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Contact information for club Leadership can be found on our Club Website:

[www.sharktoothsportscarclub.com](http://www.sharktoothsportscarclub.com)

Webmaster: **Jen Maher**, *Maverick MKG*

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# INTRODUCTION

As I sit here and write this introduction, I find myself reflecting on 2025 and looking forward to 2026. I certainly hope that you all look back and say it was a good year to be a member of our club and as you look ahead, you are excited to see what the club has to offer in 2026.

I certainly hope you find our meetings to be informative, our monthly events entertaining and our dinners enjoyable as you sit down to dine with members and leave as friends.

In looking back, if I were to summarize 2025, it would be:

- We started the year with an overnight road trip to Kissimmee, Florida to attend the Mecum Collector Car Auction as spectators.
- We added several new memberships in 2025 (i.e., Paul & Becky Davis, Scott & Allison Yancey, Doug & Pam Chase, Vince & Kathlee Martin, David & Manon St. Germain and our newest members, Pat & Barb Breen).
- The annual club car show at the Maher home was again an enjoyable and relaxing day spent with friends as everyone enjoyed seeing all the sports cars parked up and down my street, a good hoagie and some great "back in the day" music brought to you by *Jayar Mack and Friends*.
- We did a pop-up event at the Venice Italian-American Club and a trip over to Service Beach afterwards to enjoy a sunset.
- We once again granted a scholarship to a Venice High School student, along with a number of financial donations to area charities. At year end we donated close to \$17,000 since our inception.
- It seems based on the number of members that sign up to drive one or both days, our members, men and women, continue to enjoy and look forward to driving at the two (2) collector car auctions we support in Punta Gorda.

- At our November meeting the club membership once again really stepped up to donate to Venice Police Departments Blue Santa Program.

These are just a few positive memories that quickly come to mind as I look back.

While I am pleased with how the club has grown and the direction in which we are headed, I am always concerned about what we can do better and how to improve the overall member experience. While I have meetings with the Leadership team quarterly and we push ourselves to enhance your experience, there's no better way than to ask you the membership, what you like least, what you would like to see changed and/or what you would like us to add to the club that would enhance your overall experience. That is why I asked Mary Bimonte, our Social Events Coordinator, to survey the membership with your responses to be reviewed and summarized at our next Leadership Team meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

As for what I see for 2026, I envision the following:

- ✓ I am confident that we will reach our goal of thirty (30) membership or sixty (60) members, with a nice blend of full-time and seasonal memberships.
- ✓ I have asked our Benevolent Committee to invite some new beneficiaries to attend a club meeting so you can hear what they do in support of those within our community that can benefit from us providing a "hand-up."
- ✓ We will continue to fund our annual scholarship award.
- ✓ I plan to get more outside presenters to attend our club meetings to present on topics you will hopefully find interesting.
- ✓ A road trip up to Charlotte, North Carolina is being planned for August to visit the Charlotte Motor Speedway, the NASCAR Hall of Fame, a couple of race shops and who knows what else.
- ✓ I am confident that the membership will step up and plan some fun events for your fellow members or plan some enjoyable monthly dinners.

- ✓ We will continue to do pop-up events. Sunsets at the beach are always relaxing, whether we combine it with hoagies at the beach or perhaps a visit to the Italian America Club beforehand when they have their two dinners for \$25 summer special – the best bargain in town outside of the Costco \$1.50 hotdog.
- ✓ The annual photo shoot at the Venice Boat Launch is being planned for late February followed by the club providing pizza to all members.
- ✓ We will have another Hoagiefest/Car Show/Concert at the Maher home in March.
- ✓ A charity golf outing is being considered as well and may become an annual outing for the golfer and non-golfer in our club.
- ✓ We are also considering a day at the pistol range for those that may have an interest in experiencing what it is like to fire a handgun followed by dinner.

As I enter my fifth year of leading the club, I must thank the wonderful men and women who have stepped up in the past and present to assume a leadership position in the club. I also must thank you, the members, for your support and involvement in making this “your” club.

Lastly, as I have reported to you before, Steve and Darlene Bieglecki will not be renewing their membership in 2026 as they have sold their Corvette and are moving on in a different direction. Steve has made one of the biggest and most positive contributions to our club, in regard to taking our club to another level and that is his contribution as the designer and editor of Shark Bites, our club newsletter. I think all of us look forward to the next quarterly edition and while several of us are responsible for writing the articles you hopefully enjoy, it’s Steve that prods us to get our articles in, formats the newsletter and always adds either a funny caricature or photo or interesting article at the end. I just wanted to express in writing my sincere thanks and appreciation to Steve for his contribution and wish him and Darlene the best and may their future, just like that of our club, be bright and everlasting.

YOLO (You Only Live Once)

**Ken Maher**

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



I recently brought one of my cars in for service at the dealership and I am told that the service includes the replacement of the windshield wipers. My first question is why they are replacing something just because the mileage says so, as opposed to first checking the wipers to see if they need replacement. Hmmm! But then it occurred to me, other than size, are all wipers blades the same. Hmm! The light goes off, and we now have an article to write about.

To begin, it was interesting to learn that windshield wipers were invented by a woman, Mary Anderson, who in 1903 after noticing that streetcar driver struggled to see in the rain. She designed a manual, lever-operated wiper blades, which led to the modern windshield wipers we rely on today. Can you imagine safely operating a car in the rain today without them? Well, her invention was not initially embraced before it became a standard feature in vehicles.

Let us start with the basics.

### **What are windshield wipers and how do they work?**

Windshield wipers are mechanical devices designed to keep your windshield clear of rain, snow, and debris. They consist of three (3) main components:

1. **Wiper Blades** – that rubber strip that makes contact with the windshield.
2. **Wiper Arms** – The metal components that hold the blades and move them back and forth.
3. **Wiper Motor & Linkage** – The system that powers the wipers and controls their movement, including the rate of speed they move back and forth.

