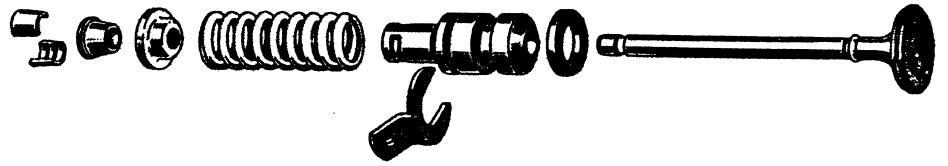




Valve Clatter



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

www.nvrg.org

Volume XXXI, No. 2

February 2009

Jim LaBaugh Editor

Bill Potter's Big Top Garage Tour



The January garage tour was to Bill Potter's 'Big Top' Garage. The 'Big Top' refers to the steel beam frame of the garage that was disassembled by Bill at another site and reassembled on his farm in Potomac Maryland. The farm contains several outbuildings and grounds containing many old Fords and other Detroit iron (*continued on page 3*).



February 2009

Our first real snowfall of the season has finally arrived and today as I write this message, the snow is starting to melt and a light rain is also falling. It reminds me of the day years ago when the club went to Bill Potter's garage, the weather was very similar. But not this year, our latest outing took us back to Bill Potter's place again, only this time we were able to inspect the treasures scattered about outside the garage. Again I am in awe of the extensive collection and the degree to which everything is organized. I was also pleasantly surprised to the one and only Buzzy Potter holding court in the corner of the "Hot Rod" assembly area of the shop. It was a great way to kick off the new year for the club and I am extremely grateful for the generosity of both Bill and Buzzy Potter for sharing their collection and giving us all a little motivation to get out in the garage and get something done.

Our next tour event takes us to the home of Clem and Sandy Clement. Every year Clem and Sandy open their home to a great day of fun, friends, food, cars and let's not forget the largest collection of Model Trains I've ever seen. There's something for everyone! It's a real treat for the kids so, grab your kids and grand kids and don't miss this one. The food is always good and we're all encouraged to bring a dish to share. If the weather cooperates, bring the V8, Clem say's there's room on the lawn.

Also, plan on making it to the next membership meeting. Ken Burns will report on one of the great Woodie shows held annually on the left coast. So dig out that Hawaiian shirt and wax up the long board, it's time for some fun in the sun.

Do you remember your first experience in a Ford V8? If so, write up a little tale and send it to Jim LaBaugh to be published in the Valve Clatter.

Eric Sumner

ATTENTION:

[Winter weather is here, so if Fairfax County schools are closed or let out early the day of our meeting, our meeting site also is closed and the meeting is canceled.](#)

Garage Tour Report

by Dave Gunnarson



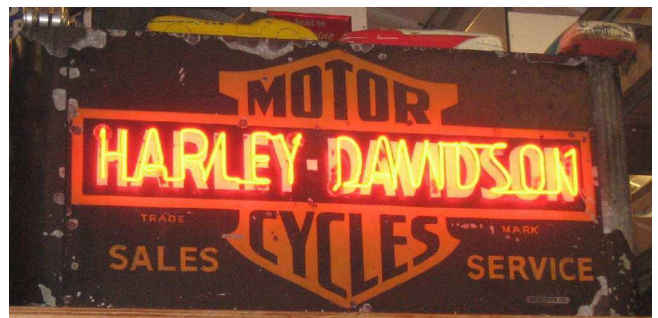
On a nippy but reasonable winter's day, a large contingent of faithful NVRGer's gathered at the traditional rally point at Fair Oaks Mall for a much anticipated return to the garage of Bill Potter in Potomac, Maryland which houses Bill and his dad's Buzzy Potter collection of old Ford, Harley and a wide range of other items. The caravan, which included Leo Cummings in his Mercury sedan,



navigated the beltway and arrived to find other members already at the garage. Over 30 people took advantage of this marvelous opportunity. The first hour was spent inspecting the old car and truck collection sitting outside of the barns resting quietly after seeing their prime years of service completed. Buzzy said he kept every vehicle he ever owned, and after seeing the collection of vehicles on the property, it would be hard to challenge that assertion.

