



# Exhaust Whistle



**Great Southern Region AAC**

May 2026 - Official publication of the AAC Great Southern Region - Serving Central Alabama

Vol. 38 No. 5

## **Next Outing - Dinner Meeting July 21 - 6pm - Golden Rule Irondale - Invite a friend!**



### **Ken's New Car**

As some of you know, Phyllis and I have enjoyed our 1959 Triumph TR3 for 21 years. Late last year, we began thinking of getting something with more room for touring and old enough to take on tours

such as the Glidden and Sentimental.

That being said, we put the TR3 up for sale

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## What Have You Been Up To?



and found a 1936 Ford Tudor Touring Sedan. It is a project as I never buy a car that actually runs. I know it is strange but to me, there is much satisfaction in bringing a car back to life and learning all about it in the process. It has become apparent to me that the car has been driven very little in at least 30 years, so lots of projects to keep me busy.

BTW, if anyone out there has good knowledge about this model, I am all ears. My learning curve is pretty big because I have never owned anything near a 90 year old car.

- Ken McClellan

### AACA Central Spring Nationals July 22-26, 2026 ▪ Green Bay, Wisconsin *Registration & Hotel Deadline: June 20*

**Show Highlights:** Lambeau Field Tours ▪ Welcome Party ▪ Craft Event ▪ Members Roundtable ▪ Judging School ▪ Ice Cream Social ▪ Oneida Dancers ▪ Leisure Time @ Oneida Casino ▪ Judges Breakfast ▪ CJE ▪ Nationals Car Show ▪ Cocktail Hour & Banquet

**Host Hotel:** Tundra Lodge

865 Lombardi Avenue, Green Bay, WI 54304

877-888-3727, ask for AACA rate

*Includes \$10 daily breakfast if you show your AACA badge*

**Questions? Contact Chairman:**

Russ Walker, 920-819-1407, russellswalker@aol.com



*Request registration materials from AACA National*

# JOIN THE FUN! AACA MEMBERSHIP



## Come for the Cars, Stay for the People.

- Celebrating vehicles 25 years and older
- AACA is one of the largest and most inclusive car clubs in the world with more than 40,000 members
- Ownership of an antique vehicle is not required for membership



AACA National Headquarters  
P.O. Box 417 Hershey, PA 17033  
Founded 1935 717.534.1910  
[www.aaca.org](http://www.aaca.org)

**Dedicated to the preservation,  
restoration and maintenance of  
automobiles and automotive history**

Membership in the AACA is required to be a  
member of the Great Southern Region  
Ownership of an antique car is optional

### **Exhaust Whistle**

Great Southern Region, Birmingham, AL  
Email stories and photos to Charlotte at  
[Realracegril1@gmail.com](mailto:Realracegril1@gmail.com)  
[www.greatsouthern.aaca.com](http://www.greatsouthern.aaca.com)  
facebook: gsraaca

The Exhaust Whistle is a monthly  
publication of the AACA Great Southern  
Region, view expressed in the Exhaust  
Whistle are not necessarily those of the  
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### **2026 Officers**

President: Ken McClellan  
Vice President: Bill Gardner  
Treasurer: Vicki Bolton  
Secretary: Vicki Bolton  
Editor/Webmaster: Charlotte Dahlenburg

## A Note From The EDITOR

It is hard to believe we are already halfway through our 2026 year. Time seems to move faster every year, and before we know it, we will be looking back on all the memories, miles traveled, and friendships made this year.

This week we will celebrate 250 years of the United States of America. What a great reminder of the history that surrounds us and the freedom we enjoy. It is also the perfect time to get those antique cars out of the garage, take a drive, and share them with others at local events and gatherings. These cars were built to be enjoyed, not just stored away.

One of the best ways we can grow our hobby is by sharing it with others. Carry those older issues of AACA Magazine with you when you are out and about. You will be surprised how many people you meet at car shows, restaurants, or community events have never heard of Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA), Great Southern Region of AACA, or even had the opportunity to look through one of our magazines.

