

"THE ORIGINAL"

TEXAS CHAPTER

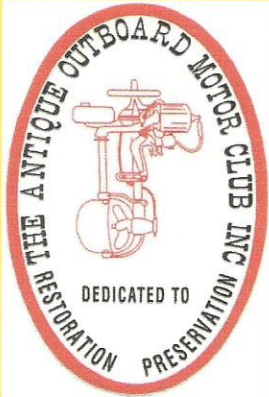
ANTIQUE OUTBOARD  
MOTOR CLUB, INC.



# Texas Chapter News

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## 2016 Tomahawk Nationals Report

By Tom Oncken

This is my follow-up to the article that I posted in the April issue of Texas Chapter News where I had just received an amazing gift from the Texas Chapter membership—an all expenses paid trip to Tomahawk, Wisconsin so I could attend the 2016 Tomahawk Nationals. We were set to leave July 30<sup>th</sup> and return on August 7<sup>th</sup>. So, here is the summary of our trip northward.



me and Mike for the seven nights we spent in his home near Tomahawk.

John picked us up at Central Wisconsin Airport on Saturday afternoon, July 30<sup>th</sup>, and took us to his home to drop off our luggage. Upon arrival, we noticed a mini-van with "The Autohaus" license plates sitting in John's driveway. John had already arranged to have the rental

The original plan was to cover expenses for my wife and me to make the trip to Tomahawk; however, my wife is an accountant for Waste Management in downtown Houston, and she cannot take off from work during the first week of any month due to month-end closing of their books. As an alternative, I invited my son, Mike, who has been involved with AOMCI since he was 9 years old. He managed to get approval to take off from work, so he agreed to accompany me on the trip. Having my son come on this trip was an additional perk. He and I used to see each other six days per week before we lost our business to a crooked landlord in 2011. Now our visits are mostly limited to birthdays, holidays, or when my wife and I take care of the grandkids. Needless to say, the upcoming vacation was a chance to bond again.

vehicle delivered to his house. Mike then drove the three of us around Tomahawk so he and I could familiarize ourselves with the area. As we drove by Sara Park to scout out the meet site, I was amazed to see there was already one pickup truck there with a load of outboards. That afternoon, we attended the Kwahamot Water Ski Show in Tomahawk. It was a great show put on by the locals which benefited Shiners Hospitals for Children.

On Sunday, after John served a gourmet breakfast, we took a trip northward to Minocqua, Wisconsin to check out an antique and classic boat show that was being held at The



One of several classic woodies at the show.

It was nearly five months until our trip to Tomahawk; however, time passed ever so quickly. John Graf had researched United Airlines flights to and from Wisconsin, a rental car from The Autohaus in Tomahawk, and a one-night stay at the Quality Inn near Central Wisconsin Airport since the return flight was leaving at 5:05 AM. All I had to do was purchase tickets and make the reservations. Lodging was otherwise covered by John as he provided two bedrooms for

Boathouse. We perused the vintage boats on the grounds and at the docks and then decided to have lunch in the restaurant. I noticed several old outboards inside which

included a Flambeau, a Johnson A-25, a Champion Blue Ribbon, a mid-fifties Johnson, and a 1958 Evinrude Fisherman. We left The Boat-house and spent a little time visiting other local boat builder legends and learning more about the lay of the land. Later in the afternoon, we visited Sara Park once again to check out additional members who had arrived. The meet was still not scheduled to begin for another two days, but attendance was growing, as was my anticipation.

We drove to St. Germain, Wisconsin on Monday to check out the massive flea market sponsored by St. Germain Firefighters Association. It took quite a while to walk through and see all of the vendors. I noticed several outboard motors for sale including some Mercury green top outboards, various Evinrudes (among them a rowboat motor and a nice 1930s Fisherman), and a Flambeau. All of them were overpriced with the cheapest Mercury being priced at a little over \$500 and all other motors priced up to \$1,500, if not higher in some cases. Another quick trip by Sara Park that afternoon revealed that more people were arriving hourly and attendance was beginning to expand exponentially. John's guest list grew on Monday afternoon with the arrival of Rob Ebbing and Todd Young from Illinois. The more, the merrier at the Graf Hotel.

Although Tuesday is not an official day of the Tomahawk Nationals meet, we spent most of our



Rob Ebbing brought a drone with him. Here is one of Rob's aerial views of the massive meet area at Sara Park just before the meet actually started.

time there as vehicle after vehicle came in loaded with motors, boats, and parts. We could not take a chance that some good deals might pass us by. For the most part, we lived at Sara Park for the remaining days. While John set up a tent and sold some Tomahawk Boat t-shirts, Mike and I walked the park . . . and walked . . . and walked some more. Sara Park was enormous!

Tuesday night, John Graf hosted a truly fabulous meal at his home. John and Cindy Slator, and Gene and Nellie Gruender from Missouri accompanied John, Rob, Todd, Mike, and me for a remarkable evening of good food, drink, and conversation. The meal included some Grade-A steaks grilled to perfection, with roasted corn on the cob and salads that included vegetables from John's garden. (Several other items were included, but I cannot remember specifics as we had homemade dinners most nights while we stayed at the Graf residence and I am sure I could easily confuse one day's menu for an-

other.) Take it from me; the meal was perfect as was the company at the table.



Todd Young grilling steaks for the evening meal while Tom and Mike Oncken watch Rob Ebbing's drone flying overhead.

Wednesday was the official first day of the meet, and after registering in the arena, Mike and I took a stroll down to the main launch ramp to check out the boats. As the Indian Special Interest Group Leader, imagine my joy at getting an opportunity to ride with Bill Andrulitis in his Indian powered aluminum boat. During our participation in the four day event, I also got to witness Brook Newcomb running his Indian on a little racing runabout. I can now say that I have seen and heard an Indian outboard motor run. I have always speculated that the Indians were very noisy with their exhaust cutout opened, and that was confirmed when I rode with Bill as we could not hear each other speak while riding in his boat. We could hear one another clearly once the exhaust cutout was closed, but the horsepower dropped immediately.

As a first time Tomahawk visitor, the sights and sounds at this meet were astonishing. There were literally tons of outboard motors on display, parts for sale, decals for sale, literature for sale, boats for sale, and even some toy outboards for sale and on display. Race boats were roaring up and down the lake throughout the meet and even some old iron was being run. Bill Andrulitis ran a Waterman Porto. I had only seen a Waterman in photos and it is even more amazing to see one run in person. Several varieties of rowboat motors also were run, making the number of old motors run on the waterways absolutely amazing.



Bill Andrulitis entertaining Tom in his aluminum boat powered by a 1930 Indian Silver Arrow.



