

Swanks News

Swanks Car Club
Swanks Newsletter

Established 1956
September/October 2026

Viva Las Vegas Rockabilly Weekend



The Largest Rockabilly Event in the World, and the Longest Running Music Festival in Las Vegas. Featuring four nonstop days of music, hot rods, dancing, burlesque, pool parties, shopping and more. This festival features the best Rockabilly music from over 100 world-renowned bands and legends of Rockabilly and dozens of wild DJs. They also feature North America's biggest pre-1960's era car show where you can find hundreds of hot rods.

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Newsletter Editor:
rondahley@gmail.com

Ted Talk with Ted Bryans

Fall is here and we can see the end of racing season is getting closer. In NHRA news the 2026 regular-season champions were crowned at the U.S. Nationals at Lucas OIL Indianapolis Raceway Park. The 2026 Regular Season Champions:

Top Fuel: Doug Kalitta

Funny Car: Mat Hagan

Pro Stock: Dallas Green

Pro Stock Motorcycle: Richard Gadson



Fast Jack Beckman won the Funny Car All-Star Callou defeating Matt Hagen at the U.S. Nationals. I'm sure Ron Dahley is in his glory as he is a big Jack Beckman fan.

The countdown to the Championship in NHRA is next with six remaining late-season races left. September 17-20 in Martin Michigan; September 25-27 in Rockingham, North Carolina; Oct. 2-4 in Madison Illinois; Oct. 9-18 in Ennis Texas; Oct. 29 –Nov 1 in Las Vegas, Nevada and Nov. 12-15 in Pomona, California where the final champions will be crowned.

The World of Outlaws Sprints made their final trip through the Dakotas this past August with races in Grand Forks, West Fargo and Minot with rain threatening and a rain delay in Minot the races were able to proceed, and they got then all the races in. The World of Outlaws wrap up the season in Concord, North Carolina on November 6 and 7.

The World of Outlaws Late Models made their Northern swing last June with Bobby Pierce winning in Ada, MN; Minot, ND; Grand Forks, ND; Fergus Falls, MN; Ogilvie, MN and Maribel, Wi. Bobby Pierce won 6 feature races in a row before finally getting a 4th place finish in West Virginia then, the next night at the same track he won the feature. Bobby Pierce is leading in the points currently with the last race taking place in Concord, North Carolina on November 6 and 7.

NASCAR racing will name their champion after the November 8th race in Homestead, Florida. Top five points leaders are Denny Hamlin; Kyle Larson; Christopher Bell; Ryan Blaney and Tyler Reddick.

This past August we lost a good friend and great car guy and a member of the **Swanks Car Club Ken Nicholson**. Ken worked at Clarence's Louvre Shop as a custom painter and pin striper as a young man. Kenny and his wife started Supreme Autobody and ran the business for 26 years. He then went to work as an auto insurance adjuster. Kenny was very artistic; he attended college for two years majoring in art before going into the auto body field. Kenny was a good family friend he pinstriped the air cleaner on our 57 Chevy. Ken was the chair for the World of Wheels car show in Fargo. My parents, Vic and Gail Bryans worked for Ken until the show ended in 1994. I had the honor of introducing Kenny to Ron Dahley and Kenny shared information on the Swanks Car Club history. Kenny belonged to the Swanks Car Club being an active member as a young man. Kenny received the Swanks Newsletter to keep abreast of Swanks happenings, he also was a member of the Road Knights and he was an active member of the Valley Vintage Car Club.



Kenny loved swap meets, here is a picture taken a few years ago at the Art Olson Swap Meet in West Fargo, N.D

Photo: Ron Dahley

The Kenny Johnson Collection

Jim Jacobson

Jim Jacobson, a car guy, member of NDSRA and all-around great guy shared some photos of some of Kenny Johnson's car collection. Kenny is owner of Northwest Auto Body Shop in Fargo. Kenny invited Jim and the Abercrombie car group to visit his lake home and see his collection. A big thank you to Jim and Kenny for giving us the opportunity to see his cool car collection.





“Werewolves of London”

Wikipedia



Warren Zevon

The song began as a joke by Phil Everly (of the Everly Brothers) to Warren Zevon in 1975, over two years before the recording sessions for *Excitable Boy*. Everly had watched a television broadcast of the 1935 film *Werewolf of London* and "suggested to Zevon that he adapt the title for a song and dance craze. Zevon played with the idea with his band members LeRoy P. Marinell and Waddy Wachtel, who wrote the song together in about 15 minutes, all contributing lyrics that were transcribed by Zevon's wife Crystal. However, none of them took the song seriously.

