



# The Steering Wheel

## August 2021

Newsletter of the Midwest Antique Auto Club

Not affiliated with any national club.

An independent group of collectible vehicle enthusiasts.

Dedicated to the preservation of the antique/collectible automobile.

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Meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month. The Board meets at 1:30 p.m. and the general meeting begins at 2:00 p.m. during the months of November, January, February and March at the **NEW CASSEL RETIREMENT CENTER at 900 N. 90<sup>th</sup> St., Omaha, NE 68114.** During the summer months of April, May, June, July, August, September and October, there are no inside meetings. In these months we have “Official Car Tours” on the third Sunday of each month. Plus whatever extra tours may please us. There is no meeting in December, that meeting is replaced by our annual Christmas banquet. All vehicles are welcome, any year, make or model, but a drivable collectible/antique vehicle is not a requirement for membership.

The deadline for articles for the Steering Wheel is the last Saturday of the month.

### The President's Message



Hello Everyone,

I hope your enjoying the warm summer weather by driving your old cars. It's a great time to get out and see people and their rides. I want to thank everyone that helped with the Missouri Valley Hot Rod Reunion Car Show on July 25. I know that Jerry Vincentini appreciates everyone helping with the car show and rising money for three great charities.

As many of you know, my father, brothers and I have been working for over the past decade on my father's 47 Chevy Convertible. Last week, we passed a major milestone by painting the car in its original Oxford Maroon. I left a couple of before and after pictures of the car. We are so happy to finally get to the stage where we can permanently reassemble the car. Our goal is to have Dad drive a completed car next year on our car tours.

Also, we have had some members that were fully vaccinated get COVID so please continue to be safe around groups and gatherings.

See you in August.

John and Karen Thurber



## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

### **August Driving Tour – August 22**

We will be visiting Prairie Gate Retirement Community (14 Valley View Drive, Council Bluffs) to show our cars to the residents on **Sunday, August 22**. As we found out at New Cassel, the residents really appreciate seeing our cars, especially since they haven't been able to leave the community since the Pandemic started. The event will be held in the parking lot of the Retirement Community and they will have snacks for us during the show. **We will meet at Bomgaars in 2803 E Kanessville Blvd, Council Bluffs between 1 and 1:30 p.m. and leave for Prairie Gate a little before 2 p.m.**

### **September Driving Tour**

We are still arranging the September driving tour. More information to come in the September Steering Wheel.

## Member News

### July Tour Missouri Valley Hot Rod Reunion

I am glad that we participated in the Missouri Valley Hot Rod Reunion Car Show. It was a great event that raised funds for Make-A-Wish, Child Saving Institute and the Shriners. Well over 100 cars showed up for the event. I special thank you to Janet Hedegaard for helping register and take payment for the cars participating in the event. And thank you Jerry Vincentini for all you do to support the collector car community in Omaha. We did not take roll of all the members attending so thank you for those that helped park collector and spectator cars.

### COVID Notice

As I mentioned previously, we have had fully vaccinated members recently contract the Delta variant of COVID-19. Please be safe while being around large groups. We want to see you driving your cars not sick in bed.

## *MIDWEST ANTIQUE AUTO CLUB*

### **AN INDEPENDENT GROUP OF COLLECTIBLE VEHICLE ETHUSIASTS**

#### **Just how long did the carburetor hold out against fuel injection in passenger vehicles?**

By Daniel Strohl Hemmings Motor News



It had been there from the start of the internal-combustion automobile. In fact, the carburetor was one of those key advances that made it possible to put an explodey contraption on top of a wheeled cart and semi-reliably travel down the road. But for all things an end must come, and the last carbureted passenger vehicle rolled off an assembly line in 1991. Or was it 1994? 1999? 2012? Let's see which date is correct.

