

Remembering Jack Vanatta



Jack Vanatta’s 1946 Lincoln, his Pride and Joy

Sunday, May 20, our long time LCOC and North Star club member and friend, Jack Vanatta lost his valiant battle with cancer. Jack had been sick for some time and did his best putting up the good fight until the very end.

Jack and his wife, Julia, were “regulars” at most of our regional events with Jack behind the wheel of his 1946 Lincoln that he was so very proud of. His Lincoln was a very nice driver and that is what he enjoyed the most. His V12 ran very well and Jack was not afraid to drive it anywhere; with his beloved wife, Julia, as his chief navigator. Jack was a quiet man, but once you engaged him and got him to open up a little you quickly found out that he was a storehouse of useful information about Lincolns of this particular era. Hail and farewell, Jack, you will be greatly missed by your fellow Lincoln club members.

Jack Vanatta was born 69 years ago in Anchorage, Alaska. He was preceded in death by his mother, M. Elizabeth and his brother, Jay. He is survived by his wife, Julia, his daughter, Charlotte (Terry) Pilling; father, Robert (Van); brother-in-law, Jack Bowdan; two cats, “Dog” and Thatcher; nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends. Jack’s life will be celebrated Saturday, June 23, at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Avenue South, Minneapolis, beginning with visitation at 10 AM and with services at 11 AM. Following the services, a light lunch will be served. Memorials preferred to the Masonic Cancer Center, University of Minnesota.

In 2004, Julia Vanatta wrote the following story about just how their much loved 1946 came into their lives. It originally appeared in the May 2004 issue of the Northstar News and it is appropriate that we reprint it this issue — some 14 years later.

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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.

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Trivia from the Internet



*Tom Wolfe
American Author
1930 - 2018*

The birth of the literary movement known as New Journalism can be traced to one coffee-fueled episode in 1963: Tom Wolfe's all-nighter. He had been sent to California by Esquire magazine to report on a gathering of custom-car designers and casually cool teenagers.

Photos of lacquer-painted cars were laid out on the pages, and the magazine was about to go to press, but Mr. Wolfe wasn't able to complete his first assignment for Esquire. Finally, managing editor, Byron Dobell, told him to write up his notes as a memo; which the editors would shape into a story. Mr. Wolfe began typing at 8 p.m.

"I wrapped up the memorandum about 6:15 a.m.," he later

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Editors Message

June 2018

Gentle Readers... May has been a busy month for us folks in the Lincoln Club. We had a nice tour that was put together by our friends in the Classic Car Club. It covered an area west of the Twin Cities, and from start to finish, I clocked about 170 miles. As it was a nice, somewhat cool day, Olga was able to tag along and enjoy the sites.

We started out at 'Hooked on Classics' in Watertown. They have been around for forever and a day, selling collectable cars, mostly on a consignment basis. They were short on Lincolns, but had a lot of other interesting cars that did catch some attention from those of us on the tour.

Eventually, we got to the Jim Hudson collection. We were there a number of years ago, but there were a few new

cars added to the collection. In addition to a few Hudson's, there were two 1953 Buick Skylarks and two 1987 Buick GNX coupes. One had about 600 miles, and the other had about 3,000 miles. Virtually brand-new. We had lunch at the Annandale Event Center and it was a good chance to visit with some of the folks in the CCCA. Also, the Event Center sells classics on a consignment basis, so we had an opportunity to check out some of the classics they had for sale. We also stopped at the Veit Collection (which is on our LCOC tour in July) and looked at the fine collection of mostly Chevrolets; which are very nicely displayed. They also have a nice collection of gas pumps and other auto related items that would be the envy of any collector. All in all, it was a very good tour; which all of us enjoyed very much.

May 19, we were invited by Jeff and

Wendy Eisenberg to come to their place of business, Libson Automotive, on Central Avenue in NE Minneapolis. The neighborhood was doing their annual Art-A-Whirl; which is an "Art Crawl" in the area adjacent to Libson Auto. There are a number of former businesses and warehouses that now are homes to a great many artists.

Folks come from all over to go through these various buildings and checking out what these artists have to offer. Jeff and Wendy thought it would be nice to sponsor a car show and invite members of the Lincoln club to come with their classics, have some lunch (which was very good) and perhaps visit some of the artists nearby. This was another great event. We got a nice chance to visit with some of our members and to listen to Jeff explain the types of services

that he can offer to those of us who own older Lincolns and other classics.

May 26 was our annual spring Lincoln show; which was sponsored by the good folks at Bloomington Lincoln. There were close to 20 Lincolns there on one very, very hot day. I think that it was around 93 degrees, but there was a slight wind that did help things a bit. It was good that we had a tent to shield us from the sun and that worked well. Olga came and received a lot of attention from our members. Bloomington Lincoln also provided a very nice lunch and a number of door prizes. A very sincere thank you to them for their hospitality. We will have more about this show in our next issue. Enjoy the weather, enjoy your Lincolns.

Till next month, David and Sweet Olga the Samoyed — who wishes for some cooler weather.



Sweet Olga is visiting with her new found friend, the Penguin; who appears to be lost. Olga thinks that 90 plus degrees here in Burnsville is no place for her friend. Olga told her friend that her dad would get her on the next plane to somewhere much cooler. We can do that!

Directors Message by Bob Johnson June 2018

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wrote, "and by this time it was 49 pages long. I took it over to Esquire as soon as they opened up, about 9:30 a.m. About 4 PM, I got a call from Byron Dobell. He told me they were striking out the 'Dear Byron' at the top of the memorandum and running the rest of it in the magazine."

The story, "There Goes (Varoom! Varoom!) That Kandy Kolored (Thphhhhhhh!) Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby," was more than a dutiful report on the car convention. Mr. Wolfe had discovered an underground culture among the West Coast car designers, hailing them as the vanguard of a new form of modern art, not unlike Picasso.

"I don't have to dwell on the point that cars mean more to these kids than architecture did in Europe's great formal century, say, 1750 to 1850," he wrote. "They are freedom, style, sex, power, motion, color — everything is right there."

Seldom had journalism seen such an audacious display of observation, wry humor and go-for-baroque verbal dexterity. Mr. Wolfe invented words, wrote in the point of view of his characters and peppered his pages with ellipses, italics and exclamation marks.

