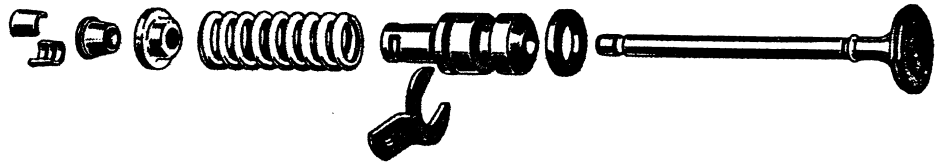




# Valve Clatter



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

NEW WEB ADDRESS: [www.nvrg.org](http://www.nvrg.org)

Volume XXX, No. 1

January 2008

Jim La Baugh Editor

## '33 & a 30<sup>th</sup>

While not quite a long-playing record, this year rings in the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1933 Flathead Fords and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Northern Virginia Regional Group. In this diamond anniversary year for the '33s, it is useful to recall some of the things that made them sparkle. The 1933 models featured the streamlining for which they are now famous. A longer wheelbase than the previous year's model provided more passenger comfort with wider seats, more leg room, and head room. The '33s also featured a new x-chassis frame and improved V-8 engine. It is remarkable that, in a year that saw a near-collapse in the banking system in March after two years of deflation, domestic U.S. production by Ford would account for 303,294 V8 passenger cars, according to Loren Sorenson in "The Ford Factory" (Silverado Publishing, 1980, reprinted Motorbooks International 1990). Among that year class, including trucks, four exist today owned by members of our club: Roy and Karen Judy's Cabriolet, Donald Hill's Fordor Sedan, Ed and Debbie Mascali's Pickup, and Steve and Wendy Pieper's Three Window Coupe.

In 1933, Ford was celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> year so it is only fitting that during the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the '33s, the Northern Virginia Regional Group is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> year. The first meeting was at Mike Gall's garage. Club officers that first year were Mike Gall (President), Walt Richmond (Vice President), Bob Guthrie (Secretary), and Hank Amster (Treasurer). By March of 1978, the club had 20 members. Activities that year set the tone for the next 30 years. Meetings commonly had a technical focus. The V-8 Ford Faithful made pilgrimages to car meets/flea markets at Frederick, MD in March, Carlisle, PA in April, York, PA in July, as well as Hershey, PA, and Rockville, MD in October. The first car for sale to appear in the club's one-page newsletter was a 1947 Super Deluxe Coupe – list price \$1,500. Over the next 9 years, enough fleas were scratched, parts found, cars purchased, and programs attended, that the club decided to host the 1987 Eastern National meet. Guided by co-chairs Ken Burns and Charlie Morrison the event was a resounding success. The Northern Virginia Regional Group's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary the following year found 58 members on the roster, with a similar number at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Near the 20 anniversary of hosting the Eastern National in '87 the club decided to do it again in 2007, ably co-chaired by Cliff Green and Hank Dubois. Under their guidance, club members pitched in to make the '07 meet another V-8 success, with some 260 happy Ford enthusiasts in attendance. Now, at 30, the Northern Virginia Regional Group is over 120 strong and looking forward to the next decade of more V-8ing, as well as the year ahead celebrating the '33s.



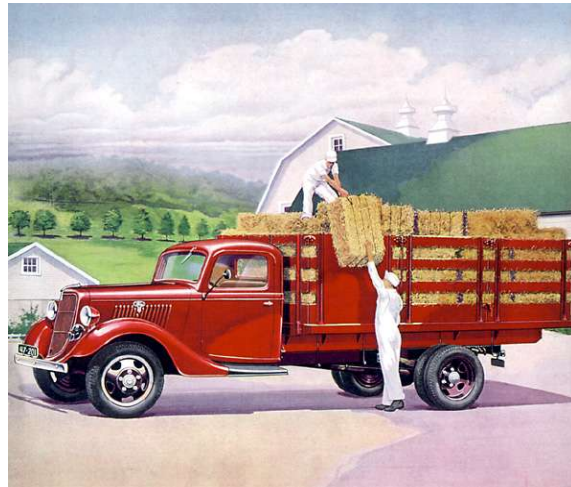
1ST. MEETING  
FEB. 7, 1978  
7:30 P.M.



