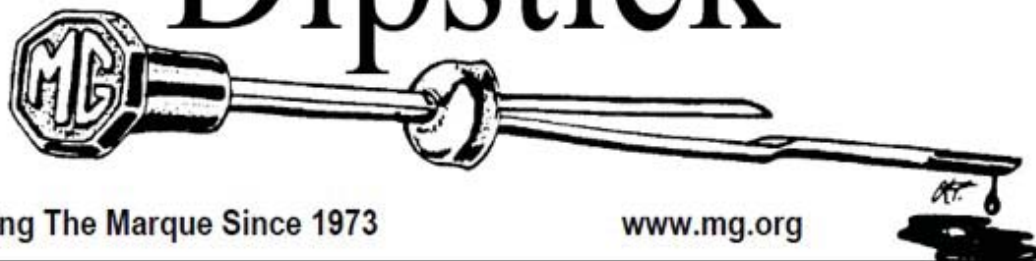




# The Dipstick



Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

[www.mg.org](http://www.mg.org)

**Volume 45 Issue 11**

**November 2018**

## Back to the Crooked Road!

*By Jim Villers, Robert Perrone and Susan Bond, with photography by Donald Ladd*

The "Crooked Road" is a heritage trail in Southwestern Virginia that explores the musical history of the Blue Ridge and Cumberland Mountains. There are numerous roadside markers highlighting the local history and stories of musicians and events that evolved into today's bluegrass music. Exploring the roots of bluegrass was the focus of our four day tour.

We began our tour with breakfast at the Portsmouth Waffle Town restaurant with Tad's 8:01 starting time. The group was a little slow assembling as Donald and Rose Ladd and Jim and Betty Villers finished their breakfast without another MG in sight. Then the cars began arriving and by Tad's prescribed time, eight cars were all in a line and departed down I-664, connecting to US-58 West, heading for Floyd, VA. After a brief rest stop at the McDonalds in Emporia, we continued west on US-58 at a constant 60MPH; we had a lot of miles to go.

Lunch was at Ernie's in South Boston, an interesting old restaurant that has been used on previous tours. While most of us were inside ordering our food, Fred McCall and Linda were enjoying their gourmet lunch in the parking lot. Their lunch had been warming on the firewall of their 1500cc "oven" and they finished it off with black walnut cookies.

As everyone knows, Tad prefers the smaller less traveled roads and now was the time that we departed the four-lane US-58 for a nice two-lane with attractive scenery for our afternoon drive. After an hour or so, we stopped at the Homeplace Winery in Climax to taste their finest blends. Then it was on the road again for our drive into Floyd.



Floyd is a town like no other town in Virginia. It is the Mecca for bluegrass musicians who converge on the town with their fiddles, banjos, mandolins and guitars to play with others on the streets, in the alleys and on the several stages. The musical area of Floyd is one block long, organized around The Floyd Country Store. Our Hotel Floyd was located on an adjacent street with a walkway directly to The Country Store, a perfect place to stay. After touring the art mall and the out-door craft fair across from the Store, some met for dinner in the Doghouse, a large pub with a tourist feel.

After dinner, it was time to take our 7:00 seats at The Country Store for the "prime show". The first hour was a bluegrass gospel band and vocalist; good but not exciting. They were followed by an eight



musician dance band and the place lit up with rhythm and feeling. The dance floor in front of the band filled with "flat footing" dancers; a historic type of dance with tap shoes that reminds me of the "Irish River Dance" troupe of a few years ago. The excitement and joy was contagious and Cynthia and Linda were soon among the enthusiastic dancers. A Japanese Blue Grass Band played during the intermission and another band finished up the concert.

The joy of Floyd is more than The Country Store as people come and go during all of the performances. While taking a break from The Country Store, some enjoyed a pick-up band

playing in the square in front of the public restrooms and another band playing in a vacant space between two buildings. While walking the street, we noticed a couple of teenagers holding banjos and asked if they would play a number. With that, we were treated with some excellent banjo picking as the two young people play off the talent of each other. That is Floyd, the celebration and joy of bluegrass music.