With the outdoor inspections complete, the group slowly filtered into the main garage, a 60 foot by 100 foot metal building. Buzzy kept warm in the only heated section where a '32 project car was being assembled. Bill

entertained everyone in the main building and set out some doughnuts for consumption, but the real feast was in the display of automotive, machinery-related and all sorts of indescribable treasures where ever one looked. There were two '32 cars next to a special '34 open car, and Indian motorcycle, modern hot rod, 1907 corn husker engine,



Harley Dealer neon sign - all visible within the first two steps of the door. Upstairs were long rows of metal shelves, neatly stacked with performance speed parts, Harley parts, front axles, and on, and on. On the first level were more cars, motorcycles, bins of parts, tools, bicycles, and so much that it would take too long to describe. In fact, the hardest part for some, seemed to be trying to focus on just one thing; there was just so much to look at, and most so interesting, that it was hard to concentrate.



Garage Tour Report (continued)



About 20 folks headed over to a local eatery and swapped stories over lunch. A good time was had by all and special thanks go to Bill and Buzzy for their hospitality.

Ford News Ladies – Safety

For many years, Dorothy Dignam wrote columns that appeared in the publication Ford News. She focused on automotive topics of interest to the ladies. For those who think car seats for children are a recent invention, Dignam's article in the July 1939 issue of Ford News highlighted children's car seats with seat belts. The cost was under \$5.



Designed to “..clamp securely under the car cushions in the front or back seat.. “ the seat could be used until age 5 or 6. “Mrs. Muller” - the inventor- “has been commended by the National Safety Council for the security of this invention, and we've heard of extreme cases where cars *turned over* and Junior hardly bumped his head.” reported Dignam.

January Meeting Report

The January meeting program featured Cliff Green (below left) talking about shocks. His report from the meeting is the [Tech Tip](#) this month, beginning on page 5.




SHOCKING NEWS!!

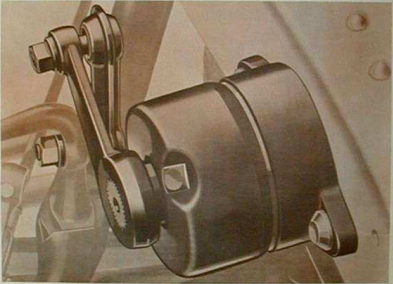
by Cliff Green

Have you tightened your gland nut lately?
Adjusted the needle for winter driving?
How about checking the hydraulic fluid?

What are we talking about here? Why the Houdaille (pronounced hoo-dye) shocks that smooth the ride on all Fords '32 - early '47.



THE FORD V-8
has 4 Houdaille Double-Action
self-adjusting
SHOCK ABSORBERS
as standard equipment on all models



FORD V-8 SHOCK ABSORBERS cushion both *upward* and *downward* road shocks on all four wheels, and automatically adjust themselves to give smooth riding comfort both summer and winter. The double-acting feature opposes "outward throw" of body when rounding curves.

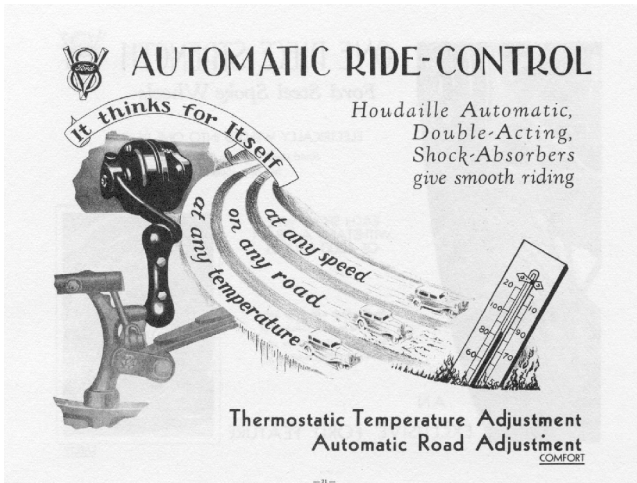
ANOTHER REASON FOR FORD RIDING COMFORT

Shock absorber is really a misnomer. Their purpose in the suspension system is to dampen the energy produced by the springs, converting mechanical energy into heat! Yes, heat. When the shocks do their thing, the heat is transferred from the body to the frame. Next time you go for a ride in your early V8, check one out to see how warm it is.

