

SWANKS NEWS

Swanks Car Club

Established 1956

Swanks Newsletter

September-October 2025

Crooked Lane Farm Car Show

Ron Dahley



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Issue Dates: Jan. 25th, March 25th, May 25th, July 25th, September 25th, November 25th

Going to a car show? Bring your camera and send in the photos for the next newsletter.

Got a project or a new car? Take a few photos and submit them to the newsletter.

Got something to sell? Put it into the newsletter—
rondahley@gmail.com



The Decades featuring Swanks member Donnie Nustad entertained the crowds during the 10th annual Crooked Lane Farm Car Show.



Crooked Lane Farm Car Show



The Crooked Lane Farm Car Show held their 10th annual car show at Crooked Lane Farm near Colfax ND. Scott and Kathy Adams have been spearheading this popular show since the beginning and have announced that this was their last year of organizing the show. The show may or may not continue some of the folks would like to continue this car show so time will tell. Crooked Lane Farm is a beautiful spot for a car show with lots of shade trees, they feature live music, there are food trucks and indoor plumbing. A big thank you to Scott and Kathy for their service in providing a great car show for 10 years.



Young Love





History Lesson

Curiously Unusual Wonders



On June 21, 1955, three friends—Sam Gray, David Rutford, and Fred Hallberg—set off on an unusual journey. From Saint Paul, Minnesota, they launched a homemade raft down the Mississippi River. The craft was pieced together with barrels and planks, powered by an unlikely engine: a 1939 Chevrolet they had bought for \$15.

The car already had 172,000 miles on it, but the men found a clever use for it. The rear wheels spun against another set of wheels, which in turn drove a propeller. Even the car's steering wheel was repurposed, serving as the rudder for their raft.

Their adventure wasn't without setbacks. In Saint Louis, they had to pause to grind the Chevy's valves. Near Memphis, a bearing on the propeller shaft burned out, but with the help of tools borrowed from a barge crew, they made the repairs. Food supplies ran low when they discovered a stowaway—a rat—had been eating their rations. Fishing offered no help; they didn't catch a single meal during the entire trip.

Other challenges included swarms of mosquitoes, collisions with driftwood, and the backwash from massive barges. Still, on July 25, 1955, after more than a month on the river, the trio finally reached New Orleans.

or the return trip, they decided to drive the old Chevrolet back to Minnesota. Against the odds, the car made the 49-hour journey—though it burned through five gallons of oil along the way.

A remarkable journey powered by ingenuity, grit, and a very tired Chevy. Photo: Ramsey County Historical Society



Street Machine Summer Nationals

Todd Schultz

The Street Machine Nationals were held July 18-20 at the St. Paul Fairgrounds. Called “the Biggest Muscle Car Party of the Year” features high-performance street machines, hot rods, and street trucks from across the country. The show offers many events to keep one from being bored. Some of the events include show and shine contest, dyno challenge, burnout contest, QA1 autocross and swap meet.

Swanks member Todd Schultz regularly attends this event and shares his experiences with pictures. Thank you, Todd, for bringing us along for the ride!



Feature Car

Ken Nunez's 1957 Ford Custom

Kustomrama

Scalloped, sculpted, and nominated as one of the best, this 1957 Ford built for Ken Nunez of Monterey, California, is a textbook example of late-1950s West Coast custom style.

Restyled by Dick Archibald of Archibald Kustom Autos, Ken's Ford stood apart even in a sea of show cars. But it was the paintwork by Salinas striping ace, Paul Vona, that sent this mild custom into the wild.

Every panel was treated like canvas. Vona's paint scheme, layered in sweeping scallops and panels, made the Ford float like a dream down the boulevard. This was more than flash, it was finesse. The car made such an impression that it was nominated as one of Motor Life Magazine's "Top 28 Customs of the Year" in July of 1958.

Vona, an up-and-coming painter at the time, was just 19 when he painted his own Oldsmobile with a pearlescent purple hue that lit up show floors from Salinas to L.A. His work on the Nunez Ford proved he wasn't just a painter. He was an artist shaping the look of an era.

This photo is more than a beauty shot. It's a preserved piece of Monterey custom culture at its peak.

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!
TO
Swanks Member

Gerald Quam

Sept. 18th



Toppers to add a new car show in 2026

The Swanks newsletter has reported on the Sioux Falls annual car show many times. The show, "Winterfest of Wheels" was held each February. It was the first one we reported on for the new year and it was a really good show. After 10 years the couple who organized the show retired and we did not have a show in 2025.

