



# TALLY HO

## Prime Minister's Message:

Well, the New Year closed the first decade of the second millennium; can you remember how fast that went by?

I hope that you like I look forward to this coming year. What's around the corner? More MG Club drives, hope and good times to help build memories. I will be asking each one of you what you would like to do as a club: more meet and greets, drag racing, local rally, polo driving, maybe at the old airport. Something you did a long time ago or with another club? There are bound to be ideas and opportunities that we have never considered.

For starters we have the Holiday Party for the club at Chez Streit's on January 22 to look forward to. Thank you very much to Jane and Dave for opening their home to the club again this year. There will be a gift exchange too, not more than \$15.00 please. Dave is supplying the Turkey and Ham, so bring a side dish and BYOB. This has always been the highlight that brightened the Christmas, New Year Holidays. We can start with a short drive before the party from the Streit's house.

So I wish all of you a Happy New Year, may your joys be many and your troubles few. I hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Nancy

## Quick and Dirty Battery Test

by Don Schmidt

There is a quick test you can perform to get an indication of your battery state of charge. A version of this test was described in a recent issue of Car Craft magazine. Their test is actually an improvised battery load test using an electric fan as a load. Turn on your head light high beams as well as any other convenient loads for three minutes and then test your battery voltage and compare with the chart. A dead battery can register as much as 12 to 13 volts with no load after a brief rest but as soon as it is loaded the voltage drops to nothing.

### BATTERY STATE of CHARGE TEST

Since most of us don't have a 25 amp fan we need to use a available substitute load. SO ON. Turn on your head light high beams as well as any other convenient loads for three minutes and then test your battery voltage and compare with the chart. A dead battery can register as much as 12 to 13 volts with no load after a brief rest but as soon as it is loaded the voltage drops to nothing.

Voltage	% Charge	Voltage	% Charge
12.66	100%	12.06	25%
12.45	75%	11.89	00%
12.24	50%		

You can also check your battery condition by charging it over night and retesting the state of charge test this could keep you from buying a new battery. Also check the battery voltage while cranking the engine. With the starter engaged good battery voltage should remain above 9.8 volts while cranking.

**SAFETY FAST!**

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# Why You Should Become A Member of Big Bend MGS

## Big Bend MGS Membership Application

NEW

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

D.O.B. (Mo/Day at least) \_\_\_\_\_

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Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Wk. Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

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Model MG: \_\_\_\_\_ eår: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Model MG: \_\_\_\_\_ eår: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Model MG: \_\_\_\_\_ eår: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been involved with MGÖs? \_\_\_\_\_

Other Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

What other MG organizations are you a member of?  NAMGBA  NAMGAR

NAMGBR  MG Drivers  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be interested in helping the Club with the following?  Events  Committees

Social Activities  Tech. Info.  Committees  Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Send the *Tally Ho* newsletter to this email address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Membership year starts January 1st and expires December 31st

Annual dues are: \$25.00 Family Unit members which includes British MarqueÖ newsletter

subscription. Singles are a family unit. Please enclose check made to Big Bend MGÖs and give

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North American MGB Register

# The "T" Register

by Charlie Key

Right now is the time for the working of and adding all the readiness engineering features to your T car, to be refreshed while waiting for the spring.

Let's revisit the Moss oil seal kit. There were quite a few necessary changes that were put forth by Moss Motors since the very bad failures of their first attempt. This good idea suffered setbacks, re; extreme leaking after installing the kit. Most of you know that I did extensive research to make this thing work and found the seal was the biggest fault in the kit.

Moss changed this seal after they received my research however; they employed a less rated seal at a lower cost. This seal was said to be the same as the expensive one I was using. I received one of these from Moss and showed it to everyone at the seminar I gave at the GOF 2003. I had success with several of these conversions using my expensive seal and these are still working, however, this past summer while rebuilding my YB engine, my son Adam said I should try the new seal kit, and I agreed. I ordered the new improved kit and this is what I found. 1st, the kit was pretty much the same except that it had this new seal which was not made of the high heat Viton I had used, still I wanted to give it a fair shake. 2nd, as with all T engines so many machine areas can be very different.



Adaptor in hand.



Big gap to fill.



Now with this all aligned and torqued it is time to add the sealant.



This is the way it should look, oil can't possibly get out now, can it?



