

NORTHSTAR NEWS

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 6

OUR 22 ND YEAR

JUNE 1, 2023

1998 was a banner year for Lincoln



For the year 1998, Lincoln managed to outsell its crosstown rival, Cadillac.

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.

This month, we are featuring the Lincoln lineup from 1998. As usual, in searching for one thing on the internet, I stumbled upon the article below from the Detroit News. Originally printed in 1998, it records a momentous occasion for our favorite brand Lincoln, that of beating out its longtime rival, Cadillac, for the American Luxury car market leader. It would be short-lived, but, at least it happened.

Continuing, we feature some reviews of the four cars in Lincoln's portfolio for 1998. The Town Car, the Continental, the Mark VIII Sport Coupe, and the all-new Navigator which was an immediate sales success.

After 59 Years, Lincoln Is Set to Outsell Cadillac By Michelle Krebs, December 13, 1998, the Detroit News.

AFTER nearly six decades as the undisputed leader of the American luxury market, Cadillac is poised to lose its crown to Lincoln this year.

As of Nov. 30, Lincoln, the luxury division of the Ford Motor Company, had sold 170,265

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Trivia from the Internet



William Neeson
Irish Actor

William John Neeson OBE (born 7 June 1952) is an actor from Northern Ireland. He has received several accolades, including nominations for an Academy Award, a BAFTA Award, three Golden Globe Awards, and two Tony Awards. In 2020, he was placed seventh on *The Irish Times* list of Ireland's 50 Greatest Film Actors. Neeson was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2000.

Early life - Neeson was born in Ballymena, County Antrim, the son of cook Katherine "Kitty" Neeson and primary school caretaker Bernard "Barney" Neeson. Raised Catholic he was named Liam after a local priest. The third of four siblings, he has three sisters, Elizabeth, Bernadette, and Rosaleen. He attended St Patrick's College, Ballymena from 1963 to 1967, and later recalled that his love of drama began there.

He said that growing up as a Catholic in a predominantly Protestant town made him cautious, and once said he felt

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Editors Message

I think that we can safely state that late spring, or early summer is now here. At least we had a few more nicer days in May than we had in April, so much for a great spring.

Those that went to the Wisconsin Dells event this past May reported that it was a fun time. The sad part is that we had only about 10-12 North Star club members attend. Those who were involved with other activities missed out on a really fun time, non-stop, from Friday through Sunday morning. It was so very kind of our host for this event, Mark Platt, and his wife, Sue, to be such gracious hosts. Our North Star club is truly blessed with a lot of good members who are always willing to help out and make our very fine club even better. The Platt's have a beautiful collection of older vehicles and memorabilia that will truly amaze any first-time visitor. Their hospitality was the very best.

This issue of the Northstar News is a bit on the wordy side. Again, none of our members stepped up and sent in an article suitable for publishing in our monthly newsletter. So, I cranked up the internet for a search on something that could be used as a feature article. I was successful in finding an article about Lincoln having a very good year in 1998, outselling Cadillac for the first time ever. So, I tied that article to four individual reviews of the 1998 Lincoln product line, the Town Car, the Continental, the Mark VIII, and the Navigator. Of the four vehicles, only the Town Car and the Navigator were deemed to be really successful. The Mark VIII, one of the best Luxury Sport Coupes ever made, was not selling well, and production was halted in mid-1998. I have thought about this over the years, and I don't have a good answer for its non-success. Most people who bought Mark VIIs really loved them, and today we have almost a cult following for this really one-of-a-kind car. Perhaps Lincoln could never really figure out how to properly market them. The beautiful Continental was equally as fine a car as the Mark. But sales kept falling off, and it too was finally discontinued in

2002. I had both a Mark VIII and a Continental of this vintage and found them both to be excellent automobiles. Again, why the Continental didn't sell is beyond me. It was a great driving car, very spirited with its DOHC engine, and



Sweet Niko has made a new friend. Cody, who takes great care of my lawn stopped by to say hello to Niko and offer him a couple of treats. Instant friendship for the price of a small treat. Niko now thinks of Cody as his new best friend.

turned out to have good economy in highway driving.

