

“The Headliner”

Newsletter of the Northern Ohio Regional Group #20 Early Ford V-8 Club of America Our 56th Year

Volume 32 Number 2

February 2025



Mission Statement: “To preserve and authentically maintain vehicles manufactured by the Ford Motor Company for the model years 1932 through 1953 inclusive, and to serve as an accurate and technical source of information concerning these automobiles for the benefit of its members as well as the general public.”

Presidents Message February 2025



Greetings Fellow V8'ers,

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Steven Kronen, your new NORG President.

I would like to thank Jack Bukszar for his leadership as our previous President. Jack, and our former first Lady Sharon, did an excellent job running our Regional Group along with our staff of Directors. I want to personally thank all of you for your efforts.

This new year brings us another Early Ford V8 driving and event season. Our first event, NORG Installation Banquet, took place on Jan.19th at D'Agnese's Restaurant. Sixteen members attended and enjoyed a wonderful dinner followed by the Officers and Directors reciting their Oath of office.

As you are reading this, NORG 20's Directors have met to plan our activities for the 2025 calendar. If you have any ideas for a group outing, bring it to our first club meeting in February.

In closing, I look forward to a full schedule of events and activities this year.

The Northern Ohio Regional Group has the nicest people to ever drive a Early Ford V8.

Steve

Officers & Board 2025

President: Steve Kronen

Vice President: Steve Klein

Secretary: Neal Garland

Treasurer: Dan & Diane Francis

Directors

Jack Bukszar

Rick Jandrey

Pat Rooney

Beth Schilling

**All Meetings are held at
Stow Community Center
3800 Graham Road
Stow, OH**

**“Kick Tires”: 7:00
Meeting Begins: 7:30
Ends: 10:00 or Sooner**

Website:

www.norgv8club.org

Editor

Craig Gorris
10160 Echo Hill Drive
Brecksville OH 44141
440-526-6138

February Program

Our February Program will be a video presentation of the Richfield Car Show held on the Square on Saturday, July 27, 2024.



2025 Northern Ohio Regional Group #20 Installation Banquet

In spite of the snow, ice and bitter cold temperatures, sixteen hearty NORG members attended the 2025 NORG Installation Banquet at D'Agnese's Restaurant on January 19th. Unfortunately, illness kept a number of folks from attending.

After socializing with one another, we were seated and their waiters served us drinks and appetizers. After these delicious entrees, members selected either Italian wedding soup or a salad. This was followed by their selection of either Chicken D'Agnese's, Eggplant Parmesan, {an Seared Salmon, Pasta Alfredo or a 8oz. Steak. After dinner we were provides a selection of Italian Pastries, coffee, tea or soft drinks.

Members in attendance included Jack & Sharon Bukszar, Ed Carr and his daughter, Jennifer, Dan & Diane Francis, Neal Garland, Craig & Annette Gorris, Steve & Stephanie Klein, Steve Kroen, Rick Jandrey, Frank & Ginger Posar and Pat and Barbara Rooney.

After dinner past National President Craig Gorris, swore in our 2025 Officers and Directors using the National Early Ford V-8 Club "So Help Me Henry" oath of office.

NORG members in attendance at 2025 Installation Banquet



2025 NORG Officers & Directors with after taking the Oath of Office



2025 Activities At A Glance



- **Friday, February 15th** NORG Meeting Stow City Center 7:30
- **Thursday, February 20th** NORG Luncheon, O'Charley's Restaurant and Bar, located at 283 Howe Avenue in Cuyahoga Falls. Their phone number is 330-475-8444. Plan to arrive at 11:00 a.m. so we can beat the noontime rush.

See page 4 for Details

Congratulations To Your 2025 NORG Officers & Directors

President: Steve Kronen

Vice President: Steve Klein

Treasurer: Diane Francis

Secretary: Neal Garland

Membership Chairperson: Dan Francis

Board of Directors:

Jack Bukszar, Beth Schilling, Rick Jandrey, Pat Rooney.

NORG Cookie Bakers

February	Steve Klein
March	Neal & Momoe Garland
April	<i>Need Volunteer</i>
May	Diane Francis
July	Bill & Bonnie Sykes
August	Regis & Beth Schilling
September	Sharon Bukszar
October	<i>Need Volunteer</i>
November	<i>Need Volunteer</i>

A Note from Beth Schilling our Sunshine Chairperson

If you know of any one needing cheered up for any reason (get well, sympathy etc.) please contact Beth Schilling (the Sunshine person).

Via email at schillingregis@att.net Or call or text at 330-221-4625.

