

# der Auspuff

Monthly Newsletter • November, 2016



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# Prez Sez

from President Ross Rampy



## Fellow Cascade Porsche Pushers

It's hard to believe that November is already here, and that we're winding down the year. But that doesn't mean it's all over because there are a few more social events remaining, so come out for them!

Looking back at the year, it's been another one that was filled with truly amazing drives for such a small region. But more what's important is that we got to share experiences with new members and we got to know each other a little bit better. I would personally like to thank John Early, Arne Berglund, Joel Weyhe, Glenn Gumaer, Chris Chavez and Sue Ward for all their time and efforts to make our club so successful. So the next time you see one of them, thank them.

The season is ending and for all of you in the Central Chapter I'm sure you had a good time at your pizza dinner. For those in the Southern Chapter, the **potluck dinner at the Early's on the 19th** will no doubt be another success.

And miles to go... It's not soon to start thinking about events and drives for next year.

As Always,

See You In My Mirrors.

*Ross*

## Our Leadership

**Ross Rampy**  
President

**John Early**  
Vice President

**Chris Chavez**  
Secretary

**Sue Ward**  
Treasurer

**Glenn Gumaer**  
Membership  
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**Arnie Berglund**  
Central Chapter  
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Communications

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# Cascade Region's 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

By John Early, Region Vice President

## 55 years and still getting along...

On Saturday October 22, about 22 souls from the Southern Chapter got together for an admittedly, quickly announced and executed monthly dinner. As it turns out our actual 55th university date was this exact night. So why not get together and spend it with some of your favorite petrol afflicted friends. Ross and John (our Prez and VP) got this



into their heads on Thursday afternoon and by Friday noon we had arranged to dine at what is now one of our now favorite meeting places, Lark's at the Inn at the Commons in Medford. It was a cold and rainy night but the atmosphere was, as usual, warm and friendly, the wine and food was certainly worth the trip but the wait staff was among the best we

have ever encountered. There were the usual discussions centering on our cars, recent past activities and next year's events. Lark's came through for us and we will be seeing them again for our February planning brunch.

Remember, the next few months bring us the following dining opportunities; November 19th – Potluck at the Early's; December is our pizza bash at Kaleidoscope in Medford, and the annual dinner will be in January. Of course, the 2017 planning brunch will be at Lark's in February.

We look forward to seeing you all in the coming months and please remember keep the shiny side up...

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*John*

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# The Tale of a Low Budget Porsche

By Arne Burglund, Central Chapter Rep and Webmaster

For a few months this year there was a second Porsche in my life. I thought I'd share the story.

As background, you should know that I really do enjoy working on cars, fixing them when they are broken. It is very satisfying to take something that doesn't work and restore it to being a functional car again.

And that is one aspect of my '84 911 that has been largely absent. It rarely breaks. Sure, there is normal maintenance to be done, and upgrades and improvements, but none of that occupies much time. So a while back I started thinking about picking up some cheap car that needed mechanical or electrical help, just to fix it up and then sell it when I'm done. The goal was not to make a profit, I'm happy as long as I just break even. Any suitable car that I find interesting could have filled this role, it didn't have to be a Porsche.



But after keeping my eyes open for a few weeks looking for the right victi... err, candidate, a Porsche is what I found. In mid-April (with the help of fellow Cascade member Craig, his truck and a rented car dolly) I brought home a 1984 Porsche 944, which apparently needed a head gasket. It also needed some TLC in the interior, although it was far

from as bad as some I've seen.

The pluses—the car was remarkably straight, with livelier looking custom pearlescent silver paint than stock. It also came with a reasonably nice set of staggered Fuchs (15x7 & 8). The car looked pretty good from 10 feet away. The cam and balancer belts had been changed just a few hundred miles before it was parked, so those would probably be OK to reuse.

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The less good—the attractive paint was applied in a less-than-great manner, quickly masked around all the trim, and with a fair amount of orange peel. The interior was a mixed bag, decent black seats and carpets from a later 944 in what was originally a brown/tan interior. The (cracked) dash, headliner and door panels were still brown, and needed some cleaning.

The bad—it didn't run, all clues pointed to a blown head gasket. The power steering had been disabled (belt removed) due to bad leaks in the rack. The car came with 2 tachs, one in the car and a spare, but neither worked. The power sunroof and passenger window were also non-operative. The support struts for both the hood and the rear glass were non-supportive. Neither the A/C nor cruise control worked. And I was sure I'd find other issues as well.