In any event, these four fine Lincolns are of the vintage that enthusiasts are starting to look at them in terms of being collector cars. They make great tour vehicles and, being over ten years of age, are now eligible for showing competitively at sanctioned Lincoln shows. Parts are still fairly easy to obtain, as a lot of mechanicals were shared with both Ford and Mercury production automobiles. Another plus is that the price is still fairly affordable, and there are still a lot of good clean examples out there to choose from. We understand that there were four Mark VIIs that showed up at the Wisconsin Dells show. What a wonderful turnout for such a great car.

We need to build membership in our parent club, the Lincoln and Continental Owners Club. There is a lot out there on the web about the LCOC and how to join. But, signing up new members is sort of a retail operation, best-done one-on-one by existing members signing up new ones. I am convinced that there are a lot of wonderful older Lincolns out there owned by people who know nothing about either the LCOC or the local North Star regional club. What is the best way of connecting with these folks? If you have any ideas on growing membership, please let us know. Also, how can we improve our regional club? Different types of activities? Let us know what should be changed. Things that we did 25 years ago may not be working as well today. Your ideas are always appreciated; reach out to either Bob Johnson or myself. We will listen to you and do our best to make the club more member-centered.

Till next month, David and Niko the Samo-yed....

*Directors Message by Bob Johnson**May 2023**(Continued from page 2)*

like a "second-class citizen" there but has also said he was never made to feel "inferior or even different" at the town's predominantly Protestant technical college. "It would be colorful to imagine I had a rebellious, uproarious Irish background," he has said, "but the facts were much greyer. Irish, yes. But all that nationalistic stuff, crying into your Guinness and singing rebel songs—that was never my scene." He has described himself as "out of touch" with the politics and history of Northern Ireland until becoming aware of protests by fellow students after Bloody Sunday, a massacre in Derry in 1972 during the Troubles, which encouraged him to learn more local history. In a 2009 interview, he said, "I never stop thinking about [the Troubles]. I've known guys and girls who have been perpetrators of violence and victims. Protestants and Catholics. It's part of my DNA." At age nine, Neeson began boxing lessons at the All Saints Youth Club, and went on to win a number of regional titles before quitting at 17. He acted in school productions during his teens.^[18] His interest in acting and decision to become an actor were also influenced by Ian Paisley, founder of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), into whose Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster he sneaked. He said, "[Paisley] had a magnificent presence and it was incredible to watch him just Bible-thumping away... it was acting, but it was also

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May snow was not what we planned for, but after about two weeks of miserable weather, the last part of May is or was pretty decent. I know the dandelions sure have blossomed everywhere around my home. We went from white to yellow in my yard with no green; after cutting the dandelions, my yard is now green. June is the first month of summer and very special for our Region, back 22 years ago it was the first issue of the North Star News, edited and produced by Dave Gustafson. Just think of the time Dave has spent generating this newsletter on a monthly schedule. Please take the time to thank Dave for his efforts, and can you take the time to write a Pride and Joy Article for Dave to use in our newsletter?

Thank you, Lincoln of Bloomington, for hosting our monthly North Star Region Board meetings for the past six years. Our first Board meeting at Lincoln of Bloomington was on May 4, 2017, at the invitation of General Manager Dave Nixon and has continued on by Principal Owner Ryan Benning. Our meetings are open to all region members, who are welcome to attend. We would like your input.

We are **now in car show season!** Our first car show was on Saturday, May 13, in Wisconsin Dells at Mark Platt's Collector Car Garage. Our second car show is on Saturday, June 17 in Bloomington Minnesota, at Lincoln of Bloomington, and our third car show, is on Saturday, July 29, at the Blacksmith Lounge, in Hugo, Minnesota, the first Annual Lincoln and American Collector Car Show, there is a \$10 entrance fee. Please register now or you can pay at the gate on show day. Email me if you need a registration form.

