



# VALVE CLATTER

Northern  
Virginia  
Regional  
Group



THE EARLY FORD V-8 CLUB OF AMERICA  
Regional Group 96

Volume XXII, No. 12

December 1999

Cliff Green, Editor

## FORD NEWS



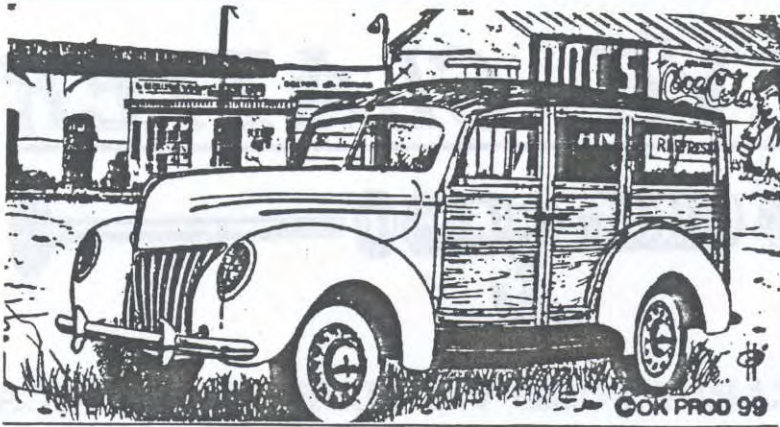
*Merry Christmas  
And  
Happy New Year*

### From your Board of Directors

*This lovely lady is all decked out for the holidays in her new 1941 Mercury - a totally new "big" body style. I think they are preparing to go to the NVRG holiday dinner and Gift exchange! Twelve of our members own 1941 cars or trucks.*







## *UP FRONT* *With the President*

**DECEMBER 1999**

Happy Holidays to all of you and yours. Barbara and I had a wonderful Thanksgiving and hope yours was just as meaningful. As the year draws to a close, I want to thank all of the club members who worked so hard on all of the club's activities. We did a lot of big and small things together again this year, and I am proud to have been a part of it. The sharing of knowledge and the helping hands that members always extend are the essence of the club.

**Von Hardesty** and **John Girman** teamed up to arrange and organize the November tour of the transportation collection at the Gerber Facility of the Smithsonian. Please thank them for their efforts, as this was a special opportunity to see a lot of unique things. We thank Von and John for their efforts.

During the past year we have had a number of new members join the club. I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate our welcome to you and trust that your participation will be both enjoyable and useful to you.

I have received a newsletter from our Southeast National Director **Waymon Brownlee** reporting on the National Directors last meeting. The highlights are that: the national club will no longer sell clothing; books for the following years are underway 1932, 1937, 1938/39 (in final draft), 1940, 1941-48; a new Regional Group was approved as the Central New York Flatheads #155; and club membership has risen from 8,852 to 9,210. We were also encouraged to get involved in the club's youth program.

Remember, if we each do a little, together we can accomplish a lot!

**DAVE**



## GERBER FACILITY SMITHSONIAN TOUR

JEANNETTE HALL

Seventeen members of the Northern Virginia Region V8 Ford Club toured the Gerber Facility in Suitland, Maryland on Saturday, November 6th. This facility is only open twice a year for private tours and they are held under extremely tight security. Our three-hour tour included only two of the numerous buildings at this site. Our tour guide was very knowledgeable both in the historic and mechanical aspects of the collection which included antique cars and trucks (electric and gasoline powered), race cars, trolleys, carriages, motorcycles, tractors, bicycles, buses and a motorized tricycle. The collection is being kept strictly for historical purposes and the items are not being restored but rather are being kept for future generations to use for research purposes. Some vehicles are loaned to other historical facilities or are on display at the Smithsonian for special exhibits. Most of the collection has been donated to the Smithsonian and they decide what offers they will accept. Some of the interesting vehicles included in the collection are the following: 1900 Ryker Electric "Carriage", 1901 Autocar, 1903

Cadillac, 1912 Pierce-Arrow, 1912 Brush Liberty, 1918 Autoped, 1918 Ford Tractor, 1926 Stutz, 1926 Model T, 1930 Mack Truck, 1931 Model A, 1934 Ford V8, 1963 Corvette, 1964 Chrysler Turbine and a 1971 VW Beetle.