When the spring is upset by a bump in the road, if left by itself, it would expend its energy through oscillations, like on a buggy or trailer. Now, attach the spring shackles to an absorber arm. The oscillations are dampened by the restriction of the hydraulic fluid in the Houdaille cylindrical assembly on both the joust and the recoil. On most V8 models, a needle valve can adjust the resistance.

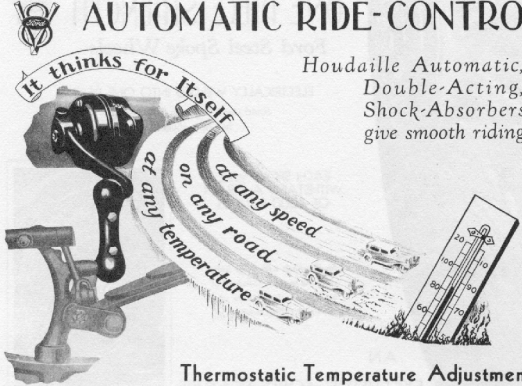
Houdaille was a Frenchman who developed the cylindrical absorber in the early 1900's with the final pattern awarded in 1914. Little change to his invention has taken place since then. Houdailles were mounted on every French car plus RR and all race cars. A. B. Shutz bought the rights to produce the shocks in the USA in 1919. He established the Houde Manufacturing Co. in Buffalo, NY. After being selected by several cars in the 1920's, his big contract came from Henry Ford in 1927. His device was to be standard equipment on the Model A, worth some 21,000 units to start with!

The Ford unit underwent numerous changes from 1932 until 1937. Some were mounted inside the frame, some had automatic temperature compensation, arms and links were modified, casting were different, etc. For your particular car, you have to do research to make sure you have the correct body, arms and links.



AUTOMATIC RIDE-CONTROL
Houdaille Automatic, Double-Acting, Shock-Absorbers give smooth riding

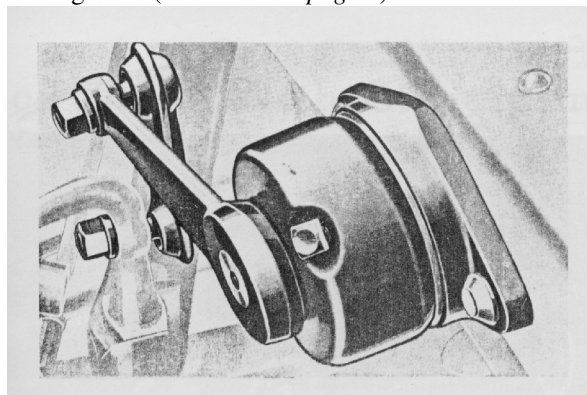
It thinks for itself
on any road
at any speed
at any temperature



Thermostatic Temperature Adjustment
Automatic Road Adjustment
COMFORT

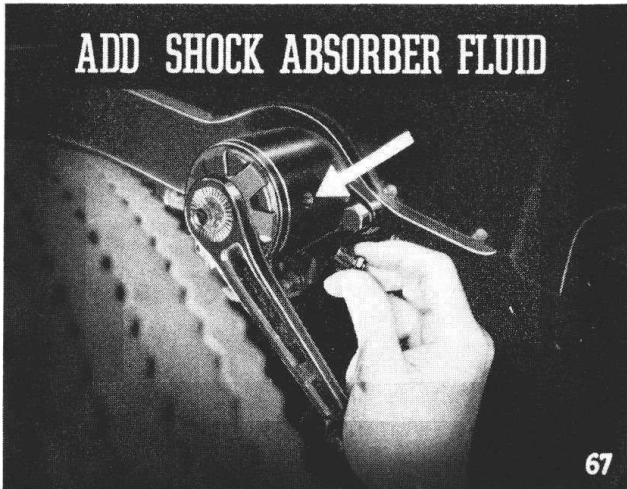
Not all shock absorbers have the Houdaille stampings on the cap. Two other companies, National and Spicer Engineering Companies, were contracted to build these units - 20-30% of the Ford cars were so equipped.

