



Sidelights



AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2025

Volume 68 Issue 6 <https://southfloridaregion.aaca.com>



*The South
Florida
Region
Celebrates
Father's
Day at
The Palace
Suites
Senior
Living
Center*

(go to page 6)

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SIDELIGHTS**AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2025****Volume 68 Issue 6****Jean Hawa, Editor**aacasouthfloridaregion@gmail.com

Sidelights is the official publication of the South Florida Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America. It has been published continuously since June 1958. The paper informs members of local and state activities, club functions, meeting dates and has articles of general interest for the car enthusiast. All articles and stories may be reproduced if proper credit is given.

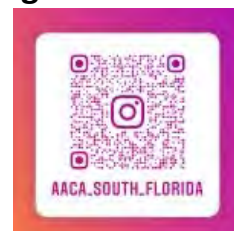
The views and opinions expressed in the articles in *Sidelights* are those of the named author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editor, the Board of Directors of the A.A.C.A. South Florida Region or members of the club.

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Hi all,

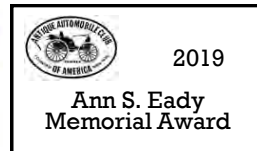
I want to say to all the new members that have joined recently, "Welcome to the AACA South Florida Region" and to all the membership ,thanks for being members of our club. We really enjoy talking with you and showing your cars. I want to remind everybody that Memory Lane is coming up, September 26 through October 5, 2025. Registration is still open and we will be needing many of you to volunteer a few hours to help take care of our cars during the show, To the car owners who will have cars at the show, please volunteer as much as you can. You will be getting instructions on where to enter the convention center.

The Lake Mirror Classic Car Show will be Friday-Sunday, October 17-19, 2025 in Lakeland, Florida. If you haven't been there before try to make it; there will be some cars that you never have seen before. Take a look at our website calendar for more information for that event. We been talking about a date for the progressive dinner and need at least two houses for this event that are not too far away, but not too close so that we can drive our cars and have a great time. If you haven't been to this event before, I guarantee that you will have an awesome time with great food, and we will be having great prices as well.

I want to say thank you to all our executive board members that without them we won't be able to do what we do for the members. This November we will be looking for additional board members to help us continue to serve this fine organization.

And like I say all the time, if you guys know of something that you want to do with the club, reach out to us and we'll be more than happy to listen to your suggestions.

Your president,
Tomás Hernández



Happy Summer!

This editor is so thankful to have club members send in their car stories to share with us., especially since a backlog of members' stories has been eliminated. A huge thank you goes to Al Padilla, Eduardo Padron, and Kenny Stowe who contributed something for this issue. Summer isn't over yet, so please send your car related stories and pictures in a jpeg format (preferred; although .heic pictures from cell phones can be accepted). You will find my contact information in this issue as follows: email—page 2 and U.S. mail—page 20.

Hopefully you have used this summer to get your antique ready for our upcoming car season. One of the most disappointing things we experience a lot is that the day before a show or on show day, we hear "My car didn't start/developed a leak/had a flat tire..." Yes, antiques can be unpredictable, but good preventable maintenance and monitoring can be a life saver, a money saver, and lessen your change of being disappointed because an event was missed. By the way, make sure your fire extinguisher is fully charged. There's nothing worse by having an empty fire extinguisher when you *really* need it. Check out the "Stuff Happens" article on page 17.

Hopefully you have been reading the monthly *Speedster* that is emailed monthly to you from Editor Stacy Zimmerman. If not, you're missing out on the most up-to-date information about AACA National. Of course, no one should miss the article written by Editor West Peterson in the latest issue of *Antique Automobile* magazine. It is his recent accident that is a reminder about what could happen when one improperly loads/unloads vehicles and/or hitches/unhitches trailers. With so many things on our minds today we often don't give ourselves the time to safely complete the necessary tasks needed in our hobby.

Stay safe everyone,

Jean

Since the second Friday of July has been designated as National Collector Car Appreciation Day, Philip Williams drove his freshly detailed 1988 Pontiac 6000 Safari station wagon to a friend's home on July 11, 2025.



The A.A.C.A. South Florida Region Board Meeting of Tuesday, June 3, 2025 was called to Order by President Tomás Hernández at 7:31 p.m., at Rinconcito Latino Café, 9606 SW 72nd Street, Miami, FL 33173.

In Attendance: President Tomás Hernández, 1st Vice President Al Padilla, Secretary Yovanna Hernández, and Board Members Benjamin Cardonne, George Harvey, Jean Hawa, Mike Penn, Jorge Salazar, Ira Shapiro, and Bob Squier.

Establish a Quorum: President Tomás Hernández was able to establish a quorum with 10 members of the board present.

First Order of Business - Acceptance of Board Meeting Minutes from Previous Meeting: President Tomás Hernández asked if everyone present had read the minutes of the May board meeting; if so, and if there were no questions, comments, or corrections, would someone move to accept the minutes as posted. Jean Hawa made a motion to accept the minutes; Al Padilla seconded it. Having no other discussion, the motion was voted on and passed.

Second Order of Business – Treasurer's Report: Tomás Hernández, on behalf of Manny Garcia, presented a reconciliation statement for May from the club's bank account. Tomás added that with membership renewals, new memberships, monthly expenses such as coffee and dessert at the board and general meetings, storage rental fee and the printing and mailing of *Sidelights*, our treasury is sound.

Third Order of Business – Membership Report: Tomás Hernández, on behalf of Ed Medina, reported that as of now we have 216 active families.

General Membership Meeting (June 21, 2025): Tomás Hernández reminded us that the June membership meeting will take place at The Palace Nursing and Rehabilitation Center prior to the car show. July's membership meeting date and location will be determined a later day.

