

NORTHSTAR NEWS

My Pride and Joy



Tom St. Martin was once the proud owner of a Mark II, quite similar to the car pictured above

Welcome to the Northstar News, the monthly publication of the Northstar Region of the Lincoln and Continental Owners Club. We value your opinions and appreciate your input concerning this newsletter and the operation of the club. This is your club.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary to own one of the finest automobiles ever produced in the land of the free and the home of the brave, one's inevitable first choice is the Continental Mark II.

The Mark II went on sale in October, 1955. My dad's youngest brother, my uncle Frank, was the only real car guy in the family. So it happened that my dad and my uncle when to look at the Continental Mark II in that fall of 1955. They came back to our house raving about the precision fit and finish of the car, but all the two of them could do at \$10,000 a pop was to fantasize. Being a mere child at the time all I could do was to listen as they went on and on about what they had witnessed. Just hearing them and their excitement I forgot to be totally miffed that I hadn't gotten to go along. After all I was the real car addict who had become infected with car disease at age 4 when someone came to our house driving a 1940 Packard Club Sedan. It was Packard blue, and I knew it was a Packard. I don't know who they were or why they were at our house in a decidedly un-Packard neighborhood, but I knew what it was and that I needed to own one someday.

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Members and guests are welcome to attend the Board Meetings. Our meeting location will be printed elsewhere in the newsletter, as it often will be held in conjunction with other club events.

Articles and other information for the newsletter should be sent to David Gustafson, Editor, at 308 Brandywine Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337.

My Pride and Joy

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Of course, it wasn't long after October of '55 that Revel came out with a model kit of the Mark II. Since most of the ads showed a black car with red and white interior, my finished product was that combo as well. There it sat on the shelf next to many other models. Some were stock. Some were highly customized. AKA the George Barris influence.

So fast-forward a couple of decades. Getting drafted and changing my name to "Private" and surviving the fun time that that was; I acquired a beautiful wife and a couple of kids. Bought a house with a double garage. Built a three car garage in the back yard, and began filling the space with rolling sculptures. All pre-war, the cars included a Packard, a Chrysler Imperial and an Auburn.

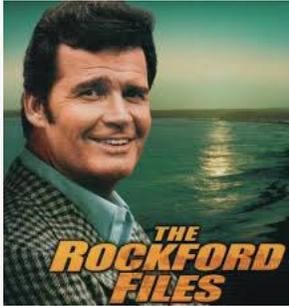
I became a member of the Milestone Car Society and thought owning a Milestone Car made some sense. [Actually any excuse to buy another car made sense] The Packard was the most drivable of my pre-war cars, so what would be a good post-war car?

A friend of mine named Lou Anderson mentioned that he wanted to sell one of his cars. Lou was an insurance agent and was good at sniffing out low mile collector cars, often from estates. The car he wanted to sell was a 1956 Continental Mark II. !!!! Mileage was 34,000 actual. It had come from the estate of the Baker family who owned the Baker Building in downtown Minneapolis.

The story on the car and the Bakers was that Mr. Baker [A. Baker according to the plate on the carpet over the transmission hump inside the car] was its original owner. After buying the Mark II Mr. and Mrs. Baker set out on a road trip from sunny Minnesota to even sunnier California. While crossing the desert, the winds picked up enough to sandblast the brand new Continental. Upon arriving in California, Mr. Baker

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Trivia from the Internet



James Garner
1928 - 2014

James Garner (born **James Scott Bumgarner**; April 7, 1928) was an American film and television actor, one of the first Hollywood actors to excel in both media. He has starred in several television series spanning a career of more than five decades. These included his popular roles as *Bret Maverick* in the 1950s western-comedy series, *Maverick*, and *Jim Rockford* in the 1970s detective drama, *The Rockford Files*. He has starred in more than fifty films, including *The Great Escape* (1963), *Paddy Chayefsky's The Americanization of Emily* (1964), *Blake Edwards' Victor Victoria* (1982), *Mur-*

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Editors Message

August 2014

July has drawn to a close, but not to worry, there is still some summer left. Hopefully, August will be a good month, with September even better. Plenty of nice days left in 2014 to get your favorite old Lincoln (or other fine car) out for a drive.

A few of us are off to Hickory Corners for the grand opening of the Lincoln Motor Car Museum early in August. A long time in the planning and fund raising process, it is now a reality. It should be a very significant addition to the Gilmore Museum presently there. We will be covering this event in detail in our September newsletter. If you would like

to attend this very historical event, (August 6 – 9), but unsure of details, call Bob Johnson at 651.257.1715 and he will try to help you with tickets and reservations.

We will be having our fall Lincoln show, early in September, at Luther North Country Ford Lincoln. It should be a great day to get together and do some intense visiting with all of our friends and club members. As usual, there will be a nice lunch, some door prizes and people's choice awards.

Later in September is the LCOC MidAmerica in Rockford, Illinois. Not far from the Twin Cities, it should

be a fun filled four days that will be remembered for some time. It is anticipated that there will be over 100 cars entered for showing, with about 250 people expected to attend. If you have not been to one of the LCOC

meets, you should plan to attend this one. Get your registration in now, don't miss this show.

We recently read in the automotive section of the Detroit Free Press that Lincoln sales rose by 16 percent this last June. This is good news. The article went on to say that Lincoln expects to break the 100,000 mark in sales either this calendar year or next. Sales of



Samara, our west coast correspondent, recently spied a really nice late 90's Lincoln Continental sedan for sale in the Portland area. She thinks that it would be the perfect mode of transportation for her as she makes her rounds checking out classic Lincolns in the Pacific Northwest. The color black is great too.

the MKZ have been very good and there are a great many advance orders for the all new MKC, which will be on sale very shortly at Lincoln dealers. It is rumored that there is a new model in the works for Lincoln. One can hope for a new Mark something or other, but a new sport coupe may not the required sales potential to make it a marketing success. But, whatever it will be, I am guessing that it will be a very good looking car, a real hit for Lincoln. Let us hope for the best.

Till next month, David, Marion and Olga, the Samoyed.

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phy's Romance (1985), for which he received an Academy Award nomination, and *The Notebook* (2004).

