



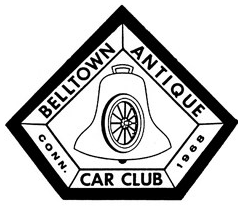
# The Belltown Bulletin

News & information from the Belltown Antique Car Club

December 2023 / January 2024







## NEXT MEETING

**Saturday, January 6, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. at Karl Helming's in Portland**

- Timely Topics:
- Report on the year-end internal audit of the Club's financial books
  - Long-lead decisions for our August, 2024 Vintage Motorcar Meet
  - Pre-planning for our April, 2024 April Antique Engine & Tractor Meet
  - First quarter tours and activities
  - Membership renewal status

## FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Just over 1,900 vehicles were sold at the Scottsdale, Ariz. Barrett-Jackson collector car auction held in January, 2020, for a sale total of \$129.7 million, its most successful auction up to that point. After a



soft year in 2021 due to the pandemic, in 2022 B-J's Scottsdale sales jumped to \$195.5 million on 1,841 vehicles sold. At last year's auction their revenue dipped slightly to \$184.2 million on sales of 1,907 vehicles.

Where might the market go in 2024? January's Scottsdale auctions might be a good indicator.

## CLUB NOTES

Our final business meeting of 2023, BACC's Annual Meeting, was held on November 4 at Karl Helming's garage in Portland. Special thanks to *Betty Lichota* and *Joan Frey* for the after meeting refreshments and goodies.

### Old Business

*Cliff Baker* explained Directors and Officers Liability Insurance, noting that our insurance agent has quoted an annual premium cost of \$854 on top of our general liability policy, for which we were charged just over \$450 in 2023. Cliff recommended that we purchase the additional coverage when our policy renews in March. A motion was made and approved to pay the first year's premium out of existing treasury funds, and going forward, pay for it via an increase in annual membership dues of \$10 per year per primary member. Per our By-Laws, dues rate increases decided at the Annual Meeting take effect on March 1, such that annual membership dues will increase to \$30 (\$40 with paper newsletter) for anyone who renews late for 2024 or joins on or after March 1, 2024. Any current member or new member who renews or joins prior to that date will pay \$20 (or \$30) as is stated on the current membership renewal form. The membership application/renewal form will be updated for March 1 to reflect the increase.

There was further discussion of the Featured Marque for 2024, however, it was decided that the final decision will be taken at the January meeting. In the interim, there will be more investigation into the option of having Connecticut-made cars be the Featured Marque. Other alternatives will still be considered.

We also need to finalize the show class list for 2024 at the January meeting such that flyers can be prepared to use in early publicity for the August Vintage Motorcar Meet. [A proposed show class list is included with the email version of this issue of the newsletter. - *Ed.*]

Update: Purchase of AACA-CCR's trailer took place upon receipt of the title from the seller. *Karl Helming* will register it, maintain it, and store it. The contents of our old trailer will be transferred to the new one ahead of the next meet.

CLUB NOTES (continued from p. 1)**New Business**

*Cliff Baker* proposed that we make a donation to the Colchester Volunteer Fire Department in memory of *Bob Fiala*, our late colleague. Recognizing Bob's generosity toward BACC, the members approved an amount of \$100.

**Upcoming Club Activities**

BACC's holiday party will be held on Saturday, December 9. *Polly Beckwith* will mail out the invitations including RSVP envelopes by mid-November. Polly reported that one of the menu options was revised versus last year. The three choices will be sliced top round roast beef, sole with seafood stuffing, or chicken Parmesan with pasta.

**Election of 2024 Officers**

Former president *Alan Carlson* made an appeal to newer/younger members to aspire to leadership roles, noting that it is good for the Club to have new ideas and perspectives. We need to cultivate the next generation of BACC leaders to ensure our future. With that in mind, we appreciate that *Polly Beckwith* offered to step aside as a candidate for the Board and applaud *Phil Schuster* for volunteering to stand for the open position.

Given that all candidates were running unopposed, secretary *Peter Christianson* cast one vote for the slate on behalf of the members present, there being no objections.

Our 2024 officers are:

President - *Mark Hoydilla\**

Vice President - *Ray Lichota\**

Secretary - *Peter Christianson*

Treasurer - *Cliff Baker*

Member-at-Large, Board of Directors - *Phil Schuster* (two-year term)

Note: *Jon Grant* continues as the other member-at-large on the Board, in the second year of his two-year term, and former president *Alan Carlson* continues on the Board in the ex-officio role.