That magazine is a great conversation starter. It gives you an easy way to talk about our hobby, our club, and the adventures we enjoy together. It may even be the reason someone decides to join us. When you meet someone who has an interest in old cars, invite them to come visit with us at our next club dinner meeting on July 21 at 6 pm at the Golden

Rule in Irondale. New faces bring new stories, new friendships, and new ideas.

I encourage everyone to keep a few extra magazines in your antique year-round. Having them close by means you are always ready to introduce someone new to the world of antique automobiles.

We truly have a wonderful club filled with great people, interesting cars, and a shared passion for preserving history. Let's continue to share that excitement with others and welcome new members into our AACA family.

Keep driving, keep sharing, and keep making memories!

*Charlotte*

## QSR Calendar

|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| January 22 .....     | Dinner Meeting        |
| February 26 .....    | Dinner Meeting        |
| March 26 .....       | Dinner Meeting        |
| April 23 .....       | Drive Tour            |
| May 18 .....         | Drive Tour            |
| June 16 .....        | Dinner Meeting        |
| <b>July 21 .....</b> | <b>Dinner Meeting</b> |
| August 18 .....      | Dinner Meeting        |
| September 15 .....   | Dinner Meeting        |
| October 20 .....     | Dinner Meeting        |
| November 17 .....    | Dinner Meeting        |
| December .....       | Christmas Gathering   |

## Do You Know About the Mileage Award Program?

*Reprinted from the Speedster*

If you enjoy driving your antique vehicle, start your engine and get recognized for driving your AACA - approved vehicles throughout the calendar year with the Mileage Award Program (MAP). Participation is voluntary and tracking mileage is your responsibility.

Any time a vehicle is driven - anywhere for any reason - the mileage counts towards the award level. Once you sign up, you will receive a badge and awards at 2,000 and 5,000 and each 5,000 mile increment thereafter. The cost to become a MAP member is a one-time fee of \$25.

Go to [http://www.aaca.org/images/pdf/AACA\\_Mileage\\_Award\\_Program\\_Application.pdf](http://www.aaca.org/images/pdf/AACA_Mileage_Award_Program_Application.pdf) for a Mileage Award Program application.



## Local Calendar

### Cruise Ins

- 1st & 3rd Tuesday - 5-8pm** Petro Bucksville 22526 Highway 216 McCalla  
**Thursday Weekly - 6-9pm** VFW Post 6022, 7001 University Blvd E, Cottondale
- 1st Friday - 6-8 pm** Sonic, 1713 2nd Ave SW, Cullman, AL. (Mar - Oct)  
**1st Saturday - 8-11am** Hoovers Tactical Firearms Cruise In 1561 Montgomery Hwy. Hoover. Hosted by Dixie Vintage Antique Automobile Club  
**1st Saturday - 9-12 pm** MOB Inc Monthly Car Show 40 Inverness Pkwy, Hoover  
**1st Saturday - 9-2pm** Cruising on the Square. Downtown Jasper (Apr-Sept)  
**1st Saturday - 8:30-11:30.** Warrior Tire 30 Lester Doss Rd, Warrior  
**2nd Friday - 5:30-9pm** Christian Street Rodders 8512 21st Haleycille in the City Hall Lower Parking lot  
**2nd Saturday - 5-8pm** Apr-Oct Bee Line Highway Classics & Cruisers Railroad St, Hartselle  
**2nd Saturday - 6-9pm** Apr-Oct Alabama Misfits Jack's Exit 267 off I-65 1195 Walker Chapel Rd, Flutondale  
**2nd Saturday - 8-11am** - Magic City Octane. 6200 Grand River Blvd E, Leeds, AL  
**3rd Saturday - 6pm** Tallahassee Shopping Center 400 Gilmer Ave  
**3rd Saturday - 2-5pm** Hooters Hwy 119 & Oak Mountain Park Road, Pelham  
**3rd Saturday - 3:30-8:30pm** Home Depot 41310 US Hwy 280 Sylacauga  
**3rd Saturday - 4:30-7:30pm** Home Depot 3784 US 431 Phoenix City  
**3rd Saturday - 6-9pm** Jack's Drive in Blountsville (May-Aug)  
**4th Friday 5-8pm** Downtown Leeds (Apr - Oct)  
**4th Saturday - 5-9pm** Pizza Bar 141 2nd St NW Carbon Hill  
**4th Saturday - 8-10:30am** 1110 Sparkman St. NW Hartselle American Legion Post 52  
**Saturday Weekly 8:30-10:30** Shops of Colonnade 3418 Colonnade Pkwy, Birmingham  
**3rd Sunday - 1-5pm** Casual Pint, 5541 Grove Blvd, Hoover  
**3rd & 5th Sunday 3pm** 1204 Forestdale Square, Forestdale  
**Last Saturday - 5pm-?** 7900 Vaughn Rd at Taylor Rd Montgomery

