



# The Steering Wheel

## August 2022

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 you are enjoying your cars and staying out of the sun. With as hot as it has been, driving an antique car without air conditioning can be difficult. Good thing for cowl vents and wing windows.

I want to thank Jack and Susan Lorsch for their hospitality in having the MAAC over to their home in July for a car show and food. I really appreciate their support over the years and kindness that they have shown us.

There are a lot of car shows over the next 45 days so I hope to see you at an event. We were able to reschedule the New Cassel Car Show to the last Sunday in September. We will finalize the car show

timing over the next 30 days.

I am sharing a few more pictures of the work on my dad's car. We got the front windshield and door windows installed and will be taking it to the upholster for a new convertible top in the next week.

See you in August.

John and Karen Thurber



## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

### **August Driving Tour – Sunday, August 14, 2022**

We will be meeting at Fort Omaha for the 8th Annual Vintage Wheels at the Fort event on Sunday, August 14. The show is held at historic Fort Omaha at 5730 N. 30 Street, Omaha. The show time is between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Please meet at Fort Omaha no later than 1 p.m. There will be food available to purchase and free tours of the General Crook house.

### **September 25th Driving Tour**

We will be meeting at New Cassel Retirement Center (900 N. 90<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha) at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 25th for the rescheduled car show. New Cassel has been a great supporter of the MAAC club allowing us to use their indoor space for our winter meetings. The car show allows us to give back and share our cars with the residents. **Please plan to be at the New Cassel south parking lot at 1:00 p.m.** New Cassel will provide us lunch and goodies. The car show should be over by 3:00 p.m. More information will be shared in a future Steering Wheel.

## **Member News**

**June 9<sup>th</sup> Car Tour** - We met at Jack and Susan Lorsch's home at 6755 County Road 25 in Kennard NE on Saturday, July 9th for a car show, hot dogs, chips and root beer floats. I really appreciate Jim and Susan providing food for the club. Although we didn't keep formal track of the members that attended, here is a partial list of people that I remember attending: John and Karen Thurber, Clif and Joyce Ellis, Monte and Marj Frost, Ed and Janet Hedegaard, Kenny and Dixie Foote, Tom and Gloria Kannas, Frank and Elizabeth Van Doorn, Jim and Cheryl Cushman, Ed and Sandy Anderson, Daryl and Linda Baker, Roger and Delmar Bunch. I am sorry if I missed remembering your attendance.

## We pick seven of the most criminally undervalued collector cars of today

By [Hemmings Motor News Staff](#)

Whether it's a six-figure Samba, the bubbling up in Amphicar prices, or microcars with macro values, it often appears that the overdriven collector car market of the last few years has overvalued every old car of interest. Who would've thought, for instance, that squarebody GM pickups—almost literally a dime a dozen and the epitome of low-buck, anti-style utilitarianism for so many years—would become the hottest thing since the sliced bread that they so resemble?

But as we all know, the economics of old cars is neither predictable nor is it rational, and just as some cars end up selling for more than the experts believe it's worth, some sell for less. We're not talking about individual sales here and there, but entire generations of cars that, for some reason or another, remain valued far less than one would expect given the esteem many collectors hold for them. To illustrate this point, we've asked the Hemmings Editorial staff to select some of the cars that consistently sell for far less than what those staffers think the cars should be worth. We're not necessarily looking for bargains or good investments here; rather, we're talking cars that we appreciate that haven't (yet) appreciated. Any prices quoted below in general reflect what we've seen in the Hemmings classified and auction listings.

Yes, this is an entirely subjective exercise, so once you've perused our choices, suggest your own criminally undervalued cars in the comments below.



### **1960-1964 Corvair Club Coupe**

The swing-axle Corvair Club Coupe is a sleeper value. There were a lot of them made and there's still a strong enthusiast base for the more exotic 'Vairs (turbocharged Spyderys, the convertibles, the wagons, and the vans), which means support for the workaday versions. On the other hand, their quirky mechanicals (and a largely unfair black legend about their safety) scare off the big-money folks who like Mustangs and Camaros. The Porsche and Volkswagen crowd, seemingly more sympathetic to their engineering, don't seem to think much of anything wearing a Chevrolet badge.

Current NADA values for 1961-'63 model Club Coupes range from \$2,300 (1961 500) at the low end to \$17,500 ('62-'63 Monzas) at the high. The 1960 "Cave Man" cars, which have a lot of one-year-only parts, should go on the average of \$7,500, and the 1964 seems to be the sleeper's sleeper, with a value of \$2,425 (500) ranging upward to \$16,900 (Monza) at the high end, despite a bigger engine than '61-'63 cars and suspension improvements.