\*) Due to term limits, a year from now Mark and Ray will not be eligible to run again for their current offices.

**MEMBER MILESTONES**

<b><u>Happy Birthday to:</u></b>	Peter Christianson	Jan. 1st (70)	Kathy Miller	Jan. 19th (79)
	Robert Szczepanski	Jan. 12th	Stan Mirecki	Jan. 20th
	Nancy Shaw	Jan. 14th	Garrett Grant	Jan. 26th
	Mike Somma	Jan. 16th (81)	Jim Mulconry	Jan. 26th
	Alan Miller	Jan. 19th (78)		

**Happy Anniversary to:** Paul & Margaret Seely Jan. 26th      Robert Szczepanski & Gayle Kellas Jan. 31st

**New Member:** Please welcome back former Belltownner *John T. McCarthy* of Camp Verde, Ariz. who has rejoined us.

**Home & Recovering:** Best wishes to *Tom Cote*, who has been recuperating from injuries suffered in a motor vehicle accident on Labor Day weekend.

**Membership renewal reminder** - BACC's annual dues are to be paid by the first of the year. Renewals are considered late as of the end of January. A reminder will accompany the February newsletter for those members whose dues are still outstanding when that issue of the newsletter is published. As of the last week of December, 40 members (41%) have not yet paid their 2024 dues. See the treasurer at the January meeting or mail your check to the Club mailbox in East Hampton at your earliest convenience. You may download the renewal form from the Club web site or request one from the Club treasurer or secretary at the next meeting.



### SCENES FROM BACC'S 2023 HOLIDAY PARTY, DECEMBER 9

66 folks attended the event. Chicken Parm was the most popular entree. Extra thanks to Polly B, Mary C, Joan F, Diane B & Cliff!



[Photo credit: Dan David, except as noted below]

### BACC Annual Awards Announced at the 2023 Holiday Party

This year the Board was pleased to recognize the following individuals (*Mark Hoydilla*, presenter):

- ◆ **Joan Frey** received the Bill Perry Award for Outstanding Service to BACC
- ◆ **Scott Macgregor** received the Henry Burr Award in Recognition of Commendable Club or Community Service
- ◆ **Bill Nitschke\*** received the John Marinelli Award for Enhancing the Overall Enjoyment of the Old Car Hobby

\*) not present



[Photo credit, above (Scott) and left (Joan): Betty Lichota]

**Congratulations to our three award winners for 2023!**



## CONNECTICUT AUTOMOBILIA

Submitted by Steven Rossi

Back when Southern New England was the incubator of the automobile industry in America, Connecticut was the home of a variety of suppliers that sprang up or diversified to serve the newly-minted automobile producers. Conn. Telephone & Electric Co. of Meriden was one such company.



**CONNECTICUT IGNITION**

**Full Current—and What It Means To Gasoline**

**T**HE Connecticut System is free to deliver the battery's full current to your cylinders because no resistance has been set up anywhere along the line to cut down the flow.

Full current means a fat, eager spark which fires rapidly and completely even today's low-grade fuels.

That fat spark is necessary to get the maximum miles per gallon from your gasoline. With gasoline at 35 cents full current will prevent high fuel bills.

The Automatic Switch guarantees the system's safety in using full current—because when the motor stops the current stops—the switch kicks off automatically and checks the flow.

Will the Connecticut Ignition System be on the next car you buy?

**CONNECTICUT TELEPHONE & ELECTRIC COMPANY**  
Meriden Connecticut

LXXXVI THE HORSELESS AGE. Vol. 18, No. 19.

# CONNECTICUT SPARK COILS

**Over 15,000 Connecticut Spark Coils**

have been

**Contracted for 1907 Cars**



By the leading automobile manufacturers, and this in view of the fact that they have been on the market but practically one season.

They cost more to manufacture than other prominent makes are sold for, consequently the selling price must be made in proportion.

Connecticut Coils are the best that money can buy, and where a manufacturer uses them as regular equipment it is a pretty good indication of the quality of the car.

See that your new car has a Connecticut Coil.

## Think It Over

Send for Catalog No. 12H.

**The Connecticut Telephone & Electric Co., Inc.**  
Meriden, Conn.

### UPCOMING EVENTS (Club participation events in bold)

**Saturday, January 6, 2024 - First BACC business meeting of the new year at Karl Helming's home garage, 220 Jobs Pond Rd., Portland, Conn., 1:30 p.m.** [in the event of poor winter driving conditions it may be postponed to Sunday, Jan. 7].