Soon after, Zevon's friend Jackson Browne saw the lyrics and thought "Werewolves of London" had potential and began performing the song during his own live concerts. T Bone Burnett also performed the song, on the first leg of Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue tour in the autumn of 1975.

Werewolves of London is featured on Zevon's third album “**Excitable Boy**” released in 1978. The song was Zeon's only top 40 U.S. hit reaching number 21 on the Billboard hot 100.

VW Show in Fargo

photos by Todd Schultz



Rush City Car Show

Photos: Todd Schultz

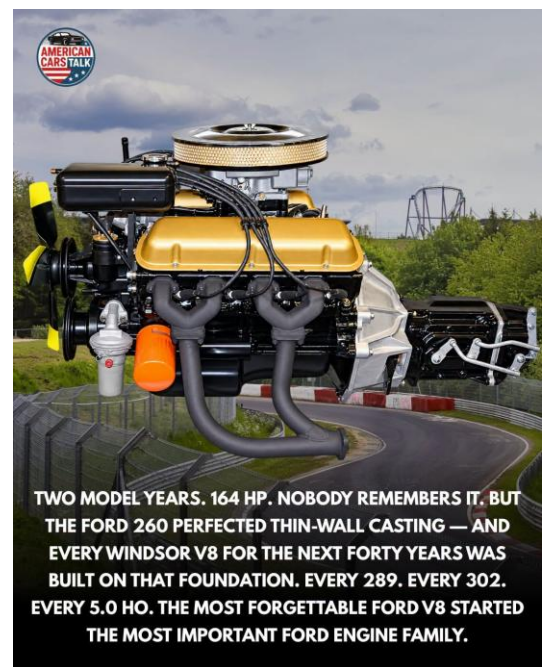
Todd attended a car show in Rush City. Rush City is east of Cambridge Minnesota. Todd reports that 632 plus cars were at this event!



Engines

The Ford small-block didn't start with the 289. It didn't start with the 302. It started with the **221** — introduced in July 1962 with the same engine displacement as the

original 1932 Ford Flathead, by pure coincidence. The 221 was Ford's answer to a question the Chevrolet small-block had been answering since 1955: how do you build a lightweight, compact OHV V8 that fits in a mid-size car? Ford's Y-block V8 was too heavy



too tall, and too expensive for the new 1962 Fairlane intermediate. Engineer David Ash and his team designed a clean-sheet V8 using thin-wall casting techniques that had never been applied to a Ford engine block. The thin-wall process used precision sand cores to create cylinder walls, water jackets, and main webs with less metal than conventional castings — reducing

block weight without reducing structural strength. The result was a V8 measuring 24 inches wide, 29 inches long, and 27.5 inches tall — smaller than the Chevy small-block in two of three dimensions. The 260 followed months later as the 221's bore was widened from 3.50 to 3.80 inches. The 260 occupied an eighteen-month window that determined the architecture of Ford's most important engine family. Bore: 3.80 inches. Stroke: 2.87 inches. 260.0 cubic inches. Cast-iron thin-wall block with a short skirt that didn't extend below the crankshaft centerline — eliminating the deep skirts of the Y-block and FE engines. Five main bearings. Wedge combustion chambers with 53-cc volume. Valves: 1.59-inch intake and 1.39-inch exhaust in 1962-1963; enlarged to 1.67-inch intake and 1.45-inch exhaust in 1964. Output: 164 HP at 4,400 RPM and 258 lb-ft at 2,200 RPM with a two-barrel carburetor. A four-barrel version made approximately 220 HP. Weight: 482 pounds complete — lighter than every FE big-block Ford built and competitive with the Chevy small-block. Over 500 prototype 221/260 engines were dyno-tested and evaluated before mass production began, logging 17,000 hours in Ford's Dearborn Dynamometer Laboratory and 250,000 miles of in-vehicle testing. Ford didn't rush this architecture. They validated it obsessively.

The 260 proved three things that defined the Windsor family forever. First: thin-wall casting worked. The blocks didn't crack. The reduced-metal main webs survived production power levels without failure. Ford could build a V8 with less iron and maintain durability — a manufacturing advantage that reduced material cost per block across millions of units. Second: the short-skirt design was structurally adequate. Eliminating the deep skirts that wrapped below the crankshaft on the Y-block reduced weight and simplified machining without increasing main-cap walk or crankshaft flex at the horsepower levels the engine produced. Third: the bore spacing could grow. The 260's architecture accepted a bore increase to 4.00 inches for the 289 in 1963, and the same bore with a longer stroke for the 302 in 1968. Every displacement change from 221 to 302 used the same fundamental block architecture, the same bellhousing pattern, and the same external dimensions that the 260 had established. The 260 was the proof-of-concept. Everything that followed was an iteration.

