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December 5, 2008

**Winter Adventure #3,** *by John Shapiro*

I would say, December 3, 2008 will go down in my Cruisin' Chronicles as the night we earned our Cruisin' Winter Roadster Wings, as group of us took our roadsters and participated in the first ever Candy Cane Cruise, on Clifton Blvd, between Lakewood and Cleveland.



We received a post card promoting the first ever Candy Cane Cruise and thought, sure what the heck let's take my wife's roadster out one more time (Dec 3rd). She said, "What!" I said, "It'll be fun and there's shopping!" (good boy). Sooooo with 2 layers of sweat shirts, scarf, snow mobile suit, hand warmers and leather hats, (we don't have heat, wipers, windows, fenders or a hood) ... we then hastily tie wrapped two strings of battery powered Christmas lights (see above pic strung between the grille and the windshield) ... we cruised out along Lake road with only a bit of rain hitting the windshield which quickly converted to a large spray of water spewing from our rear wheels that kicked up a beautiful

rooster tail spray totally emerging passerby windshields!! I love a good time. Isn't wasn't long before we made the scene (jelly bean) at the Candy Cande Cruise to the amazement of on lookers which amazes me the kind of comments like: "*Aren't you afraid those old engines are gonna blow up!*" or "*Do those things have brakes?*" I just couldn't bring myself to tell 'em the truth.



First stop was registration at Don's Lighthouse Restaurant, getting what was to become the Best Goodie Bag we've ever gotten - check these things out: \$10 dollar gift certifi to the Liquid Planet; Buy One get the 2nd at half price at the Asian Grille, Buy One get one at half price at the Diner on Clifton (which we used); \$5. gift certifiat at Papa Nicks Pizza, skyline of Cleveland key chain from Clifton Web and a gift certificate to Don Lighthouse just to name a few! When was the last time that happened? Usually it's duck tape and a parts catalog.



Although only 33 cars participated (which is probably 30 more than I honestly thought would venture out), it was pretty neat seeing hot rods and collector cars, out and about in nasty weather. Interestingly, the back drop of all the Christmas lights and wet streets made for some cool pictures (above thanks to CT photog Bruno Z).

Next year the Candy Cane Cruise will allow any old cars, convertibles, coupes, sedans, whatever (any year too). And although it wasn't the kind of cruise we are all used to, it only went for a few blocks, it was lots of Christmas fun and you know me, whether there's 100 cars or 10, I'm gonna have fun and eat!



### **Unique Shopping**

We stopped along the way we visited a couple of shops along Clifton that included one of the most unusual shops (see pic above which is so packed with stuff it'll take 45 minutes to go through it) It's called "Flower Child" - but don't be misled by it's 70's name - it's not just 70's but 60's, 50's and is loaded with vintage artifacts, cool clothes, old records (33 1/3 and 45's), funky furniture and make sure you go downstairs - you will get lost in the basement - it's a true time warp as you can see from the picture. Next door is Clifton Web. (see pic below) as owner Mike stood outside for a snap shot to some people who couldn't believe we actually drove those "old cars"!



But not before recommending the Diner on Clifton (he must have heard my stomach rumbling)... on the corner of 117th and Clifton for one of the best meals we've had in a long time.



### **Diner Chow-down time**

I've passed the Diner on Clifton at least 100 times and thought "ya know, one of these days I'm gonna stop in, but never have until tonite". I'll say, lately I've been eating in some real good diners - I might write a book! Seriously, it's was great and I had my choice between Chicken Pot Pie and Shepards Pie, I took the later and glad I did, excellent. Their dinners, sandwiches and desserts are great and affordable.



Did I mention dessert... this is the piece of carrot cake we attempted to eat. Note the size as it sits next to a regular coffee cup - \$3.50!

Well, the Candy Cane Cruise is now history, but you can visit the shops and eateries along the short few blocks just East of 117th street. Then think about participating next year.

As always, I invite you to "cruise" through our website, it's updated very often... always check the **CRUISE NEWS** button upper left for all of the latest news, then be sure to click the flamed **READ MORE box** to take you deeper into the website. There's more "Cruisin' Chronicles" below.....