Just like that, the legend of Tom Wolfe was

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May sure is a funny month; the only good thing so far is no snow and very dry and cool. Please reserve your hotel rooms and register now for our 2018 Mid-America Meet July 11-15.

On Saturday, May 19, we held a mini Lincoln car display, at Jeff Eisenberg's Libson Twin City Auto on Central Avenue, Minneapolis. The car display was in conjunction with ART A WHIRL exhibits and activities that were close for all to enjoy. We had 24 persons attend and bring their collector cars to display. Everyone had a chance to visit and enjoy the fellowship of the day and the Art A Whirl event. On this day, a very good time was enjoyed by all that attended. Jeff and Wendy provided us with a terrific lunch, and two very nice door prizes: won by Andy Strange and Peter Hill. The weather turned cooler as the day went on, but we had no rain. A big THANK YOU, to Jeff and Wendy Eisenburg for hosting this fun event.

The biggest smile of the day Saturday, May 19, belonged to Alex Kelly, Arden Hills, who drove his 1974 Continental Coupe to his first North Star event, this Lincoln was given to him by proud Grandfather Glen Kelly this spring.

Our May Monthly Board Meeting at Bloomington Lincoln marked one year that we have been holding our meetings at this Dealership. We are very happy that Bloomington Lincoln has continued to be our host for our future board meetings. We thank Ryan Benning and the sales staff at Bloomington Lincoln for all the support they have given to our North Star Region. All region members are welcome to attend and our monthly meetings that are held on the first Thursday of each month, and we would like your input.

We hope you were able to attend the 10th Annual Memorial Day weekend car show, at Bloomington Lincoln, Bloomington, Minnesota, Saturday, May 26. Maybe we will get a break and have a sunny day for a change. We are using social media to advertise this event, so come early to get a choice parking spot.

No June activities are planned as there are so many car shows around the area, especially the All Ford Show at Dunwoody June 3, and the Back to the 50s, June 22-24, we hope to see you there.

As of May 21, you have just only 30 days left to register for our big event at the 2018 Mid America National Meet, July 11-15. We now have 60 percent of you our region members that have registered or reserved your hotel rooms — please do it now. Your North Star board of managers, Gustafson, Wothe, Foley, Roth, White, Brace, Holaday and Sasse are spending a lot of personal time to do this meet for you, the least you can do is get registered if you plan on attending. Again, our host hotel is the Marriott Minneapolis West, located at 9950 Wayzata Blvd. St. Louis Park, Minnesota. The hotel room reservation phone number is 952-544-4400, please call now. The meet information and the registration PDF form is posted on our NEW LCOC website, lcoc.org at the bottom of the page, "Click to download the Event Registration Form." Matt Foley will be our meet Registration Chairman, and he may be reached at 612-280-4930. Please register early

We always need "Our Pride and Joy" articles about your Lincoln. Please take the time to write that article about your car that you keep putting off during the summer because you were to busy. Please share your story about your car with all of our members; we would like to know how you got it, what you enjoy about it, what you have done to it or have left to do. Please send your article to Dave Gustafson; he can only do the newsletter with material that you send him, so get busy.

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

Bob and Mary Johnson...

Board Of Directors - 2018

Title	Name	Phone Numbers	email	Term Ends
Regional Director	Bob Johnson	H(651)257-1715	arborbob41@aol.com	2041
Secretary	Roger Wothe	H(952)473-3038 O(952)583-5339	rwothe@comcast.net	2020
Treasurer	Matt Foley	C(612)280-4930	mcfoley@earthlink.net	2019
Activities Director	Jay White	H(612)559-3219	jay@jwhiteandassoc.com	2018
Director	Bob Roth	H(763)475-1429		2018
Publications/ Membership	Dave Gustafson	H(952)435-1919	davidwgustafson@att.net	2019
Director	Tom Brace	H(651)644-1716	trbrace@comcast.net	2019
Director	Bill Holaday	H(763)402-1171	bill.holaday59@gmail.com	2020
Director	Larry Sasse	H(952)440-5024	fordpeople@msn.com	2020

Members and guests are welcome to attend the Board Meetings. Our meeting location, unless otherwise specified, will be held at Bloomington Lincoln in their conference room. Meeting time will be 6:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month, except December.

Articles and other information for the newsletter should be sent to David Gustafson, Editor, at 308 Brandywine Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337. email: davidwgustafson@att.net

More Jack Vanatta

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Jack spent his most memorable childhood years in Seattle. One summer, he and his friends were given a ride to camp in a '41 Continental Coupe. Although, I'd always noticed his appreciation of classic Lincolns and Fords, it seemed he was most interested in T-Birds and Edsels. I was quite surprised when he approached me in May 2002 thinking about buying the car of his dreams — our beautiful 1946 Lincoln 4-Door Sedan. Listed for sale on a Classic Auto website, Jack had been in contact with the seller, Rick Slaybaugh, for several months. Rick had purchased the car from the estate of the original owners, the Widmers; who had enjoyed and maintained the car as a classic-to-be from the day Walter broke it in on his drive home from Dearborn to Portland, Oregon. After a flurry of negotiations, an inspection by a cousin and arrangements for transporting our new car back to Minnesota, we got our first look at her July 9, 2002. She was everything we had imagined and then some. The original paint had that mellow aged look and the chrome was shiny and appeared to be in very good condition. Starting the engine and rolling her off the trailer was the beginning of a wonderful new adventure.

The first summer with the Lincoln was all about learning. We started out slow, driving it around the block, then to the local Dairy Queen. We took her to Saturday night in Saint Paul that first weekend and met several wonderful LCOC members. The club has been a great source of information and new friendships. Within two months, we had attended our first club function and entered our car in her first showing at the Mid-America meet in Red Wing. I guess that's what they call jumping in head first! Jack managed to fix a few things right away, such as the overdrive and the vacuum windshield wipers.



Jack Vanatta behind the wheel of his beloved Lincoln sedan.