Filling the oversized gap, should be a great fit.

The first thing I found in this engine was that the seal mount was so far away from the crankshaft flange I would need an adaptor to reach the mounting area. Having done all the prescribed work listed in the Moss instructions,



We put the engine back together with confidence that it will work properly. Of course, the real test will be on the road to the GOF this year.

the real test will be on the road to the GOF this year.

At this point I must give credit to the unsung heroes that always know better than to test a car on the road. So I listened to Paula, my better half, and decided to pull a trailer, just in case. We took an MGB, the YB, a Land Rover and the trailer. The drive ensued and all was well, but I did not dare to make note of how well the car was working, at least not so anyone could hear. Adam and Kim were piloting the YB for some 30 or 40 miles when I saw they were signaling to exit with a heavy oil spray behind the car. Of course, if you don't like anyone driving too close behind on the interstate this oil spray will keep them at bay. I was so glad that I had the trailer. We loaded the YB and continued on, had a great time at the GOF and kept the galley topped up.

After the trip and the catastrophic failure of the improved kit, it was time to see what failed.

Again, it was the oil seal that ran hot and chafed causing the failure. It actually lost the fine sealing lip on the oil seal. This was caused by running too hot or at too high a speed for the material, same problem as before. I did not report this to Moss as last time and will install the seal I found that works. I am also going to investigate a Chevy seal kit. I haven't heard anything bad about this way of doing the job, except that it can not be changed back to original. But why would you want to change something that works?

All for now, keep those T's on the road. Safety Fast! Charlie Key

# Has Your Oil Changed Without You?

by David Kinsey

On a recent evening, with nothing better to do, I was reading several MG forums (hey, other than driving or working on Öem, what's better to do than reading about Öem?) and discovered my oil had changed without me! No, not a free, magical drain and refresh in my car, but a change to the oil IÖve been pouring. It has happened slowly, since 2005, and I wasnÖt paying attention. What was a reduction in the amount of zinc in motor oils because chemical reactions, due to the presence of zinc, were causing early catalytic converters. Engine, fuel, and oil producers combined efforts to reduce air pollution resulted in all three being fine catalytic converters and engine oil had to do its part. Oil that used to have up to 1400 ppm (parts per million) was now reduced to 600 ppm. Why is this important to us? Our engines do not have Öroller tappets;Ö they have Öflat tappets.Ö Here are some quotes from the experts:

Engines with flat-tappet cams have extremely high pressure loading at the contact point between the lifter crown and the cam. According to Mark Ferner, team leader for Quaker State Motor Oil Research and Development, ÖEven stock passenger cars can experience pressure in excess of 200,000 psi at the point of flat-tappet/cam lobe contact.Ö To prevent excess wear, traditional oil included a generous dose of antiwear additives, primarily zinc dialkyl dithiophosphate (ZDDP). The zinc reacts with the cam lobe to create a sacrificial chemical coating strong enough to keep parts separated to reduce the wear. Ferner added, ÖZinc Ös pressure qualities also aid in reducing piston ring-to-cylinder bore wear at BDC and TDC, where the rotating assembly experiences a change in velocity and direction. Besides its extreme pressure protection, multifunctional zinc also functions as an antioxidant.

This slow reduction of ZDDP in engine oil over time has resulted in excessive cam wear in some engines.

A couple of months ago I had a member of the Columbia Gorge MG Club bring a totally failed camshaft and lifters back to me. They had only 900 miles on them. I immediately contacted the camshaft re-grinder and asked how this could happen. They were not aware of this problem as they were starting to have many failures of this type. Our representative from a major supplier of performance engine parts (EPWI) stopped by to Öwarn usÖ of the problem of the NEW oils on flat tappet engines. This was a call he had to make because of this problem to warn their engine builders. ÖThe reduction of the zinc, manganese and phosphorus is causing very early destruction of cams and followers.Ö Their statement: Use diesel rated oils such as Delo or Rotella that are available at auto stores and gas stations. Engine RebuilderÖs Association (AERA) Bulletin #TB2333 directly addresses this problem.

