

# DAKOTA CRUISERS



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

January 2017

“SHIFT’N GEARS FOR OVER 20 YEARS”



Well Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Our present this year is that Eileen is feeling so much better after a bit of a health bout. It’s so nice to see her up and about again!

We have some interesting things coming up for 2017! Our Presidents Spring Cruise will be taking us up towards Williston to see the beautiful collection of Darrel Meyers. He will have a “new toy” to show us. Then each Wednesday evening cruise throughout the summer will also be interesting. Remember, the first Wednesday evening is our monthly meeting at the Vegas starting at 7:30. Otherwise, we leave Hardees at 6:30 to cruise somewhere interesting and remember, a few are pot luck, but not all!

The January meeting on the 4th at the Vegas will be something special for everyone in attendance. Then at the February meeting we will be having our annual swap meet with tables surrounding the perimeter of the room. Feel free to bring smaller items for sale to our members but any large items please have pictures and let’s have a sale!!!

The Club Christmas party was a great success at The Moose club. Sherri and her crew did a ‘bang-up’ job with the meal and getting us whatever we needed to pull the evening together. I want to thank Cara Olson for heading up the party and keeping everything together.

Thanks to Craig Eraas for lining up and performing our entertainment. It was funny. The club offset the cost of the meal, and by the time the Chinese Auction was over the evening cost was just about a wash! Thanks for all that helped out. AND, those of you that won items, —well you should have gotten some nice items!

Anyway, stay tuned and lets all look forward to a great summer with the Dakota Cruisers!!!

George



**State Farm®**  
Providing Insurance and Financial Services  
Home Office, Bloomington, Illinois 61710

**Kellie Thorman, Agent**

1316 20th Ave SW  
Minot, ND 58701  
Bus 701-839-4999 Fax 701-839-3354  
www.kelliethorman.com



**The greatest compliment you can give is a referral.**



**GEORGE MASTERS**      **GEM@MIN.MIDCO.NET**  
800 31ST AVE SE, LOT 900      **WWW.MASTERND.COM**  
MINOT, ND 58701      (701) 240-6771

## SUPPORTERS OF DAKOTA CRUISERS



**I have seen better days, but I've also seen worse. I don't have everything I want, but I do have everything I need. I woke up with some aches and pains, But I woke up, my life may not be perfect but I am blessed.**

**Isn't it funny how red, white & blue represent freedom.....  
Until they're flashing behind you.**



**A woman's anger is like a check engine light. There is no way to figure out why it came on. Just ignore it and hope it goes away.**

**Yes Officer, I did see the "speed limit" sign, I just didn't see you.**

# A Guide to Building a Rat Rod

Updated on March 25, 2016

"Rat rods are low-buck, custom-built machines, which is evident by the Jack Daniels coolant overflow tank on this auto."



## What Is a Rat Rod?

You may have been considering fiberglass hot rod kits and found that \$5000 dollars won't buy much, especially if you want a customized car body style.

One option is to build a rat rod.

Although these one-of-a-kind autos may look like unfinished piles of junk yard parts and not be suitable for drag racing, they possess a primitive beauty with their gutted interiors and rusty, primed exterior. Without the any custom car paint jobs or chrome wheels, a rat rod can be built for not a lot of money.

Besides, that unfinished-rat-rod-rough-around-the-edges look adds character. It also mirrors what the first hot rods looked like, which were built by car buffs during the Depression. As you can guess, during the '20s and '30s, money was scarce for people, but that didn't stop mechanically-handy enthusiasts from tinkering with their rides. The independent, do-it-yourself mindset is a defining feature of early hot rods and rat rods. These vehicles are forms of art, designed and built by their owner.

Compare that with the mindset of just buying a kit car, where you follow cookie-cutter instructions and realize that somebody else has the same fiberglass hot rod kit car as you.

## Ideas to Get You Started



"Junk yard parts and ingenuity are the staples of rat rods. If you look close, you can see the suspension on this vehicle is composed of an inverted leaf spring bolted to the chassis by a square plate& mash; hardly high tech!"

## Old Car Barn Finds

Because you're not looking for collector cars, you can pretty much use any old barn find to get started building.

Finding an old body to use should not be too tough. The make and model of the find is irrelevant unless you have a very specific design in mind.

- In my area, Craigslist always has bodies—most of the time with frames—for less than \$500 dollars. This is an inexpensive way to get started.
- Another solution is old car barn finds. If you live in a rural area, many times farmers or folks with a lot of property will have vintage autos parked in the back 40 or in their barns. Often, these folks haven't had the time to pull the rusting car out of the weeds or figure out what to do with it. These vintage autos are just waiting to be built into a custom machine.

The key is to keep your eyes open and talk to your neighbors, who may know where to find one.

## Visit Local Scrap Yards

Salvage yards contain a plethora of used parts that are perfect for your rat rod.