Perhaps the outstanding example of this criminal undervaluation in our classifieds is this 1964 Chevrolet Monza Spyder Club Coupe shorn of its turbocharger and priced at \$4,950. It's got a black-vinyl interior (claimed original) with the coveted Spyder instrument cluster. Outside, it wears what I assume is Palomar Red paint. The car comes with an unidentified two-carburetor replacement engine wearing an alternator (suggesting it's a '65-'69 unit) coupled to a four-speed and an unidentified gearing that should be 3.27 or 3.55. The seller says it's a "good car to restore" either with a replicated 150hp turbo engine or some hot rodded version of the replacement unit which is good enough that the car currently "runs/drives." - Dave Conwill



### **1984-1996 Chevrolet Corvette**

The fourth-generation Corvette should have a lot going for it at the moment. Besides the fact that it's a Corvette—America's sports car, the everyman's exotic, the eternal halo car, loved by legions—it almost perfectly fits the aesthetic and the character of the post-malaise Rad-era cars that have enjoyed a surge of popularity over the last several years. And yet while third-generation Camaros, Fox-body Mustangs, OBS trucks, and all manner of Nineties imports have become far more popular (and more expensive) than casual observers could have imagined, the fourth-generation Corvette has not kept up at all. Sure, there's the ZR-1s and the Grand Sports and the Callaways that all fetch decent money for 30-year-old sports cars, but we're constantly seeing lower-end hardtops and even the occasional convertible in good, if not perfect, condition selling for four figures. Take, for instance, the all-white 1988 35th Anniversary version for \$9,900 or

the loaded and recently serviced 1988 for \$9,950. Spend any more than \$20,000 and it better be one of those special versions mentioned above. While they don't perform like modern Corvettes, the digital dashes and other gizmos haven't aged well, and aftermarket support for these cars is thinner than for other Corvette generations, they still perform well for cars of their era and the minimal upfront investment into a fourth-generation Corvette should bend the fun-to-cost ratio in its favor. - Daniel Strohl



### **1980-1987 Jaguar XJ6**

Jaguar automobiles have always represented surprising value in the luxury car market, offering traditional fine-car appointments with athletic performance at prices that typically undercut the competition. That's especially true on the secondhand and collector markets, where—outside of specific sports models—Jaguars don't trade hands for money that acknowledges all they have to offer. The Series III XJ6 is notably undervalued for what it represents.

When this 1987 four-door sedan was new in the 1980s (particularly the later years), it enjoyed improved build quality and reliability over its Seventies predecessor. This Jag featured a peerless blend of ride quality and handling, smooth straight-six power, and a warm, British style that was very different from its often-stuffy Teutonic and American competitors. The financial depreciation that haunted earlier Jaguar sedans continued with this one, and by 2000, even low-mileage, pampered examples were worth a fraction of their original MSRPs. In 2005, when the 1985 models were 20 years old, NADAguides valued a standard XJ6 at \$3,725-\$5,775 and an upmarket XJ6 Vanden Plas at \$4,275-\$6,575. Seventeen years later, those numbers have barely changed with an '85 XJ6 ranging between \$1,925 and \$8,200 and a Vanden Plas being \$2,625 to \$10,350.

Those low values mean marginal XJ6s have turned into scruffy ones, and many have been scrapped. Survivors can be all over the place in terms of condition, but even the highest-priced, finest examples are comparatively cheap and offer a luxury driving experience unlike anything you can buy today. - Mark J. McCourt



### **1992-2000 Lexus SC300/SC400**

Toyota threw its substantial engineering might behind creating Lexus in the 1980s, establishing a new brand with a keenly Japanese take on luxury: it blended that country's famous automotive value and reliability with technological advancements. The first-gen LS400 may have been Toyota's interpretation of a Mercedes-Benz W126 S-Class, but that clever platform came into its own under the styled-in-America SC coupe, analogous to Mercedes' SEC. Despite sharing many components with the LS400, as well as the hugely valuable fourth-gen Toyota Supra, the rear-drive SC 300 and

SC400 remain bargains.

Under the hood of the automatic-only SC400s like this black 1992 was the DOHC 4.0-liter V-8 from the LS; SC300s used the base Supra's DOHC 3.0-liter, naturally aspirated 2JZ engine and could offer a three-pedal five-speed. It's true that both cars were relatively heavy and looked sportier than they drove, but they were very comfortable, impeccably engineered, and capable of interstellar mileage. Priced at \$40,000 and \$47,500 in 1995, NADAguides said the slow sellers could command between \$5,150 and \$14,050 twenty years later. Today, a SC300's current value range is a paltry \$3,175 to \$6,825; a contemporary SC400 is \$3,625 to \$9,150.