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## **Autumn Adventure #2**, *by John Shapiro, editor*

11/28/08

It's another adventure involving car related memorabilia, trains, diecast and of course, food. Got a call from Jeff, one of our subscribers the other day about a Hardware Store in North Lima Ohio (no this is not North of Lima Ohio - it's South of Canfield, Oh.) Anyway Jeff said, *"If you like railroad stuff, diecast stuff, be prepared to walk around this very unusual hardware store."*



### Stop #1: Crouse Mills True Value Hardware, N. Lima Oh.

Located just off the last exit of the Ohio Turnpike before going into Pa., which is the Route 7 exit, go South through North Lima, past the truck stops, past the downtown traffic light and start looking for the Crouse Mills True Value Hardware on the right, if you pass the rail road tracks you've gone too far.



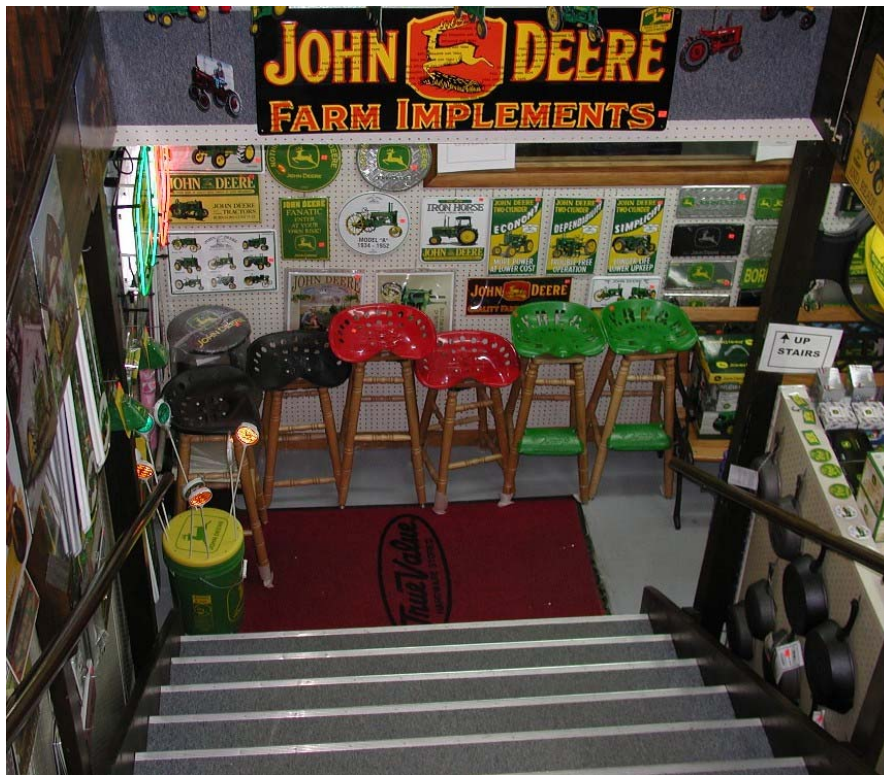
Actually we would have passed it if it wasn't for the giant cow-on-a-trailer parked out front! Inside there's 3 levels that are filled with the usual hardware store items, and that's hard to find hardware store items, but hey, we were there to see trains and diecast - and ended up staying for over an hour, ate some popcorn and couldn't believe our eyes. But first up there was the Ohio State maze of rooms.



This has got to be the largest collection of Buckeye stuff I've ever seen, in fact I think they have more than the college book store and all of it For Sale. You go through each room thinking it's the last one, then "bam" there's another room with more Buckeye stuff and then another!! If you've got a "Buckeye" on your Christmas list... this is a must see. After winding our way around the store, we stumbled on the train rooms (that's plural).



Lots of Lionel stuff, with a small amount of HO, but whether or not your looking for that hard to find item, it's just plain IMPRESSIVE. Long haul ways filled to the brim with train stuff, then as you navigate around the isles you loose track (pardon the pun) of where you are and are constantly asking employees how to find the next room. In fact we looked for 20 minutes and finally had to be personally ushered "upstairs" to the Diecast room.



But not before going through the John Deere room! This was another collection gone out of control (but that's a good thing) and again everything is For Sale, including little John Deere toddler sleepers, bed sheets, trashcans, clocks. On the other side, is the Diecast car room that's filled with all sorts of cool hot rod and collector car stuff, even a 1933 Willys True Value promo bank (which I've never seen before).



Downstairs in the basement there's lots of interesting, "non hardware" goodies, all of which have nothing to do with fixing things in the house, just collecting things: Coca Cola things, outdoor things, even a Harley area that included the (above) "giant" coffee cup - note the regular size mugs next to it....

