

THE VINTAGE MOTOR CAR CLUB OF AMERICA
MINUTES OF THE
86th ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
HOLIDAY INN NEWPORT NEWS – HAMPTON
NEWPORT NEWS, VA
FEBRUARY 19, 2025

OFFICERS PRESENT:

President	Duane Copley
Executive Vice President	Mark Hamlin
Secretary	Mike Welsh
Treasurer	Elaine Johnsen
Membership Vice President	Clare Oestreicher
Activities Vice President	Trisha Copley
Technical Vice President	Steve Fitzgerald
Publications Vice President	Ray Maxfield

PAST PRESIDENTS PRESENT:

2017-2018	Don Knight
2019-2021	Ray Maxfield

REGIONAL DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Connecticut Valley	Jerre Hoffman
Great Lakes	Gary Miron
Independent	LaVern Warriner
Kentucky	Clare Oestreicher (for Cliff Tibbitts)
Mid-Atlantic	Becky Woodall
Midwest	Myron Smith
Mountains & Plains	Sandy Carlson
Northwest	Carl Edem
TexOma	Ken Blake
Western	Dion Stams

President Duane Copley called the meeting to order at 9:57 a.m. EST.

The Secretary called the roll and declared a quorum.

President's Report: Duane Copley

2024 was another exciting year for me as your President. Thanks to all who took the time to give me a positive "atta boy". I'm still learning and have come to the realization that "pushing" is almost as important as leading when dealing with large groups led by volunteers.

We got a great deal accomplished this year. I say "we" because without the assistance of the Executive Board and the Board of Governors, little would be accomplished. That "Many hands make light work" quote could never be truer except in our case perhaps it should be "Many minds make light work."

While I've not yet seen the final numbers. I believe we are making strides toward achieving a balanced budget. The program to offer a digitized version of our *Bulb Horn* magazine to the membership has been implemented. Our VP Publications, Ray Maxfield, has worked tirelessly on upgrading and improving the quality and usership of our web page and the *Touring Chronicle*. VP Membership Clare Oestreicher successfully revamped and updated our tri-fold membership flyer with the assistance of the *Bulb Horn* editor Tracy Leshner. These are only a few of the many tasks performed by the officers and each officer will update you on what they have accomplished this year.

Looking forward, the club needs to get the budget balanced. Many feel that can be achieved by attracting new members. Unfortunately, the numbers do not support that solution since a printed edition of the *Bulb Horn* consumes 80% of those funds leaving little to help pay our other obligations. However, membership recruitment is still very important as our membership continues to age. Volunteers to plan and implement our vast list of National Tours ranks near the very top since it impacts the current membership, supports recruitment of new members and fills some of the financial gap not covered by our dues.

Our club is healthy but we need to do the work necessary to move it forward. Your officers and Board of Governors cannot do it all.

You are the most important member we have.

Executive Vice President's Report: Mark Hamlin

My job is to update the officers of both the chapters and the regions. I have sent out emails, and it's been doing very well. We're well over halfway filled in. Keep those responses coming in.

Treasurer's Report: Elaine Johnsen

My name is Elaine Johnson, and I haven't met everyone here personally, so hello and welcome. I want to share a little bit about who I am and why would I be your treasurer. I was raised in Colorado. My dad was a car guy, who let me drive all manner of cars, mostly 50s and 60s. I've been married to AJ for 42 years We met while working in a Chevy dealership where I was finance manager and he was a sales manager.

My experience comes from more than 30 years in financial and budget management for large and small businesses and government agencies. That employment then led to serving on several nonprofit community boards and organizations within our community. But today, Duane asked us to speak of our duties and our accomplishments within VMCCA during 2024.

Aside from getting everything recorded, analyzed, reported, and filed with all kinds of agencies, it was a really good year. If you're interested in a detailed list of treasurer's duties, I actually made a one page summary, and I'd be happy to share it with anybody. Over the year, I spend anywhere from 15 to 40 hours a month on VMCCA, and more hours, of course, at the end of the year.

It was a great year for refining some of our processes within the membership database, which is a valuable tool that we have. Within that database a lot happens, and so we work on our processes and work on the system to make sure we get accuracy in reporting of membership dues. In working with the secretary's office and our database consultant, I can now fully reconcile the Treasurer's report, which I can pull from the database, drop into Excel, and see all that month's activity that happens over in Mike's office. I can then get it entered in the accounting system, and separate it between credit card payments and check payments, and then balance that to the bank deposits and balance it to the credit card reports. I feel really good every month when I get it reconciled, but it was a matter of communication with each other and then making it happen.