It was not until some time in 1947 that Ford changed to the airplane type, tubular shocks. The exact date is nebulous since every assembly plant used up their old stock before switching over. (continued on page 6)

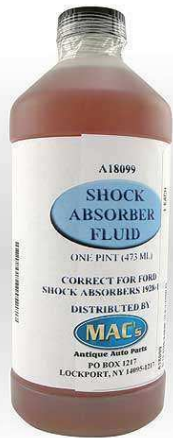


SHOCKING NEWS!! *(continued)*

Our Houdaille shocks are rebuildable if the shaft does not wiggle. M&S Hydraulics says : 1) The shaft can be turned, and is not loose and does not wobble from side to side. About 10% of the shocks are like this. All can be rebuilt. 2) The shaft is frozen but straight. All these must be disassembled to determine if they can be rebuilt. This category will constitute about 40% of the total. About half of these can be rebuilt. M&S also repro's new shocks!



You can order the hydraulic fluid from MAC'S for \$10 a pint, including shipping.



The best way to service is to unbolt the rears so that they will hang down to get access to the filler nut. It is easier to pour and rinse with the filler on the top. It is important that the shock body is not overfilled. Let it drain bolted to the frame before installing the nut. The fronts are assessable by turning the wheels full turn.

There is a valve on the end of the shaft that can be turned to adjust the about of resistance inside the body. The book says to only move the adjustment half the width of the needle from the factory mark!! A little goes a long way.

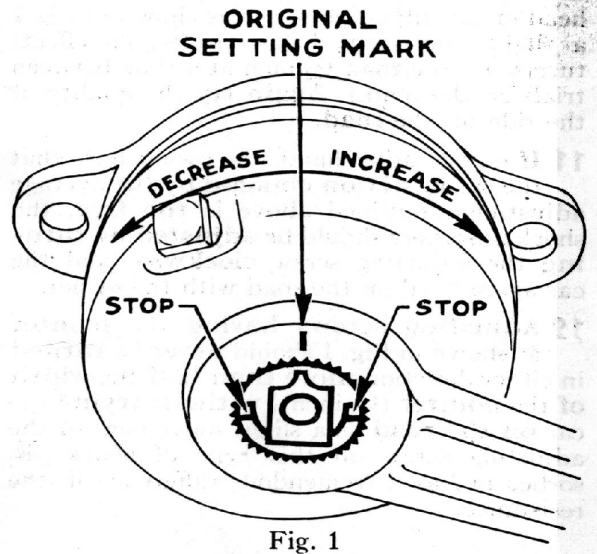


Fig. 1

During the winter it was advisable for the Ford to be serviced for ride conditions, other wise the car would ride like a truck (like Dave Gunnarson's, which has none). The earlier cars would have the gland nut tightened which requires a special tool. Some of the nuts were on the back of the cylinder, others were under the arm.

SHOCK ABSORBER PACKING NUT WRENCH

A wrench for tightening the packing nut of the rear shock absorbers used on 1934 and 1935 cars is now available from K. R. Wilson, Buffalo, N. Y. (See Fig. 434).

The shock absorber packing nut wrench is listed under number V-172 and is priced at 75 cents.

It will usually be found when a shock absorber is leaking at the packing nut that the leak can be eliminated by tightening the nut with the V-172 wrench.

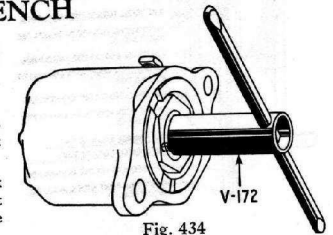


Fig. 434

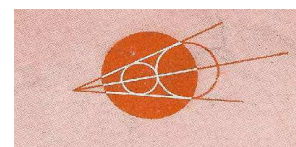
GO CHECK YOUR FLUID!

Wanted:

1949 Ford F100 Pickup - A friend of Steve Pieper is interested in obtaining a 1949 Ford F100 Pickup Truck. If you know of one that is available, please let Steve know.

Welcome:

Please welcome new members Stu and Kay Sondheimer of Alexandria, VA. Stu has a '35 5-window coupe that he is still working on. Stu and Kay attended the Fairfax County show last year. He received a rousing welcome at the January meeting. Of particular interest is assistance with the wiring on the '35.



“The one I wish I had kept.”

by Art Zimmerli

Going through some old photographs, it occurred to me that some of the older members of the club might have pictures of their first cars or “the one I wish I had kept.”



My entry would be this 1949 Mercury convertible with the '50 front clip. I bought this car in 1951 from Smiling Sam the Used Car Man up on Wisconsin Avenue. Not long thereafter I went on an all expenses paid trip to Korea so it sat around for awhile. Buy 1956 the paint was fading, the top leaked, and so did the window, top, and seat cylinders. Sold it in the spring for one hundred ninety five dollars.