To begin with, the carburetor certainly had come to the end of the line by the late 1980s. Electronic fuel injection had largely supplanted it over the prior decade, and those carburetors that hung on past the Reagan era only did so with feedback systems and emissions controls making them nearly unrecognizable (and, as many a frustrated mechanic of the time will attest, nearly unworkable). The California Air Resource Board mandate for emissions monitoring equipment on all cars sold there starting in 1988 certainly hobbled the carburetor, but it was the looming OBD-II, set to take effect in 1994, that put the carburetor out to pasture.

By the time the OBD-II legislation was passed, however, automakers had already converted nearly their entire U.S. fleets to fuel injection. Those cars and trucks still using carburetors typically were the automakers' oldest

and/or least expensive models. In fact, we only count 12 models that made it to the Nineties without switching to fuel injection.

Of those 10, we have the barely-worth-mentioning 1990 Toyota Tercel with its 3E 12-valve single-overhead-camshaft 1.5-liter four-cylinder that dated back to 1987. The third-generation Honda Prelude used the B20A3 12-valve single overhead-camshaft 2.0-liter four-cylinder through 1990 as well; it appears to be the last multi-carbureted engine available in the United States with its twin sidedraft Keihin carburetors. The last four-barrel carbureted engine available in the United States, the Quadrajel-topped LV2 Oldsmobile 307, soldiered on into the 1990 model year in the Chevrolet Caprice, Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser, Buick Estate Wagon, and Cadillac Brougham.

Two car models continued into the 1991 model year with carburetors, and both lay claim to the title of last carbureted cars sold in the United States. While the 5.0-liter V-8 in Ford's LTD Crown Victoria had switched to fuel injection in the mid-Eighties, the 5.8-liter remained available with a Motorcraft 7200 variable-venturi two-barrel carburetor for fleet sales and in Canada. Meanwhile, the Subaru Justy's EF-12 three-cylinder engine switched from its Hitachi two-barrel to fuel injection sometime late in the 1991 model year.

The same year, Chrysler wound down production of the Jeep SJ Grand Wagoneer, which had by then been reduced to a single power plant: the Motorcraft 2150 two-barrel-fed 360. With LTD Crown Victoria production wrapping up in Ontario, the Toledo-built SJ Grand Wagoneer reportedly is the last U.S.-built passenger vehicle to come with a carburetor.

With just a couple model years left until the OBD-II mandate, you think that'd be it, but there's more. Up through 1993, Mazda kept a two-barrel on the 2.2-liter four-cylinder in its B2200 pickup and Isuzu continued to offer the carbureted 4ZD1 2.3-liter four-cylinder in the Amigo. That 4ZD1 2.3-liter, however, remained carbureted for one more year in the base-trim two-wheel-drive TF series Isuzu Pickup.

Of course, that doesn't mean the Isuzu Pickup was the last vehicle ever built with a carburetor. Note that the phrasing we use above doesn't include motorcycles or recreational vehicles in our purview. Also note that we've concerned ourselves to this point with passenger vehicles sold in the United States, which was the first country to fully implement OBD-II and, effectively, ban carburetors. Carmakers would continue to build and sell carbureted vehicles elsewhere around the globe until other countries eventually adopted their own versions of OBD-II.

Determining exactly which vehicles remained carbureted in which countries, however, is somewhat more difficult to nail down. The above-mentioned B2200, for instance, remained carbureted at least through 1995 in Australia and New Zealand, but we've also heard reports that the Suzuki Swift remained carbureted there through 1999 and that the Australian version of the Mitsubishi Express van used a carburetor through 2003. In Canada, one could reportedly buy a Lada Niva with a carburetor through 1996. In the U.K., it may well be the same Subaru Justy mentioned above. In the rest of Europe and possibly in Japan, the Honda Civic continued to use the carbureted D13B1 and D13B2 four-cylinders through 1995. And then there's Russia, where it appears the Lada Riva still had a carbureted engine as late as 2012, the same date that NASCAR switched over to fuel injection.

There could very well be later examples too, and we're sure we'll hear about them in the comments below. For now, though, and especially in light of the coming prohibitions against sales of new internal-combustion-powered cars around the globe, it's at least worth exploring the topic just to illustrate that nothing lasts forever, no matter how used to it we have become.