Brook Newcomb running his 1931 Indian Silver Arrow outboard on the back of a racing runabout. [Photo compliments of Emma and Jack Craib]

You may think that I am exaggerating, but the most outstanding part of this meet for me was speaking to the members who attended. For years, I have visited with members over the telephone, by letter, or through email correspondence. In most cases, the only opportunity to see any of these people has been through photos in *The Antique Outboarder*. I was finally able to put many names, faces, and voices together. I returned to John's home each afternoon with a hoarse voice from talking so much. (What? Me talk a lot? Heaven forbid!) Camaraderie is what this organization has always been about, and I got to enjoy it first hand.

Saturday night's banquet was a blast! Not only was the food very good, but the door prizes were special. My son and I were sitting at a table with John Graf and Gene Winter of Wisconsin. Suddenly, a special door prize was shown. It was a frilly little "Divas Snow Gear" sequined t-shirt. I looked over at Gene as they showed that shirt and I told Gene that he really needed that t-shirt. I said something like, "Gene, this shirt is definitely you. Get ready, my friend, to go get your new shirt." Immediately after I made those comments, Gene's name was called out. While Gene was trying to recover from the shock, we all were laughing so hard that we had tears in our eyes. Mike made Gene pose for a photo with his new shirt. As the door prizes continued, John received some maple syrup and Mike received some coffee mugs. Then it happened again.



Gene Winter proudly displaying his new "Divas Snow Gear" shirt received during the banquet.

Another frilly little pink "Divas" shirt was held up. I told Gene that I had a horrible feeling that I was about to get a shirt to match his. You guessed it. They announced that the shirt was going to a fellow from Texas, and I was the only Texan left in the room. I had to go get my frilly little shirt while Gene laughed himself silly. Of course, Mike had to take my photo as well. By the way, my wife likes her new t-shirt. Where's yours, Gene?

I am sad to say that the banquet was soon over, as was the Tomahawk meet. Immediately following the banquet, John rushed us out to the Quality Inn next to the Central Wisconsin Airport so we could get up at 3:30 AM to catch the flight back home. In a flash, it was all over. The week seemed like only a day or two. Then reality set back in, as we had to return home to the Houston area where heat advisories and 100+ degree daily temperatures greeted us.

In closing, I wish to thank all of the Texas Chapter members who contributed so that I could take this trip. You have made an old member very happy, and I will never be able to repay the kindness that you have shown. My thanks also to the Dalle Ave clan, the Northwoods Chapter, and all members in attendance for making me and my son feel right at home. I offer thanks to Dave Reinhartsen for starting this adventure and Louis Rothermel for helping to pull it off. A very special thanks also goes to John Graf. My son and I invaded his home for a week, and he treated us to some special gourmet meals and excellent lodging. We could not have done better if we had stayed in a first class hotel. As for now, I have successfully marked the Tomahawk Nationals meet off of my "bucket list". It is an experience that I will not soon forget. Thanks to all.



Tom Oncken holding his frilly little "Divas Snow Gear" shirt. Yes Tom, paybacks are hell.



One of the many boats displayed in the arena. Built in Wisconsin, this is a "Tomahawk". [Photo compliments of Emma and Jack Craib]

# John Stanley Kremp 1963—2016

In Memoriam



John S. Kremp was born on October 21, 1963. He grew up as one of four siblings, son of a northern Indiana optometrist – Stan. John was very talented. In his teens, John became an expert snow skier. By age 18, he earned his private pilot's license flying an Aeronca Champ, with his dad as his flight instructor. A short time



An Aeronca Champ airplane.

after that, the cold and snow of every winter no longer seemed to hold as much pleasure as it once did, and a family decision was made to move south to Texas.

We arrived in Kerrville, Texas on October 1, 1985. Over a number of years, John developed his own successful business specializing in artistic design and installation of custom ceramic tile. I am sure that his customers will miss him.

It was March 18, 2006 that John and I attended our first Texas Chapter swap meet at John and Cindy Slator's homestead. Owen Meredith brought a collection of parts from four Johnson PO-15 outboards that were in different stages of disrepair and/or disassembly with the intention of selling the lot. We bought all four parts mo-



March 2006 meet held at John and Cindy Slator's home. John and Stan Kremp with Louis Rothermel checking out all of the treasures.

tors for a total of \$200. We joined the club that day. Antique outboards seemed like a perfect hobby for us to share, and that is the way it

worked out. We actually restored three good running motors out of that initial collection of parts, but we were not finished yet.

We transitioned through several motors and boats over the years. John could not help himself as he bought that old club hydroplane. The boat was showing its age, but the trailer that came with it was a great piece of engineering! Then, there was "Fireball", a wooden utility racer that we purchased from Peter Schultz. Peter also sold us a Super 10 Hurricane rat rod motor that John ran on that classic boat for years. Like most young, and not so young men, the need for speed infected the both of us.



Somehow we were introduced to Dudley Malone of Oklahoma racing fame, and managed to buy a Yamato 302 that he had built for his grandson to race. Dudley's grandson had moved on into auto racing. Another "Okie" had a yellow picklefork hydro that made a good match for the Yamato. That combination could really haul! John seemed to have no fear driving that thing as we continued to enjoy Texas Chapter wet meets.

Like so many newer members, we became good friends with Louis Rothermel. John and I discovered that Louis had fond memories of Kerrville. He shared his lengthy stories with us of his days as a young cadet at Schreiner College when it was formerly an all male military institute for boys. Louis has always been a great wise person to listen to.

Learning more about old outboard motors was of great interest since neither John nor I had much experience with the mystical workings of mechanical things. It was obvious to anyone that we needed a lot of remedial training. Initially, that is where Frank Simon became a super mentor and good friend. Frank could fix anything as he was a mechanical wizard. More recently, it has been Chip Rathbun who has been helpful teaching us and re-teaching things about OMC motors. We probably wore out our welcome ask-

ing so many questions, but Frank and Chip never seemed to mind. Joe McCauley has also been a fine source of encouragement.

John married Nina ten years ago, and along came Johnathan, and three years later, beautiful Sarah Ann was born. John's life has been devoted to his children. The kids have been a fixture at the meets. We have tried to attend the spring and fall meets at Kingsland, and Louis Rothermel's Houston dry meet "get-together" every year. It seems like wives, mothers, and grandmothers did more than their share of watching the children too. That is about the time we sold the single seat racing hydroplane and traded that part of antique outboarding for more of a family-oriented affair with the purchase of a pair of Alumacraft boats. Nina and the children could now enjoy being "on the water" with John.



John with Sarah Ann and Johnathan.

Well, it has been a happy ten years or so with the antique outboard club, but sometimes when things are so great, life throws us a surprise – not always a good one. Several months ago, John started having severe abdominal pain. After extensive testing, John was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer which had metastasized into his liver. After seven days in the hospital and two in hospice care, the extremely aggressive cancer took John away from us on August 4, 2016.