- **How do I know what size wipers your car needs?**

The answer here is quote straight forward:

- Check your owner's manual.
- Look up your vehicle in online wiper size database.
- Measure your current wipers if replacing them yourself; or
- Stop by *O'Reilly Auto Parts*, a club sponsor, and ask one of their techs to recommend the correct size and type for your vehicle. In fact, they will typically install the new wipers free of charge.

- **How often should you replace your windshield wipers?**

Most experts recommend replacing your wipers every 6-12 months – now I did not see this coming – depending on use and climate. If you drive in harsh winter conditions, you may have to replace them more frequently. But we live in Florida. Ah... it is the heat and depending on how much your car sits outside in the sun, the rubber tends to dry out faster than up north.

- **What are the signs that you need new windshield wipers?**

Look for any of the following signs:

**Streaking:** Caused by dirt or debris buildup on the blades; worn-out rubber that no longer makes contact; or a damaged or bent wiper arm.

**Squeaking:** Caused by dry rubber blades (clean them with rubbing alcohol), improper installation (check that the blades are securely attached) or simply low-quality blades (consider upgrading to premium wipers).

**Skipping:** Caused by a bent wiper arm or dry spots on the wiper blade.

**Reduced visibility:** Caused by worn-out blades that need replacement.

- **How can you make your windshield wipers last longer?**

Clean your wiper blades regularly with a damp cloth.

Avoid using wipers on a dry windshield.

Park in the shade – the sun is not your friend.

Lift wipers in icy conditions to prevent them from freezing to the glass.

- **What are the different types of windshield wipers?**

Not all wiper blades are the same, and here are the main types:

**Conventional Wipers** – these are the oldest and most common design. They are made from a metal frame that holds a rubber insert. Although they are cost-effective, they have several drawbacks when compared to newer blade designs.

- **Performance** – *These blades provide a reliable wiping performance in normal conditions but often fail to perform in extreme weather, like snow*

or heavy rain. They are prone to streak and often leave water behind.

- **Durability** – These blades wear out quickly, especially in colder climate where ice and snow may cause them to freeze to the windshield or become damaged.
- **Cost** – These blades are the most affordable option but need to be replaced more frequently due to wear.

**Beam Wipers** – these blades are a modern design that offers superior performance and durability. They consist of a single piece of flexible rubber with an integrated beam structure that helps maintain even pressure across the entire blade.

- **Performance** – These blades excel in extreme weather conditions, such as heavy rain, snow, or ice. They provide consistent wiping without streaks and maintain better contact with the windshield.
- **Durability** – These blades last much longer than conventional blades due to their robust design, and they are less likely to freeze or clog with debris.
- **Cost** – These blades are more expensive but can be considered a worthwhile investment given the heavy rains we are apt to get living here in Florida.

**Hybrid Wipers** – these blades combine the best features of both conventional and beam blades. They have the same structure as a beam blade but are encased in a protective cover that prevents damage from external elements.

- **Performance** – These blades are ideal for those that need the reliability of beam blades but also want the added protection from debris or ice buildup. They are versatile enough to

perform well in most weather conditions.

- **Durability** – These blades are durable and last longer than conventional blades, and the protective cover reduces wear and tear, ensuring they remain functional for longer.
- **Cost** – These blades are typically priced in the middle range between conventional and beam blades, offering a good balance of performance and cost.

I suspect most of us simply take the car to the dealer and if the wiper blades need to be replaced, the dealer or your local mechanic simply replaces the blades with a type of their choosing. In reviewing ratings on-line Rain-X and Bosch tend to consistently be rated higher than other manufacturers. The two Rain-X blades with high marks are their Silicon Endura and Latitude Water repellency variants. The Bosch Icon was also very highly rated.

For a complete summary of the top 8 best windshield wipers, click on the following link to read more:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/technology/best-windshield-wipers-clearly-a-good-idea/ar-AA1PXkp8?ocid=socialshare>

In conclusion, what would Mary Anderson recommend if she were alive today? I can see you already forgot who Mary Anderson was.

Ken Maher





# VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## CAR NERD

OK, I admit it. I am, sadly, a Car Nerd. We recently returned from a trip to Europe. While we were traveling around seeing all of the incredible sights, buildings, monuments etc, I was also noticing the cars, trucks & busses. Weird, huh? Yes, it's a sickness and there are probably groups and therapists that can help, but what fun would that be?

A couple of years ago, after another European trip, I wrote an article about the car culture in Europe, or more correctly, the lack thereof. This trip, I was thinking that of all the cars we saw, most of them are unknown to us here in the USA. So, this rambling will focus on the cars that are so common in Europe and so unknown to us here at home. Once again, plagiarizing liberally from Internet sources, here are a few thoughts on that very subject.

First, the cars in Europe are, for the most part, very different from what we are used to. Most of the cars are very small, very utilitarian and fairly basic. This particular trip, gas and diesel were in the neighborhood of \$6 to \$8 per gallon, or 1.25 to 2.00 Euros per liter. The roads, other than the freeways, are narrow and bumpy. Ample parking is virtually non-existent. All of this adds up to small cars. A majority of the cars are manual transmission and many are diesel powered. It seems that car washes, while available, are not particularly popular. There are certainly exceptions to this observation, but it appears that cars are a means of transportation and not much else.

