



Wheel Tracks



This '50 Ford Custom Convertible, fondly named "Duke of Earl," is owned by Barry and Suzy Solomon, new VAE members from Westford, Vermont, and San Antonio, Texas. Beginning on page 6, you will read how Barry's love of automobiles began when he was 15 years old. This car is almost identical to the one he purchased in 1956, although this one is much nicer. Notice the lack of hood ornament or other chrome on the hood. It is called being "nosed." Also notice the rear wheels without the fender skirts.

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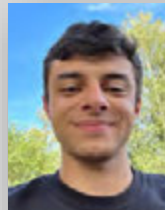
Wheel Tracks Printer—Catamount
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Vermont Automobile
Enthusiasts Website...

vtauto.org



FROM OUR PRESIDENT,
JASON WARREN



Hello,

It seems this winter is nothing if not relentless. But, I am glad that members were able to brave the storm and come to Rothspeed's for a tour at the February Meeting! It was a lot of fun, not only learning about the way they make cars, but the hours of meticulous detail and knowledge that is needed. Thanks to Scott and his crew for taking time out of their Saturday and also for providing us with some great snacks!

Please try your best to come out and support the meetings that your fellow club members help to coordinate and put on! It is important to not only them, but to those who are hosting our club.

Finally, as each month gets us closer to the Car Show, I encourage you to reach out and see where you can help! We have made a lot of changes for this year's show and will need all hands on deck.

I appreciate all that you do!

Jason

Rothspeed
Milton, Vermont



This & That from Gary Fiske

I hope you received the email that I recently asked John Lavalley to send to all of you. Unfortunately, this is the first time that you who do not have an email address are getting the information.

You all received the sad news of the passing of our VAE friend, Don Lovejoy. Don had chosen his nephew, Jeff, to be his estate executor and one of Jeff's jobs is to find new homes for Don's two vehicles: a 1957 Chevy and a 1964 Corvair. Jeff had decided to go the route of an online auction company and decided to put the Corvair up for auction first, with no reserve. If all went well, he would put the '57 up next. He had a few companies to choose from and made the decision to go with one called Bringatrailer.com. Jeff told me he liked the way the company operated, the fact the auction was a short 7 days (poop or get off the pot), and the capped 5% buyer's fee. Reading the company's website, Jeff paid \$99 for the listing and an additional \$330 for the "Plus Photo" option.



I am not an auction person; they seem like gambling to me, I'd rather simply find what I want and buy it. I also know they are a very good thing in many ways, like clearing an estate, and that is why I am writing this article. Like a few other VAEers, I am getting up there, age-wise, and it might happen that someone will have to find homes for the "few" things I have accumulated over the years. So I am paying attention to how Jeff's auction decision shakes out. Maybe it will be of interest to you also. The Corvair auction will be over by the time you read this, but maybe he will have the '57 listed for you to watch. I will try to keep you informed also.



In the meantime, enjoy your "things" and keep going forward, all-ahead-full, as we say in the Navy.

Please scan this QR Code for New Membership and Membership Renewal.

Please scan this QR Code to donate to the Vermont Automobile Enthusiasts.



About Us

We at Vermont Automobile Enthusiasts preserve the history and the vehicles of our automotive past. Since our beginning in 1953, our central mission has been to educate, and to enjoy our old vehicles and our wonderful membership.

We are a 501c3 not-for-profit Inc. Membership is \$35 per year or \$60 for 2 years. Become a member by clicking on "Join VAE" on our website, fill out the form and mail it with \$5 to our secretary. Or, pay online by clicking on "Renew Membership."

Wheel Track's monthly deadline to the editors is the 5th of each month.

Contact us at...
vaeinfo@gmail.com

Our website
is...vtauto.org

Next up.....

2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS



And always open to all members & guests!

APRIL 11: FORT ETHAN ALLEN MUSEUM & DRIVING TOUR. Saturday. Meet at 10:30 at the museum located in the pump house, 11 Marcy Drive, Colchester, VT, near the stone water tower. The museum will be open. After visiting the museum, take a self-guided drive around the historic fort. At 1 PM we will meet for lunch at the Burger Bar 831-825 VT Route 15, just a short drive west of the fort. Please call Coordinators Charlie or Marion @ 802-878-2536 or 802-734-4010 to **RSVP by 4/7** so we can give the Burger Bar a head count.

MAY 23: GARAGE TOURS at 78 Tree Hill Rd. and 264 Golf Course Rd. in Williston, VT. Coordinators: Bill Erskine & Steve Hornbrook. More info, including start time and where, will be in the April issue of WT.

****NEW** MAY 23: SPRING RALLY 2026.** Saturday, 8:30 AM SHARP! Middlebury, VT. Please see back cover for details. Coordinator: Dave Stone. 802-598-2842.

MAY – OCTOBER: CAR MEET-UP 2nd Tuesday of each month at Island Ice Cream, 21 Commerce St., Williston, VT, at 6 PM. Coordinator: Charlie Thompson

JUNE 27: JEFFERSONVILLE CAR SHOW. Saturday, 9 AM-2 PM. Cambridge Elementary School soccer fields, 1886 School Street, Jeffersonville, VT. Coordinator: Jason Warren—802-477-2430.

