

Fox Tales

Fox Valley Region

Model A Restorers Club

September 2007

Pennies from Heaven!

Cali's telephone was noisier than a valve seat trying to get the heck out of Charlie's number two cylinder. Early morning storms thundered through the area, promising soggy weather for Fox Valley's annual pilgrimage to the Illinois Railway Museum. Intense lightening and sheeting rain just before dawn started everyone's internal debate, which concluded with a call to John. (Jan started *our* debate exactly when I had concluded mine with a decision to tough it out and install the side curtains; I was probably first to call). THE TRANSPORTATION EXTRAVAGANZA was likely going to be shy six or eight of Henry's finest.

It is absolutely amazing what just a peek of sunshine can do for tourism! By 8 AM all that was left of the storms was a few puddles, and by 9 there were eight Model A's decorating John's freshly blacktopped lane. We picked up Choin's on the way, so we had nine carloads of picnickers to chow down on pork loin and potluck. Whaddafeast!

Less hearty car types were scared away by the rain, so we had lots of elbow room ... and plenty of tables ... in the oak grove. Jan summed it up when we got home: *"What a pleasant day!"*



Photos courtesy of Keith Rogers



REMARKABLE ROADSIDE REMEDY

On the way home from Union, Nemechek's Sport Coupe pooped out. Actually, its engine revved, wildly out of control. But the result was the same. The colorful old Ford made an unplanned stop at the side of the road. As Frank retold the story, at the August Club meeting, he and Joni had already passed Cali's house, headed east on Burlington Road, when they heard a "snap" and the accelerator pedal dropped to the floor. The engine raced wide open. Frank was able to lift the accelerator pedal with the edge of his shoe, but every time he pressed down, the pedal stayed to the metal or, "to the plywood," as Frank corrected himself.

Lifting the hood confirmed the source of the problem. The 77-year-old accelerator return spring had broken. As it sat, the engine had lost its ability to "un-accelerate." Since the Fox Valley convoy had disbanded and Frank's mechanical support was long gone, it was up to him to noodle an "unauthorized" repair to get the car – and Joni – the rest of the way home.

Frank's solution was to remove a shoe lace and to tie it to the accelerator pedal, keeping the free end in his hand. Upward tension on the string controlled the accelerator rebound. Frank proudly reported that his Rube Goldberg engineering worked great with the only problem being maintaining the tautness of the shoe lace while shifting, steering, and using the directional signal.

Frank paused dramatically in his narration to admit that they did arrive home safely ...
... "literally *on a shoe string!*"

We can assume that Joni added the *prayer!*