Fun Facts:

- Early cars had no steering wheels just levers.
- The first car was actually a tricycle.
- The first truck was a Daimler.
- Rear view mirrors first appeared in 1911 at the Indy 500.
- Seat belts became common after racer Jack Cover survived a crash
- ABS brakes were originally designed for airplanes in WWII
- Convertible roofs came from horse-drawn carriages.
- The first electric car dates to the 1800's

Mark Weber Wrenching

With the help of a few Swanks friends Swanks member Mark Weber is making real progress on his latest project. In the picture is Mark with Don Nustad and I suspect behind the camera is Gary Johnson. Good friends, lots of laughter and a little work on Mark's project.



The look on Mark's face tells it all!



HISTORY LESSON

Lowrider

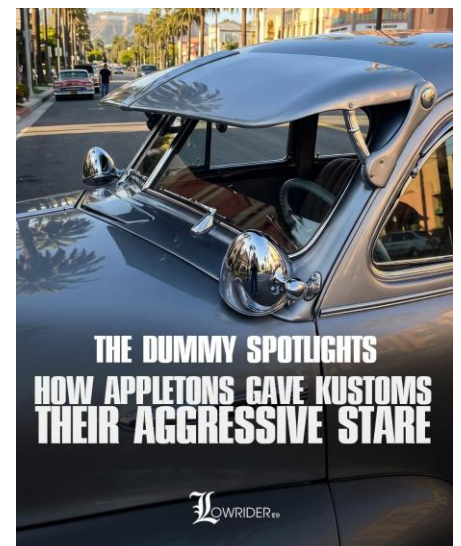


Spotlights

You don't need a working light bulb to cast an intimidating shadow. In the golden era of Kustom Culture, the heaviest rides on the boulevard rocked dual Appleton spotlights—and most of them didn't even have Wires.

Mounted fiercely on the A-pillars and aimed sharply at the ground, these classic police-style spotlights were rarely used to see in the dark. Instead, they were the ultimate aesthetic weapon. Builders used them to visually widen the car and enhance the aggressive stance. Appleton spotlights proved that in the custom car universe, pure, untouchable of style will always override function.

Swanks member Ron Dahley sports a pair of well weathered and pitted dummy spotlights from the 60's on his 49 Chevy pickup daily driver. Although they do not work, he likes the look and the driver's side light works well to house the tachometer.



Larry Zaun Memorial Car Show Buffalo ND

Chris Tallackson

Several Swanks members attended the Larry Zaun Memorial car show this past July. Thanks to Chris Tallackson for sharing some pictures with us. Larry was a really good car guy and a very good friend of the Swanks.



Cars and Coffee at Interstate Dragway's

Johnny "Rocket" Nustad



The weekend is only two days long because people without project cars made the calendar.

Feature Car

Wes Rydell's 1941 Chevrolet Fleetline

In the Swanks Car Show Special Edition of Swanks News we included a picture of Wes Rydell's '41 Chevy which was shown at the Swanks car show. As promised, we will provide more information on this amazing automobile.



Wes Rydell and Rad Rides by Troy Team Up to Create the Goodguys 2021 Classic Instruments Street Rod of the Year

Fuel Curve/Damon Lee

When street rod patrons Wes and Vivian Rydell team up with the team at Rad Rides by Troy, expect the results to be spectacular. The latest result of their collaborative efforts is this gorgeous '41 Chevy Fleetline that was crowned the Goodguys 2021 Classic Instruments Street Rod of the Year during the 23rd Summit Racing Nationals presented by PPG in Columbus, Ohio. Fuel Curve

Those who know their Chevrolets might point out that in 1941, the Fleetline was only offered as a four-door sedan. That's exactly what this one started as. Rydell imagined what might have been if Chevrolet designers had developed a two-door model, one with a formal design that was statelier than a coupe, yet sportier than a sedan. To achieve that vision, the Rad Rides team, led by Adam Banks, not only shortened the body and top, lengthened the front doors, and eliminated the rear doors, but also raised and widened the fenders, chopped and sectioned the top, sectioned the hood, and made a host of more subtle sheet metal modifications that allow the body lines to flow well and look proportional. They augmented that with '40 LaSalle taillights, custom trim, nickel plating and gorgeous pearl red Glasurit paint, a modified Nissan color



The classy, formal body rides on a modern Art Morrison frame with independent front and rear suspensions and active adjustable electric shocks. The Rad Rides team machined the custom 18-inch wheels, which draw inspiration from a '58 Oldsmobile hubcap. They're wrapped in whitewall tires from Diamondback Classics

There's plenty of horsepower thanks to an LT1 engine modified by Lingenfelter with a custom camshaft, stroker crank, and a host of other tricks. The Rad Rides team built custom stainless steel 180-degree headers and designed and machined the valve covers and air intake. A modern GM 10-speed automatic transmission will make for easy driving around town or on the Interstate.