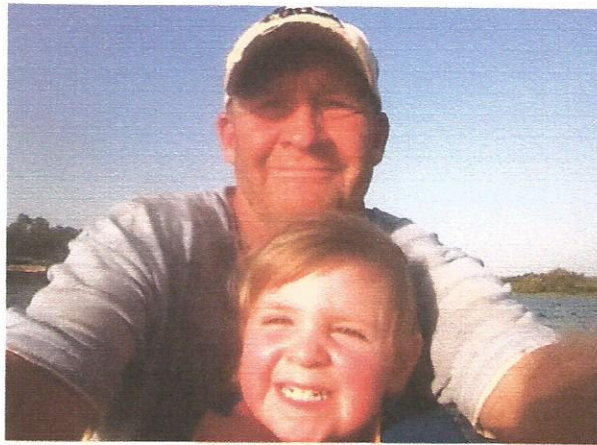


John "on the water" with family members.

For those of you who did not have the pleasure of knowing John, please consider the following:

- John was very special – a kind man;
- He was always considerate of the feelings of others, often putting their feelings ahead of his own;
- John had a mental curiosity about how things worked – including outboards;
- John loved his children most of all. He tried so very hard as a father to be patient, and teach them, and provide for them; and
- John always gave of himself, up until there was no more strength to give.

Prepared by John's Dad – Stan



John and Sarah Ann.



John with Nina, Sarah Ann and Johnathan.

**[Editor's note: Like most members, I was shocked to hear that John had passed away. We had just seen him at the April meet in Kingsland and he did not appear ill in the least. I am embarrassed to admit that I personally did not know much about John or his past history with the Texas Chapter. So, when I reached out to Stan for assistance in learning more about John, Stan provided this fantastic story about his son with instructions to add anything that I felt necessary. Only a fool would try to improve upon a father's love for his son. This is a great story as written, Stan. Thank you for sharing it with us. Tom Oncken]**

# The Early History of The Texas Chapter

From the Archives of Dave Reinhartsen

Soon after publishing the first issue of *The Antique Outboarder* and graduating from the University of Wisconsin, our founder, Dave Reinhartsen, moved AOMC to Texas in January of 1966.

A few months later, he spotted a 14 foot 1958 Aristocraft Torpedo that had been repossessed by Valentine Marine. It was in pretty sad shape, but Dave wanted it. He made an even trade with the owner of the business, Val Valentine, for a 12 foot Crestliner on a homemade trailer. When the time came to pick it up, the Aristocraft had been refinished. It was no longer an even trade, but Val generously insisted that a deal was a deal, and Dave towed his new acquisition home for a little more work. Dave and Val became friends.



Dave and his Aristocraft Torpedo

Valentine Marine was the largest boat dealer in Dallas at that time and was eager to expand the emerging boat industry. Val hired Hal Cope-

land Public Relations, and Hal arranged free exhibit space for the AOMC at the Dallas Boat Show. As the only AOMC member in Texas, Dave was at his exhibit every evening for six straight days. He met a lot of interesting people (including Jack Ruby's doctor) and made many friends, but did not recruit any new members; the idea of collecting old outboards was too new – especially in Texas.

Hal called Dave in June asking if AOMC would team up with Valentine Marine in an antique outboard public relations stunt on Lake Dallas. Dave was still the only AOMC Member in Texas, so it could hardly be called an AOMC event. Hal suggested a "Texas Chapter Meet" and The Texas Chapter, the AOMC's first chapter, was born out of necessity. Dave loaned outboards to several somewhat crazy friends from Texas Instruments (TI) and held the first AOMC meet – ever! Success was measured by the number of outboards that could be made to run.

Over the next year, Hal arranged for a radio interview with KRLD Sportscaster (and later Dallas Mayor) Wes Wise, another and larger antique outboard exhibit at the Dallas Boat Show, and



another meet at Lake Dallas. Dave was able to claim AOMC participation in 1967 because members Rick Anderson and his wife came over from California, Bill Rust came down from Wichita Falls, and Dick Jones came up from Florida. KVIL provided live radio coverage of the event and Dave donated bottles of "home brew" to lend authenticity. Several spectators helped themselves to the "home brew" and quickly spit it out. That evening, another "first" for the Texas Chapter: The very first "Victory Dinner" was celebrated at the posh Cattleman's Restaurant in downtown Dallas. Everyone tried the calf fries appetizer. (Don't ask, it's a Texas thing.)

In 1968, Dave began soliciting contributions from any member who desired to donate toward incorporation of the club. As a result of those efforts, there was an announcement in the April 1969 issue of *The Antique Outboarder* in the Club Briefs section that read as follows: "Thanks to the efforts of Dave Reinhartsen and others, The Antique Outboard Motor Club is now incorporated — in the State of Texas — as an educational institution. The new club designation is **AOMCI**."

The Texas Chapter had no activities for the next several years. Dave was responsible for a major project at TI and spent a lot of time traveling, and/or at sea in the Gulf of Mexico, and off the west coast of Africa. In 1970 he moved his family to California for 530 days where they lived through two fires and an earthquake, but quickly moved back to Texas in 1971. Over the ensuing years, Dave and his family attended several MAPS Chapter events in Missouri.

By 1974, there were only 453 AOMCI members, few of them in Texas. Dave noticed that there was a new member in Texas, Ted Bieber. He called Ted the next day and they became acquainted by phone. That led to a weekend trip to Houston to hunt for old outboards. Ted and his wife Maryanne came to Dallas for Thanksgiving and they hunted for more old motors. As

a result, the Biebers and the Reinhartsens became very close friends.

In the spring of 1975, the two families met at Lake Somerville, TX. In a bizarre twist, the local Sheriff hassled them so that his personal friends could take over the beach that the two families had been using. Ted casually informed the Sheriff that he was a corporate attorney, and that quickly became the end of the situation.

Walt Verner of New Orleans joined AOMCI around 1975. Two meets were then held at Lake Charles, LA to include Walt. It was a thrilling and beautiful ride to take the old boats and motors up the river and into the Spanish moss and swamp-land of Louisiana. Ted and Dave also met at Lake Livingston and Toledo Bend Reservoir, becoming the nucleus of our Texas Chapter.

