



The Steering Wheel

September 2026

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,

Just when you think it will start cooling off, it heats up again. I am writing this during a week-long period of 90-degree days.

Owning classic cars means being careful in the heat. Most old cars don't have electric fans and really on mechanical fans run off the engine for cooling. Also, old style, green antifreeze doesn't have the cooling capacity of modern antifreeze. You can drive your classic cars during hot weather – you just need to monitor your temperature gage closely. Also, regular changes of antifreeze will help both your engine and radiator last longer and run cooler. Remember, people drove these cars in all kinds

of weather when they were new. You can drive your cars in hot or cold weather.

We hope to see everyone in August.

John and Karen Thurber

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September Driving Tour – Penny’s Visions Art Gallery, Neola, Iowa – Sunday, September 20, 2026

We are planning our fifth driving tour on Sunday, September 20 with a tour to Penny’s Visions Art Gallery in Neola, Iowa. As an Iowa artist, designer and author, Penny Christensen her husband Russell have co-owned and operated Penny’s Visions Art Gallery in Neola for over 30 years.. Her paintings are in private collections in all 50 states and eight foreign countries. They have been on display at galleries, art museums, one-woman shows and other fine art institutions. After visiting the art gallery, we will have a picnic lunch at the park in Neola. **We will meet at Bomgaars at 2803 E Kanesville Blvd, Council Bluffs, IA at 1:00 p.m. and leave for the tour at 1:30 p.m.** Members with the last name beginning with A-M, please bring a salad, members with the last name ending with N-Z please bring a dessert. Please bring lawn chairs.

Plattsmouth Car Show – Friday, September 18, 2026

The Plattsmouth Chamber of Commerce Cruizin' Main car show is scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM in historic downtown Plattsmouth, Nebraska. Time: 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM (Car registration starts at 2:00 PM) Location: Main Street, Historic Downtown District (and 4th Street off Main), Plattsmouth, NE. Free for the public; \$20 donation for vehicle entrance. Go to the website if you have any questions (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CarShows.IA.NE/posts/28944326648503409/>)

Fremont Swap Meet – Sunday, September 27, 2026

The next Fremont Area Car Club Swap Meet in Fremont, Nebraska is scheduled for Sunday, September 27, 2026. Location: Christensen Field, 1914 Christensen Field Rd, Fremont, NE. Admission: Free for buyers. Features: Car corral, antique items, arts and crafts, buy/sell/trade, and a free pedal car drawing

MEMBER NEWS

August Driving Tour – We had a nice time showing off our cars at New Cassel Retirement Center on August 22. The residents seemed to enjoy looking at the cars and the weather cooperated. I big thank you to everyone that attended. The list of members I remember attending include: John and Karen Thurber, Michael Thurber, Scot Shales, Frank and Elizabeth Van Doorn, Max Meier, Dave and Ester Miller, Ed and Janet Hedegaard, Clif Ellis, Lance Sulentic, Jim and Cheryl Cushman, Tom and Gloria Kannas.

VanDerBrink Auctions, LLC will be having the Robinson Collection Auction on October 3, 2026 at 821 County Road S, Fremont, Nebraska. Tim Robinson grew up in western Nebraska and loved cars, racing, and looked for every chance to get his need for speed. Tim Robinson and his family would travel all over the US in search of 1955-1970 Full size Chevrolets. The Collection grew to almost 450 Chevrolet Classics. This is absolutely an amazing collection and noted as one of the largest Full size Chevrolet Collections in the United States. The Auction will be Live Onsite with Online Bidding,

How to Protect Your Classic Car from Extreme Weather **Benjamin Hunting 25 August 2026 Hagerty**

Extreme weather is a fact of life. Over the last 25 years, the intensity of severe floods, storms, hurricanes, wildfires, and blizzards in the United States has only continued to climb, forcing millions of classic car owners to evaluate just how well-protected their autos are from the worst that Mother Nature can throw their way.

I’ve lost track of the number of times over the past 12 months that I’ve had to run outside with a set of padded moving

blankets to throw over one of the vehicles that doesn't fit inside my garage, in a desperate race against incoming hail the size of gumballs, or how often I've had to clear my yard and driveway of branches the size of baseball bats flung from nearby trees by the winds of the previous night's storm. And those threats are small potatoes compared to the danger of a river flooding, or a coastal storm surge, or forests that could catch fire with the next lightning strike.