Garner, the youngest of three children, was born in Norman, Oklahoma, the son of Mildred Scott (née Meek) and Weldon Warren Bumgarner, a carpet layer. His two older brothers were actor Jack Garner (1926-2011) and Charles Bumgarner, a school administrator who died in 1984. His family was Methodist. His mother, who was of part Cherokee descent, died when he was five years old. After their mother's death, Garner and his brothers were sent to live with relatives. Garner was reunited with his family in 1934, when Weldon remarried.

Garner grew to hate his stepmother, Wilma, who beat all three boys, especially young James. When he was fourteen, Garner finally had enough of his "wicked stepmother" and after a particularly heated battle, she left for good. James' brother Jack commented, "She was a damn no-good woman".

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The rain man has worked overtime this year; everything is green if it wasn't drowned out. This isn't funny, but Marion Gustafson wanted the door prize she won at Lord Fletchers on Sunday, July 13. The object that Marion wanted was a *RAIN GAUGE*, because theirs was broken by a hail storm the week before. The wet weather stories we all can tell are many but not all can be printed here. It would be nicer to write about something other than bad weather. We can always use an article about Lincolns for our newsletter. Past or present, we all enjoy reading about them.

The North Star region is proud to announce that two members, Paul Andahl, Bismarck, North Dakota and Perry Bush, Menasha, Wisconsin were elected by acclamation, as LCOC National Directors for three year terms effective 2015. Paul Andahl has shown that he has the dedication to our Region and LCOC by the miles he and Deb drive to attend our monthly activities from Bismarck, North Dakota. Perry Bush has realized that LCOC is an organization that he wants to help lead into the future by using his special talents and knowledge of the Lincoln automobile. I really want to thank these two individuals because they stepped forward to help run the LCOC at a time when so much is changing. As our membership ages, it is necessary to recruit new members to replace ones that are no longer active in the club. Many of our younger members of society do not even own cars, much less take the same interest in particular brands as our present membership. As LCOC members, we must work hard to recruit younger members just to keep the club economically viable. We cannot be satisfied with just replacing everyone we lose with one new one. We need to try to gain two members for each one we lose to just slowly grow our beloved LCOC. Additionally, Lincoln is also working hard to find its way. Even as late as last year, Alan Mullaly, the former CEO of Ford Motor company questioned whether or not it made economic sense to keep producing Lincolns. The recently announced MKC, the small luxury crossover is in high demand and the MKZ is selling well, but other models desperately need updated styling to attract mid to upscale buyers.

Activities Director, Jay White coordinated a Lincoln Breakfast Club meeting on Saturday July 12, at 8 AM, at Perkins restaurant in Maple Grove. The region members who attended were Jay White, Gary Plocker, Roger Wothe, Dennis Owens, Ray and Jeannine Nelson and Bob and Mary Johnson. After breakfast, we motored as a group to the "Maple Grove Days Car Show". The Lincolns were parked together and made an impressive display. Guess what, the rains came down hard about 1:30 PM and that was the end of a neat gathering of our Lincolns at a local car show. Several more members were planning on attending, but morning showers cancelled their attendance. Jay is going to try and set up another Saturday morning breakfast and car show for us to attend. It was really neat to see the attention our Lincoln's got when parked

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Northstar Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2014

Regional Director Bob Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:40 at Culver's Restaurant in Maplewood MN. Board members present were Bob Johnson, Bob Roth, Bob Gavrilesco, Harvey Oberg, Dave Gustafson, and Dennis Owens. Other members attending the meeting were, Mary Johnson, Marion Gustafson, and Faye Oberg. The agenda of this meeting was approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Regional Director Bob Johnson announced that two North Star region members, Paul Andahl, Bismarck, North Dakota and Perry Bush, Menasha, Wisconsin were elected as LCOC National Directors for three year terms effective 2015. Bob stated the election was by acclimation when only five candidates filed for the five open positions. There was no need for an expensive ballot and voting process since the outcome was known. A national election article with information about all elected directors is elsewhere in this newsletter.

Bob reviewed the activities for the remainder of the year. The next activity is the Sunday Brunch, at Lord Fletchers on Lake Minnetonka, July 13 at 11:30 AM. Jay White has coordinated a Lincoln Breakfast Club meeting on Saturday July 12, at 8 AM, we will meet at Perkins restaurant located at Hemlock and I694. After breakfast we will motor to the "Maple Grove Days Car Show". About 9 members have expressed interest in attending this type of event. Time, date and location for all other activities will be found near the end of the *Northstar News*.

Our August event is the Lincoln Museum dedication, Hickory Corners, Aug 6-9, Bob J will lead tour up thru northern Michigan via Mackinac Bridge, about 750 miles, this will be a two day trip. As of 7/10/14, 180 registrations, and 130 Lincolns, 358 people for Dedication, fourteen North Star Members have registered for Dedication and 7 for driving tour. If you have not registered, they will take late registrations, so register as soon as you can.

Tom St Martin has recommended a new restaurant, Roasted Pear on 9690 Colorado Lane, Brooklyn Park. It is located at Hwy 610 and Zane Ave North. We have been there before but has changed owners. We will go there for our Yearend Brunch in November. Jay White will schedule date in near future.

Treasurer Harvey Oberg stated the Treasury balance is \$3,012.33 with all bills paid. Projects, Bob Gavrilesco reported that 21 Region Grille Badges are sold.

Publications and Membership Director Dave Gustafson reported that there was no change in membership numbers. Bob Johnson mentioned that Roger Wothe has recruited two new members by sending them LCOC Membership applications after meeting them at local car shows. Bob asked if we could spend the money to send each Region Member new LCOC Membership Application forms to hand out to prospective Lincoln owners to let them know about our club. A motion was approved to spend about \$100 in postage and letter costs in doing a first class mailing to get LCOC Membership Applications and cover letter to all North Star Members.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM. The August Board Meeting will be at Morries Minnetonka Ford Lincoln, 2nd floor conference room on August 14, which is also moved out one week because of The Lincoln Museum Dedication August 6- 9, 2014. Respectfully submitted by Bob Johnson for Secretary Roger Wothe.

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Garner stated that his stepmother punished him by forcing him to wear a dress in public and that he finally engaged in a physical fight with her, knocking her down and choking her to keep her from killing him in retaliation. This incident ended the marriage.