JUNE 27: NOT QUITE INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE—WATERBURY, Waterbury, VT. Saturday, 3 PM. Coordinator: Don Pierce - 802-229-8606

****NEW** JULY 17-18: BOB BAHRE CAR COLLECTION,** Paris Hill, Maine. ****SAVE THE DATES**** Friday-Saturday overnight tour. Founder's Day Celebration on Saturday from 9 AM—5 PM. Friday overnight in Oxford, ME. Please see page 9 for more info. Coordinator: Eric Osgood

JULY 31 - AUGUST 2: Friday—Sunday. **42nd GRANBY INTERNATIONAL CAR SHOW,** Daniel Johnson Park, 230 rue Drummond, Granby, QC, Canada. For more info, go to www.vadg.ca

AUGUST 7-9: THE 69th VERMONT ANTIQUE AND CLASSIC CAR MEET. August 7, 8 & 9, 2026. Farr Field, 1901 US Route 2, Waterbury, VT. Coordinator: Bob Chase ****DESPERATELY NEED VOLUNTEERS****

SEPTEMBER: COLCHESTER LIBRARY CAR MEET, 898 Main St., Colchester, VT. Come on out and show your cars! Date TBA. Coordinator: Charlie Thompson

OCTOBER: GYPSON TOUR. Saturday, 10 AM. Date TBA. Coordinator: Ed Hilbert

NOVEMBER: ANNUAL MEETING. Coordinator: Judy Boardman

DECEMBER: HOLIDAY PARTY. Coordinators: Charlie & Marion Thompson

ONGOING MONTHLY MEETINGS

VAE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS: April 16, July 16, October 15, 2026, at 6 PM. Fairfax Town Offices, 12 Buck Hollow Road, Fairfax, VT. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend!

EDUCATION & CHARITABLE OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETINGS: Generally the 3rd Saturday of each month in Williston, VT, at 10 AM, 338 Commerce Street. Contact Chairman Ed Hilbert for meeting confirmation at 802-453-3743.

VERMONT ANTIQUE & CLASSIC CAR MEET COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 PM, Revitalizing Waterbury, 46 So. Main Street, Waterbury, VT. Chairman: Bob Chase.

CARS & COFFEE - MAY-OCTOBER

CARS & COFFEE VERMONT: Third Saturday of each month at University Mall, Dorset Street, So. Burlington, VT. 7 AM—9 AM. <http://carscoffeevermont.com>. Coordinator: John Malinowski. 802-662-1026.

CARS & COFFEE MIDDLEBURY: First Saturday of each month at A&W, Route 7, Middlebury, VT. 8 AM-10 AM. Coordinator: Dave Stone. 802-598-2842.

WAITSFIELD CARS & COFFEE: First Sunday of each month at Mad River Exchange, 6163 Route 100, Waitsfield, VT. 9 AM—12 PM. Coordinator: John Lynch. 802-496-5251.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO GREEN?

Are you repeatedly reading *Wheel Tracks* online with the hard copy getting thrown away?

Due to the ever-increasing costs of printing & mailing, you can request to have your hard copy stopped and read it online through the VAE website. Bonus: It means you get your *Wheel Tracks* earlier, before snail mail comes out. Plus, it saves the club money so as to continue its mission of providing scholarships and the Golden Wrench Awards to worthy high schoolers.

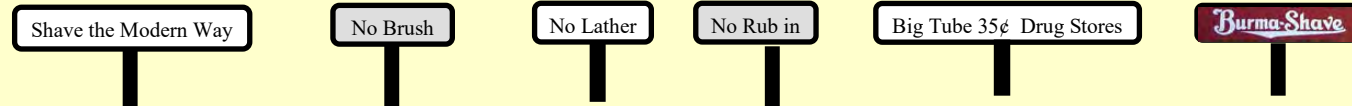
If interested, please send an email to Anne Pierce at fortherecordinvermont@gmail.com to request the stop of your snail mailed *Wheel Tracks*. You'll be doing good things all around!

Burma-Shave the Jingles

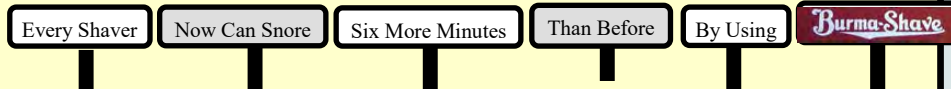
By Charlie Thompson



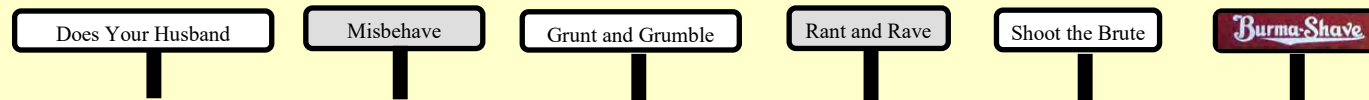
The wording on those first sets of signs hand made by the Odell brothers in 1926 was not recorded and appears to be lost to history. They were most likely variations of those first recorded in 1927, which were sort of regular advertising:



The first rhyming jingle appeared in 1929:

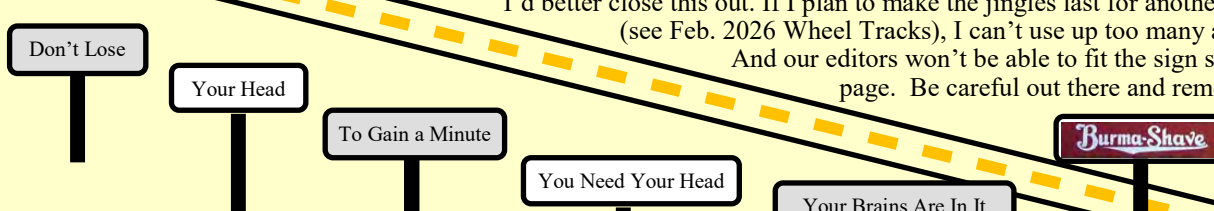


The jingles generally fit into several themes: boy-girl relationships, traffic safety, modern shaving methods, saving time or money, and "accept no substitutes." An early boy-girl jingle from 1930 read:

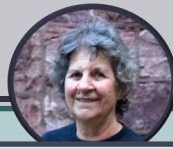


Traffic safety jingles generated appreciation letters from police and other officials, giving Burma Vita Company the reputation of being public service minded. Jingles were changed annually or biannually and swapped around different parts of the country. New jingles were created each year in addition to reusing jingles in different locations. When the creative efforts of the Burma Vita staff and board of directors began to fade, the company announced in newspapers and radio ads a contest for the public, offering a \$100 prize for any jingle they used. Suggestions poured in by the thousands. Semi-retired Clifford, the senior Odell, would take the entries to their summer camp and spend a week or so sorting out the potentially usable ones. Copies were made for the board of directors, and each member would select his favorites. Then at board meetings, campaigning and negotiations would take place to select the new crop. These were much more fun than typical directors' meetings.

I'd better close this out. If I plan to make the jingles last for another 36.5 years (see Feb. 2026 *Wheel Tracks*), I can't use up too many at one time. And our editors won't be able to fit the sign sets onto the page. Be careful out there and remember:



More in the next *Wheel Tracks*.



"The Softer Side"

A Column Shared by Nancy Olney (Left), Judy Boardman (Center) & Anne Pierce (Right)

.....from Anne

JUST DON'T DROP IT

I've always had a love affair.....with glass: blown glass, fused glass, stained glass, mosaic glass, crystal.... If it's glass and it sparkles, I'm all in. A few years ago, Don and I were traveling in western New York, and we stopped at the Corning Museum of Glass in Rochester, NY. Talk about glass! It is a museum where you can explore 3,500 years of glass and glassmaking, from ancient cultures to contemporary art. I thought I had died and gone to heaven. We even did a workshop of blowing glass, Don making a hanging ornament and I made a glass flower with a curlicue stem! If you ever get the chance, check out this awesome museum. I know you'll be duly impressed.



Mosaic on slate



Fused

That being said, it brings me to today. I'm finally indulging my passion of glass and have joined not one but two glass arts clubs at the rec center in our winter home of Green Valley, AZ. And if you know me, when I start a new hobby, I join in hook, line, and sinker.

The first club is what's called the Lapidary Club (which technically means the art of shaping stone, minerals, or gemstones into decorative items like jewelry) which also includes the fusing of COE 96 and/or Dichroic glass. Dichroic glass is created by vacuum-depositing multiple layers of metal oxides on glass to make it appear to change color based on lighting conditions and viewing angle. It is widely used in making pendants, earrings, etc. The COE 96 glass is a type of kiln-glass with a Coefficient of Expansion of 96, meaning it expands and contracts at a specific rate when heated and cooled. It too is highly popular for fusing, jewelry, and stained glass because it is stable, versatile and available in many colors.

Now I'm not making any jewelry because if it's not diamonds, I'm not wearing it! So what to do? Well, I am in the midst of making 40 3X3 inch squares of fused glass, all different colors, all different designs on them from birds to flowers to cactus, and even abstract squares. They're fired in the kiln on what's called dimensional fire, meaning the glass won't all melt into each other but remain on top of each other to create dimension. When finished, sometime next winter, they will frame a mirror that I picked up at a garage sale. I'm having a ball every time I get to play with glass.



Fused

The other club I joined has 3 facets: stained glass (much like you'd see in a church window), mosaic glass (cutting small pieces of glass and fitting them together almost like a puzzle but with space between each piece to be able to grout in between; hence, the mosaic look); and again, fused glass (taking much larger pieces of glass and fusing them together to make bowls or ornaments, wind chimes, etc. You name it, you can probably make it in glass. I did two mosaics in the intro class, one of a cactus, the other of a blue bird, both on slate from Arizona.

So that's what I've been doing this winter. How about you?

WIN

A SPECIAL GIFT COULD BE YOURS!
Find the VAE logo hidden in one of the pages.



Actual size →

Mail to: *Wheel Tracks*, 203 Colchester Pond Rd., Colchester, VT 05446 or Text to 802-793-9080 or Email to: fortherecordinvermont@gmail.com. Please include your name, mailing address, AND the page # with location on the page where you found the logo. And please tell us what you like/don't like about WT. We welcome your feedback! One winner will be drawn monthly. One entry per household per month. Must be received by the end of the month. February's winner was **Peter James** of So. Deerfield, MA, who found the logo on page 7 in the leaves. March's winner was **Cheyenne Martindale** of Fairlee, VT, who found the logo on page 8 in the rear window of the 1915 Cadillac.