It was interesting that the tour guide mentioned his shop teacher several times and the mechanical knowledge that he had gained in high school. It is good to hear that teachers do have an influence in stimulating interest in preserving history and sharing mechanical knowledge that can be applied in job selection. Many club members demonstrated their love of vehicular history by sharing their knowledge with the group during the tour. It was a very worthwhile tour!

The following attended: John and Patti Girman, Dave Blum, Hank Amster, Bill Selley, Dave Westrate, Eric Sumner, Louise and Bill Vincent, Cliff Green, Hank DuBois, Charlie Morrison, Don Lombard, Tom Shaw, Jeannette and Barry Hall and Red Vaughn.

Editors note: Photographs were allowed, however, none could be published under any circumstances- our newsletter is no exception!





## GETTYSBURG AUCTION

*Editor*

A very interesting nearby auction took place the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving. It was advertised in *Hemmings* and *Old Cars*, however I was not aware until asked to attend by **Dave Blum**. The collection of Ford parts, literature, promotional material and displays, tools, memorabilia, gas station and garage items are too large to list. An old Ford dealership in Emmitsburg, MD, Sperry's Garage and Ford Sales moved to a larger store in 1959. They left most of the early stuff behind in the old building. When it finally closed for good in the '70 the family still retained a large collection of later fenders, literature and parts from the '60's (read Mustang) plus the building full of Ford stuff from the '20's!

Blum, Amster and I drove up Saturday and discovered that most of the major dealers that you find at Hershey were in attendance. Other NVRG members included **Nick Arrington**, **Tom Lumpkin** and **Jerry Hill**. We had time to view the amazing collection, half of which had been sold the day previous. Outside the building were several, T's, A's and one V8, a '34 Tudor with 30K some miles that needed restoration (auctioned off for \$16,500).

We were all fascinated at the final bids for anything with Ford on it – how about a tire display stand that went for \$750 – I had my eye on that and thought that \$200 might buy it! There was a huge literature collection that included every truck show room display catalog since the first in 1934 through the last in 1954, I believe. Most of the car dealer show room albums were there too, including perhaps the first one published in 1929 featuring the Model A – this went for \$1,050!!! It was in unbelievable condition. Hank Amster would have bid on the '41, except he said that a convertible was not pictured (it must have been ripped out!). Nothing went cheap as numerous literature dealers were there. Jerry Hill successfully bid on choice pieces of literature. He also bid for me and purchased a NOS 48-5230 '34-36 muffler, in the box!

At one time two auction were going on at once – the parts and mechanical items and tools in one room and the literature, memorabilia in another.

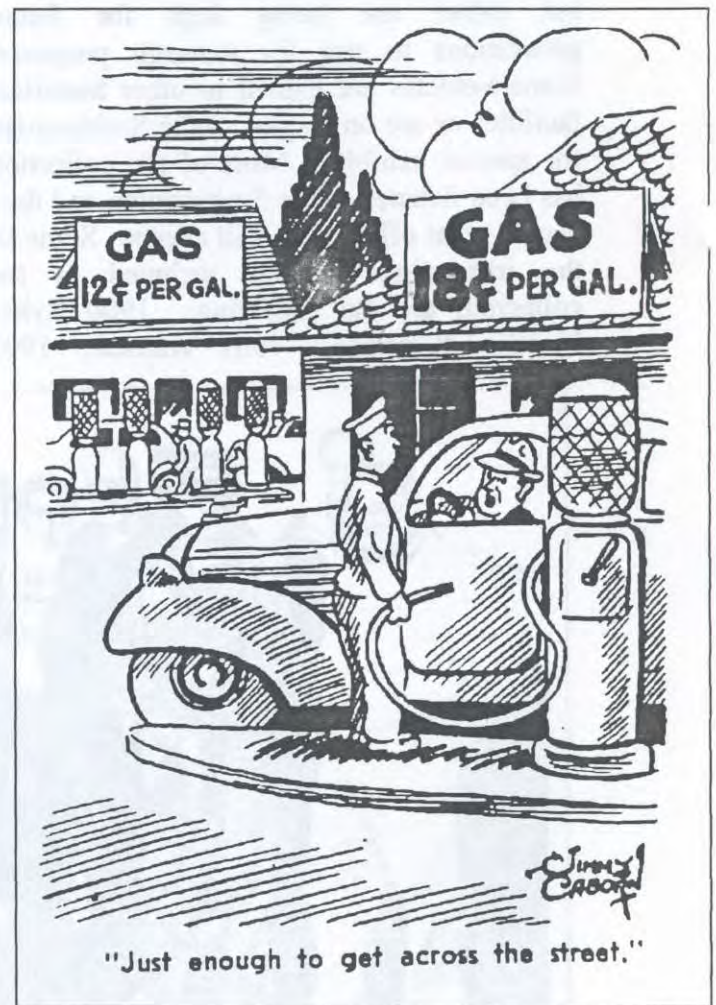
Numerous gas pumps and related items showed interest – how about a pair of glass globe halves with some gas logo that I have never heard of going for \$1,800! That item must have been a keeper, however you can bet that most of the auctioned merchandise will be seen next year at Hershey - but not my muffler!