Based on the overall condition, I judged that the car would probably be worth \$2500 to maybe \$3000 in running condition and with some other fixes. This estimated ending value defined the total budget. If I assumed value of \$2500 when done, and allowing for the fact that I would want to sell quickly, total cost needed to be less than

\$2500. So I set the maximum budget including purchase at \$2000. And since the registration was going to expire in August, that defined my deadline—sell it prior to it needing new tags.

So here it began. The seller was asking \$1200 for the car, and was firm on the price, as he knew the Fuchs alone accounted for a big chunk of the value. I figured that was fair, as I considered the Fuchs to be my safety net—if I got into it and found too much to deal with and stay in the budget, selling the Fuchs would cover much of the purchase price.

So I bought the car, and started tracking the costs. I tracked anything that I had to buy for this project including expendable supplies, but not any supplies that I already had





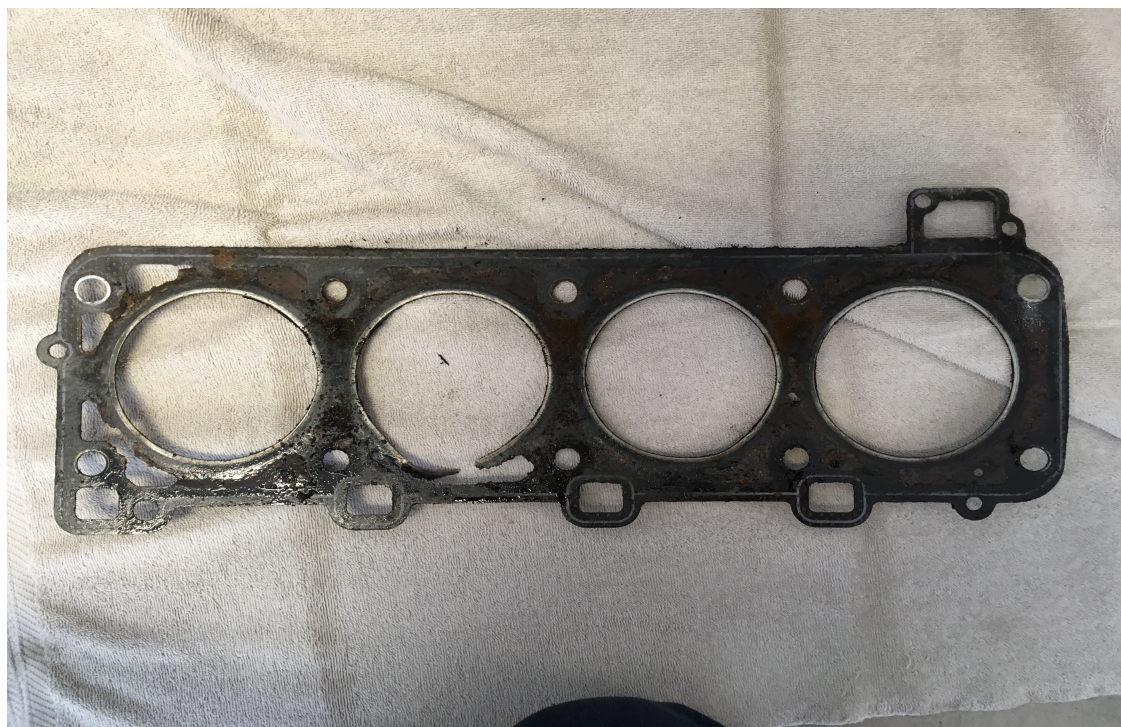
on the shelf in the garage. Initial accounting to get it home:

Car itself – 1984 944	\$1,200.00
Title transfer	\$77.00
Tow dolly rental	\$44.95
Sub-total	<b>\$1,321.95</b>

That got the car home and in the garage. I spent just a bit of time assessing just exactly what I had, and found nothing too surprising at that point. So the next step was to remove the cylinder head and assess the engine condition. This would be the first decision point – fix it or part it. Of course, to disassemble it properly, I needed a shop manual for it.