By Barry Solomon

As a teenager in the '50s, my bedroom walls were not adorned with pictures of Marilyn Monroe or other semi-clad beauties but with pictures of classic cars and custom cars, both British and American. The monthly arrival of my copy of the subscription to *Sports Cars Illustrated*, costing an exorbitant 35¢ an issue, \$4 a year (ha-ha), was met with an excited and palpitating heart. I was obsessed. The thought of owning one of those sleek and cool MGs, TR3s, Austin-Healeys, etc., made my heart race even faster. Jaguars, Porsches, Ferraris, and that ilk were, of course, out of the question. Furthermore, my beloved, only-Buick-driving dad, would not allow me to get any type of sports car - "There's not enough metal around you to be safe, son!" So, I was relegated to only be able to get a larger American car.

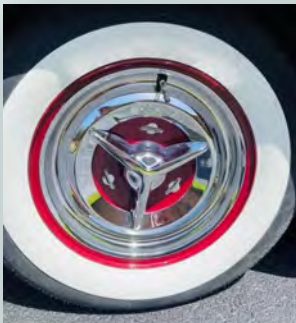


At that time, and for the previous two years, I worked as much as possible at Jim Kinsey's Sunoco station in Baltimore, just down the street from our house. Jim paid me 75¢ an hour for pumping gas and allowed me to keep any tips. He also paid me \$1 to wash a car. In the middle of winter, with sub-freezing temperatures, I would put an electric heating coil in a bucket of ice-cold water, warm it up, and then wash a car, hosing it off and drying it with towels before the water could refreeze. In addition to the dollar that he paid me, I would often get several dollars in tips from most customers. We did have a few hotsy-totsy wealthy customers who would also want me to pick up and deliver their cars back to them, which I did by using Jim's car for the shuttle. One much older lady, Mrs. Korvath, actually tried to pull a Mrs. Robinson on me, but I wouldn't have known what to do at all, so I accepted her huge \$5 tip and ran out of her house as fast as possible. Some days I could earn from \$14 to \$20, a huge sum at that time for this little pisherkeh.

Jim Kinsey was a character... married, short, bald, usually smelled from liquor, and a ball of fire. One day, I walked over to him while he was changing a flat tire and asked him, as only the innocence of a 14-year-old could, "Hey, Mr. Kinsey! What're ya' doin'? Changin' a tire?" Without skipping a beat, he said, "No, Barry, I'm taking a flying ***** to the moon!" I was embarrassed at the time, but that is funny as hell now, and I still laugh about it to this day, as well as sometimes say it in jest myself. During that year, I stashed away a couple of hundred dollars and also decided that I didn't want to continue to be a fat kid anymore. So I put myself on a strict diet, often sated my hunger pangs by sticking the garden hose in my mouth and drinking copious amounts of water, and worked my butt off (literally). I became thin. My goal was to look like the Everly Brothers, those ultra-skinny, gorgeous, Tennesseans who were huge stars at the time, singing such blockbusters as *Wake Up Little Susie*, *Bye, Bye Love*, *Dream*, etc. It was my dream (pun intended) to be like them. So one day I got out my hidden envelope of cash and went to a downtown fashionable men's clothing store and bought a couple pair of nice pants, finally not from the "husky department," and a nice sports jacket. While not really coming close to looking like an Everly Brother, I did look far better than I had the previous year.

Shortly afterward, now being fifteen-and-a-half, I bought a beat-up, used 1951 Ford convertible and continued to work in the gas station for as many hours as Mr. Kinsey would give me, as well as cutting lawns and shoveling snow off neighbors' driveways and walkways when it snowed. Every dollar I made I put into that car, adding a dual exhaust manifold with, of course, loud dual Glass Pack mufflers, rear fender skirts, continental kit on the rear for the spare tire, blue-dot rear taillight lenses to give a purplish glow when the brakes were applied, 1956 Oldsmobile spinner hubcaps, fuzzy dice (of course), and a floating 1954 Pontiac grille, had it nosed and decked (removing all the chrome and ornaments and making the hood and trunk totally smooth), and had it painted with seven coats of metallic maroon lacquer. Chocolate-colored rolled-and-pleated Naugahyde upholstery beautifully finished off the interior. Then, I hand-painted pinstripes all around the metal dashboard. Even though I didn't know what the hell I was doing, I removed the two-cylinder heads from that flathead Ford V-8, had them milled down at a machine shop to increase the compression a bit, and painted the outside of them bright red. I first put them on without new gaskets and quickly learned that was not a good idea as the cylinder heads kept leaking air and fuel. So after cursing a bit, I removed the heads, bought a set of new head gaskets, replaced the heads, and installed very shiny chrome bolts to secure them. They looked great. Man, was I cool or what?

