



The Steering Wheel

February 2025

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. 90th 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 latest Steering Wheel can be found at <https://midwestantiqueautoclub.org>.**

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

The President’s Message



Hello Everyone,

Thank you to everyone that joined Tom LaHood’s soup and chili feed in January. Tom is a long-time Chrysler enthusiast. In fact, one of our members, Charlie Moriarty, purchased a 1949 Chrysler Windsor from Tom a number of years ago. It was nice to meet up other car clubs and have conversations with other car enthusiasts. It is great to see what other are doing with their antique cars.

I hope you spend some time getting your cars ready for our monthly tours. We have a couple of interesting tours planned in 2025 including joining another car group for a fall foliage tour. Now is the time to prepare for some long drives this year.

We hope to see you for bingo at our February meeting at New Cassel. I hope you keep warm and safe in the meantime.

John and Karen Thurber

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 16th Indoor Tour

This is the second official indoor meeting of the season. Please join us at New Cassel (900 N. 90th Street) on February 16th at 2 p.m. to celebrate a late Valentine's Day! **Please bring a red desert or salad.** **We will be having BINGO at this meeting.** Please remember to enter using the lower north entrance to the facility and if you are not feeling well, please stay home. Also, if you want something other than water to drink, please bring your own drink.

2025 MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE -They are still \$25.00. If you didn't pay you membership dues as part of the Holiday Banquet registration form, please send payment to Jim Cushman at 1901 No. 59th Street Omaha, NE 68104

March 2, 2025 LINCOLN, NE — 50th Annual Rocky Manginelli Memorial Swap Meet,

Sandhills Global Event Center, 4100 N. 84th St. Doors open at 7:00 a.m. “The first and largest swap meet of the year held in Nebraska!” www.enwicc.com

March 7-9, 2025 World of Wheels – CHI Center, Omaha.

The 70th annual Omaha World of Wheels at the CHI Health Center, showcasing America's Finest Hot Rods, Custom Cars, Trucks & Motorcycles. March 7-9, 2025. The Classic Chevy Club may have a couple of cars entered into the event.

March 16th Indoor Tour

March MAAC Meeting, New Cassel, 2:00 p.m. Plan to join us to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Corned Beef and Cabbage (and potatoes). Please bring a dessert or salad.– see the March Steering Wheel for more information.

MEMBER NEWS

Tom LaHood's Event - We had a great time meeting with Tom LaHood and other old car enthusiasts at Tom's chili and soup feed. A big thank you to Tom and the others for the food and hospitality. Since this was not an official MAAC event, I didn't keep track of the members that attended.

Monte Frost – Monte Frost, long-time MAAC member, is in Methodist Hospital. Please keep Monte and Marj in your thoughts and prayers.

This Classic Blue Type II Volkswagen Bus is a Los Angeles Fire Survivor

By [Tara Hurlin](#) January 16, 2025- Hemmings Motor News



The above photo of a retro blue VW bus that miraculously survived the deadly Los Angeles fires has been circulating around the internet with many viewers questioning the integrity of the photo. It's difficult to believe that the walls of flames which engulfed entire mountains and destroyed neighborhoods and the lives of thousands spared the classic VW van, but one news channel debunked any doubts with a closer look of what some have called a "magical bus."

In the photo, first shared by [AP News](#), the VW bus, nicknamed "Azul", which is Spanish for "blue", retains its bright blue paint while its surroundings show just a glimpse of the devastation the fires caused.

Martin, who makes carbon fiber surfboards under Starlite brand, purchased the 1977 Volkswagen Type 2 on a whim while he was studying mechanical engineering at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He saved money on rent by living out of the van during his senior year, then, last summer, he sold the van to his business partner, Megan Krystle Weinraub. After a surfing trip with friends on January 5th, Weinraub, who is still learning to drive the manual transmission, parked the VW on a flat spot on top of the hill not far from her apartment near the Getty Villa.

Her learning curve could have been this VW's blessing in disguise. Fire erupted in the Palisades just two days later, forcing Weinraub to flee with her dog in her primary vehicle. While she felt bad about leaving Azul, that thought seemed minor when compared to the tragic loss of the community's homes and loved ones.

On Thursday, Weinraub received a photo from a neighbor with the bus in the background, bright blue against the otherwise dark path of destruction. "I freaked out," she said in an interview with AP. "I was in the bathroom, and I screamed." She immediately called Martin, who told AP "There is magic in that van. It makes

no sense why this happened. It should have been toasted, but here we are.”

On her Instagram, Weinraub shared, “For two straight days, I was glued to the news, anxiously waiting to see if my house had burned down. It’s something I never thought I’d experience. Seeing people I know lose everything was devastating. I feel incredibly fortunate and grateful to say that both my house and my bus are still standing. When I got a picture of the blue bus, surrounded by destruction, still standing strong, it took my breath away. Everything around it was gone, but Azul was still there. In that moment, it felt like a beacon of light, a symbol of hope that even in the darkest times, there is still light shining and good things are still possible.”

Martin and Weinraub were even more shocked when they saw news outlets picking up the VW story. “It’s so cool that it’s become this, like, beacon of hope,” Martin said. “Everything around it was toasted, just destroyed. And then here’s this bright blue shiny van, sitting right there.”

NBCLA shared a close-up look of the slightly fire-damaged VW bus in the below video:

https://youtu.be/MdUeUMq_xbs



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