## JAVARAS BUILDING

Jason Javaras is in the process of building a large detached garage big enough to house a lift! Perhaps he is seeking to expand his collection of one '40 coupe?

## XMAS GIFT IDEA

From the *STEERING COLUMN*, newsletter of Ventura V8's, RG#84: "Royce Hulsey has gone into production of the new "BETTER HUB PULLER". This rear hub and brake drum puller works better and does not damage the axle threads. Royce will be selling them for \$48, which is less than 1/2 the cost (\$112) of the other type. It is designed to fit the '28 – '48 early Fords. 818-889-8665





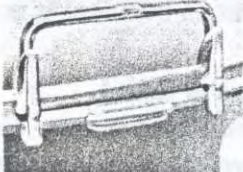
*We suggest these*  
**FORD ACCESSORIES**  
*as excellent*  
**CHRISTMAS GIFTS**

- \* Inexpensive
- \* Lasting quality
- \* Useful the year 'round
- \* Thoughtful and different
- \* Easy to wrap attractively



**BUMPER CENTER GUARDS**

Bumper guards, front and rear, reduce possibility of damage to a car while parking, or while someone else is parking. This gift is an investment in worth-while protection, and any car owner will appreciate it.

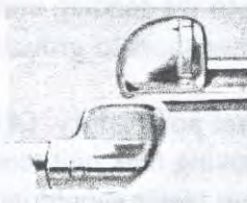


Front \$3.50  
 Rear 2.50

**ROTO-SELECTOR RADIO**  
 With Integral Antenna

Here is the gift of gifts! Music, news, drama, sports, time and weather reports, a world of information and entertainment to add to the pleasure of driving.

Installed \$39.00  
 State and local sales taxes are extra



**BUMPER END GUARDS**

These guards, like the Bumper Center Guards, may save owners from repair bills. They fit neatly over bumper ends and give additional protection to fenders. Anyone who owns a car would like such a practical gift.

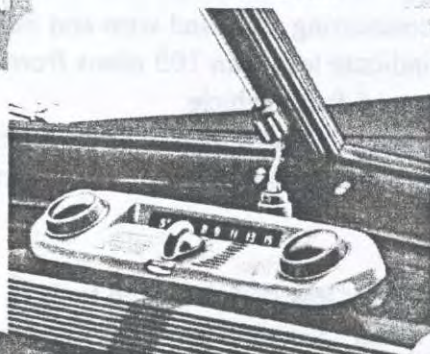
Pair \$2.75



**SIDE MIRROR**

This mirror adjusts to the vision of any driver and gives him a broad view of the road behind. It's a big help while pulling into traffic from a line of parked cars or when passing. It is theftproof while car is locked.

\$2.75



**CLEANER AND POLISH M-3830**

This is a double-acting compound, cleans and polishes in one operation. It's excellent for Ford, Mercury's and Lincoln cars. A practical gift any owner will welcome.