### Shows

#### July

- 11 Cruisin' Together for Zach and His Family Classic Car Show.** 8-1pm, 1265 Coleman St, Heflin, AL \$20 Entry.  
**18 Car & Bike Show** 2-8pm Collins Chapel Baptist Church 14366 Co Rd 29 Jemison. Info 205-294-4751 \$15 Entry. Raffle and Door prizes  
**18 National Mustang Day All Ford Show** 8-2pm Mustang Museum of America St Clair Areans 100 Arean Drive Adenville. \$20 pre \$25 Day of.  
**25 5th Annual Ryans Creek Baptist Church Car Show** 8-12pm 24849 Co Rd 222 Bremen. Kids Activities, BBQ Lunch, Door Prizes, Info 205-287-1613  
**25 2nd Annual National Day of the Cowboy Antique Car, Truck and Tractor Show** 8-2pm 269 circl C Rd

Alexandria. Info 256-452-8202

#### August

- 1 Vernon Car Show.** 8-1pm. 9071 Hwy 18, Vernon. First Baptist Church. \$20 entry. Cars, Jeeps, Trucks Welcome! Food & Drinks, Music, Family Friendly. All proceeds to the building fund.  
**15 Chelsea Car Show.** 8-2pm. 11011 Chelsea Troad . \$25 Entry  
**22 Cars for a Cause Car Show** 10-1pm Campus 124 - Back Lot 2408 Pelham Pkwy., Pelham. \$30 Reg. Scavenger Hunt, Family Fun, Food Trucks, Trophies, Music, Vendors, Outdoor Games

#### September

- 10 Vette Spectacular.** 9-2pm Classic Car Motoring 3900 Grants Mill Rd. Irondale

#### October

- 24 40th Annual Blountsville Harvest Festival Car Show.** 8-2pm. Jacks Drive-In Blountsville. \$20 entry. Door prizes, 50/50, Money Tree

## AACA Calendar

#### July 23-25

##### Central Spring Nationals

Location: Green Bay, WI

#### August 5-8

##### Southeastern Divisional Tour

Location: Hendersonville, NC

#### August 19-22

##### Annual Grand Nationals / Zenith Awards

Location: Allentown, PA 717-534-1910

#### September 9-14

##### Founders Tour (1932-2001)

Location: Williamsburg, VA Host: Historic VA Peninsula Region

#### September 21-26

##### Revival AAA Glidden Tour (Pre-1943)

Location: Dover, DE

#### October 6-9

##### Eastern Fall Nationals

Location: Hershey, PA Host: Hershey Region

#### 2027

#### February 4-6

##### Annual Convention/National Awards

Location: King of Prussia, PA Host: AACA

#### February 18-20

##### Winter Nationals

Location: Melbourne, FL

#### April 8-10

##### Annual Grand Nationals/Zenith/Southeastern Spring Nationals

Location: Charlotte, NC

#### June 3-5

##### Eastern Spring Nationals

Location: Fredericksburg, VA



# IT'S HURRICANE SEASON

My fellow Regions and Chapters, I am not trying to sound like Henny Penny, and the sky is certainly not falling. However, hurricane season is here for those of us along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts—and severe weather from hurricanes can also affect those who live well inland.