Crooked Road Convoy – before the “exterior color-challenged” cars started having problems!

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly, a shot rang out! A door slammed. The maid screamed. Suddenly, a pirate ship appeared on the horizon! While millions of people were starving, the king lived in luxury. Meanwhile, on a small farm in Kansas, a boy was growing up.

My apologies to Snoopy, and to Charles M. Schulz. But sometimes you turn to the greats for inspiration.



But I will use another often-used phrase to describe how we spent so much of Saturday. Actually, I will butcher the phrase a bit, because the Saturday portion of *“Straight Back to the Crooked Road”* can be summed up by saying *“Better red than dead”* since it describes the MGs that day. I’ll explain later.

Saturday was a beautiful day to drive an MG on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Apparently, sad to say, Fred’s car decided it was also a beautiful day to break down on the Blue Ridge Parkway. After a lot of consultation and experimentation, Jim Villers, Don Ladd and I declared that the patient needed to be transported to the Emergency Room of Frank Linse. We just didn’t have the needed parts to repair the MGA, and we could not get the parts shipped by Moss from Petersburg to Floyd until Monday.

So we bid a reluctant farewell to Fred and Linda and continued on our way. Of course, in my attempt to take some ignition parts off of my own car to try them on Fred’s, I knocked some wires loose and broke down about five minutes later. Although Caroline and I missed the visit to Château Morrissette, eventually we caught up with the group in time for lunch.

We all picked up our pre-ordered lunches at the Mabry Mill Restaurant, then went on our way to the Blue Ridge Music Center. Most of the group was able to enjoy live music at that stop, which featured a very talented musician. He performed several songs of local origin and provided some interesting background and information as well.

Somewhere around this time Karen was asked if she had another pair of shoes. Why was she asked? So she could help push the car, of course...

I'm not sure, maybe Tad's car was jealous that Fred's car had so much attention. But by the time we arrived at the Blue Ridge Music Center Tad's car could barely run.

After another round of poking, prodding, muttering, and head-wagging, the assembled group of MG experts declared they could do no more for this car either.

As the rest of the group came out to join us to leave on our next part of the drive, someone asked "What's wrong with Tad's car?" And some smart-aleck, (I won't mention who, but I think she has red hair and was my passenger), answered "What's wrong? It's an MG!"

Well, that didn't stop our fearless leader, and he and Karen got back in their car and led us to our next stop. Unfortunately, that next stop was along the side of the road about five minutes later. Yes, the tow trucks were busy that day.



*Manly mechanic at work*

And now for the explanation of the "Better red than dead" phrase I mentioned earlier. Of the cars that remained, all were some variation of red. The two cars that broke down were white and blue, (or whatever exactly that color is on Fred's car). I wonder if we should try bringing red spray paint on the next road trip.

Well, now we had to go on with one less MG, but we still had the 2 passengers. Now I know that sometimes there can be some friction in a married couple that is related to cars. But, because of the MG, Tad and Karen split up. Well, not their marriage, of course, just where they had the ride for the rest of the weekend. Tad became a passenger of Sue Bond, and Karen drove away with Al.

And I don't want to cause trouble, but I do know that at the next stop Karen was unable to get out of Al's car. Try as she might, she was trapped inside. Finally, someone had to tell Al that he couldn't keep her, and had to give her back to Tad, so he let her out.

So while Tad stayed behind with his car to take care of the towing issues, the rest of us enjoyed the wine at Mt. Vale Vineyards, where I also overheard some interesting stories. I'm not one to gossip, but I did overhear a certain club member telling tales of dancing on the tables at a party, and another having some vague recollection of doing the same thing... or wait, maybe it was dancing on the bar, not a table. Funny how the memory gets foggy over the years.



Then Al joined in to say that he once danced on a table at a party too. I have a feeling that he didn't generate nearly as much interest as the other two, whose names will not be mentioned... as long as the check clears.