Earlier in 1975, Ted learned of a huge cache of outboards and parts in St. Joseph, MO. He and Dave decided to check it out, planning to rent a trailer for the trip back if necessary. On a warm and sticky Friday in February, Ted and his son, Chris, drove up from Houston. They had supper, loaded Dave's 1969 Plymouth convertible, and headed north. Just over the Oklahoma border, they encountered a cold front. Ted was driving and turned on the heater. It did not work. It was 23 degrees outside, and probably about the same temperature in the convertible. They took turns. The driver got the warmest jacket. The passenger kept the driver awake, and the loser had to curl up on the back seat under a thin blanket that Dave carried for emergencies. In St. Joe, they had a hot breakfast in a warm Howard Johnson's, then went to a Dodge dealer where Ted changed the heater control valve in the parking lot at 7:15 AM with the temperature at 19 degrees. The "owner" of the "treasure" who was not the real owner, finally showed up two hours late. The outboard stuff was overpriced, but Ted bought \$20 worth of miscellaneous parts. They headed back to Texas around noon in a heavy snowstorm. Just over the border, in Gainesville, TX, slush from the highway splashed its way up into the engine compartment, causing the alternator drive belt to slip. The lights dimmed, the windshield wipers stalled, and Dave drove into the ditch. They walked to an all-night diner, called a tow truck, and finally got back to Dallas at 3:30 AM on Monday morning. Ted had had enough! After 1200 miles of hard driving, Ted and Chris immediately headed back to Houston, another 250 miles, arriving just as the sun rose over Houston. Ted had a doctor's appointment later in the day.

That same year, Dave bought a lot on Lake Cypress Springs and began spending his weekends there preparing to build a lake house. Ted and Maryanne came up from Houston to run old outboards. Characteristic of Ted's humor, he announced: "When all you weekend lumberjacks

have your heart attacks, I'll buy all of this for a song, and have a nice place to build a lake house."

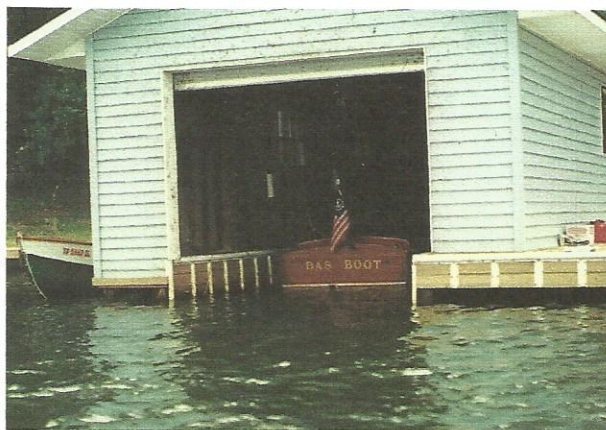
Dave's AOMCI activities were curtailed in 1978 when his first wife made him a single parent through a divorce proceeding. As a result, Ted took over as President of the Texas Chapter. As Dave's kids, Scott and Kaarin, grew older, life settled down and the number of Texas Chapter members increased. By 1982, Ted and Dave thought that it was time to have a Texas meet central to as many members as possible. They sent a letter to all Texas members, and James Mallow found a perfect place on Lake Buchanan near Austin. There, Dave introduced his new (and second) wife, Vicky, to antique outboarding. "Those people are crazy!" she reported to her friends, co-workers, and relatives. The fledgling Texas Chapter met at the same resort at Lake Buchanan every fall for the next several years.

By 1984, Dave had completed building his log home at Lake Cypress Springs, east of Dallas. Fall meets moved to his weekend home and became a tradition. Many things resulted from the Cypress Springs meets; the formalization of the Texas Chapter with dues, Dave's daughter re-met her future husband, David Salisbury, everyone drank a lot of beer, and the septic system overloaded. Dave built a huge six sided table



Dave's special table built to feed hungry Texas Chapter members.

that could seat twelve to accommodate Texas Chapter meets, which by this time included 15 to 25 members. A unique design, it had three legs and a center post. The table was so big that Dave had to build a large Lazy Susan to facilitate the passing and serving of food.



Dave also built a boat house on Lake Cypress Springs. Check out the wooden inboard called, "Das Boot".

The spring 1985 meet was held at a marina on Lake Travis, but quickly moved to more hospitable surroundings. Dave DeMoia, a new member from Kerrville, TX was welcomed and quickly joined the fun. Later, the Texas Chapter spring meets were held at Sheppard Air Force Base Annex on Lake Texoma, hosted by Frank Jacobs (George Jacob's brother) in the years 1991-1993. By this time Texas Chapter meets were attracting members from all over the United States. The participation had grown to around 25 to 35 members.

The fall 1985 and 1986 meets were held at a fishing camp near Hemphill, TX. It was owned by a friend of Dave's from work and located near Cajun country; the Victory Dinner was a crawfish boil. The Texas Chapter grew rapidly, attracting AOMCI members from Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas.

The nucleus of the 1985 and later Texas Chapter was a special group of people. Ted Bieber, Frank Jacobs, James Mallow, George Jacobs and his FBI (Full Blooded Indian) friend Wahoo McGrew, Dave DeMoia, O. D. Tucker, and some others became more than just friends. Wives too enjoyed each other's company and planned Saturday night Victory Dinners.

Ted Bieber and George Jacobs were major assets to the Texas Chapter as well as the AOMCI. Both served as AOMCI Membership Chairman for several years and were very active in chapter activities. George had an outboard junkyard and repair shop in Sherman, TX and was a major source of parts and motors for the entire club.

Though it rankled the Executive Council (EC), there was always plenty of beer at Texas Chapter meets. In fall 1985, 19 members drank 17 cases of beer in less than 48 hours. Dave can recall the quantities because it was he who took the cans to the can machine for a cash refund. The EC was 1200 miles away and was powerless to do anything but complain about what went on in Dave's house and on his waterfront. Ted, George, and Dave started a contest to see who could buy the cheapest case of beer (receipt required). Clearly, The Texas Chapter had a lot more fun than the costive EC!

George Jacobs had a knack for finding unusual things; for example a pinup calendar featuring a scantily clad (and really cute) girl assisting in the repair of a 1923 Elto Ruddertwin. Ignoring copyright laws, the watercolor sketch was reproduced as a Texas Chapter recruiting poster by a chapter member who owned a print shop in Arkansas (See attached printout at the top of the next column). Its heading read, "The Texas Chapter of . . . THE ANTIQUE OUTBOARD MOTOR CLUB, INC. invites you to join in the fun!" George took 50 of the 11" x 17" posters with him to the next International AOMCI Meet. They were very popular and some say proved that the Texas Chapter

The Texas Chapter of...

**THE ANTIQUE  
OUTBOARD MOTOR  
CLUB, INC.**

invites you to join in the fun !