70th Club Anniversary Celebration Report- Tomás Hernández said that it was an awesome party. All board members agreed that the food was very good; and especially the great cake made by Angela Torres from Basket Babes. Tomás thanked everyone who helped put together this special moment and everyone who came to

be part of the celebration.

Memory Lane (September 26 – October 5, 2025)- Registration is open and the application is online.

Progressive Dinner: No date has been assigned yet. Jean Hawa explained that we need at least two members to offer their house with areas for parking for the event. Jean suggested that Ed Medina put out the information online explaining that we only need the house as the club will provide everything else.

Holiday Party (December 13, 2025)- Tomás Hernández reminded us that this will be a sit-down dinner event, most likely at the Miami Outboard Club with three dinner choices. He also mentioned that we need to get more information about the parking spaces.

Miami Art Deco Show (January 17-18, 2026): Ira Shapiro has been in contact with the Interim Miami Preservation League Director to remind him about our club and our history with this event. He reminded us that we will be needing volunteers for both days for staging and parking show vehicles. Ira stated that he is stepping down as chairman and suggested that Jorge Salazar and Ben Cardonne be co-chairs for the show.

Other Club Business:

- Ira Shapiro notified us that the cost of the club's warehouse is going up. Mike Penn will find out about the cost and availability of the previous warehouse we used.
- Jean Hawa reported that the Deering Estate Vintage Auto Show date is Sunday, November 2, 2025.
- The Lake Mirror Classic registration is now open. Ira Shapiro reported that the grand marshal is Gary Patterson, president of Shelby American. Returning will be last year's grand marshal, automotive and race car designer, Kip Wasenko.

Sunshine Report: Jean Hawa had nothing to report.

Adjournment: With no further club business to discuss, President Tomás Hernández made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. It was unanimously seconded and approved.

Submitted by Yovanna Hernández, Secretary



The A.A.C.A. South Florida Region Board Meeting of Tuesday, July 1, 2025 was called to Order by President Tomás Hernández at 7:28 p.m., at Rinconcito Latino Café, 9606 SW 72nd Street, Miami, FL 33173.

In Attendance: President Tomás Hernández, 1st Vice President Al Padilla, 2nd Vice President Ed Medina, Secretary Yovanna Hernández, and Board Members Benjamin Cardonne, Jean Hawa, Thomas Kosky, Mike Penn, Jorge Salazar, Ira Shapiro and Bob Squier.

Establish a Quorum: President Tomás Hernández was able to establish a quorum with 11 members of the board present.

First Order of Business - Acceptance of Board Meeting Minutes from Previous Meeting: President Tomás Hernández asked if everyone present had read the minutes of the April board meeting; if so, and if there were no questions, comments, or corrections, would someone move to accept the minutes as posted. Jean Hawa made a motion to accept the minutes; Ed Medina seconded it. Having no other discussion, the motion was voted on and passed.

Second Order of Business – Treasurer's Report: Tomás Hernández, on behalf of Manny Garcia, presented a reconciliation statement for June from the club's bank account. Tomás added that with membership renewals, new memberships, monthly expenses such as coffee and dessert at the board and general meetings, storage rental fee and the printing and mailing of *Sidelights*, our treasury is sound.

Third Order of Business – Membership Report: Ed Medina, reported that as of now we remain with 216 active families. Ed proposed to follow National's membership guidelines with a discount for the remaining period or until July.

General Membership Meeting (July 17, 2025): Tomás Hernández reminded us that July's membership meeting date and location will be determined at a later day.

Father's Day Vintage Car Display and Members Meeting - The Palace Suites Senior Luxury Living Report- Ed Medina informed us that it was a great turnout with 19 cars present. He added that we were provided with a great lunch and wonderful music; we even had a Marilyn Monroe impersonator who took pictures with many of the residents in front of the cars.

Memory Lane (September 26 – October 5, 2025)- Ed Medina informed us that we have 41 pre-registered cars.

Progressive Dinner: No date has been assigned yet. Benjamin Cardonne has offered his residence for one of the progressive houses. We are still waiting for another location to finalize all the details.

Holiday Party (December 13, 2025)- Ed Medina said that he will be working on all details and that we will use the indoor ballroom at the venue.

Miami Art Deco Show (January 17-18, 2026): Ira Shapiro mentioned that the Miami Preservation League wants to maintain the relationship with our club since the car show is a big hit during Art Deco Weekend. Jorge Salazar will be co-chair of the show, together with Benjamin Cardonne.

Other Club Business:

- Tomás Hernández informed us that Paula Valentina Perez has resigned from the board.
- Jean Hawa received a very nice thank you letter from Julia (Judy) Beauchamp.
- Ed Medina thanked Jorge Salazar and Manny Garcia for helping move the club's contents to the new storage unit. Ed said he found t-shirts from previous national shows and suggested giving them away at different events. He also found antenna flags to be used at our car shows and once these are gone, we should order more.
- Ira Shapiro inquired about the final cost of the 70th Anniversary celebration. Ed Medina responded that we were within budget.
- Ed Medina proposed to purchase two more folding tables to put under the tent. All were in favor.
- Ira Shapiro announced that he has been nominated to serve on the National AACA Board of Directors.

Sunshine Report: Jean Hawa informed us that Gina Medina had surgery.

Adjournment: With no further club business to discuss, President Tomás Hernández made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. It was unanimously seconded and approved.

Submitted by Yovanna Hernández, Secretary



BELATED FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION AT THE PALACE SUITES

By Jean Hawa

In celebration of Fathers Day in June, our club displayed 19 antique and classic cars at The Palace Suites Senior Living Center in Kendall on the Saturday following Father's Day. A bountiful lunch was provided for all the residents and to participating car owners and one guest. This gathering was to constitute our monthly Members Meeting.