But I think that's enough for now. I'll just conclude by saying that we did have a very enjoyable day the rest of the way out, with great roads, fine company and a fine dinner in Boone before calling it a day.

Better red than dead?

Just in case it hasn't been mentioned, we were down to 6 red(ish) MGs and a Mini – and the Mini is red and black. I wonder if that has some special significance.

We had breakfast at the Blowing Rock Holiday Inn, made sure the cars were full, too, and headed out when I was ready. I realized that being the lead car with Tad navigating in the passenger seat has its advantages. We backtracked to Boone which was no where near as busy as it was the day before (Appalachian State home football game) and headed up NC 421, thru the Cherokee National Forest. Some where along the twisty road we drove under a picturesque stone arch. Drivers behind us reported that one bewildered dog watched each LBC passing as tho he had never seen the like before. We crossed into Tennessee for a while, took TN 133 and crossed back over the border into Virginia, and on to Damascus for a pit stop at the Old Mill Inn where we would later eat lunch.

Heading west on 58 we found Heartwood, Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway, near Abingdon. Have you ever stopped at Tamarack while taking I-64 thru West Virginia? This is the same thing for south west Virginia. There were quilts, jewelry, pottery, Christmas decorations, paintings, mixed media, musical instruments and much more, all hand-made. We were all impressed and walked around in awe of all the talent on display. Heartwood also hosts Crooked Road music and can be reserved for special events. On the way out we had our picture taken with the LOVE sign out front.

Getting back on 58, we headed back to the Old Mill Inn in Damascus for lunch on the porch overlooking the mill pond. I can't remember who first spotted it, but we spent the time, while waiting for our food, watching a hawk in a tree across the mill pond. Donald Ladd used his telephoto lens to get a picture and we debated until we found a picture online that ended the discussion; it was an osprey. The inn manager



confirmed it. We had no idea osprey were to be found so far inland. Before we finished eating it had been joined by a half dozen turkey vultures which also stared at us – spooky, would be good for Halloween. But the food was good, the weather delightful and the company even better.

We had some time to wander around Damascus, visiting the Crooked Road wayside, walking along part of the Virginia Creeper trail, and looking into the shops along the main street. One of my bucket list items is to bike the Creeper trail and we found out that Adventure Damascus Bicycle and Outdoor Company will rent you a bike, haul you to the top of the trail and pick you up at the bottom for only \$28. Such a deal! I wonder if they have bike trailers for dogs.

Back on the road, we followed 58 east to Konnarock Road that would reconnect with 58 later and was a bit lower on the mountain, letting us avoid some of the rain higher up. But the GPS had other ideas and took us left on 658 before we got back to 58. More twisty roads! But by the time we turned on to 601 it had started to rain and we had to slow down on the curves – drat. Safely back on 58, we headed to Galax and the Hampton Inn, which had a forlorn white MGB in the parking lot.

Jim Villers had called his son, who lives in Windsor, earlier to see if his truck and trailer were available, planning to return the next week to get Tad's B. But the younger Jim had said he wanted to get out of the house where he had been recovering from a back problem and would drive out that evening. So we checked in and then met in the hotel breakfast area, unpacking and consuming snacks and adult beverages. Before it was dark, Jim the younger arrived. He backed the trailer up in front of the B and told Tad to see if it would climb in by itself. Halfway up the ramp the B decided that was way too much work and quit for good. Jim pulled the lead off the coil and told Tad to put it in first and turn the key to

After all those adult beverages, I was not keen on driving to Tlaquepaque Mexican Restaurant, even tho Google said it was only 4 minutes away. But Andy, Cynthia and Tad were walking so I joined them. It was finally a bit cooler and most of the trip was down hill and thru parking lots. It felt good to use people power instead of horse power for a while. We were all seated at a long table and had the usual noisy fun going on. We even helped sing "Happy Birthday" to the honoree at the table next to us. What happens in Galax stays in Galax! The walk back was all uphill but we made it, and retired for the night.