"The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) billion-dollar disaster count has gone from three or four per year in the 1980s to more than twenty per year over the last five years, adjusted for inflation," says Lee Meeler, vice president of claims for Hagerty. "What's been most striking to me as a claims leader is that it's no longer the usual events in the usual places. We've seen flooding in the mountains, wildfires in the suburbs, derecho winds in the Midwest that nobody saw coming. "The idea that extreme weather is somebody else's problem, in somebody else's part of the country, just doesn't hold up anymore." As environmental perils continue to mount, the old ways of keeping cars secure may not pass muster. Adaptation is the name of the game when it comes to dealing with a climate whose onslaught of slings and arrows shows no signs of slowing down.

Embrace the Barrier Method

Not everyone has access to a garage, but that doesn't mean you can't take steps to keep your vehicle safe from some of the most common weather-related dangers. Emergency blanket deployment isn't a practical solution in the long term, especially if you happen to be at work or asleep when a storm strikes. Hail can easily act as a rock tumbler on paint and bodywork and is sometimes bad enough to total a car.

Fortunately, even a basic car cover can provide some protection from errant branches, falling ice, and blown debris for vehicles stored outside. Thicker is better when it comes to absorbing impact, and while there are arguments to be made against keeping a vehicle covered at all times (wind can cause the cover to move around on the car, thus abrading and/or scratching trim and paint), throwing a cover on your car in advance of a potentially damaging forecast is definitely worthwhile.

There are even some types of outdoor covers that can extend some level of protection against flash flooding. "There are car bags that are made of PVC or high-strength polyester with waterproof zippers that you drive over and zip up over your car," says Meeler. "The idea is mainly protection against rising flood water." Meeler clarifies that while standing water is a force of nature that will penetrate any opening, these zip-up covers can be effective against smaller flooding events. And if you can't get one delivered in time? "Some owners also recommend DIY solutions—going to [the hardware store] and buying cheap plastic that you could drive your car over, and then just fasten at the top for a cheaper option."

At the other end of the cost spectrum are "car bubbles," which use active ventilation to create a pocket of filtered, continuously circulating air around a vehicle. While they are primarily intended for interior storage, in a pinch this design could be recruited as another layer in your strategy against hail or falling debris (as long as you can ensure the power required to keep the bubble inflated).

Get It Inside

The next step up from a car cover is, of course, some type of protective parking structure. There's a definite hierarchy here when it comes to what level of protection you can expect, and from what type of danger, and there are some caveats to keep in mind as today's storms continue to grow stronger. The most basic type of parking protection is a temporary, portable garage consisting of a steel or aluminum frame wrapped in Mylar or a similar type of synthetic material. These are familiar sights to those who dwell in the northern U.S., where owners use them to keep snow off vehicles, but they can also serve as year-round harbors against precipitation, as long as you're able to control the moisture level inside (not always easy in some climates).

However, these types of structures come up short when they're asked to face a heavy load. This can be in the form of heavy snowfall, which can accumulate not just on the top of the plastic cover, but also against the sides. Both can put enough pressure on the frame to collapse it, with disastrous effects on the car that's being stored inside. Wind can also put too much of a strain on the load-bearing frame of a temporary garage. Even the metal components of a well-anchored structure can be bent or snapped by a strong enough gust. In the worst-case scenario, the entire garage lifts off the ground (and potentially slams into your ride).

Keeping this type of garage clear of snow is vital. If an incoming blizzard looks like it might overwhelm the speed at which you can shovel, you might be better off rolling your car into the driveway and enduring a dump of the white stuff. The strategy applies if the forecast includes very strong winds. Covered car ports offer a halfway point between a traditional garage and a temporary one. In theory, their roofs are strong enough to hold a much heavier weight of snow, and they are far less likely to be pierced by a falling branch. At the same time, they lack side protection, which means that debris blown laterally by sufficiently high winds can threaten your bodywork.