The residents had the opportunity to step back in time with some of the vintage autos on display and take pictures with them. The DJ had the car owners, residents, and staff members signing along and dancing. A surprise appearance of Marilyn Monroe became a very popular photo opt.

The idea of having the South Florida Region put on a car display came from Debbie Penn, whose father Leonard is a long time independent resident of The Palace Suites. Leonard has accompanied his son-in-law Mike Penn to many of our car shows. Having the antique car display at his home made him very happy. Of course Leonard didn't miss a chance to "meet" Marilyn.



R:
Mike Penn's
1976
Cadillac
Eldorado



L: Philip Williams'
1988 Pontiac 6000
Safari station wagon



Even James
Dean made
an
appearance



Marilyn with Al Padilla and his 1955
Buick convertible

L: Marilyn
and
Leonard



L: Silvio Areau's
1950 Plymouth Special Deluxe



Ivan Morro's 1957 Chevrolet BelAir



Laurence Huber's 1950 Cadillac
convertible Series 62



Tomás Hernández's 1954 Ford
Crestline Sunliner



Left: Bob Mayer's
1959 Ford Fairlane
500 Skyliner
retractable

PHOTO CREDITS:

Jean Hawa
Al Padilla

(continued on page 7)



Cliff Gibson's
1992 Chevrolet Corvette



Fabio Nodarse's
1973 Volkswagen Super Beetle



1960 Cadillac
from Williamson
Cadillac



Benjamin Cardonne's 1998
BMW M Roadster convertible



Edgar Belaval's 1978 Fiat Spyder



Robbie Greene's 1970 Pontiac GTO
convertible



Richard Heisenbottle's 1963
Chevrolet Corvette



Gary Shanock's 1973 Pontiac
Grand Am Coupe



L-R: Ben Cliff Maurice Tomás Mike



Al Padilla's 1955 Buick



1973 Pontiac Grand Am Coupe

1957 Chevrolet BelAir

1963 Chevrolet Corvette



1959 CHRYSLER 300 E Submitted by Kenny Stowe

As a 47-year member of the South Florida Region AACA this month, and Life Member #1, I am often asked, "What is your favorite old car?" My prompt answer is always, "The next one..."

Last week was lucky enough to find an unusual and rare 1959 Chrysler 300 E convertible. That year was one of the model's lowest sales figures. Five hundred fifty coupes were manufactured and one hundred forty convertibles, of which mine is one of the 27 known to exist. The odometer shows 90006.8!

Some of the unique features of the vehicle are the 413 cubic inch wedge engine producing 380hp, mated to a 3 speed TorqueFlite (typewriter) shifter, and dual four barrel carbs. Some factory equipment and optional accessories are Power Steering, Power Assisted Brakes, Power Adjustable Front Swivel Seats, Power Windows, Electro Touch-Tuner AM radio, power antenna, and heater, and factory 150 mph speedometer (in 1959!)

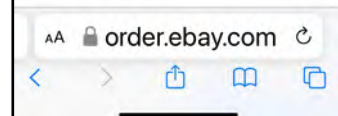
The Beautiful Brute, as the 300s are affectionately referred to, is Ivory White and Beige Leather. It drives like a modern car, and handles like Moby Dick. *(continued on page 9)*



Push button automatic



Portable Hand Held
Mopar spot lite (plugs
into cigarette lighter)



9:49 56

1959

TV Shows

- . Gunsmoke CBS
- . Wagon Train NBC
- . Have Gun, Will Travel CBS
- . The Danny Thomas Show CBS
- . The Red Skelton Show CBS
- . Father Knows Best CBS
- . 77 Sunset Strip ABC
- . The Price Is Right NBC
- . Wanted: Dead or Alive CBS
- . O. Perry Mason CBS



At least four of these shows are still on the air today, but not on the original station. In its 53rd season, the Price is Right is currently broadcast on CBS!

BREAKING NEWS By Kenny Stowe

My 1959 Chrysler E, proudly representing our South Florida AACA Region, won the Driver Preservation Award tonight (June 21) in Beckley, West Virginia at the National Show. Even though I was not in attendance, I was able to send the car.



Accessory (?)

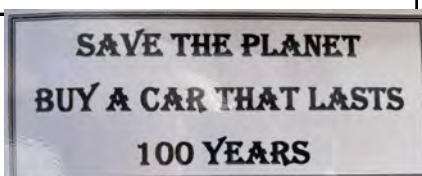


TRIBUTE TO JOHN AND CELIA LAYZELL

Sadly, we have to say so long to long time members John and Celia Layzell who have decided to leave Miami. John emailed 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair Ed Medina the following: "FYI, after 38 years in So Fla, and a member of AACA South Florida Region since about 1993, this September we are relocating to Winter Haven, Central Florida. We will be 16 miles/ 37 minutes from Lake Mirror, Lakeland so we look forward to seeing many AACA So Fla members there!"



BEST of SHOW- 2025 ART DECO
1925 Alvis Speed 12/50 roadster



Besides having wonderful engaging friendly personalities, John and Celia will be remembered mostly for their unique antiques that were driven around Florida, not trailered. They included their 1937 Alvis Speed 25 Vanden Plas 2 dr sedan which they drove to the Lake Mirror Concours, 1963 Lotus 7 Replica driven to the Deering Estate and Biltmore Way Coral Gables shows, the 1987 Porsche 924s 2 dr coupe, and Little Red, their ever popular 1970 Volkswagen Beetle AKA, the "Peking to Paris" rally car. John and his son Brett successfully completed the 2013 Peking to Paris rally. Then Celia and John drove Little Red in an 1800- mile cross country tour in June 2018.



