we made in 1966 for Adam West as Batman. It was a thrill car, because when I was asked to build a 20th century Batmobile in the 1960s William Dozier was the director and he was going with "Pow!" and "Wow!", and if I was going to build a car for that time I would do the same thing. We had the oil squirters going out of the back, nail spreaders chain cutters in the front, rocket tubes and parachutes and that's what the fun was. (Laughs) Crime fighting at the time was kind of intricate. It was fun to be able to do those kinds of trick things to the car.

Tom: You know, I still have the old model kit of the Beverly Hillbillies truck. That was another creation of yours.

Barris: Yup, a 1922 Oldsmobile. To make a jalopy like that in Beverly Hills is kind of hard, so, I had to go to a feed



store outside of Fontana, California. Out in the desert I found this old Oldsmobile. It was a four door made into a pick up. We spliced it together and Dozier said to me "There's one thing you need to do, George. You need to add a rocking chair in the back for Granny."

Tom: Now, with the Munster Mobile, you were under a time line to get that car finished. They wanted that car, like overnight.

Barris: Yeah, that was kind of a swifty because Friday morning when I went over to the studio, they had an old hearse there. And I took one look at the script and saw a real funny family, taking a Frankenstein and making him a wonderful guy. We've got to do something that is going to be part of the family. So my wife Shirley and I and the gang, we got together over the weekend and we put together three Model Ts, with coffin handles, big lanterns and spider webs, I walked in there on Monday Morning and the director said "you've only got a couple of weeks to play with it." I said that's what we have come up with and it'll be worth it.

Tom: And the other car in that series was the Drag-u-la and it had its challenges, too. I understand you had an interesting time trying to obtain the body for that car.

Barris: Ah, The fun part about it was that Al Lewis had to have a car, He was an old vampire and we had to come up with something. We went to a mortuary to buy a casket and the man says "Where is your deceased?" Well, nobody's dead and he said "Well, I won't sell you one." So, we went to the next one and I said I want a casket and he says "What are you going to do with it?" and I said build a car out of it. He said "Nah, get outta here." So I went to the third one and I didn't even bother to tell him what it was for. I just handed him some cash in an envelope and the guys picked up the casket and walked out. We literally had to steal it.

Tom: You said you have worked on Fast and the Furious, so you are still active in Hollywood?

Barris: Oh, very much so. We've just finished a movie called Benchwarmer, which is very funny. I just completed a project where I turned a new GTO into a two sear roadster with vertical opening doors. My latest challenge is something called a hybrid. Toyota called and asked if I would do one of their hybrids. I told them that I have worked on the Ninja Turtles and this looks like a Ninja Turtle, so I better put a change on it (laughs). It was a challenge and we had nine days to do it. So, we have a nice looking Toyota Hybrid out there and it's doing a great job.

Tom: Of all of the cars that you have had your touch on over the past fifty years, which would be your favorite?

Barris: I get asked that all of the time. It would be like asking the father of ten "which child do you like the best?" I have done thousands of cars and every one does what it is supposed to do: entertain people. I would guess that the most popular one is that Batmobile.

Tom: I guess anyone who has been around cars for a while has their favorite Barris story. Back when I was in high school, some of my buddies and I found an old custom Buick in a field behind a greyhound track in Massachusetts. We decided that it was too much for any of us to handle, so we left it there. Years later, I saw in a magazine where that car had been rescued and restored and that it was customized and once owned by Sam Barris.

Barris: Yep, yep... That was the first Buick Fastback that was chopped. In cutting the fastback and lowering it, we had to go in through the trunk. Splitting the truck to get that nice look on it, That Buick now is owned by a guy in Missouri named McCormick and it does appear at shows. Some of our old cars are coming back to life again. Sam's Merc is being restored, too. They found it in New York and brought it back to the West Coast. It is being restored along with the Ala Kart.

Tom: Do you still get together with folks like Daryl Starbird and the Alexander Brothers?

Barris: Very much so. We always had, every year, a Grand National or Autorama in Detroit and all get together: Winfield, Joe Baillon, Cushenberry and Wilhelm, the old timers. We get together and reminisce about pounding away at metal the way we had to do it, compared to the way the guys do it today. And we sit and have a round table discussion with them, too. It's kind of fun to talk about the different periods of time.