Shortly after the breakup of the marriage, Weldon Bumgarner moved to Los Angeles, while Garner and his brothers remained in Norman. After working at several jobs he disliked, at sixteen Garner joined the United States Merchant Marine near the end of World War II. He fared well in the work and with shipmates, but suffered from chronic seasickness. At seventeen, he joined his father in Los Angeles and enrolled at Hollywood High School, where he was voted the most popular student. A high school gym teacher recommended him for a job modeling Jantzen bathing suits. It paid well, \$25 an hour, but

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More Bob Johnson

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in his first interview for the Archives of American Television, he said he hated modeling and soon quit and returned to Norman. There, he played football and basketball, as well as competed on the track and golf teams, for Norman High School. He never graduated from high school, explaining in a 1976 Good Housekeeping magazine interview: "I was a terrible student and I never actually graduated from high school, but I got my diploma in the Army."

He changed his last name from Bumgarner to Garner after the studio had credited him as "James Garner" without permission. He then legally changed it upon the birth of his first child, when he decided she had too many names. His brother Jack also had an acting career and changed his surname to Garner, too. His non-actor brother, Charlie, kept the Bumgarner surname.

Garner was

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together in a group.

The North Star Region Car/Grille Badges are really selling, 23 of the 40 ordered are now sold. We will have them on display and for sale at our events. The cost is \$40.00 each.

The Sunday Brunch at Lord Fletcher's on Lake Minnetonka, July 13 was attended by 30 of our members. The buffet was possibly one of the best in the Twin Cities, Lord Fletchers really has it all. Everything you wanted to eat and more. We are professional eaters, and no one went away hungry. Region members who we have not seen in a while that attended, were Bill and Donna Allen, Jim and Ruth Boylan, Jack and Marilyn Fletcher, Poplar Grove, IL, Rich and Linda Herman, Roger and Jan Leppla, Dennis Owens, Dave Sandels and Jack and Julia Vanatta

As we have previously mentioned in this column, the Lincoln Motor Car Foundation museum dedication will take place this August, from the 6th through the 10th. As of July 10th, there have 180 registrations, with some 130 Lincolns of all ages for this event, along with 358 people attending. Fourteen Northstar club members are set to attend. If you have not registered, they will take late registrations, so register as soon as you can.

Mary and I will lead a caravan that takes the northern Michigan route, via Mackinac Bridge, this trip covers about 750 miles and we will make it a two day trip, beginning Tuesday, August 5th, departing from St. Croix Falls. If you want to tag along with us, call me at

651.257.1715 for all the details.

It is time to think about our Octo-

ber election for managers to the North Star Board of Directors for 2015. Each year in the fall, our Region is required to elect by blanket ballot, one third of our Board of Directors for 2014, we have three openings. The term of a Region Manager is three years. These positions will be filled by nominations in September and election using mail ballot in October. The new Board of Directors will elect Region Officers for the term of one year in November for 2015. All active members of the region are eligible to nominate and vote in the election. We currently have nine Directors. The bylaws call for at least five directors and no more than nine. Please contact Roger Wothe at home 952-473-3038 or email rwothe@mchsi.com, by Monday, September 15th, if you are interested.

Tom St Martin has recommended a new restaurant, Roasted Pear on 9690 Colorado Lane, Brooklyn Park. It is located at Hwy 610 and Zane Ave North. We have been there before but it has changed owners. We will go there for our year end Brunch in November. Jay White will schedule the date in the near future.

During the month of June, 40 of Frank Warner's cars were sold via an on-line auction service. While the cars were preserved with indoor storage, most have not been driven in years. All clearly showed the effects that inactivity and non-climate controlled storage over a long time will have on a car. There are still some cars left in Centuria, Wisconsin, if I find out what the plans are for them I will let you know.

As always, keep the journey continuing in our marvelous Lincolns.

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closely advised by financial adviser Irving Leonard, who also advised Clint Eastwood in the late 1950s and 1960s. After several feature film roles, including *Sayonara* with Marlon Brando, Garner got his big break playing the role of professional gambler Bret Maverick in the comedy Western series *Maverick* from 1957 to 1960. Garner was earlier considered for the lead role in another Warner Brothers Western series, *Cheyenne*, but that role went to Clint Walker because the casting director couldn't reach Garner in time (according to Garner's autobiography), and Garner wound up playing an Army officer in the pilot instead.

Only Garner and series creator Roy Huggins thought *Maverick* could compete with *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *The Steve Allen Show*. The show almost immediately made Garner a household name. Various actors had recurring roles as *Maverick* foils, including Efrem Zimbalist, Jr as "Dandy

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Bill Ford Revives a Classic, The Continental

From the pages of *Popular Mechanics*, November 1955, by Arthur Railton



What should you get when you plunk down \$10,000 for an automobile? After all, it can have only four wheels and one engine just like any other car!



But the new Continental, designated the Mark II in a somewhat British accent, is unlike other cars, say its builders. For \$10,000 the Continental buyer is said to get finer quality than has ever been built into an assembly-line product before, plus an outward appearance so striking that there can be no doubt he is driving an automobile that costs \$10,000.

Let's look at these two claims for the Continental. Do they stand up?

First, what about striking appearance? Judge for yourself. The car is certainly different without being freakish. There can be no doubt that it is a descendant of the original Continental. Its proportions emphasize what many persons still believe is the epitome of automotive design—the long, long hood that signifies power and the small, compact passenger

compartment that denotes elegant intimacy.

It has, for this writer at least, a flashy dignity. If that sounds like a contradiction, it is! But, strangely enough, it is true. There's enough dignity to satisfy the most retiring of retired millionaires, yet with it there's enough flash to elicit wolf-calls from street urchins. Driving the new Continental you look impressive, but you certainly won't be called a grandstander!

What about the claim of fine quality? Can any assembly-line operation live up to that promise?

Months ago when production of the new Continental was just getting under way, an inspector spotted burrs on an incoming shipment of washers. The burrs were small; the washers not of major importance. The fault would not affect by as much as a whit the operation or looks of the car.

Yet the whole shipment of washers went back. Not because the faults were critical, but because they violated the basic concept of the car—it must be as perfect as possible.

And it should be. After all, it does have a price tag that reads \$10,000 or so and when a man spends that kind of money he should get perfection.