Balance forward	\$1,321.95
Used 944 service manual	\$16.94
Sub-total	<b>\$1,338.89</b>

Using the manual as a guide, I proceeded to pull the head. And here is what I found:



Note the break in cylinder #3 (second from left in the picture). This may have been the textbook example of a “blown head gasket”. There was no indication of other issues. The seller had shut it down and had it towed as soon as it started spewing white smoke,

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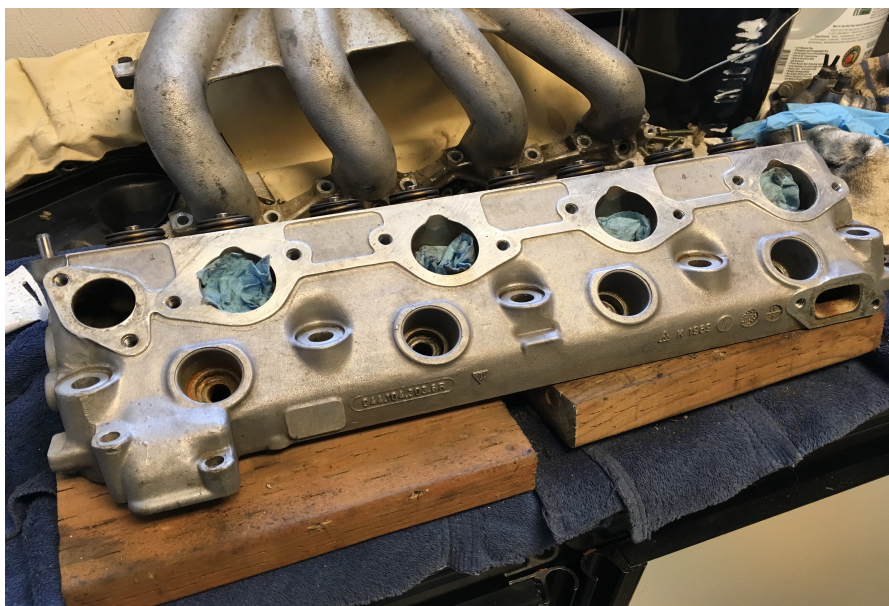


so no appreciable amount of coolant got into the oil. The cylinder head was straight and not warped. Bores looked great. In short, it looked like the head gasket was pretty much all it needed, other than hood support struts, as I was tired of working around sticks of wood holding up the hood. So parts were ordered, and cleaning and prep began.

Almost immediately I ran into the first additional supply issue—my supply of gasket remover had completely dried up since I last used it. So a new supply was charged against the car's account.

Balance forward	\$1,338.89
Gasket remover	\$10.49
Head gasket set	\$95.00
Thermostat seal	\$2.50
Alternator belt	\$14.50
Oil filter	\$8.25
Oil (11 quarts to change twice)	\$32.89
Hood shocks	\$28.50
Sub-total	<b>\$1,531.02</b>

Things cleaned up quite nicely, and soon I was waiting on parts. I was feeling pretty good about it at this time, the budget was still looking OK, and the car seemed to be cooperating.



When the parts arrived, the first thing I did was install the new hood struts. Ahhh! That was a nice improvement. I then proceeded to put it all back together, pour in fresh oil, charge the battery, and fill the radiator with plain water. (No anti-freeze yet, until I was certain I wasn't going to have to tear it back down.)



The actual first starting of the car happened with no drama. Connect the battery, and turn the key—it coughed once, then fired up and settled into a smooth fast idle. Success!

And then things looked like they were going sour. After running smoothly for a few minutes, it started to smoke—badly. White smoke with a strong smell of coolant. Not good. I shut it back down and started checking things out. No, still no coolant in the fresh oil. No pressure in the cooling system that would indicate sealing problems with the head gasket. Was the cylinder head perhaps cracked?

This was not looking good. I started to think about cutting losses and parting it out, but wasn't quite ready to give up on it yet. Chatted with a couple of other members about it, and the question was posed about whether there might be coolant in the catalyst and muffler that might still need to be boiled out?

This possibility seemed worth pursuing. After some thought, I decided to let it cool off completely, then start it and watch for smoke. I figured that if it ran cleanly when the system was cold, and only smoked when the exhaust gets hot, then probably things would be OK.

Sure enough, on cold start there was no smoke at all, just smelled like it was running rich. And after a few minutes for the catalyst to get hot, the white smoke started billowing out. The answer to this was to hit the road, get the exhaust good and hot and boil it dry.

So I carefully and timidly drove down out of my neighborhood, rather embarrassed by the thick fog bank I was creating. Quickly headed to a nearby rural area to give it a good run. Tried to rationalize my trip—perhaps I was killing mosquitos while fogging the area?

About 8 miles into the drive, the smoke rather suddenly stopped. The car continued to run well, coolant temperature was good, and I was happy! I continued my drive for another 15-20 minutes to assess the rest of the rest of the car. Here's what I found:

- The car was definitely running rich. First guess was that all the antifreeze flowing through the exhaust had fried the oxygen sensor.
- The brakes were strong, controllable, had a firm pedal with great feel. In short, they felt like Porsche brakes. Nothing needed there.
- The clutch had great bite, no slipping even when abused. But the engagement point was not good, very high. Would need some attention there.
- Transmission shifted nicely, other than the very sloppy linkage, which felt worse than an early 911 with worn out bushings in the shift linkage.