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Northstar Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 3, 2018

Regional Director Bob Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Bloomington Lincoln. Board members present were Bob Johnson, Dave Gustafson, Tom Brace, Bob Roth, Jay White, Larry Sasse, Bill Holaday, Matt Foley and Roger Wothe. Other members present were Mary Johnson, Barb Wothe, and Dave Sandels. Visitors were the newly elected LCOC Norway Region Director: Ingve Jensen and his wife, Brit Hamre. They were in the country to attend a wedding and were introduced to all of the Board members. The minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda of this meeting were approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Regional Director Bob Johnson reviewed some of the upcoming chapter activities. They may be found in the *North Star Newsletter*. He reported that so far there have been 15 registrations (27 persons and 13 cars). There have been 121 room reservations out of 140. He added 20 more May 2. Shirts were ordered April 30. He wanted to know if we should also order hats. The Annual Lincoln Car show at Coon Rapids Ford/Lincoln has been canceled and he is looking for a replacement.

Activities Director Jay White presented a very interesting report on the North Star Region Facebook page. He encouraged everyone to visit the Facebook page (North Star Lincoln Continental Car Club). He would you everyone to "like it." He needs 100 positive responses.

Treasurer Matt Foley reported that the Treasury balance was \$4,421.06 with all bills paid.

Membership and Publications Director Dave Gustafson reported that the total of renewed members is about 143. He continues to need more "My Pride and Joy" articles.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m. The next Board meeting will be at Bloomington Lincoln at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 7, All Lincoln members, Lincoln owners, and friends are invited to attend any or all Board meetings.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Roger Wothe.

The LCOC Board is trying to determine the feasibility of making a printed directory available once again.

The following questions are being asked of LCOC membership to help guide the board.

- Would you be interested in having a paper copy of the LCOC directory, similar to the last one issued in 2015? (YES or NO)
- The cost of the directory would be over and above current membership fees. With that in mind, how much would you be willing to pay for a printed copy of the directory?

Please let Director Bob Johnson know as soon as possible. Call Bob at 651.257.1715 or email: arborbob@aol.com

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born.

"It was like he discovered it in the middle of the night," Dobell told *Vanity Fair* in 2015.

"Wherever it came from, it seemed to me to tap a strain of pure American humor that wasn't being tapped." Mr. Wolfe, who had a transformative effect on journalism and later became a best-selling novelist, died May 14 at a Manhattan hospital. He was 88.

In 1963, Mr. Wolfe was a little-known reporter at the *New York Herald Tribune*. Less than two years later, when his first collection, "The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby," was published, he was one of the most famous and influential writers of his generation.

His books became best-sellers, and his explosive, fast-moving prose was seen as the perfect vehicle for the times. He invented or popularized such phrases as "good old boy," "radical chic," the "Me Decade"

(sometimes altered to "Me Generation") and "pushing the envelope."

Perhaps his most memorable coinage was the title of what is often considered his greatest achievement: "The Right Stuff." Published

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*Jack Vanatta continued...**(Continued from page 5)*

in 1979, the book was an epic account of the idea of American heroism, viewed through the exploits of military test pilots and astronauts.

Mr. Wolfe chronicled the rise of the hippie generation in "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test" (1968), mocked the pretensions of Manhattan liberals in "Radical Chic" (1970) and of the art world in "The Painted Word" (1975). He gleefully violated the city editor's dictum to trim each sentence to a sleek, understated nugget of news: For Mr. Wolfe, no verbal extravagance was too much.

"American journalism has never had a practitioner who combined the attributes of talent, audacity, learning, legwork, and pure observation as well as Tom Wolfe," author and scholar Ben Yagoda wrote in "The Art of Fact," a 1997 anthology of narrative nonfiction.

Mr. Wolfe was considered the leader of an ink-stained avant-garde that included Jimmy Breslin, Joan Didion, George Plimpton, Gay Talese and Hunter S. Thompson. Their personal, immersive style was imitated, with varying degrees of success, in practically every newspaper fea-

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After several more club functions, we sadly put her away for the winter as we looked forward to the promise of the summer of 2003. When we got her back from storage, we immediately began getting her ready for the long drive to Dearborn. Keep in mind that we had put less than 1,000 miles on the car since we bought her and we had not driven further than 60 miles on any single trip. Yet we were taking her on a 1,400 mile road trip in the heat of summer.

Our journey to the Ford Centennial was the highlight and a fitting end to our first year of ownership — and what a journey it was! Many of you traveled to Dearborn, but few of you did so with the dumb luck of newcomers like us. We had barely left Minneapolis when we started having trouble. It was raining really hard and we were going up the hill above Hudson, Wisconsin when we started losing power. Jack pulled off the road and we began to wonder if our trip was over. We made it into Roberts, Wisconsin. Small towns are great on a Friday night. Everyone knows everyone and we were given the number for Roberts Towing & Repair. Tom Peterson came downtown, bringing his family along for the ride. He and several local folks helped push the old car into his shop. I was behind the wheel for the first time. After a good charge on the battery, we were back in business. We spent the night just up the road and started out again in the morning.

About 80 miles up the road, we lost power again. This time we rolled into a station in Camp Douglas. We had it all figured out now. Just plug her in every 80 miles and try to find parts to fix the problem when we get to Dearborn. But as luck would have it, someone knew someone in Camp Douglas; who just might have the part we needed. Turns out there was a 300 acre junk yard just a few miles from the station and we found a voltage regulator in an old WWII army issue Ford. It was the ugliest voltage regulator we'd ever seen — but it worked and we were back on the road.

After a short visit with relatives north of Milwaukee, Jack and I left to catch the midnight ferry to Michigan. We drove through dense fog up to Manitowoc —

which made for a very tense drive. At the ferry, we met up with a yellow '46 Continental Cabriolet being trailered from Seattle, Washington. With four short hours of sleep on the boat, morning arrived and we were on our way again.

The drive to Detroit was not too bad until it started pouring rain. Traveling through the rain on a busy, unfamiliar freeway in an old classic car is certainly not much fun. A Ford truck did follow us for quite a distance and we decided he was watching our back. Thank you whoever you were! We had never been so relieved to get to the hotel as we were that night!