The SC didn't get all the available turbocharged performance and computerized gee-whiz features of its JDM Toyota Soarer body double, but this coupe remains unique in Toyota history as a "bubble era," nearly cost-no-object exercise in personal-luxury motoring. Like the 1990s Supra, NSX, RX-7, and 300ZX, it should have the attention of a new generation of collectors; its time has not yet come. - Mark J. McCourt



### **1956-1957 Continental Mark II**

If ever there was a post-war classic, the Continental Mark II was it. A hand-built luxury coupe meant to invoke the coachbuilt Lincoln Model K of the '30s (in spirit if not in style), the Mark II existed only for two years (1956 and 1957) and was largely hand-built beyond its bare mechanicals—and even those were effectively factory-blueprinted. Its clean flanks, styled by John Reinhart and Gordon Friggin' Buehrig fer cryin' out loud, stood in contrast to the increasingly busy two-tone paint and brightwork attached to more plebian American cars. A seven-

step quality control program ensured that the components that went into each Mark II were double-checked for fit and finish, by both vendor and on-site workers, while those who built Continentals were encouraged to take the necessary time to test-fit parts before installation. At \$9,966 at launch, it was the most expensive American car in its day, which helps explain why barely 3,000 were built in its two-year life. (The only available option was air conditioning.) In a world where the term "special" is overused to the point of abuse, the Mark II was indeed a special machine. Rare, expensive, touched by automotive royalty, and the pinnacle of its moment. And yet at multiple auctions in the last few years, we've been hard-pressed to find a Mark II—nice, clean, properly-restored Mark IIs—selling for much north of \$50,000. There's even a solid 1956 for sale on Hemmings.com right now for \$37,500. Surely this is a six-figure car? We're not sure what's happening here, except maybe to suggest that the people who remember these cars as new cars are beyond the age of car collecting. If the CCCA ever moves its cutoff point past 1948, surely the Mark II would top the list for inclusion. Is this what it will take to get this car some respect? -

Jeff Koch



### **1980-1985 Mercedes-Benz 380 SL**

There are plenty of individual models to choose from venerable R107 generation of the Mercedes-Benz SL-class. With an 18-year production run and different powertrains between European and North American markets (some of which came stateside as grey-market imports), there's almost an R107 for every taste and budget. Despite a general upward trend in prices, there's value to be found, especially with the 380 SL.

That's likely because the 380SL is the weakest and slowest of the R107 family, but these were not made to be sports cars. Besides, even the 1986-'89 560 SL, with all of 227 horsepower, is slow by modern standards. The SL isn't about speed. It's about style, composure, and the rock-solid feeling from a peak era for Mercedes-Benz.

It's not hard to find promising examples like this 1984 Mercedes-Benz 380 SL for under \$15,000, versus \$20,000 and up (sometimes way up) for a 560 SL. Take a chance on an example that needs an engine tune-up or hasn't been driven in a while, and you can even score one for four figures. The displacement under the hood, the badge on the back, and the extra cash in your bank account are the main differences between a 380 and the more expensive options. - Mike Austin



### **Any mid-Seventies full-size American sedan**

Model year 1975 was a weird time for full-size American cars. A fuel crisis meant neutered drivelines (everything from power to rear-axle ratios)—and also not terrific fuel mileage to compensate. Quality issues were often present. Most of the Big Three had smaller-sized replacements on the drawing board, so the cars of the season were in something of a holding pattern. They're big, comfortable, generally full of modern-enough features like power steering and brakes, (frequently) air conditioning and more, and

are sublime over-the-road cruisers. That said, as time went on, collectors gravitated toward high performance, leaving this era—and the four-door body style—to languish. More recent developments have shaken the sedan of its no-fun stigma, but older models remain tarred with it.

And so it remains, nearly half a century on. “Criminally undervalued” is another way of saying “really cheap to get into considering what you get,” and this trio is that all over. Let’s look at the year’s four-door sedans. With some notable exceptions, we often find vintage Ford values lagging behind their competition’s, so we started there first. High retail on a ’75 LTD (not a Landau or a Brougham, just a base LTD) is right at \$3,575—about a grand less than their base price in 1975! Thinking that Mopars will be prized solely for their birthright as Mopars, and that their lower production might account for something in the collector-car world, we looked at the full-size Monaco sedan. To our surprise, their values were even lower: high retail for a clean Monaco is listed well below \$2,000. That seems low, but even at twice the price, you’re still well under a dollar a pound. Finally, we assumed that even a four-door Impala would be in the five-figure range, since Chevy sales numbers generally outpace the comparable brands, but no: high retail on a ’75 Impala sedan is at \$5,275.

Of course plusher trim levels and coupe versions on these would be more highly valued. This Cordova-topped 1976 Pontiac Bonneville four-door hardtop, for instance, comes with an asking price of \$10,500. Surely, half a century on, some of these numbers should book for a little higher? The flip side is, they’re also proof that you can get into the old car game with a charming old beast, full of parts that can still be replaced at the local parts store, without endangering your kid’s college fund. Today, the survivors have likely survived for a reason: they’ve been taken care of, they were solidly-built to begin with, etc. And rightly or wrongly, none of them are valued very highly—most of them less than their MSRP when new. With the full-size Class of ’75, in terms of pricing, there’s really nowhere to go but up. - Jeff Koch

**MIDWEST ANTIQUE AUTO CLUB**  
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