1970 Volkswagen Beetle "Peking to Paris" rally car



1987 Porsche 924s 2 dr coupe



1963 Lotus 7 Replica



1937 Alvis Speed 25 Vanden Plas 2 dr sedan



2025 CUBA NOSTALGIA—May 17-18, 2025

BY Al Padilla

Cuba Nostalgia, a celebration of Cuban culture and heritage was back for its 25th year bringing together exhibits, memorabilia, food and music that honored Cuban traditions. The indoor venue was transformed in a way to recreate iconic places to make you feel as you were strolling in the streets of old Havana.

Once again, I was asked to gather some pre-1959 automobiles that represented yesteryear transportation on the island. Some AACA members responded to the request and I was able to present a beautiful array of classic cars to the event organizers. The cars were aligned in a gracious manner through the red carpet exhibition building entrance of the Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition Center. Fulgencio Batista's 1958 Mercedes-Benz 300D "Adenauer" limousine greeted the show attendees thanks to the generosity of Guy Lewis to enter this historic vehicle. Even with a somber aura that reflected a troublesome period of transitional Cuban governments, the Adenauer presence depicted its elegance and made a statement that unfortunately, history cannot be changed.

GM, Ford, Chrysler and Morris Garage were also represented at the venue. My 1955 Buick Century convertible was positioned at the center end of the line to recreate a 1958 photograph of a 1956 Buick Special convertible parked at the tarmac in front of a Cubana de Aviación Lockheed Constellation airplane at the Rancho Boyeros Airport in Havana, Cuba. A brief history of the plane and the Buick were part of the exhibit with the purpose of showing how Cuba led other Latin American countries in general advances and to trigger memories and to preserve history. This event has been revitalized to continue as the most prestigious Cuban cultural experience in South Florida.

Also shown were recreations of Floridita, Catedral de la Habana, El Encanto, Museo de Bellas Artes, Tropicana and other Cuban landmarks. The event goes danced and sang along during four live concerts performed on Saturday and five on Sunday at the Tropicana.



Al Padilla beside his 1955 Buick Century



Junior Felix Valdes' 1950 Chevrolet Deluxe



Jorge Estopinales' 1955 Cadillac Eldorado



License plates display

Note: The irregular lighting on the car display unfortunately resulted in lackluster photos.

Artwork

(continued on page 11)





Jorge Montano's 1958 MG



Pedro Puente's 1957 Thunderbird



40's



Silvio Areu's 1950 Plymouth



Ivan Morro's
1957 Chevrolet BelAir



R: Guy
Lewis' 1958
Mercedes-
Benz 300d
"Adenauer"

Chevrolet BelAir



1959 Ford retractable



Frank Brito's 1951 Chevrolet



Tony Hernandez's
1952 Chevrolet pickup

This ultra-rare Mercedes-Benz 300d "Adenauer" was ordered new in 1958 by then Cuban President Fulgencio Batista. Batista had hosted the Cuban Grand Prix races in 1957 and 1958, attracting drivers Carroll Shelby, Stirling Moss, and Juan Miquel Fangio, who was kidnapped by Fidel Castro guerillas on the eve of the February 1958 race. Thoroughly impressed with Mercedes-Benz performance, President Baptista ordered the \$14,000 sedan with optional whitewalls, power brakes, wood trim, carpeting, a Grand Prix radio, leather interior with white piping, custom Karl Baisch luggage, automatic transmission, and presidential flagstuffs. President Baptista used the 300d as the state sedan until he fled Cuba with his family New Year's

Day 1959 as depicted in "The Godfather".

After entering Havana with Che Guevara guerillas, Fidel Castro confiscated the car for his own use until 1965-66 when his Mercedes-Benz 600 limousine arrived. The 300d was then sent to the Cuban Embassy in Ottawa, Canada, for official use. When the fuel injection unit failed circa 1971-72, it was placed in storage where it remained for 40 years. The current owner obtained the 300d in 2015, undertaking three years of mechanical recommissioning. Showing just 15,000 miles, the car is largely original save one 1970 repaint.

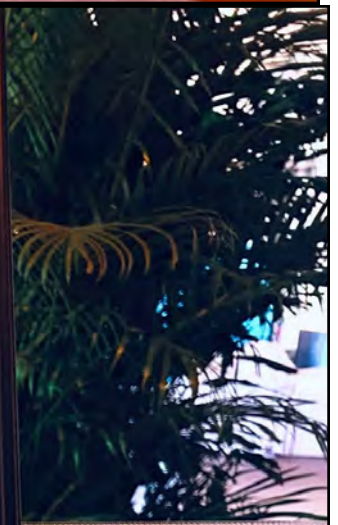
Two original 1961 Cuban government stickers remain on the windshield. In addition, since its return to Miami nearly 10 years ago, dozens of Cubans who fled Castro's dictatorship have identified the car as being used by both the Batista and Castro governments.



(continued
from page
11)



Cubana de Aviación Lockheed L-1049G Super Constellation - 1956 Buick - Rancho Boyeros, Cuba - Foto - Norberto Suarez 9/27/98



1956 Buick Special Convertible - Model 46C

Production: 9,732 cars
Original Retailer: \$12,740.00
Engine: 322 cu in (Ford V8)
Max. Horsepower: 220 (w/Optional)
Max. Torque: 119 ft-lb (w/Optional)
Height: 59.8 inches
Wheelbase: 122 inches
Approx. Base Weight: 3,880 pounds

1,70

% share of all 1956 Buicks

Lockheed L-1049 "Super Constellation"

El Lockheed L-1049, también conocido como "Constellation" y por "Connie," fue fabricado entre 1943 y 1958 en la planta de Burbank (California), alcanzando las 856 unidades. Propulsado inicialmente por cuatro motores Wright "Cyclone" 972TC, y R3350 de 18 cilindros, en doble estrella, tenía una autonomía de 8400 Km, una longitud de 34,65 metros, una envergadura de 37,49 metros, una velocidad máxima de 596 Km/h y una configuración de 59 a 99 plazas, siendo inconfundible por su triple deriva y su fuselaje con forma de delfín.