George Barris with the Batmobile



Editor's Note: You can read more about **George Barris** on Wikipedia (+ lots of other online sites) at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Barris_%28auto_customizer%29

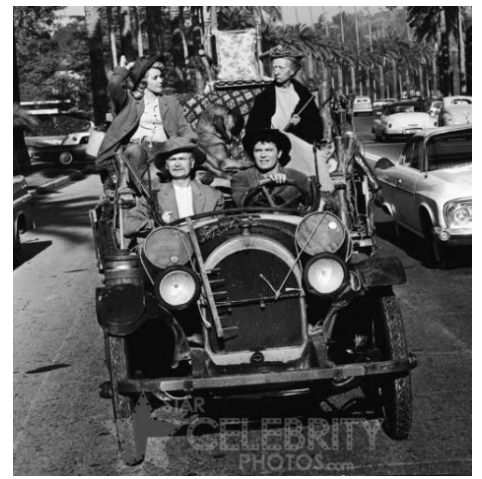
Car Quiz:



Buick built trucks from 1910 to 1923, but was the **Beverly Hillbillies** car a **Buick**? If so, what year? If not, what is it & what year?

Hint: It was built by the late **George Barris** and if you already read **Tom Lynde's** interview you should know the answer.

The answer is on page 8.



Online Only Content: In the DVC last month there were a couple of pages of pictures from the 2015 South East Regional. Now, thanks to **Cliff Dillingham** you can see MANY more pictures, along with a narrative by **Bruce Kile**. http://dixie.buickclub.org/Photos/se_regional_2015.html

The Timing Chain:

December 13, 2015: Holiday Party at Ippolito's in Suwanee 2 pm to 5 pm. Look for details in Dave's "Word from our Asst. Director".

February 21, 2016: Annual Bowl-A-Rama. Start bowling at 12:30 with lunch and a business meeting to follow. More details next month.

April 30, 2016: BOP&C hosted by the Southeastern GTO Association (SEGTOA). The SEGTOA has requested that any Dixie Chapter BCA members that would like to volunteer to help with the 2016 BOPC to please contact Show Chairman Paul Sorrells at 404-702-3398.

May 15-19, 2016: The Buick Driving Enthusiasts (BDE) National Spring Tour will be hosted by DCBCA members **Skip & Jane Petsch** in nearby Pine Mountain, GA. The BDE is a division of the BCA and you can attend 1 BDE tour without being a member. After your "test drive" you can then decide whether or not to join the BDE. Ask **Skip** or **Bruce & Shar Kile** for additional details.

July 27-31, 2016: It's not too soon to register for the 2016 BCA National in Allentown, PA. The 2016 National will be an extra special event since the BCA will be celebrating **50 years!** Make your hotel reservations **soon**, as hotels will fill. Details available at <http://www.buickclub.org/2016anniversary/>

October 13-15, 2016: The 2016 BCA South East Regional will be hosted by the Music City Chapter and will be held somewhere in "middle TN".



From the "Sunshine Committee":

JD's mom **Alice Westfall** passed away on November 1st. Many of you know **John and Alice** from previous BCA Nationals as well as our 2011 BOPC when they came down to visit JD & Roxanne and helped us at the BOPC. Please keep JD & Roxanne, John, and the entire Westfall family in your thoughts and prayers as they go through this most difficult of times!

If you know of a member who is ill, injured, recovering, or just in need of a special thought and bit of hope sent their way, please let Jean Richstein know about them as soon as possible. She is making certain that cards and well wishes are sent from the Dixie Chapter BCA. To enable Jean to share the Club's thoughts and concerns in a timely manner, please be sure to keep her well informed. grayfoxconsulting@gmail.com



Member "News": No "News" this month. ☺

NOTE: If you know of members winning awards or touring to interesting places, or have an idea for an article of interest to our members, please let Jerry know at least one week before the end of the month to enable inclusion in the next **Dixie Valve Chatter**.

Membership Renewal Time: Membership Renewal Notices will be mailed out this week. Those that have prepaid for 2016 or beyond do not need to pay any additional dues at this time. However, please return the Membership Form so we can verify that we have your correct address, phone number(s), email address, National BCA Number, etc.

Those that do owe dues at this time can pay for up to 3 years at \$20 per year.

Past winners of the Meritorious Award pay just \$10 per year, and current Elected Chapter Officers don't pay Chapter dues while in office.