**Friday-Sunday, Jan. 19-21** - Carlisle Events presents Auto Mania, an indoor flea market and corral at the Ag Hall at the Allentown, Penn. Fairgrounds. Info: <https://carlisleevents.com/events/events-detail/index?id=auto+mania>.

**Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 20-21** - Auto Parts Swap 'n Sell, Eastern States Exposition Better Living Center, 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield, Mass. For info go to [www.apswapnsell.com](http://www.apswapnsell.com).

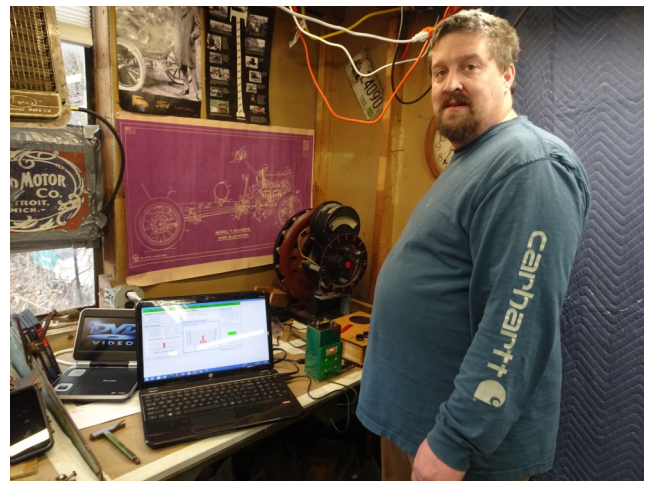
**Saturday, February 3 - BACC monthly business meeting at Karl Helming's home garage, 220 Jobs Pond Rd., Portland, Conn., 1:30 p.m.** [in the event of poor winter driving conditions it may be postponed to Sunday, Feb. 4].

For more old car event listings check out the websites of the Conn. Seaport Car Club based in the Fairfield area @ <https://www.ctseaportcarclub.com/carshows.htm>, and Shoreline Antique Auto Connection based in the Branford area @ <http://www.shorelineantiqueautoconnection.com/calendar.htm>.

### REHAB WORK

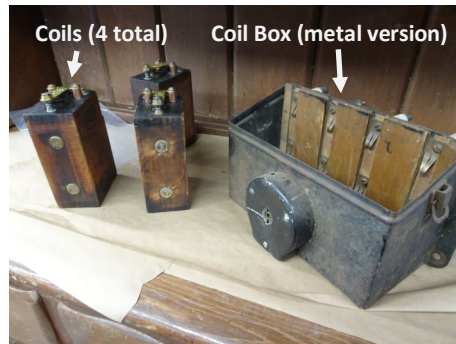
Some guys will seize the moment and get involved in something that is both a learning experience for them and a big help to others in the old car hobby. Belltowner and Model T enthusiast *Ben Jermaine* is one of those people.

We visited Ben in his Chester workshop (it occupies a corner of the building that once housed his grandfather’s wood-working shop) to learn more about his budding sideline repairing Model T coil boxes. The adventure began last winter when he became intrigued by a post in an on-line Model T forum. It said that a hobby supplier in upstate New York had passed away and his family wanted to sell his inventory and equipment. Ben wasn’t interested in taking on the whole operation, but, it seemed to him that there was a real need for a source for rebuilt coil boxes. Plus, learning how to fix them was something he was keen to do. With that in mind, a deal was struck and Ben trucked home a large assortment of parts and cores related to all manner of Model T coil boxes (there are several types and iterations). Included was a hand-cranked test rig, complete with magneto.



Ben has since acquired a later generation testing unit as well as the software to turn his laptop into a modern way to validate that he has set up a rebuilt unit correctly. He has also acquired more used cores sourced from swap meets as well as from *Richard Beckwith’s* stash of early Ford stuff. Before he was sidelined this summer with a knee injury that required two surgeries, Ben had been digging into the intricacies of taking individual coils apart, replacing parts as needed, and bench adjusting them to work properly when installed on an engine. One trick he discovered to make it easier to remove the tar insulation from inside a century-old coil is to put it in the freezer first. He has since field tested examples of his repair handiwork using his own Model T.

Through word of mouth Ben has already been getting requests from fellow Model T owners to either provide individual rebuilt coils in exchange for their old cores, or to rebuild and return the original coil boxes taken from their cars. Also, some hobbyists with “hit and miss” engines that use Model T coils have inquired about his services. Now that his knee is on the mend, Ben is back to tinkering with coils and the processes needed to create an effective work flow. He is just getting started and already there is a backlog of orders!