And from British-Cars.net, where I first read of this problem, Frank Grimaldi offers this advice: ÖI had the same dilemma and prompted me to call each of the below oil manufactures. They were all aware of the ZDDP problem with older engines and each recommended oil with sufficient levels of ZDDP to avoid the wear problem. They each gave me the percentage of ZDDP but I did not include the info in my notes. I do remember that Pennzoil racing oil had the highest level with the others being about 10-15%. Valvoline racing oil 20W50 because it is available in my area whereas Pennzoil is not. Below are the recommendations that were provided

## Recommended Motor Oils for The MG

Castrol: Syntec 20W50 (for Classic Cars) Valvoline: Racing oil, VR-1, 20W50 Shell: Rotella HD diesel/automotive, 15W40 Pennzoil Racing Oil, 20W50 Mobile: Mobile 1, 15W50 Delvac Diesel, 15W40, or 5W40  
(As a footnote, Amsoil also has a recommended product)

Of course, at this point I was in crisis mode, hearing imaginary voices of woe from my MG in the garage. I researched the Castrol Off-Road Motorcycle Oil mentioned in the British-Cars.net thread and it was tough to find. I went online to Castrol and called the woman on the other end said immediately, ÖOh, you have a flat-tappet engine and we have engineered a new oil with 1200 ppm ZDDP specifically for classic cars!Ö

HereÖs the web site: <http://www.castrol.com/castrol/genericarticle.do?categoryId=82915470&contentId=701264>

Now, I donÖt recommend one over the other, and I have been reluctant to go to a synthetic oil for the MG, as the Castrol is, but Castrol tech called around in Virginia Beach for me and found the Pep Boys on Military Highway, near Janaf Shopping Center, stock this oil. I changed mine yesterday. They did not have the proper K&N oil filter (though their computer said they did) so I had to go elsewhere for that. At lunch today after the really great Two-State Drive (thanks, Richard!), a few of us discussed this issue and some concern the synthetic might be too slippery and get past rings, causing some oil burn. Well, I guess IÖm the guy with a pig ear you informed if I see any smoke or have any problems. So farÉ none. In fact the oil pressure gauge is reading steadily higher and I hear a lot less noise at startup (these are probably inherent features in synthetic oils, I donÖt know). And, of course, itÖs expensive. However, my car is not moaning scarily from the garage any more.

Reprinted from *The Dipstick* Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classic Car Club

One good thing about Alzheimers...  
you get to meet new people everyday.



[www.pmcaregivers.com/Humor.htm](http://www.pmcaregivers.com/Humor.htm)

# The Wisdom of - Don Gatheman - Opps, I Mean MG

As I was troubleshooting and replacing the motor for my windshield wipers, I was once again astounded by the engineering ideas from carmakers. Ford, GM, MG- to me it doesn't seem that any manufacturer has the patent on goofy ideas. I'm sure there are, but some of them certainly escape me.

If I'm working on my Chrysler truck, I can say something like "what's wrong with those goofballs from Chrysler? I hope they fix this in the future. I should send them an e-mail!" Of course, we can't do that with MG. It's like being mad at a dead family member- you can't call them up and tell them off. So here's my new philosophy- from now on I'm going to pretend MG did not shut its doors in 1980 (I don't count the "new MG as the same company, and especially not the "new Chinese MG") and complain as if someone is there to listen.

Back to the subject at hand. The wipers stopped working (that's windshield, not windscreen wiper. We'll see what the new editor does with this one!) so I first pulled the steering wheel to take a look. Everything seemed in place, so I decided to check the power to the motor. Easy, I thought- just pull the wiring harness and check the connections. But no- you have to remove the motor first! Even though this isn't my engineering complaint (that comes later), I thought it a stupid idea, something I would like to see them do the next time they get to the motor. I'm sure there are, but some of them certainly escape me.

Well, we have reached the last of my segments and more pressure on the bottom end short-  
ries of ÖViagra for your carÖ with this articleÖening itÖs potential life.