For hubcaps, I had always loved the look of the '56 Oldsmobile Rocket 88 spinner hubcaps. Those chrome beauties had some images of the planets with rings - hence, the name "Rocket 88" - raised over a stippled background under the three-pronged spinners. I got them from a guy named Bobby who worked at the gas station with me. He was a few years older and a real hot-rodder with a souped-up '52 Ford that could lay rubber in all three gears. I traded him my two Roy Rogers Daisy BB guns for a pair of those hubcaps (which he probably had stolen). Then I hand-painted the background with the same metallic maroon paint to match the car itself. In all truth, if I may say so myself, it was a neat work of art. A few days after driving the car to my new high school, some rotten, thieving @#%*! stole my hubcaps despite their having locks on them. So I rationalized that it was okay for me to get another pair the same way, which I did. Further rationalization carried my actions to be justified because it was okay to steal hubcaps from "other guys who steal hubcaps." Seeing Oldsmobile spinners on any car other than Oldsmobiles in those days probably meant that they had been stolen. Certainly, to this day, I am ashamed of those actions, but at the time, as an immature 15-year-old, there was no internet or Mr. Bezos from whom to get another pair delivered to my house within two days.



Continued on next page..

My First Car, by Barry Solomon, continued:

Almost every available dollar that I earned at the gas station was spent on that car over the next few years. Making out with my girlfriend with the top down on a warm summer night, while listening to The Platters or The Fleetwoods or Johnny Mathis, still elicits mind-boggling memories!

Fast forward a few years - now in college. While studying for final exams at the end of my freshman year at the University of Maryland, I really bore down and put all my time and energies into preparing for them. I didn't need a car because I never went anywhere other than to walk to the campus library or to the college dining hall. One day my girlfriend, Ellen (later to become my wife), asked me if she could have and use my car, the '51 Ford convertible, during those two weeks. She was in her senior year of high school and did not have a car of her own. I said, "Sure, but just promise me that you won't go joy-riding with your girlfriends with the top down, and just use it to go to school and back." She said, "Okay, I promise." Plus, she was very good at driving a stick shift and handled the "three-on-the-tree" very well. I felt good thinking about her being able to use the car and showing it off.

The day that I finished finals, both my parents and Ellen drove from Baltimore to College Park, MD, to pick me up. I was so relieved that finals were over and felt like I had done well on them, which I did. We went out to dinner at Duke Ziebert's, a really great and popular restaurant in Washington, DC, a place to easily see a lot of high-powered congressmen and, sometimes, even the President of the United States himself. We had a great dinner and drove home to Baltimore late that night. The next day I intended to get my car back, but at breakfast, my Dad told me that while I was studying for finals, his Buick needed to go into the shop for some work so he had taken my Ford from Ellen and used it for a few days. He then seemed a bit embarrassed to tell me that while he had it, he had to swerve to avoid an oncoming truck and had rammed my car into a telephone pole and totaled it. He was not hurt; that was all that mattered to me. While I was terribly disappointed, I could never be angry or resentful of my Dad for any reason in the world, the least of which would be for damaging my car. In the meantime, I could use his pink-and-white 1956 Buick Roadmaster almost anytime I needed it. He said that we would go looking for another car for me in the next week or two.

A few days later, June 10th, 1959, was my 18th birthday. Dad walked into my bedroom to wake me up and said, "Get dressed and come with me. I want to show you something." I asked what it was, but he just said, "Don't worry, I'll tell you later." We drove to South Baltimore to H&H Motors, a used car lot owned by friends of my father. Perched on the corner display platform, raised about 10 feet in the air, was a shiny 1958 black Austin-Healey 100-6 roadster convertible, white top and chrome wire wheels. Dad said, "See anything you like?" I almost fainted. I lost my breath and started shaking. Since the first day of my pubescence, I yearned for a sports car, but my parents always said that those cars were too dangerous and much too expensive, so I had pretty much given up the pursuit or even trying to pray for one. Now, here in front of me was one of the most iconic, cool, gorgeous, hot, desirable pieces of rolling metal art on the face of this earth. I said, "Dad, are you kidding me? Please say you're not kidding!" He said, "No, if you like it, it's yours. Happy birthday, son." As always, he had followed his mandate of: "You can never spoil a good child." I think that he paid Mr. Horowitz about \$2,000 cash for the car (a fortune for us at that time) and followed me home. I spent the next week, day and night, polishing it with Simonize car wax every minute that I was not driving it. Even as I write this, I can still feel the joy and adrenaline of getting that car. Only in my dreams had I ever gotten to drive or own one of those beauties. Was that the best birthday present on the face of this Earth or what!? I was in Heaven.

Many years later, probably about ten or fifteen, Dad confessed to me that he really did not wreck my Ford. It was Ellen who did it. She had, indeed, ridden around gallivanting with the top down with her girlfriends, listening to loud rock 'n' roll music, got distracted, and smashed up my Ford. But my parents loved her, so Dad took the rap for her. Hell, I couldn't even be mad at her. After all, her crash got me the car of my dreams. WOW!

Now, almost two-thirds of a century later, after decades of humongous efforts and toils, I have a few really old beauties to gawk over every day. I duplicated that '51 Ford convertible (actually now a '50) with those Olds Fiesta Spinners and '54 Pontiac floating grille. Oh, what memories!