Surely things would improve once we got to Dearborn, but our streak of luck continued. Everyone was helpful, and we learned many new things about our car. In fact, a member from Chicago; who had restored a '48 was kind enough to show me how to fix the back window or so he thought. Jack was no where around, but I thought — sure, why not!? Instead of putting the window back on the track, it abruptly dropped into the door! H-e-l-p! We soon learned that the lift mechanism inside the door no longer existed. The window had been rigged up using an old coat hanger (handy gadgets, aren't they?). At least it happened at a meet where experienced club members were able to show us how to remove the door panel, jury rig the window to stay closed, and put the panel back again. Tools such as putty knives and a kitchen spatula proved to be the most helpful. My biggest lesson? Don't let anyone touch the car unless Jack was around!

After the LCOC meet, we joined thousands of other Ford enthusiasts and parked our car on the Centennial grounds for the balance of our stay. Two inches of rain made the parking areas muddy, but soon the sun came out, and we enjoyed the great collection of cars and the people who loved them. We especially enjoyed seeing all the Zephyrs at their national meet.

We headed for home early afternoon Saturday, expecting to get home Sunday evening. After getting stuck in a traffic jam for nearly 45 minutes, we were finally on the

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 ture section in the country.

"The most important literature being written in America today is in nonfiction," Mr. Wolfe asserted in his 1973 anthology, "The New Journalism," which became the standard of prosaic rubric for his style of writing.

He borrowed certain techniques from fiction, including characterization and dialogue, but knew that journalism had something else going for it: "the simple fact that the reader knows this actually happened."

In almost everything he wrote, Mr. Wolfe examined what he called "status details" — the finer points of behavior, trends, fashion and the pursuit of prestige that, in his view, shaped the American social order. Sullen teenagers, Southern good old boys, arty urbanites, elite test pilots — all measured themselves by what their peers thought of them.

Despite frequent appearances on television and on college campuses, Mr. Wolfe remained curiously opaque. He wasn't a pill-popping, pistol-waving renegade like Thompson; he didn't dabble in Hollywood, like Didion; he wasn't a party host, like Plimpton; and he wasn't a serial husband with a violent streak, like novelist-

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More Jack Vanatta

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road to Ludington to ride the ferry back to Wisconsin. Again we had company, this time a late Model T from southern Minnesota; which just happened to get selected for display at Ford's dinner honoring suppliers loyal to Ford for the first 100 years. We took a spin in the old T around Manitowoc before heading for home.



Julia and Jack Vanatta

Things were going along pretty well until we got to the Highway 29 overpass at County Road Q late Sunday afternoon. Thump! Wham! It was a blow out at 60 mph. In the trunk was the original spare; which was not drivable without adding some air. A call to a local towing service got us enough air to make it in to Wausau, Wisconsin where we found a WalMart with a set of radial tires to get us home! The service center closed at 6:00, and we rolled in at 5:30. We decided to call it a night and drove back into town Monday morning. To end the trip as we began, we stopped for breakfast in Roberts, Wisconsin. What a journey it was.

They say that each of us has a destiny, and this old Lincoln sedan had our names on it from the very beginning. Registered to Charlotte Rice, the maiden name of Walter's wife, I found it very interesting that our daughter's name is also Charlotte, and the couple who stood up for us at our wedding are named Rice. The car came from great Northwest, where Jack first fell in love with a Lincoln while living in Seattle. A mere coincidence? Hmmm

The 1997 Lincolns

In 1997, Lincoln, by all measure produced some very fine models. Most people who purchased Lincolns this year were rewarded with a very fine driving model, capable of going long distances in complete comfort.

What made them fine in 1997 makes them good collectable cars today. Prices today are still in the realm of reasonableness; which makes them good candidates for those seeking to get into the old car hobby without taking out a second mortgage on the homestead.

Lincoln fielded only three models for 1997, but each was a very distinct vehicle that served different purposes; the Town Car, the Lincoln Continental and the Mark VIII, a luxury sports coupe.



1997 Lincoln Town Car

This article will talk about the Town Car, the final year for this body style and the Mark VIII. We hope to go into the Continental in a future issue. The following is from road test reports from 1997.

With the demise of the Cadillac's Brougham in 1996, the Lincoln Town Car remains as the only rear-drive traditional luxury car made by an American manufacturer. It's also the biggest production car sold in America.

This big cruiser was part of a price realignment strategy at the beginning of the 1997 model year that put the Town Car, Continental, and Mark VIII all at the same starting price—\$37,950, including \$670 destination—a substantial reduction for the other two, a \$370 increase for the Town Car. But even with the increase, the Town Car is selling 25% better than last year.

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The 1997 Lincolns continues

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turned-New Journalist Norman Mailer.

Instead, he cultivated an image as an eccentric, well-mannered Southerner who — never mind the Yale Ph.D. and flamboyant white suits — gaped in wonder at the sheer spectacle of America in the 1960s and beyond. He resisted any attempts to be portrayed, as the title of his second novel put it, as “A Man in Full.”

The biggest question surrounding Mr. Wolfe’s methods was the simplest: How did he manage to win the trust of such disparate groups as Southern moonshiners, car fanatics, socialites, hippies, and astronauts?

By his account, it was simply by hanging out, watching and listening — in other words, being a reporter.

Custom-car designer George Barris said Mr. Wolfe was around so much that he “even came to the house and cooked dinner with my wife.”

He entered the world of stock-car driver Junior Johnson — the title figure of a 20,000-word *Esquire* article, “The Last American Hero” — so completely that he described the chickens walking across Johnson’s yard in Ingle Hollow, North Carolina

At the Park Avenue apartment of conductor Leonard Bernstein, Mr.

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The Town Car competes primarily against the Cadillac DeVille and Concours. It comes in three trim levels—the base Executive Series, the volume Signature Series and the fully loaded, top-of-the-line Cartier (\$43,870), for those who don’t care to waste time checking option boxes on order forms.

For 1997, some of the standard luxury content that has crept into the Town Car over the past few years has been thrifted out of the car, small items that most of us won’t miss because we didn’t notice them when we had them (illuminated rear ashtrays, robe cords on the seatbacks, the trunk key cover, an extra power point underneath the dashboard, cellular phone wiring, etc.).



What’s new and improved for this year is an entirely new recirculating-ball steering system that is more precise smoother and more durable than the previous system. There’s also a more durable cloth used on interior trim. Other than the major system change, the Town Car is as it was last year; which is to say — loaded. The changes were minimal because a substantial redesign is due next fall.

