

RUST NEVER SLEEPS

Where to troll for trash and treasure in some of the coolest junkyards in the world

Very few things are as disappointing or frustrating in our hobby as being unable to source original — and sometimes very rare — trim, glass or other bits for the cars we care about. Fortunately, a number of decades ago the now-beloved cars were merely used and old (stick with me here), and being pushed into the grave by subsequent years' models. This process of use and disposal created hundreds, then thousands of junkyards across this country. Now they're treasure troves, keeping trim pieces and assorted parts secret and safe for our picking years later.

If you have a place to score the rare and hard-to-find, and want to share it with your fellow collectors, send me a line about it at chad.tyson@americancarcollector.com.

— Chad Tyson



All American Classics

Just across the Columbia River in eastern Vancouver, WA, is ACC's favorite local junkyard. All American Classics specializes in 1930s through 1990s American cars and trucks.

Arrive and check in at the showroom that was once a dairy farm's barn. There you'll find books, pamphlets, and a sampling of the new, used, reproduction and N.O.S. parts available for all manner of American cars.

Move outside and on to the yard where about 3,000 vehicles sit on 20 acres of auto wrecking.

All American Classics has been supplying the area since July 5, 1989, when current owner Todd Toedtli's father opened for business. Most of the vehicles are raised off of the soggy ground by steel wheels. When the cars are no longer there, the wheels act as headstones for the completely dismantled autos.

Maps are available for navigating through the well-organized lot. If you work clockwise through the lot, Chevrolets make up the viewing for half of the distance until FoMoCo pieces take their place. Mopar shells follow in the southeast corner, then it is right back to GM metal, predominantly Buick and Oldsmobile. Projects are available. (Tip courtesy of Jim Pickering.)



Photos by Dave Tomaro

Background photo courtesy of All American Classics

Detailing

What: All American Classics
Where: 15209 NE Fourth Plain Road, Vancouver, WA 98682, not far from American Car Collector's Portland, OR, headquarters
Phone: 800.955.4999
Web: www.allamericanclassics.com



Courtesy of Vavavoom Garage

Vavavoom Garage

This Canadian yard is fantastic, according to its patrons. It is run by "Uncle" Bill Harrison in Southern Manitoba, Canada, six miles north of the town of Altamont and an hour's drive northwest of Langdon, ND, specifically. He has been gathering all makes and models from the '20s to the '70s for the past 25 years, with hot-rodders and restorers in mind. More than 600 project and parts vehicles fill the yard, plus thousands of other parts including hoods, fenders, bumpers, trim, glass, taillights, and the list goes on. The yard has coupes, sedans, wagons, trucks and plenty of oddballs.

Shipping is done worldwide. It has been said there is probably not a better yard around for many hundreds of miles. (Tip courtesy of Gord Forman.)

Detailing

What: Vavavoom Garage
Where: Box 25 Altamont, Manitoba, R0G 0A0 Canada
Phone: 204.248.2221
Web: www.vavavoomgarage.com



Courtesy of Classic Auto Parts

Classic Auto Parts

North of Coeur d'Alene, ID, is Hayden, ID, and north of there is a junkyard that specializes in 1950s and 1960s American cars, including many convertibles. The yard also includes all types of American makes and models 1940-76. Mike has recently purchased an estate that includes many N.O.S. Hudson and Rambler parts. A list of more-or-less complete projects available is on the website. (Tip courtesy of Mike Waller.)

Detailing

What: Classic Auto Parts
Where: 18438 North Highway 95, Hayden, ID 83835
Phone: 208.762.8080
Web: www.classicautopartsonline.com