Photos of Barry's 1950 Ford Custom Convertible

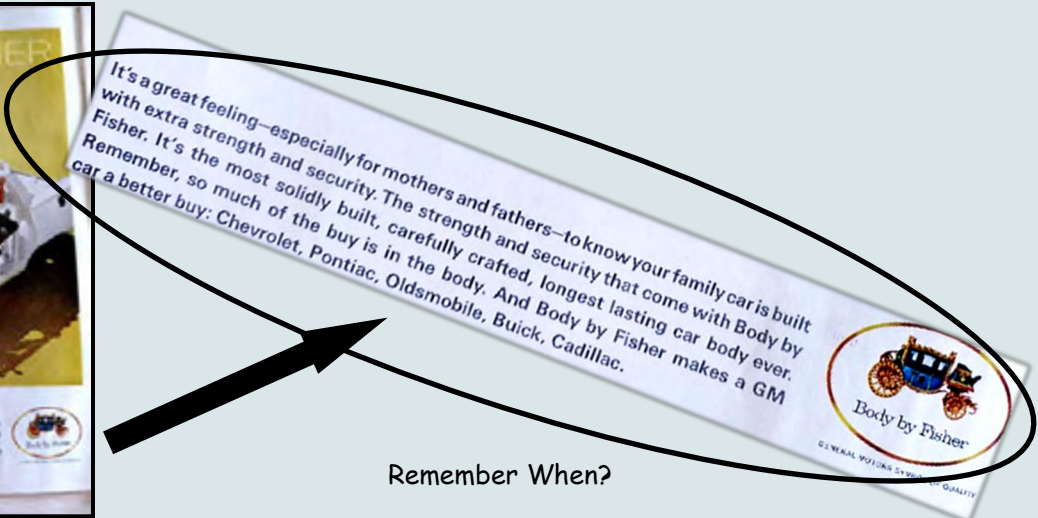


Barry Solomon is a VAE member and lives in Westford, VT, and San Antonio, TX.

"Remember When?" with Chris Barbieri



This Body by Fisher 4-color ad appeared on the inner front cover of a 1960s Life magazine. A bunch of kids are romping around the "bones" of a General Motors body, someday to be one of GM's five brands at the time. The ad is what's referred to as a "grabber" as it's likely to "grab" your attention, and I think this one does. Every kid appears to be enjoying doing something. Also interesting at the time is the Body by Fisher logo noted at the bottom right side of the ad.



Remember When?



William Mraz
1936-2026

Long-time VAE member Bill Mraz of Middlebury passed away on Feb. 25, 2026. He will be remembered in car circles by the first car he ever owned, a 1933 Dodge Coupe. After restoring it, he could be seen driving the "'33" in parades and local events, the highlight of which was the annual car show in Waterbury. He was 89.

Donations in his memory may be made to the VAE scholarship fund.

For the complete obituary, please go to:
<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/life-lines/obituaries/obituary-william-bill-arthur-mraz-1936-2026/>

ANNOUNCEMENT!

A new video has been added to the VAE website. You should check it out. We all know Fred Gonet of Proctorsville, VT, has been restoring cars for many years. In fact, he is considered one of the best in the eastern USA. Something many of us do not know is that Fred's restorations include many categories, and this announcement is about his multi-year project on a circa 1904 Cretors Model D steam-powered popcorn wagon. A video of the "before" wagon has been added to our website along with a video to the finished engine. In the coming months, a video of the completed wagon will also be added.

The wagon came to Fred two years ago mounted on a 1914 Ford Model T. His first task was to remove the popcorn wagon from the vehicle and restore the Model T. Having finished the vehicle, he began work on the wagon and can now see the finish line. An amazing number of 250 parts went to Anthony Cook's Classic Metal Restoration in Shaftsbury, VT, for repairs and nickeling. Anthony is one more Vermonter with a very special restoration knack. As far as Fred knows, there is one other correct Cretors steam wagon that's in Ohio, and here we have one in Vermont! Wouldn't it be amazing if the finished wagon could be displayed at our August Car Meet in Waterbury?

Gary Fiske



Hi Anne,

Another wonderful issue of Wheel Tracks. Thank you.



The poem by Don Perdue, referring to his days in Salzburg, Austria, in 1964.... "Brilliant poem, Don." Brought back memories of our living in Germany from 1967-1971. We were stationed in the Bavarian Alps but North of Wuerzburg, a Seventh Army Training facility called Wildflecken. There's no Flecker like Wildflecken!

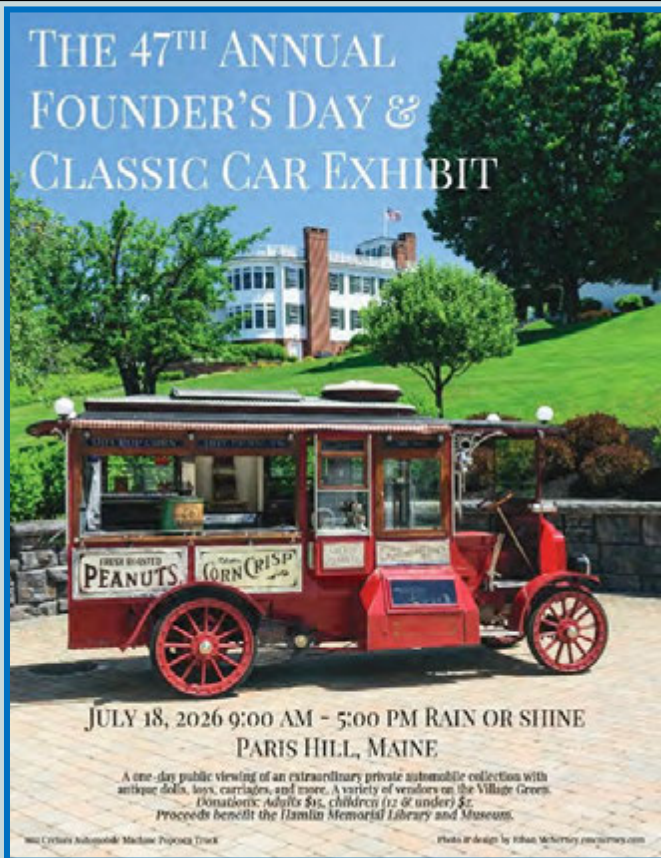
All troops in West Germany in those days came to our post at least once a year for training. Some of you folks were probably there. So we are familiar with driving the Autobahn and coming upon huge fog banks in the valleys, many times causing 20-to-70 car pileups. No, we were never involved but did drive through some of those times there.