*(editors' note: our story ends here for now, but look for additional Crooked Road coverage in a future issue of The Dipstick!)*



RJ Reynolds' Catalpa climbing tree at the Reynolds homestead



Fine Mexican dining in Southwest Virginia!

## The Northwest Passage and the Southwest Corner

Well, we are back. We left home on September 2 and returned on September 30. Four weeks, 8,500 miles and 22 states later and it cost less than \$1 per mile. Along the way the MG got a bit of a makeover with a new muffler; tailpipes; fuel pump; not one but two new tires and an undetermined amount of screws. She's running great, although I understand she's going to be headed into the shop for a tune-up. I wonder why?



I'm sure all of you will appreciate that the top was up for only two days of the trip. One through the Midwest when it was raining buckets from more than one stray cloud and the other in Washington where we encountered the misty drizzle, rain and almost freezing temperatures. Beyond that, the top remained down and I bundled up every morning in my winter gear as the temps were almost always in the 30's or 40's, ok maybe 50's when we started but the wind chill was

always below freezing as far as I was concerned. PJ thought the temps were great but did occasionally break down and put on the vest and raincoat. Those would come off well before noon each day for him but I would keep bundled up well into the afternoon on most days. We discovered that the MG did in fact have AC but I would roll my window up every morning and turn it off and wouldn't turn it back on (roll the window down) until the afternoon and towards the end of the trip I didn't even to that.

This was a windshield tour and to prove it I have over two thousand pictures, with most of them being taken through the windshield of the MG, some with bugs and others without depending on when we last filled up for gas. Sorry, but I was told not to share all two thousand pictures with the group that only a few were needed for the Dipstick. Probably, for the better because I believe there are several pics of the floorboards and my feet because I kept hitting the wrong button on the camera.



Crater Lake, Oregon



The words that best describe our travels would include spectacular, gorgeous, magnificent, beautiful beyond words, exciting, marvelous, etc. etc. With each new turn in the road there was something else to look at and admire.

First up was the New River Gorge in West Virginia, followed by intermittent freeways into Ohio. Note, we didn't miss leaving the big cities behind us. Our route through the Midwest included long stretches of road where the only things visible were either cows or corn and there were a lot of both. The cows won the contest for most seen animal on the journey, followed by horses and dead bugs (on the windshield) after that it was sheep and goats with a few elk, buffalo, prairie dogs, and a lone coyote thrown in for good measure.

South Dakota brought us to the Badlands and the beginning of our adventures with dirt roads. Apparently there was a huge sum of money available as just about every national park and Indian reservation we traveled through had work being done on the roads. Actually, they usually did away with the road, left a lot of dirt (which is what we traveled over) and then started paving (always on the other side of the road). Just our luck. We surmised this is what led to the replacement of the muffler and the two new front tires along with the wheel alignment. Sorry, I digress.



PJ's new friend, safely viewed from inside the cockpit!

## Visit to Sports Car Craftsmen

My wife and I have two adult children who live in the Denver area along with two grandchildren. We normally visit three times a year. I had purchased an MGB in 1983 and transferred it to my son in Colorado in 2013 when I purchased an MGA. My son and his family enjoy the car a lot and he takes it to various events in the Denver area. He was invited to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Sports Car Craftsmen and I went along with him and my grandson.

There is not a shop like this in our area.



They seem to specialize in complete restorations of any type of British sports car. They also have a back lot with perhaps 100 of what the owner calls organ donors. I believe they have at least six Magnettes in the back. None of those 100 donors had engines. However the owner has 18 trailers with all sorts of cars and two with only engines on board.

Of particular interest to me was the display of color chips of almost all of the original MGB colors. There is a sign that says they have never been exposed to sunlight, so they represent the original color as it left the factory. Of 48 original colors, they have chips for 32.

*Submitted by Rich Hildreth*



Colorado branch of the  
Hildreth family



32 of the original MGB colours!