Over the past ten years, hurricanes or their remnants have passed through every state in the Southeastern Division of the AACA. Preparing in advance can help reduce worry and make it easier to respond when conditions change.

Take a little time now to prepare, so you can have peace of mind throughout the storm season.

I want everyone to continue enjoying our club and the old-car hobby long after storm season ends. Being prepared for the worst takes very little time, but it can make a meaningful difference when severe weather approaches.

*Ira Shapiro*

National Director

Assistant VP Regions Development and Support - SE

ishapiro54@gmail.com - aaca.org

305-216-9837

## Hurricane Preparedness Information

### Fellow Southern Division Region and Chapters:

The 2026 Atlantic hurricane season began on June 1 and runs through November 30. While not everyone in the Southern Division is affected by hurricanes in the same way as those who live along the Atlantic or Gulf Coast, it is always wise to be prepared for hurricanes and other severe weather events. My perspective comes from more than 70 years of living in a hurricane-prone area.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center, there is a 35% chance of a near-normal Atlantic hurricane season, a 10% chance of an above-normal season, and a 55% chance of a below-normal season. In practical terms, that still means there is always the possibility of hurricanes during the season, even though it is impossible to predict exactly where storms will form, when they will strike, or how strong they will become.

Forecasters expect 8 to 14 named storms (with winds of 39 mph or higher). Of those, 3 to 6 may strengthen into hurricanes (with winds of 74 mph or higher), and 1 to 3 could become major hurricanes in Categories 3, 4, or 5, with winds of at least 111 mph.

It is important to remember that NOAA's seasonal outlook is not a landfall forecast. It does not predict how many storms will strike land or where a storm will make landfall. Forecasts for individual storms and their likely impacts will be issued throughout the season by NOAA's

National Hurricane Center and your local weather officials. That is why preparation should begin well before a storm is approaching. Now is the time to protect your home and collectible vehicle(s), rather than waiting until severe weather is already at your doorstep.

### Preparation Checklist

Use the following steps to prepare your home and vehicle collection before a hurricane or severe weather threat develops:

1. Photograph your vehicles, collectibles, and the contents of your home and garage, including furnishings, appliances, tools, equipment, and special finishes such as custom flooring.
2. Protect important computer data and key documents, including insurance policies, service records, manuals, and contracts. Make backup copies and store them in a secure location so they can be recovered after a storm.
3. Review your insurance coverage to make sure all policies are current and provide the protection you need before the season becomes active.
4. Store copies of your insurance policies in a safe, weather-tight, and accessible place. Consider keeping digital copies in the cloud instead of relying only on a computer hard drive.
5. Prepare early. Do not wait until a storm is bearing down on your area to begin acting.



*The second generation Ford Thunderbird (also called Squarebird) was produced by Ford for the 1958 to 1960 model years as a successor to the popular 1955–1957 two-seater. (Photos courtesy of Ford Motor archives)*

## 4-seat Ford Thunderbird debuts Feb. 13, 1958

By Mark Maynard - Mark Maynard has written about cars, their people, and products for 30 years. You can email him at [MaynardsGarage@gmail.com](mailto:MaynardsGarage@gmail.com) or visit his website, [MaynardsGarage.com](http://MaynardsGarage.com).

Two major changes were made to attract buyers: two rear seats were added and the level of luxury and features of a full-sized car were incorporated into a mid-size platform

The Ford Thunderbird first hit the market in October 1954 as a two-seater to compete with the two-year-old Chevrolet Corvette, according to [AutomotiveHistory.org](http://AutomotiveHistory.org).

“Unlike the Corvette, Ford marketed the “Baby Bird,” as the first generation of T-Birds has come to be known, as a personal luxury vehicle, not a sports car.

“Focusing on its comfort and convenience proved to be the right route for Ford, as the car found wild success, outselling Corvette nearly 23 to 1 in its first year of production. Between 1955 and 1957, some 50,000 Thunderbirds ended up in driveways around the country.

“The big wigs upstairs at Ford, particularly whiz kid

Robert McNamara, thought it could do better. This led to a complete redesign for 1958, resulting in the four-seat Ford Thunderbird, which debuted on this day in 1958.”