FIRST MEETING WILL BE AT MIKE GALL'S HOUSE. WE WILL AT THIS MEETING ELECT OFFICERS AND A BOARD OF DIRECTORS. IF YOU NEED FURTHER INFO CALL MIKE AT HOME AT 273-5334. THIS WILL BE YOUR CLUB SO PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND. WE HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE READY TO MAKE THIS AN EXCELLENT CLUB. IF YOU CAN'T MAKE MEETING WRITE FOR MORE INFO. GET INVOLVED JOIN NOW!



N.Va. Regional Group  
EARLY FORD V8 CLUB  
P.O. BOX 29  
FAIRFAX, VA. 22030



## January 2008

“An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves”. ~ Bill Vaughan

Whether you are a pessimist or an optimist, I hope you had a relaxing, fun and enjoyable holiday or maybe you just survived the holiday with shopping, travel, planning, dealing with relatives, and so on.

For 2008, the board of directors returns for another year with new ideas to keep our wonderful club running like a well oiled early Ford V8 and the contract has been signed with the County to allow us to use Hunter House in Nottoway Park again. **John Sweet** has lined up several programs for the early part of this year including an interesting talk in January on the effects from ethanol in modern gasoline on our old V8's and a special program in February that I'll let him describe in detail elsewhere. **Leo Cummings** has some ideas that are still in the planning stage for tours.

**Barry Frieze, Eric Sumner** and I had an early Christmas this year scavenging some parts off a 1938 dump truck on it's way to the smelters pot. More on this story later.

On a personal note, please keep Butch Myrick in your thoughts as he receives treatment for cancer.

Yours in EFV8ing,

Dave

## A few New Year's V-8 Resolutions for 2008

*John Sweet*

As I've grown older (and, sticking with that follow-on cliché: "but not necessarily wiser,") I, like most folks around this time, have a habit of reflecting back on the previous year and like to think about the next. This year, after a delightful Christmas spent with my sister, her husband and my almost one-year old niece I had some extra time to think, courtesy of some flight delays at O'Hare.

Naturally, some of these thoughts were of old cars and all the fun that I had with them in 2007. I quickly decided that last year will really go down as one of my banner years in the hobby; especially as part of the Northern Virginia Regional Group. Even with Hershey, two Lincoln meets, and lots of other fun stuff, I was able to have more fun because of everything our club did in 2007. Just think: two car shows (Fairfax and the ENM), some really fun programs (at least your program chairman thought so . . . ) and, of course, lots of great tours and drives (Willow Croft, the drive in movie night, garage tours, the poker run, and a really phenomenal Lebkicker tour.)

These happy thoughts actually helped to mitigate a very aggravating two hour flight delay. My positive thoughts were further compounded when, at the gate, I was told that my seat assignment had been changed and I was moved up front to business class. As I buckled up in a nice wide comfortable seat with a complimentary cocktail prior to take-off, I thought about what I needed to do to make 2008 as fun as 2007, and ended up scribbling a few car related 2008 resolutions on my napkin.

So, here are my V-8/V-12 resolutions for 2008:

1. Sell my house and buy another one that has a much bigger garage!
2. Sell the '96 Diamond Anniversary Edition Lincoln Town Car and use the proceeds for resolution # 11 (Ad to be forwarded to the Valve Clatter soon!).
3. Get to know even more members than I know now and be a helpful club member.
4. Forward at least six articles to the Valve Clatter for the year.
5. Make sure any photos I take at a V-8 event are labeled and then forwarded to the editor and to the club historian.
6. Contribute an article or photo to the V-8 Times and hopefully see it published.
7. Contribute to the Lincoln as well as the Early Ford V-8 Foundation.
8. Attend the Grand National in Dearborn in July.
9. Drive my '48 Lincoln to as many local club functions as possible.
10. Attend and (even more important) drive the '48 Lincoln on the Lebkicker tour.
11. Finally, buy a road-worthy '34 Ford Tudor or Fordor sedan for fun and touring. (I really love my Lincoln, but some times having 4 less cylinders makess life a whol lot easier).