That is Bill Ford's philosophy and the Continental Mark II is Bill Ford's baby. He has been the driving force behind the car since its conception. Months back, when the division was just starting to produce cars, this writer was startled to spot Bill Ford test-driving cars on the plant's own track. He wanted to satisfy himself that each car was right. He no longer can do that, production being what it is today, but he still spot checks Con-

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Reviving the Continental continued

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Jim Buckley," Richard Long as "Gentleman Jack Darby," Leo Gordon as "Big Mike McComb," and Diane Brewster as "Samantha Crawford" (Huggins' mother's maiden name) while the series veered effortlessly from comedy to adventure and back again. The relationship with Huggins, the creator and original producer of *Maverick*, would later pay dividends for Garner.

In 1971, Garner returned to television in an offbeat series, *Nichols*. The network changed the show's title to *James Garner as Nichols* during its second month in a vain attempt to rally the sagging ratings. The motorcycle-riding character was killed in what became the final episode of the single-season series. Garner was re-cast as the character's more normal twin brother, in the hopes of creating a more popular series with few cast changes. According to Garner's videotaped *Archive of American Television* interview, Garner had *Nichols* killed in the last episode so that a

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Continental as they come off the line.

To make certain each car is right, Continental established a new job classification in the assembly operation—the road-test mechanic. Each Continental gets two test drives around the small but adequate test track by one of these experts. This mechanic takes the car over the railroad-tie "rattle course" and brings it in for corrections. He must do the correcting himself. There is no passing the buck. If the car has a rattle, he's got to get rid of it. If it skips a beat on acceleration, he must make it right.

Two examples will illustrate the careful planning that went into details. When the time came to select a horn, Ford and others sat for hours listening to the sounds of various horns as the car was driven past, driven into a driveway, under the window. After hundreds of samplings, a horn was selected with just a touch of "sass" blended into its authoritative tone.

A similar amount of care was taken in the exhaust-pipe design. First, there were simply two straight-back pipes, but that sounded like two four-cylinder engines, hardly impressive enough for a Continental. Finally, a rear crossover pipe was added just above the differential so the engine would sound right. There are still the two separate exhaust systems, but the crossover pipe blends the two sounds into one.

Here are some added reasons why the new Continental is a \$10,000 automobile:

Painting a Continental is said to take longer than the entire assembly operation of other cars. There are

eight double coats altogether:

Two double coats of primer followed by a water-and-sand rubdown;
Two double coats of surfacer followed by water-and-sand rubdowns;
Two double coats of color followed by oil-and-sand rubdown;
Two added coats of color and another oil-and-sand rubdown;
Final polishing. There are 14 single colors and five conservative two-tone combinations available.

Chrome parts get successive layers of copper, nickel and chromium. They pass salt-spray resistance tests three times as severe as the usual S.A.E standard. Chrome, used sparingly outside, appears in unexpected places; the radiator cap, oil-filler cap, dipstick, door edges.

The leather in the Continental's upholstery (and 23 of 49 interior-trim schemes are all leather) comes from Bridge of Weir, Scotland, where barbed-wire enclosures are never used because the cattle's hides might be damaged by the barbs. This leather is tediously hand-worked in Scotland to make it supple.

Each engine is tested on a dynamometer alone, then with its transmission attached, and finally in the car.

Each transmission is tested individually in a test vehicle before being shipped to the Continental assembly plant.

Glove compartment and trunk are lined with the same fine carpeting used on the floor.

Vent panes as well as windows are motorized with the driver's control on a shelf in the door.

It takes 90 man-hours to assemble the Continental—a figure believed to be two or three times higher than for

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sequel could never be made.



*Starting with the 1974 season, Garner appeared as private investigator Jim Rockford in *The Rockford Files*. He appeared for six seasons, for which he received an Emmy Award for Best Actor in 1977. Veteran character actor Noah Beery, Jr. (Wallace Beery's nephew) played Rockford's father, Joseph "Rocky" Rockford, while Gretchen Corbett portrayed Rockford's lawyer and sometime lover, Beth Davenport, until she left the series over a salary dispute with the studio. Garner also invited yet another familiar actor, Joe Santos, who played Rockford's friend in the Los Angeles Police Department, Detective Dennis Becker. Rounding out the cast was a character actor and friend of Garner's who had previously co-starred with him on*

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More Continental

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other American cars. Daily production is a mere 10 to 16 cars.

About 300 persons work in the assembly plant and 47 of them are inspectors. That is an inspector for every six workers, a very high ratio.

Bodies are checked on a gauge and must come within a tolerance of 25/1000 inch.

Don't make the error of calling this car the 1956 Continental. It isn't. It is the Continental Mark II, meaning the second of a series. There are no plans for yearly changes. When a change does come, the new model will be the Mark III. That might be one, two or five years from now.

Have you noticed there is no talk about horsepower and torque? This was no oversight. While the rest of the industry shouts about its added power, the Continental people are mum.

The engine is a modified Lincoln V8 and it obviously puts out as much (probably more) power as Lincoln's 285 horsepower and 401 pound feet of torque. But all you'll get from Continental sources is a smile when you ask how much. Their answer is simple: "Horsepower is adequate."

And, on the theory that when you buy a \$10,000 automobile you don't have to rely on such incidentals as horsepower to impress your friends, Continental says it will continue to stay aloof in the horsepower claiming race.

Having driven the Continental, I can say quite honestly that they are right—the horsepower is adequate!

More Pride and Joy

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went directly to the nearest Lincoln dealer and with the bill sent to the insurance company, bought a replacement Continental Mark II. This would be the car that I would purchase from Lou Anderson.

Unlike what I had been used to seeing in Mark II ads, this car was not black with red and white innards. It was blue. It could be described as a robin's egg blue. Or a sky blue. The technical name from the Continental division called it light blue. The interior was a matching light blue and white leather. The trunk looked as though nothing had ever been put inside of it. It was perfect. It had its original spare tire, jack and tire wrench in the original blue vinyl case. This one was loaded with all of the available options that Continental offered for the 1956 model year. All, of course, was one; air conditioning. It was another \$500 over and above the 10 Gs you were already handing over.