The inside has a similar blend of classic style and modern comfort and amenities. The modified stock dash is updated with Dakota Digital instruments and a Flaming River tilt column topped with a beautiful custom steering wheel. A custom console bisects Cadillac ATS bucket seats, which are complemented by a custom-built rear seat. Red Garrett Leather upholstery is beautifully stitched and augmented with custom trim and gray square-weave carpet. A Kenwood stereo and Vintage Air climate controls are just a few of the many creature comforts.



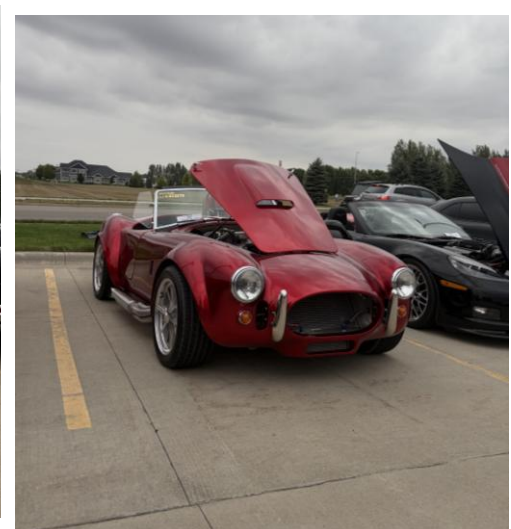
Bean Days Car Show

Horace ND



Johnny "Rocket" Nustad

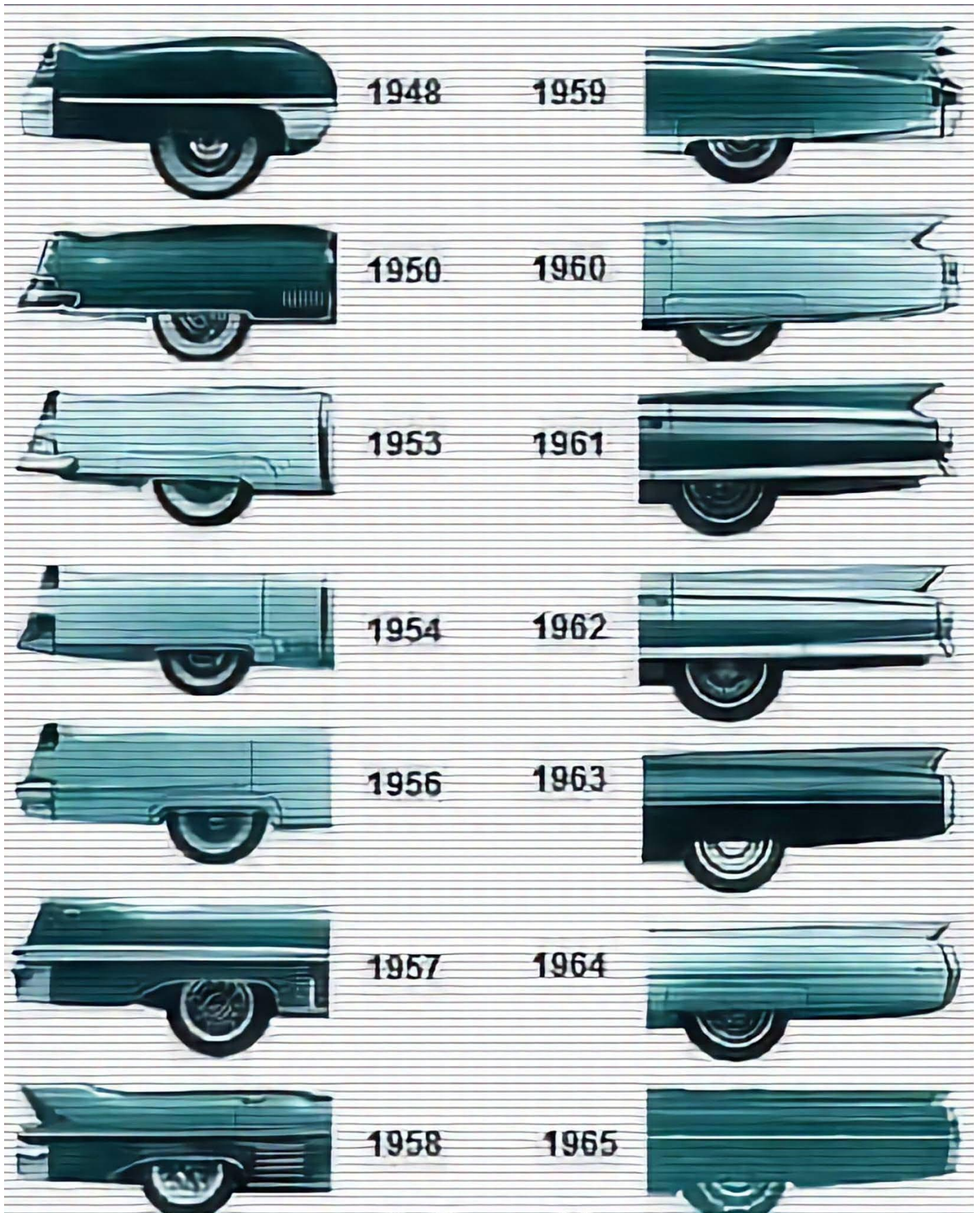
Swanks member John Nustad attended the Bean Days Car Show in Horace ND and got some excellent photos of the event. Thanks to John for his many contributions to the club, especially to the Swanks News! Please note how many Swanks members contributed to this issue. The more contributions the better the newsletter.