### Thunderbird Convertible Models

The second-to-fourth-generation Thunderbird convertibles were similar in design to the Lincoln convertible of the time, according to Wikipedia

The so-called “Squarebirds” used a design from earlier Ford Skyliner hardtop and convertible models.

“While these Thunderbird models had a true convertible soft top, the top was lowered to stow in the trunk area, according to the Wikipedia page. This design reduced available trunk space when the top was down.

Along with the 1958 Lincolns, the 1958 Thunderbird was the first Ford Motor Company vehicle designed with unibody construction.

The Thunderbird name was not among the thousands proposed, according to Wikipedia. Other nameplates that were rejected include “Apache” (the original name of the P-51 Mustang), “Falcon” (owned by Chrysler at the time),



and “Eagle,” “Tropicale,” “Hawaiian,” and “Thunderbolt.”

A Ford stylist who had lived in the Southwest submitted the Thunderbird name. The word “thunderbird” refers to a legendary creature for North American indigenous people. It is considered a supernatural bird of power and strength.

Thunderbird Country Club in Rancho Mirage, Calif., also lays claim to being the inspiration for the car’s name. According to it, Ernest Breech, a Thunderbird Country Club member and then chairman of Ford Motor, was supposedly deeply involved in creating the Thunderbird. Breech, it is claimed, asked the club’s permission to use the name, which was granted.

#### Thunderbird Legacy

Succeeding generations of Thunderbird became larger until the line was downsized in 1977, in 1980, and in 1983. Sales were good until the 1990s when large two-door coupes became unpopular. Thunderbird production ceased at the end of 1997.

Production of a revived two-seat Thunderbird was launched for the 2002 model year and continued through the 2005 model year.

From its introduction in 1955 to its final phaseout in 2005, Ford produced more than 4.4 million Thunderbirds.

*2026 Founders Tour*  
*An Amazing Race through History*  
 September 9-14 ~ Williamsburg, Virginia

**Reservation Deadline: May 15**

Hosted by the Historic Virginia Peninsula Region AACA

Visit [hvpr.aaca.com](http://hvpr.aaca.com) for more information

Visit [WILLIAMSBURG JAMESTOWN YORKTOWN](http://WILLIAMSBURG JAMESTOWN YORKTOWN)

AMERICA MADE IN VIRGINIA

Register online at [AACA.org](http://AACA.org) or request registration materials from AACA National

## What is “The Spirit of the Hobby Award?”

By Steve Moskowitz, CEO AACAA,  
aaca1@aaca.org

Spirit of the Hobby Award ModaMiami 2026

Several years ago, AACAA started providing awards to several well known and respected concours' d'Elegances around the country. This has been proven very successful and gives AACAA a presence with another segment of the car hobby. The exposure to the entrants and concours helps promote our brand.

The winners are chosen by the concours judges, not AACAA. The winner is usually given preference to the restoration of a historically important car but not exclusively as some judges base it on things like owner restoration, provenance, etc. This year's winner had a great story on her restoration, and it is a vehicle that is gaining in popularity at shows along with other similar SUVs.



## Mileage Award Program

Touring is not a spectator sport, so for those who enjoy driving their vintage vehicle, the AACAA Mileage Award Program (MAP) has been set up. So, as the old saying goes, “Ladies and Gentlemen, start your engines” and prepare to enjoy AACAA touring.

Anytime a vehicle is driven - anywhere for any reason - the mileage counts towards the award level.

The vehicle owner must register the vehicle in the MAP. Registration included completing the MAP form and returning it with \$25 to AACAA Headquarters.

When the vehicle is driven 2,000 miles it is eligible for the MAP award. The badge has places for each award: 1st Award - 2,000 mile; 2nd Award - 5,000 mile; Subsequent Award(s) at each 5,000 mile increment.

Mail your copy 2 at each increment for National Headquarters to approve and you award will be mailed to you.

Direct questions to [general@aaca.org](mailto:general@aaca.org) or 717-534-1910.