I don't know how long Mr. Baker lived after the California trip, but after his demise Mrs. Baker used the car. She must have been getting up there in age too, as she seemed to get too close to too many other objects. Finally the Continental was put in the garage in the basement of the Baker Building and Mrs. Baker went to rest until her days were concluded.

So Lou Anderson comes across this car that had been sitting parked for a number of years. The only defect was a lot of chipped paint on the passenger door from whoever parked next to the light blue Mark II every day. That, and the general problems that come about to a car that doesn't

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The Continental Mark II

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Nichols, Stuart Margolin, playing Jim's excellent mate and treacherous "friend" Angel Martin. In the first episode of Season Six, Paradise Cove, Mariette Hartley guest-starred as Court Auditor Althea Morgan.

Garner had previously appeared with Rockford Files co-star Hartley in a series of Polaroid Camera commercials. Garner ultimately ended the run of the show, despite consistently high ratings, because of the high physical toll on his body. Appearing in nearly every scene of the series, doing many of his own stunts — including one that injured his back — was wearing him out.

He was nominated for his first Oscar award for Best Actor in a Leading Role in the movie Murphy's Romance opposite Sally Field. Field, and director Martin Ritt, had to fight the studio, Columbia Pictures, to have Garner cast, since he was regarded as a TV actor by then (despite having co-starred in the box office hit Victor Victoria opposite Julie Andrews two years

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From Daily Driving by Frank Nerad.

Supposedly, the sequel is never as good as the original; and that is certainly true of the Continental Mark II. The original Lincoln Continental, created as a one-off by Bob Gregorie and his design staff for the personal use of Edsel Ford, was, with little argument, the best American auto design of the 1940's. Mildly production-ized and sold as a series into the late Forties, it was a classic. Ford Motor Company tried to re-create the same magic some 15 years later with the Mark II, but to re-create magic is a tougher task than the first time. Still, though the Mark II lacked the essential rightness of the original's proportions, it was a car to be reckoned with. By sheer mass, sheer price, sheer presence, it was a vehicle that epitomized 1950's America.

If you are known by the company you keep, then the Mark II deserves high marks. A wide swath of the rich and famous in the 1950's owned one, including Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Louie Prima, Dwight Eisenhower, Barry Goldwater, Spike Jones, Nelson Rockefeller, Henry J. Kaiser, Howard Johnson and the Shah of Iran.

A sticker price that nudged \$10,000 (\$9,966.00 f.o.b. Detroit) made the Continental Mark II twice the price of a garden variety Lincoln of the same year. In defense of the gargantuan price, the Mark II was hand-built to a very high quality standard such that Ford Motor Company claimed it lost a thousand dollars or so on every one it sold.

That's a believable tale, because the Ford Motor Company of the early Fifties was in some disarray. The still-privately-held firm had weathered World War II with flying colors and

leapt into the post-war economy with gusto, but as the Fifties dawned it seemed lost. As a maker of low-cost "transportation" cars and light trucks, it certainly had a big place for itself in the market, but climbing out of its stereotype into the middle-priced and luxury segments proved to be difficult. At the same time, General Motors was cleaning up in that portion of the market with Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick and Cadillac.

The executives at Ford Motor Company went through exercise after exercise to come up with a way to gain a strong footing in the upper end of the car market, but the plans that resulted from these excursions into "future-think" were almost invariably scrapped or emasculated. One plan that did bear some fruit was to take Mercury (often derided as Ford with more chrome) and move it upscale into what was approximately Buick territory, introduce a new division (Edsel) to compete in Pontiac-Oldsmobile territory and send Lincoln into headlong battle against Cadillac. An addendum to this plan suggested the creation of a "Special Products Division" to build short-production-run "halo" vehicles to add luster to the Ford Motor Company offerings.

Of course, we all know what happened to Edsel. But what is less well understood was the final addendum to the plan. Ford executives did, indeed, create a "Special Products Division," and its charter was to re-capture the essence of the Lincoln Continental in a new, ultra-luxury vehicle. Given this task, the division quickly morphed into the short-lived Continental Division of Ford Motor Company with none other than Edsel's son, William

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More Mark II

(Continued from page 10)

earlier). Columbia didn't want to make the picture at all, because it had no "sex or violence" in it. But because of the success of *Norma Rae* (1979), with the same star (Field), director, and screenplay writing team (Harriet Frank Jr. and Irving Ravetch), and with Field's new production company (Fogwood Films) producing, Columbia agreed. Columbia wanted Marlon Brando to play the part of Murphy, so Field and Ritt had to insist on Garner. Part of the deal from the studio, which at that time was owned by The Coca-Cola Company, included an eight line sequence of Field and Garner saying the word "Coke", and also having Coke signs appear prominently in the film. In *A&E's Biography of Garner*, Field reported that her on-screen kiss with Garner was the best cinematic kiss she had ever experienced.

In 2000, after an operation to replace both knees, Garner appeared with Clint Eastwood (who had played a villain in the original *Maverick* series) as astronauts in the movie

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Clay Ford, as its general manager. Because of this, purists insist the Continental Mark II should not be referred to as the Lincoln Continental Mark II. That, however, is splitting hairs, since the Continental division vehicle was sold by Lincoln dealers, used a Lincoln power train and in all other ways smelled like a Lincoln. The Continental division created a vehicle with presence. Not only was its price tag big; it was big. A two-door hardtop, the Mark II was built on an enormous Y-shaped frame with a wheelbase of 126 inches. At over 18 feet, it was as long as a Chris Craft runabout, and finished with the same meticulous detail. Further, it was no lightweight. Its body-on-frame construction plus a full complement of luxury equipment, like air conditioning, power-operated windows, power-operated front seat and rich leather upholstery conspired to create a weight that has been variously reported as 4,825 pounds or 5,100 pounds, some two-and-a-half tons.

There was little elegance in its suspension. The independent front suspension was a fairly typical American A-arm arrangement, though one bow to high tech was the employment of "speed-compensating shock absorbers." The rear suspension was even more rudimentary: a huge live axle hung by semi-elliptic springs with hydraulic shock absorbers for damping.