Pin 5.45



**VISOR VANITY MIRROR**

This handy glass can be attached to either sun visor. Attractively decorated with a floral design. Ladies appreciate it.

Pin 5.70



**GAS TANK LOCKING CAP**

Here's another gift any car owner will consider most practical. This cap prevents the theft of gasoline, or the contamination of gasoline while in the tank.

\$1.25



**LICENSE PLATE FRAMES**

These chrome-plated frames cover the unpainted license plate edges and bring the license into harmony with the bright car trimmings. They adjust to any size license plate, snap on easily and can be used year after year.

Pair \$1.75

See our complete line of **FORD ACCESSORIES** when planning your gift list. *Your Ford Dealer*



# GAS GAUGES

Thank you Road Chatter 1-8

by Tom O'Donnell

Ford products from 1935 to 1953 use electric fuel gauges of similar design. The dash unit has an indicator needle connected to a bimetal strip that is heated by an electric coil. The heating causes the strip to bend and move the needle to indicate the fuel level. There is also a bimetal strip in the tank unit. These units are in series. The tank unit has a set of contact points on the bimetal strip that allow current to flow thru the heating elements. When the coil on the tank strip heats up, these points open and current stops heating the bimetal strips. When the tank coil cools down the points close again, starting the heat cycle again. The tank unit has a float that is attached to an arm. The arm moves a bellows that changes the tension on the points. When the tank is full, more tension is placed on the points and they take longer to open, allowing the coils to heat the bimetal strip longer and indicate a full tank. When the float is at the bottom of its travel, the tension is at the minimum and the points open sooner causing less current to flow thru the heating coils.

A known good sending unit with 2 jumper wires can be used to test the circuit. One of the jumper wires would be connected to the case of the sending unit and to ground. The other jumper wire would be used to substitute for the wire from the gauge to the sending unit.

Common problems with this system are:

1. Leaking float on tank unit. (Always indicates less fuel than is in tank.)
  - a. Immerse float in boiling water and watch for bubbles.
  - b. Solder hole and retest. Use no more solder than necessary to seal hole.
2. Poor ground on tank. (Always indicates less fuel than is in tank.)
  - a. Test by attaching a wire to a sending unit mounting screw and then grounding the wire to the car body. Clean tank mounting points to allow a good ground.
3. Grounded wire to the sending unit. (Always indicates a more than full condition)
  - a. Find and repair short to ground. This can cause the dash unit to burn out if not corrected immediately.
4. Tank unit contact points dirty. (Always indicates less fuel than is in tank.)
  - a. Test by removing tank unit, connecting a ground wire and moving the arm. Gas gauge should follow movement. Ohm meter should indicate less than 100 ohms from the wire connection to the case of the sending unit. Test with unit removed from vehicle.
  - b. Remove top of sending unit by using a 3/16" punch to relieve the crimps. This is done from the bottom side of the unit. Clean the contacts with a contact cleaner or burnishing blade. Retest the unit before reassembling.
5. Dash unit defective. (Always indicates less fuel than is in tank.)
  - a. Test by measuring with an ohm meter. Good unit will show about 10 ohms across it. Touching the wire to the sending unit to ground momentarily can be done if an ohm meter is not available. Use caution as this could bum out a good gauge if left connected too long. Replace defective gauge.
6. Open wire to sending unit. (Always indicates less fuel than is in tank.)
  - a. With ignition on and wire disconnected from tank unit, there should be 6 volts between the wire and ground. Repair or replace wire.  
(Take care to prevent sparks while the tank unit is out of the tank. Fuel vapors are explosive.)

