

The Lakester's Car Club

The Lakester's Car Club has recently had somewhat of a reincarnation. The original Lakester's Car Club was formed in 1958 by a group of high school boys in Fairmont. According to a *Sentinel* article on the club from December 18, 1958, entitled "*These Boys Don't Pass Stalled Cars,*" the purpose of the club was as follows: "It was formed to promote courtesy and safety on the highways by encouraging young men's interest in automotive mechanics, operation and safety." So, just exactly how did they accomplish that goal? Basically, the club would assist motorists whenever and wherever they were found in trouble, and they did not accept any pay for their help.

At that time, in 1958, the club had between thirty to thirty-five active members between the ages of sixteen and twenty. The membership was closed and applications to join had to be voted on by the current members. The officers at that time were Jerry Pietan, president, and John Riegel, treasurer.

The Fairmont Police Department supported the group primarily as a result of Major Jones's interest in the club. The local VFW also backed the group giving them permission to hold their meetings in the VFW Hall with a VFW member present. The Lakester's Car Club also rented a two stall garage on South Elm Street where they worked on their cars. In addition, they purchased a club car, a 1931 Ford Roadster, which they planned to make into a hot rod to be raced at drag strips. The club also worked on fundraising projects in order to improve their garage, restore their 1931 Ford, and to help promote future car shows.

Now, what about the Lakester's of today? The current Lakester's Car Club rebirth took place in June of 2008 with prior Lakester's promoting its revival. Former Lakester Warren "Bo" Haeckel approached Bob Bonin with the idea of reorganizing the club hoping to appeal to the "younger generation" as well. At the present time, their membership totals fifty-one, with fifteen of those members being from the "younger generation." The club sponsors car events, benefits, and fundraisers in the area. They also enjoy traveling to other car shows in the area and have gone to car shows as far away as Nebraska. They also recently sponsored a very successful fundraiser for the Martin County Historical Society at which time original Lakester's members Warren "Bo" Haeckel and Neil Benschoter donated their original Lakester's jackets, circa 1958, and a Lakester's Plaque to the Martin County Historical Society. Those items are presently on display and can be viewed at the Pioneer Museum in Fairmont.

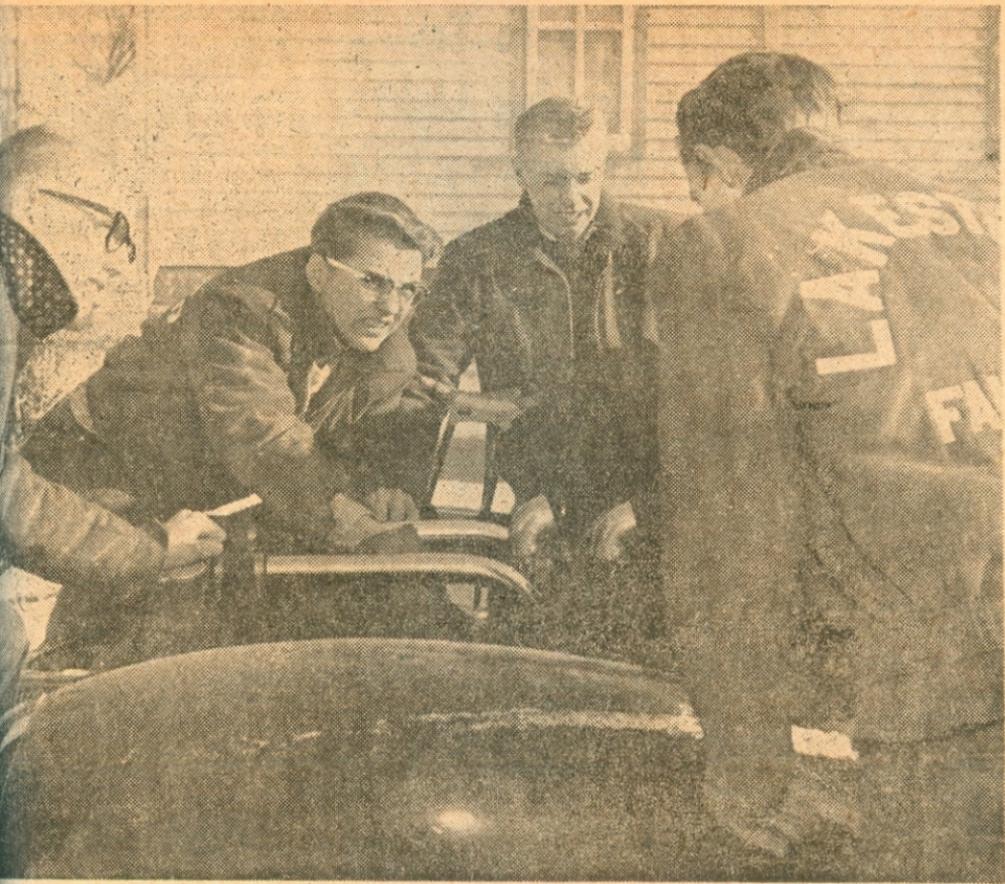
For more information on this topic, contact the Pioneer Museum in Fairmont.

LAKESTERS



FAIRMONT

N.H.R.A.



RIEGEL

BENSCHOTER

PIETAN

FORD

MOTOR CHECK — Four members of the Lake Superior Car Club, check over the motor on one of their "customized" cars. The Lake Superior Car Club members have helped many motorists who have stalled on the road due to car trouble,

flat tires, out of gas, etc. Members shown are John Riegel, Neil Benschoter, Jerry Pietan, and Don Fork. (Sentinel Photo by Bob