Many of the vehicles you will see in Europe are very familiar, such as Toyota, Nissan, Fiat, VW and Ford. What we consider to be high-end cars, BMW, Mercedes, Land Rover etc. are fairly common everyday cars, taxis and commercial vehicles. What you don't see are pickup trucks, large SUVs or large cars of any kind and "fun" cars. My Ford F350 Crew Cab would be as uncommon as a Bugatti Veyron. Also, there are virtually no American makes other than Ford, which has a large manufacturing presence throughout Europe. Oddly, another thing you won't see much is Honda. Honda pulled out of the European market about 15 or 20 years ago.

But, what you do see, that we don't have here in America, are Peugeot, Renault, Dacia, Citroën and Skoda. So, in case you have an opportunity to visit Europe, here is some info on those cars. Best to be informed, right?



**Peugeot** - The oldest car company in the world, The Peugeot Company was established in 1810 in France. Initially, Peugeot made saws and other hand tools. Around 1840, they added coffee grinders and, in 1880, bicycles.

Interestingly, Peugeot's entry into vehicles stemmed from an unlikely source, petticoats and crinoline dresses. These garments used flexible metal rods for their structure. These metal rods found their way into umbrella frames, wire wheels, bicycles and ultimately, cars. In 1889, the first Peugeot automobile was released. Only 4 copies were made. It was a steam powered 3 wheeled vehicle. In 1890, steam gave way to petrol and 3 wheels became 4. By 1899, Peugeot was making about 300 cars per year. Considering that the total number of vehicles produced in all of France was about 1200, 300 by one manufacturer was significant.

Peugeot went through many changes over the next 130 or so years. From the beginning, Peugeot was a significant player in the developing sport of Auto Racing. In 1913, Peugeot became the first non-American brand to win at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. During the war years of the 20th Century, Peugeot was active in military vehicles and armaments.

Currently, Peugeot is headquartered in Paris. Assembly plants are scattered around Europe and South America. Peugeot vehicles are available world-wide except for the USA, Canada and North Korea. Peugeot produces about 2 million vehicles per year.



**Renault** - Founded in 1899 as "Société Renault Freres", by brothers Louis, Marcel and Fernand Renault, in Boulogne-Billancourt, near Paris. They had their start in business through

the family textile company. Louis handled design and production while Marcel and Fernand handled business affairs. By 1907, a significant portion of taxis in Paris and London were Renault. In 1908, Renault was France's largest vehicle manufacturer, selling 3575 units. It was also the largest selling foreign brand in the USA.

Early on, the brothers realized the potential marketing value of auto racing. Both Louis and Marcel drove Renault vehicles in the city to city races of the day. In 1903, Marcel was killed in an accident during the Paris-Madrid race. Louis stopped racing, but the company remained as a strong force in racing. As with others, Renault was very involved in military equipment during the various wars in the 1900s.

In 2021, Renault was struggling with diminished sales due to the Covid 19 pandemic and faltering economy. The company divided itself into 4 sections: Renault, Dacia, Alpine and Mobilize. Part of the Dacia company is the Russian brand Lada.

In 2023, Renault sold a major portion of the company to Nissan. Today, Nissan and the French State each own 15% of Renault. Renault is now a part of the Stellantis group. The company still maintains a significant presence in racing, specifically Rallying, Formula 1 and Formula E. In 2024, Renault produced 2,264,815 units. 2023 revenue was about \$53.6 billion, US dollars.



**DACIA** - Dacia (pronounced Dá cha) is a Romanian company that was started in 1966. In 1999, it was sold into the French "Renault Groupe". Today,

Dacia is the largest company in Romania by revenue, accounting for 8% of Romania's total exports.

In 1966, the manufacturing plant was in Calibasi, Romania, now called Mioveni. The company bought the tooling and basic designs of the Renault 8. It was rebadged and marketed as the Dacia 1100. In 1969, the company released a new version called the Dacia 1300. The new version included a variant called the 1300 Super Lux. This version had novelties such as a heated rear window, a radio, wing mirrors on both sides and more luxurious trim. It was available solely to

ranking members of the communist party "nomenklatura".

As with most other auto companies, Dacia has gone through many changes in its history. Dacia was reorganized by Renault in 1999. A part of Dacia, Lada, was spun off from Dacia and under Russian control, became Russia's most popular automobile. In 2004, Dacia released the Dacia Logan, which has become its most successful model. The Logan is sold in many countries, worldwide. It is often branded as Renault. Dacia is one of the top selling brands in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in Russia. In 2024, Dacia sold 676,340 personal and commercial autos.



**Citroën** - A French automobile manufacturer headquartered near Paris. The Citroën Automobile Company was founded in 1919. In 1934, the company made its mark with the Traction Avant, the first car to be

mass-produced with front wheel drive and 4 wheel independent suspension. It was also the first vehicle with uni-body construction, eliminating a separate chassis.

In 1954, Citroën produced the first hydropneumatic self leveling suspension. The following year, 1955, Citroën released the Citroën DS, which was the first car with modern disc brakes and swiveling headlights. The DS cemented Citroën's place in the automotive history books. The DS was available as a fastback/sedan, as a wagon/estate car and as a convertible.

With the DS, Citroën set new standards in ride quality, handling and braking. It became well known for its aerodynamic, futuristic body design as well as its unusual, quirky innovative technology. The DS was a front engine, front wheel drive executive car that was also available in a less expensive variant called the Citroën ID. In 1959, a Citroën ID could be had for \$2833, US dollars. The DS was competitively involved in auto racing throughout its 20 year lifespan. The DS placed 3rd in the 1998 Car of the Century poll and has been named as the "Most Beautiful Car of All Time" by Classics and Sports Cars magazine.

When The DS was released at the Paris Auto Show, it set a record by taking in 80,000 orders

during the 10 days of the show. This record held until 2016 when it was surpassed by the Tesla Model 3.