This year, I thought Wisconsin Dells would be a great location away from the Minneapolis and St. Paul area to hold a car show. The location was the best, and our hosts, the Platt's, were fantastic with a great facility, food, and events for us to do. Our only problem was we only had ten Lincolns and nineteen persons attend. Now back to the drawing board; what can we do to get you to attend this type of event? What am I missing? Please call me if you have a suggestion for getting members to attend these types of shows.

Our Facebook presence continues to grow, with likes over 1500. Please check our Facebook page and contact Jay White if you have any suggestions about more items for Facebook. We are posting our North Star Region Car Show Flyers on Facebook to let other Lincoln Owners know about our car shows to help gain attendance to car shows. Please use our correct Facebook page, which is ***North Star Lincoln Continental Car Club***.

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

Bob and Mary Johnson.

Board Of Directors - 2023 - 2024

Title	Name	Phone Numbers	email	Term Ends
Regional Director	Bob Johnson	H(651)257-1715	arborbob41@aol.com	2023
Secretary	Chris Struble	(952)679-0342	068690@gmail.com	2023
Treasurer	Matt Foley			2025
Activities Director	Jay White	H(612)559-3219	jay@jwhiteandassoc.com	2023
Director	Bob Roth	H(763)475-1429		2023
Publications/ Membership	Dave Gustafson	H(952)435-1919	davidwgustafson@att.net	2025
Director	Tom Brace	H(651)644-1716	trbrace@comcast.net	2025
Director	Tina Zimpel	612-298-3632	tinajzim@gmail.com	2025
Director	Jeff Eisenberg	(612)521-3537	Jeff.eisenberg@libsontruck.com	2023
Director	Dave Heeren	(952)469-3647	dheeren41@hotmail.com	2025
Director	Ernie Christensen	651-500-0179	ernobc@yahoo.com	2025

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

Lincoln, a banner year for 1998 continued...

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cars and trucks in 1998. That was nearly 7,000 ahead of Cadillac, which had sales of 163,482 -- mostly cars -- in the same period. The gap grew in November, prompting Cadillac to concede the race virtually.

"We don't know the outcome, but we're pretty much seeing the very distinct possibility that Lincoln will overtake us in total vehicle sales," Chris Preuss, a spokesman for Cadillac, said last week.

Lincoln has not beaten Cadillac since 1939, according to figures compiled by Automotive News, a trade journal.

Cadillac's sales were down slightly through November, largely because of United Automobile Workers strikes that led to the shutdown of G.M.'s North American assembly operations for up to two months last summer. But Lincoln's gain of 21,500 sales over the year-earlier period was a bigger factor in the sales race. Lincoln benefited from a redesigned Town Car, especially its Navigator sport utility; the division will sell more than 40,000 Navigators this year. Cadillac's equivalent vehicle, the Escalade, went on sale only recently.

Lincoln sells just two car models (Town Car and Continental) compared with Cadillac's four (Catera, DeVille, Eldorado, and Seville). Production of the Lincoln Mark VIII ended in June.

The luxury car makers that are enjoying double-digit sales increases are doing so largely because of sport utilities. After introducing its M-Class utility in late 1997, Mercedes-Benz is having a record year, with sales up 44 percent. Indeed, through November, Mercedes trailed Cadillac by only about 9,000 sales.

Lexus sales were up 57 percent, to 139,411. Lexus, a division of Toyota, offers a revamped full-size utility, the LX 470, and a new car-based model, the RX 300, which is already the division's best seller.

Cadillac sales have been steadily declining from their lofty levels of the late '70s and mid-80s when it sold more than 300,000 cars a year. G.M. used to boast that Cadillac outsold all foreign luxury brands combined.

