

Futurliner News

GM Futurliner Restoration Project
(See more on our web site: www.Futurliner.org)

Newsletter #40

October - 2011



Futurliner #10 at the Dayton, OH Show - 2011

This 40th issue of our newsletter continues the semi-annual newsletters now that the vehicle is completed and being displayed during the year. This project has been an all-volunteer effort that started in 1998 with the goal of restoring one of the twelve GM Futurliners, originally built in 1940, to its original and functional condition. The vehicle was donated to the National Automotive and Truck Museum by Joe Bortz in the early 1990's and is still owned by the museum in Auburn, Indiana. The restoration project was led by volunteer **Don Mayton** in Zeeland, Michigan with a group of nearly 40 volunteers participating.

Loss of NATMUS Founders

It is with much sadness that we notify you of the loss of **John Martin Smith and his wife Bobbie**. They were both killed in an automobile accident on 10/5/2011 near Auburn, IN. John Martin was a founder of both the ACD (Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg) Museum and NATMUS in Auburn Indiana and was active in the early days of the Futurliner project. Don Mayton and others met with John Martin, Bobbie and others from NATMUS IN 1998 as the restoration project was developed with the agreement that NATMUS would continue to own the vehicle and Don's crew would restore it in Michigan and show it around the country. Bobbie continued to support NATMUS even after John Martin stepped down as President of NATMUS. They will both be missed. Don was able to attend one of the viewings on his way home from Hershey, PA this month.

2011 Futurliner Shows Completed

- May 12-15, 2011 -
 - **Auburn Indiana**, R&M auction. Our restored Futurliner was on display along with one of Brad Boyajian's unrestored Futurliners which was up for auction. Brad's vehicle did not sell and is still available as far as we know.

- May 26-28, 2011
 - **South Bend, Indiana**, National Truck Antique Historical Society (ATHS) Truck show at the County Fairgrounds – Fred Hoffman in charge
- June 9, 2011
 - **Muskegon, MI**, Hot Rod Show, 10 AM – 8 PM, Paul Prinzig in charge
- Aug 5-7, 2011 –
 - **Norwalk, OH** Pontiac National's 20th Anniversary, Paul Prinzig in charge.
 - The highlight of the show was seeing our Futurliner on the drag strip. It set many records (well sort of) for slowest time in the ¼ mile, largest vehicle to run the drag strip, heaviest and most underpowered.
 - See also www.pontiacnationals.com
- Aug. 26-27, 2011
 - **Grand Rapids** Metro Cruise, Ron Mortensen in charge
 - This also was a rare showing of our Futurliner display "trailer" which has a working original engine, transmission, driveshaft and generator that was originally in the back of 6 of the 12 Futurliners.
- Sept 16-18, 2011
 - Dayton Ohio Concours d'Elegance, Chuck Snow in charge

2012 Futurliner Shows

Note that some are Under Consideration & some are Firm

Check the web site for future updates.

- March 16-18,
 - Cleveland Ohio – Autorama (firm), *Fred Hoffman in charge*
- June 9, KOOL Chevrolet in Grand Rapids, Chuck Snow in charge, (firm)
- June 16, Oldsmobile Homecoming, Lansing Michigan, Chuck Snow in charge (firm)
 - Location is 7150 Harris Dr, Dimondale, MI
 - Dimondale is just SE of Lansing, near I-69 & I-96 split
- July 18, St. Charles, IL, Pontiac National, Paul Prinzig in charge, (under consideration)
- Oct 5-6, Fort Wayne, IN, Ferreri's and Friends, Sycamore Golf Club, (TBD) in charge (under consideration)
 - 11836 Covington Rd, Ft. Wayne, IN 46814
- Nov. 2011 - March 2012 – Our Futurliner might be on display over the winter at the Auburn IN National Military Museum. Discussion is underway – watch the web for the latest details.

You can help! - If you are planning to attend any of the shows, and if you are inclined to give us a hand, let the "in-charge" person know or let Don or Dean know (addresses at the end). We'd love to have help telling visitors about the project and help selling memorabilia to support the project. I have done it a number of times and it is a very enjoyable day (Dean)

What's Happening Lately:

- The Futurliner was moved back to Grand Rapids in Sept. for the annual maintenance and work sessions.
- We are considering museum display for the winter of 2011/2012 and 2012-2013. Having the Futurliner on display at the ACAA Museum in Hershey PA and the Kalamazoo Air Zoo in Michigan has proven to be very valuable to both the museums, NATMUS and the project. A display like this sure beats having it sit in a storage unit all winter.

- Volunteer Paul Prinzig reported this summer that while “they were at the AHS show in South Bend, we had another donation to our project made by an interested individual. Chris Thornton of South Bend, IN is the sound/audio man that manages all the sound equipment used at the fairgrounds. While talking to us about the Futurliner he noticed the large speakers being used during the presentations shown in our vintage photos. He could tell by the photos the specific model and maker of those speakers. They were Elector-Voice 848 made in Buchanan, Michigan. He said that he had such a speaker available and he would like to donate it to the project. I spoke to him about possibly hooking it up to our existing TV and he said he'd send me the proper driver that could be hooked up to do so. He said the speaker is made of fiberglass and may need a bit of smoothing out and painting before we use it.”

History

- Streamliners – we understand recently that the early (1930's) vehicles may have been turned over to the US Armed Forces in WWII. Might anyone have info?



Futurliner Memorabilia for Sale:

Items available thru NATMUS serve as both fund-raisers for the Futurliner Restoration Project and interesting memorabilia for all of you.

- **DVD** The video, titled “**Miracle at Beaverdam**”, is available on either VHS or DVD and can be requested from NATMUS for \$25 (including S&H). **Model** - A scale model is available for \$50 plus \$10 S/H. It is 1/64 scale or about 6” long and comes in a clear plastic display case.
- **Historical Book:** If you are interested in the full history of the Parade of Progress and the restoration project, pick up a copy of “**General Motors Parade of Progress & A Futurliner Returns**.”
The book is available through the Futurliner web site www.Futurliner.org with links to the NATMUS store or by calling NATMUS at (260) 925-9100. The price by mail is \$35 (which includes postage, taxes and handling) or \$29.95 at the NATMUS museum store.
- **Donations** are still required for on-going repairs and maintenance of the Futurliner. Many people have been very generous in their financial support of the project and all donations are deeply appreciated. Donations can be sent to **NATMUS, 1000 Gordon M. Buehrig Place, Auburn, IN 46706** and they are fully tax deductible. Be sure to mark your check for the Futurliner project.

Miscellaneous:

- We get numerous requests to bring the Futurliner to shows around the country. This is no small effort of course with a vehicle this size and which requires a sizable staff to accompany it. Because of the complexity of moving and showing the vehicle, the crew and NATMUS have established the guidelines that were detailed in a recent issue (#31 – Nov 2007). If anyone is interested in requesting the Futurliner for your show in 2011 or later, contact Don Mayton (address below).

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2011 Show – Dayton, Ohio Concourse d'Elegance at Carrillon Park