## **The Orbit Gas Station: A Space-Age Landmark That Refuses to Fade Away**

The Orbit Gas Station: A Space-Age Landmark That Refuses to Fade Away

Every now and then, a photograph takes us back to a time when America was fascinated with the future. Such was the case when friend of the page Stuart Skalka shared a photo of the famous Orbit Gas Station in Orangevale, California. Remarkably, more than sixty years after it was built, the station is still standing and serving customers.

For car enthusiasts, the Orbit is more than just a place to buy fuel. It is a surviving piece of automotive history from an era when gas stations were destinations, gathering places, and works of art.

Built around 1963 and designed by architect Ed Ward, the Orbit stations featured a dramatic four-pointed roof that looked more like a flying saucer than a service station. The design reflected the optimism of the Space Age, when Americans were captivated by rockets, satellites,

and the promise of the future. Businesses along America's highways competed for motorists' attention with bold, eye-catching architecture, and few structures captured that spirit better than the Orbit stations.

The Orangevale location has inspired countless memories. Former employee Lily Clark Carr recalls working there while in high school in 1969. One of her favorite memories was the station's open-air vehicle lift.

"I worked there in HS, 1969. It had an open-air car lift where we modified our cars between pumping gas. Great to have a free lift back in those days!"

That simple memory perfectly captures what service stations once meant to car culture. They weren't just places to fill up. They were social centers where friends gathered, stories were exchanged, and enthusiasts tinkered with their cars.

Many of us remember the days when a service station

attendant would pump your gas, wash your windshield, check the oil, and air up your tires—all without being asked. Stations often gave away collectible glasses, maps, and promotional items that became treasured keepsakes. It was a different era, and places like the Orbit help keep those memories alive.

Today, the Orbit stations have developed a devoted following among classic car enthusiasts and photographers. Their futuristic rooflines provide the perfect backdrop for vintage automobiles, hot rods, and muscle cars. Whether it's a Model A, a Tri-Five Chevy, a Mopar muscle machine, or a classic Volkswagen Beetle, almost any vintage vehicle looks right at home beneath the station's distinctive "spaceship" canopy.

Perhaps most importantly, the Orbit stations remind us why preservation matters. Across the country, many unique roadside landmarks have disappeared, replaced by modern buildings that prioritize efficiency over character. Every surviving Orbit station serves as a reminder of a time when architecture, automobiles, and American optimism came together to create something memorable.

If you ever find yourself in the Sacramento area, consider making a stop at one of the remaining Orbit stations on Auburn Boulevard or Greenback Lane. Fuel up, take a few photos, and spend a moment appreciating a rare survivor from the golden age of the American automobile.



After all, places like the Orbit aren't just gas stations—they're monuments to the road.

References: Skalka, Stuart. Photograph of Orbit Gas Station, Orangevale, California. Facebook post, June 10, 2026; Carr, Lily Clark. Personal recollection of employment at the Orangevale Orbit station, Facebook comment, June 2026[ "Orbit Gas Station" discussions. Reddit communities r/RetroFuturism and r/Sacramento; Roadside Architecture. Archive and photographic documentation of Orbit Gas Stations and Googie-style roadside architecture; Flickr photographic collections documenting surviving Orbit Gas Stations in California.



## GREAT SOUTHERN REGION - ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA

### Application for Membership

Applicant Name\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Partner Name\_\_\_\_\_

Street Address\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL Address\_\_\_\_\_

Current or past AACA membership Number\_\_\_\_\_

Current antique cars owned\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature\_\_\_\_\_

### Membership and Dues

Great Southern Region members will receive the monthly newsletter, club news and invitations via email

Please check out the website: [GreatSounthern.aaca.com](http://GreatSounthern.aaca.com)

Note: Region members must also be members of AACA. If new to AACA, please complete separate AACA application.

Send both applications and one check for all dues, payable to Great Southern Region AACA to:  
Vicki Bolton, Secretary/Treasurer  
2056 Shebia Dr  
Hoover AL 35216

Annual Dues for Great Southern Region      20.00   per family

Annual Dues for AACA      45.00