If all that seems ungainly and somewhat crude, there was nothing ungainly or crude about the Mark II's exterior shape. In profile it offered a simple elegance with an extremely long hood, tight greenhouse with a

stately roofline and a deck accentuated by stand-up taillights and the famed "Continental" tire bulge. None of Cadillac's tailfin excesses here, though perhaps the faux spare tire was a bit bigger than it needed to be. Tastefully, chrome was kept to a minimum, and the Mark II's handsome grille was remarkably restrained and flanked by two simple round headlights.

What power plant was used to propel this mammoth piece of machinery? A thoroughly modern (for its time) Lincoln V-8 engine was the obvious choice of the Continental division brass. The cast iron-block engine displaced 368.6 cubic inches and, equipped with a four-barrel carburetor, it produced 265 horsepower. (With a bit more tuning the following year, the horsepower was upped to 300 to compete with the Chrysler 300 letter series, which was mining the same vein of customers.) A Turbo-Drive three-speed automatic was the only transmission available.

The car debuted in Lincoln-Mercury (Lincoln-Mercury-Continental?) dealerships on October 5, 1955, and it created an immediate sensation. Certainly the public relations types had something to do with the uproar, but there was mass curiosity to see what Ford built that cost ten thousand dollars.

Buyers got a lot for their money. Each Continental engine was meticulously balanced and tested on a dynamometer before being installed in the virtually hand-built frame. The chrome trim was subjected to a 10-day-long salt spray test, and the intricate front-end body pieces were test fitted before final assembly and the

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*Space Cowboys, also featuring Tommy Lee Jones and Donald Sutherland. During a group appearance by the cast on television's *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, Leno ran a brief clip from Garner and Eastwood's lengthy saloon fistfight during Eastwood's *Maverick* appearance in "Duel at Sundown" over forty years earlier; Tommy Lee Jones and Eastwood also stage a brief bar brawl in *Space Cowboys*, and Leno is shown interviewing the four astronauts in the film.*

For his contribution to the film and television industry, Garner received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (at 6927 Hollywood Boulevard). In 1990, he was inducted into the Western Performers Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He was also inducted into the Television Hall of Fame that same year. In February 2005, he received the Screen Actors Guild's Lifetime Achievement Award. He was also nominated for Outstanding Performance by a Male

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Mark II continued...

application of premium lacquer paint. Upholstery was fashioned with Bridge of Weir leather imported from Scotland.

Though the Continental Mark II was met with a great deal of interest, at 10,000 dollars in 1955 the car was too expensive to attract much of a following. Ford executives originally planned to build about 2,000 Mark II's a year for a period of five years, and the model exceeded their projections early on. Some 2,550 Mark II's were built during the 1956 model year, but by the end of the year sales slowed to a trickle. A very slightly revised 1957-model Mark II was put into production, but only 444 were built, and the model and the Continental division itself were abruptly cancelled.

Ford Motor Company decided to take a new tack with its Lincoln vehicles, adopting unit body construction instead of the traditional separate body and frame, and the result was a disaster. Consumers avoided the newly styled 1958 Lincolns and, to add insult to injury, Ford brass decided to call the top-of-the-line Lincoln the Continental Mark III with only an oddball roof treatment differentiating it from the run-of-the-mill Lincolns. It wasn't until the late 1960's that Ford saw the error of its ways and tried to recant by offering another Lincoln Continental Mark III, one more in tune with the first Lincoln Continental and its worthy successor, the Continental Mark II.



More Pride and Joy

(Continued from page 9)

get driven. Lots of little things Lou had taken care of in his meticulous way until one day in 1976. Lou and his wife decided it was time to buy a motor home so the family could travel together down the highway in joy and harmony. [The motor home turned out to be an adventure of another sort that is its own story.]

Of course, when I saw the light blue Continental Mark II in the flesh I fell in love. It wasn't black, and I had never seen a light blue Mark II before in the past twenty years. I thought it was great. I thought it was perfect. It was pretty much perfect. It only required recharging the AC with Freon in the spring of the year. It drove down the highway so effortlessly. Even at 100 mph the solid ride made it feel like you were home sitting on your living room couch. Just don't try to turn it. Handling was not its strong point.

It was also a real chick magnet. It was common for young women to see the car and tell me how much they liked it. Joan liked it too, because it didn't need to be shifted. And, of course, nearly everyone in the general public thought it was a Thunderbird. In spite of the license plate reading LA 1956, nearly everyone asked, "What year is that?"

Having the car disease, I saw a 1941 Packard that I was just dying to own. A friend of mine owned it in Milwaukee. We never got together on the price so he kept that car. About three years later Friendly Bob Adams outside of Milwaukee owned it and the price had doubled! A year later another dealer on the West Coast had that same Packard. I de-

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Pride and Joy continued...

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*Actor in a Supporting Role that year, for **The Notebook**. When Morgan Freeman won that prize for his work in **Million Dollar Baby**, he led the audience in a sing-along of the original **Maverick** theme song, written by David Buttolph and Paul Francis Webster. In 2010, the Television Critics Association gave Garner its annual Career Achievement Award.*

Garner is married to Lois Clarke, whom he met at an "Adlai Stevenson for President" rally in 1956. They married 14 days later on August 17, 1956. "We went to dinner every night for 14 nights. I was just absolutely nuts about her. I spent \$77 on our honeymoon, and it about broke me. According to Garner, "Marriage is like the Army; everyone complains, but you'd be surprised at the large number of people who re-enlist".

Sadly, James Garner passed away August 19, 2014. He will be missed by many of us that watched him on both the big and small screens over the years.

From the internet..

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cided it was now or never. We talked back and forth and came up with a trade of the Mark II toward the Packard.

In 1981 my brother and I drove way out west with the 1956 Mark II to trade for the 1941 Packard. If you have ever driven across the northern part of the country on I-94 you see some amazing sights. However, the road is long and lonely, especially crossing Montana. The pavement was up and down every few hundred feet, but the Mark II just drove solid as usual. I was reminded of how good this car was as a new Buick was passing us and the Buick was bouncing like a yo-yo. Our car was smooth like silk.

As we arrived in the dark of night the rain was just pouring down in buckets. The Mark II had performed flawlessly, just the way the Continental Division had intended. When I shut it off for the last time the odometer read 41,000 actual miles.