Fast Forward to today. Citroën is headquartered in Poissy, Saint Quen-Sur-Seine, France, but has manufacturing plants throughout all of Europe, South America, South Africa, Japan and China. It is now also a part of the Stellantis Group. In 2021, Citroën sold about 755,000 units. It has experienced a slight decline since then. The Citroën has not been sold in the USA for about 50 years. Currently, the most popular model is the Citroën C4. It is a compact petrol (gasoline) powered hatchback which sells for around \$19,000 USD.



**Skoda** - A Czech automobile manufacturer, headquartered in Mladá Boleslav, Czech Republic

Skoda was founded as an auto manufacturer in 1925. The company was originally founded as an arms manufacturer in 1859. Its founder was

Czech engineer Emil Von Skoda. At the time, it was in the Kingdom of Bohemia, a part of the Austrian Empire. After it became an automobile company in 1925, it was very successful and became one of the largest European industrial conglomerations of the 20th Century. Today, Skoda is comprised of Skoda Auto, Doosan Skoda Power and Skoda Transportation. The company was named after its founder, Emil Von Skoda, but the word Skoda in the Czech language means “pity” or “shame”.

Skoda became a State owned company during the communist occupation. After the Velvet Revolution, it gradually began to be privatized once again, beginning in 1994. Eventually, in 2003, it became a wholly owned subsidiary of the German multinational conglomerate Volkswagen Group.

Today, Skoda is sold worldwide except in Japan and North America. Skoda vehicles are produced in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, India and China. Skoda is very popular, with a variety of models. It is a major supplier of vehicles in all of Europe. Skoda produces about 1 million personal vehicles per year.

If you are anywhere in Europe, the vehicles you see are very likely one of these 5 makes. If you recognize a vehicle or a logo, it is probably a make you could buy in the US, like Mercedes, Fiat or Toyota. If it is somewhat unfamiliar, it is probably a Peugeot, Renault, Dacia, Citroën or Skoda. To the untrained outsider's eye, they all pretty much look the same - a compact, no frills runabout. I'm certain that anyone in or from Europe would run me up a flagpole for some of the statements I have made above. Be that as it may, they are still cars and a car nerd like me would love to drive them!

Dave

In the early 1960s, Detroit started releasing unadvertised, off the books versions of their cars that were intended for the track and not the general public. A case in point - the 1961 Pontiac Super Duty Catalina that came stripped of all but the barest necessities, a trunk full of high performance parts and no warranty. Other examples - 409 Chevy Impala, 427 Ford Galaxie and 413 Plymouth Belvedere.

From such humble beginnings, Drag Racing is now a Multi-Multi Billion Dollar sport, creating some of the wealthiest people in the world.



**Dave Love**

## What Do You Know? (About The Cars In Our Club)

Each issue, we'll focus on a car, chosen at random, that has a representative in our club. It won't be your specific car, but rather a generic description of the Year, Make and Model.

This month's spotlight - 2023 Mazda Miata MX-5

What do we know about Mazda? Well, it's a Japanese car company. It makes a lot of cars. It seems to have a pretty good reputation. Let's look a little closer.

Mazda was initially founded in 1925 as a manufacturing company named Toyo Cork Kogyo Co. (Americanized). It was founded by Jujiro Matsuda, in Fuchu, Hiroshima, Japan. It



manufactured, yes, you guessed it, corks. The company began making machine tools shortly after its inception. In 1931, the company started to produce vehicles. The first vehicle made by Mazda was a 3 wheeled truck called the Mazda-Go Auto Rickshaw. The name Mazda was derived from Ahura Mazda. Ahura Mazda is the God of Harmony, Intelligence and Wisdom in Zoroastrianism.

Throughout its history, Mazda has had numerous partnerships in the automotive industry. It has always been aligned with Mitsubishi, as the vehicles were initially sold through the Mitsubishi network. Over the years, Mazda has partnered with Toyota, Nissan, Isuzu, Suzuki and Kia. From 1974 until about 2008, Ford was a major partner and shareholder. You might remember the Ford Courier, a compact pickup that was an exact copy of the Mazda B compact truck from '72 to '82.

Mazda has been known as a company that thinks outside the box. Probably its most famous departure from the norm was its development of the Wankel Rotary engine in the personal vehicle market. The Wankel was used as a way to distinguish Mazda from other Japanese auto manufacturers. Mazda enjoyed great success with the Wankel due to its significant power and remarkable high-revving capability. The Wankel fell out of favor after the Oil Crisis of 1973. It lost out to more fuel efficient piston engines

Mazda has a long history in auto racing, In 1991, Mazda, with the Wankel powered 787B, won the 24 hours of LeMans. It was the first and only non-piston powered vehicle to win at LeMans. To this day, there is an entire open wheel racing division built by Mazda. Mazda Motorsports has the most comprehensive auto racing development system of any auto manufacturer,

To this day, Mazda is a major player in the Japanese auto market. As of 2022, Mazda's largest market is the USA, followed by China and Japan.

So, Mazda has a long and storied history. How about the Miata?

The Mazda Miata is also known as the Miata MX-5. In Japan it is marketed as the Mazda Roadster and was previously named the Eunos Roadster. The Miata made its debut in 1998 at the Chicago Auto Show. It was an immediate hit. It has been described as "the successor to the 1950s and 1960s Italian and British roadsters, with the Lotus Elan serving as a design

benchmark". Mazda MX-5 has sold over a million cars, making it the best selling 2 seat, convertible sports car in history.

The MX-5 was introduced at a time when most of the small 2 seat roadsters began to rapidly fade away. Mazda became the successor to the MGB, the Triumph TR7, the Triumph Spitfire and the Fiat Spider. One of the few remaining comparable vehicles is the Alfa Romeo Spider, though it comes at a much higher price.