If breathing in break cleaner causes short term memory loss imagine what breathing in break cleaner can do.

What's the Diff?

Differentiating a Cadillac by its' fins. The 1948 Cadillac sported the first fins!



Viva Las Vegas

I was visiting with a good car friend at a local car show and he, Brent told me about his adventure attending the Viva Las Vegas car and music festival in Las Vegas, Nevada this past April. He took his father on a road trip in his 58 Chevrolet Belair. They took several day to cruise the 58 across the USA to Vegas. He said the Belair drove down the road not skipping a beat. They enjoyed the ride driving moderate speeds taking in all the scenery along the way. He said they got a lot of attention on the road, at gas stations and at their motels. Once there they enjoyed seeing so many vehicles they had not seen before along with the music and all the attention their car received. Brent said there were lots of females dressed as pin up models some were professional models with photographers. Brent was approached by a photographer and was asked if he could use his 58 Chevy as a backdrop Brent gave him permission and the photographer and model thanked Brent with some of their photos. A big thanks to Brent for sharing his fun experience with us. Oh yes, he's planning on returning next April for the Las Vegas rockabilly music fest and car show.



The greatest sound in an old garage isn't the radio. It's a freshly built V8 firing for the first time while everybody immediately starts checking for leaks.

American Legion Car Show

Ron Dahley

The American Legion in Moorhead MN hosts several car shows through the summer. They are fun events with good food available in their restaurant. Thanks to Rick Weaver for making this show happen.



Swanks Car Show Challenge will have an ending date of Nov. 1. Swanks, please keep your car show notes up to date, so you don't forget any shows.

Swanks Drive Carefully



Upcoming Events

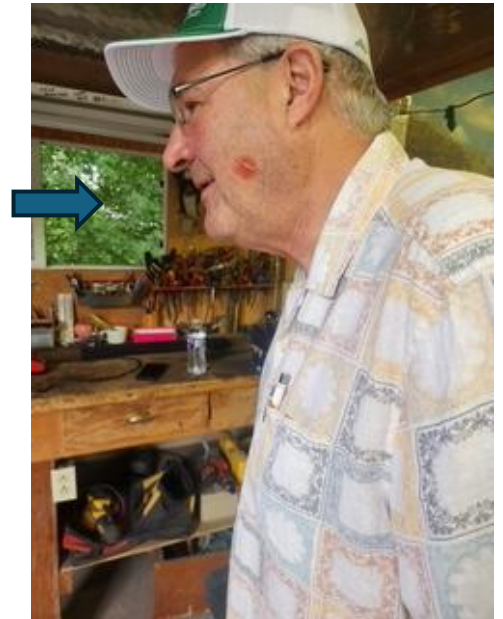
Oct 10 Franksteiner's Ball Isanti
Fairgrounds Cambridge MN 9-4

Feb 12-14 Topper's Car Show Sioux Falls SD

April 2-4 Topper's Car Show West Fargo ND

July 22 Swanks Car Show Casselton ND 5-9

Girls
love
car
guys



Ron's Helpful Hot Rod Tips



Happy Halloween Swanks