Thank you,
Beth

**Northern Illinois Regional Group #8
Invites you to
"A V-8 Family Reunion"
The 2025 Central National Meet
Springfield, Illinois • June 22-26, 2025
Host Hotel - Crowne Plaza**

We can't have a reunion without you!



Early Registration Available NOW at <https://2025cnm.com>

For more information:

E-mail: registration@2025cnm.com

Phone: 630-858-9474

LUNCH LOCATION FOR FEBRUARY

Thursday, February 20th 11:00
O'Charley's Restaurant Cuyahoga Falls

Our February Lunch will be held at O'Charley's Restaurant and Bar, located at 283 Howe Avenue in Cuyahoga Falls. Their phone number is 330-475-8444.

Directions

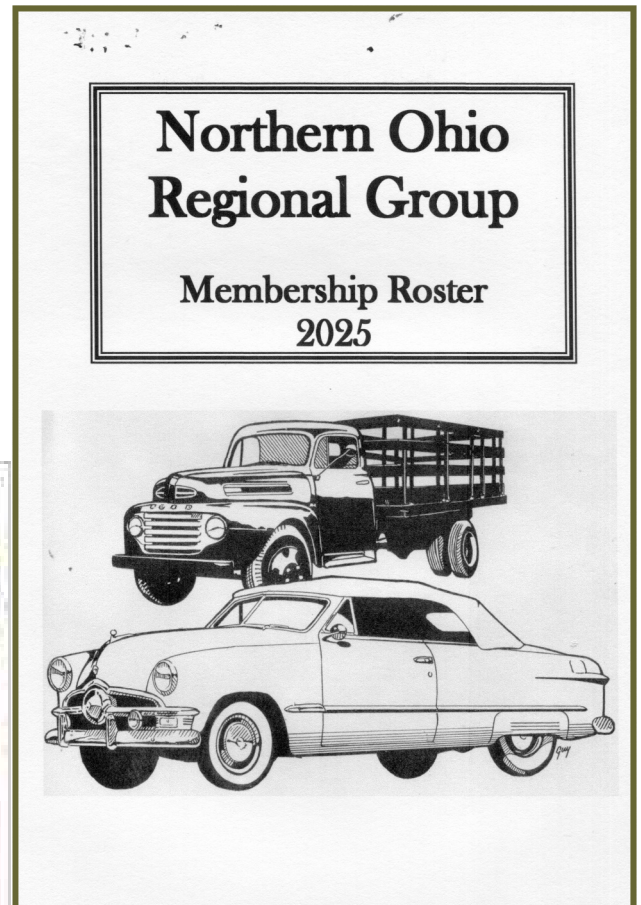
- Take Route 8 South
- Exit at Exit 4 Howe Road towards Cuyahoga Falls
 - Continue on Howe Ave.
 - Drive to Huddleston Ave



NORG 2025 Rosters Available at February Meeting

Once again, as a result of the outstanding talent of member Guy Shively, we have entirely new artwork on our 2025 Roster. Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the 1950 Ford Product line, Guy has once again volunteered his time and created the cover. He has drawn artwork for our annual Roster covers since 1989. Guy's artwork, specifically his unique pin striping is known throughout the world. His customers can be found throughout the United States, Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. "I striped a 1911 Mercedes that is in now in Germany. It was a hand-built car restored over a period of about five years and is currently in the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, Germany," Shively said. Shively lists "lots of Packard's and a 1928 Ahrens-Fox firetruck" among his other treasured pieces. We are very fortunate to have Guy's talent within our Regional Group. Shively, who attended the former Lloyd Elementary and Austintown Fitch High School, went on to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in commercial art from Youngstown State University, which he attended from 1973 through 1978. He began Guy's Graphics in 1975 as a service of Ohio Van and Truck Supply then established his own business in 1992 on Silica Road in Austintown.

An old-school designer, it's likely his aversion to using anything but his own two hands to create his artwork that makes his services so unique. Perhaps his dedication to his unique artwork is the reason examples of his pin striping can be found peppered throughout the nation. Shively has works on display at the Speedway Motors Museum of American Speed in Lincoln, Neb., and formerly had artwork featured at the Hotrod Heritage art exhibit's SEMA Show in Las Vegas. A few examples of Guy's work are shown below



Old Henry was in his dotage. This was to be the last model to receive his blessing. For young Henry, the car symbolized a radical break with the past—a test of strength. For the Ford Motor Co., the 1949 Ford became the car that kept Dearborn in business. In every way, 1949 proved a pivotal year—the car was Ford's escape from the Dark Ages.