Not all Garages or Barns are created equal

In most cases, the best protection against nature's wrath is, of course, a permanent, enclosed structure like a garage or barn. Pole barns are popular and can be thought of as a hybrid between a carport and a more traditional garage. They are often much larger than a carport, and they rely on the strength of large posts driven into the ground, versus traditional timber framing used in other structures, to bear the weight of the roof and walls. However, Meeler warns, make sure that yours is equipped with hurricane ties. "A lot of pole barns do not have hurricane ties built in," says Meeler. "These attach the roof structure to the walls, and they're incredibly effective at preventing a collapse onto a vehicle, or [the roof] being blown away and damaging something else." These ties are inexpensive and should be considered a must-have when upgrading a pole barn to deal with today's weather.

Older pole barns are also vulnerable to truss damage. "Trusses can crack or splinter, and you might not notice it," says Meeler. "A compromised structure might make it through one storm, but it's the next one that's going to cause you problems." He recommends a regular yearly inspection from a qualified builder for anyone dealing with this type of structure, or indeed any storage building that's been through a significant storm. Depending on where you live, a garage can take on several different forms. It might be attached to your house, it might be a separate structure on your property with its own foundation, or it could be tucked underneath your home or apartment building (or even rise up beside it).

Each of these designs will serve you well if hail, wind, or snow are your primary concerns, but flooding still represents a risk for any garage that isn't sitting well above ground level. "Once water rises up past the rockers, or gets into the engine compartment, you could be looking at a total loss," says Meeler. Underground garages, especially in urban locales like New York City, are at risk of serious flood damage once they fill up with water and become a soup of metal and glass.

Get the Dodge at of Dodge

It's here that discretion becomes the better part of valor when it comes to protecting your classic car. There are some situations, no matter how well-built your garage or barn might be, where the single best decision you can make is to get your car as far away from the danger as possible and wait things out until it's safe to return. A wildfire is the most obvious evacuation scenario. There's very little chance that your vehicle's storage space can survive a blazing inferno, and the best possible solution is to move the car to a safe location well ahead of when you'll need to leave your home. The same applies if you live in an area where severe flooding is expected, such as in a hurricane zone, or when enough rain is forecast to make flash floods a distinct possibility. "Mr. Miyagi gave Daniel some excellent advice [in the Karate Kid film series]: The best defense is not to be there," says Meeler.

If you live in an area where fires or floods are potentially in the cards, it's a good idea to plan out where you can move your vehicle well ahead of time, so you're not scrambling at the last minute. Sometimes it can be as simple as traveling to a hotel that's well away from the threat, and parking your classic in the hotel's lot. In an urban environment, you might be able to secure above-ground parking that rises above the waterline. Some insurers will cover expenses related to this kind of temporary move, while others even provide designated, storm-rated parking lots designed to protect vehicles from the worst weather. It's much cheaper for an insurance company to cover a few nights on the road than it is for them to pay out for a classic that's been declared a total loss. Steering a mobile asset out of harm's way is win-win for both parties.

Don't Forget the Paperwork

Your classic isn't the only thing you should consider in a worst-case scenario. Having your insurance policy easily accessible after a storm, fire, or flood has passed through your area will make your life much, much easier should you need to make a claim. The title and any other documentation associated with your vehicle also deserve the same level of protection.

“I would recommend a fireproof safe, kept on the second story of a home, or somewhere else that’s safe from flood or fire,” says Meeler. “We can work around [missing ownership documents], but it’s a much longer process.” When dealing with the worst-case scenario, the one thing you don’t want to be burdened with is fighting through layers of bureaucracy to secure replacement ownership paperwork. If you’re in the middle of a project and haven’t titled your car yet, you might want to rethink that decision.

“You’d be surprised by how many people will buy a car, but because they plan on restoring it and don’t want to register it yet and pay taxes and everything else, they have no paperwork,” says Meeler. “And so you have a situation where a customer in Florida has a valuable restoration project sitting there, but it’s still titled to a different person in New Jersey. It’s much harder to get that sorted out.”

No one ever wants to think about the day they have to call their insurance company and start the claims process on an irreplaceable car that’s been near and dear to their heart. Taking a serious look at the weather and climate risks in your area, shoring up your current storage situation, and establishing a clear plan in advance for escaping the kind of dangers that can’t be overcome by any other means gives you a fighting chance to keep your classic vehicle—and your family—as protected as possible.



MIDWEST ANTIQUE AUTO CLUB

AN INDEPENDENT GROUP OF COLLECTIBLE VEHICLE ENTHUSIASTS