Volume 21, Issue 11 EVAOSD Newsletter November 2011

Charged Up

ELECTRIC VEHICLE ASSOCIATION OF SAN DIEGO (EVAOSD)
An affiliate of the Electric Auto Association (EAA)
2755 Dos Aarons Way, Suite A, Vista, CA 92081
Ph: (760) 670-3388 Fax: (760) 266-9505 Email: EVAOSD.Newsletter@DriveGasFree.com
Website: www.evaosd.com

Officers:

President: Joseph S. Gottlieb

Vice President: Wistar Rhoads

Treasurer: Lloyd Rose

Program Chairman: Joseph S. Gottlieb

Newsletter Editor: Staff

Webmaster: Russ Lemon

Librarian & AV: Lloyd Rose

Regular Meetings: Our meetings are on on the 4th monday of every month (except December).

Location: California Center for Sustainable Energy 8690 Balboa Ave., Suite 100 · San Diego, CA 92123

Place: Main Conference Room

Next Meeting: ***Monday***, Nov. 28, 2011 **@ 7:00 p.m.**

Program: General Topics

Inside this issue:

Presidents Message:

I have all sorts of interesting thoughts when I am driving my electric car. The latest is on brake lights. Should my brake lights come on when I am in regenerative braking? I ask this because the other day I was going down the highway in Eco mode (a mode that has softer power on the accelerator and more regen braking than normal mode). When I take my foot off the accelerator, the car goes into regen mode. It is like I am lightly tapping on my brakes and not coasting freely. So with that notion, I thought maybe my brake lights should come on. But I am no NTSB.

My quick rant is about all the hub bub about a couple Volts burning up (see page 4). Cars catch fire on the road every day and no one thinks twice about getting in a giant gas filled rolling incendiary device. I think the issue is the number of Volts to the number of fires is large in comparison. I just hope this mess doesn't lead to more regulation and delays for the electric car to go through. Thanks GM.

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Thanks to all for participating in Novembers events. I was scarcely seen this month, so thanks to all members for representing. I saw a large turnout for the premier of Revenge of the Electric Car. I also heard there was a good turn out at the Car2Go program (go rent yourself and EV for a few minutes... literally).

From the Treasurer

One of my favorite stories is about Bob Beaumont, in spite of huge odds, was able to produce a simple EV that he thought everyone could use. There are many still on the road today. The story is also told in a , not so well known book… THE LOST CORD !

Bob Beaumont:
Who Popularized Electric Cars, Dies at 79, The cause was emphysema, said his daughter.

A recent photo of Mr. Beaumont in his enduring creation.
By NICK BUNKLEY

Bob Beaumont, who thought every home should have an affordable electric vehicle in its driveway and sold more than 2,000 of them, the tiny, trapezoidal creation known as the CitiCar, decades before General Motors and Nissan came up with their own versions, died on Monday at his home in Columbia, Md. He was 79.

Bob Beaumont at the wheel of the trapezoidal CitiCar in 1974.

In the 1960s, Mr. Beaumont was so inspired by the battery-powered lunar rover and so appalled by the nation's insatiable appetite for oil that he sold his Chrysler-Plymouth dealership in upstate New York to become a carmaker himself. Just as the Arab oil embargo was ending in 1974, the CitiCar — eight feet long, 1,100 pounds and shaped like a cheese wedge on a golf-cart chassis — began rolling out of a factory in Sebring, Fla.

The car, a two-seater with a price tag under $3,000 — about half the price of an average car at the time — was initially met with skepticism, particularly given its top speed of 26 miles an hour. Mr. Beaumont added two more batteries, allowing it to reach nearly 40 m.p.h., and sales took off.
"Everybody heard about what we were doing in Florida," Mr. Beaumont told Baltimore City Paper in 2008, "and they came flocking to us like we were the salvation of the world."

The company, which he called Sebring-Vanguard, soon became the sixth-largest carmaker in the United States, though well behind the Big Three, American Motors and Checker Motors. In three years, it sold 2,206 CitiCars (that's the number Mr. Beaumont remembered, his daughter said, though other reports give figures slightly higher or lower).

But the CitiCar was dogged by questions about its roadworthiness, particularly after Consumer Reports declared it inordinately noisy, unreliable and generally "foolhardy to drive." Mr. Beaumont successfully defended the car, whose body was encased in the same type of plastic as a football helmet, against bureaucrats in Michigan who wanted to ban it from public roads: he attacked it with a baseball bat, then suggested he test whether a Ford owned by one of the officials would withstand a similar test.

