

IHRA Nitro Jam returning to Virginia Motorsports Park

Article/Interview by "Butch" Hora and Interview/Photo provided by John Dunn

It's been 5 years since the International Hot Rod Association, (IHRA) has run it's popular Nitro Jam National Drag Racing Series at Virginia Motorsports Park, (VMP). VMP General Manager, Bryan Pierce told me that they just made a special announcement on August 27 at the James Center in downtown Richmond about a military celebration and discount for the upcoming show. He also said that they are going to make a special donation to Operation Homefront, a organization that provides emergency financial assistance to families of service members and wounded soldiers.

Two top drivers from the IHRA circuit; Top Fuel World Champion driver Bruce Litton and driver of the 1973 Duster Prosalgia Nitro Funny Car, John Dunn were there with Bryan Pierce when he made the announcement. Bryan later talked with John Dunn about TMC and then hooked us up with John so we could ask him a few questions about his fast Mopar. The following are the questions I asked John Dunn along with his candid responses:

TMC - Where are you from? How long have you been drag racing?

J. Dunn - Monticello Illinois, started drag racing on the street or back roads at 16 and drove my first funny car at 23. Had no clue what I was getting into but knew it looked like fun

TMC - Have you always been a Mopar guy? If not, what made you change to Mopar?

J. Dunn - Have not always been a Mopar guy, ran Chevys for a long time until I got to see the bottom end of a Hemi at a competitors shop. I loved the way the crank was up in the block and how strong the motor was designed. Sold all the Chevy junk and bought my first Hemi the next week!

TMC - How long have you been running the Duster body?

J. Dunn - 2 years



TMC - What made you choose the Duster Body? Who makes it?

J. Dunn - Wanted something different, but still aerodynamic or at least as good as we can be under Prosalgia rules. Plus people can relate to the Duster, because it was a more common race car back then. Our body was made by nostalgiafunnycarbodies.com

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Dates To Remember

- Oct 15-16 IHRA Nitro Jam**
Virginia Motorsports Park, 8018 Boydton Plank Road, Petersburg, VA 23803
<http://www.virginiamotorsportspk.com/>
- Oct 22-24 8th Annual Virginia Fall Classic**
Newport News, VA
Events include cruise-ins, dinner, music, car/truck/bike shows and much more.
<http://www.vafallclassic.org/>

Club Officers

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Butch Hora (vamopar1@cox.net; 757-427-3094)

Vice President

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A.J. Schneider (tazldazl@cox.net; 757-410-2985)

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Newsletter Editors

Chris and Bob Yates

TMC MEMBER RIDE OF THE MONTH

OWNER: Al Gennarelli

RIDE: 2008 Dodge Challenger SRT8

ENGINE: 426 Hemi Stroker w/ twin turbos

TRANSMISSION: NAG1 5 Speed Automatic

REAR END: Moser Dana 60 locker w/3:54 Gears

Article by: Al Gennarelli and Photos by: Chris Yates

My name is Al Gennarelli and I live in Sunbury North Carolina. I currently own a 2008 Dodge Challenger SRT8, a 2009 Dodge Challenger SRT8 and a 2009 Dodge Drag Pack Challenger. What really got me started with Mopars was when Chrysler came out with the new Dodge Ram truck. My interest peaked in 2006 when there were rumors that Dodge was going to come back out with a new Challenger. That same year I bought a 2006 Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 from Starr Motors in Suffolk, Virginia.

I went back to Starr Motors in 2007 and traded my Jeep in for a new Dodge Charger. When I purchased my SRT8 I planted a bug in their ear that I was



VERY interested in getting a new Challenger when they became available. While I waited for the new Challenger I made modifications to the Charger getting her ready for the drag strip. I swapped out the cylinder heads, the camshaft and began racing it at Virginia Motorsports Park. My need for speed was now born and growing fast!

In 2008 the Challenger finally made it to the dealerships! I had been given the option by Starr Motors to purchase the first Challenger they got in, which I gladly did! It was a



2008 SRT8, Hemi orange with sunroof. I let them keep it in their showroom for a little while, but then it went straight to the speed shop

where it got the 426 Hemi Stroker motor and Twin Turbos. While the Challenger was in the shop, I purchased my second Challenger, this one was a black 2009 SRT8. I drove it stock at the track for a few months before I began it's modifications. I decided to take the 426 Hemi Stroker motor out of my Charger and swap it



with the stock 6.1 in the 2009 Challenger. Once the changes were completed I ended up selling the Charger.