So there you have it, John's Early Ford V-8 and Lincon V-12 resolutions for 2008. Lots of work? Well, sure, but then again, I know I'll have a ball doing them! So Happy New Year, Happy V-8ing, and Happy Zephyring. See you on the road!

## Some Flathead Ford V-8 basics

*From the November, 2007 Redwood Review, newsletter of the Redwood Empire Regional Group # 27*

There are a few things that are fundamental to flatheads.

First off, flatheads are called flatheads because their heads are more or less flat. That is because they don't have valves in them. The valves are in the block beside the pistons rather than over them, the valve stems point down rather than up, and the heads of the valves are up rather than down. All this is in contrast to an overhead valve engine.

Now it gets interesting. If you are used to a flathead lawn mower engine, like a Briggs and Stratton, the valves are parallel to the cylinder and the crankshaft is centered on the cylinder. It's all squared up.

On a Ford/Mercury flathead, the valves are not parallel with the cylinders and the angle isn't the same from side to side. This is clearly visible when you pull the heads. The camshaft is not centered on the crankshaft and the crankshaft is not centered on the cylinders. When I first saw a disassembled flathead V8, I thought it was manufactured wrong. Right or wrong, that really is the way Ford made them.

The exhaust ports coming through the block sometimes makes it a challenge to retrofit a flathead into a dragster frame built for another kind of engine. The exhaust can end up pointing at a frame rail.

The flathead changed through the years. There were versions with 21 head studs and versions with 24 studs or bolts. They were made with 221 cubic inch displacements, 239 cubic inch displacements, and 255 cubic inch displacements. The latter was the 1949 and later Mercury engine with the much desired four-inch stroke camshaft. Ford also made a small 60 horse powered flathead V8 as an economy version which was once popular for midget racing, and a huge 337 cubic inch V8 for trucks and Lincolns. Of course, there were inline four and six cylinder flathead engines and the Lincoln V12s, but they aren't the subject of this page.

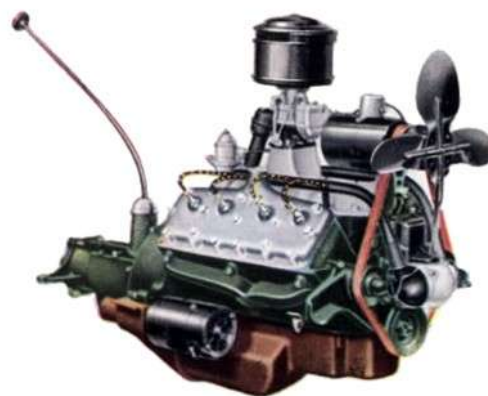
The 239/255 cubic inch "24 stud" engines are the most popular ones for hot rodding. These were made between 1946 and 1953 in the United States and through 1954 in

Canada and Australia. There are two basic types of these engines which I will refer to as early and late. The change was made in 1949 in Ford and Mercury cars and in 1948 in Ford trucks. They are easy to tell apart. The early engines had half of the bell housing cast into the block, the distributor mounted to the front of the engine with its shaft lined up with the camshaft, and the heads had water outlets in the center. The late engines had bell housings which were entirely bolted on, the distributor pointed up and to the right perpendicular to the camshaft, and the water outlets were on the front of the heads. The late heads used bolts rather than studs. There were other differences, but these will help identify the engines.

The way Ford counted cylinders is different than you might be used to. Cylinders 1-4 are on the right side and cylinders 5-8 are on the left side. Cylinder #1 is the first one on the engine's right side. It is not the one farthest forward. In the late style engines, it is the one closest to the distributor.

The firing order on all flatheads is 1-5-4-8-6-3-7-2. And don't forget how Ford counts those cylinders.

The counter-intuitive way the cylinders are numbered makes for some funny-looking stuff on the bottom end of the engine too. So, when you look at the rods attached to a flathead crankshaft, the order from front to back is 5-1- -6-2 - - 3 -- 8-4. The single dashes indicate rods which share a throw on the crank. The double dashes represent going to the next crank throw.