It might seem boring, but the accuracy of reporting dues to income, and ensuring every membership is properly entered into the database is critical to our income statements, the mailing or emailing of the magazine, and other reports that are generated from the database, such as regional or chapter listings, active or inactive members, and so on. It all starts with the good work that Mike does, and Beth has helped him a tremendous amount. Thanks very much, Mike and Beth, for your thoughts and ideas and effort to make this a smooth process between our two offices.

Going forward, my goal is for the organization to reach a budget of neutral status. That may never happen and I'm not expecting that, but I would like to see us have our finances in really good shape, where our income and our expenses are pretty much neutral. From time to time, that can happen because we need to use our reserves for specific projects or needs. It's an accomplishment for the whole organization and the Board of Governors, and we reach that by working together and by the decisions we make.

Marilyn Talbot asked whether database searches returned only current members, or current and previous members. Mike Welsh said all current members, and former members added since the 1980s, would be listed. Clare Oestreicher added that member searches also show paid-dues history. Elaine offered to retrieve an active member report and send it to Marilyn.

Membership Vice President's Report: Clare Oestreicher *(submitted report)*

The VMCCA Officers' Handbook describes the Membership Vice-President's role primarily as a promoter of participation in the VMCCA. The Membership Vice President is to answer membership-related inquiries, administer the Membership Awards program, and follow up with members who have not paid their annual dues on time.

Toward those ends, in 2024, I was able to participate in a wonderful set of VMCCA tours – Orphan, Old Spanish Trail II and III, Lewis & Clark, and the Revival AAA Glidden Tour®. Talking with people who admire our cars on tour is a great way to encourage prospective memberships. I worked with our *Bulb Horn* editor, Tracy Leshner, to redesign, update, and print a fresh batch of flyers to distribute to future members. I thank Marilyn and Jim Talbot, Becky and James Woodall, and Sally and Bob Murray, who staffed the VMCCA tent last October at the Hershey Swap Meet and Show, a great place to attract car enthusiasts.

Becoming familiar with our Officers' Handbook and other club literature has allowed me to research and resolve questions of organization, eligibility, and membership status for club members. Writing an article about membership for most editions of the *Bulb Horn* gives me a way to reach out to our members. Welcoming new enrollees, at editor Tracy's instigation, is another way I use our magazine. Composing announcements and articles for our electronic *Touring Chronicle* lets me get the word out quickly when news happens.

To promote better communication between the National VMCCA and its Regions, I have launched a project to realign our Region boundaries and promote outreach by active Region officers to local members. You'll hear more on this at our Board of Governors meeting, and hopefully vote on the issue when the time comes.

Ideally, you have not, however, heard from me in the last week, because that would mean you were late paying your 2025 dues. Working with Secretary Mike Welsh and Publications VP Ray Maxfield, we sent messages to nearly 400 members who missed the January 1st deadline and the February 1st grace period for dues payment. We're persistent - we don't want to lose you!

A growing and joyful Membership project is to do the annual research into who enrolled in our club when, and to present awards for longevity in the VMCCA. You'll hear the names of the 2024 Membership Awards recipients at tomorrow's Awards Dinner.

I see the affirmation of current members as important a job as recruitment of new members. I'm delighted to welcome new folks, but I'm also here to solve problems and keep our good and faithful members connected. If I can be of any help to you, your Region, or your Chapter, please let me know.

(end of submitted report)

Clare added that one of the best projects she does with the club is researching who's been a member since when. The club present certificates to those who have been members for 25, 30, 40, and 50 years. That program was began when Ray was president and Jim Talbot was the membership director, and they did a lot of work to catch up people who hadn't gotten awards.

Clare said the best way to recruit is personal outreach, such as when driving your car attracts people's eyes.

Activities Vice President's Report: Trisha Copley

(submitted report)

Although not too successful so far for the 2025 season, I have asked via *Bulb Horn* messages and some *Touring Chronicle* messages for volunteers for National Tours. To date, the only National Tours for the season are the Annual Meet being held in February in Virginia, the Orphan Tour being held in June in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, and the Revival AAA Glidden Tour® being held in September in Kentucky. As always, however, there are several Regional/Chapter tours scheduled and I thank those who have volunteered for them.