I was happy racing the 2009 Challenger, but anxiously awaiting the 2008 Twin Turbo to be completed. The car was running so well racing at the local tracks that I began traveling to other events throughout the East Coast. I took it to Maple Grove, PA in 2009 and got runner up in the Fastest Challenger Class, running an 11.42. I made the Quick 8 at ZMAX, which was featured in Hot Rod Magazine in 2009. It placed 2nd at Mopar Madness weekend at Virginia Motorsports Park, (VMP) in 2010 and 2nd at LX & Beyond in 2009 and 2010. Finally, in June 2009 my 2008 Twin Turbo Challenger was done! After months of modifications, it was now a SRT8, 426 Hemi Stroker, with twin turbos and a 10 pt cage. Later modifications included nitrous and a Moser Dana 60 locker rearend with 3:54 gears! It took 3rd place in 2010 at Bradenton, FL in the unlimited class and it has been featured in Mopar Enthusiasts magazine, Sep 2010 issue. In Spring 2010, it ran a 9.91 all motor at VMP on the first pass! On the 2nd pass, with a 75 shot of NOS, it ran 9.71 which makes it the fastest street legal Challenger according to the LX Forums!

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“The History of the Tidewater Mopar Club”

(Part 4)

Article written by Bill Laurent, John Vukovich and “Butch” Hora

1999-2007: Bill Laurent - President

The club continued to grow under Bill Laurent’s leadership. Bill focused the club back to building and campaigning charity give away cars and increased the amount of charity funds the club generated by expanding the club’s annual Mopar Show into a show series.

In the first year, Bill worked with Oyster Point Dodge to return the annual Mopar Madness Show to Langley speedway where the 1971 Plymouth Road Runner Clone was given away. In keeping with earlier Langley shows, The Sunday show featured hot laps, a burnout contest, Rides in Richard Petty’s NASCAR Truck, and car tug of war. In addition, the event was expanded to Saturday and included the club’s first cruise to colonial Williamsburg, the clubs first Show on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk, and a race event Saturday night. Although the show was very popular, the high cost of leasing the track prevented the clubs return the following year. Instead, each of the events were separated to create the “*Mopar Madness Show Series*”.

In 2001, the club coordinated with Jeff Johnson of Classic Events to sponsor the newly formed Chrysler classic drag race and show series. TMC became the official sponsor of the Virginia Chrysler Classic held at Virginia Motorsports Park, where we raffled a 1965 Plymouth Barracuda for charity. The Virginia Chrysler



Classic event was counted as one show in the clubs growing Mopar Madness Show point series. Unfortunately, the majority of Chrysler classic events were located in Ohio and the Ohio racers who followed the series were unwilling to make the trip to race in Virginia. As a result, Chrysler classic backed out of the event receiving pressure

TMC MOPAR MOMENT

from its racers the second year. However, this did not stop the club from continuing to hold shows at Virginia Motorsports Park. A good relationship between the club and track management has resulted in an annual Mopar Madness event that continues to this day.

So what shows made up the Mopar Madness Car Show point series? The Series evolved through the years and was comprised of many of the following events:

- Spring Mopar Madness at Virginia Motorsports Park: Autocross, Drag Racing, Show & Swap Meet, Jet dragsters and Alcohol Funny cars. Bunny Burkett made many appearances as well as Mopar Expert Galen Govier.
- Summer Mopar Madness at Fort Monroe Air Field: Autocross, car show, and swap meet. The event lasted three years and ended when Fort Monroe was designated for base closure, at which time the base took action to secure all activities.

- The Colonial Mopar Tour: A cruise down the colonial parkway and tours of Jamestown, Yorktown battle field, and Colonial Williamsburg. The event was held three years.