La primera aerolínea latinoamericana en operar el "Super Constellation" (L-1049C y L-1049G) fue Cubana de Aviación que lo tuvo en servicio en sus rutas de La Habana a Madrid, Nueva York y Méjico. Otras compañías de la zona que lo operaron fueron Línea Aeropostal Venezolana, Avianca, y Varig.

The Lockheed L-1049 Super Constellation is an American aircraft, a member of the Lockheed Constellation aircraft line. The aircraft was colloquially referred to as the Super Connie.

The L-1049 was Lockheed's response to the successful Douglas DC-6 airliner, first flying in 1950. The aircraft was produced for both the United States Navy as the WV / RV and U.S. Air Force as the C-121 for transport, electronics, and airborne early warning and control aircraft.

Range: 5,150 mi / Top speed: 330 mph / Cruise speed: 304 mph / Length: 114' / First flight: July 14, 1951



CARS AND COFFEE 239

Submitted by Eduardo Padron

Mel Mann and I attended Cars and Coffee 239 this past Sunday, July 20, 2025, at Mercato Town Center in Naples, Florida. Since the featured marque was Corvettes, I thought I'd send you a few photos of my 1968 Corvette roadster at the event. Mel did not bring any of his fine vehicles this time around.

Considered to be the Southwest Florida's premier Cars and Coffee event, they occur on the 3rd Sunday every month for all makes and models from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. There are five restaurants and of course coffee shops.

This particular car and coffee gathering has something for every one, ranging from pre-war classics to European sports cars, American production, and late model exotics. The website is **[cars and coffee239.com](http://carsandcoffee239.com)**. and it is on Instagram.

The organizers are very specific about having respect for the venue. Everyone is expected to **NOT DO THE FOLLOWING**: arrive before 8:30 a.m., reserve or save parking spaces, park at Whole Foods, block traffic, revving, burnouts, speeding, loud music, dealer cars, commercial promotion, promoting other events, signs, sales, flyers, tents, and definitely, no shenanigans upon departure from the event. Spectators are expected to park in the garage.

There are volunteers to help you find available parking. However, since there is no registration, the show is free and no windshield cars are created.



Eduardo Padron's 1968 Chevrolet Corvette

The Cars and Coffee 239 event is a relaxed event for car enthusiasts, spectators as well as car owners.



It was a beautiful Sunday morning and my 1968 participated in a patriotic display, leading a trio of red, white, and blue Corvettes.



The ride home from the event was pleasant as well.



[NOTE: (1) The article below was published in the July 2022 issue Volume 67 NO. 07 of "The Road Map", pp.15-16 the newsletter of the New Jersey Region of AACA, edited by Jay DeBoey. The article is written by Rich Reina, who is published here, with Rich's, Jay's and new editor Dick Bettles's permission.] (2) If anyone has a comment or questions about Rich's technical articles, please let Editor Hawa know [jmhawa@comcast.net], so it can be forwarded to Rich.

Two months ago, in the May 2022 Road Map, I rambled on about my hammer-driven impact driver. In June, it was my vernier calipers. For my third and final installment in this series, I've chosen another simple hand tool: the brake caliper piston spreader. Disc brake system servicing is straightforward, actually easier than many people realize. One step that sometimes befuddles the home mechanic is that the new brake pads will only fit inside the caliper if the caliper pistons are pushed back into their bores. (Go way back to the October 2020 Road Map and read about the components of a disc brake system.)

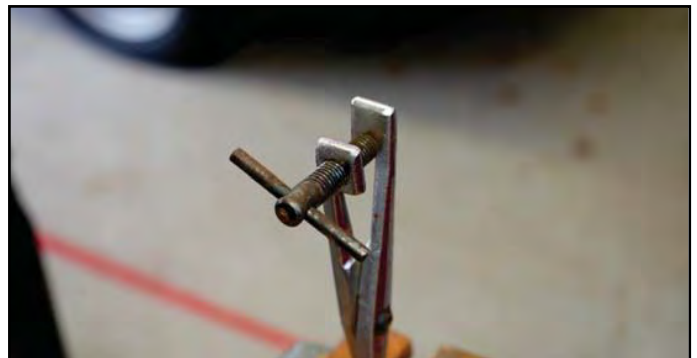
Many instruction books advise using a large C clamp for this job, which is certainly doable. However, I find its use to be cumbersome. The C clamp itself is often larger and heavier than needed. An inexpensive and purpose-made tool is the "Piston spreader" which comes in a variety of shapes and sizes.

The tool I own, like so many of mine, has been in my toolbox for decades. Frankly, I have no recollection of purchasing it; it doesn't even have a brand name on it. But mine, compared to every other version I've ever handled, is the model of simplicity. It's nothing more

than two almost identical pieces of metal, hinged in the middle, with a thumb screw inserted into a threaded hole in one end. As the thumb screw is turned clockwise, the screw pushes against the opposing piece, effectively also spreading the ends on the opposite side. If these ends on the opposite side are placed inside the caliper, the resulting force pushes the piston back home in the caliper. It takes twice as long to explain as it does to do.



My old and simple caliper piston spreader



As the thumb screw is turned, it pushes the ends farther away from each other,

The tool is light and consists of only three pieces. Once I set it up, I can perform the operation with one hand, something which cannot be said for a heavy C clamp. As vehicle brake systems evolved from fixed position calipers with pistons on both sides, to sliding calipers with only one piston per side, some improvisation has become necessary. There isn't always something for my tool to push against opposite the piston, so I simply use the worn-out pad as a 'top' for the spreader tool.