Just a reminder to all members, it is not the responsibility of the Activities VP to pick the time and places for National Tours. It's the volunteers that decide. There is a number of National

Tours to choose from and they can be found on the website under the Membership>Member Resources, either “Hosting a VMCCA Tour or Meeting” or further down under “Download the Guidelines for Hosting a VMCCA National Tour or Meet”. As the Activities VP, I need the Statement of Expectations and an initial budget, which in turn is forwarded to the other officers for review and approval. Once the host has been notified of the approval and their plans have been pretty much put together, a copy of the registration form and flyer should be sent to the Activities VP to forward to Officers again for review and approval. Once approved, these items can be forwarded to appropriate Publications Officers for printing in the Bulb Horn, Touring Chronicle and the website. If a potential host has questions, I’ll do my best to answer or do what I can to get the question answered.

(end of submitted report)

Trisha asked Marilyn Talbot to talk about this year’s Revival AAA Glidden Tour®. Marilyn stated the tour dates are September 7th to 12th, with registration open from March 15th to the middle of June. Jeff Stumb arranged the tour and has added a third hotel for participants. Marilyn offered attendees a preliminary list of tour activities, and added that more information was available on the VMCCA website.

An audience member suggested the tour director, and perhaps spouse as well, wear the tour’s official shirts so tourists can identify them for questions or problems.

Technical Vice President’s Report: Steve Fitzgerald

Steve noted he was not Alex West (his predecessor), nor anything like Alex. Steve said he learned about cars the hard way, and the only other family member interested in cars is his grandson-to-be. Steve added that his 1939 Pontiac was easier to understand than computers or new cars.

Steve said his primary activity is the club’s awards program. He noted that no Golden Award judging, which requires a tour director to find judges for pre-1913 cars, had been held in his memory, and stated he doesn’t think of VMCCA as a judging organization.

Steve said he has had lots of help from Mike Welsh, Beth Welsh, Sally Murray, and Clare Oestreicher. The Technical committee of Randy Carlson, David Fields, and Mike Huffman have also been very helpful with revisions to awards, nominations, categories, and nomination forms.

In the past year, Steve said numbers of nominations ranged from none for the Revival AAA Glidden Tour®, to many for the Farm Boys Tour, plus 23 Outstanding Tour Director nominations and eight Outstanding Working Car nominations. Steve said he tried to get all the 2024 nominations processed by December 1st, only to receive 11 more the next week.

Steve said a couple of new awards have been added, which need sponsors, and reported that two existing awards, the Spencer Award and the President’s Award, have lost their sponsors. Steve said he had brought 15 awards (totaling more than 50 pounds) with him to either give out or hand over for transportation, and noted that he plans to travel to Salt Lake City to hand out three awards and will hand out another at the Lewis and Clark Tour.

Steve asked for tourists to be reminded to fill out award nomination forms during tours so as not to forget, and hopes the numbers of nominations keeps growing.

A member asked who selects the winner of a multi-nomination award. Steve said the winner is the one with the most nominations. Trisha Copley said the question referred to nominations of multiple people for one award. Steve said this had not happened to him, and a member asked what would be done if it did happen. Steve said he would request nominations from people who had been on the tour.

Publications Vice President's Report: Ray Maxfield

(submitted report)

There was a good balance between normal everyday work and projects across the publication/media responsibilities. Overall, it was a busy and productive year.

Tracy Leshner is creating an attractive and engaging *Bulb Horn* magazine. Each edition is packed with interesting articles and photographs. The *Bulb Horn* magazine has been an award-winning publication in the past. It clearly is today!

The VMCCA website is kept current with officer articles and articles for vintage car enthusiasts to enjoy. Brenna Olwine, website content contractor, researches for articles and updates the website weekly. Brenna coordinates updates for the website with our website host, Arc Seven Technology.

Advertising costs are closely monitored by companies in these times. Renewal advertisements are difficult to get. John Pendergast, display advertising contractor, contacts our *Bulb Horn* magazine and website advertisers frequently and routinely. John has developed a few new advertisers while maintaining our historical advertiser base.

The *Touring Chronicle* is completed on time.

The two major projects completed in 2024 were the media's involvement in the *Bulb Horn* Digital membership option and the Revival AAA Glidden Tour® database transfer from a personal computer to a secure server. Additionally, the responsibility to update and maintain the database was transferred to the VMCCA Secretary.

(end of submitted report)

Ray requested feedback and suggestions on the website's content, and said the website is updated on Wednesdays. He also requested that members not contact Arc Seven directly. Ray noted that at last year's winter meetings it was suggested to have more advertising staff, and said John Pendergast is doing the best he can and that members should support the current advertisers. Ray said the website has helped drive the success of the new digital *Bulb Horn* membership option and the online dues payment system.