# Marque Time

Greetings MG Enthusiasts,

It was great to see such a large turnout at our October meeting. The weather was perfect and the first lady and I were happy to see our cul-de-sac full of LBC's. The meeting seemed more complete with our Vice President and her chauffeur having returned from their almost cross-country adventure.

I was able to enjoy a great cruising day recently. When I pulled up to a stoplight, the guy in the car next to me asked if I had a problem with overheating. I realized that it hasn't been an issue since my gauge broke.

As Thanksgiving approaches I am thankful for many things. One of them is being part of the MG Club and the friendships that it has brought. My best wishes to all for a happy Thanksgiving and Holiday Season.

Safety Fast,  
Bill O

Your President

## Dipstick Calendar – November 2018

Nov. 3 TRAACA Movie Night – 5pm – 9:15pm  
Special Events in Portsmouth

**Nov. 4 – (Sun) – Fall Tech Session**

**Nov. 7 – (Wed) Monthly Meeting – Hampton**  
Hosted by Faith & PJ

**Nov. 10 – (Sat) – Merroir & Terroir Oyster  
Extravaganza**  
Chatham Vineyards – 4pm – 8pm plus  
travel time  
\$55pp – Reservations Only

**Dec. 16 – (Sun) 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**  
11:00 Brunch at Princess Anne Country  
Club

**Dec. 18 – (Tue) Holiday Lights**  
6:00 for Dinner at Franco's

**Feb 16 – (Sat) 2019 Kick-off Drive - Norfolk**  
ETD – TBD

**Bold-Faced Items are TMGC Events**



## Activity Report – November 2018

Another Oh, MG moment – Crow Farm Winery (Tour de Bay – October 2013) has been named the #1 winery in MD by House Beautiful Magazine.

For those traveling to MG-2019 in Traverse City, four other #1 wineries could be on the route – Zephaniah Farm (Leesburg, VA), Chestnut Ridge (Spender, WV), CLE Urban Winery (OH – match this with your visit to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame), and Mawbry Vineyards (Suttons Bay, MI).



Oh, MG #2 – NASA Wallops Island (Tour de Bay – October 2013) was just announced as the site of the first US Launch Complex for California-based Rocket Lab. Beginning in 2019, Rocket Lab will launch satellites into low-Earth orbit from this facility.

Oh, MG #3 – Boone, NC (Crooked Road – September 2018) was named the 2<sup>nd</sup> Best Place to Retire in North Carolina. I guess if you live there, you already have a place to park.

You are invited to join us on a future drive, and you can experience some of these Oh, MG moments.

Quick Hit – We have been invited to join the TRAACA for their annual Movie Night – This Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> at **Special Events, 2211 Elliott Ave, Portsmouth**. Enjoy horse races from 5pm – 6pm. Dinner is from 6pm – 7pm. 7pm – 9:15pm – The movie - “The Babe” - will run from 7pm to about 9:15pm. **RSVP to Joann at 757-485-1212.**

Susan and Terry are back on the schedule for hosting the **Fall Tech Session** after a year’s hiatus. Come on out on **Sunday November 4<sup>th</sup>** to their home in Chesapeake. I’ve seen enough bonnets raised this summer to know that there will be plenty of projects. And if by some chance there are none, the Bonds always have a grand supply of beer to enjoy on the deck. As usual, the garage opens at 10am, but expect a few early risers to be at work when you arrive.

Our **next meeting is on Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>** at Faith and PJ’s home in Hampton. This is the Chili Cook-off. I hope you have been fine-tuning your recipes and are ready to take on defending champion Pete Olsen for the title. He has claimed the title with his Tail-Pipe Backfire Chili, versions 1, 2, 3 and 4. We’ll see what he concocts this time around. And it will be interesting to see what the competition brings.

There has only been modest interest in the **Merroir & Terroir Oyster Extravaganza at Chatham Vineyards on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>**. Tickets (\$55/person) are still available at [www.chathamvineyards.net](http://www.chathamvineyards.net). If you decide to go, let me know and I can include you in the travel plans.