*Editor's note – The author of this was not identified in the Redwood Review. Original credits, however, were shown as published in the 'Vibrations' Early Ford V8 Club of Peoria, Illinois, August 2003, as well as the Lone Star Regional Group #6 of Arlington, Texas, in September of 2006.*



## [The view from the keyboard](#)

*Editor*



Thanks yet again to Cliff Green for his many years at the helm of the Valve Clatter. I also thank him for taking the time to show me how to assemble the newsletter and for providing me

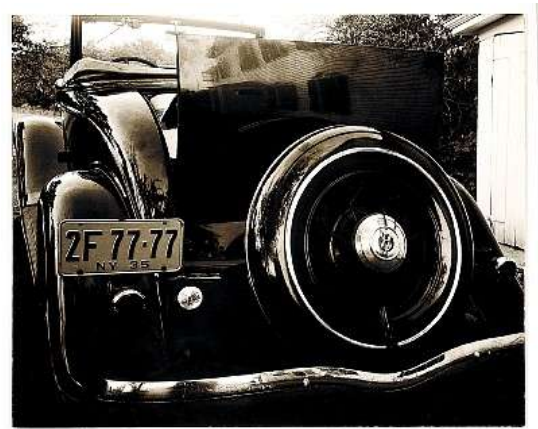
with access to his incredible library of Ford literature. Your contributions are vital to making the Valve Clatter as informative as possible about our club activities, technical tips, items of interest to our better halves – the ladies, notes about your car, sources of Ford facts etc., and V-8 items/vehicles you are looking for or selling.

Over the six years I have been a member of the club, I feel fortunate to have met some of you at our monthly meetings, or on tour, and at the 2007 Eastern National meet. I am looking forward to meeting the rest of your in the year ahead, as the opportunity arises at one of our many gatherings.

The wealth of information in Valve Clatters of the past 29 years makes clear some important things about our club. The strength of this Regional Group is its members, including their interest in Flathead Fords, and their willingness to share their knowledge with others. In addition, this is a club that provides numerous opportunities during each year to get those Fords on the road where they can be seen and enjoyed by others. Vintage vehicles commonly may only be seen in museums. Many people do not live near car museums or have the chance to visit one. By getting out on the road, we are taking the cars into the open-air “museum” that is composed of the magnificent highways and byways of this great country of ours.

While participating in one of our many tours, at the Willowcroft winery, Tom Shaw was kind enough to encourage me to consider following in Cliff Green's footsteps. Others have served in the role of editor over the years, including Mike Gall, John Hinkle, Nick Arrington, Tom Arrington, John Wenchel, Harry Avery, Steve Dawkins, Bill Tindall, Ken Burns, Paul Chase, and Jim McDaniel. So I am just taking a turn to contribute in a small way, as many others have done before me.

Fords have been a part of my family over the years in different ways. My maternal grandfather worked at the Kearny, New Jersey, Ford plant in the 1920s. The first Ford I can remember riding in was our family's 1954 station wagon. My father and I used to walk to the Ford dealership in our town every year when the new models arrived. As I entered my teens, an English Ford with column shift, a Cortina, replaced the wagon. Rides in my father's 1930 Model A Tudor were highlights of visits home in later years, culminating with the arrival of a 1939 Deluxe Station Wagon that was truly barn-fresh when it arrived at our house in 1978. Now many years later, I am looking forward to the view through the windshield of the '39 and the many adventures ahead with our club. Thanks, readers for your patience with this long editorial. I do not intend for it to be a tradition, merely an initial note of encouragement for all of you to consider submitting material for these pages in the months ahead.





# FORD PARTS AND ACCESSORIES

# MERCHANDISING BULLETIN

IT'S HERE! TWO-WAY PROTECTION FOR ALL CARS

## GENUINE FORD ANTI-FREEZE

PROTECTS AGAINST FREEZING • PROTECTS AGAINST RUST AND CORROSION

**HERE IS TWO-WAY PROTECTION**

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**QUART 25¢**  
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**GALLON \$1.00**  
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Temperature (°F)	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%
10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
12	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
16	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
18	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
20	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
22	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
24	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
26	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
28	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
30	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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36	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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40	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
42	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
44	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
46	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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52	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
54	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

ALWAYS TAKE WINDMETER READING AND ALWAYS USE WATER TEMPERATURE...

Folders, Window Posters, Counter Display Cards, Window Streamers, Wall Charts—these sales aids are available to help you sell Genuine Ford Anti-Freeze. Display them prominently.