The 2023 version continues the long and successful story that is Miata. The 2023 Miata was described as the "truest sports car you can buy, at any price.". And, you didn't have to pay Porsche Boxster money for it.

The biggest drawback to a Miata is both a curse and a blessing for the car. It is tiny. It's difficult to use a Miata as your everyday driver that you take to Costco to load up on bulk items to get you through the winter. You can't pack it full of luggage to take the family on a trip across country. However, that small size makes it quick, nimble and a total blast to drive.

The light weight is almost perfectly balanced at very close to 50/50 front to rear. The Miata is not a horsepower beast but it is so light and nimble that its power is adequately capable of producing big smiles. The Mazda Miata MX-5 may not win a lot of drag races, but it absolutely loves charging down back roads and carving corners. You can throw it aggressively into a turn and it hardly notices. As a plus, It squeezes about 34 miles out of a gallon of gas.

In 2023, the Miata came with a Dual Overhead Cam, 7000 rpm 4 cylinder engine producing 181 hp and over 150 lb/ft of torque. At around 2400 lbs, it has enough power to make it very quick. The car was available with a 6 speed manual transmission or an optional 6 speed automatic. It has all of the features we have come to expect with a modern late-model car. The car is a front engine, rear wheel drive design. As mentioned, it is fairly small: 151" total length, 68" wide and 49" tall. It will do 0 to 60 in under 6 seconds and has a top speed of about 140 mph.

Mazda Miata is available in several versions, Sport, Speed, Club and Grand Touring. The Miata has been (and still is) referred to as the "Best Bang for the Buck" in the sports car category. A well deserved title.

**By: Dave Love**

## CAR SHOWS



### STSCC Area Car Show Schedule 2Q'24

The following listing is accurate as of the date of this publication. Check the club's Monthly Meeting Minutes under "Club Admin" on our [website](#) for updated listings of STSCC suggested area car show events.

### ONGOING EVENTS

- Cruisin' on Dearborn 1st Saturday Each Month. Dearborn St in Englewood. 2-8pm
- Wellen Park Cars & Coffee Downtown Wellen Park 1st Saturday each month 8-10am
- Northport Cars & Coffee @ Cocoplum Village \$10 Donation. 1st Sunday Each Month 8-10am
- UTC Mall Cars & Coffee @ Ford Garage. \$10 Donation, 2nd Saturday Each Month, 8-10am
- Lynche's Pub St Armands. Cars & Coffee. 3rd Saturday Each Month 8-10am
- AACA Cars & Coffee @ Ideal Classic Cars 4th Saturday Each Month 9-1p
- SAGE Auto Studios, 4th Saturday Each Month 7:30am-10am

### LANCE'S AREA CAR SHOWS

- Every 1st Saturday Hooters, Sarasota - US41 @ Clark Rd 5pm-8pm
- Every 2nd Saturday Ideal Classic Cars, Venice. 9am-1pm

### UPCOMING CAR SHOWS SW FLORIDA

- Riverwood Car Show, Port Charlotte. January 18, '26
- Venice Florida Corvettes "Vette Together". March 15, '26
- Concourse de Caractère, Peace River Botanical Gardens, Punta Gorda. March 23, '26
- **SEE TEAM REACH FOR DETAILS**

## QUARTERMASTER'S CORNER

Our official white club shirt is a Port Authority Dry Zone Micro-Mesh Polo, costing \$40.00 with embroidery of the club logo, your name, and tax included. It is also available in 16 other colors at the same price. To see available colors please go to [sanmar.com](#). Enter LK110 in the search window. Men and women colors are the same. Embroidery on other items (Hats, Visors, etc.) is also available.

Please contact me if you want to place an order.

*Margaret Borcello*

## BENEVOLENT FUND NEWS

**Venice Police Department's Six Community Outreach Programs**-The Venice Police Department sponsors six Community Outreach Programs throughout each year for the benefit of residents who live in Venice. In November, the Benevolent Committee, on behalf of the Sharks, donated a check for \$500.00 to VPD's Community Outreach Programs to be used for whichever of the six programs that VPD had the greatest need at that moment.

Also relating to the Blue Santa Program (another of VPD's six Community Outreach programs) those Sharks who were in town in November and attended the club's November meeting also brought toy donations representing the **member's annual contribution** to VPD's Blue Santa Program. The Benevolent Committee is grateful for the **member's** participation in supporting VPD (and ultimately the kiddos) through the Blue Santa Program. And our thanks as well to Mike and Sandy Connors for their long-distance toy donation as well as to those members unable to attend the meeting who

arranged to have other members deliver their toy donation for them.



### **2025 Benevolent Committee Re-Cap:**

These are the organizations that the Benevolent Committee donated to during **calendar year 2025**, for a total donation of \$3,500.00.

- Backpack Angels
- Venice Area Pregnancy Care Center
- Venice Area Mobile Meals
- Venice High School Scholarship to Riley Sullivan
- South County Food Pantry
- Venice Police Department Community Outreach (2 of the 6 Programs)

### **2026 Benevolent Committee Proposed Donations:**

The Benevolent Committee held its annual planning meeting, and recommends the Sharks donate to the following organizations in 2026:

- Backpack Angels
- Venice Police Dept Community Outreach
- Venice Area Pregnancy Care Center
- Venice Christmas Angels (new)
- Venice High School Scholarship
- Venice Area Mobile Meals
- South County Food Pantry

- Service Dogs Saving Lives (new)

A little information about the two new organizations....

**Venice Christmas Angels (VCA):** VCA is a nonprofit organization for children in need and family support servicing all of Venice and Sarasota County. It provides a complete family holiday meal for over 300 families. At Christmas time an "Angel" is provided with a child's wish list and clothing sizes and sponsors a child. When financially able VCA helps families with rent, food, etc.