Secretary's Report: Mike Welsh

The last few months have been very busy with collecting dues for 2025. So far this year we have collected dues from 260 members from individuals and some from regions or chapters but there are still dues to be collected from those who have not yet paid.

I have made the arrangements for renting the spaces and the tent for Hershey this year.

I sent an e-mail to Tracy Leshner, our new Editor, inquiring if she was going to be at this meeting. She replied that they had plans to go to go see their midshipman in Annapolis and that this meeting was not in the cards for this year.

I ordered new brochures from what Clare, Dion, Sally, and Tracy have put together. They look new and different with several newer cars and some young faces. Let me know if you need some brochures and I can send them to you.

Downtown Committee Report: Mike Welsh

The Downtown Storage Committee consists of Mike Welsh, Bob Ehinger, Jim Clock and Beth Welsh.

The excess *Bulb Horns* were advertised in the last two issues of the *Bulb Horn* for 2024. No one replied. And then I heard from two VMCCA members who would like to have some or all of the Bulb Horns. This is a strange story but it goes like this. David Setterland, who lives in Hanover, MA, is interested in some of the issues. BUT also David Wilson, who lives in Manhattan, MT, would take possibly all of the surplus issues. So if this happens, David Setterland would come to Kansas City and pick up the boxes of *Bulb Horns* and take them to David Wilson.

Results of 2025 Officer Elections: Mike Welsh

(submitted report)

The following Candidates for 2025 VMCCA Officers are elected by the VMCCA membership by affirmation and the results are declared official.

President, Duane Copley
Executive Vice President, Mark Hamlin
Treasurer, Elaine Johnsen
Activities Vice President, Trisha Copley
Membership Vice President, Clare Oestreicher
Publications Vice President, Ray Maxfield
Technical Vice President, Steve Fitzgerald

Respectfully submitted February 1, 2025

(submitted report)

Duane asked if there were any problems with the ballots or the voting process. None were raised.

Ray noted there was some discussion about this year's ballot (containing the same officers as in 2024) requesting a vote of affirmation. One member, who requested a paper ballot, asked how to

vote for individual candidates on an affirmation ballot. Ray said this arrangement could be accommodated using Constant Contact if desired.

Duane announced Carl Worstell will be the 2025 nominating committee chair, and asked all present to encourage members to run for vacant positions.

Member Comments

John Zimmerman reported that 18 cars have been registered for the Orphan Car Tour, with a variety of marques represented, and he asked for more people to register. John said people in his region had been asking him to do a National tour in the Michigan area for five years. The tour will be progressive in order to visit the many museums and other attractions planned, covering 175 miles between Ypsilanti and Kalamazoo over five days.

Gina Eagan asked if the club could do away with the delays of sending checks through the mail and instead start using a service such as Zelle or Venmo for membership dues and tour registration payments. Elaine Johnsen said tour directors and registrars could choose to use alternative payment services for their tours, but it would be a large leap for the National dues system to adopt such services. Matt Eby asked if receipt of payment guarantee a place on the tour, or would the paper registration form have to be received as well before a place was guaranteed, if Zelle payments were accepted for tour registration. Trisha Copley said most members can scan a registration form and email it to a tour director or registrar at the same time a Zelle payment is made. Marilyn Talbot said her preferred way would be for members to send a check for registration, then email her the registration form, at which point she would verify check receipt from the bank and then email confirmation of registration. Steve Fitzgerald stated he had never had a tour registration mailed without a check, and said he prefers to pay his member dues in cash at the club's Hershey swap meet tent. Elaine said that online dues card payments through the club's website are in the club's checking account the next day, but that tour payment methods are set by the tour director. Clare Oestreicher said that, before COVID when tours sold out, applications were considered submitted by their postmarked date, and said electronic submissions might have an unfair advantage over mailed submissions. Marilyn said that accepting credit card payments would cause the tour to charge extra. Carl Worstell said that people running tours have enough to do without chasing down payments. Duane said he considers an application complete when the both application form and the payment have been received, and said it is frustrating when lack of payment delays ordering a meal or buying a ticket for a tourist. Duane also noted that tour registration checks may not be deposited for 90 days, leaving payers to wonder if the check got lost. Carl said people might also write their check incorrectly. Duane said National tour directors have the choice of how to accept payments, including through Zelle. Trisha asked if anyone had used Zelle, and explained it was a method of transferring money from bank to bank. A member said some people, including himself, don't transfer money using a computer. Trisha asked how many people pay bills online. Clare suggested that the club continue to leave tour payment methods to the discretion of the director and registrar, and re-visit the question if more young members join. Becky Woodall explained that, for national tours, a separate bank account is created so that check payments can be deposited quickly, while for regional tours (specifically, Mid-Atlantic), the checks must be

processed by the region treasurer rather than in a tour account, and might be sent only once a week.