I had several Flatheads in the late Forties including a '38 Ford Coupe and a '41 Mercury Station Wagon, but the convertible is the “one I wish I had kept.”

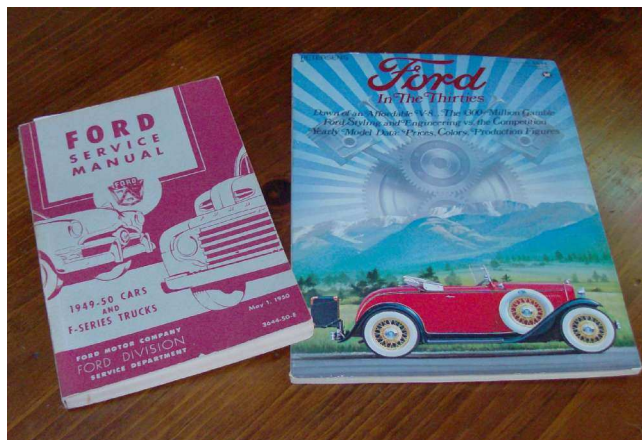
I cannot remember all the prices but one that I do involved my father. He was in the automobile business in D.C. but lost it during the Depression. He managed to save our house and his 1930 Auburn with the big in-line Lycoming engine. By 1940 things were better. We drove from Maryland in that big old Auburn over to Arlington Ford in Rosslyn where he bought a new Standard Two Door Sedan. They gave him seventy five dollars for the Auburn. That is the one I wish he had kept.

Book Reviews: by Jason Javaras

Ford in the Thirties – Petersen Publishing Company – dated 1976.

This 144 page paper bound book is a treasure trove of information of all things Ford during the 1930s. I picked it up some time ago but until now have not taken the time to read it cover to cover. The author, Paul L. Woudenberg, Ph.D. was a lecturer at UCLA in automotive history and engineering, and was particularly interested in Ford Motor

Company’s influence on the production of both American and European cars and trucks in the turbulent thirties. The book starts with the rise and fall of the model A, deals extensively with the development of the flathead V8 engine and ends with the 1940 and 1941 models that prefaced the new decade of the forties. In between the author systematically analyzes each new Ford model and truck by year and compares them with other competitive makes by design and features. The black and white photos are well chosen and the text has just the right mixture of technical data and trivia to make the book an interesting read. Included toward the end of the book is an in-depth interview with Emil Zoerlein, who was a top-level engineer with Ford from 1926 to 1959 and who had a close working relationship with Henry Ford for many years. His insights into Mr. Ford’s design philosophy make especially good reading for those of us of the Ford persuasion. Closing out the book is a complete listing of Ford Model Specifications from 1930 through 1940. This publication is a good candidate to look for at swap meets and in fact may be in reprint by now.



Ford Service Manual. 1949-50 cars and F-Series trucks. Ford Service Dept. publication no. 3644-50-E.

This Ford publication follows the tried and true format of service manuals for most all of the EFV8s and probably even further back than that but because it covers both cars and trucks it is much more comprehensive in both topics and content. Topics covered include model identifications, specifications and procedures for: Lubrication, Maintenance, Trouble Shooting, Adjustments, Minor Repairs, and Replacements for all 1949-50 cars and F-Series trucks through F8. The Specifications Section alone is 11 pages long and even includes most torque specs which are often hard to find in one place.

The manual is 192 pages long and is bound in heavy duty embossed paper that should last well in the garage. My copy is an original copy, dated May 1, 1950 and can still be found at Hershey. Reprints are also available from most of the larger EFV8 parts dealers.

February Meeting Program: Wavecrest

a report from Ken Burns

Tuesday, February 10, 2009 at 7:00 pm



It may be a miserably cold, wet and snowy evening outside, but Ken Burn's will surely warm the cockles of your heart with his presentation about Wavecrest - The premier woody event held at the spectacular Moonlight Beach in Encinitas, just on the outskirts of sunny, warm and delightful San Diego along California Highway 101.