[Photo credits: Dan David]



Ben gives us hope that the old car hobby has a future beyond the Baby Boomer generation. We wish him well!

### NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

*Unmuffled Exhaust from the Editor*

Putting pledges in writing can be a risky business. Nevertheless, I believe I can safely say that in 2024, as far as this newsletter is concerned, I will:

- never use AI (artificial intelligence) to generate copy or my editorial
- continue to encourage heretofore reluctant members to submit photos, suggestions, and feedback
- try not to pose **Who, What, Where or When** questions that are as easy to answer last year’s were
- do what I can to use the newsletter to promote the best that BACC has to offer
- give plenty of advance notice concerning when I plan to unplug my keyboard and retire as editor

Okay, one of these might be interpreted as a joke. Just one!



## BELLTOWN CLASSIFIEDS

*Send your sell/wanted ads for cars, parts and hobby-related services to dan12david@yahoo.com*

### For Sale – **1957-58 Imperial Parts**

Have complete car minus engine and transmission.

Call or text **Brent Thompson**, 860-638-7447, East Haddam [BACC member]

### For Sale – **1929 Ford Model A 4-dr. Phaeton**

Blue with yellow wheels. Older restoration, well maintained. Runs good. Located in East Haddam.

Call **Tom**, 860-608-2947, to discuss [Ad placed by *Jim Way*, BACC member, on behalf of owner]

### For Sale – **1987 Cadillac Allante - \$7,900**

Maroon with dark red leather interior, removable hardtop, low miles, stored four years, no rust, all original.

### **1927 Ford Model T Roadster - \$14,000** →

Recent total restoration, excellent condition.

Call **Richard Beckwith**, 860-343-3056, Haddam [BACC member]



### For Sale – **1917 Ford Model T Touring - Best Reasonable Offer**

Looks good and runs, but may need some attention to put it back on the road.

Being sold to settle an estate.

Call **Richard Beckwith**, 860-343-3056, for information [BACC member, representing owner]

### For Sale – **1931 Ford Model A Sport Coupe - \$10,500**

Registered, runs well, and is a high driver-quality car. Black on black, with red wheels.

Elderly owner can't push a clutch anymore.

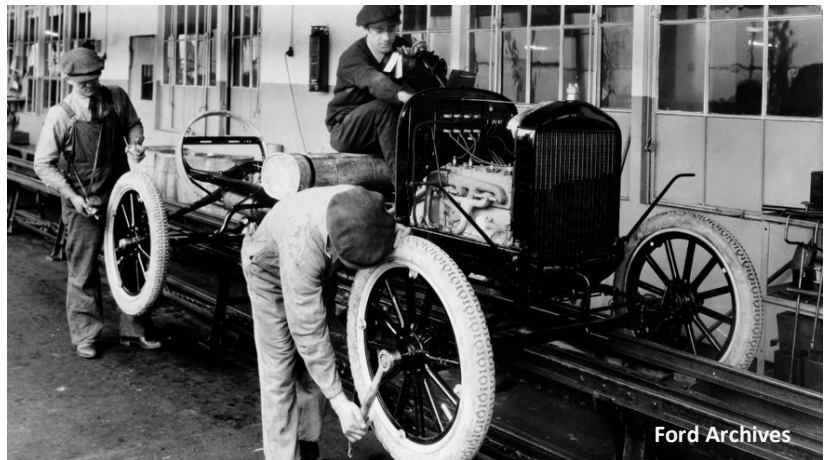
Call **Richard Beckwith**, 860-343-3056, for information [BACC member, representing owner]

## HOBBY HEADLINES & HISTORY

### **December, 1913 - Continuous production line fully implemented for Model T final assembly**

Henry Ford phased-in the moving assembly line at Ford's Highland Park Plant in Michigan 110 years ago [see photo]. Ford's production efficiency increased dramatically - the total time to build a Model T went from about 12 hours down to 93 minutes. The cost savings made the Model T more affordable and thus more popular.

A total of 15 million Model Ts were built over the life of the model.



### **Buick goes independent for 1934**

The first Buicks to have an independent front suspension system were introduced 90 years ago, in December, 1933. Oldsmobile and Cadillac models shared the same design concept, which differed from the more trouble-prone "knee action" front ends available on contemporary Chevrolets and Pontiacs.