If you're searching for a rat rod chassis for your body, you may be able to pick up an older channel chassis for cheap. Vehicles from the '60s, '70s, and '80s make good donor machines. This would keep you from building one, if you're not so inclined. The junkyard is also a good place to pick up engines, transmissions, and rear-ends for cheap.

Besides, if you find a wrecked luxury car, you can snag the leather seats and steering column and put them in your rat rod. There's nothing like riding in style.

## **Watch a Build Before Starting**

### **Gut the Interior**

Rat rods are simple vehicles—kind of like big go-karts. They ride rough, they are loud, they are ugly, and they don't have the creature comforts of heated seats, air conditioning, and the like.

But the "options" that may be in the body you bought—such as ratty bench seats, cracked or broken gauges, or ripped door panel upholstery—need to go.

This kind of stuff, which is ruined anyway, will catch fire once you start cutting and welding the body.

### **Chop the Top and Frame**

Forget your everyday carry multitool. Get out your grinder and MIG welder. It's time to chop the top.

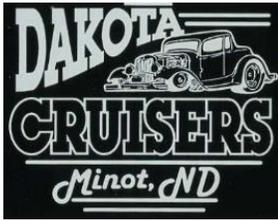
- Most rat rod trucks have a lowered top because the windows on the older trucks are humongous and look silly. You may like the look. If not, shorten the cab height.
- Many builders, also, don't like the cab to be very high on the frame, which means they will make rat rod frame plans to cut it in thirds. The middle portion will be lowered a few inches by welding in a cross brace that reconnects the other two-thirds of the frame. The truck cab would then fit in the lowered portion.
- If you don't have drive train parts, such as a rear-end or front axle, you should be able to pick one up for cheap at a junkyard. The only thing to keep in mind is that the lug pattern will need to match your rims.
- A cheap transmission and motor can be picked up as well. For reassurance, it might be a wise decision to rebuild these items, which is inexpensive.
- If you're lazy, you could always opt for a crate motor or even consider using a compressed natural gas engine.

In either case, you must have a way to open the headers and let the exhaust breathe. A rat rod has gotta be LOUD!

### **Rat Rods Rule!**

Building a rat rod does have its ups and downs, including the time required to complete the task. But overall this is a project car that will set you apart from the many fiberglass hot rod car kits—not to mention be a lot less expensive.

Besides, rat rods are works of art, which means they are never finished. That ding or scratch that will eventually mar a custom car paint job will look right at home on a rat rod.



Dakota Cruisers  
 PO Box 727  
 Minot ND 58702-0727

<b>Customer Name:</b>		<b>Invoice Date:</b>	December, 2016
<b>Street Address:</b>		<b>Invoice Number</b>	DC 2017 Dues
<b>City/Prov/Postal:</b>			
<b>Home Phone:</b>			
<b>Email Address:</b>			

**Notes**

Monthly Meetings are at 7:30 PM on the first Wednesday of each month at the Vegas Hotel.

Visit our website or call our Hotline to stay current on events!

[www.dakotacruiser.com](http://www.dakotacruiser.com)

701 852 5277 or 701 852 KARS

**Important 2017 Events**

Motor Magic: Sept 2 - 4, 2017

Dakota Cruisers Season Finale XXIII: Sept 15 – 17, 2017

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
2017 Dakota Cruisers Club Membership	\$25.00
<b>Please mail your dues to: Dakota Cruisers PO Box 727 Minot ND 58702 or you can pay at the next monthly meeting you attend.</b>	
Please let me know if there are any changes to your mailing address, email address or phone number. Thank you ~ Cara Olson Email: <a href="mailto:colson2144@hotmail.com">colson2144@hotmail.com</a>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$25.00
<b>Tax</b>	
<b>Total Due</b>	\$25.00

Make all checks payable to Dakota Cruisers and mail to address shown above.	Thank you for your club membership!
---	-------------------------------------

# OFFICER/BOARD DIRECTORY

POSITION	NAME	PHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL
President	George Masters	240-6771	gem@min.midco.net
Vice President	Dave Alberts	838-4309	mde@srt.com
Secretary	Pricilla Jevne	720-8058	pljevne@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Cara Olson	721-1627	clolson2144@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Tammy Kloehn	721-5345	tammykloehn@yahoo.com
Board Member	Ken Amundson	263-1809	klamu@outlook.com
Board Member	Craig Eraas	721-5500	craig.eraas@gmail.com
Board Member	Greg Olson	721-5531	gominot@yahoo.com
Board Member	Steve Smith	833-3434	scsmith@.com
Board Member	Doug Frazier	721-7203	badss@aol.com
Webmistress	Sherie Saltveit	721-7501	sjsaltveit@hotmail.com

WEBSITE ADDRESS:  
[www.dakotacruiser.com](http://www.dakotacruiser.com)

~~(701) 852 - KARS~~  
ADDRESS CORRECTION  
SERVICES



800 31st Ave. S.E., Lot 900, Minot, ND 58701

Next General Meetings at  
the Vegas:  
Jan 4 & Feb 1, 2017