THE ANTIQUE OUTBOARD MOTOR CLUB, INC.  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE (PROV.) \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PRE-1950 MOTORS COLLECTED: \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK THE WAY (S) THAT YOU MOST ENJOY ANTIQUE OUTBOARDING:

Half this application and \$20.00 to: ( ) COLLECTING MOTORS ( ) RESTORING MOTORS  
THE ANTIQUE OUTBOARD MOTOR CLUB, INC., c/o George Jacobs ( ) RUNNING MOTORS ( ) COLLECTING INFORMATION  
224 Houston, Sherman, Texas 75090

members had more fun than any other group.

George, Dave, and Dave's third wife (Gail D) attended the International Meet in Winona, MN in 1988, driving George's huge Chrysler Imperial that they renamed Leroy the Pimpmobile. To make the journey more pleasant, Dave conned Hamm's out of ten free cases of beer that the Texas Chapter shared with everyone. At no time in AOMCI's fifty year history was any chapter more appreciated.

During the International Meet, Dave was asked by AOMCI president, Alan LeBaugh to create a first class AOMCI brochure. Dave did just that—at his own expense. The EC stalled printing. After a long battle, Dave decided to change the newly designed AOMCI brochure to a Texas Chapter brochure and had 3000 copies printed, again at his expense. The new brochures were distributed gratis to other chapter presidents who were also clamoring for new recruiting literature. The EC was embarrassed, Dave was semi-victorious, and AOMCI subsequently had a new brochure.

In another first, Dave started the Texas Chapter newsletter in 1990 to encourage communication among Texas Chapter members and other chapter presidents. The Executive Council had a lower intestinal fit over it because it competed and often disagreed with the international newsletter. Other chapters soon followed with their own newsletters, revealing a need to include post 1950's outboards in AOMCI activities. That was



contrary to the myopic wishes of the Executive Council. Georganne Mires published several issues resulting in complaints from the EC about her outspoken criticism that the EC was stalling the printing of a new AOMCI brochure.

In 1989, Dave's third wife, Gail D, hosted the meet at Lake Cypress Springs while Dave was in Germany. (The phone bill was astronomical!) By 1990, the fall Texas Chapter meet attendance had grown so large that the meet was moved to the Cypress Springs Marina across the lake from Dave's house. Dave's septic system breathed a sigh of relief (pun intended).

By 1990, there were enough members in East Texas to host a meet there. Members launched next to the old steamboat turning basin in historic Jefferson and proceeded through the bayou to Caddo Lake, the only natural lake in Texas. A fried catfish lunch was served at a lakeside restaurant in a town with the strange name of Uncertain, TX. The 10 to 15 mile run through the swamp required a guide and was breathtakingly beautiful.

Ted Bieber, having moved to a lakeside home near Nacogdoches, TX hosted meets at his house in 1991 and 1992. Like most "new" chapter meets, Ted's meets attracted people who would not have otherwise bothered to come.

The 1992 meet at Lake Texoma featured another Texas Chapter first: An AOMCI Wedding! Solemnized by Hamm's, George's favorite beer, Dave and Gail (fourth and current wife) were married in calf deep water. Their wedding cruise was in a Jon boat, powered by vintage outboards. "Reverend" O. D. Tucker of Little Rock, AR officiated and "Worst Man" was Jon Wiggins



of Springfield, MO. George Jacobs of Sherman, TX provided the Hamm's.

The Texas Chapter, like many Texans, had grown into a large, boisterous, rebellious and cantankerous collection of characters, much to the consternation of the power hungry EC, who could not control it from so far away. Dave viewed a number of EC actions and inactions to be unethical if not dishonest. When it was proven that members of the EC were funneling rare motors to themselves and their cronies and were also interfering in Texas Chapter elections,

George Jacobs abruptly resigned as AOMCI Membership Chairman, throwing the EC into a tizzy. Dave was especially angry because the EC had introduced politics into the hobby club he had founded 27 years earlier. He felt that the EC was behaving like a bunch of petty dictators. In September of 1992, Dave had enough and ceased to participate in AOMCI and Texas Chapter activities because of the EC. Dave said: "Antique Outboarding just isn't fun anymore." His collection of magazines and motors were sold over the next few years.

If any of our Texas Chapter members is to be prominently remembered, it is George Jacobs. George had a retinue of friends that was as big as it was wide: his full blooded Indian friend, the Chief Patent Attorney for Shell Oil, identical twins that worked with him at his shop while arguing with each other constantly, a prison counselor, a jewelry designer, a banker, a real estate investor, an Air Force pilot, a guy from the Defense Industry, an alcoholic lawyer, a sign maker, retired Air Force friend, a drug dealer, a dry wall installer, a high school band director, the operations manager for a Mississippi barge company, an upholsterer, a pawn shop owner, and countless others that he knew only as a result of his letters. George, while AOMCI Membership Chairman, wrote a personal letter to every new member of AOMCI – sometimes thirty letters per day. It paid off. George was well known across the country.



George Jacobs relaxing with his favorite beverage, an ice cold Hamm's.

Many of the earliest members of the Texas Chapter mentioned in these paragraphs have slowly moved to the outboard junkyard in the sky. O. D. Tucker passed away in 1999, George Jacobs passed away in 2004, Ted Bieber passed away in 2006, and James Mallow passed away in 2012. Dave DeMoia now lives in Louisiana, and Dave Reinhartsen moved from Lake Cypress Springs to Cleburne, TX in 2004. Ever outspoken, Dave still delights in puncturing the previous EC's hot air balloon. His message to them has always been the same: "It's a hobby club, not a Wall Street boardroom!"

**[Editor's Note: I was asked to add some details from the following years; however, space was running out in this issue. As a brief note, shortly after Dave left, several members ran for and were elected to Executive Council positions. Texas Chapter members Louis Rothermel and Don Dwiggins took office along with Lou Danley who was a joint member of the MAPS Chapter and the Texas Chapter. As a result, many of the problems of the past were eliminated during their terms in office. Perhaps I can cover this more fully in a future issue of our newsletter. Tom Oncken]**

# Kingsland Spring Wet Meet

April 8 - 10, 2016

A Slightly Delayed Report By Tom Oncken

The writing on the wall suggested to me that this was going to be an unusual spring meet at Lake LBJ this year. I received notice from one of my roommates during the Conroe meet in March that he was going to miss the Kingsland meet so he could participate in a soccer tournament with his daughter who is becoming somewhat of a soccer star. My other roommate contacted me shortly thereafter to let me know that he would not be attending since he and his wife were going to be spending some quality time with their grandson. Having been in both of their positions at one time or another, I applauded both of them for taking the time to be with their younger family members. A week before the Kingsland meet, I noticed an email asking for someone to deliver some motors to the meet for John Slator. It quickly became apparent that John and Cindy would not be attending the meet either as I volunteered to transport a motor and some parts to Kingsland for John. John and Cindy attended their son's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party on this weekend. Once again, the family is always first, so I am happy that they decided to celebrate with their son.