Still, in 1977, with the safety questions lingering and with oil cheap and plentiful again, Sebring-Vanguard went bankrupt. Another company bought the design and continued building a similar model, which it called the Comuta-Car, for several more years. About 4,400 of those cars and their derivatives, including a postal delivery Comuta-Van, were sold.
"He laid the pathway; he was just about 30 years too early," said Peter Crisitello, who owns a 1977 CitiCar and organized a caravan of about a half-dozen of them to Mr. Beaumont's home for a four-day gathering of enthusiasts in 2009.

After the CitiCar was discontinued, Mr. Beaumont moved to Maryland to run a used-car dealership and to lobby Congress to promote electric vehicles. In the 1990s he began a venture called Renaissance Cars and designed a battery-powered sports car, the Tropica, that was far more elaborate than the bare-bones CitiCar. For various reasons, it did not catch on; fewer than 25 were ever built.

Robert Gerald Beaumont was born on April 1, 1932, in Teaneck, N.J. After high school, he served for two years in the Air Force before studying business at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y. He left college before earning his degree to work at the Chrysler dealership in Kingston, which he later bought and ran for about 20 years. Despite having a wife and five children to support, his daughter said, he believed in his vision strongly enough to sell the dealership.
"Financially it was a big gamble, but in his heart it wasn't," Dina Beaumont said. "Recently we realized how many of those CitiCars are still on the road today. They're still running, and we've never heard of a fatality or any serious accident."

In recent years, she said, her father was pleased to see automakers unveil plans for mainstream electric cars like the Nissan Leaf and the Chevrolet Volt though he was disappointed that General Motors added a gas generator to the Volt instead of making it purely electric.
In addition to his daughter, Mr. Beaumont is survived by his wife, Loretta; his sons, Marc, Robert Jr., Steven and Matthew; and 11 grandchildren.

While developing the CitiCar and the Tropica, Mr. Beaumont often ran into resistance from the auto industry and its allies in government, said David Goldstein, a longtime friend and the former president of the Electric Vehicle Assoc of Greater Washington DC
He got more and more publicity, people were asking why Detroit couldn't do this, and Detroit saw this as a threat to their existing business model," Mr. Goldstein said. "In the end he was amused that after all these years Detroit had come around to his way of thinking."
He added, "I'm now driving a Volt, and I believe I owe that legacy to Bob."

First Some Bad News:

WASHINGTON — Federal officials say they are investigating the safety of lithium-ion battery in General Motors Co.'s Chevrolet Volt after a second battery fire following crash-testing of the electric car.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Friday that three Volt battery packs were crash-tested last week. In one instance, the battery caught fire afterward, and in another the battery emitted smoke and sparks.

Last May, a fire erupted in the battery of a Chevy Volt that had been damaged during a government crash test three weeks earlier. Last week's tests were an attempt to replicate the May fire.

NHTSA has opened a formal safety defect investigation of the batteries.

General Motors officials said previously that government officials didn't follow the carmaker's protocols for storing post-crash batteries.

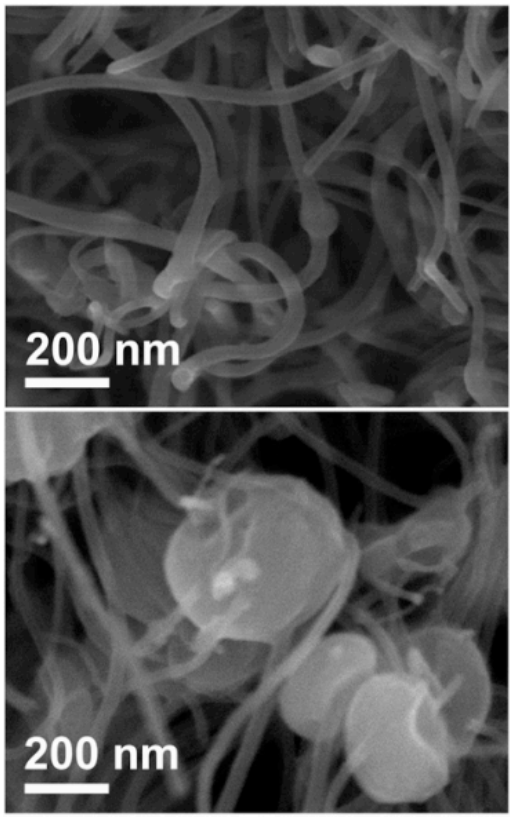
Then Some Good News:

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) recently revealed an energy storage breakthrough that could one day make batteries more commercially competitive with gasoline. Scientists dramatically increased the energy density in lithium-air (or lithium-oxygen) batteries with the introduction of carbon nanotubes to the cathode. Though tiny, the nanotubes allow a battery to hold considerably more lithium oxide as the battery discharges.