- Mopars on the Boardwalk: Car show on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk was founded by the Tidewater Mopar Club the first year. The club welcomed Virginia Beach Dodge (now Hall Dodge) to sponsor the event in 2001. Other car clubs wanted to have shows on the Boardwalk too, this led to the City of Virginia Beach directing that there would be only one car show on the Boardwalk. So, Bill coordinated with Beach Events to hold concurrent shows with all clubs on the Boardwalk on the same weekend. This show continued like this from 2001 until 2006 until Beach Events took over completely. In 2010 Beach Events brought some promoters in from Ocean City Maryland in to run the show without the help of the local car clubs and now we are no longer involved.

- Wings and Wheels: An all make car show and air show coordinated by TMC and the Commemorative Air Force. This event was held two years at the Hampton Roads Executive airport. The most memorable event occurred when an airplane broke one of its landing gear when attempting to land. The pilot hit the throttle and pulled the plane back into the air before he lost control on the ground. A second plane was sent airborne to assess the damage to the plane, and it was concluded that the landing gear was unsafe and the plane had to make a belly

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landing. With no fire or emergency medical staff at the Hampton Roads executive airport, the plane was diverted to the Norfolk International airport, where it performed a belly landing. The pilot was uninjured, the plane received moderate damage, and the Norfolk International Airport ended up shutting down all flight operations for over four hours to clean up the field.

- Mopars at the Battleship: A small event held at Nauticus over a three-year period. This event was typically held in conjunction with Summer Mopar Madness.

- Fall Mopar Madness at Langley Speedway: In 2005, the club returned to Langley Speedway in an attempt to re-establish a lasting show there. Restrictions placed on the club by the new track owners prevented many activities previously conducted at the show. Although the show was successful, the club decided not return to the venue.

- NAS Oceana Air Show: The club organized the first ever car show in conjunction with this event.



- Fall Mopar Madness at Northeast Drag way: As an alternate to the Fall Show at Langley Speedway, the club held a one day car show and race event at this facility in Hertford NC. Although a good event, track management had a poor understanding of the support and coordination necessary to manage a car show and the club decided not to return the following year.

- Summer Mopar Madness Cruise-in: For many years the club organized a summer cruise in at Oyster Point Dodge with the Hampton Roads Little Red Express and Warlock Owners Club. The events included free food, live music, and were quite the party.

- Spring Mopar Madness at Motorworld: a small car show and go-cart race event held two years at Motorworld theme park in Virginia Beach.

During this time, the club worked closely and gave donations to a number of charity organizations including Saf haven, Victory Junction, Children's Hospitals of the



Kings Daughters, Disabled American Veterans, American Cancer Society, the National Kidney Foundation, and the Peninsula



Rescue Mission. For three years the club sponsored the Oyster Bowl, a college

football game for Christopher Newport University to raise funds for Shriner's Childrens Hospitals. The club sponsored an automotive scholarship at Tidewater Community College and donated an industrial sand blast cabinet to their newly formed automotive skills training facility.

Also during Bill's presidency, the club campaigned and raffled many cars for charity. In addition to those already mentioned, a 1977 Lil Blue express Truck and a 1975 Plymouth Duster were raffled for charity.

The 1975 Duster was actually built in just over a week. Bill learned through the local car club council that UPN was going to locally film and produce an automotive television series called *Street Vision Garage*. Bill approached UPN and proposed recording the club's restoration of the 75 Duster in a one week timeline,



similar to the Overhauled television series. UPN agreed and Bay Custom Auto in Denbigh

sponsored the location and painted the car for the club and the show. As committed, the club rallied its membership and in about one week, the Duster was completely restored and filmed for the show. Bill also represented TMC as the co-host of the television show for two seasons. The show was initially very successful and expanded to include tuner cars during its second season. UPN took the initiative to coordinate a subsequent charity car build that included the club and well-known automotive customizer Boyd Coddington. UPN's plan was to have TMC build a customized 1968 Sport Fury convertible to unveil at the Las Vegas SEMA Show with sponsor Legendary Auto Interiors and UPN. The car

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President's Corner

The September 2010 Tidewater Mopar Club, (TMC) meeting was held in the upstairs conference room at the Hall Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram Used Car building on September 14th. We had 30 active club members present along with 3 new members who came out to join the club. Also in attendance was a very special guest, Champion Funny Car driver Bobby Martin and his wife Lori.