I want to discuss some more upgrades (call But, it is worth it to get to 9.5-1 or a little  
them more expensive) for your engine. This higher. For a street engine in an old LBC, I  
section will require some expert knowledge would not go above 10.0-1 compression. You  
of the inner workings of an engine. If you have could replace the reworked head and see and  
prepared your brakes and suspension from the feel a noticeable improvement in the perfor-  
previous articles, then you are ready for more mance using a stock cam with some minor ad-  
power. And who doesnÖt like more power? Justments to the valve clearance. If you have  
right. 9.5-1 compression, you will find the compres-

LetÖs go on the theory it does little goodÖion higher with the stock valve settings. Take  
to put more fuel and air into the motor than a compression check after installing the head  
you can get out so headers and a free flow and see. If it is over 190 lbs. per cylinder, try  
exhaust are required for these modifications setting the valve clearance about .002Ö tighter  
to be of benefit. Some of our LBCs have de (not on early Jags). Healeys, MGs, and TRs  
cent stock exhaust manifolds such as the big can take it. This will give a slight increase in  
Healeys and early MGBs. But headers are bet valve lift and duration as well as overlap. It  
ter. And you need to get a good set and then will allow more fuel/air in and more exhaust  
have then ceramic coated in a silver color, in out. After adjusting the valves, try another  
side and out. This will make a much cooler compression check and see how much it has  
engine compartment also. come down.

Now that you have the headers on order I have assumed here that we all know the  
and you have your tools laid out, letÖs startÖ difference between compression ratio and  
First, this is not necessarily about a complete compress of an engine. The compression ratio  
engine overhaul so your compression needs is the ratio between the volume of air in the  
to be good. Remove all the plugs and get a cylinder at bottom dead center and the vol-  
good compression reading in dry cylinders and ime at top dead center. 9.5-1 ratio would have  
then squirt a little oil in one cylinder at a time 9.5 times more air at bottom dead center in  
and retest that cylinder. You need about 15Ö the cylinder than at top dead center. The com-  
lbs per cylinder dry. And it should only go up pression is how much the air gets compressed  
about 5-10 lbs with the oil. You also want very when the engine rotates, this is controlled by  
consistent readings across the engine. No more internal clearances on the piston, the cam  
than 15 lbs. Difference between the high and profile, the ring seating, etc. How much the  
low cylinders. You can live with a slightly piston can compress the air after rotating sev-  
larger variation for a stock street engine but eral times; this is the compression. Adjust the  
do not try to get too much power out of an valves a little tighter will not effect the ratio  
already weak engine. but will affect the compression.

If your compression is low then consider With the changes to the head, you are  
a full rebuild and you can get more power than probably ok with your stock, but in excellent  
most of us need. So, your compression is in condition, stock carbs. There is enough adjust-  
specs and you are ready. I would start at the ment to the mixture to compensate for the  
top and pull the head. Since most of you do modifications so far. So, what would be next?  
not have the equipment, I do, to do valve jobs, how about a cam change? This can be done  
then take the head to a good machine shop oh some cars with the engine sitting in the car,  
have used Goza machine shop in Acworth for some may require you pull the engine.  
over 30 years; he knows the British engines DO NOT GO FOR A RACE CAM! A  
and their specs. Have a good 3-angle valve mild street cam is all you need for the street.  
job done and if bigger valves are available for A full race cam does not have enough torque  
your engine, have them installed. at low RPM, below 4,500 or so. And if you

If your old valves are ok, and bigger ones watch your tach before you start this, you will  
are not available, then re-use the old ones.  
They can be re-cut and fitted back to the head.  
They will have the benefit of being slightly  
lighter than new valves. Also have the valve  
springs check for tension and replace or shim  
if needed. You can usually cut or surface the  
head a good bit to raise compression but re-  
member; higher compression can lead to a lot  
of other things. Like having to run 93-octane

(continued from page 6)

Follow the standard installation procedure for your car and the cam maker for their break-in procedure. The other good part about a mild street cam is that you can get away with using the two dots or hah marks on the gears to line up the cam. To get full benefits from a race cam, you should use a degree wheel to set the cam to manufacturer's specs. Again, you can stop at the cam and head work and notice a good improvement over the old engine.

But let's go a little deeper. If the engine is out, why not have it bored and new oversize pistons installed. A bigger engine gives more power. You may not feel the difference between a stock bore engine and one that is .040" oversize, but if the engine is out and you are going to get new pistons, why not bore it and go bigger? If your compression was way off at the beginning to this, then you probably need new pistons and rings if the head was not bad. While the engine is at the machine shop, have the rotating components balanced. This adds no power but makes things run so much smoother.