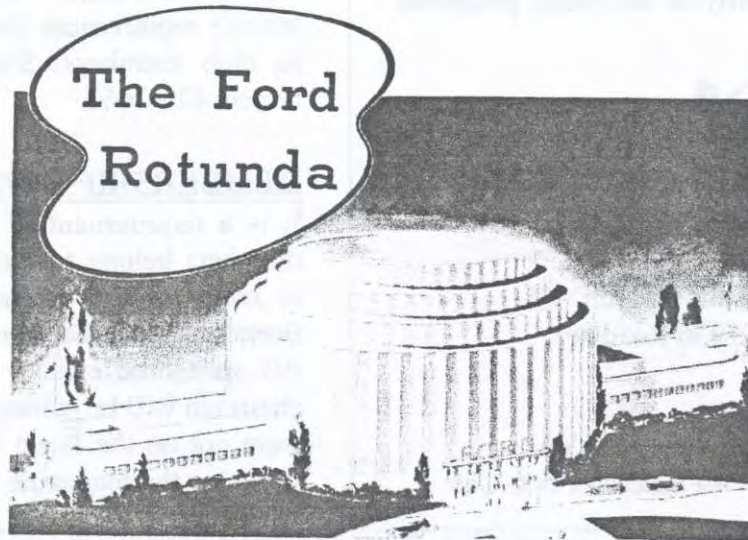


## FIRE DESTROYS FORD ROTUNDA AND CHRISTMAS EXHIBIT

*Editor*

When I was a kid during the Christmas season, my parents would take me on a Sunday night ride to see "The Lights". In this case it was to the "Green" in Taunton, Mass. to look at the holiday fantasy displays. We also traveled to Boston to shop at *Filenes* where I vividly remember the Lionel train display and all the store decorations. Most cities in those days had some sort of Christmas exhibit that people from miles around would take their children to witness – in Detroit it was the Ford Rotunda.

While surfing the Internet I ran across a story from the archives of the *Detroit News* about the Ford Rotunda fire in November 1962 by Jenny Nolan. The information is taken from her article and 1936 issues of *Ford News*.



The Ford Rotunda was constructed for the 1933 Chicago Worlds Fair and was one of the main attractions during its two-year run. It was disassembled and moved to Detroit where it was reconstructed using more permanent materials. It was opened to the public on May 1936. The *Ford News* featured the opening and described the design to resemble a stack of gears with an open courtyard in the center. It was located across from the Ford administration building and quoted the *Ford News* "Will serve as a fitting gateway for all visitors to the world's largest industrial permanent exposition – the Rouge Plant". From 1936 to 1962, the Ford Rotunda became the fifth most popular tourist destinations in the US.

"The building was closed to the public during WWII, and following the war underwent a massive remodeling in 1952. The courtyard was covered with an 18,000 pound dome". In 1953 an annual Christmas display was started and grew and grew each year into a real fantasy. Huge crowds were attracted from the metro area to see all the lights, gigantic Christmas tree, nativity scene and animated figures at storybook land.

"The preparations for the 1962 Christmas display were well under way when disaster struck on Nov. 9. While workers applied tar to the dome as weatherproofing, they kept it warm with an infrared heater." The tar caught fire and in less than an hour, the Rotunda lay in ruins along with most of the Christmas displays. "Over the nine years the Christmas Fantasy was held, almost 6 million people visited it."

To View the article: [www.detnews.com/history/rotunda/rotunda/htm](http://www.detnews.com/history/rotunda/rotunda/htm)



**DAVE WESTRATE PRESIDENT FOR THIRD TERM!**

At the November Board of director meeting, Dave Westrate volunteered to serve a third term as club president! All the present members were retained. Some of the duties were reshuffled – see back page for new assignments. The two new members of the board, **Von Hardesty** and **Steve Piper** will share responsibility for tours. The board works hard for the benefit of the club and it reflects in the quality of the tours, programs and social events.



**NANCY WINDINGLAND**

301 Sycamore St. Falls Church, VA  
22046 241-4562 1936 Roadster

**JACK SWEET**

1565 Old Eaton Lane, Reston, VA  
22094 437-4898 "46 Lincoln Cont. Cab

**FOR SALE/WANTED**

1935-36 open car radio (speaker in box) with control head and cable. Good condition, tubes light, probably needs vibrator. \$150 Call Skip 435-8817

1950 Ford Tudor – great shape with rebuilt flathead with less than 5,000 miles. New leather interior, tires, with headers. \$6,000 OBO Tim Foltz 540-786-5100

NOS Ford muffler 48-5320-C in the box – service replacement for 1932-34 Ford - \$75 to club members, \$100 to others. Cliff Green 426-2662

**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

It is a requirement of the National that all members belong to the Parent Group. This is required for insurance purposes. The Board and members are covered during any RG sponsored events. So, the membership chairman will be calling to remind those who were not on the latest National V8 roster to sign up – the magazine is worth the dues!