When using this tool or any other tool to return the caliper piston home, remember to loosen the cap on the brake-master cylinder reservoir.

(continued on page 15)

(continued from page 14)

Should the hydraulic fluid be very full, it may not be possible to push the piston all the way back. The fluid may need to be withdrawn; you also want to be careful that you don't spill any fluid out of the reservoir when driving the piston back.



The tool at work. Note placement of worn pad on each side to provide a pushing surface.

It's now interesting to reflect back on the choices I've made for "three of my favorite shop tools" None of the tools is electric, electronic, or hydraulic. Each tool cost me \$100 or less, so my choices are far from the most expensive tools I've owned. And two of the choices, the impact driver and the vernier calipers, have very general uses. This month's choice is specific to brake jobs, but is needed whenever brake pads are being replaced. Without realizing it beforehand, my three 'favorite' choices are small, simple, light, and affordable tools that make automotive repair work more convenient!

(Next month: we're going back to brakes to have a more detailed look at brake pad replacement)

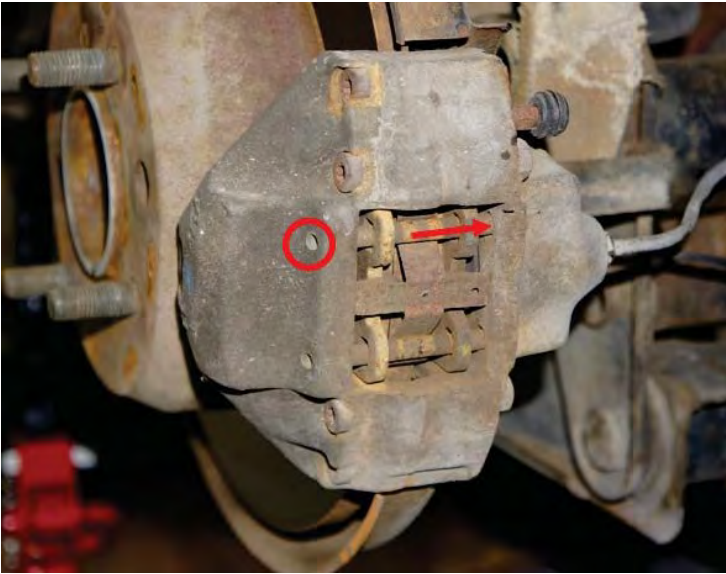
[NOTE: (1) The following article was published in the August 2022 issue Volume 67 NO. 08 of "The Road Map", pp. 20-21, the newsletter of the New Jersey Region of AACA, edited by Jay DeBoey. The article is written by Rich Reina, who is published here, with Rich's, Jay's and new editor Dick Bettel's permission.] (2) If anyone has a comment or questions about Rich's technical articles, please let Editor Hawa know [jmhawa@comcast.net], so it can be forwarded to Rich.



Way back in the October 2020 edition of Rich's Repair Ramblings, I wrote: "In a later edition of our Repair Ramblings, I will provide detailed descriptions of pad and rotor replacement." That 'later edition' is now here! For this month, we will start with just pad replacement. But first, let's talk money. My 1993 Mazda Miata, an HPOF Original award-winning car, has disc brakes front and rear. If my front brake pads were worn and needed replacement, I could search the Internet for price quotes. One popular website quotes a repair price (parts and labor) of \$161 (\$68 labor, \$93 parts). Another popular website which sells replacement parts quotes prices for front pads for my Miata was ranging between \$10 and \$37, depending on brand and pad material. Most car owners would presume that it's too difficult to replace pads, and would spend the \$161. But if you bought pads for, let's say \$25, and I told you that it's easy to change them yourself, saving \$136 in the process, would you? Now that I have your attention, I'm here to tell you that in fact, it is easy.

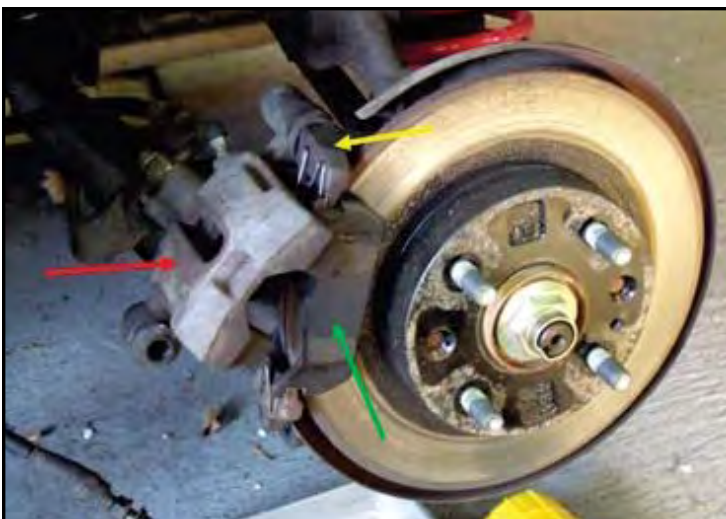
The front tires must be removed of course, and for that you will need a jack and jack stands. NEVER WORK ON A VEHICLE WHICH IS NOT PROPERLY SUPPORTED –IT COULD FALL AND KILL YOU. Pad removal differs depending whether the caliper is fixed (pistons on both sides) or floating (pistons on one side only). Fixed position calipers are easier. See photo #1: insert a narrow drift into the hole (circled in red), and drive the pin in the direction of the red arrow. Do the same for the lower pin. Remove the spring clip, and remove the pads (the pads may require some gentle urging from a screwdriver or small pry bar if corrosion has built up).