### **First Chrysler made its debut 100 years ago**

On January 5, 1924, the Chrysler Six was unveiled at the Commodore Hotel in New York City. The car included such features as a high compression engine and a replaceable oil filter, and was the first mass-produced car with four wheel hydraulic brakes. The car's namesake, Walter P. Chrysler, had taken over Maxwell the year before, and would soon rename the company Chrysler Corporation following the initial success of the Six.

## WHO, WHAT, WHERE OR WHEN

*Challenge your automotive history IQ*

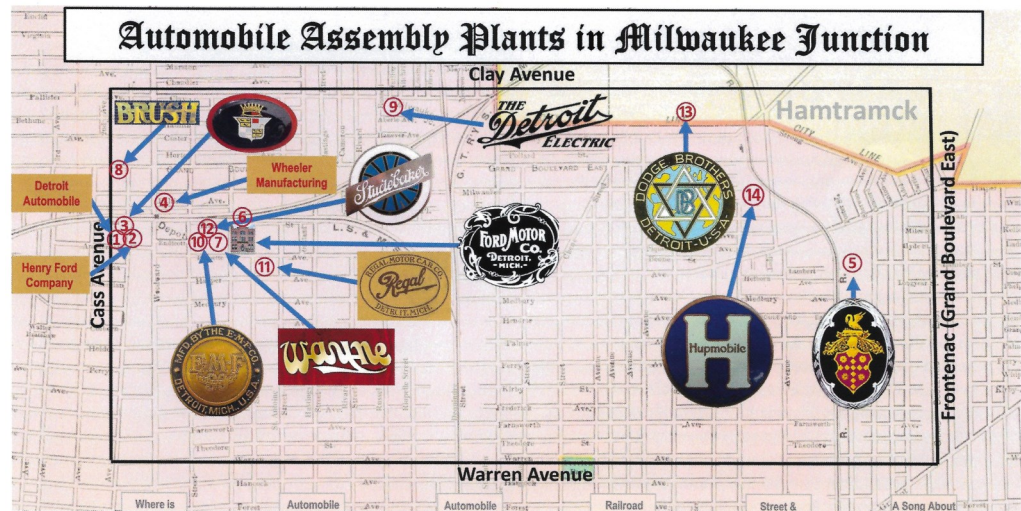
Read each of the following statements carefully. Which ones are true?

1. The original Mustang was the basis for the first Cougar.
2. The "malaise era" Cougars were based on down-sized Thunderbirds.
3. Seventh generation Thunderbirds were based on the Continental Mark IV.
4. The original Continental was based on the De Vaux.

The correct answer to Who, What, Where, or When in the last issue, "Milwaukee Junction is known in some circles as the 'cradle of the auto industry.' Where is it located and which companies established automobile assembly plants there some twelve decades ago?":

Answer:

Milwaukee Junction is a neighborhood in Detroit, Mich., bordered by Clay Ave. (N), Frontenac (E), Warren Ave. (S), and Cass Ave. (W). It was home to assembly plants operated by Detroit Automobile, Henry Ford Co., Cadillac, Wheeler, Packard, Ford Motor Co., Wayne, Brush, E.M.F., Detroit Electric, Regal, Studebaker, Dodge Brothers, and Hupmobile.



## NEXT ISSUE

The next **Belltown Bulletin** will be the February, 2024 issue. The copy and classified ad deadline is Thursday, Jan. 18. Monday the 22nd is the publication date, with mail-out on Jan. 23 and e-delivery no later than Jan. 25.

Club member suggestions, comments, classified ads, and content submissions are most welcome. Send them to the editor at dan12david@yahoo.com (or call 860-575-6194). **Thanks go to this month's contributors: Steve Rossi and Betty Lichota.**

## BELLTOWN ANTIQUE CAR CLUB (2024 OFFICERS)

President - **Mark Hoydilla**  
 Vice President - **Ray Lichota**  
 Secretary - **Peter Christianson**  
 Treasurer - **Cliff Baker**

Elected Directors\* - **Phil Schuster** (yr. 1 of 2) & **Jon Grant** (yr. 2 of 2)  
 Sunshine Chairperson - **Polly Beckwith** (860-345-4256)  
 Newsletter Editor - **Dan David** (dan12david@yahoo.com, 860-575-6194)

\*) The BACC Board of Directors is comprised of the four current officers plus the previous president (Alan Carlson) and two elected from the membership at large

Club web site - [www.belltowntantiquecarclub.org](http://www.belltowntantiquecarclub.org) [webmaster: **Ralph Phil**, mail@rjphil.com]

E-mail address - belltowncarclub@gmail.com Club mailing address - BACC, P.O. Box 211, East Hampton, CT 06424

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/BACC-Belltown-Antique-Car-Club-116729245345421/](https://www.facebook.com/BACC-Belltown-Antique-Car-Club-116729245345421/) [FB mgr.: **Betty Lichota**]

Disclaimers and Words to the Wise: The opinions expressed by the authors of the content of this newsletter are theirs and are in no way intended to represent a position taken by the Belltown Antique Car Club or its officers. The information presented herein is for the edification and entertainment of antique automobile enthusiasts who should use their experience, prudence and good judgment in applying it. Product mentions should not be interpreted as endorsements.