We tested the mid-grade Signature Series version; which starts at \$40,310. It comes with power disc brakes with anti-lock, tilt steering, automatic air conditioning, cruise control, a new AM/FM/cassette sound system with digital signal processing, a keyless entry/alarm system, six-way power seats with three-position memory and lumbar support, and auxiliary controls on the new steering wheel for audio and climate controls, as well as cruise control.

In addition, our test car had traction assist, the auto-dim mirror, the power JBL sound system, heated seats, leather seating

surfaces and a six-disc CD changer. The bottom line on the window sticker totaled \$42,790.

The essence of what you get in a Lincoln Town Car is effortless cruising, easy fingertip operation of every system, hushed mechanical operations, high-end materials, and plenty of that traditional American road-hugging size and weight.

The Signature Series has almost everything you can get on a Town Car with room left on the options list for just a few more items. The Cartier gets special wheels, larger tires, rear vanity mirrors, a JBL sound system, leather seating, traction assist and heated seats, most of which our test car had as options anyway.

If there is a single attribute that places the Town Car above the rest of the cars in this class, it is sheer interior spaciousness. The Town Car’s interior is simply huge.

The instrument panel uses blue-green electronic digital readouts for all of the instrumentation; which is somewhat incongruous in a car like this, but they are large, easy-to-read and not cramped together. The main display is recessed and hooded so that sunlight never obscures the information, and some of the lenses have been changed to reduce reflection and glare on 1997 models.

We should all be more concerned about automotive seats than we are, and the Lincoln designers have addressed some of our concerns by giving us orthopedic equipment masquerading as lounge chairs. While they don’t look even remotely sporty, and they won’t hold you in place in a hard corner, the Town Car seats have more adjustment techniques than a chiropractor, with long tracks, front and rear tilt, and power recline, not to mention a five-zone heating system. We found the seats enormously comfortable and supportive, and we thank the designers for finally removing the embossed Lincoln star from the seatback, where it was neither luxurious nor necessary.

Five-star seats coupled with generous head, hip, leg and shoulder room make the Town Car interior ideal for two couples living together and the 22.3 cubic-foot

More 1997 Lincolns

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Wolfe captured the awkward social dance between uptown liberals and street-toughened Black Panther militants in the enduring phrase "radical chic."

Mr. Wolfe was praised by novelist Kurt Vonnegut — "a genius who will do anything to get attention" — and poet Karl Shapiro; who exclaimed in a Washington Post review that the author "is more than brilliant . . . He is more than urbane, suave, trenchant . . . Tom Wolfe is a goddam joy."

Mr. Wolfe spent much of the 1970s working on "The Right Stuff," a gripping chronicle of the inner world of test pilots and the more rarefied group that grew out of them — the country's first astronauts. He scaled back his customary satire and mockery, adopting a relatively sober style befitting his larger subject: what it takes to be a hero.

"This quality, this it, was never named, however, nor was it talked about in any way," he wrote. "The idea was to prove at every foot of the way up that pyramid that you were one of the elected and anointed ones who had the right stuff and could move higher and higher and even — ultimately, God willing, one day — that you might be able to join that special few at the very top that elite who had the capac-

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trunk leads the industry in width, depth, breadth, and utility. The electrically-operated trunk lid goes all the way down to bumper level and is easy-to-load and unload. Our only criticism here is the trunk lid itself; which should open a little more toward the vertical.

Like many luxury cars these days, the Lincoln Town Car has a single powertrain combination, a 4.6-liter single overhead cam V8 that makes an adequate 190 horsepower (210 in the dual-exhaust Cartier version) and a useful 265 pound-feet of torque (275 for the Cartier), coupled to an electronically controlled four-speed automatic transmission. While these engines are adequate for the need of most Town Car customers, even those who tow light trailers, they are not a competitive match for the powertrain sophistication found in the Cadillac Northstar engine—275 or 300 hp— or most of the import entries in this class.

Ford's corporate 4.6-liter V8 is a smooth, quiet and economical engine and has an enviable record in terms of durability, but this two-ton car really should be using the 290-hp version from the Mark VIII or the 255-hp version from the front-drive Continental.

Ford's corporate product planners undoubtedly rationalize the Town Car's engine in terms of fuel economy and the car does escape the gas-guzzler penalty. But even so, it could use more muscle. Engine quibbles aside, the Town Car covers ground quietly, almost serenely, when it is in its element, tooling about town or cruising the highway. A new intake manifold takes induction noise down to the lowest level yet, and the four-speed automatic is quiet and efficient. Steering effort can be adjusted by a sliding-bar switch on the left side of the dashboard, although effort does not equate with road feel.

The Michelin XW4 tires, coil spring/air suspension and gas-filled shock absorbers do an outstanding job of separating a Town Car's occupants from the lumpy realities of the outside world, coping admirably with potholes and broken pavement. The P215/75R-15 tires are quiet, though we

would prefer more rubber on the ground, such as the optional P225/60R-16 all-weather tires, even if there were a slight noise penalty to pay.

There is lots of lean and wallow in the Town Car's luxurious ride, and the speed-sensitive power steering is numb on-center, these factors combine to make this car unhandy on winding two-lane roads, but quite stable and comfortable on interstates and boulevards.

The ABS brakes were authoritative in their power and especially quiet when the antilock circuits were active, emitting only a mild, high-pitched buzz when we encountered icy pavement.

This is the seventh and final model year for the current Lincoln Town Car, and we think they have got it about right by now. We looked all over the car for loose threads, body panel misalignments, poor sealing and less-than-luxurious materials, and we came away impressed. There were some things in the trunk area that could use improvement in terms of materials, fit and finish for a \$43,000 car, but the body fits and interior quality were the best we have ever seen on a Town Car of any vintage.

Unlike many of its competitors, the Town Car is not a treasure trove of leading edge technology. It doesn't offer the front-drive traction or the electronic chassis sophistication of the Cadillacs, the security of the Lincoln RESCU system used in the Continental, or the handling of the import sedans.

But for the traditional American luxury car customer who treasures lots of space and quiet operation—a category that includes tens of thousands of unswerving Town Car loyalists—it's still a favorite.