I first met Bobby when I went to the grand opening of the Tidewater Community College, (TCC) Regional Automotive Center in Chesapeake, Va. back in April 2009. He was there with the then sponsored Chrysler College Automotive Program, (CAP) Hemi-powered 2008 Dodge Charger Funny Car (see TMC May 2009 Newsletter). I gave him a TMC 2009 Dodge Charger Mopar Madness t-shirt which he liked so much he wore it the rest of the day! We talked a little more that day before I asked him if would come out to one of our shows and he said he would love to if he could work it around his racing schedule. Well, I kept e-mailing him club newsletters and we stayed in touch until things finally came together. I introduced Bobby to Chris Colbert, General Manager from Hall Dodge, so they could work out the details and three weeks before our last show of 2010, Bobby called me and said he was coming out to help TMC/Hall Dodge raise money for the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia! Now back to the meeting...

The first order of business was to give a \$300 check to two representatives, James Holt and Levon Renyolds, from the Youth Challenge of Hampton Roads, (YCHR) Several months back the club agreed to raise money by selling donated items that Kevin Beard set up at Mopar Madness. Well, we already made a \$200 donation, so with the other items sold, we were able to add an additional \$300 donation for a total of \$500 bucks! The club agreed to keep the program going at all our shows. So, if you have any items that you would like to get out of your garage, just bring them to the next show and see Kevin Beard or Bob Yates. If you see something you need, just make a fair donation and we will add that to the next donation. YCHR receives no government assistance, because they are Christ-centered program, so they really appreciate any donations. If you are interested in helping them out, contact Travis Hall, Program Director at (757) 244-1234 (ext 205).

This month our feature guest speaker was Mike Previtire from Kalbones Speed Shop & Off Road our

Spotlight Sponsor for September. Mike is one of the professional technicians that work in the shop on everything from Monster 4x4's to cool Street Machines. He told everyone about a little about himself and what he does at Kalbone's as he passed around some samples of what their CNC Flow Water Jet machine can do. After answering a number of questions from club members, Mike gave out some neat Kalbone's stickers, brochures and business cards. He invited everyone to stop by and check out their parts showroom and their awesome shop. He stayed around till the meeting was over so he could talk more with several members. For more about Kalbone's Speed and Off Road Shop check out the Sponsor Spotlight article in the September issue of TMC's newsletter. As I am writing this article, I just realized that Kalbone's had their "Mopar Magic" Monster Truck out at the TCC Regional Automotive Center grand opening with Bobby Martin's Hemi Charger Funny Car, what a coincidence!

Next, our surprise visitor Bobby Martin talked with club members about his 3000 horsepower 2008 Hemi Dodge Charger Funny Car. He started out by telling us how excited he was to be here in Virginia Beach to help TMC/Hall Dodge raise money for the Foodbank of Southeast Virginia. It was encouraging when he mentioned how impressed he was with the great relationship we have with Hall Dodge, the huge club turnout for the meeting and the good things we are doing with the Foodbank. He emphasized how important what the we were doing to help the local community charity organizations and how this reflects well on the club, the dealership while also helping Mother Mopar sell cars. Bobby answered a few more questions before it lead to him telling us a really cool story about his wild ride to win 2009 Top Alcohol Funny Car at the U.S. Nationals at O'Reilly's Raceway Park in Indianapolis, Indiana. This year Bobby has been driving a 1933 Willys Outlaw Pro Mod, powered by a 524 cubic

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inch blown Oddy's Automotive alcohol burning powerplant for Spike Sterling out of Steubenville, Ohio! For more on what Bobby has been up to go his website: <http://www.bobbymartinracing.com>. Later after the meeting was over, Bobby walked over to swapped drag racing stories with lifetime TMC member and 1967 NHRA Super Stock World Champion Ed Miller. Here's a picture to document old school and new school racers, that's cool!

On to other club business, club member and sponsor Rick Hart collected the final money so he could place the club's 3rd big order this year from Auto Metal Direct. The order went Monday the 20th and everyone who ordered new stuff should have it next week. Club members who took advantage of the great deal got a discount of 15-20% off of the correct 18-gauge steel panels, bumpers and glass plus NO shipping costs! A big TMC thank-you to one our great club sponsors Mike Gray and all the people AMD!