1998 Lincoln Town Car - If the new Town Car is any indication of Lincoln-Mercury's intent to change minds about what a luxury car should be, then they are well on their way toward attracting a new group of buyers. Lincoln-Mercury wants to keep all of its current customers — they give the Town Car one of the highest loyalty and repurchase rates in the industry. But, at the

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Northstar Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2023

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

The meeting was called to order at Bloomington Lincoln by Regional Director Bob Johnson at 6:35 p.m.

Board members attending the meeting were Bob Johnson, Dave Gustafson, Tina Zimple, Chris Struble, Matt Foley, Dave Heeren, and Bob Roth. The Board members not present were Tom Brace, Ernie Christensen, Jay White, and Jeff Eisenberg. Visitors present were Mary Johnson and Sweet Niko.

The minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda of this meeting were approved.

Director Reports:

Dave and Tammy Hereen have completed the 2023 North Star Region directory with pictures in it as a new feature. The new directory is a big hit and much needed. Thank You, Tammie and Dave!

Sunday Brunch on April 16 at Dehn's Country Manor. Twenty hardy members attended during another snowstorm; the highlight was four new North Star Region Directories were given out as door prizes.

There will be a May road trip and car show at Mark Platts Collector Car Garage, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, Saturday, May 13, a three-day road trip (Friday and Sunday) or just for the day.

Saturday, June 17, 2023. The 14th Annual Lincoln car show will be at Bloomington Lincoln, Bloomington, Minnesota, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Matt Foley reports that we currently have \$4845.57 in the treasury with all bills paid. Jay White Facebook page now has over 1500 likes. Please use the correct Facebook page, which is **North Star Lincoln Continental Car Club**.

Membership and Publications: list of 12 non-renewing members is attached. Bob Johnson sent them an email.

A discussion was held regarding holding the June Board meeting at the Blacksmith Lounge on June 1.

Projects: Ernie Christensen suggested doing a Club Window Cling. We have an LCOC window cling for \$3.50. This would be a good region project and should be cheaper in volume.

The meeting Adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

The next Board Meeting will be held at the Blacksmith Lounge in beautiful downtown Hugo, Minnesota, on June 1, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Struble

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great acting and stirring too." In 1971, he joined a physics and computer science course at Queen's University Belfast before leaving to work for the Guinness Brewery. At Queen's, he discovered a talent for football and was spotted by Seán Thomas at Bohemian FC. There was a club trial in Dublin and Neeson played one game as a substitute against Shamrock Rovers FC, but was not offered a contract.

Early career - After leaving university, Neeson returned to Ballymena, where he worked in a variety of casual jobs, such as forklift operator at Guinness and a lorry driver. He also attended teacher training college for two years in Newcastle upon Tyne before again returning to his hometown. In 1976, he joined the Lyric Players' Theatre in Belfast, where he performed for two years. He got his first film experience in 1977, playing Jesus Christ and The Evangelist in the religious film *Pilgrim's Progress* (1978). He moved to Dublin in 1978 when he was offered a part in Ron Hutchinson's *Says I, Says He*, a drama about *The Troubles*, at the Project Arts Centre.

In 1980, filmmaker John Boorman saw him on stage as Lennie Small in *Of Mice and Men* and offered him the role of Sir Gawain in the Arthurian film *Excalibur*. After

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1998 Best sales ever for Lincoln

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the role, Neeson moved to London, where he continued working on stage, and in small-budget films and television. He lived with actress Helen Mirren, whom he met working on *Excalibur*. Between 1982 and 1987, he starred in five films, most notably with Mel Gibson and Anthony Hopkins in 1984's *The Bounty* and Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons in 1986's *The Mission*. Neeson guest-starred in the third season of the television series *Miami Vice* in 1986, and moved to Hollywood the next year to take higher-profile roles. He starred with Cher and Dennis Quaid in *Suspect*, which brought him critical acclaim. In 1988, he starred with Clint Eastwood in the fifth *Dirty Harry* film *The Dead Pool*, as Peter Swan, a horror film director. In 1990, he had a starring role in Sam Raimi's *Darkman*. Although the film was successful, Neeson's subsequent years did not bring him the same recognition. In 1993, he joined *Ellis Island* co-star and future wife Natasha Richardson in the Broadway play *Anna Christie*. They also worked together in *Nell*, released the following year.