I was tickled with my newly acquired Packard. I would never forget what a great car the light blue Continental Mark II was. Ironically seven years later I had a phone call late one night. A man said he had my old Mark II. I asked how many miles were on it now. About 42,000 actual. He had a buyer in DC who was going to give him twice what I had sold it for. He just wanted to verify that it was a "Pillsbury Car". I said "No". Doesn't it say "A. Baker" on the little plaque on the carpet? "Yes, but they are related to the Pillsburys" "That is news to me." I like the real story that Baker was in the real estate business.

Of course, if you remember the

light blue Mark II that Tim & Gaye Purvis owned, that was pretty much identical to my car except for the interior. Mine was all leather. The Purvis car had white nylon inserts in the seat cushions. The guy I got the Packard from didn't like the light blue paint. He painted it a dark blue. Which is fine. It was his car now. I just like to get my cars as close as possible to the way the factory built them.

Mark II, Another Take

The Mark II sold for around \$10,000, the equivalent of a new Rolls-Royce or two Cadillacs (at least until the \$13,074 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham out-priced it in 1957). In spite of this, Ford estimated they still lost over a thousand dollars per car on the 3,000 that were built.

About 1,300 were sold in the last quarter of 1955 after the car's October debut at the Paris Motor Show; another 1,300 or so in 1956; and 444 in 1957, some with factory-installed air conditioning. Initially, Ford accepted losses on the Mark II in return for the prestige with which it endowed its entire product line; but after going public, tolerance for such losses fell.

Famous owners included Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Elizabeth Taylor, the Shah of Iran, and a cross section of the richest men in America. Taylor's car was a gift from Warner Bros. studio, and was painted a custom color to match her distinctive eye color.

The car was featured in the 1956 film *High Society*, starring Sinatra,

(Continued on page 14)

Olga Arrives

Marion and David are very pleased to announce the arrival of a very sweet four year old Samoyed, whose name is "Olga".



Olga, now living with Marion and David

Olga comes to us from Pasco, Washington, where she had been previously residing with Jordan Hargrove and Cody Beeson and their three other canine companions.

This past July 7th, we received a call from our dear friend, Jim Cheskawich, of Woodland, Washington, who let us adopt his Faithie, almost ten years ago. Jim, had just been contacted by Jordan and Cody who asked for help in finding new homes for two of their Samoyeds, Regan and Olga. Regan, a nine year old boy, was Faithie's son from her second litter. Regan, is also the father of Olga, the four year old girl, which makes Olga, Faithie's grand daughter.

Jordan and Cody are in the process of buying a new home in the Pasco area, and their home owners association has a two dog limit for all residents. It took us about four seconds to say "Olga, you have a "forever home" with us, here in Burnsville.

We were agreeable to driving out to Pasco to get Olga and bring her back to Burnsville. But, Olga has not made any journeys of any length by car, so it was a trip on Delta, a direct flight to Minneapolis on July 18. Olga had been scheduled to fly out on a 7:15AM (west coast time), arriving about Noon, Minneapolis time, but the HVAC system on the plane was not working right and her departure was

delayed until the next direct flight at 1:15PM. Her flight got in about 6:00PM, but due to heavy Friday activity, she sat over at the main terminal for two and a half hours, until she could be brought over to the Delta air freight counter, off 34th ave East. She is a sweet girl, about 15 pounds lighter than Faithie, but sharing her curiosity and gentleness.

Mark II, another take

(Continued from page 13)

Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and Louis Armstrong.

While technically never a Lincoln and manufactured by a separate new division, Continental, the Mark II was sold and maintained through Lincoln dealerships, featured a Lincoln drive train, and sported a Continental-emulating spare tire hump in the trunk lid, affectionally called a "Continental kit" for all the optional add-ons during the 50's. The outside mounted spare was 1st used on the 39-48 Lincoln Continentals. On its hood and trunk were four-pointed stars, soon adopted by Lincoln as its own emblem.

Handbuilt and resultantly expensive at around USD10,000 on launch, the quickly redesigned 1958 Mark III was cheaper at \$6,000, mostly because it recycled Lincoln parts and technology. The result was that the two products were difficult to differentiate within the customer's mind, and resulted in the Continental marque's being reabsorbed by Lincoln. Confusion of the model as a Lincoln has reigned ever since.

Today, approximately half of the original 3,000 cars still exist in varying states of repair. An active owners' club exists, and thanks to the use of standard Lincoln mechanical components, most parts required to keep them going are available. Prices range between \$8,000 for a running example in poor repair to \$70,000 in concours condition.

From today's vantage point, it can be argued that the Continental Mark II was successful at being what it was intended to be: an American Rolls-Royce or Bentley, and a re-creation of the grand cars of the thirties. Unfortunately, it was not profitable to manufacture, even at its five-figure 1950s sales price.

From the internet....

You May Be Interested in these Items for Sale

The space on these two pages is provided as a service to our readers who wish to place ads for automobiles, parts and other treasured parts that they wish to find new homes for. In an effort to keep our pages fresh, we will publish your ad for a period of three (3) months. After that period of time, we will delete it unless we hear from you that you wish to have it continue for another three issues.



For Sale: Parts for 1946 - 1948 Lincoln

Bumpers, four from \$75 to \$300. Steering wheel \$500.
Lincoln script spot lights \$75. Master cylinders \$20.
Spare tire and rim \$25.
Pedal Car \$200. Gas tank, free.

Call Dave Bodziak at 612.788.3758



Northstar Region grille badges are now available.

Over half of the initial order have been sold. To obtain yours, contact Harvey Oberg at 651.739.9754 Call now before they are all sold out and we have to order more.