The Toppers' car club of Fargo/Moorhead/West Fargo have stepped up and will host the show in 2026! The show will take place at the Sioux falls Convention Center; this is a nice facility for a car show and there are many hotel/motels close by. The 2026 show will be held February 13-15. The show would make a wonderful romantic get-a-way, just get a date and take her/him to a car show for the weekend.

Johnny Rocket attends Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals

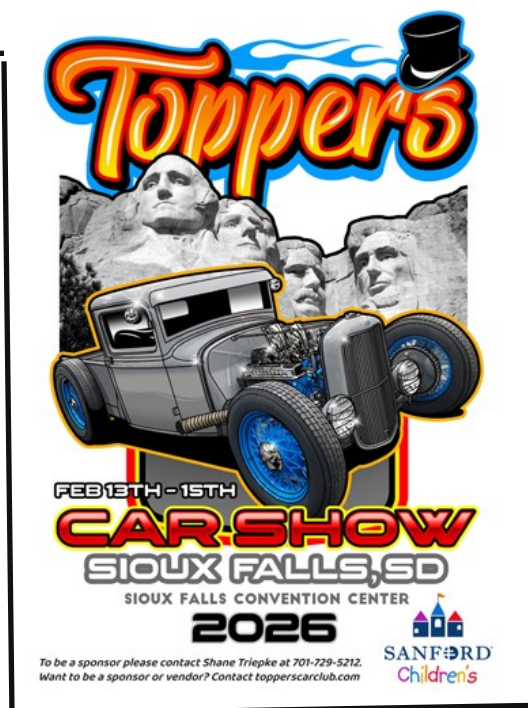
Photos Johnny Nustad



Left: Johnny & Erica Enders
NHRA champion driver



Left: Erica Enders, crew member, and her hauler and race car.





Hey Paula

BY

Paul and Paula

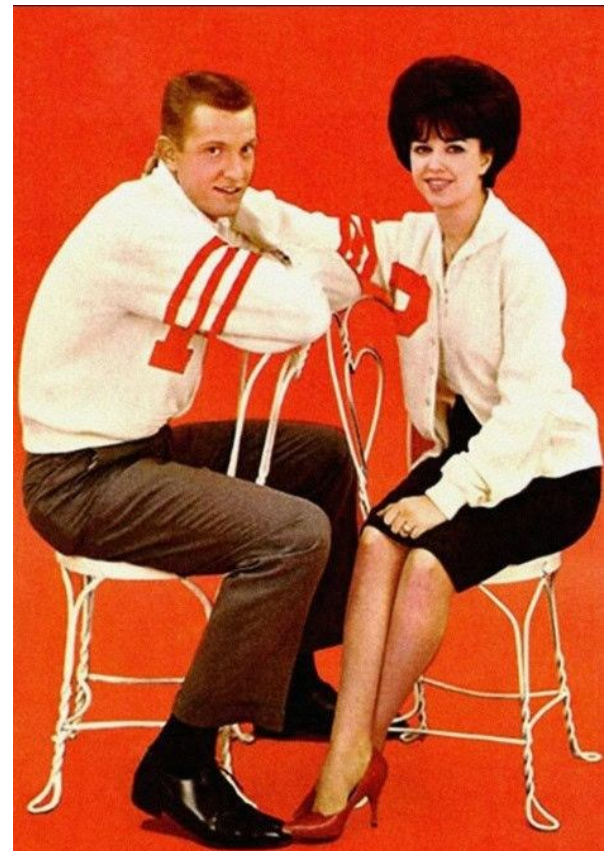
My Oldies Songs



Released in 1963, 'Hey Paula' is a charming duet by the duo Paul & Paula, which became an instant classic. Written by Ray Hildebrand and Jill Jackson, the song captures the sweet, innocent nature of young love and the joy of connection. The playful back-and-forth exchange between the two singers creates an intimate and engaging atmosphere that resonates with listeners. Its catchy melody and heartfelt lyrics contributed to its success, propelling it to the top of the charts, where it reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100. 'Hey Paula' remains a nostalgic favorite, embodying the spirit of early 1960s pop music.



Remember this popular local band?



Breaking News:

A tour bus going to Elvis's Graceland mansion has crashed. No one was injured, but the passengers were all shook up!