Rise to prominence - Steven Spielberg offered Neeson the role of Oskar Schindler in his Holocaust film *Schindler's List* after seeing him in *Anna Christie* on

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same time, the division wants to use the new Town Car to attract buyers away from other domestic and Japanese luxury brands.

Lincoln-Mercury plans to do this with fresh styling and a greatly improved driving experience achieved through better handling, better brakes, and a more controlled ride quality.

The Lincoln Town Car is 85 percent new for 1998. While the designers, engineers and product planners have maintained the interior space and trunk space of the previous, boxlike Town Car, they have thrown away the rectilinear design, the square corners, and some of the formality of the car. In its place is a new shape that owes something to the Jaguar, something to the Bentley, and quite a bit to Ford's New Edge design philosophy.

The car was designed at Ford's California facility, and it shows. It's round but not a jelly-bean; it's formal without being frumpy; it's trim yet still substantial. It's the first all-new Town Car in eight years. And it's about time. As always, Cadillac's deVille is the arch-rival for the Town Car, but nowadays, there are a number of smaller European and Japanese cars in the \$40,000 luxury sedan bracket: Acura 3.5 RL, BMW 528 and Mercedes-Benz E-class.

Walkaround and Interior There are four versions of Town Car to choose from: the \$38,500 Executive series sold primarily as a fleet car, the \$40,150 Signature Series, and the creme de la creme \$42,500 Cartier series. When adjusted for equipment, these prices average \$975 less than the price of the 1997 Town Car.

While each of the three basic series is progressively more loaded, the car is essentially an American-idiom luxury car with all that implies: rear-wheel drive, V8 engine, smooth, quiet ride, seating for six, trunk room for four sets of golf clubs, and lots of comfort and power amenities. From its jewel-like headlamps and traditional grille back to its chrome license plate surround and massive corner-mounted taillamps, the Town Car has been carefully rethought for the trip into the 21st Century, but it's only fractionally smaller than the old barge. It's 3.7 inches shorter, and more than two inches of that is taken from the front overhang.

The most exciting news is the Signature Touring Sedan, which we drove. The Touring

package comes with the more powerful 220-horsepower V8 engine with dual exhaust, larger 235/60R-16 tires on unique 16-inch alloy wheels, a special torque converter, a 3.55:1 rear-axle ratio for quicker acceleration, revised springs, shock absorbers, and stabilizer bars designed for a more sporting ride and handling feel. With more than 20 special parts designed to improve performance, the Touring package is worth every cent of its \$500 cost. The Signature Touring Sedan comes in seven unique colors. Inside are perforated leather seating surfaces and a special black birdseye wood-grain finish on the instrument panel and doors.

Just about everything inside the car is new and improved, from the door panels to the instrument panels to the radio face to the switches and controls. The electronic instrument cluster of old has been eliminated. In its place is a new, smaller cluster featuring a centered speedometer flanked by fuel and temperature gauges.

Two small electronic windows on either side of the speedometer serve as the message center and compass. The system includes a redundant speedometer display but no tachometer.

The old radio face has been replaced with larger, easier-to-use buttons and controls. Below is the control center for the climate control system. Nothing is difficult to reach or understand, and the controls are not crowded together.

The front and rear passenger compartments are huge. A new rear pillar design makes the rear seat cozier than the old car without being smaller. The big, thick seats are comfortable, and the power front bucket seats offer lumbar support and two-position memory. For safety and convenience, the steering wheel contains buttons for cruise control and the sound system.

We noticed a marked improvement in interior noise over the previous model. The windshield has been moved forward four inches, and gooseneck mirrors have been designed to generate less wind noise. The glass is thicker, there are triple seals on the doors, and the pillars have been designed to cancel noise. This is as quiet as Marcel Marceau.