### **Service Dogs Saving Lives (SDSL):**

Earlier this year Ron and I were at the Venice American Legion for a charity event they were holding for the benefit of SDSL. At that time we met Linda Johnson and Paul Johnson who in 2022 created a nonprofit named Service Dogs Saving Lives after the tragic loss of their son to suicide and wanted to honor his memory. They partnered with Dogs, Inc (formerly SE Guide Dogs) and Valor Service Dogs. SDSL focuses on raising funds allowing their Partners to concentrate on training and selecting deserving individuals who will eventually receive the benefit of the service dog. Since their inception, SDSL has awarded five service dogs to deserving individuals. Their goal for 2025 is to raise \$98,000, and per their website they have already raised about 75% of that goal. \$25,000 is the approximate current cost that SDSL needs to raise to fund just **one** service dog.

SDSL has an extensive website with all kinds of information about their organization, including a video under "News & Events" of a recent segment on Suncoast View where Linda Carson interviewed the Johnsons, and Sean Brown, a Veteran, was present with his service dog during that interview. Take a look at their website!!

[\*\*Service Dogs Saving Lives\*\*](#)

***By: Ron & Linda Wencil***

## SOCIAL EVENTS

From mini-golf mornings and waterfront dinners to showroom tours of automotive legends and Mediterranean feasts, Sharks have once again filled the season with laughter, friendship, and memorable experiences. Every turn of the wheel, every shared meal, and every story told adds to the variety of our club, making 2025 a year to remember. As we look toward the holidays and the new year ahead, the roads may wind and twist, but one thing is certain — the Shark Tooth Sports Car Club is always full speed ahead, together.



October brought a fun change of pace as the Shark Tooth Sports Car Club traded our steering wheels for putters at Pop Stroke in Sarasota. This beautifully designed course, co-owned by Tiger Woods, gleamed with perfectly manicured greens and challenging hills and angles appealing to the real golfers while still being fun for non-golfers. The morning was filled with friendly competition, laughter, and plenty of playful bragging rights. Mini golf may be “small,” but the memories were major! A deep appreciation and thank you to **Carol Parkinson & Tom Lupica** and **Dave & Janice Love** for co-hosting this lively morning.



Later in October, Sharks enjoyed an evening of culinary delight at Tarpon Point Grill & Marina. With stunning waterfront views, fresh local flavors, and a menu as vibrant as the marina setting, this dinner offered the perfect combination of great food and even better company. A big thank you to **Roger and Margo Maple** for hosting such a memorable evening!

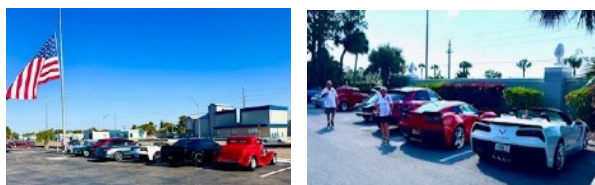


In November, the Sharks rolled into classic-car heaven with an exclusive tour of Ideal Classic Cars in Venice. More than just a



dealership, Ideal Classic Cars combines museum-quality displays with a working showroom, featuring over a hundred stunning cars, trucks, and motorcycles.

Members explored a wide range of classics — from roaring muscle cars to elegant European icons — and learned about the business behind these automotive treasures, including sales, consignments, restorations, appraisals, and even international shipping. It was a car lover's dream: a chance to admire craftsmanship, hear the stories behind each car, and appreciate the legacy of these timeless machines. Thank you to **Skip Ackerman and Cindy Buckheit** for organizing this event for all our car enthusiasts.



November continued with Sharks gathering at L'Olive, a hidden gem serving Mediterranean cuisine at its finest. The cozy, inviting setting created the perfect backdrop for sharing stories and laughter with great friends. Good food, good wine, and even better company — exactly what the Shark

Tooth Sports Car Club is all about. A big thank you to **Michelle and Bill St.Clair** for hosting such a memorable evening.



As 2025 draws to a close, Sharks will gather once again at Boca Royale Country Club for our annual Christmas Dinner Party, hosted by **Ken and Kathy Maher**. Don your holiday best, share stories of the year's adventures and toast to the roads ahead — all in a warm, festive atmosphere that truly feels like family.

### Shifting Into “Winter Season”

As the New Year dawns, the Shark Tooth Sports Car Club is already revving up for a fantastic first quarter. From waterfront dinners (can't get enough of those around here!) to marine adventures, up-close wildlife encounters, and spring training baseball; winter promises plenty of fun, camaraderie, and memories in the making.

We'll kick off 2026 with an evening at Farlow's on the Water, where members will enjoy a menu that blends Caribbean-inspired



dishes with Southern home-cooked classics — something for every palate. Good food, great company, and a relaxing atmosphere make this the perfect way to start the year on a high note.

Also in January, Sharks will explore the newly opened Mote Science Education Aquarium. After a long-awaited opening, this cutting-edge marine life attraction lets you journey from the Indo-Pacific Gallery to iconic Florida freshwater species — and don't miss the awe-inspiring large sharks swimming overhead! Science is truly the attraction here, and it's a hands-on, immersive adventure perfect for curious Sharks' minds of all things aquatic.

In February, join fellow Sharks for an evening at The Grill at 1951, where good food, good company, and live jazz create the perfect backdrop for a relaxing dinner. The easy-listening music enhances the warm, inviting atmosphere, making it a night to savor both culinary delights and conversation.

Also in February, get up close and personal with majestic elephants at Myakka Elephant Ranch, a non-profit conservation center. During the Elephant Encounter, members will learn everything about these incredible creatures in a one-hour immersive experience — and there's plenty of time to take photos and even touch the elephants. It's a rare chance to connect with wildlife while supporting conservation efforts.