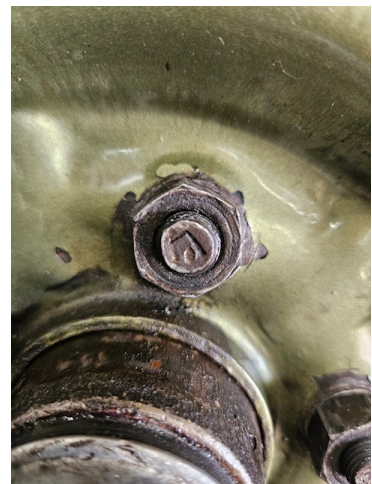
Anoka Nights Classic Saturday Car Shows *Todd Schultz*

The Anoka Classic Car Show is held most Saturday evenings from June through September. The show runs from 4:00 to 8:00pm The show is put on by volunteers and the income from the show is given to local charities. Our own Todd Schultz attends this show every summer, and he shared a few photos.



Lug Nuts *Ron Dahley*

As a 14-year-old kid trying to work on his own car, a 1953 Chrysler two door hardtop with bald tires, it was a learning experience. Old tires that went flat regularly. I got a lot of experience changing flats but one thing I could not remember is the lug nuts. The drivers side were left hand threads and the right side had right hand threads. For the life of me I could not get that through my head, and I was forever tightening those lug nuts to the point that it took two men and a boy to loosen them. If I remember correctly, they were not lug nuts but rather bolts making it a bit more difficult to hold the wheel in place and start the bolt. Chrysler products from the 30's to the 70's had left-hand threads also some Pontiac, Buick and Oldsmobiles had left-hand threads on the driver's side till the mid 60's. This was done to help prevent the lug nuts loosening due to rational forces of the wheel. All modern vehicles have right-hand threads on each side of the car.



Ted Talk with Ted Bryans

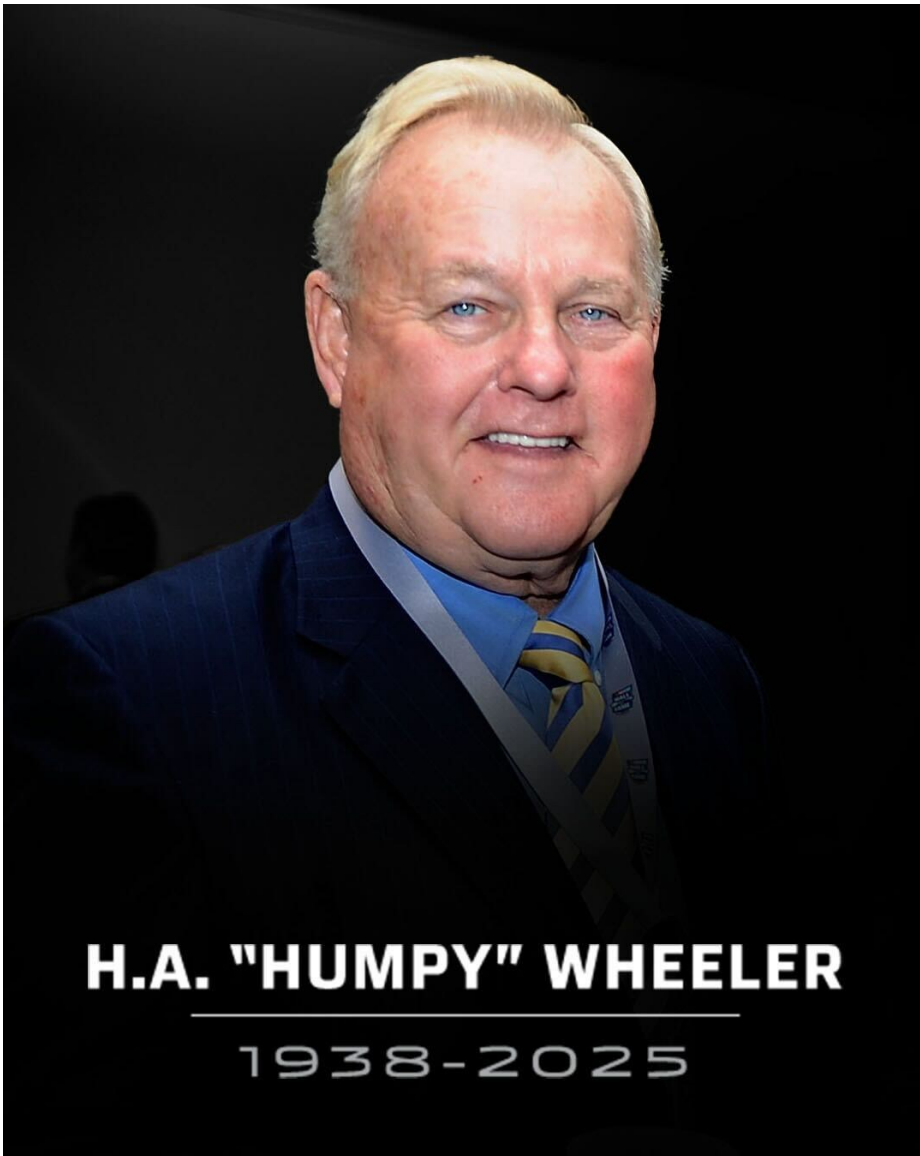
Hi Swanks, well, we lost a true NASCAR pioneer this past August when Humpy Wheeler passed. I found this article by the Associated Press that describes his accomplishments.