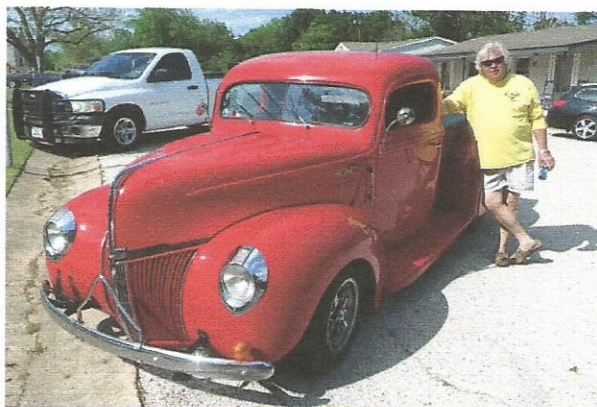
Now, all that was left to do was to travel to Kingsland and have some fun; however, Adam Finn called me on the Wednesday afternoon before the meet and I almost could not understand him. He sounded horrible as a result of contracting the influenza virus, and he informed me in a very low and raspy voice that he would probably be in bed for the rest of that week. I encouraged him to stay at home and to get some rest. I certainly did not want to share the flu with him. I told him not to worry about us because I would handle things in his absence.

Let's see, Adam and Susie Finn were not coming, and now I was going to be in charge of the Saturday evening meal at the meet. Being a huge fan of the Houston Texans, I am all too familiar with the concept of having a "third-string quarterback" enter the game when the first two quarterbacks go down for the count. You all remember the "third-string quarterback" don't you? He is usually the old guy who has played the position for years, and then sits on the bench waiting for retirement to come. With "first-string quarterback" Adam and "second-string quarterback" Susie (perhaps vice versa) both out, I have to admit that I had concerns about getting the "Victory Dinner" prepared and on the table. I had assured Adam that everything would be fine, and I kept saying that in my mind over and over as I traveled to Kingsland. Then it finally occurred to me that my secondary family, our Texas Chapter membership, would not let me fall on my face in preparation for Saturday's evening meal.

Saturday morning, we were all invited to partake

in an excellent breakfast prepared by Cornelia Kueffner and Marilyn Rathbun. Cornelia produced plate after plate of "Rösti" (a Swiss-Germanic style potato, onion, and cheese cuisine) to anyone wanting to participate in the special breakfast. Marilyn prepared an excellent fruit salad to compliment the meal. Gentlemen, these ladies are spoiling us. We have got to find a way to pay them back for their loyalty and generosity.

Legendary Chef Meatball, who arrived in his newly acquired bright red 1940 Ford pickup truck hotrod, was not worried about the evening meal. Completely confident in the task at hand, he accompanied me to his favorite meat market in nearby Llano to purchase freshly ground hamburger that he would ultimately grill on Saturday evening. Cornelia went with us to get the meat, and later assisted me at the local HEB where we purchased other necessities for the hamburgers including buns, cheese, tomatoes, onions, pickles, salad supplies, frozen desserts, flatware, paper plates, and some canned soft drinks. Phase one was now complete, and all was well for the moment.



Meatball with his newly acquired hotrod 1940 Ford pickup. Nice ride, Meatball !

Later, while Meatball prepared patties for grilling and I was slicing tomatoes for the burgers, I was asked if I had any salt and pepper for the burgers. Needless to say, a quick trip back to HEB secured the remaining items required for the afternoon meal. While Meatball and I were in my somewhat vacant cabin preparing the meat and tomatoes, some of my favorite ladies across the driveway (Cornelia Kueffner, Marilyn Rathbun, and Sylvia Coffey) were preparing the desserts which had to be baked in the oven. In addition, they were cutting up lettuce and tomatoes in preparation of the salad and dressing for the meal (and once the meal was completed, cleaning up afterwards). Oh, and Joe McCauley had to make another trip to HEB for the ketchup that we forgot during the earlier two trips.

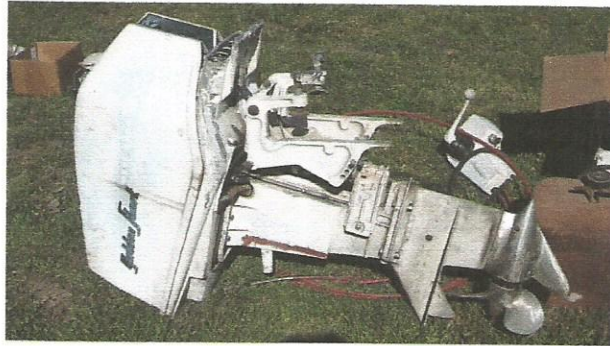


Assistant Chefs Cornelia and Marilyn preparing goodies for the Victory Dinner.

Needless to say, the meal was a great success due to these wonderful ladies and Chef Meatball. As always, Meatball grilled the burgers to perfection and all of the sides were excellent. Even the desserts that we purchased disappeared quickly. We collected \$10 per person for the meal and, when all was said and done, we had a very small amount of cash leftover that was given to Chip to deposit into the chapter bank account. Hopefully nobody left unhappy or underfed. I cannot thank everyone enough for all of their help and patience with me during this endeavor. I must say that I personally look forward to returning to my spot on the bench (where I belong) at the next meet.

By now, I am sure you are all asking, "were there any motors or boats there?" Well, of course there were! Even though most of my attention was preoccupied with other things, our other members were swapping and trading and running boats and motors. With the absence of John Slator, I noticed David Coffey, Jr. filling the void by wheeling and dealing for several outboard motors and various parts. At one point, he was yelling with excitement from the center of the lake as he returned from a local marina where he had just purchased a mid-1960's electric start

Evinrude 18hp. The motor fired right up after he shot carburetor cleaner into the carburetor intake. Tony Robinson brought a pickup truck bed full of motors and some parts for sale or trade. He had one large West Bend Golden Shark that he traded to David, but he had to trade back for it when David realized that he had used up all of his available space in his vehicle with the 18hp Evinrude. David got another smaller motor from Tony in exchange for the West Bend.



This poor old West Bend was having a difficult time finding a new home.

Those in attendance at this spring meet included the following: David Coffey, Jr.; David and Sylvia Coffey, Sr.; Jim and Tracy Johnson; Richard Kairis; John, Nina, Johnathan, and Sarah Ann Kremp; Stan and Donna Kremp; Jerry and Rocky Lindamood; Chris Link; Morten and Martha Lovstad; Joe McCauley and Cornelia Kueffner; Meatball Murray; Tom Oncken; Chip and Marilyn Rathbun; David and Nancy Reese; Tony and Andrea Robinson; Dave Samstag; Doug Samstag; "Scott-Atwater Al", Katie, Addison, and Abigail Smith; and Walt Thompson. Although I made a concentrated effort to make a note of all who attended, please accept my sincere apologies if I overlooked anyone. I still find it refreshing that so many ladies attend our meets, and in several cases bring their young children. Thank you ladies! Despite the early indications, we had a very nice turnout and signed up a new member, Chris Link. Welcome to the Texas Chapter, Chris! You have joined up with a very special group of people.