The TMC Annual Picnic was held at Vice-President, Bob Kinker's estate out in Chesapeake on Saturday August 14th. It was beautiful warm August day for all the club members and their families that came out. A special TMC thanks to Scott and Gary Benson for coming out to join in on the fun and BBQ some of their famous pig for everyone to enjoy. There was so much food to sample



because everyone brought some side dishes and desserts to go with the killer BBQ. There was plenty of entertainment, from horseshoes and corn hole to all the car stories being told. Bob Kinker and Rick Hart had rented a giant tent and even got us our own Port-a-Potty! A new attraction this year was new member and "Ice Cream Man" Charles Dickens, who kept everyone's bowl full! Another great TMC picnic Bob, thanks for putting it all together and letting us have it at your home! For more pics of the TMC picnic, go to: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/maxwedge11/sets/72157624732188964/> and

http://s695.photobucket.com/albums/vv312/dartguy66_photos/TMC%20Picnic/?albumview=slideshow#/grid

Next I covered some of the important points from the bi-annual TMC Board of Directors meeting that was held on the 28th of August at my house. A group of club members and myself met with Bill Laurent at Golden Coral in Virginia Beach for breakfast. Then we cruised out to the Virginia Beach Airport in Pungo to meet up with other members to check out the Tidewater Region AACA 37th Annual Car Show where there were plenty of really cool cars and restored military aircraft. We then met at my house, ate some burgers and brats before have a 2 hour BOD meeting. We reviewed the last year of everything the club has done. We then determined what worked well and what did not. We voted on a tentative schedule so we could start planning ahead for the next year of events. Of course, all this will be finalized after TMC elections have been completed and the next group of TMC Officers and Board Members attend the next BOD bi-annual meeting in January 2010.

The last thing we discussed was the TMC/Hall Dodge "Feed the Hungry" Mopar Show that will be held at Hall Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram Used Car building parking lot. I got a list of volunteers to help out with show and went over the final details for the show. The food was changed from chicken to pizza and we battled a quick list of favorite pies. The goal for the show, raise another \$1000 bucks to make donation to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia be \$2000 bucks! Everyone was ready for the last TMC show of the year!

I know this is the longest President's Corner I ever done, but there has been a lot going on. It is very important that everyone checks out the attached TMC Officer nomination sheet and puts their input in for whom they would like to be on the ballot. If you would like to be more active, type your name in position you would like to fill and submit it. We are looking for nominations of members for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Web Master and the Board of Directors. **For those members that don't have e-mail write the nominations on the enclosed form and mail it to the club P.O. Box 9243, Virginia Beach, VA 23450. For the majority of you with e-mail, you can just type your nominations on the form that is in Word and e-mail it back to vamopar1@cox.net.** Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have questions. Congratulations to Dana Byrum who won \$42 bucks in the club meeting 50/50 raffle and gave \$20 bucks of it back for the Foodbank!

Mopar to ya! "Butch" Hora TMC President

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TMC - What size engine are your running? Are there any factory parts used in it?

J. Dunn - 498 cu in with a 4.187 bore, and a 4 1/2 stroke. No, all aftermarket.

TMC - How much horsepower does the engine produce? What fuel do you run?

J. Dunn - Who knows, gobs when the air is good and the track is tight maybe 3 to 4000. We run nitro methane.

TMC - What kind of transmission do you run? Is there anything special about it?

J. Dunn - Lenco 2-speed with a 41% first gear. I don't use any gauges and shift when I think it needs it.

TMC - What type of rear end is in the car? What gear ratio? Is there anything special about it?

J. Dunn - Moser Engineering full floater with 3.70 gears, I'm proud to call them a sponsor and letting me use the first one they ever built. The unit has been bullet proof!

TMC - What size slicks are you running? How many runs do you get out of them?

J. Dunn - 34.6 x 17, depending on track conditions the tires will last as long as 6 runs but usually 4 runs.

TMC - Is there anything else special out the car?