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## BY THE WAY...

- ◇ Once again, it's that time of year when your **membership renewal** is due. Memberships lapse at the end of February if dues are not paid. Another reason to renew before then is that annual dues will increase by \$10 per year, effective March 1st!
- ◇ If you only get (or read) the paper copy of this newsletter, you are missing out on the color photos and bonus features found in the electronic version that we mail to all members who provide their email address. For example, this month's email issue includes a scanned image of *Don Liepelt's* 1930 Willys-Knight 66B arriving at Hershey, first published in a national club magazine. In addition, there's a link to a video documentary on the Chrysler Turbine Car program, as well as the proposed class list for our 2024 August meet. If you don't own a computer you can always access the club website at your local library. Stop there on a quiet winter's day and catch up on what you've been missing! A year's worth of back issues of ***The Belltown Bulletin*** are accessible from the site.
- ◇ Hartford-based Synthetic Cinema International, LLC arranged with Belltowners *David and Nancy Cardone* to use their Old Saybrook automotive repair workshop as a film set to shoot scenes for a holiday-themed film called "Where Are You, Christmas?" The film debuted in late October on cable TV on The Hallmark Channel. There were to be repeat airings shown throughout the holiday season. The garage scenes were filmed on two Sundays last March and were completed just prior to David's scheduled open heart surgery. Both the movie and the surgery had happy endings.



## E-Delivery Bonus\*

**Cover Image** - It's not every day that a BACC member's car shows up in a national magazine, let alone as a dramatic full-page photograph on the inside cover of AACA's ***Antique Automobile***. As an encore, it is reproduced here, on our first-ever ***Belltown Bulletin*** e-cover. Full credit goes to **AA** photographer Michael Rubinstein for his image of *Don Liepelt's* 1930 Willys-Knight 66B, taken at Hershey 2023 on the drizzly morning of the Friday car show. Congratulations to Don for being a Repeat Driver Participation Class (DPC) winner as well!

For your long winter's night viewing enjoyment, check out this documentary by the Hagerty Drivers Foundation on the Chrysler Turbine Car program of 1963 (be advised, it's an hour and ten minutes long):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOlrB1fwVPc>

Last but not least, on page 9, check out the proposed class list for our 2024 August Vintage Motorcar Meet. The number of judged classes and the class breakdowns are unchanged from 2023. What differs is that Class A becomes the Featured Marque Class and the truck classes are moved to the end of the list. Also, our 40-year cut-off means that show field registration is extended to 1984. Should we consider any other changes? The class list is to be finalized at the January business meeting.

\*) The E-Delivery Bonus is not included in the printed version of this newsletter that is distributed via the USPS.

Note: All links in the electronic version are "clickable" as long as your browser is open.



## Proposed Class List - 2024 Vintage Motorcar Meet

17 Classes Total, 16 Judged (same totals as 2023)

### Judged Classes

- A** Featured Marque
- B** Full Classics, 1915-1948
- C** Ford Model A, 1928-1931, all non-truck
- D** Early Cars, -1931, excl. Ford Model A & Full Classics
- E** Cars, 1932-1948, excl. Full Classics
- F** Cars, 1949-1954
- G** Cars, 1955-1960
- H** Cars, 1961-1965
- I** Cars, 1966-1968
- J** Cars, 1969-1970
- K** Cars, 1971-1984
- L** Sports Cars, Post-war -1964
- M** Sports Cars, 1965-1984
- N** Early Trucks, -1948 (up to 2 ton)
- O** Trucks, 1949-1970 (up to 2 ton)
- P** Trucks, 1971-1984 (up to 2 ton)

### Display-Only (not judged)

- X** Modified, Non-Stock Vehicles and Unclassified Vehicles, plus vehicles not wanted to be parked in class or arriving after registration closed

Note: All vehicles entering the show field must be at least 40 years old (this year's cut-off 1984)