FORD MOTOR CO. ailed as Henry Ford ailed, and when the elder Ford passed away in 1947, some mourners observed that the company had died even before him. His grandson, Henry Ford II, had become president at age 27 in 1945 and suddenly found himself heir to the fastest-sinking car company in the United States.

Ford Motor Co. had lost money steadily since the machine-smashing labor riots of 1941. By Apr. 1946, losses were running \$10 million a month. True, Americans clamored for new cars just after the war, but material shortages, inefficiency, work stoppages, and OPA price ceilings kept Ford from posting anything even resembling a profit. In short, the company was falling apart at every seam, and at first there was only one young man trying to shore it up. That was HF II—green but as stubborn and self-possessed as the old man.

He realized he needed help in a hurry—good help. In late 1945, Tex Thornton, now chairman of Litton Industries, sent a long-shot telegram to HF II, asking for jobs for himself and his group of bright young ex-Airforce officers. Ford accepted, and Thornton's "Whiz Kids" came to play key roles, both individually and together, in helping reorganize Ford.

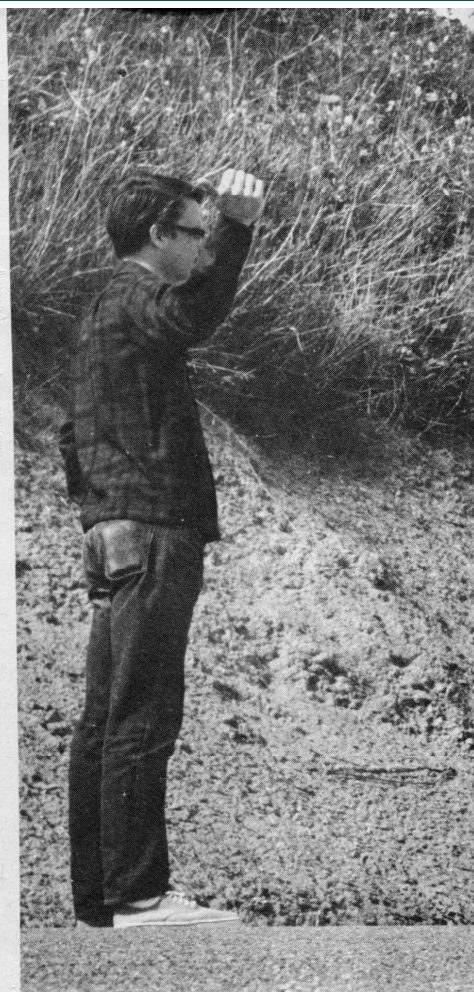
HF II admitted he wanted to pattern his company along GM lines. In May 1946, he succeeded in hiring Ernest R. Breech away from GM's Bendix Div., and in doing so he finally got his key man. Together, working

pretty much as equals, Breech and HF II began to bring the Ford Motor Co. back into the world of the living.

Breech immediately threw himself into every aspect of the company's many complex problems—everything from coal mines to morale. One big problem was the fact that all Ford car lines were about 15 years behind the times. Lincolns, Mercurys, and Fords were still riding around on suspension systems designed for the Model T. But Ford Motor Co. had no one who knew anything about independent front suspension; in fact, had no engineering staff to speak of, practically no testing facilities, and no instrumentation. So one of Breech's first acts was to bring in Harold T. Youngren as vice president of engineering.

Youngren had been Oldsmobile's chief engineer for 15 years, but at the time he worked for Borg-Warner. He brought to Ford a broad background in all aspects of modern automotive design, and he'd soon put together a bright staff of 121 enthusiastic engineers (many ex-GM) to work on Dearborn's most immediate project, the 1949 Ford, code named the F-1948 or X-2900.

Breech and HF II recognized the need to come up with an entirely new and different Ford, one *not* based on prewar antecedents. They okayed E. T. (Bob) Gregorie's basic styling designs for the 1949 Mercury and Lincoln (see *Fantastic Ford Finds*, SIA #2, and *Postwar Lincoln-Mercurys*, SIA #3) but con-



THE SELLING OF THE 1949 FORD

One of the best articles about the 1949 Ford—perhaps the best—appeared in POPULAR SCIENCE for July 1948. It spanned 15 pages and constituted a major scoop over that magazine's competition.

The man responsible for that scoop was Devon Francis, POPSCI's capable, longtime auto editor. SIA contacted Mr. Francis at his home in White Plains, N. Y. and asked him how he managed that scoop. Here is his reply.

