



# The Steering Wheel

## September 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.

<u>Presidents</u>	<u>John &amp; Karen Thurber</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-496-7701</u>
<u>Vice President</u>	<u>Clif Ellis</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-397-4279</u>
<u>Secretaries</u>	<u>Gloria &amp; Tom Kannas</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-681-5897</u>
<u>Treasurers</u>	<u>Jim &amp; Cheryl Cushman</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-558-0150</u>
<u>Tour Committees</u>	<u>Ed &amp; Janet Hedegaard</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-490-5909</u>
<u>Web Page Editors</u>	<u>Tom &amp; Linda Beiriger</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-498-0598</u>
<u>Historian</u>	<u>Clif Ellis</u>	<u>Ph. (402)-397-4279</u>

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 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,

I hope you enjoyed our tour to Macedonia Iowa. Again, a big thank you goes to Tom and Gloria Kannas in arranging the tour and to the people of Macedonia Iowa in opening their museums for us to visit. It is interesting to see how small communities around Eastern Nebraska/Western Iowa support their heritage with local history museums. I have a few pictures of the tour on the next page. Again, thank you Tom and Gloria for suggesting the tour.

Ed Hedegaard, Lance Sulentic and I were asked to show three vintage cars from the 20s, 30s and 40s at the Joselyn Castle for a big fundraiser (see picture on next page). I really appreciate Ed and Lance joining the event on a hot night.

We hope to see you at our September Tour.

John and Karen Thurber



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### September Driving Tour – Sunday, September 21 – Fontanelle Orchard

We will be visiting the Fontanelle Orchard in Fontanelle Nebraska (just north of Arlington, NE) just like last year. The club will be purchasing pie and ice cream for all the members that participate in our tour. **Please meet at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 21, at St. Patrick's Catholic Church at 204<sup>th</sup> & Maple Street.** The church is located at the northwest corner of 204<sup>th</sup> & Maple - you can turn right off Maple Street just west of the church to enter the parking lot. We will be driving past Elk City on our trip to Fontanelle Orchard. We will be leaving to drive to Fontanelle Orchard at 1:30 p.m. Pies will be available to purchase for \$18 a pie. Please bring chairs to the tour. I hope to see you at our last driving tour of the year.

### October Driving Tour – Sunday, October 12

The club will be supporting and joining the Southwest Iowa Car Cruise on Sunday, October 12. The cruise will be stopping by the Hedegaard's home in Underwood IA for lunch and the club will help Ed and Janet park cars and set up the lunch. Afterword, the club will join the cruise. More information on the October tour in the October Steering Wheel.

## MEMBER NEWS

**August Driving Tour** – I hope you enjoyed our tour to Macedonia Iowa. As I mentioned earlier, Tom and Gloria Kannas were able to arrange the drive and tour to the two museums in Macedonia Iowa. Thank you

Tom and Gloria for suggesting the tour. Attendees include Jim and Cheryl Cushman – 39 Buick, John and Karen Thurber – 88 Pontiac Fiero, Dave and Ester Miller – Modern, Lance and Aleta Sulentic – 38 Chevy, Max Meier – Modern, Ed and Janet Hedegaard – 2005 PT Cruiser, Cliff Ellis – 67 Mustang, Ed Anderson – 99 Plymouth Prowler, Bob Yanders – 2024 Nissan Z.

## Weekend Wrench: To Furbish or Refurbish?

By Jim Richardson August 1, 2025 Hemmings Motor News



When I saw Mr. Bowman rolling down the street in his new 1954 Pontiac Star Chief convertible, I stopped mowing the lawn and ran in to tell Pop. He set aside his morning paper, and we walked down to get a closer look. Nobody in our neighborhood bought new cars, so this was a special event.

Mr. Bowman (kids never called adults by their first names) was standing next to the car while his wife took pictures, and then he took us for rides around the block. I rode in the big back seat and marveled at the car's styling. There was a feeling of awe and envy in the air on the part of the neighbors. For most of them, having a new

car was a just a dream fueled by the marketing of the manufacturers.

Some neighbors didn't have cars at all. Others were still driving prewar cars, including my father, who had a 1936 Chevrolet Master four-door sedan. Generally, families had one car that Dad drove back and forth to work, and it was his job to look after it too.

We were called Aviation Okies, because most of our families came to California from the Southwest to get jobs in the aircraft factories. To us, if you were a real man, you fixed your own car, and neighbors often helped. It was also a form of socializing and recreation. I remember my father and Mr. Thompson adjusting the tappet clearances on his old Chevy, for example.

It was done with the engine warm and running in order to maintain the correct temperature for the gap, because the engine expanded as it heated, and a couple of thousandths could be the difference between too tight, which would result in burned valves, or too loose, causing lost performance and tappet noise. This was a hot and dirty task, but it had to be done periodically.

Also, back then if your fuel pump failed for instance, you went to Pep Boys and bought a kit to rebuild it. The pumps were designed to be rebuilt, and you would have been a wuss if you paid someone to rebuild your old one, or bought a new one. The entire process, which included removing the pump, rebuilding it, and re-installing it, usually took an afternoon. It was considered a two-beer job.

Cars back then were *designed* to be rebuilt. Granted, they needed a lot more maintenance to keep them going, but if you took care of them, they would literally last a lifetime. I still drive my stock 1940 Packard 110 anywhere I want to go, and it was built before I was born.

In the '50s we didn't live in a throwaway society, and we didn't make a plethora of new cars designed to be neglected to death. These days automobiles are made to last five trouble-free years (coincidentally the amount of time it takes to pay one off), after which we go back into debt, and our old car becomes someone else's

problem. Nothing on new cars is designed to be rebuilt. This is how our American consumer society has evolved. But a lot of countries keep their old cars going for years like we did when I was a lad. Small countries that import all their cars find ways to do it and continue to drive cars we regard as antiques.

In these tumultuous times with trade uncertainty, maybe we should start maintaining our old cars again rather than buying new. Personally, I delight in seeing well-cared-for old cars. And I am no longer impressed by 500 horsepower and electronic gadgets that tell me where the nearest In-N-Out Burger is located.

Modern cars are complex, but they need less attention. It is true that you can't get a rebuild kit for a modern fuel pump and will have to replace a defective one, but that is not as costly as paying \$500 or \$600 a month for an outrageously overpriced *new* car.

Are parts available you ask? They usually are unless you are working on a one-off Hispano-Suiza. Old auto supply stores have parts sitting on shelves in the back, gathering dust, and are glad to get rid of them. Also, salvage yards have plenty of used ones too. Besides, most production cars from the past were assembled using the same components as other brands, and typically little changed from year to year.

I'm not talking about restoring for show, but for refurbishing for transportation. I wouldn't get fussy if, when certain parts wore out, they were replaced with later components that will do the job as well or better without harming the performance or appearance of the car.

Consider this: Mr. Bowman's 1954 Star Chief convertible would be just as much of a sensation in the neighborhood today as it was back then. And best of all, just about everything one might need to keep it going is still available if you look in the publication you are holding in your hands.



## **MIDWEST ANTIQUE AUTO CLUB**

**AN INDEPENDENT GROUP OF COLLECTIBLE VEHICLE ENTHUSIASTS**