



Youth Restoration Award recipient Luke Richards

Most Model A hobbyists have taken part in club activities for International Model A Ford Day in September. But this wonderful tradition didn't just happen. Bruce Adams had the idea in 2009. It grew at the grassroots level, then got a boost from MAFCA and MARC. Now the Model A Youth Restoration Award (MAYRA) is proposing to start a new tradition: observing May as Model A Youth Month.

We encourage clubs to select one day in May to conduct an activity for youth by displaying, demonstrating, explaining, teaching about, giving rides in, and experiencing the Model A. The goal is to expose and interest youth in the joys of owning, maintaining, and operating Model A's.

Why focus on youth? Involving the younger generation is essential to the hobby's future. Most Model A'ers are concerned about that future and would like to do something to help keep the hobby growing. Local clubs can take the lead in reaching out to youth. Articles in newsletters and magazines don't have the same impact.

For too long, we Model A'ers have been surrendering the old car restoration interest to the "muscle cars" or the "rice rockets." But many of us know that our grandchildren, having been exposed to our Model A's at a young age, continue to hold them in a special place in their memories.

If we can widen that circle of grandkids through programs in which we invite youth to sit in our cars, honk the horn, go for a ride, help in the maintenance, and for a time be part of Model A ownership, they, too, may develop a soft spot for Model A's that will last a lifetime.

While some clubs are already steeped in encouraging youth interest and participation, many others are not. We don't want to change the plans of clubs that are currently involved. But wouldn't it be wonderful if every club would hold at least one youth-oriented event in May: at a school, a scouting event, in a boys' or girls' club setting, or in a park, to give these kids a hands-on experience with Model A's — instead of just watching and hearing them in parades. The Directors of MAFCA and MARC have endorsed the plan. The rest is up to us to make it happen.

Start small this May. But start! Designate an interested member to spearhead the effort, then encourage everyone to get behind the program.

If your club has a thriving youth program or if you have an idea for one to try in May, share it with us by emailing David.Sheehan1999@gmail.com. We look forward to your help in making this campaign a success. ☺

Jim Lank is treasurer of MAYRA, editor of the San Fernando Valley Model A Club MAFCA newsletter, The Rumble Sheet, and the auctioneer for the San Gabriel Valley Model A Restorers Club



Mishawaka (Indiana) High School members of the Hoosier A Ford Club displayed their chassis restoration at Model A Ford Day in Michigan.



Youth Restoration Award recipient Brooke Lindsay