VOLUME TWO • OCTOBER 1936 • NUMBER TEN

PARTS PANEL OPERATORS' CONTEST IN FULL SWING ...  
NEW IMPROVED HEATER  
LEADS FALL ACCESSORIES  
SALES ITEMS.....Page 2

FORD ANTI-FREEZE SHOULD BE PUSHED NOW ... NEW BATTERY FOLDER OFF THE PRESS.....Page 3  
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DEALERS TELL OF INCREASED PROFITS FROM "OPEN BIN" INSTALLATIONS.....Page 6  
LUGGAGE CARRIER FOR BOATS ... KANSAS CITY

BRANCH DISPLAYS AT STATE FAIR ... FACTS ABOUT GENUINE FORD PARTS.....Page 7  
DEALER ACTIVITIES HERE AND THERE.....Page 8

With the garage-tour season ahead, it may be a good time to be sure your Vintage V-8 is ready

for the season. Remember, anti-freeze, oil, and grease are cheaper than steel.



## TECH TIP

*Cliff Green*

We continually search for the culprit in our ignition systems. The most difficult trouble shooting is when the car will start 90% of the time, while mysteriously, the remaining 10% it won't. When you have this type of problem it is necessary to find out if there is voltage to the coil. There should be 3.5 volts when the points are closed (to make a circuit). Run a jumper wire from the positive post of the battery directly to the coil or jump the back of the ignition switch (batt to ign) and if it starts, than the source of the problem is under the dash. I have found the thumb screws on the ignition switch loose. They should be tight, tight! Move the toggle switch up and down when a voltmeter is across the batt and coil terminal and check for voltage.

Now, there was an occasion when the woodie quit for no reason at all and prior to that would not start on occasion. I found that cycling the ignition switch would restore the ignition. The contacts in the little box on the back of the steering wheel and ignition lock assembly were dirty and worn. Disconnect the three wires from Batt/coil/gages and take out the two screws that hold the assembly to the ignition lock. Inside you will find three brass balls that pivot to press against brass spots, representing the terminals, when you move the toggle switch up and down. Moving the toggle up (starting in 1938, down on earlier) will line up the brass connections. If they are dirty – clean up with a pencil eraser or lightly sand; if worn - replace assembly. Remember all 6V electrical components must be tight on shiny parts.

This tip is appropriate for '32- '48, although the trouble shooting is the same for later models.



Note: Interior photo above is of a replacement type.

## FOR THE LADIES

Barbara Westrate passed along some information concerning the other Ford Model B -shown below.



Ford built a planned community in Dearborn, Michigan that is now a historic district minutes from Detroit. Six models were offered, models A to F. Common to these plans were a porch, three bedrooms, and a two-story design. The National meet in Dearborn in 2008 may provide an opportunity for attendees to drive their Early V-8 Fords or modern iron to this historic district to see what the other Model A and B that Ford built look like today.

## SELL/WANT

Ray Kunsman has a very nice/restored radiator for a '38/'39 "heavy" Ford truck. He purchased it off of ebay a few years ago. Ray indicated that "This 'very hard-item-to-find' is yours free just for the cost of shipping." 912-598-7204.

## 1933 in perspective

In 1933, owing to the huge east Texas oilfield discovery, the price of a barrel of oil dropped from 75 cents a barrel to ten cents a barrel. Competition was so fierce the oil industry asked for government regulation to stabilize the price at \$1.00 a barrel, according to Daniel Yergin in "The Prize" published in 1991 by Free Press.

## V-8 EMAIL

*Dave Gunnarson*

Dave found a 1938 Dump Truck located near Colvin Run Road and Route 7. It had a 24 stud, 59? Flathead in it. The truck was due to be scrapped at any time. He reported that the engine spun freely, had a full charge of anti-freeze in it, was full oil that was clean and had no water in it. One head was removed and there was little or no lip on the cylinder walls and the bore looked good too. The engine had been covered, but Dave did not know if the engine had problems or not. He alerted the club through the NVRG listserver set up by Jim McDaniel. At the time of printing the fate of the engine was unknown. Perhaps if a club member did retrieve the engine, it would be a good story to share with the readers of the Valve Clatter for the February issue.