Driving Impressions - Even with the Touring package, 3.55:1 rear-axle ratio, and 220 horsepower on tap, the Town Car Signature Series lacks the strong performance of some of

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More about Lincoln for 1998

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Broadway, Kevin Costner, Mel Gibson

and Warren Beatty all expressed interest in the part (Beatty even auditioned), but Neeson was cast in December 1992 after auditioning for the role. He read the Keneally book and concluded that his character "enjoyed fookin' with the Nazis. In Keneally's book, it says he was regarded as a kind of a buffoon by them... if the Nazis were New Yorkers, he was from Arkansas. They don't quite take him seriously, and he used that to full effect." His critically acclaimed performance earned him a nomination for a Best Actor Oscar, and helped the film earn Best Picture of 1993. He also received BAFTA and Golden Globes nominations for the performance. He soon became an in-demand.

In 1999, Neeson starred as Jedi Master Qui-Gon Jinn in *Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace*. Director George Lucas cast Neeson because he considered him a "master actor, who the other actors will look up to, who has got the qualities of strength that the character demands." As the first *Star Wars* film to be released in 16 years, it was surrounded by media anticipation. Neeson's connection to *Star Wars* started in the Crown Bar, Belfast. He told Ricki Lake, "I probably wouldn't have taken the role if it wasn't for the advice of Peter King in the Crown during a Lyrical reunion." Despite mixed reviews from critics and

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its competitors. With its 282 cubic-inch engine, it just doesn't get away from a stoplight like a \$40,000 car should these days. It's not that it's slow, but its chief competition has 275 horsepower, a palpable increase.

The transmission feel and function are greatly improved over the 1997 Town Car, with shifts that take only 0.6 seconds as opposed to 1.2 seconds in the old car. The fourth gear overdrive can be switched off for climbing and descending long grades. The full-time all-speed traction control can also be switched off for climbing out of snow banks or other special situations.

Most veteran Town Car owners will notice the vastly improved steering and suspension on their first drive. Ford has redesigned the steering system with more expensive components—replacing bushings with bearings, for instance—that give improved steering precision and feel. The air suspension system boasts new twin-tube shock absorbers and the Touring Package comes with shocks that are 50 percent larger for a less floaty, less jarring ride. Another more expensive solution is the rear suspension, which uses a new Watts linkage between the axle housing and the frame designed to improve handling and ride quality—usually mutually exclusive goals. The trailing arms have also been redesigned to be parallel to the frame. All this adds up to a much more pleasant ride. The 1998 Town Car feels glued to the road. Handling is much more predictable in lane-change maneuvers without the momentary indecisiveness that characterized the old car.

Brakes have been upgraded with bigger, thicker front discs and new twin-piston calipers. With 25 percent more swept area, the new brakes are less likely to fade away when hot, such as excessive use in the mountains. We weren't happy with the brakes on the 1997 model and are pleased to see brakes that will take a great deal of Even with the Touring package, 3.55:1 rear-axle ratio, and 220 horsepower on tap; the Town Car Signature Series lacks the strong performance of some of its competitors. With its 282 cubic-inch engine, it just doesn't get away from a stoplight like a \$40,000 car should these days. It's not that it's slow, but its chief competition has 275 horsepower, a palpable increase.

Summary - Lincoln's new Town Car is an appealing choice with its huge cabin and trunk and bulletproof engine and transmis-

sion. The new styling looks sexier than the previous model from all angles. And the Town Car looks even better when you consider that prices are about the same as last year. In a world of front-drive cars, the new Lincoln is a traditional rear-wheel-drive American luxury car. We predict the new Town Car will be a big hit. And we think the success of the Touring models will surprise Lincoln-Mercury.

1998 Lincoln Navigator - When you scan the full-size luxury section of the sport-utility landscape, you may be surprised to find that there's only one serious offering with Made In America stamped on its rocker panels. And it's even more surprising that this Yankee challenger comes from an automotive division that has never tried its hand at trucks before.