(no, you don't want to know how much the giant mug is - just bring cash!). My wife says she's glad I didn't know about this place when I was heavily involved in diecast and train stuff! All I can say is, "Be Prepared to Walk", you'll spend at least an hour! 11788 Market St *North Lima, OH*. Phone: 330-549 -2143

### Stop #2 TP Tools, Canfield, Oh.

Not far up the road to Canfield just off Rte 46 is the home of TP Tools who's giant store is something you have to visit whether or not they're having a sale. Inside it's packed with all the tools they actually make and then some.



Here Bob Darney (you may remember him he built one of last years Cruisin' Times Hot Pick winning cars: the '56 Chevy using nothing but TP tool equipment). Bob demonstrates a unique painting sprayer/air compressor combo that virtually eliminates overspray. You get the whole thing (gun, hose and compressor unit for \$499.)!

Visit their website for more [www.tptools.com](http://www.tptools.com) or call 1-800-321-9260 for directions.

### Stop #3 The Steel Trolley Diner, Lisbon Oh.

The sun was setting of the western sky and that meant we were getting hungry! I knew of a diner I had visited some years ago when we went on the Lincoln Highway tour, so we got ourselves onto Route 11 and headed South (approx 19 miles) toward Lisbon Oh. Get off at the Route 30 exit, go West into downtown, keep looking on the left for the Steel Trolley Diner (140 E. Lincoln Way).



Folks this is the real McCoy. This Diner is not one of those old greasy spoons, (even if it was I'd go back), the Steel Trolley Diner really offers very good authentic diner food from gigondo burgers to good 'ol roast beef 'n gravy with mashed potatoes. It's also home to their basket of real fries, home made milkshakes and home made pies. Their coffee is served in the old style diner mugs, remember those big 'ol thick coffee mugs? (Which are for sale as well as t-shirts).

A little history of the town and diner. Rooted along the Lincoln Highway (Rte 30 - America's first coast to coast highway), in Lisbon, Ohio, which by the way is the second oldest town in Ohio, the Steel Trolley Diner has a long history all its own. Back in their heyday, there were over 6,000 original diners dotting the landscape of America. Sadly, over time, many of these diners gave way to chain restaurants and were destroyed, however there are a few that have survived in Ohio and the Steel Trolley is one of them built by the Jerry O'Mahoney Company in 1954 and now owned Earle and Jacki Hersman of Libon. Give 'em a call (330) 424-3663 and they say it's open 24 hours - but call to make sure!

NOTE: The order that we visited would differ from yours due to our time constraint. It's Recommended to start at TP tools, then Crouse Hardware, then Steel Trolley Diner.

As always, if you know of a cool cruise someplace email me and we'll check it out.  
[cruisintimes@gmail.com](mailto:cruisintimes@gmail.com)

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**November 14, 2008**

**The Autumn Adventure #1**, by John Shapiro, editor

Who says there's nothing to do once the car show season ends? We hooked up 3 friends for a "Chevy

HHR Caravan" to the new Hot Rod City Restaurant in New Philly (Oh), for a return trip to this really cool restaurant and auto-memorabilia place to see if those excellent burgers we tasted are really as good as I thought they were. It was a gloomy day with on and off rain showers and it even snowed on the way home but it was a whole lot better than staying at home!



We planned a full day that involved eating at the Hot Rod City restaurant, then a visit to the Warther Museum Dover Oh. and an evening "buffet bash" at the Barn Restaurant just outside Wooster Oh with a couple of shopping stops along the way. You can set up the same type of tour with a few friends or do a car club winter outing - it's easy and loads of fun!



### **Stop 1 - Hot Rod City Restaurant USA, New Philadelphia, Oh.**

The new Hot Rod City Restaurant USA is located near New Philadelphia Oh off I-77 (Rte 21 & Rte 39). (Off the exit, turn right at the light, then quickly get in the left lane 100 feet, then bear left and look for the restaurant about 1/4 mile on the left - sits back.

We got there just as it opened (11am on Saturday) and after the roughly 2 hour drive from Cleveland (lots of coffee and pee stops!) we were ready for lunch. I recommend the "Chase Double Burger" and

comes with homemade chips. (no need to get the fries as you'll need to pace yourself for dessert and later, dinner!) The unique thing about their burger is the diamond shape of the bun, allowing you to always have a "corner" to bite into!! I have unofficially (until our Jan '09 issue) given it the Cruisin' Times B.A.B. Award (Big Ass Burger) Award.