A member asked when the *Bulb Horn* is mailed, saying it reaches him a month or more late, and that he depends on them for tour information since he doesn't use a computer. Ray Maxwell said the schedule is arranged for members to receive their copies before the first of the month (e.g., March/April should arrive before March 1). Ray advised members to contact him or Mike Welsh if their copy doesn't arrive by the 15th of the month. Elaine noted that there was a snowstorm in Missouri (where the Bulb Horn is printed and shipped) in January. She also said she sometimes has problems receiving checks in the mail, and Mike added that was a reason he and Elaine set up an online method for periodic money transfers between their offices.

Gary Miron said the new brochures showed very nice cars, but he noted that younger members are interested in more recent cars, 1960s through 2000s, and they might not recognize older cars, like the ones on the tri-fold brochure. Gary suggested including a newer 25-year-old-or-older car on the brochure to attract younger people's interest, and said the Great Lakes Region was considering a similar change for their materials. Clare described the difficulty encountered in finding photos for the just-printed brochures, noting that the 5,000 ordered should last about two years, but agreed that the next brochure should show more recent cars.

Carl Worstell said the conversation was getting away from the agenda. Duane said the current conversation was part of the question-and-answer agenda item.

Dion Stams noted that the brochure revision committee made a deliberate effort to include photos of younger people, and agreed that the next revision committee should try to include photos of newer cars. A member asked for the printer specs for submitting brochure photos. Gina said that when she shows younger people the brochure they say the older cars aren't affordable, and said that showing 80s or 90s cars might seem more within means to purchase. She also said the club wouldn't attract young people with an old-school representation of the club.

Becky said she had asked Paul Jablonski from JC Taylor, the club's insurer, to attend the meeting, but since he wasn't available he sent information sheets for the members in attendance. Duane noted that an insurance representative spoke at a past AACA national meeting, and Duane felt every officer should attend something similar.

Duane asked, and Ray confirmed, that Ray would present the annual awards at the banquet that evening.

New Business: VMCCA Foundation Report and Tour Annoucement, Don Knight

Don Knight reported that the Foundation is very active, and has awarded 81 scholarships to members' kids and grandkids since 2019. Last year was a record year with 20 scholarships awarded. Eight scholarships have been awarded so far this year, and there are three new applicants. Don said it is a real joy to read about their accomplishments and what their plans are. The Foundation has given out a total of \$121,500, which comes from individuals, chapters, regions, or anyone who will give the Foundation money.

Don said the Foundation is constantly fundraising, but it's a struggle keeping up, so the Foundation is proposing a special tour this fall, in Southeast Texas, where the majority of the profits will go to the Foundation. \$25 per entry car would be given to National to cover the *Bulb Horn* advertising and the insurance. Details will be worked out when the Board approves them, but Pat and Jamie Crandall, B D Berryhill, Marion Berryhill, and Cindy and Don will be the organizers of this tour.

Don moved to approve the proposed Foundation tour, where all profits, except the \$25 per car going to National, will go directly to the scholarship program.

Carl Worstell asked what kind of tour this would be. Don said any car 25 years old or older could participate. Elaine Johnsen asked whether the tour would be classified as a regional or national tour. Don said it was not either of those, but hoped that all the profits aside from the \$25 per car could go to the Foundation's scholarship program. Elaine asked how large the tour would be. Don said they hope to have 50 cars, and noted that no plans were finalized pending Board approval. A member asked for the date. Don said it would be in late September or early November, in order to avoid conflict with Mid-Atlantic's October tour. Trisha Copley asked if it would be an annual tour. Don said it was possible depending on how it went. Trisha suggested future instances be classified as specialty tours, and Don said that was their plan. Elaine asked if they would want insurance and advertising, and Don said they would want to be covered by the club's umbrella policy and to advertise in the *Bulb Horn* and the Touring Chronicle. Clare Oestreicher said the proposed tour could be operated like a regional tour since they are covered by club insurance and don't require Board permission. Clare noted the Foundation's offer to reimburse the club for advertising was generous.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Foundation's petition. The motion carried.

A member asked if Foundation scholarships are available to all club regions and chapter. Don said they are.

Elaine thanked Bob and Sally Murray for bringing the laptop and projector that made Zoom access to the meeting possible.

The meeting was ended at 11:56 a.m. EST.

Mike Welsh
Secretary