The 1997 Mark VIII

In the 40-odd years since its inception, Lincoln's Mark series has come to represent the marriage of driver-pampering luxury and potent sports coupe prowess.

When it was introduced in 1993, Lincoln's current incarnation, the Mark VIII, continued that tradition—from the plush, landed-gentry refinement of its cabin to its

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More Town Car and Mark VIII

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ity to bring tears to men's eyes, the very Brotherhood of the Right Stuff itself."

The book won the American Book Award, became a best-seller and was made into a 1983 film with Sam Shepard and Ed Harris.

"Never mind journalism, new or old," author Michael Lewis wrote in *Vanity Fair* in 2015. "The Right Stuff," in my view, is a great work of American literature." Thomas Kennerly Wolfe Jr. was born March 2, 1930, in Richmond. His father was an agronomist and edited the *Southern Planter*, a magazine for farmers. His mother was a homemaker with varied artistic interests.

At Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, from which he graduated in 1951, Mr. Wolfe wrote for school publications. He also pitched for the baseball team and once had a try-out with the New York Giants.

Determined to stand out in other ways, the trim, 6-foot-tall Mr. Wolfe became a conspicuous dandy, wearing custom-made suits, often in white or pastel colors.

"I just want to make sure," he later said, "that when I walk into a room, everybody there turns around and says, 'Who in the name of God is that?'"

A four-month newspaper strike allowed Mr.

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highway-gobbling 280-hp V8 engine.

Now, with a host of new features, restyled body panels, a new interior and some technological advances, the Mark VIII has once again topped itself.

Where do we begin? Let's start with the Mark's innovative new lighting system, including High-Density Discharge headlamps that deliver 2.7 times more reflective light than standard lamps—meaning the driver sees things easier and sooner. And the Mark VIII's use of a neon tube tail lamp system—an industry first that was pioneered in the Ford Explorer—allows following drivers to significantly reduce their stopping distance.



1997 Lincoln Mark VIII

In addition, Lincoln designers have replaced the Mark's plastic hood with an aluminum one, enlarged the grille, modified the exhaust tips, and added new front and rear fascias, along with new quarter panels. There's more. The trademark rear-end tire hump, recalling the first Continental of 1940, is now more subtle, and six new hues have been added to the color chart.

The Mark's interior has also been redesigned, with several new touches—a power-tilt steering column with memory, burl-walnut door trim, power-adjusted lumbar-support, luxury instrument panel and leather-trimmed armrests.

Two trim levels are offered—the standard Mark VIII and the sportier LSC (Luxury Sport Coupe). The hue of our LSC test model was dubbed Opal Opalascend. In less poetic English, it was a handsomely creamy off-white.

Our LSC tester's base price was

\$38,880. It came equipped with several options: A \$1515 power moonroof, a \$670 trunk-mounted CD changer, a \$300 tri-coat paint treatment, \$290 heated seats and two no-charge options—front floor mats and electronic traction assist. The \$670 destination charge boosted the total cost to \$42,325.

On the standard Mark VIII, the grille, bodyside moldings, and headlamp and tail-lamp trim are chrome; on the LSC, they're body-colored. Even though the new grille is larger than on the '96 Mark VIII, it's still smaller than the enormous wraparound headlamp housings. In fact, the lamp housings are the largest in the industry, and they cast a cool, bluish beam that's wider and longer than standard lamps.

The neon taillamps are also generously sized. The taillamp system is actually a single 48-in. wide neon tube; which extends the full width of the vehicle—running across the top of a trunk-mounted light bar—and wraps around the rear fenders. The tube, which is hidden by the molding, projects light downward onto a reflective surface, and then out through a clear acrylic lens.

According to Lincoln, the neon illuminates 198 milliseconds faster than standard incandescent bulbs—which means that at speeds of 60 mph drivers following along behind can reduce their stopping distance by an average of 17.5 feet. The upshot is fewer rear-end collisions.

Integrated into the side mirrors is a security lamp that illuminates the ground when the door is unlocked using the keyless remote. On the bottom edge of the mirror housings, a line of red LED lights blink in tandem with the turn signals. These lights are visible to trailing cars but are positioned so as not to distract the driver.

Although the hood, fascias, and fenders have been restyled, the shape of the '97 Mark VIII is not radically different from the '96—except that its corners are more rounded, and its sleek, elegant lines are more sloping. And the vestigial decklid wheel hump has been downplayed to the point that it barely evokes the more promi-

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*The 1997 Lincolns continued**(Continued from page 10)*

Wolfe time to write his first pieces for Esquire. When the strike was settled in May 1963, Mr. Wolfe flourished, writing freewheeling stories for his newspaper and traveling on weekends for Esquire. After the Herald Tribune folded in 1967, Felker launched New York magazine; which became a showcase for Mr. Wolfe.

His style was so overwhelming that it masked what wasn't there: Throughout the turbulent 1960s and '70s, he avoided writing about the war in Vietnam, civil rights, the women's movement, foreign policy or politics. He seldom wrote about celebrities.

"I was afraid that readers would like the pieces for their subjects," he told The Post in 1979, "not for my writing."

Above all, Mr. Wolfe never wrote about himself.

When he married for the first and only time at 48, it took many by surprise, if only because he was so guarded about his personal life.

Survivors include his wife, Sheila Berger, a former art director of Harper's Magazine of New York and two children, journalist Alexandra Wolfe of New York and furniture designer Tommy Wolfe of Brooklyn.

For years, Mr. Wolfe

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gent bulge of bygone years.

As you might surmise, a luxury sport coupe with a \$38,000-plus base price is bountifully appointed. The standard Mark VIII comes equipped with the following goodies: Speed-sensitive variable-assist power steering, aluminum-alloy lacy-spoke wheels, air conditioning with automatic climate control, power windows/door locks/heated mirrors, message center with trip computer, burlled walnut wood applique, leather seats, leather-wrapped steering wheel and gear shift, power-tilt telescopic steering column, driver's seat memory with remote recall for two users, six-way driver and passenger power seats with Autoglide seating system, power-adjusted lumbar support, rear-seat heat ducts, speed control, remote keyless entry and universal garage door opener.

That's a long list, and it gives the Mark VIII an exceptional value quotient. Inside our roomy LSC, the plush perforated-leather seats were accented in grand fashion by the burlled-walnut trim on the door panels and console.