Humpy Wheeler, 'P.T. Barnum of motorsports,' dies at 86

CHARLOTTE, N.C. -- Humpy Wheeler, a pioneering motorsports promoter and former president and general manager of Charlotte Motor Speedway, has died, NASCAR said. He was 86.

Charlotte Motor Speedway said Wheeler died Wednesday of natural causes, surrounded by his family.



"Humpy Wheeler was a visionary whose name became synonymous with promotion and innovation in our sport," NASCAR chairman Jim France said. "During his decades leading Charlotte Motor Speedway, Humpy transformed the fan experience through his creativity, bold ideas and tireless passion. His efforts helped expand NASCAR's national footprint, cement Charlotte as a must-visit racing and entertainment complex."

Howard Augustine Wheeler Jr. was born in 1938 in Belmont and gained his first major publicity job with Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. He held several other positions after Firestone shut down its racing program in 1970 and was hired at Charlotte Motor Speedway by owner Bruton Smith as president in 1975.

He became a transformative figure in promoting racing and was known as the "P.T. Barnum of motorsports" for flashy prerace stunts, elaborate productions and sparing no expense in ensuring fans had the most enjoyable experience possible at his events.

Earlier this year, Wheeler was named winner of NASCAR's prestigious Landmark Award for outstanding contributions to NASCAR.



Whats the Diff? 1940-42 Willys

MCG's Spotters Guide

For 1940 the Willys received another facelift and a new model designation, 440 (four cylinders, '40 model year). Another one-year design, here the easy tell for car spotters is the split, two-piece grille. This is the bare-bones Speedway Coupe, the price leader of the 1940 Willys lineup at \$495. (Note the single windshield wiper.) All Willys models now featured hydraulic brakes, the upgraded 61 hp engine, and a new feature for 1940, a column-mounted shift lever.



Among collectors today, **the 1941** model is probably the most popular year, with the coupe considered the most desirable body style (though MCG likes the quarter-windowed sedan). The easy identifier of a '41 is the beautiful fine-toothed grille, similar to 1940 but one piece rather than two, and with vertical rather than horizontal slats. Note also that the wipers have been moved from the top of the windshield to the cowl for 1941.

Changes for **the 1942 Willys Americar** Model 442 were minimal—the main visual signifier is the vertical chrome band added to the center of the grille. Only around 3,800 units of all body styles were produced that model year.

Following Pearl Harbor, in January of 1942 all passenger car production was wound down throughout the industry. By that time Willys-Overland was focused on Jeep production, with the Toledo plant producing 10,000 units before the end of calendar year 1941. The Jeep, manufactured by both Willys-Overland and Ford during the war, took a good part of its running gear and hardware, along with its 134 CID engine (L-134, in military lingo) from the Willys.



Fun fact: 1963 was the first year for the Pontiac Tempest brand

Bench Rodding with Robert Tommeraasen

I met Robert Tommeraasen at the Fergus Falls car show sponsored by the Classic Car Club. The sharp looking International Harvester Metro van caught my eye and when I approached, I realized this guy is offering free water and ice cream from this vehicle. I had to ask what he was doing. And he exclaimed that he was there to hand out free ice cream and then I found out he was working for Auto Value, and this was one of their promotion vehicles.

Robert was a mechanic by trade but after two heart attacks he decided that a career change might be in order so he went to work for Auto Value stores, but it seems as he has not slowed down much. Robert exclaimed he does a lot of marketing for the company in the summer months he also has a route of stores in South Dakota; He works out of Sioux Falls SD but also spends time at the corporate headquarters in St. Cloud MN. Robert has a CDL license so he can drive an Auto Value semi if they are shorthanded. He says in a pinch he also works on their delivery trucks.

The van is one of several promotion vehicles Auto Value uses to promote their stores, he shared a picture of a cool older Ford Bronco with their logo and a 47 Chevy truck that is part of the fleet. Robert shared that attending car shows and doing promotions at Auto Value Stores is his favorite part of his job.