I also am writing about the logo hidden on page 7 in a photo provided in the Trivia from Don Tenerowicz. The third photo down shows what appears to be an old Porsche race car with the number "77" painted on the door. That, too, brought back memories of 1970s-80s when Sandy and I and our family used to be avid fans of the racing at Catamount Race Track, a third-of-a-mile oval up in Milton. #77 was the car of Tom Tiller, the "Kentucky Colonel," as he was referred to. Yellow Dodge cars with the black 77 on roof, doors, etc., late model racing. I will write an article about those days. Fun times.

Please, no prize for identifying the logo. I just do that for fun! And thank you for that!

Buzz Stone

Buzz Stone is still a snowbird in Vero Beach, FL.



Anyone interested in attending the Founder's Day & Classic Car Exhibit in Paris Hill, Maine, and wanting to spend Friday night, July 17th, in Oxford, Maine, please email me for a confirmation # at the hotel. I have 10 rooms booked at \$285 each.

Eric.osgood@outlook.com

This is a very nice collection and well worth the trip over for their once-a-year open house. If you bring a vintage car, it gets preferential parking up near the grounds.

Here's a link to Bob Bahre's collection for a preview:

<https://themainemonitor.org/for-bob-bahre-collecting-classic-cars-never-got-old/>

And looking forward to hearing from VAE'rs who'd like to attend this event.

Eric Osgood



Wheel Tracks Academy

By "Professor" Wendell Noble



STUPID ENGINEERING

I trust that many of us are old enough to remember who Rube Goldberg was. He was, among other things, an engineer and a cartoonist. He is best known for his humorous cartoons depicting complicated mechanisms to perform simple tasks. His designs were fictitious, but I've encountered some real-life examples that have gotten into production and perplex me to this day. I'd like to start a museum of these and more examples of stupid engineering in honor of Rube. Some ideas are stupider than others. I don't know of any units of stupidity so I will propose the "duh." I think Homer Simpson may already have a copyright on "D'oh." Kind of stupid rates one duh, really stupid gets two, and incredibly stupid gets three.

One exhibit in my virtual museum is the Briggs & Stratton engine in my now discarded lawn mower. For the convenience of the user, it has an electric starter, just like every modern automobile. It takes some effort to overcome the compression of an engine to start it. The obvious approach would be to use a starter motor large enough to do this. A less obvious choice would be to provide some mechanism to relieve some of the compression while cranking.

In my chainsaw there is a simple push-button poppet valve that closes itself when the engine fires. Briggs & Stratton came up with a way more complicated mechanism to do this. It consists of some sort of a centrifugal weight device on the camshaft that holds the exhaust valve open until the rotation rate is high enough that the weights pull a sliding collar on the camshaft allowing the valves to operate normally. Those extra moving parts eventually move too far as the weights fly off and end up in the crankcase rendering the engine inoperable. When I took mine in for repair, the guy was able to easily show me the problem because he had three more that he was working on with the same problem. He allowed as how it was a pretty stupid design. Probably that gets two duhs.

Another exhibit is what I encountered with my Model A Ford valves. With most cars of that vintage, a valve job is something commonly required and simple. With the cylinder head off, remove the valve keepers, pull the valves out, grind the valves, and lap the seats. Then reinstall the valves and turn the adjuster nuts on the lifters to reset the gap to compensate for the material lost in grinding and lapping.

On the Ford, it's not quite that simple. The valves can't be simply pulled out because they have a mushroom shape at the bottom of the stem. A special tool is required to remove the valve guides before the valve can be removed. Once the grinding and lapping are done, adjusting the valve gaps requires a trial-and-error procedure of filing to shorten the valve stems since the lifters are not adjustable. If a valve stem ends up too short due to over-filing, replace it with a new one and start over. This procedure turns what could otherwise be a four-hour job into a one-week job. It's hard to imagine that a group of competent engineers sat around a table and agreed, "Yeah! That's a good idea. Let's run with it." I think I'd assign that entire kludge two duhs twice.

Well, those are my submissions to "The Rube Goldberg Memorial Museum of Stupid Engineering." There will certainly be more. I'll bet you have some too. I'll be waiting to hear from you.

ENGINEERING.



ENGINE EARRING.



Wheel Tracks Classifieds



Bumper Sticker of the Month...

I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.