The new instrument panel is highlighted by brighter, more stylized gauges and a multi-function electronic message center that seems to keep tabs on everything but the New York Stock Exchange. In a somewhat amusing display of conspicuous driver-indulgence, the display distinguishes between "Vehicle" settings and "Personality" settings.

The Vehicle settings permit the driver to do things like turn on the traction control and monitor the distance to your next oil change. The Personality system performs functions like locking all doors when the car passes three mph and tilting the side mirrors to reflect the curbside when the car is shifted into reverse.

When the key is removed from the ignition, the driver's seat eases back two inches while the steering column whirs upward—allowing for maximum exit clearance (especially handy after consuming that massive slab of prime rib at the country club.)

The leather seats were so cushiony we

were tempted to settle in with our favorite novel and a cup of herbal tea. And if you can't get comfortable in one of the many configurations offered by the various power adjustments, you're just too hard to please.

On a more functional level, the '97 Mark engine features a new air intake system, which has been relocated further away from the driver's cabin. Those changes, in concert with improvements in body insulation and sealing, combine to significantly reduce engine noise.

Meanwhile, the new coil-on-plug ignition system—in which each spark plug has its own coil—helps extend tune-up intervals to 100,000 miles—presuming, of course, normal driving conditions and regular fluid changes.

The 4.6-liter twincam 32-valve InTech V8 engine sends 280 horsepower to the rear wheels on the standard Mark VIII, and 290 on the LSC. That added up to plenty of launch power in our test car, as well as excellent response at highway-passing speeds.

And make no mistake—when it comes to handling, cornering and weavy lane-changes, the Mark VIII is light years away from its floaty Town Car cousin. Thanks to its new speed-sensitive variable-assist steering, new all-speed traction control, larger front stabilizer bars and retuned shocks, the LSC proudly lived up to its sport-coupe credentials, as it nimbly and confidently negotiated twisty country roads north of Detroit.

In the luxury sport-coupe market—where the Mark VIII contends primarily with the Cadillac Eldorado and the Lexus SC 400—designers are always looking for new ways to simultaneously pamper the driver, make an elegant styling statement and boost the car's sport-performance capabilities.

With its myriad changes and improvements for '97—the inventive lighting system, message center enhancements, more responsive steering, smoother ride, and further damping of noise and vibration—the Mark VIII succeeds on all fronts.

From the internet...

North Star Welcome Wagon

(Continued from page 11)
 disparaged the modern novel as a lifeless relic that could be revived only with a muscular framework of reporting and social realism. Deciding to do the job himself, he published "The Bonfire of the Vanities" in Rolling Stone magazine, then, after considerable revision, in book form in 1987.

The novel describes the comeuppance of a wealthy bond trader and self-crowned "master of the universe" — another term coined by Mr. Wolfe — amid the racial and cultural turmoil of New York. "Bonfire" sold millions of copies and was made into a 1990 film with Tom Hanks, Melanie Griffith, and Bruce Willis.



Mr. Wolfe received the National Humanities Medal from President George W. Bush in 2001 and sold his archives to the New York Public Library in 2013 for \$2 million.

"I regard myself in the first flight of writers, but I don't dwell on this," Mr. Wolfe said in 1981. "If anything, I think I tend to be a little modest."

From the internet...

By Francis J. Kalvoda Willmar, Minnesota 320-235-5777 fjk@charter.net



The Welcome Wagon

Enjoying the summer heat? As we drive down the road (or detour) the breeze from the open windows or AC vents feels good as we see the vivid greens and bright blossoms; even better if we see that from the windows of our Lincolns. Micki and I just returned from a quick trip to Bismarck, North Dakota and we will return there in June. While we were there, I saw a pristine 1949 Lincoln. I will be contacting the owner for possible North Star LCOC membership. That's what we need to do to keep our club going and growing.

This month I am pleased to introduce to you **Greg** and his family. Greg and his wife Sasha have been married 10 years and live in Edina, Minnesota. Call them at 612-205-4680 or email trux-tcforce@yahoo.com. They live a pretty private life raising their three children. Greg was born and raised in Moscow,



Greg's 1967 Continental

came to the United States as a refugee when he was 19. He grew up poor but always had a fascination with automobiles, especially impressive automobiles. He never thought he could afford a car, in Russia. Life had different plans. Over the last 25 years, hard work and opportunities have produced an impressive collection of impressive automobiles. I met Greg on the Classic Car Garage Tour in

May. He is pictured here behind the wheel of the red 1967 Continental convertible; which he drove on the tour; I truly enjoyed our visit. Two other Lincolns are part of the family: a green 1947 Continental Coupe and a white 1974 Continental Mark IV. But wait, there's more! The need for impressive luxury (and speed) continues with the black 1967 Cadillac Eldorado, several Mercedes: AMGs, 80 and 90 series, and a BMW 850i. I think we will be seeing Greg and his family at our North Star events arriving with an impressive car, but it might not always be a Lincoln.

Greg stated, "My favorite thing is to volunteer to try to help others. I do some



Greg's 1947 Continental



Greg's 1974 Mark IV

life coaching with people that come out of prisons or people that have a history of drug use." Greg comes to Willmar one day a month to do this. I am looking forward to his visits. I think a topic of conversation may be impressive collector cars — we should be able to find a few.

Until next month, keep America beautiful, drive a Lincoln.



THE LINCOLN MOTOR COMPANY

For Sale — All Good Lincolns

Please patronize the following businesses. Both of which have gone the extra mile to support the North Star Lincoln club.

Bloomington Lincoln, 1001 Clover Drive South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, just below Highway 494 west, between Nicollet and Highway 35 South. Phone 952.888.2271

Bloomington Lincoln will provide excellent service for your new Lincoln or late model Ford, Mercury or Lincoln at very reasonable prices. Please also check with them if you are interested in a new Lincoln or if you would like an excellent used car. Check them out and let them help you.

Jeff Eisenberg's Libson Twin City Auto, 1218 Central Avenue NE, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Phone 612.521.3537

Jeff has one of the best repair shops in the Twin City area; who will fix just about any problem that you have with your older Lincoln or any other type of collectable car. He has worked on a number of Mark IIs and Slab-sided Lincolns with amazing results for their owners. Car problems — give him a call and see if he can be of help. I would be willing to say that he can.