THIS WAS CLOAK-AND-DAGGER work that began with lengthy negotiations at Ford just to get a look at pictures of the car. One day in early 1948, Virgil LaMarre, a Ford pressagent, phoned me from his midtown New York hotel. He had photos to show me.

With POPSCI editor Perry Githens in tow, I called on LaMarre in his room. After swapping our usual shares of dirty stories, LaMarre showed us some transparencies. We had to look at them with a magnifying glass just to tell what the car looked like. After a couple of hours of negotiations, Githens had made a deal—a lot of pages in POPSCI plus the front cover in return for early information and photos.

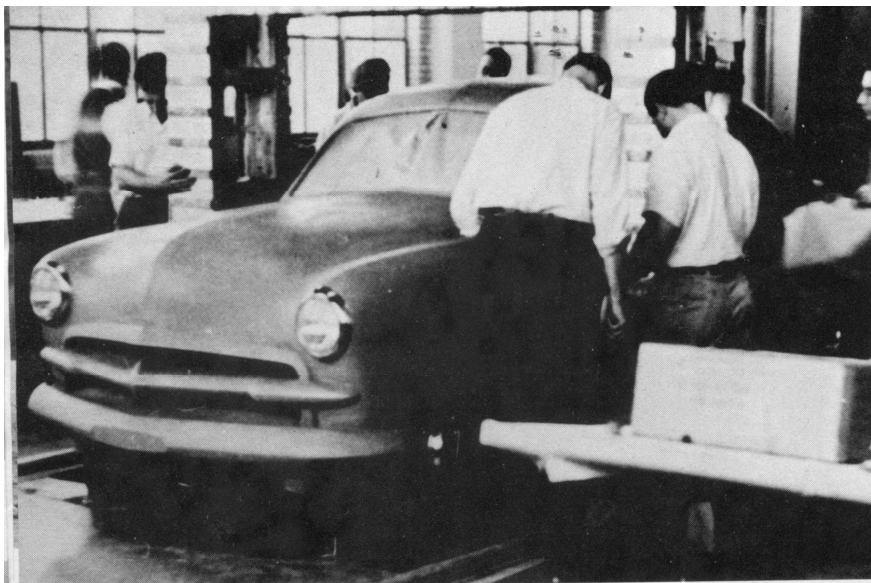
As we emerged from the hotel, I asked Githens, "Did you palm a picture?"

"I couldn't," said Githens. "The s.o.b. counted them as he took them out of his briefcase and he counted them when he put them back. We'll have to play this one straight." Ford was horribly afraid that the daily press would get early pictures of the 1949 Ford and spoil its impact at dealer showrooms.

So our art editor guaranteed security by hiring a suite in a nearby hotel and doing all his work there. The door was kept locked. We had a password and all that. I think this was mostly for show. When we finally got our hands on photos, the art editor personally took them to the engraver in Connecticut and stood over him until he had the plates. When the press run started, the art editor put the engravings in a satchel and boarded the train for Dayton (he was deathly afraid of flying), where we printed. At the 11th hour, he produced the engravings, and as the magazine came off the press, all copies were impounded (by us). I forget how distribution took place, but the shenanigans were worthy of an Orient Express melodrama.

—Devon Francis





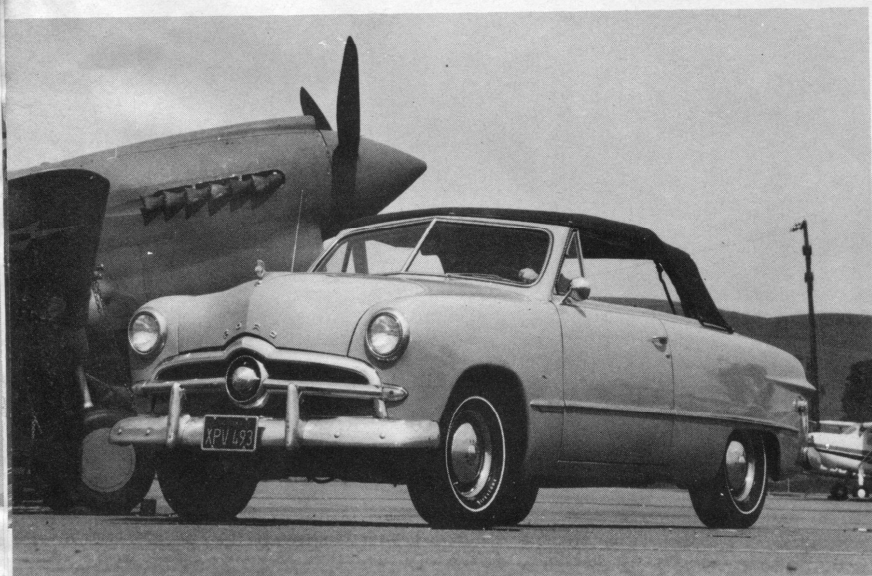
This photo and one below were taken in 1946. Geo. Walker is in foreground, left, with head bowed. Original clay had straight grille bars, spinner came later, perhaps Studebaker-inspired.