"We were able to create a novel carpet-like material — composed of more than 90 percent void space — that can be filled by the reactive material during battery operation," says Yang Shao-Horn, a Gail E. Kendall Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering at MIT.
The net effect is more time between discharges, less weight, and an energy density much closer to gasoline than previous attempts at the technology. The battery can store four times more energy for its weight than current lithium-ion battery electrodes, MIT stated in its press release.

Shao-Horn noted that more work was necessary before the technology could become commercialized; nonetheless, science bloggers have already begun to visualize its use in the transportation industry, and even in the creation of hybrid aircraft.

Advances in battery technology are a welcomed development; energy storage has been a drag on the adoption of electric vehicles, and engineers have must devise sometimes unorthodox solutions for electricity generation.



Lithium peroxide sticks to carbon nanotubes as the battery discharges. Photo: Courtesy of Mitchell, Gallant, and Shao-Horn

About Kick Gas Car Club

The Kick Gas Car Club is a support group for current and future electric vehicle owners, established in 2007 and based in San Diego, California. Our mission is to convert and maintain electric vehicles for green trees, clean air, blue sky's and healthy oceans EVerywhere, a local effort with global significance. Our hearts also tell us to do this for EVery current and future Jack and Jill see "About Puff the Mechanical Dragon" our Kick Gas Car Club mascot and a metaphor for the four stroke cycle engine which has been polluting our environment for over one hundred years. Club members collectively own and operate a car conversion shop stocked with specialized tools and equipment needed to undertake the conversion process safely and quickly. To date the Kick Gas Car Club has converted or has had a hand in converting well over two dozen ICE cars (Internal Combustion Engine) to NICE cars (No Internal Combustion Engine) powered by electric batteries. We also offer EV conversion workshops for a small fee and to date almost two hundred people have participated. The Kick Gas Car Club is self funded by its members on a voluntary donations basis. Please come and join us for one of our EV workshop held the first Saturday of each month or for one of our EV Work-a-Days held each remaining Saturday of the same month. If you do decide to visit, you will find us diligently working on Kick Gas Car Club member EV's as we share technical knowledge, sweat equity labor and great meals with like minded friends who choose to love and live POWERFUL as they drive NICE-ly by EVery gas stations in their neighborhood and hopefully sometime soon in the whole WORLD ! Why not? Saz the KGCC

Electric Auto Association (EAA) Membership Application Form

Fill out this form, attach a check, money order or use PayPal, in US funds only, payable to 'Electric Auto Association'. CE = Current EVents newsletter

e-CE ☐ $35 USA & other Countries ☐ $25 Student ☐ $25 Senior (>65-USA/Canada only) birth year ____

paper CE ☐ $45 USA ☐ $48 Canada ☐ $52 World ☐ $29 Student ☐ $29 Senior (>65-USA/Canada only)

☐ $120 (supporting level-1) ☐ $240 (supporting level-2) ☐ $500 or more (high voltage)_____ ☐ do not list my name

I support the _____EAA Chapter (addional chapters, $10 each) _____

☐ ($10each) Additional Chapters or Special interest group (other than the one that comes with the membership)

You can fold this form as indicated and mail it with your payment enclosed. Use tape to seal the form, **on the sides**, before you mail it or send an e-version of this form, through PayPal using http://electricauto.org/eaamembership.html

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

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Mailing address (Apt. #) _____ Home phone _____

Mailing City, State & Zip-8 _____ Work phone _____

☐ Electronic version of Current EVents, paperless only, link sent by email, if your membership was for the e-version, that is what you will receive

☐ Do you own or ☐ Lease an electric vehicle (plug-in) ☐ production ☐ conversion ☐ bicycle ☐ hybrid or ☐ None

please include miles driven and type of vehicle _____

All information in this application is for the exclusive use of the EAA and not sold or given to any other organization.

Please identify your primary areas of interest relating to the EAA (check as many as your wish

☐ Owner/Driver ☐ Hobby/Builder ☐ Professional/Business ☐ Competition (Rallies, Races, Records ☐ Plug-in Hybrids

☐ Environmental/Govt. Regs ☐ Social (Rallies, Shows, Events ☐ New Technology & Research ☐ Solar & Wind Power

☐ Promotion & Public Awareness of EVs ☐ Student or General Interest ☐ Electrathon/Bicycle/Scooter/Other

The Electric Auto Association is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) for the promotion of electric vehicles. Your donations are tax deductible and with your membership you will receive the EAA publication, "Current EVents". All information and statistics in this application are for the exclusive use of the EAA and is not sold or given to any other organization or company. Your membership dues include a percentage goes to the EAA Chapter you support for public Electric Vehicle promotion EVents like rallies, shows and EV rides.

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