That's Funny



You said you drove a VETTE



Swanks Cookin' Corner

IF YOU WAIT LONG
ENOUGH TO COOK DINNER,
EVERYONE WILL
EAT CEREAL.

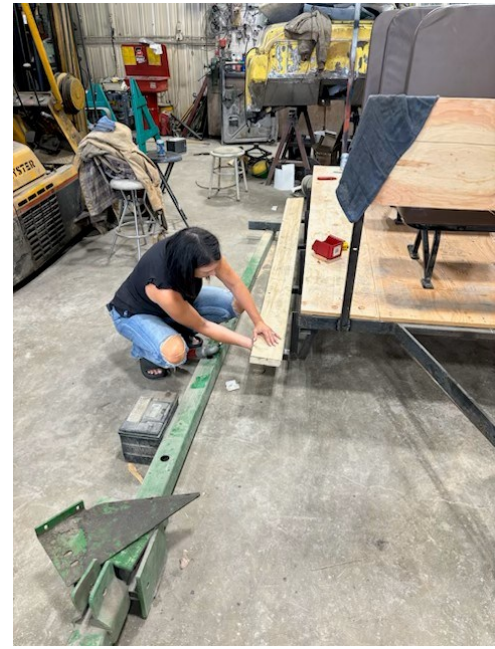
FOLLOW ME FOR
MORE RECIPES.



Gary Johnson and his cousin Eugene Johnson, Also a Swanks member, who drove his 69 Camaro from Fort Collins, CO.



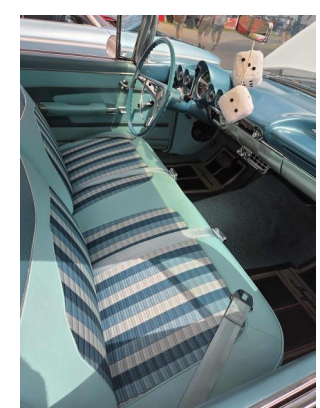
Lindsey Johnson checking out Gene's Camaro.



Lindsey Johnson working on a people Hauler for the Swanks car show.

South Dakota Show Johnny "Rocket" Nustad

Johnny sent in some pictures of a car show at the South Dakota State Fair. Johnny accompanied his dad with the Sherwin Linton Band who performed at the state fair and he spotted a car show so he took advantage and shared some pictures of his experience. Thanks Johnny!



Fergus Falls Car Show

Ron Dahley

The Classic car club of Fergus Falls MN held their annual car show and swap meet in Kirkbride Park in Fergus Falls the first part of August. It was cool with rain on and off but it did not scare off too many car enthusiasts as their was a good turnout of specialty vehicles to look at. Several food trucks were on hand to keep everyone satisfied with good food and drink. A few swappers were on hand to share some good deals on parts and tools.



Swanks Drive Careful



By the time my dad was my age he had 8 cans of old screws, bent nails and pieces of wire in the garage. I have none. I am failing at life.

Ron's Helpful Hot Rod Tips



Up Coming Events

Please check to ensure the events dates and times have not changed.

Sept. 6 15th Annual Childhood Cancer Awareness Car Show, Blue Cross Parking lot, Fargo ND 11-3:30

Sept 14 Cruise to the Island Mayville ND

Sept 25 Ten 11 Car Show, Moorhead MN 3-8pm

Sept 27 Pumpkin Fest Car Show Lake Park MN

Oct 5 Uffa Days Rutland ND

Oct .11 Frankenstiiners Ball 20th Annual Isanti County Fair-grounds Isanti MN

Frequent Events

1st Tues. El Roco Cruise Night Grand Forks ND 6:30-9:30.

2nd Tues. Elks Car Show Fargo ND 4-8:30 pm 3435 North Broadway.

1st Wed Fergus Falls Cruise Night

2nd Wed Detroit Lakes Cruise Night June-Sept, 4-8:30pm

Wed. Cruise Night Pelican Rapids MN 6:30 Main Street.

Thurs. Cruise Night Grand Forks ND 6-8:30 pm Culvers Restaurant.

1st Thursday Moorhead Cruise Night Moorhead MN 5-8:30 pm Downtown Center Avenue Moorhead. Starts in May.

2nd Thursday Barnesville MN Show "N" Shine 6-8 pm Downtown Barnesville.

3rd Thurs West Fargo Cruz Night West Fargo ND 4:30-9 pm Sheyenne St.

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