Deals on Wheels:

1960 Buick LeSabre: Debbie Brooks has decided to part with her award winning 1960 LeSabre.

My car is a 1960 Buick LeSabre with just under 43,000 original miles.

I have had the following done to it:

- New Coker radial tires
- Newly rebuilt brake booster & master cylinder
- Newly rebuilt carburetor
- New shocks
- New exhaust system, muffler and Y pipe
- New turn signal actuator
- New horn relay
- New ignition switch
- New intake manifold gaskets
- New valve cover gaskets
- New battery
- New wheel cylinders and brake hose in front
- New cording around interior's headliner

Also included:

- Owner's manual and chassis manual
- Custom car cover
- Waterproof car cover
- Two pieces of trim with clips
- Rear wheel bearing and brake hose

I won best GM car, best in class, plus a couple of plaques this year. She is a beautiful car and I hate to part with her. She has leaks and needs more gaskets replaced. She needs front brake shoes as the ones I purchased didn't fit and she needs a horn as the horn button fell down inside steering column when the new turn signal actuator was put in. I also had a guy who works on upholstery repair a couple of places where seam was coming apart. I just can't afford to pay out anymore. Although I love my car and everyone who sees her loves her too!



Asking \$18,000
Debbie Brooks
819-845-8684
dkbrooks1957@gmail.com



MORE Deals on Wheels:

Need AC Delco parts? If you are in the need of genuine AC Delco parts such as batteries (including 6 volt) ignition parts etc., at discount pricing. We have established a "cash account" with Johnson Industries in Atlanta aka "J. I. Parts Express" <http://www.jipartsexpress.com/>. Simply phone the call center at (770) 448-3896 and tell them that you are with the Buick Club account #47225, and place your order. You will also need to tell them which of the 8 distribution warehouses you would like to pick it up & pay at. Distribution centers are in Woodstock, Marietta, Norcross, Emery, Snellville, Turner Field, Roswell, & Columbus. **A "cash account" does include Visa/MasterCard.** If you have any questions call **Bruce Kile** (770) 977-7924.

Do you have a Buick or "car stuff" for sale?

All Dixie Chapter members can advertise "For Sale" cars, parts, and car related "stuff" for up to 6 months, or longer if space permits.

In addition, non-members can advertise their cars and parts for up to 3 months, space permitting, if they have items that may be of interest to our members. This is as a courtesy to the sellers, and as a service for our members.

Please send your ads to Jerry at least one week before the end of the month to ensure that your ad is included in the next **Dixie Valve Chatter**.



"ANDY" & The Dixie Chapter, by "Guest Reporter" Bruce Kile:

The trivia question & accompanying picture in last month's "DVC" teased my memory from the time of our 1984 BCA National Meet which, of course, was hosted by the Dixie Chapter. Someone in the BCA hierarchy, at the time, had mentioned to us that actor/comedian **Andy Griffith** was actually a member of the BCA & (tongue in cheek) suggested that since he hailed from nearby (?) Mt. Airy, N.C. we might invite him to be our guest speaker/entertainer at the banquet. Well not being one to shy away from a dare or a chance to go "one up" over previous BCA National hosts, we researched the BCA records (way before internet/google) and actually came up with a business address in Hollywood for Andy. We typed up a, somewhat formal, letter of invitation & sent it off to California. Although we really didn't expect that Andy would be able to accept our invitation we, never the less, were very surprised & excited to receive a nice letter of "regret" from Andy Griffith's personal secretary explaining that due to a prior commitment in his home town of Mt. Airy, Andy would not be able to attend the 1984 BCA National, but that he sent his "best wishes" for a successful meet. As I recall that letter was reprinted in the National Meet program for all to see. I'm still trying to find a copy of that program. Perhaps our historian, **John Sincere**, has one in the club "archives" that he could bring to a meeting? Oh yes, just a little side note, the 1984 meet was indeed very successful & marked the first time in the history of the club that the Buick National was held south of the Mason-Dixon line. Incidentally the Dixie Chapter also held the distinction of being the first chapter to host a national meet in only its 5th year of existence. Of course we had so much fun in 1984 and the response was so great from BCA members worldwide, that we repeated it in 1994. Both meets are still "talked about" by BCA "old timers". Of course Andy Griffith passed away a couple years ago, but I'm convinced that his "well wishes" back in 1984 helped the Dixie Chapter host two successful BCA National Meets.