Our **Holiday Party** also serves as the club's 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. We will be back at **Princess Anne Country Club in Virginia Beach for brunch on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**. The cost of the brunch is \$20 per person, payable at the door (cash or a check to TMGC). I'm sure the brunch selection will be as elaborate as it was on our last visit. There will also be a cash bar for your adult beverages. Plan an arrival time of 11am. It will help in finalizing our plans with PACC if you RSVP by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Finally, our first event in the 2019 wrap-around driving season is on **Tuesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>** with the **Holiday Lights at Norfolk Botanical Gardens**. This top-down drive is an annual favorite. Join us for a great dinner at Franco's (6200 N Military at Norview). Plan on arriving between 6:00 and 6:30pm. We'll depart en masse to drive through the lights at approximately 7:15.

And that leads us into the New Year. Events are being planned. Some new destinations and some old favorites. Our first drive will be in February. Rumor has it, there is a Spring Tour in the works. We'll visit Harbor Park, Hanover Tavern, Oozlefinch, and more. Can you say, "Outer Banks"? Anticipate more back roads than highways. We continue to search for good food, good drink, and interesting venues – your suggestions are always welcome. And if someone wants to take on the challenge of driving the pace car for an event, please let me know. Also, we are still looking for hosts for our 2019 Meetings. Plenty of dates remain open, although there has been tentative interest as some are checking their calendars. Contact the VPs or the Activity Wonk to reserve your spot on the calendar.

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## **2018 November Dipstick Membership**

**2018 Membership:** 113 paid memberships.

**2019 Membership:** 87 paid memberships. (So far 32 non-renewals)

**New Memberships:** Welcome back to Bob and Pam McClaren (71 and 74 MGBs); Welcome to Ross Pierce and wife Janet Humphries (70 MGB).

**Dues:** 2019 Dues are way past due! Renewal Forms are on-line at [www.mg.org](http://www.mg.org). Please fill out a copy and bring it to a meeting or mail it along with \$20 payment. If you have no changes to past data, you only need to submit the \$20 in dues. If you do not plan on renewing, please let me know by mail or e-mail. Thanks.

**Membership Chair:** Andrew Wallach, 545 Mayflower Rd., Norfolk, VA 23508. 757 408-4497.  
[wallach@whro.net](mailto:wallach@whro.net).

# October 2, 2018 TMGC Meeting Minutes

President Olcheski opened the meeting at his lovely home in Virginia Beach. By my count we had more around 40 people in attendance. Previous minutes were approved.

Vice President returned from her wonderful vacation with PJ that lasted 4 weeks. She did mention that they visited Yellowstone, Badlands, Arches and Mount Rushmore to name a few. Only broke down a half a dozen times but a lot of laughter ensued. They were fortunate to have a tech session for a fuel pump while in the Yellowstone parking lot.

Treasurer's report indicates that we have a balance of \$1,692.94

Paid membership is currently at 78. We have approximately 183 cars in the club with at least half of them running. Having a running car is not a requirement. We welcome back Bob McLaren. Three of the founding members were present to include Mike Ash, Roosevelt Mosely and Hank Giffin.

The next tech session will be at the Bond's. Wednesday November 7, 2018 PJ and Faith will be hosting the meeting in Hampton VA.

Activities: Antique Auto Club has a thing going on for movie night November 3, Saturday in Portsmouth. If interested check out the website. The movie is Babe which has a lot of old antique cars in it. Jim Villers recommends this outing. On November 10, 2018 we are invited to go the Eastern Shore at Chatham Vineyards for oysters and wine. Tickets are \$55. If interested we are leaving Virginia Beach around 3pm. December is the holiday party at the Princess Anne Country Club. More information to follow. Tuesday, December 8, 2018 Holiday Lights cost is \$20. Anyone willing to host a meeting please contact Tad.

Dipstick's deadline is October 20, 2018. Mike Haag has requested pictures from the Crooked Road Tour. Also look forward to Faith and PJ's adventures along with excerpts from the 850 mile Crooked Road Tour.