(continued on page 16)



#1- use a drift in hole (red circle) to drive pin out (direction of red arrow)

For a floating or sliding caliper, see photo #2. The caliper is in two pieces, the main body which holds the pistons, and a bracket to which it mounts. Find the bolts holding the main body to the bracket. (Open there are plastic or rubber plugs over these bolts. The bolts could be hex heads, Allen heads, or Torx heads; be sure to use the correct size socket.) Remove these bolts and pull the caliper body out and away from the bracket. **DO NOT DISCONNECT THE BRAKE HOSE.** Do not let the caliper hang by the hose; tie it up with rope, cable ties, or mechanic's wire so that there is no tension on the hose. Remove the brake pads.



#2- unbolt caliper body (red arrow) and pull it away from caliper bracket (yellow arrow), which gives access to brake pads (green arrow).

Next is possibly the only tricky part of the repair: pushing the caliper pistons back into their bores so that the new pads can be installed. First, a technician's Best Practice Tip: remove the cap on the master cylinder reservoir and make sure it's not filled to the brim, because as the pistons are pushed back, brake fluid is pushed back toward the master. You do not want brake fluid to spill out of the top of the reservoir. On a fixed caliper, I've successfully used a large screwdriver or small pry bar to drive the pistons home. On a floating caliper, many people recommend a C-clamp for the job. In either case, the best tool to use is a special tool called a caliper piston spreader, which I wrote about just last month in my July 2022 column.

With the pistons successfully returned 'home', insert the new pads, making sure that any spring hardware (usually included with the new pads) is in place. Although not 100% required, I prefer to use a special disc brake pad lubricant along the edges of the pad (NOT on the pad material surface). Reinstall the pins or bolt the caliper body back into place, depending on the design of your braking system. Photo below shows the brake pads (in red) installed within the caliper. Check the fluid level in the brake reservoir, top up as necessary, and reinstall the cap.



the new brake pads in red are mounted within this floating caliper

Remount the wheels and tires, jack up the car to remove the jack stands, and let the car back down to the ground. **CAUTION:** before driving the car for the first time, pump the brake *(continued on page 17)*



pedal several times to reinstall brake pressure! When you pushed those pistons back home, you pushed the brake fluid AWAY FROM the calipers. It's going to take a few stabs of the pedal to bring that pressure back up. I've heard of more than one technician (who should have known better) who has gotten behind the wheel after a brake job, started the engine, thrown the car into gear, and crashed when his first brake pedal application didn't stop the car. Don't let that happen to you.

These brake pad replacement instructions are general in nature, and the specific steps for your year, make, and model vehicle may differ somewhat. However, the overall concept of disc brake operation is rather consistent across the industry. I always recommend consulting shop manuals and other guides for your specific vehicle. Make sure you have the tools and equipment you need ahead of time. If it's your first time, a knowledgeable friend who is willing to lend a hand is invaluable.

Next month: Replacing disc brake rotors.

STUFF HAPPENS

**By Dain King, Judging School Instructor,
dainingv8@gmail.com**

You are getting ready to compete for the first time to earn a First Junior. You will leave home in two days for a National show. Those wheel covers just arrived in time to cap a three-year labor of love. OOPS! STUFF HAPPENS! Right model – wrong year. And it's too late to reorder. They sure look a lot nicer than the dented dog dishes you have used for the past two years. Maybe you decide to pop them on anyway, and maybe the chassis judge won't notice. Hopefully, you will be exonerated at the Awards Banquet. That was one mistake (or four matching wheel covers) and one way to overcome it. One step in the judging process that might get missed. But what happens when one mistake is missed by the owner, the team captain, and all four field judges? And how can one mistake make a difference at the Awards Banquet?

At a recent National show, a Mercury was registered as a Ford. It was the correct year and model, so two out of three isn't bad. The windshield card and the vehicle judging form stated it was a Ford, when indeed it was a Mercury. The Team Captain didn't cross check the

windshield card with the judging form. The owner might have had another vehicle on the show field and just mixed up the paperwork. That has happened in the past, where an owner had multiple vehicles being judged and the only difference was the model year. Now remember, the owners are Continuing Judges Education (CJE) News By Rick Lay, Chairman Continuing Judges Education, layco@bellsouth.net chip)! So far this year, through the Auburn Nationals, we have had more than 300 of our AACA judges take advantage of our over 20 different CJE course offerings. For those new to judging, our CJE courses are taught immediately after judges' breakfast and typically last 30 minutes or so and... you get to earn one annual CJE credit (and a CJE the most nervous individuals on the show field. We have to make sure we all work together. Each one of the field judges had to look at the windshield card to copy the vehicle number onto their worksheets – another cross-check missed. But what if a judge did notice and said nothing to the Team Captain?

This mistake was not caught until the Chief Judge was canvassing the field to ensure that all vehicles had been judged. In this particular case, Fords and Mercurys are judged in different classes, meaning the impact of the scores by the judging team might have an effect on the other vehicles in the class that it should have been judged with. The paperwork indicated it would receive a First Junior, but what if its score knocked another vehicle down to a Second Junior? What if the Mercury had been judged in the proper class, and another vehicle in that class would have knocked the Mercury down to a Second Junior?

As a club, AACA got lucky. The owner was lucky as well and was happy at the Awards Banquet, where he received a First Junior for his efforts. There were no other vehicles in the erroneous class, nor were there any vehicles going for a First Junior in the class he should have been judged in.

Lesson learned... Always cross-check the vehicle with the windshield card, then cross-check the windshield card with the information on the vehicle judging form. We got lucky on this one, but we cannot rely on luck every time.

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YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU!!