Once lunch was finished, we meandered around the automobilia laden restaurant, visiting the various rooms that can accomodate large groups, unlike other restaurants that can't handle groups of 4 or more. We had 10 in our party and we had a semi-private room with plenty of room. You might want to call ahead just to make sure - 330-339- 7697. Plan on extra time to visit the gift shop (where you can pick up a copy of the mag and the Sweet 16 Calendar (plug plug)! Dessert: ice cream, as they serve 44 flavors of "Velvet" brand ice cream made near by in Utica Oh., get it "to-go" so you can snoop around the old gas station outside!



It's just a short walk next to the parking lot, you'll find the station complete with pumps, office, (note the smudge pot sitting next to the gas pump on the right of the island - remember those used to be used in road construction sites long before orange barrels! And (note the Model A and mid 30's Ply or Ford sitting along the right! We went for a closer look (below).



Close up inspection of the Model A coupe proved it had it's trunk section cut off and a short flat bed inserted for hauling stuff, the rear fenders are bobbed and there's a strange hood ornament attached to the right front fender.



Next to it is a '35 or '36 Ford or Plymouth - look close the top was welded shut (where the cloth top once was) possibly getting ready to be hot rodded or it was used as an old jalopy race car body for a make shift roll bar. Anyway, it fun imagining the history of those old cars.

## Stop 2 - Warther Museum, Dover Oh.

One exit North on I-77 (Rte 250 East) is the home of the Warther Museum where you'll experience the story of the Warther family and how the Warther's combined a love of family and a love of hobbies to create an amazing legacy. Ernest "Mooney" Warther turned his joy of carving wood and ivory into creations that the Smithsonian has called priceless works of art. Absolutely amazing carvings of a real working (wooden) miniture steel mill (below) that was totally hand carved.



They also hand make complete kitchen knives. The tour lasts an hour and you'll spend more than that walking around visiting their button collection and souvenir shop and just marveling at the hand carving (in ebony and ivory) the various railroad engines and tenders. (below)



Mooney lived in a time when steam locomotives were king, so many of his carvings are steam locomotives made of walnut wood, ebony, and ivory. He combined history and artistry with motion by making the locomotives run authentically. His precision and sense of detail on the wood and ivory carvings reflect Mooney's amazing skills and passion for steam technology. In fact, the perfection and mechanizing of his steam locomotives earned him the title of World's Master Carver, in the 1920's. Tours leave every hour and I think the last one is at 3:00 pm call (330) 343-7513.

### Stop #3- Amish Shops & the Barn Restaurant Wooster, Oh.

By 4p we decided to take Rte 39 from Dover Oh through Sugarcreek, into the Amish country stopping off at a Christmas store, then through Berlin, a right on Rte 83 in Millersburg to the Wooster by-pass, exiting onto Rte 585 to the Barn for dinner arriving there by 5:30pm.



Why the Barn? You mean besides being able to seat 10 people... the buffet is like putting on a feed bag (pardon the pun)! By the way, the Barn offers 2 ways to dine - upstairs is the regular restaurant where you order off the menu ... but downstairs is the huge buffet... and then there's SHOPPING.....



### Stop #4 - Shopping at the Barn Complex.

With our tummy's full we visited the various shops on the grounds that included the "Buchanon Place", "The Oak Cupboard", "Toyrixfix" and the "Amish Outlet Store". The Barn 330-669-2555.

The Autumn Adventure was a full day of "something for everyone" and you can do the same thing over the winter months, it doesn't take much, call some friends, get a few couples together - or make it a car club outing.

**\*\*\*Be sure to click on the Cruisin News browser button for more just published articles.**

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## **Cars & Trains,** *by John Shapiro, editor*

11/11/08

Did you know that more car people are into model railroading? It's true, I am. I'm one of those HO style guys and have built lots of displays. Actually I get more of a thrill building the diorama part then the actually running of the train. But any-who, now thru April of 2009, (especially during the month of December) you'll find lots of model railroad and toys shows(toys are the third thing car guys love by the way) through out the Ohio and Pa. area.



You'll find a bunch of train shows listed on our Cruisin' Events Calendar, just go back and hit the browser button that says "Cruisin' Events". Also, if you hear of any train shows, feel free to email them to me [cruisintimes@gmail.com](mailto:cruisintimes@gmail.com)

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