FOR SALE... Body and interior parts for 1936/5 Packard Model 120. Also front end parts, two complete rear axles, and other mechanical items. Negotiable, cheap, buy it all or in pieces. Seat springs, front and rear, over a dozen, prefer to sell as a lot. \$20. (Parts mentioned are for a '36 Packard.) Multiple small items for your flea market, sorted and listed, will sell as a lot at a cheap negotiated price. Roy Martin, 802-862-6374, roymart@comcast.net.

FOR SALE...Ford 1948 Model 4, built July 3, 1948, no rack or radiator, 6 original tires, 2-speed rear end, 4-speed transmission, V8 spins over. Usable cab, \$800 firm. Cash, pick up. Carb, starter, generator (for above vehicle)—all for \$100. Call Ellie, 802-425-3529, Ellieb@gmavt.net

FOR SALE...Jim Beam Collector Automobiles
1 - 1929 Ford Phaeton in green porcelain, \$50 o.b.o.
2 - 1932 Duesenberg "J" in light blue, \$65 o.b.o.
These are in good shape and there are others. The Duesenberg has a small brochure with it. In Essex Jct, VT. Please email lieslleslie@comcast.net.



FOR SALE...1941 Packard 160 Touring car. Unrestored. 88,354 original miles. Hasn't left Vermont. Classic black. **block needs repair or replacement** Good winter project. \$25K.



Paul & Christina McCaffrey. 802 318-6259 or 802 318-2636

FOR SALE...1927 Buick parts – bumpers, fenders, wooden spoke wheels, some door parts, engine parts, transmissions, spare tire racks, radiators, radiator shells and other miscellaneous parts. Prices are negotiable. Greg Sabens 802-272-3369 or 802-479-5220.

FOR SALE...1994 Mercedes E320, 4 door, 6-cylinder gas, 101,000 miles, minor spots of surface rust, very clean interior, asking \$3000.



Call Charlie, 802-878-2536

Wanted

Vintage Vespa or Lambretta

With Sidecar
contact
Allyson
ally@sover.net



FOR SALE...Miata sales brochures for Mazda MX-5, 1990-2021, both U.S. and foreign. Prices typically in \$5 to \$10 range. Send e-mail or call with your interests, and I'll respond with availability and price.

John Emerson
jemerson@middlebury.edu
802-388-7826

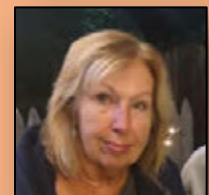


The Roadside Diner



LEMON DESSERT

1 and 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
1/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup butter, melted
6 ounces frozen lemonade, thawed
7 ounces marshmallow fluff
1 cup heavy cream, whipped



Nancy Gypson

Mix graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and melted butter. Press into 8" square pan. Blend thawed lemonade and marshmallow fluff together. Then fold in whipped cream. Pour over graham cracker crust and freeze for 3 hours. If desired, sprinkle with additional graham cracker crumbs.

April 2026



Spring Rally 2026

Depart A&W Drive-in - 8:30 Sharp
Rally to Ripton to Hancock to Waitsfield Farmers Market - Arrive 9:45

Treat Yourself to the Best Products from Vermont's Farmers and Local Artisans
Stretch Your Legs - Shop - Eat Well - Soak Up the Sights and Sounds - Live Music!

Depart 11:30 - Rally through Buels Gore to Bristol Town Green - Arrive 12:00
Group Photo on the Bandstand

Saturday May 23 - Rain or Shine

Presented by VAE's Middlebury Cars & Coffee

Half of the Chevy trucks made are still on the road today. The other half made it home.

Attention..... The date printed after your name is when your VAE Membership expires.

FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP...

The following came to us from VAE 1st Vice President Judy Boardman.

Sunday morning on the porch of the Walloomsac Inn, sometime in the 1980s, waiting to go to the Bennington Car Show. Shown are Gael Boardman, Steve Dana, Joe Kaelin.



(The Walloomsac Inn was established in 1771 and has housed several US presidents, Robert Frost, and the above mentioned illustrious gentlemen.)

* * * * *

"LOOK OUT THERE'S A LITTLE CAR BEHIND YOU." Place on windshield of Detroit Monster parked in front of you. Saves you many bumps, dents, scratches. Pad of 200—\$1.98 postpaid. No C.O.D. Austin-Sudfield, Box 337, Short Hills 8, N. J.

This ad could apply to the huge trucks that everyone is driving these days. My everyday car

is a little one. This is from a booklet, *Foreign Car Guide*, May 1960.

Judy

This story about General MacArthur's Packard came to us from Eugene Fodor by way of Don Rayta.

In 1942, General Douglas MacArthur ordered this Packard Clipper Eight sedan with virtually every option, including air conditioning, overdrive, and radio. The \$1,341 base price nearly doubled to \$2,600. The



factory returned his check and delivered the car to his station in Australia as a gift. The car was MacArthur's until 1948, when he gave it to his driver, who had served the general. The car sat forgotten in a barn in Texas for 30 years. MacArthur made arrangements through a Navy friend to ship the car on the aircraft carrier Princeton to San Diego. Then, on a military flatbed, it was shipped to Fort Sam Houston, Texas. It was released to the driver in his home city of Dallas. He made arrangements to have military hardware removed and painted a bright post-war color. However, he had to wait as they were busy. Before he could get it done, he parked the car in his small, dirt-floor garage. He died in his sleep, and it remained there untouched for years. The car still had MacArthur's old army helmet and corn cob pipe.