FOR SALE: 1937 Lincoln K 2 window sedan. This car is one of three known and has been a show winner and a very reliable tour car. It has a high speed rear end and has been completely restored to a very high standard. It has won the Edsel Ford trophy and has been a runner up to the Bell award. I am offering the car at \$59,500 and am looking for good home with someone who will enjoy it as much as I have. If you are interested, please call Tom Brace at

SOLD



FOR SALE: 1978 Mark V. White with blue, full padded top. Blue leather interior. Excellent condition, both inside and out. Smooth running 460 makes it a pleasure to drive. Air blows very cold. Truly would be a joy to own. 54K miles, it just don't get much better. Fairly offered at \$9,950.

Call Dennis Owens at 612-269-6482 to talk more about this Mark and the price.

You May Be Interested in these Items for Sale

Wanted.... Car club badges and patches. New and Used. Call Harvey Oberg, 651-739-9754

Wanted... NOS exhaust resonator for a 1974 Lincoln Town Car. Part Number D4VA5E272AA
Call Vaughn Ebbighausen at 218-736-4049 or email vemsp294@gmail.com

For Sale - 1965 Lincoln Continental Convertible



This beautiful, fully-restored, 100-point car (Lincoln show standards) is now available. Equipped with the whisper-quiet, smooth 430 V8, rare silver blue bucket seats and steel belted radial tires. Stainless exhaust system and detailed engine bay and undercarriage. Drives perfectly. **Call John Palmer at 218-389-6189 or 218-380-3239.**



1994 Lincoln Town Car Executive loaded with options. The car has two air bags, key-less entry, air suspension, moon roof, four wheel disk brakes, cassette tape player and 1-1/8" white wall tires. Second owner since 1999. Car gone over by Lincoln dealer. Rare gold color with matching interior. Must see to appreciate. Asking \$9,500.



Northstar Region grille badges are now available. To obtain yours, contact Bob Johnson at 651.257.1715.

Now Available - Lincoln Caps and Shirts
Mens shirts with pockets, Ladies without pockets.
All Sizes, one price \$25, Caps just \$10.



Call now, operators standing by: Bob Johnson
651-257-1715 or email: arborbob41@aol.com

Preview of Coming Events

- June **All Ford Show, Sunday, June 3, 2018, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm** at Dunwoody Technical Institute, 818 Dunwoody Boulevard, Minneapolis. \$5 per car — all Ford products including Lincolns welcome.
Back to the Fifties, June 22-24, 2018, Minnesota State Fairgrounds, St. Paul
- July **LCOC Mid-America National Meet, July 11 – 15, 2018**, St Louis Park, MN
Sunday, July 22, 2018, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM 10,000 Lakes Concours d'Elegance
Excelsior Commons, Excelsior, Minnesota.
- August **Lincoln Motor Car Museum, August 6 - 12. LZOC -Fifth Annual Lincoln Homecoming**, Hickory Corners, Michigan, and Elkhart, Indiana.
Saturday, August 11, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM North Star Region, 16th Annual Classic Lincoln Out State Car Show at the Almelund 62nd Annual Threshing Show.
- September We are in the process of revising our plans for our September Lincoln car show. A location change is necessary. More to follow in our July issue.

Know some other event that may be of interest to members of the North Star Region? Let us know and perhaps we can work it into our event schedule for this year. Do you have a special burger place that we can cruise to some evening? Tell us about it — maybe we can do it. Good friends and nice Lincolns make for some fun times.

Wanting to buy Trico windshield washer pumps used on Ford Lincoln and Mercury cars '57-'59 and GM Cars (all models, Cadillac, Buick, Chev, Olds) from '56-'58. Complete pumps or parts wanted.
Please call Harvey Burski 218-624-7157 or email me at hburski@q.com.

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ON THE NORTHSTAR LCOC WEB SITE.**

www.northstarlroc.org Click on publications.

Issues are in PDF format and may be printed on your color printer.

North Star Activities

Lincolns are on the move and headed for Minneapolis, Minnesota



The North Star Region is excited to host the 2018 Mid-America National Meet in the Twin Cities area, July 11-15 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Our host hotel is the Marriott Minneapolis West, at 9960 Wayzata Boulevard, St. Louis Park, Minnesota. It is conveniently located only minutes from popular area attractions, including the Mall of America, Target Field, US Bank Stadium and many more attractions. The Marriott is an exceptional hotel with all of the amenities including Wi-Fi, indoor pool, a fitness center, Starbucks, Kip's Irish Pub and much more! The room rate is \$129 per night or, if you prefer, there are a small number of King Suites for \$159. Breakfast for two is included in the room rate. To reserve your room, call 952.544.4400, ask for reservations and mention that you want the "North Star LCOC" special rate.



This year's theme is "**North Star Touring at its Best**," and that says it all! We've arranged driving tours to three great car collections.

Thursday will begin with a driving tour to Morrie's car collection starting at 9 a.m. This is one of the top collections in the country, featuring well over 300 cars, as well as a vast collection of antique gas pumps, neon dealership signs and other memorabilia. This is one you won't want to miss! Lunch will be served at the Medina Ballroom.

Friday, we will be off on another driving tour first, at the Veit Automobile Museum featuring 150 rare and unusual gas pumps, a collection of 1933 Ford Model 40s, Tri-Five Chevrolets and more. After lunch, we will visit the McDowall car collection; which has about 40 very interesting and unique cars of appeal to most any collector.

For more information and to download the meet registration form, go to the LCOC website: www.lcoc.org and click on Mid America National Meet. Please contact Matt Foley, Meet Registration Chairman, at 612-280-4930 or e-mail mcfoley@earthlink.net if you are considering attending our 2018 Mid America National Meet in Minneapolis (St. Louis Park) Minnesota. Matt Foley will send you a meet packet via email or USPS mail if you need a printed copy. You may download PDF forms from www.lcoc.org. This is the only website that will have the official registration packet for you to download. Register early to ensure getting the tour and the day that you want.

Meet registration will close June 22, 2018. Help us by registering before this date. For more information please contact either Matt Foley or North Star Region Director, Bob Johnson, 651-257-1715,