For Sale: **1948 Lincoln Continental Coupe**. Complete V-12 engine overhaul. New brakes and battery, New tires. Chrome has been replated. New dark green paint. Good working overdrive. Trunk just has been recarpeted. Reduced to \$14,000. also have V-12 radiator for sale and V-12 motor mounts, complete set of upper and lower grilles and fog light holders for a 1946 - 1949 Lincoln. Call Ted Anderson 763.561.8143 9/14

FOR SALE: **1982 Mark VI 2dr** with Sun Roof. 132,000 miles \$1,000; **1983 Lincoln Continental 4dr**, no title and doesn't run \$500. **Parts cars: 1956 Lincoln Capri Sedan, 1955 Custom Sedan, 1954 Lincoln Front Clip, 1953 Lincoln Cosmopolitan Sedan**. Contact Elrod Kaufman, 27951 440 Avenue, Freeman, SD 57029 Call after 6PM for more details 605.925.4986 9/14

FOR SALE:

I need a new home. I am a **1969 MK III** with only 103,000 miles and I am green with a like new green interior. Front windows need some work. Call Rich at 715.321.1938 \$4,900/Best offer will own me. 9/14

For Sale

FOR SALE:

1980 Mark VI Givenchy Coupe, New FoMoCo 302 V8 has 40,000 miles; car needs a little TLC, \$2500/offer. 320-429-0139 9/14

For Sale:

1984 Mercury Colony Park wagon. White with "wood trim" and nice dark brown velour interior. Fully equipped with 41 options, no rust ever, turbine wheels and complete service history. 181,000 miles, but doesn't show it. Please give me a call for more information. Roald and Rosalee Storvick, Austin, MN **Call 507.433.3944 or cell, 507.438.1016.** 9/14

For Sale:

1961 through 1967 Lincoln Continentals, complete and mostly complete cars, Sedans and Convertibles. I need to thin out my collection and if you need one of these cars either to restore or to use in your existing restoration project, please give me a call. Gordy Jensen 612.819.2107 9/14

For Sale:

1966 Lincoln four door sedan. 121K miles, runs, but needs some carburetor work, green with black vinyl top. Nice interior. Call Craig Brenner, 320.262.1043, Bird Island, MN 9/14

For Sale:

1972 Mark IV \$2,000 - 60K Miles. Rebuild Carb, Pertronics Ignition system (old system goes with car), Crager spoke wheels, complete set of service manuals, Personalized "Lincoln" plates good through 2011. Some other new parts go with car. Needs some Tender Loving Care, but the car is basically sound and a good value at the price. Call Dave Breault at 612-722-2075 and leave a message. Come take a look at this Lincoln Mark IV soon. 9/13

For Sale:

I have over 150 1960's Lincolns now, mostly parts cars. More than I will ever use. I have now decided to sell my extra parts; sheet metal, trim, whatever. If you are restoring a Lincoln of this era and need parts, please contact me now. I may have what you need. Just Arrived! New windshields that fit 1961 through 1969 Continentals. Available Now. Please call Gordy Jensen at 612.819.2107 9/14

Preview of Coming Events

- August **Dedication Lincoln Motor Car Heritage Museum**, driving tour
August 7 - 10 Host hotel: Four Point by Sheraton Kalamazoo, 269-385-3922 and adjacent hotel, Holiday Inn Express, Kalamazoo, 269-373-0770. Room rate is \$99.00 plus tax includes two hot breakfasts. You must mention "**LINCOLN OWN**" for this *special rate*. Call now as rooms are limited.
26th Annual Wild Rice Days Car Show, Hwy 210 and 65, McGregor, MN. **Saturday, August 30, 2014**. Registration 8:00AM to 10:00AM Awards at 1:00PM. Entry fee \$10:00.
- September **8th Annual Luther North Country Lincoln Car Show**, Saturday, September 13, 10 to 2 PM Spend some quality time with your good friends and their very fine Lincolns. Enjoy a good lunch and your chance to win some nice door prizes.
- Mid America National Meet**, September 17 -21 in Rockford, Il. Reserve your room now at the Radisson hotel, 815.226.2100. Ask for the Lincoln Club room rate of \$90, which includes taxes. Down load meet information from the LCOC.org web site. This will a very good meet, over one-hundred cars expected. See you there.
- October **Annual North Star potluck** and auction at Morries in Long Lake, Sunday October, 12 10 AM to 2 PM
- November **End of year Sunday Brunch**. More information in future issues.

BACK ISSUES OF THE NORTHSTAR NEWS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE
ON THE NORTHSTAR LCOC WEB SITE.
www.northstarlcoc.org Click on publications.
Issues are in PDF format and may be printed on your color printer.

North Star Activities

FALL LINCOLN SHOW, SATURDAY, September 13, 2014 **North Country Ford Lincoln**

Join us at North Country Ford Lincoln, 10401 Woodcrest Drive, Coon Rapids, for our fall All Lincoln Car Show. 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

We look forward to meeting some new Lincoln owners, seeing some old friends and just having a lot of fun. There will be prizes and lunch will be served by North Country. Set this date aside now. Lets get those Lincolns out for one last time this year. Unlike last year, we will have great weather and good times for this last car show of the season. Lets do it again this September 13. See and drive all the new Lincoln cars. Best part, we will be served lunch.....

Call Bob Johnson if you have any additional questions. 651-257-1715

I-35W to US-10. Go West on Highway 10, distance of 4.8 Miles. Take the FOLEY BLVD NW/CR-11 exit. 0.8 Miles. Keep RIGHT at the fork to FOLEY BLVD NW/FOLEY BLVD/CR-11 East 0.3 Miles. Turn RIGHT onto 99th Avenue NorthWest. 0.1 Miles. Turn Right onto WOODCREST DRIVE NORTHWEST 0.7 Miles. Luther Ford Mercury Lincoln is at 10401 Woodcrest Drive NW. Call Bob Johnson at 651-587-1212 if you get lost along the way.

Dedication Lincoln Motor Car Heritage Museum, August 6 - 9 Hickory Corners/Kalamazoo, MI Check the LCOC web site for information or phone Bob Johnson.

Northstar LCOC Board Meeting, Thursday, August 14, 7:00PM, 2nd floor conference room, Morries Minnetonka Ford Lincoln. After the meeting, sales staff will be available to take your order for a new Lincoln or Ford automobile.

Mid America National Meet, September 17 -21 in Rockford, Il. Info on LCOC web site.

Summer Fun:

Historic Hastings Saturday night cruise-in. 5PM to 9PM. July 12, 26, Aug 9, 23, Sept 6 and 20.

Prior Lake Roll in, South Lake Shopping Center. July 10 and 24, August 7 and 21, 6PM to 9PM.

Cruizin for a Wish Car Show, Central Park, Delano. July 12 at 9:00AM

Henderson Classic Car Roll in. Every Tuesday, 6PM to 9PM through September 16. Main Street, Henderson, MN, which is about 30 miles SW of Burnsville on Hwy 169.