**IT'S DUES TIME ONCE AGAIN – PLEASE SUBMIT \$15 TO HANK AMSTER, 8543 FOAL CT., GAINESVILLE, VA. 20155**

**You must belong to the National to be a member of any RG**

Names (include spouse): \_\_\_\_\_

FILL IN ONLY PARTS THAT HAVE CHANGED: NO CHANGE, CHECK HERE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ (Work): \_\_\_\_\_

Year	Model (Standard, Deluxe, Super Deluxe, Custom, etc.)	Engine	Body Style



# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

THE MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH, EXCEPTIONS ARE PUBLISHED IN THE VALVE CLATTER

January 11 - **NVRG meeting** – Program: Video from the National V8 Club library. Refreshments TBA. Also, this is your chance to “show and tell”.

January 29 - **Garage Tour**. The club will visit the garage of **Steve Piper** in Alexandria. We shall view his dash board collection, two early Ford V8 under restoration and his extensive collection of automobile racing experiences. The shop is huge and completely equipped – put this on your calendar now, for this is one you don't want to miss! More info in next months VC.

February 25,26,27 **Atlantic City 2000** This popular auction, car corral and indoor flea market has attracted members over the years (when there is no blizzard). **Dave Blum** is always looking for people to go with him!

March 25-26 - **Frederick Flea Market** This event is the opening of the old car season for many members. It is the first chance to get the fever going, bump into old friends and occasionally come up with a needed something. A van provides transportation.

April 6 – 9 - **Charlotte Autofair** This event is a must. It is huge! You see parts here that never come further North. You will never see a larger car corral. You must reserve a room now if you plan to go.

May 6 - **Winchester** This year it will be the host for a big AACA event, thus you must be a member in order to participate. You will not receive an invitation as in prior years.

May 13 - **CITY OF FAIRFAX HERITAGE ANTIQUE CAR SHOW** This NVRG sponsored, third annual event, is our fundraiser. The City has again agreed to pick up the cost of printing and mailing costs. **Tom Shaw, Dave Westrate** and **Don Lombard** are working with the Fairfax Downtown Collation to coordinate this show.

June 7-10 **Carolina 200 Eastern National V8 Meet** This will be a big event for all V8'ers. We will be caravanning down to the Lowe's Motor Speedway in Concord, NC. It is highly recommended that you reserve your room NOW at the headquarters hotel -the Hampton Inn and Suites. The hotel is not open for business yet, so contact Rochida at 704-979-5600 and mention the Ford V8 meet for special rates.

**ATTENTION!**  
**THERE WILL BE NO NVRG MEETING IN**  
**DECEMBER.**  
**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL NOT**  
**MEET UNTIL January 25. 2000**



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL GROUP



President: Dave Westrate.....620-9597

Vice President: **David Blum** 281-1654  
Secretary: **Tom Shaw** 771-9374  
Treasurer: **Hank Amster** 753-9575  
Membership: **Bill Simons** 536-3648  
Tours: **Von Hardesty/Steve Pieper** 276-7579

Programs: **Hank Dubois** 476-6919  
Property: **David Blum** 281-1654  
Historian: **Don Lombard** 690-7971  
Refreshments: **Bill Selley** 679-9462  
Newsletter: **Cliff Green** 426-2662

Monthly general membership meetings are usually held at 7:30, the *second Tuesday* of each month, in the historic Hunter House, located adjacent to the tennis courts, Nottoway Park, Court House Road, Vienna, Virginia. Check the newsletter for occasional alternates sites. **SEE YOU THERE**



A V8 in everyone's garage this year



### FIRST CLASS MAIL

Regional Group 96  
Early Ford V8 Club  
Post Office Box 1195  
Vienna, Virginia, 22183