As Dave noted in his email to the NVRG faithful. “Those old Flatheads aren't growing on trees anymore.”

*Jason Javaras*

Jason asked recently “Has anyone in the club gone through the process of researching the history of their V-8? You know, build sheet, previous owners, etc? If so I thought it would save me a lot of air time trying to obtain sources, addresses and what not and also maybe help out others who have been wondering about how to find this information. With all the combined experience of our member, this must have been

something we would all like to pursue. Thanks in advance for any leads you can provide.”

Jason's question is provided here so readers of the Valve Clatter are made aware of this excellent set of questions, as well as Jim McDaniel's reply noted below.

*Jim McDaniel*

“It's been almost 20 years since I did it, but I did research my '51 Ford cruiser. I researched the title through the Virginia DMV back to a North Carolina title. This was pre-Internet, and as I recall, I wrote a letter to the DMV explaining I had an antique care and was researching the 'genealogy' of the car, requesting from them a history of ownership. When I got their reply (it probably took a few months), I then did the same with North Carolina DMV. They replied and that got me the rest of the genealogy. That is how I found out that it was a public service vehicle that was privately owned (as many were back in that time).”

If other members have experiences related to Jason's questions, submissions on this topic to the Valve Clatter are welcome.

*Bob Belsley*

Bob has found an interesting used car site based out of Staunton, Illinois. At the time of this writing, among the offerings were a '53 Black Flathead Ford. <http://www.dealsonwheels.com/dealers/company.aspx?c=630>

*Clem Clements*

Mark you calendars, please. The water damage of a year ago is all fixalated and Ms Sandy has new wood floors, fresh paint and new shine to our home. All are welcome. Note this event is in **FEBRUARY**.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR TRAIN DAY

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2008**

**12-5 PM**

AT

THE CLEMENT HOME  
12106 GARY HILL DR  
FAIRFAX VA 22030





# NVRG Calendar



## January

- 8 Membership Meeting** – 7:00 pm – Nottaway Park – **Program:** Dennis Smith will discuss the impact of ethanol now being used in gasoline and its impact on motor oils and lubrication of antique automobile engines. Refreshments: TBD
- 26 AACA Bay Country Indoor Swap Meet** – Cambridge, MD – complete information at: [http://local.aaca.org/baycountry/annual\\_parts\\_meet.htm](http://local.aaca.org/baycountry/annual_parts_meet.htm) or ask Clem for details.
- 29 Board of Director's Meeting** – 7:00 pm – Oakton Library



## February

- 12 Membership Meeting** – 7:00 pm – Nottaway Park – Program: TBD – Refreshments: TBD
- 24 Train Day at Clem and Sandy's** – 12-5 pm – full details in next month's Valve Clatter.
- 26 Board of Director's Meeting** – 7:00 pm – Oakton Library

## March

- 11 Membership Meeting** – 7:00 pm – Nottaway Park – Program: TBD – Refreshments: TBD
- 23-24 AACA Sugarloaf Mountain Swap Meet** – Frederick MD
- 26 Board of Director's Meeting** – 7:00 pm

## Down the Road

**May 17<sup>th</sup>** –Northern Virginia Regional Group sponsors our annual City of Fairfax Car Show. Contact Dave Westrate for complete details.

**July 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>** – Early Ford V-8 Club of America Grand National Meet in Dearborn, Michigan. See announcement in V-8 Times for more details.



**Board of directors**  
**Northern Virginia Regional Group**



President: **Dave Gunnarson** 703-425-7708

Vice President: <b>Eric Sumner</b>	703-709-4164	Programs: <b>John Sweet</b>	703-430-5770
Secretary: <b>Cliff Green</b>	703-426-2662	Property: <b>Frankie Martin</b>	703-928-7136
Treasurer: <b>Greg Mensinger</b>	703-893-5644	Activities: <b>Dave Westrate</b>	703-620-9597
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Tours: <b>Leo Cummings, Hank Dubois</b>	703-476-6919	Newsletter: <b>Jim La Baugh</b>	703-573-9285
Past President: <b>John Girman</b>	703-242-1459	Web master: <b>helenandken@verizon.net</b>	

**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, VA. Check the newsletter for occasional alternate sites.**



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

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