- The steering (with the power assist disabled) was very heavy, especially at low speeds.
- The suspension was not working together at all. The front felt very soft and bouncy, while the rear was extremely stiff. Another point to look into.
- Various electrical and gauge issues, most which I had identified earlier.

Now that the project looked to be viable. It was time to assign some priorities. Which things were most important to make it a sellable car, and can they be done within the budget?

The obvious first bit was the oxygen sensor. Cheap (won't break the budget), but with a good payback in how the car would run. I ordered one almost immediately. I also picked up some antifreeze, which I planned to put in after I had run it a bit to verify no leaks or cooling issues. I ruled out fixing the A/C and cruise control, as neither are essential, and the A/C especially could get expensive yet not add much to sales potential at this price range.

The two things I really wanted to address were the power steering and suspension. I figured if I was going to try to sell it as an affordable entry-level sports car, it had better drive more like one. I began to pick away at the smaller items while researching the steering.

While driving it a bit during this part, I began to notice that while it never overheated, the temperature was very erratic. I soon traced this to a bad radiator cap, which when replaced, cured that problem. And since I was driving it in the rain for testing, I had to put some new wiper blades on it too.

Balance forward	\$1,531.02
Oxygen sensor	42.78
Antifreeze	9.99
Wiper blades	17.98
Coolant tank cap	3.99
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,605.76</b>

This left just under \$400 for steering and suspension. Not good. But as I was looking for low cost options for the power steering, I got lucky. I found a really affordable set of the later 944 "phone dial" wheels. So affordable that I figured I could buy and refinish the newer wheels, swap the tires and sell the Fuchs for a "profit", adding some breathing





room to the budget. As a side benefit, I think the phone dials look better on the car anyway, so this was a win in all directions.



After augmenting the budget with the wheel change, I resumed looking for good parts for the steering. I figured I probably needed to convert it to manual steering, as parts to repair the optional power steering

rack were not cheap, and the success rate on those repairs is really rather poor. But as I looked for used manual steering parts, I came across a good, used low miles power rack for a really good price. Using that replacement rack fixed the power steering for less than I was expecting the manual steering conversion to cost. I even picked up a working tach and replacement mirror glass for the passenger mirror with the newer steering rack. At the same time I replaced the sunroof outer seal and wired up the later model power driver's seat (which was swapped in years ago but never connected).

Balance forward	\$1,605.76
Wheel swap, net	-548.06
Seat wiring	3.48
Steering rack, tach, mirror	140.00
Sunroof seal	20.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,221.18</b>

So with the extra money from the wheel change, and the far cheaper steering repair, I was feeling pretty flush with money and began thinking about some things that I figured would make the car nicer and easier to sell at the end. Some interior improvements, mainly, although I was not happy with the handling and thinking that some better shocks might be in order. That's when the big unexpected item popped up.



One afternoon, while working around inside the car looking for something under the dash, I raised up and bumped my head on the rear view mirror. Not a hard bump, no pain or anything like that, but I heard a POP! I looked up and saw that the windshield now had a large star break centered where the mirror attached.

This was totally unexpected, and at this point I was very happy that I had profited from the wheel swap. Because the new windshield cost over \$300 installed. This could have been a disaster, but due to the wheel swap and the affordable steering repair, I could get it done and still be OK. Serious interior improvements were off the table though.

I did take care of the suspension before selling though. After driving around a bit, I had discovered that the front shocks were very soft and worn, and one of the rear shocks was seized. The combination of soft up front and solid in back made for some rather odd handling. A full set of replacement shocks front and rear took care of that.

So the final accounting prior to sale was:

Balance forward	\$1,221.18
Windshield	320.00
Front sway bar mount	19.50
Struts & shocks	142.55
Misc.	40.47
Insurance	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,843.70</b>



At the end, I had a car that actually drove really nice, the way a Porsche should. I posted it on Craigslist and sold it for a small profit within 3 days. I saw it on the road a few days ago, which made me feel good.

All ended well, except my wife isn't totally thrilled—she feels my success on this one will likely encourage me to try again.

And she's right, I'm watching for my next patient now...