J. Dunn - A lot of the stuff on our car is made in our shop, mounts, tinwork, tanks and any chassis repair. We build all our motors and perform 100% of the upkeep week in and week out.

TMC - Have you ever run NHRA? Are you going to be running the Duster at the IHRA Nationals at VMP?

Yes, and we have run at NHRA tracks with great success, but the best show on Earth is the IHRA Nitro Jam and I am extremely proud that we are a part of it! If you like half track burnouts and violent dry hops coupled with a no lift attitude then you need to be at the next IHRA event!

The IHRA Nitro Jam series, a division of Feld Motor Sports, will be returning to Virginia the weekend of October 15 – 16 for the Nitro Jam World Finals at VMP. The event will feature a brand new format and a show never before seen in drag racing. The Nitro Jam features dozens of the world's fastest nitro-burning dragsters and funny cars along with some of the wildest exhibition acts from all across the country.

Tickets for the Nitro Jam World Finals are being offered at the lowest prices ever and fans can save even more by purchasing tickets in advance. Tickets can be

purchased online by going to the Nitro Jam website at www.nitrojam.com or the VMP website at www.virginiamotorsports.com.

("Members Ride," Continued from page 2)

In 2009 the word was out that Dodge was releasing a very limited racing version of the Challenger, called a Drag Pack. I applied to buy one and was chosen! I purchased number 2009031 in fall of 2009. My friend Jack and I drove to Michigan to pick it up. The Drag Pack Challenger is not street legal. All the unnecessary electronic and safety items are removed. It is a basic stripped down model with only 2 bucket seats making it 1000 lbs lighter than the street legal version! It came with a 6.1 Hemi engine with 12.5 compression, but that is being replaced with a 6.1 Arrington Engine. Other modifications include: a Dana 60 spool rearend with 488 gears and the transmission will be a 904 old school Chrysler transmission by Builder Bill at Paramount Performance. It is currently having the cage, suspension and drive train installed by Tommy Galbreath from Starr Motors. If everything goes well we should running her down the down the track this Fall! As you can see, I am very serious about racing my Mopars. I am driven to achieve the low nines and obtain the "Fastest Challenger" title and will take an 8.9 any day!

("Mopar Moment," Continued from page 4)

would then be shown nationally and auctioned for charity at the end of the show season at a Barrett Jackson event. Preparations for the build initially went well and one filming session was held, but then the show came to a sudden end when a shop in Maryland who performed one of the featured car restorations the prior season filed a lawsuit against UPN. The resultant court action ended the show. On occasion, you can still find and view some show episodes on the Internet if you google 'Street Vision Garage'.

Bill originally joined TMC in 1987 and is one of a small number of our "long haul" members. He was forced to end his presidency due to a pending military transfer, but later was able to stay in the area till his retirement from the Navy. Bill has remained a very active member of the club, attending meetings, bringing one of his cars to a show and sharing his experience with the current club officers.

(The final chapter of "The History of TMC" will be continued next month)

2010 Tidewater Mopar Club Membership Card Sponsors:

<u>Business</u>	<u>POC</u>	<u>Phone #</u>	<u>Discount</u>
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Mancini Racing www.ManciniRacing.com	Wes Sheehy	800-843-2821	Best Price Available
Amsoil Independent Dealer www.lubedealer.com/ajs	AJ Schneider	757-285-8299	10% on Amsoil Products
Hart Architectural Signage	Rick Hart	757-420-5626	10% Materials/Labor
Freedom Mechanical, Inc.	Harry Paul	757-486-5896	10% Parts/Labor
Alpha Music, Inc.	Eddie Hancock	757-486-2001	Best Price Available & More
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Kalbones Speed Shop & Off Road	Cris Anderson	757-368-3726	10% Parts/Labor



NOTICE TO TMC MEMBERS

Any TMC Member that has a complaint with a TMC Sponsor's product or service provided in a business transaction and has given the sponsor an opportunity to correct the problem; if the member is still not satisfied, they should contact one of the TMC Officers or Board of Directors listed on the front of the TMC Newsletter and register their complaint with sufficient detail to support their position. The TMC Board of Directors shall reserve the right to remove a TMC Sponsor without reservation.

TMC President