Baseball is back! In March, Sharks will head to CoolToday Park in North Port to catch the Atlanta Braves as they prepare for the new season. Enjoy the chance to see both well-known stars and up-and-coming prospects in an intimate ballpark setting — the perfect way to welcome spring with friends, fun, and a little friendly cheering!

Mark your calendars for our monthly dinner on March 16, 2026. Details on location and menu will be shared soon — get ready for

another night of great food, laughter, and camaraderie with your Shark Tooth family!

The start of 2026 is shaping up to be a season full of exploration, friendship, and unforgettable experiences. The adventures are just beginning and you won't want to miss a single turn of the road!

### **A Friendly Reminder from Your Social Coordinator**

Hosting dinners and events is a shared responsibility that keeps the Shark Tooth Sports Car Club vibrant and fun. As your Social Event Coordinator, I truly appreciate everyone who volunteers their time and effort to organize our gatherings — your contributions make all the difference.

Remember, the club can only continue to thrive when all members participate in hosting and supporting events. So, whether it's suggesting a great dinner spot, planning a tour, or simply showing up with your enthusiasm, every bit helps keep our community strong and our calendar full.

Thank you for being an essential part of what makes this club so special!

### **Host Details!**

- Monthly Dinners – Date Predetermined – Third Monday of Each Month
- Monthly Events – Host to Select Date and Venue
- Send Dinner and Event information to the Social Event Coordinator for posting on TeamReach
- Plan your event details and dinner locations three months in advance to give everyone an opportunity to reserve the date on their personal calendars.

- As the host of an event or dinner, please take photos and write a short note about your dinner/ event for our quarterly newsletter and for posting on social media.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mary Bimonte  
Social Event Coordinator  
ronmar90@comcast.net  
(203) 886-9718



## CELEBRATIONS

### Happy Birthday



#### January

14 Steve Bieglecki  
18 Mike Ferega  
29 Sandy Ferega  
31 Mike Lupica

#### February

9 Ed Cashman  
22 Bill St. Claire  
23 Allison Yancey  
24 Linda Wencil  
27 Ron Wencil

#### March

4 Michele St. Clair  
9 Roger Maple  
21 Ken Maher  
21 Gary Westfall  
26 Vince Martin  
27 Paul Davis  
30 Carol Parkinson

### Happy Anniversary



#### January

15 Chase

#### February

None

#### March

17 Maple  
27 Ferega

# MEMBERSHIP

## What Cars Do Women Prefer – And Why It Matters

*By Janice Love, Membership Director*

If you've ever wondered how much women really care about the kind of car they drive, the answer might surprise you: a lot of women actually *don't* obsess over make and model. Surveys and everyday conversations show that many women focus more on how a car fits their life than on how impressive it looks.

Here are a few things people mention:

- About 20% of women say they'd rather drive something "classic and cool" than something flashy or powerful.
- On social media, plenty of women say car type doesn't affect their self-image—or their dating life.
- Many simply want a car that's reliable, comfortable, and easy to live with.

But here's the interesting part: women are incredibly influential in the auto market. They buy about 62% of all new cars and influence over 85% of purchase decisions. Even though car marketing used to focus mostly on men, that's changing quickly.

So what do women actually look for when they're shopping for a car? Some clear patterns show up:

### **Safety is a big deal.**

Features like blind-spot monitoring, automatic emergency braking, and top crash-test ratings usually rise to the top. That's why SUVs like the Honda CR-V, Subaru Forester, and Toyota RAV4 are steady favorites.

### **Practicality wins.**

Many women prefer brands with great reputations for reliability and low maintenance, like Toyota, Honda, and Subaru. Extra cargo room, good gas mileage, and easy parking often make the "must have" list.

### **Comfort and tech make driving better.**

A simple, intuitive touchscreen, comfortable seats, and modern features like Apple CarPlay or wireless charging make life

easier. And "luxury" doesn't have to mean expensive—women often look for value more than flash.

### **And yes, looks do matter—but not in the stereotypical way.**

Clean lines, modern design, and colors they enjoy help make the decision—but not at the cost of practicality.

Of course, these are just trends. Plenty of women love sports cars, and plenty of men want a comfortable, safe daily driver. As EVs and smart features become more common, the gap between what men and women prefer is shrinking anyway. Car buying it seems, is less about gender and more about lifestyle.

## Vince & Kathleen Martin

**From:** Huntington, NY

**Car:** White 2020 BMW 230i

**Sponsored by:** Mike & Sandy Ferega

### **A warm welcome to Vince and Kathleen!**

We're excited to have you and your BMW 230i in the Club.

## Pat & Barb Breen

**From:** Ankeny, Iowa

**Car:** White 2025 Corvette Stingray Coupe

**Sponsored by:** Al & Joanne Royal

### **Welcome to Pat and Barb!**

Their new Stingray Coupe will be a fantastic addition to our lineup.



## Help Us Grow!

We plan to add a *limited number* of new members this year.

**You can help by inviting friends or acquaintances**—from golf groups, church, clubs, or other social circles—who own sports cars to attend one of our monthly meetings.

### **Need materials?**

We have excellent brochures and information sheets to help you introduce others to our Club.  
club.

## Membership Facts

25 Full Memberships

2 Associate Memberships

1 Sponsor Membership



## Manufacturers Represented



## Countries Represented

United States

Germany

United Kingdom

Italy

Japan

## Primary Sports Car Colors

6 Red

3 Blue

6 White

2 Green

2 Silver/Grey

4 Black

1 Champagne

**By: Janice Love**

## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

### 5 Replica Cars That Even a Purist Will Like

**By: Rob Sass for Haggerty News**

My relationship with replicas, aka replicars, has always been a complicated one. While I've admired some of them, I've never owned one. There's also the matter that I cut my teeth in automotive journalism at Sports Car Market magazine, a place that took a notoriously hard line on replicas. I believe that "replidoodad" was one of the kinder epithets in the SCM style guide.