By Dave Anspach,
2025 AACA President

First of all, I want to say that it is an honor to serve as the 2025 President of our Club. It is an honor, however, that bears a great responsibility. A responsibility that I take extremely seriously and I, in turn, am asking every one of you to share. To paraphrase John F Kennedy from his 1961 inaugural address "ask not what your club can do for you. Ask what you can do for your club". Now many of you will ask "what can I do". Let's talk about that.

Since we have been talking about membership for the past few years, let's deal with that first. Getting a new member is absolutely the easiest thing we all can do. We all have friends, neighbors, relatives and so on that are not presently members. With all the reduced rate and free memberships we offer, it really is as simple as ASKING someone to join. Who can say no to a gift?? With a smile and a little conversation on the fun you have, you will soon be signing up a new member.

You can't have fun if you don't participate, so get involved! If you aren't part of a region, join one!! If there isn't one close by.....start one. Regional meetings and activities with local friends are among the finest social events around. Some Regions do as many as 7 tours and a show locally every year. These busy folks are having a lot of fun.

Don't want to join a region...participate in National activities. What better way to get to visit areas all over the country and participate in a car activity than to do a National show or tour. From Maine to Florida, Carolina to California, and don't forget Puerto Rico, AACA events traverse the continent and more. No event near you?? Look

for a few like minded people and set one up yourself!! Between Hershey headquarters and your directors and committees, there is plenty of help to get you going on a successful event. And don't forget judging. Our judging program offers you the opportunity to get up close and personal to every kind of vehicle you can imagine from Abarth to Zagato. It is fun and easy to learn and packed full of opportunities to travel.

There are literally hundreds of opportunities to get involved on various committees and groups throughout your club. All you have to do is stand up and say "I can help". There is something for everyone, just let us know you are available, we'll find a place for you!!

So the bottom line is we have a fantastic club. What is missing is U!! Get new members, participate, have fun!!! I guarantee that you will peg the fun meter and have a great time!!

ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA

DID YOU KNOW?

AACA offers remote research done by library staff to anyone who is interested - Go to fill out a research request form to get started*. *Fees may apply.

AACA LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTER

Visit AACALibrary.org to learn more!

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Brany Binker

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SUPPORTERS / WANTED



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WANTED:

Sidelights needs your car stories, car pictures, accident and/or repair experiences, restoration project, childhood memories of you and a car/truck, etc. Do you have a story about a friend or relative regarding an antique? Do you have a “should’ve, would’ve, could’ve” story?

Contact Editor Hawa at
jmhawa@comcast.net



Al Padilla says “Only in Miami...”



R: New Mexico Department of Transportation, wear seatbelts billboard. As seen on Facebook

FROM:
A.A.C.A. South Florida Region
c/o Jean Hawa
9999 SW 71 Avenue
Pinecrest, FL 33156-3063



TO:

2025 SOUTH FLORIDA REGION EVENTS

Website: <https://southfloridaregion.aaca.com>

August 2025

05- Board Meeting– 7:30 p.m. at Rinconcito Latino Café,
9606 SW 72 Street, Miami 33173

21– General Membership Meeting—TBD

SEPTEMBER 2025

02- Board Meeting– 7:30 p.m. at Rinconcito Latino
Café, 9606 SW 72 Street, Miami 33173

21– General Membership Meeting—TBD

**26– 30, October 1-5– Memory Lane; Miami International
Auto Show at Miami Beach Convention Center;**
Registration on club website

OCTOBER 2025

**01-05– Memory Lane; Miami International Auto Show at
Miami Beach Convention Center;** Registration on club
website

07- Board Meeting– 7:30 p.m. at Rinconcito Latino Café,
9606 SW 72 Street, Miami 33173

16– General Membership Meeting- TBD

NOVEMBER 2025

04- Board Meeting– 7:30 p.m. at Rinconcito Latino Café,
9606 SW 72 Street, Miami 33173

20– General Membership Meeting– 7:30 p.m. at
Rinconcito Latino Café, 9606 SW 72 Street, Miami
33173; **ELECTION NIGHT!** If you're planning to dine-in.
be there by 6:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 2025

02- Board Meeting– 7:30 p.m. at Rinconcito Latino Café,
9606 SW 72 Street, Miami 33173

**13– HOLIDAY PARTY/INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS &
BOARD**

SUNSHINE REPORT



Get well wishes have been sent to Ralph Thiele. Condolences have been sent to the families of Brany Binker and Yovanna Hernandez for the passing of their fathers.

**2025 AACA NATIONAL/
REGION EVENTS**
(check *Antique Automobile* or
www.aaca.org for more information)



**September 7-12, 2025– Revival AAA
Glidden Tour (Pre-1943)-Owensboro, KY
(VMCCA Hosted)**

**September 18-20 Southeastern Fall Nationals–
Corydon, IN**

October 7-10, 2025 – Eastern Fall Meet – Hershey, PA
hosted by Hershey Region AACA – 717-566-7720

**October 18-22, 2025 – Central Divisional Tour – San
Antonio to Gonzales, TX – hosted by Texas DFW
Region – 214-498-0531**

**October 23-25, 2025 – Central Fall Nationals –
Galveston, TX – hosted by Gulf Coast Region
AACA – 832-693-4008**

OTHER EVENTS

**Every Other Friday- Cruise in Generation Old School-
Olive Garden Kendall;** 8925 SW 162 Ave, Miami,
FL 33196 (by Baptist Hospital)

**September 13, 2025 INTERNATIONAL MODEL “A”
DAY.** This day is an opportunity for Model “A” Ford
owners and clubs around the world to all go out for a
drive or event on the same day (or alternate:
September 14, if rained out) and submit photos and
story to their national magazines

**October 17-19, 2025– 26th Annual Lake Mirror Classic
Lakeland, FL;** Registration is now open.

**December 6, 2025 Gasparilla
Cars in the Park,
Hillsborough County**