Chef Meatball doing what great chefs do.

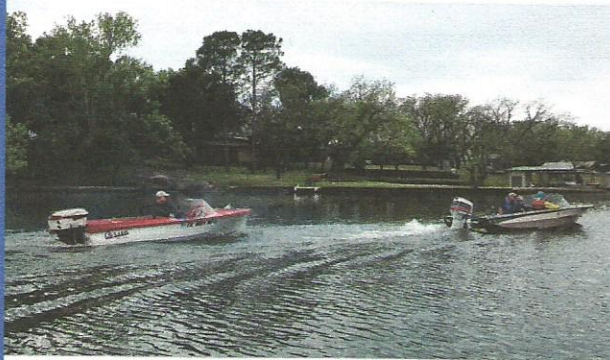


Morten Lovstad taking Jim Johnson for a ride in his hand-built flats poling skiff.

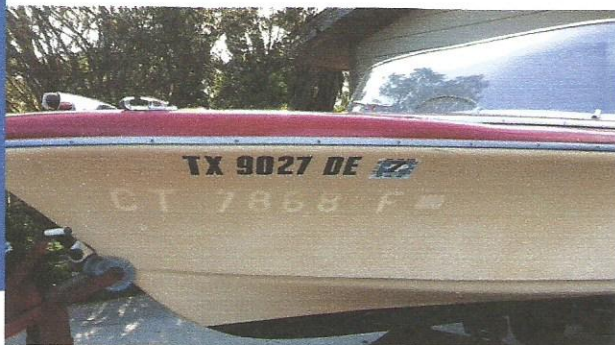
Doug and Dave Samstag brought their Marchetti hydro boat with the Mercury "Challenge Engine" that Doug has been working on. Although the motor ran, Doug is still "tweaking" the engine until she performs the way he wants it to. Chip Rathbun brought and ran his Corson boat with its 1958 Johnson V-4 50hp. Morten Lovstad brought his hand-built flats poling skiff powered

by a Mercury 4-cylinder inline 50hp outboard and actually got to run it this time. As you may recall, he did not get to run it at Lake Conroe because the lake had been closed due to debris in the water. Morten introduced us to his friend, Jim Johnson, who also brought along his hand-built 12' Tango boat powered by a 1953 Evinrude Fleetwin 7.5hp outboard. David Coffey, Jr. ran his aluminum bass boat powered by a Mariner outboard so much that he spent a great deal of time at the local gas docks (where he ultimately discovered his new Evinrude). As a passenger, I can attest that the Mariner ran very well and has plenty of power for his boat. Stan and John Kremp brought a pair of Alumacraft boats, a 1950 12 footer powered by a 1957 Mercury Mark 25 and a 1974 14 footer with a 1958 Johnson 18hp.

Joe McCauley brought along his trusty May Fly III with its 75hp racing Johnson Stinger. Joe also ran his Glastron boat powered by its 1991 Johnson 70hp. If I understand correctly, it also served as a tow vehicle during the meet (but that may be



another story). Jerry Lindamood brought his hand-built Lindy Craft with Mercury 115hp outboard. Jerry needs to figure out how to bring his beautiful wooden boat to the Houston International Boat, Sport & Travel Show. It is more than worthy of our January exhibit at the NRG Center, if not a prospective entry to the "Keels and Wheels" event held in Seabrook, Texas each year. Although he did not run it, Walt Thompson brought a nice original 1961 Duratech Sabre fiberglass boat with a 1960 Evinrude Starflite 75hp. The boat has been in Walt's family since new and is still carried on its original trailer. The boat has had several outboards over the years; however, Walt purchased the period correct Evinrude from Meatball so he can complete restoration of the family boat. Walt has been working



Thank goodness that's not a Mercury towing that Johnson!

Walt Johnson is working hard to restore his family boat, but is having difficulty removing a ghost image of the old registration number.

hard to buff out the fiberglass to a nice luster. He pointed out a ghost registration as the old Connecticut registration numbers still show up on both sides of the bow as white images that remained after removing the old numbers. Walt is doing a top-notch job on this boat and has hopes of having it running on Lake Travis later this summer.

At this point, I feel a need to add a couple of personal thank you notes. I wish to thank John and Cindy Slator for meeting me along the way to the meet so I could get the items they needed transported to Kingsland. I did not have to get off course at all and received a nice lunch at John's expense as a result of the stop. Later on Friday evening, when Dave and Doug Samstag learned that I did not make the usual stop at Opie's Bar-B-Q in Spicewood, they invited me to go with them to the local Mexican food restaurant. What a great dinner we had. Dave then picked up the check and would not allow me to contribute. Thanks Dave. Saturday morning breakfast was covered by Cornelia Kueffner, Joe McCauley, Marilyn Rathbun, and Chip Rathbun, so I did not have to make a trip to the nearby coffee house to buy my breakfast. Finally, although I told Louis Rothermel not to worry about the room at the meet, upon arrival at the Longhorn Resort, the manager on duty told me the balance of my room had been covered. Thanks Louis. As a result of all this, other than gas in my Suburban, I only spent \$10 on my Saturday evening meal. I give my personal thanks to all. You are all very special people in my books.

As a final note, the weather was a little strange during the weekend. It threatened to rain early Saturday morning, but the sun ultimately came out and the skies cleared up for a while. When we made the trip to Llano, we noticed lightning strikes on the other side of Llano, and apparently there were also some lightning strikes south of the lake, but we really never got hit with a rain storm at the resort. Although it was a little windy at times, the temperatures were very cool and our members were able to have some fun on the water. The bottom line is that the Texas Chapter had another very successful wet meet. Good accommodations, excellent food, and great friends gathering together to play. What more could you ask for??



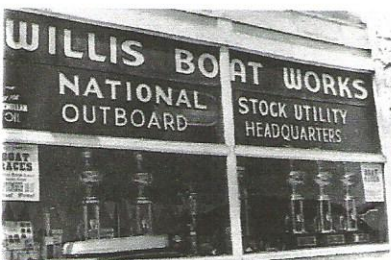
Morten Lovstad and Chip Rathbun enjoying a run on Lake LBJ.