I would also suggest you have the flywheel lightened as this will allow the engine to rev up a lot faster. This will require a balancing of the engine, and you will need a pressure plate at the machine shop to balance everything that rotates with the crankshaft except the clutch disc. As you can see, this starts to get very expensive. However, if your engine is already tired and low on compression and you are going to have it rebuilt, why not go for some of this and get more power for not too much more over a stock rebuild?

I built a TR4A race motor once where I had the rods custom made a little longer, .500" to be exact, the pistons were custom made with the wrist pin hole about .520" further up in the piston with almost no piston skirt making my pistons less than 1/3 the weight of the originals. I then had the crank turned to .020" under size but offset. This lengthened the stroke .040" overall. Not all quite legal but hard to detect. With a lightened crank and a clutch pressure plate and flywheel that weighed about 18 lbs for all three pieces and a custom front crank damper that weighed about 12 lbs, the engine would rev so fast to over 7,000 rpm,

How much did this all cost? A bunch, rods were \$900 for four, pistons were over \$800 for four and rings were another \$180. The costs go on and on.

But you get the idea of what can be done for your engine. You would never go that far for the street. Remember, you are going to drive your LBC maybe 3,000 miles a year so do not get crazy. Keep it somewhat stock and you will enjoy it much more than if it were a race motor. With a reasonable cam, good valve job, balance and lightened, bigger pistons, good carbs and headers with free flow exhaust you should see about a 30% to 40% power increase. Not the huge gains some ads tout but very noticeable in the car.

If you follow the guide lines I have laid out, your car will feel better handling wise on twisty roads and have enough power to scare yourself but have the brakes to save yourself and have fun doing it. If anyone wants to discuss their project with me, even if I am not going to do it, please give me a call or email. I will be happy to talk with you. See you all somewhere on the road. Barry Rosenberg

Reprinted from *The Registry Newsletter of the Peachtree MG Registry*

## Life of a Car

by Geoff Wheatley

In the good old days, we usually changed our vehicles after four years because the car was starting to cost a few bucks in repairs and the mileage had hit middle-age, with sixty-thousand or more on the clock. However, things have changed due to various factors, like the economy. In a recent study it was noted that people are keeping their cars and trucks up to six or more years and now consider a hundred-thousand miles as normal. Looking through the Guinness Book of Records, there is an owner of a 1966 Volvo P1800 that passed 2.6 million miles of road use. Not quite in the same class but certainly impressive is a 1989 Saab 900 that managed over a million miles before it retired to a car museum with its original engine in place. In case you think that it's only foreign vehicles that can achieve such records, let me mention a 1991 Chevrolet Silverado truck that matched the performance of the Saab with the same engine. However, it did go through four radiators, three fuel tanks and six water pumps. No information on how many sets of tires! It would be easy to associate dependability with durability but

it would seem that these two do not necessarily go together! A recent study involving a total of 46,000 responses indicated that the two outstanding vehicles mentioned earlier, Volvo and Saab, rank below the average when it comes to dependability. In other words, they may last a long time but are more likely to let you down during ownership. Obviously, good regular maintenance and the use of correct replacement parts will contribute to the life of your vehicle. These ain't no special cut-price deals when it comes to buying a new radiator or starter. Always get a factory-made unit whenever you can. Some of us are total masochists, of course! I am referring to that gallant band of dedicated idiots who lay on cold concrete floors working on cars that are thirty or even fifty years old. Then there are the truly dedicated brigades who suffer the same punishment maintaining vehicles that my grandfather admired ninety years ago. There is no way of ever knowing with any certainty the mileage of these vehicles even when they have a mile indicator, but it would be fair to say that most will have completed the range

of their speedometer several times over!

This being the case, why did the vast majority of these cars not complete the 100,000 mile record in their day, when that classic you have under a dust sheet in the garage is still here and running? To be honest, I have no idea. I do recall that the family car that my father owned always seemed to be in need of attention before a long journey. I also recall that when the multigrades came along in the early 1950s there were a number of owners who were suspect of the product and continued to use single grade lubricants. Perhaps the antiques we have belonged to owners who were more adventurous and used the new stuff! I am sure that 200,000 miles will be the standard for all private vehicles in the near future, when you consider that manufacturers are now providing 100,000-mile warranty on all new cars and trucks. Will we continue to keep our cars longer? I suspect we will. One of the pleasures of changing your car was to have a new model that people would admire. Today most cars look very much the same in almost every aspect so why bother!