Over the years, my personal views have evolved, and there may actually be a replicar in my future. But first, there are a couple of caveats. My informal, and totally arbitrary guidelines when it comes to replicars go something like this:

1. Accuracy without intentional fakery: What I mean is yes, make it look the part, but an actual intent to deceive should never figure into things.

2. The quality of the build is everything: This is the biggest driver of value in any replica. Quality coachwork, whether it's alloy or fiberglass, is huge. So are the details like gauges, wheels, and interiors. Suspension, chassis and brakes are the hardest part to get right. Nobody likes a car that looks good but handles terribly if it doesn't have to.

3. Zig where others zag: I personally prefer replicas that aren't over-replicated. Lesser known, less frequently reproduced cars are what I gravitate to. In other words, would I rather have a Devin SS or a Scarab replica over a 427 Cobra? You bet.

Here are five replicars that have sold relatively recently that fit my criteria.



### AC Ace by Hawk



I completely lost my mind (in a good way) when I saw this car on [Hagerty Marketplace](#). Although there are endless Cobra replicas out there, I've never seen a replica of the Cobra's granddaddy, the [AC Ace](#). But there are a few out there. The Hawk, built by Gerry Hawkridge in the U.K., is particularly well-regarded. If I saw this thing in the flesh, unless I lifted the hood (more on that in a second), I'd never suspect it wasn't the real thing. Every box was checked here. The car looked spectacular, it sounded great, and at \$42,265 it sold for a fraction of the price of a real Ace-Bristol.



Somebody got something truly special here. Could you quibble with the choice of a supercharged four-cylinder [MGB](#) engine? Maybe. There are other options that might better replicate the spirit of the Ace's straight-six, but the 1.8-liter B engine is tough,

sounds good, and makes decent power with the blower. For \$42,000, would I rather have this than a [Healey](#), or a ratty [Series II E-type](#) roadster? Absofriggenlutely. The new owner has my eternal envy.

### Porsche 550 Spyder by Vintage Motorcars



This one was on the bubble in terms of making the list. Arguably, it doesn't meet my "zig where others zag" criteria. The 550 Spyders is a frequently replicated car and has been for a long time. The [Beck 550](#), for example, came out 40 years ago. But this one, built by the Porsche specialists at Vintage Motorcars in California in the mid-2000s, won me over in the sheer beauty of its execution.

I love that it isn't another faux James Dean "Little Bastard" replica Spyder. The Telefunken '54 Carrera Panamericana livery is just so choice. The seats, wheels, gauges, knobs and even the Wendler Karosserie badge are spot on details, as is the engine dress-up kit designed to make it look more like a genuine 4-cam Porsche engine. Would it fool an expert? Nope. But I like it, and for [\\$51,628](#) (compared to several million for a real 550), it's hard to imagine having a better time.

### Lancia Stratos by Lister Bell





The Ferrari-powered rally-bred doorstop that is the [Lancia Stratos](#) is one of my favorite cars of all time. Like most cars that fall into this category, the chance that I'll ever own one is somewhere around zero. But when there are much cheaper high-quality replicas from the likes of Hawk and Lister Bell (now called LB Specialist Cars), why bother with a fragile original?

You could even argue that the engine in this car, also known as the Lister Bell STR, is an improvement over the original. Its 3.0-liter Alfa Romeo Busso V-6 is both stouter and better-sounding than the original Ferrari Dino 2.4-liter V-6. And if you blow it up, just grab a rusty Alfa 164 and you're back in business. At [\\$147,500](#), was this cheap for a replica? Well, no. But you could spend four times as much on a modern supercar and have less fun and far fewer admirers at whatever car meet you take it to.

### **Lotus Eleven by Westfield**



Sadly, I'm old enough to remember when Westfield first started popping out replicas of the swoopy [Lotus Eleven](#) as kits back in the early '80s. The enthusiast publications all went insane, buying and building 11s and writing about the experience. I wanted one in the worst way and have come perilously close to buying one on several occasions.

To me, this the perfect lightweight sports car. It's pretty in a way that a [Lotus Super Seven](#) or Caterham isn't, and it takes very little actual horsepower to make one of these things scoot. The 1.6-liter Ford Kent with dual

Webers must do the trick nicely here. You could pay more money for a regular old [MGA](#) than the [\\$25,200](#) someone snagged this one for, and a real-deal Lotus version would cost well over 100 grand.

### **Scarab Mk 1 by Scarab Motorsports**



Just before Carroll Shelby and the Cobra, there was Lance Reventlow and the Scarab. In the time-honored tradition of using racing to turn a large fortune into a small fortune, 21-year-old Woolworth heir Reventlow gathered some of the best engineers and constructors in motorsports to develop a world-class, all-American sports racer. It is quite possibly the best-looking of all 1950s race cars (British, German and Italian included).

Just a handful of Scarab sports cars were built before Reventlow realized that lunch counters and five-and-dime merch weren't going to support his racing ambitions. Then, in 2004, a Kansas-based company called Scarab Motorsports started building faithful recreations of the 1950s American racing icon. This one checks every box. The hand-hammered alloy body and the drivetrain components, including Hilborn fuel-injection and canted velocity stacks, are all exquisite. At [\\$242,500](#) it certainly isn't cheap, but a real Scarab is practically impossible to acquire, and given the fact that the cost of doing work like this keeps going up every year, it's difficult to imagine that the new owner here will ever lose a dime.



Thanks for trusting me with your newsletter!  
Steve