PHOTO: FORD MOTOR CO.

PHOTO: GEORGE W. WALKER



Walker, Elwood Engel, and Joe Oros created F-1948's lines, tried to keep body as unadorned as possible. Practicality dictated necessity for side trim, and it's forgotten who turned tail lights 90°.



1949 Ford *continued*

sidered them too big and bulky for the projected lighter, smaller Ford.

(Actually, initial plans called for building not one but two new Ford cars—a compact version on a 97-inch wheelbase plus a full-sized car on a 114-inch wheelbase. Ford maintained a separate Light Car Div. for the 97-incher until Sept. 1946. This front-wheel-drive compact finally went to France, where it became the Ford Vedette. It was only GM's decision to scrap its compact in 1946—GM up till then having planned to go ahead with its own small car—that convinced Ford to do the same.)

Youngren worked out a formula for the X-2900, projecting its weight at 2900 pounds (thus the code name) and setting parameters for height, width, tread, seating, trunk capacity, etc. This became known as The Package. Breech then called in George W. Walker, an ex-pro halfback and freelance auto designer, to style The Package.

Walker at that time held design consultancy contracts with Nash and IHC, but he got those set aside. HF II asked Walker if he could complete drawings for the X-2900 in 90 days. Walker said yes but that Ford would have to come down to his (Walker's) office in Detroit's New Center Building once a week to check progress. This agreed upon, Walker and his two associates set to work on May 6, 1946. Walker was extremely fortunate in having two men of extraordinary talent on his staff—Elwood P. Engel, presently vice president of styling for Chrysler Corp., and Joseph Oros, now vice president of design for Ford of Europe.

Walker, Engel, and Oros worked night and day. In a few weeks, they'd drawn up 10 rough sketches. Ford and Breech chose three and had Walker's group render them as 1/4-sized clay models. Bob Gregorie had also worked up a clay, and on Aug. 1, all four unmarked clays were brought out to Dearborn for selection by Ford's executive committee, which included HF II, Breech, John Bugas, Lew Crusoe, Mead Bricker, and J. R. Davis. They narrowed it down to one of Walker's, and work on a full-sized clay began immediately at Ford Engineering Labs in Dearborn. This larger clay, painted yellow and approved by the executive group and even by the senior Henry Ford in Sept. 1946, was put into the works immediately.

About the only dimension common to both the 1948 Ford and the 1949 is wheelbase—114 inches. Youngren's engineering team moved the V-8 forward five inches so the rear passengers weren't sitting over the axle anymore. They switched from the old X-member frame to a lower, lighter ladder type; converted the solid front axle to modern independent wishbones, coil springs, and tubular shocks; got rid of torque-tube drive and brought in Hotchkiss; completely re-engineered the transmission and differential; same with the brakes; in short, they re-did nearly everything. The one piece of hardware they did save was the V-8, but Youngren improved its cooling, cut oil consumption, completely changed the ignition system, revamped the bearings, same with the intake and exhaust systems, engine mounts, and reduced manufacturing costs.

Although the 1949 Ford turned out to be only 0.7 inch longer than the 1948, its front seat was six inches wider, the car stood four inches lower, and it was 220 pounds lighter (but still 250 pounds short of its 2900-pound projection). Trunk and interior space became much

continued on page 56

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KEN MARTIN
kmartin@chieftaintrucking.com

The Headliner Deadline

1st Day of each month. Please e-mail articles, tech tips, outings, adds, club news and pictures to:

Craig Gorris
c.gorris@prodigy.net

*Don't Forget to Check out our
updated website :
www.norgv8club.org*

February Birthdays

1	Debbie Madden
2	Bonnie Sykes
4	George Hlavacs, Earl Peters
5	Nancy Collette
19	Eileen Sanders
20	Don Brehm
21	Ken Bruening
24	Reid Firestone



**February NORG
Meeting
Friday, February
21st**

NORG MEMBERS

Your NORG Headliner depends upon contributions from members to be a successful.

Your photos and text on club activities, ladies hobbies and recipes, technical information, and information on your restoration are needed to keep your Newsletter refreshing.

Please send us anything, we can re-write if necessary.