Reprinted from *The Dipstick Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club*



FYI

We're on the Web!  
www.bigbendmgs.com

www.bigbendmgs.com

## COMING EVENTS

JAN. 22th - BBMGs After Holiday Party at Jane and Dave Streit's Home, 3023 Shamrock St. N, Drive starts at 4:00pm

Mar 19 - 21st Annl. British Car Day - British Motoring Club - New Orleans, LA

Apr. 8-11,11 - GOF S -Weeki Wachee, FL- englishcarclub@yahoo.com

Apr. 23 - 5th Annual Wheels Across The Pond 2011www.WheelsAcrossThePond.com for info/registration form - Jupiter, Fla

Apr. 25-28, 11 - NAMGAR Mile Zero GT7 Key West- Key West, FL

Jun 12-18, 11 MG2011NA Council of MG Registers, All-Register Gathering at Reno-Tahoe, NV Info: [www.mgcars.org.uk/mgcouncil](http://www.mgcars.org.uk/mgcouncil)

## CLASSIFIED

1965 Austin Healey Sprite MK III

The car VIN is HAN8L44445 with engine number 12CD-DA-H7948, so it has a 1275 engine.

Recent professional mechanical work includes engine & transmission removed to replace speed gear, throw out bearing & pilot bearing. Previously brakes were checked, engine tuned and new

wiring harness installed. Car has

recent new tires, paint, new car

pet and amateur interior installed

has top frame but no top. All

documentation included. Over

5K spent to make car roadworthy

I MUST SELL IT, so reasonable

offers over 3K are welcome. Car

is in Tallahassee. Clear Florida

title and vintage tag. I will answer

any questions and am motivated

to sacrifice it to finish my 1967

MGB finally.



bthom32312@aol.com or 850-385-6581 and ask for Bill. Member of Big Bend MGs & Past PM

### Thanks to the contributors to

**TALLY HO:**

Nancy Ayotte

Don Schmidt

David Kinsey

Geoff Wheatley

*The Dipstick Newsletter* of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club

Don Gatheman

Charlie Key

*St. Louis Metro Gazette* Newstter of The MG Club of St. Louis

Peter Bland

*The Boot, Hood and Bonnet* Newsletter of British Cars of New Hamshire

Sure would like to be thanking YOU also!



The purpose of the BBMGs is to encourage the members in the acquisition, preservation, restoration, exhibition, and use of the MG automobile

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

### OFFICERS

Prime Minister

NANCY AYOTTE

3127 Corrib Drive

Tallahassee, FL 32309

850-893-8813

nancyayotte@comcast.net

Vice Chancellor

DAVID STREIT

3023 Shamrock St. N

Tallahassee, FL 32309

850-893-6056-Home

dstreit@msn.com

Secretary

TOM & WANDA PHARES

590 Groveland Hills Dr.

Tallahassee, FL 32317

850-878-3996 - Home

twjphares@comcast.net

Chancellor of the Exchequer

& Registrar

TOM PHARES

590 Groveland Hills Dr.

Tallahassee, FL 32317

850-878-3996 - Home

twjphares@comcast.net

Librarian & Equipment Manager

J.P. BROWN

1981 Charlais St.

Tallahassee, FL 32317

850-681-6332 x35-Office

jp@BrownBevis.com

WebMaster

VERA DARBY

6340 Promenade Ct.

Tallahassee, FL 32312

850-893-4659-Home

verad04@comcast.net

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J.P. BROWN

1981 Charlais St.

Tallahassee, FL 32317

850-681-6332 x35-Office

jp@BrownBevis.com

Directors

BLAIR ENGLE

4068 Roscrea Dr.

Tallahassee, FL 32309

850-385-2821

bengle001@comcast.net

JON & JAN GARDNER

1201 Kenilworth Rd.

Tallahassee, FL 32312

850-385-8812-Home

TOM & WANDA PHARES

590 Groveland Hills Dr.

Tallahassee, FL 32317

850-878-3996 - Home

twjphares@comcast.net

Newsletterists

PHEONA & JOE KAISER

220 Edge of Woods Road

St. Augustine, FL 32092-0781

904-940-5848 - Home

josephkaiser@bellsouth.net