# 1955 Willis Comet Racer Wins Again!

By Tom Oncken

Jesse Temple Miller was a veteran of WWII who served as a Master Sergeant under Lt. General George S. Patton around the time of the Battle of the Bulge. Master Sergeant Miller along with several of his veteran friends survived the war and returned to Kingsville, Texas. As a boy, Dodie Miller of Miller's Machining and Welding of Seabrook, TX, recalls his father and friends spending a great deal of time racing midget cars and then turning to racing boats to take place of the competition they experienced on the battle fields of France. Dodie even remembers them continuing to wear their fatigues and boots.

Dodie recalls his father working hard as a rough-neck for Humble Oil Company (now Exxon for you youngsters) and putting in as much overtime



Willis Boat Works in Dallas, TX

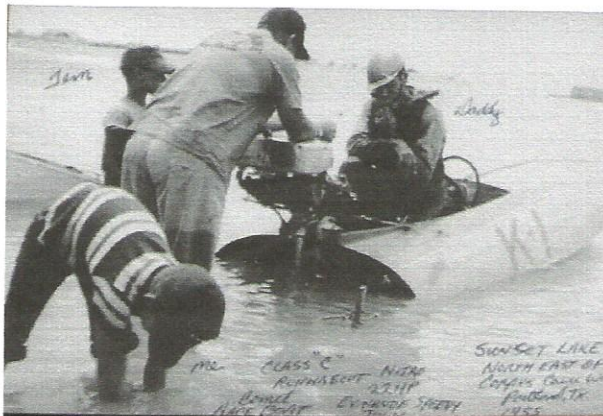
as possible to purchase a very special race boat from the Dallas area. Jesse wanted to win races, so he chose a Willis Comet class "C" service runabout to

do the job. To power his newly purchased craft, Jesse sent his Evinrude Speeditwin to Randolph Hubbell in California to have it converted to run on 98% nitro methane fuel. The cost was \$612 and the conversion apparently worked as the outboard was said to have achieved speeds of 65 to 70 mph.

Jesse participated in a race on Sunset Lake north of Portland just past the causeway in Corpus Christi, Texas. Billed as the Lone Star Boat Racing Association Championship Race, Jesse and his team brought home the 1<sup>st</sup> Place trophy. A short time later, Jesse and his team competed in a big race in Mexico on Falcon Lake where the race actually circled the courthouse. Jesse and friends brought home several trophies and a massive white velvet Mexican Sombrero with gold inlay around the brim.

Legend has it that when Jesse returned home from the Mexico races, his wife asked him, "Where's the money?" A short time later, Dodie Miller seems to remember that the Willis boat and most things racing were transported to San Antonio and were sold off. Apparently the prize money was short of the wife's expectations.

Ordinarily, that would be the end of the story; however, about 30 years ago, long-time AOMCI and Texas Chapter members, Albert and John Snell, approached Dodie Miller about making some stainless steel moldings for a Willis Comet that they had purchased believing it to be the one



From Left to Right: Dodie Miller in his youth searching for crabs, Dodie's brother, Jesse's friend, and Jesse Miller.

owned previously by Jesse Miller. Unfortunately, the Snell brothers chose not to purchase the stainless moldings and did not want to sell the boat. Accordingly, Dodie was disappointed and eventually gave up on attempts to buy the Willis.

A few years ago, the Snell brothers at 81 years of age, decided to begin selling off a great deal of their collection. Amazingly, they contacted Dodie Miller and Dodie was finally able to purchase his father's old Willis Comet. The boat was in pretty bad shape from sitting all those years, but Dodie with some help from others, restored the boat to like-new condition. Dodie had managed to keep the old Speeditwin and re-united it with the boat. Last April, Dodie participated in the 2016 Keels & Wheels Concours d'Elegance and his father's Willis Comet came back with the "Best of Class" trophy. The 1955 Willis Comet racer had won again!! Dodie assures everyone that the boat is not available for sale at any price. It is going to remain in the family where it belongs.



1955 Willis Comet side view (upper left), rear view (lower left), and Dodie Miller proudly holding his "Best of Class" Trophy (bottom right).





**SINCE 1966**  
"The Original" Texas Chapter,  
Antique Outboard Motor Club, Inc.

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## Remaining Events for 2016

### Texas AOMCI Fall Wet Meet on Lake LBJ — October 14-16, 2016

Just like our spring meet, the fall meet is another must to attend on Lake LBJ at the Longhorn Resort. Lake LBJ is a constant level lake that is more like a wide river surrounded by a lot of natural beauty in the heart of the Texas hill country. This meet is both a great wet meet with plenty of time to run your old boat and motor as well as a sell and swap meet, so bring any motors or parts that you may want to sell. We plan on having boat cruises and a picnic style dinner on Saturday evening. This meet is enjoyed by all and a great chance to get to know some more of your fellow club members. The Longhorn Resort is located on the water with comfortable cabins with kitchens. There is plenty of dock space for our boats. To make reservations, please call (325) 388-4343.

Location: Longhorn Resort; 151 Melodie Lane; Kingsland, TX 78639

### 23rd Annual Houston Swap Meet — November 11-13, 2016

This three day swap meet hosted by long-time member, Louis Rothermel, opens at 9:00 AM and closes at 6:00 PM each day. This will be the 23rd year that Louis has sponsored this event. Friday morning is primarily for setup, but some dealing starts early. Members arrive at various times throughout the day on Friday. At some point near noon, Louis will order in some local hamburgers for those who want one. At the end of the day, some members usually visit the nearby Jax Grill for dinner and beverages. Saturday is the heart of the meet with swapping starting early. Coffee and donuts are provided upon arrival. An excellent Bar-B-Q lunch will be catered in around 1:00PM for a \$10 per person fee for all you can eat. A business meeting will ensue after lunch. The remainder of the day is for swapping, repairing, or running your motors in the test tank. Most trading has been completed by the end of Saturday. Sunday is mostly a work day for those wishing to take advantage of Louis' shop which includes a lathe, parts washer, bead-blaster, drill press, and torch equipment. We usually have several experienced members on duty to help with those stubborn problems. Lunch is usually the remaining Bar-B-Q from Saturday's feast. The swapping of motors and parts is usually light by Sunday and most time is spent visiting and working on motors. Please contact Louis for information on available hotels in the area if a room is desired. There are several very nice hotels within a very short distance of the meet.

Location: Rothermel Properties; 5910 Star Lane; Houston, TX 77057; (713) 783-6300

Directions: Traveling south on the Southwest Freeway (aka I-69 S and/or US-59 S) from downtown Houston, exit on Fountain View Drive and turn right onto Fountain View Drive. Travel 1 block to Star Lane and turn right onto Star Lane. Watch for the real estate office on the left. Most of the activities are held in the back lot next to the large metallic building. The driveway is on the left side of the real estate office. We hope to see you there.