Bruce Kile BCA 3013

Co-Chairperson 1984 & 1994 National Meets

Cars of the Month: Every month we will include at least a picture or two of member's cars, usually as seen at recent meetings, tours or events.



Try to be an active member, be sure to drive your "pride and joy", and then look for your picture in the next issue of the

Dixie Valve Chatter!

Photos by **Cliff Dillingham**



Quotable Quotes

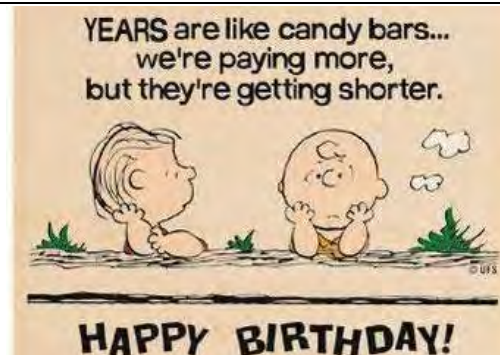


Grit In The Gearbox

Car Quiz Answer: The Beverly Hillbillies car was actually a 1922 Oldsmobile, not a Buick. Read an entire article about it online at http://www.prewarbuick.com/features/jed_clampetts_buick

Happy Birthday to:

12/1	John Sincere	12/23	Lisa Patrick
12/11	Roger Smith	12/25	Carol Whittenburg
12/18	Janet Bass	12/27	Patricia Lisenby
12/18	Maynard Cash	12/28	Ron Bergeron
12/18	Dave Gareau		



Happy Anniversary to:

12/18	Roy & Janet Bass
12/20	Paul & Penny VanNortwick
12/31	Skip & Jane Petsch

As important events in the lives of our members, birthdays and anniversaries are recognized in the *Dixie Valve Chatter*, but **with no mention of ages or years without the permission of the member**. If you will be reaching a milestone birthday or significant anniversary this year, please let **Jerry Richstein** (jerry.richstein@gmail.com) know so we can all share in your special celebration.

DO YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS or ARE YOU CHANGING YOUR E-MAIL?

If you have an e-mail address but haven't previously given it to Jerry, please notify Jerry Richstein at jerry.richstein@gmail.com, so you can receive the *Dixie Valve Chatter* via e-mail and get direct links to all of the online only content.

If you have a **NEW** e-mail address, please notify Jerry Richstein at jerry.richstein@gmail.com so you can continue to receive the *Dixie Valve Chatter* via e-mail.

The Dixie Chapter is one of over 60 Chapters of the Buick Club of America, "a non-profit membership corporation dedicated to the preservation and restoration of those vehicles built by the Buick Motor Division of General Motors Corporation".

The current elected and appointed officers are:

Director: J.D. Westfall, 13127 Overlook Pass, Roswell, GA 30075 913-638-7849 jd52@comcast.net

Asst. Director: Dave Gareau, 1565 Oklahoma Drive, Buford, GA 30519 404-863-9768 buickman7185@att.net

Secretary: Bob Stone, 412 Lima Court, Woodstock, GA 30188 770-480-4179 rstone60@msn.com

Treasurer: Shar Kile, 2492 Lorrie Drive, Marietta, GA 30066 770-977-7924 sbkile58@aol.com

DVC Editor: Jerry Richstein, 4798 Grants Way NE, Marietta, GA 30066 770-924-4779 jerry.richstein@gmail.com

Asst. DVC Editor: Tom Lynde, 2375 Jonesboro Road, Hampton, GA 30228 770-957-6882 lynde2375@charter.net

Membership: Jerry Richstein, 4798 Grants Way NE, Marietta, GA 30066 770-924-4779 jerry.richstein@gmail.com

Sunshine Committee Chair: Jean Richstein, 770-924-4779 grayfoxconsulting@gmail.com

Historian: John Sincere, 229 Pirkle Leake Rd. Dawsonville, GA 30534 706-216-4389 sincerej@windstream.net

Club Sales: Bruce Kile, 2492 Lorrie Drive, Marietta, GA 30066 770-977-7924 sbkile58@aol.com

Chaplain: Jack Horvath, 2748 Peppermint Dr. Tucker, GA 30084 770-934-0127 pjhorvath@bellsouth.net

For Photos and Upcoming Events: Check us out on Facebook, "Dixie Chapter of the Buick Club of America", and on the Web at www.dixie.buickclub.org