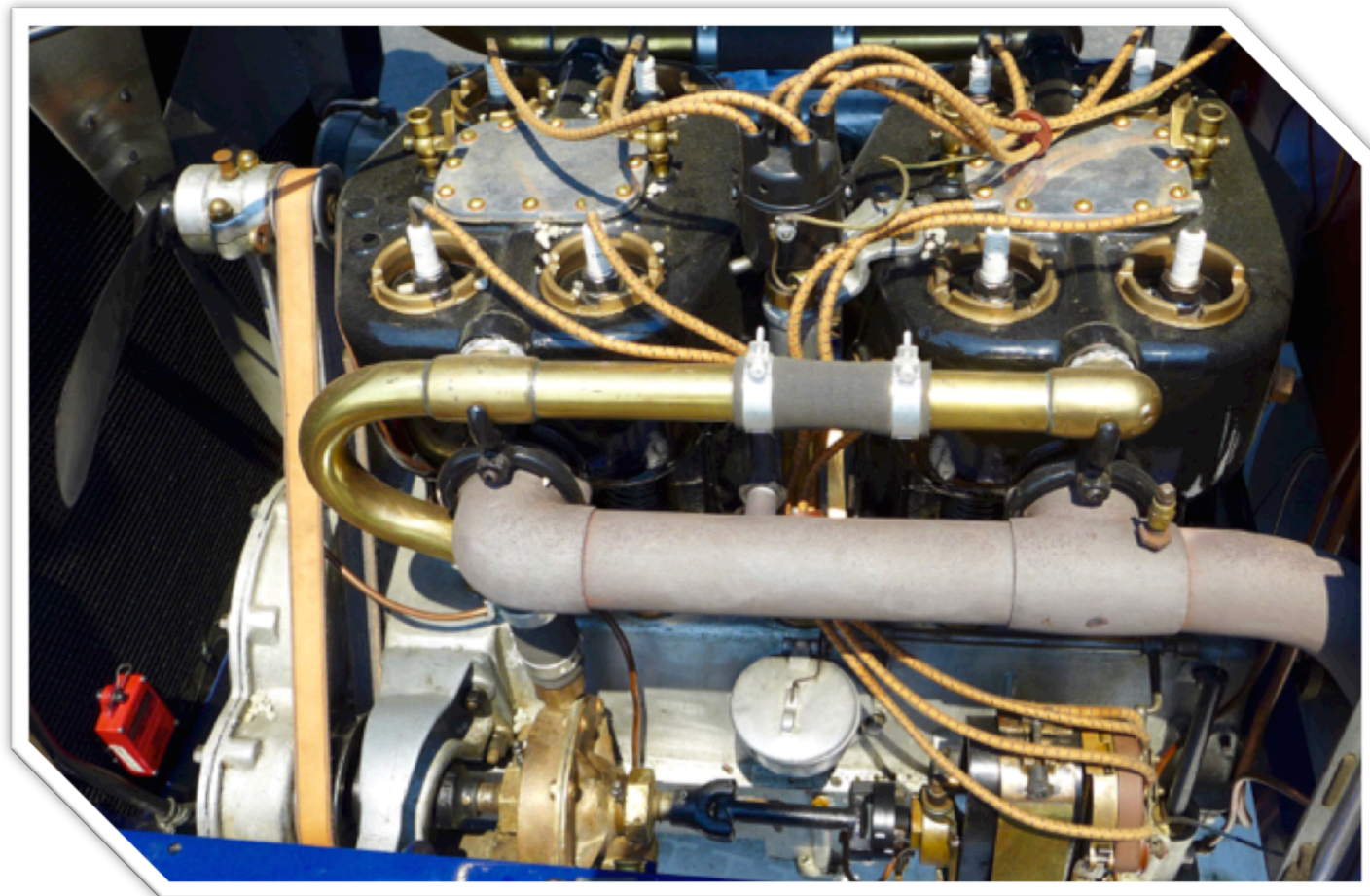
*Arne*

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*Is this an 8 cylinder, 4 cylinder or a 2 cylinder? (Note the leather fan belt)*

## Upcoming Events

### **Cascade Region's Annual Potluck Dinner**

**November 15<sup>th</sup> 5:30 PM**

**John and Suzan Early's**

357 Liberty Street Ashland, OR

**RSVP:** John at **541-941-1697** or by email at [jeary@wsenvironmental.com](mailto:jeary@wsenvironmental.com)

### **Central – Member Appreciation Pizza Feed**

**Roaring Rapids Pizza**

Nov 14 @ 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

### **Southern Chapter's December Pizza Bash**

Kaleidoscope (date to be announced)

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