The event, which is considered the "largest gathering of wooden bodied automobiles in the world," is hosted by the San Diego Chapter of the National Woodie Club and offers the lover of wooden bodied automobiles a veritable nirvana of cars to gaze upon. Attracting upwards of 250 to 300 cars, Ken will regale us with tales of surf, sand, and some really neat spectacular Woodies. So, please be sure to come and catch the wave. See you there!"

Winter weather is here, so if Fairfax County schools are closed or let out early the day of our meeting, our meeting site also is closed and the meeting is canceled.

YOU ARE INVITED
TO OLD CAR AND TRAIN DAY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2009

12-5 PM

AT

THE CLEMENT HOME

12106 GARY HILL DRIVE
FAIRFAX VA 22030

Bring you significant other, kids, parents, and any other train, antique or old cars lovers to join in the fun and fellowship of antique trains and old cars.

Weather permitting, additional antique cars may join us. New additions to the antique train collection are on display and some trains are under power. Bring "show and tell" trains, if you like, and we'll try to run them. If you have trains to be repaired, this is a good time to drop them off.

A favorite appetizer, finger food or desert brought for sharing would be gratefully appreciated.

DIRECTIONS: Take Route 66 West to Exit 55 (Fairfax County Route 7100) South to Braddock Road. Turn right towards Clifton/Centreville. Turn left at the first traffic light onto Colchester Road and go 2.2 miles. Cross Popes Head Road (Church on corner), turn left on Saddlehorn Drive (Through the brick entranceway into Colchester Hunt Village). Second right is Gary Hill Drive. We are the first house on the left.

Alternate Route: Take Braddock Road West off the 495 Beltway. Travel west about 15 miles, cross under Fairfax Parkway and turn left at the traffic light onto Colchester Road and continue as above.

[See you on Train and Old Car Day!](#)

Sandy and Clem Clement
Ph. (703)-830-5597 C (571)-239-1701
Email: clem.clement@cox.net



NVRG Calendar



February

10	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm - Nottaway Park - Program: Wavecrest by Ken Burns Refreshments: David Westrate
22	Clem Clement's annual car and train extravaganza 12-5 pm (see page 8 for details)
24	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 7:30 pm @ Oakton Library
26	Valve Clatter deadline - send items to Jim LaBaugh (jlabaugh@verizon.net)

March

10	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm - Nottaway Park - Program: VA Old Car Council Refreshments: Nick Arrington
27-28	Frederick, MD – Sugarloaf Mtn. 37 th Indoor Parts meet, Frederick, MD Fairground
30	Valve Clatter deadline - send items to Jim LaBaugh (jlabaugh@verizon.net)
31	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 7:30 pm @ Oakton Library

April

2 5	Charlotte, NC, AACA Spring meet, Charlotte Motor Speedway
14	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm - Nottaway Park - Program: To be determined Refreshments: Mark Luposello
22-26	Carlisle, Pa - “Spring Carlisle and Collector Car Auction”
28	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 7:30 pm @ Oakton Library
30	Valve Clatter deadline - send items to Jim LaBaugh (jlabaugh@verizon.net)

May

2	NVRG Annual Poker Run
12	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm - Nottaway Park - Program: Steve Pieper - racing on the Salt Flats Refreshments: Art Zimmerli
16	NVRG Annual Car Show, Fairfax City, VA
26	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 7:30 pm @ Oakton Library
29	Valve Clatter deadline - send items to Jim LaBaugh (jlabaugh@verizon.net)

Down the Road

[Garage tour in March - details to follow.](#)

June 6, 2009 - 52nd Annual Antique Automobile Meet. Hosted by the Historic Fredericksburg region, AACA.

Caroline Street, downtown Fredericksburg, VA. Contact J. Brown at (540) 372-6896

2009 Eastern National Meet, Hartford, CT June 24 to 27, 2009



Board of directors
Northern Virginia Regional Group



President: **Eric Sumner** 703-860-1916

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Refreshments:	Greg Mensinger	703-893-5644	At Large:	Hank Dubois	703-476-6919
Past President:	Dave Gunnarson	703-425-7708	Web master:	helenandken@verizon.net	

Mark your calendar !
The February Meeting is on
Tuesday February 10
at 7:00 pm in the historic Hunter
House, located adjacent to the tennis
courts, Nottoway Park, Court House
Road, Vienna, VA



February program: [Wavecrest](#)



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Regional Group 96
Early Ford V8 Club
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Vienna, Virginia, 22183