There was no old business.

There was no new business.

Marque Time: Hank Giffin is looking for fenders for an MGTC. If you need a 79 new rear muffler for a 79B contact Tad and he will help you out.

Tad wanted to thank Jim Villers for arranging for his son to come and pick up his broken down car from the Crooked Road Tour. Fred didn't have such good luck since he stated that he had to be towed from the Blue Ridge parkway to Virginia Beach specifically Frank's house and it was the trip from hell. Luckily it only took Frank 5 seconds to fix and it is good to go. On the other hand Robert Perrone also had a breakdown while almost to the tunnel heading home had a flat tire and what did the members do to help him out NOTHING except wave and say have a nice day. Where is the justice? People who were on the Crooked Road Tour determined that if your car wasn't red you were dead. Both cars that were towed (one white and the other blue) didn't make it but all the red cars did.

Jim Villers was presented with a restoration award for his Mercedes-Benz which he richly deserved.

Rose was not present due to a family member in Kentucky being extremely ill.

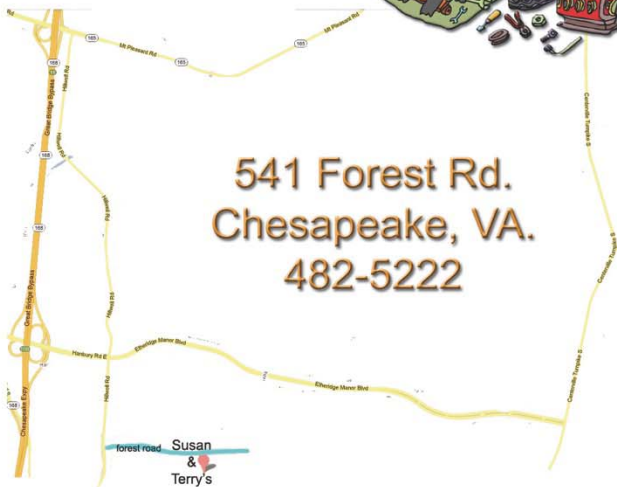
Motion to adjourn.



Rich Hildreth's son and grandson in the LBC organ donor lot, Arvada, CO

## Is Your Car in Need of a Tech Session?

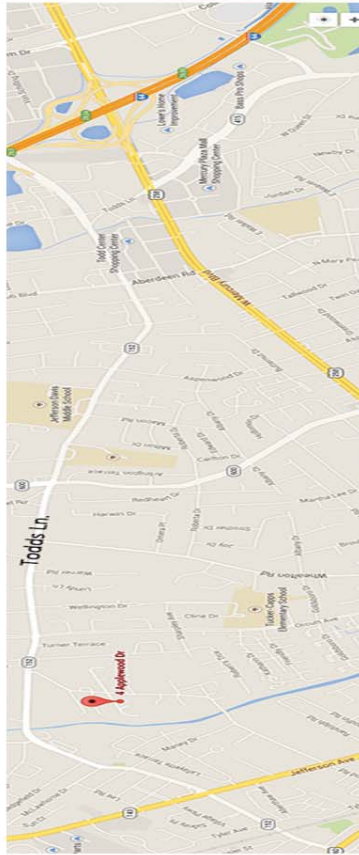
Bring it to Susan & Terry's Garage  
 Sunday, November 4th starting at 10 a.m.



541 Forest Rd.  
 Chesapeake, VA.  
 482-5222

forest road, Susan  
 & Terry's





7:30 - 8:00 pm - Kick Tyres  
8:00 Meeting

Monthly Meeting  
Wednesday, Nov 7th  
PJ & Faith Peterson  
4 Applewood Drive  
Hampton  
896-9606



# The Dipstick



Tidewater MG Classics  
C/O Kathy & Mark Davidoski  
4705 Little John Road  
Virginia Beach, VA 23455  
[davidoskicrew@cox.net](mailto:davidoskicrew@cox.net)

*Affiliated with*



North American MGB Register

# FIRST CLASS