Lincoln is obviously no stranger to luxury on a grand scale. The current Town Car sedan, a perennial favorite with limousine services, is the biggest passenger car sold in this country, and the magnificent Model K Lincolns of the early '30s, all scaled in well north of 5000 pounds, many of them approaching the three-ton frontier.

But trucks? It's not as anomalous as it may seem at a glance. As a unit of the Ford Motor Company, the Lincoln-Mercury division belongs to a company that leads the country—for that matter, the planet—in light truck expertise.

The new Lincoln Navigator is yet another manifestation of that expertise—sumptuous, silent, and strong. Think of it as Arnold Schwarzenegger suited up for a night at the opera, a uniquely appealing blend of brute strength and uptown sophistication.

Walkaround - The Navigator team obviously didn't have to design from scratch. The starting point was Ford's Expedition, a newcomer that's rewritten the full-size sport-ute rulebook.

A little bigger than the Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon four-doors but easier to garage than GM's even bigger Suburban, the Expedition blends surprising backwoods capability with equally surprising maneuverability and ride quality that sets high standards on surfaces ranging from smooth pavement to lumpy Forest Service trails.

Building from these strengths, the Navigator adds generous dollops of luxury inside and out. The wide grille is unmistakably Lin-

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1998 Best year ever for Lincoln

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fans, *The Phantom Menace* was an enormous box-office success and remained the most financially successful *Star Wars* film (unadjusted for inflation) until *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015).

Mainstream roles - Neeson narrated the 2001 documentaries *Journey into Amazing Caves*, a short film about two scientists who travel around the world to search for material for potential cures; and *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Adventure*. The latter won awards at a number of film festivals including Best Documentary from both the Chicago Film Critics Association and the National Board of Review.

After being nominated for a Tony Award for his role opposite Laura Linney in *The Crucible*, Neeson appeared with Harrison Ford in Kathryn Bigelow's 2002 submarine thriller *X-19: The Widowmaker* as Captain Mikhail Polenin. He was also on the cast of Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York* with Leonardo DiCaprio, Brendan Gleeson, Cameron Diaz and Daniel Day-Lewis, and played a recently widowed writer in Richard Curtis's ensemble comedy *Love Actually* (2003). His role as Alfred Kinsey in *Kinsey* again put Neeson up for nomination for a Golden Globe Award, but he lost to Leonardo DiCaprio for *The Aviator*. In the director's commentary of the 2007 *Transformers* DVD Michael Bay said he had told the animators

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coln, the illuminated running boards—optional on the Expedition—are standard, and the body shell is packed with extra sound-deadening materials.

From a cosmetic point of view, the only element that seems inconsistent to us is the raised white lettering on the tires, something we associate with Jeep Wranglers rather than luxury vehicles.

From a mechanical point of view, there's nothing even remotely inconsistent. Quite the contrary. The Navigator employs the same beefy frame as the Expedition and the same suspension: independent front, live axle with air springs and automatic load leveling in the rear. Four-wheel drive models like our tester add air shocks at the front, and the system automatically raises the vehicle's ride height at low speeds for an additional inch of ground clearance.

When forward motion stops, the system automatically settles down to its lowest height to facilitate ingress and egress. The standard running boards also help out in this respect; so do passenger assist grab handles inside the vehicle.

Power is supplied by a 5.4-liter V8 engine, one of Ford's new family of overhead cam truck engines. Like the Expedition, the Navigator's V8 is allied with a four-speed automatic transmission that includes an overdrive lockout feature for occasions when a little extra oomph is required.

There's plenty of oomph here, enough to give the Navigator good all-around performance and a maximum towing capability of 8000 pounds. That's significantly higher than the max for the Tahoe and Yukon, although some Suburban powertrain combinations yield even higher ratings.

Like the Expedition, the Navigator offers the option of Ford's new Control-Trac 4WD system, operated by an easy-to-use dashboard switch. The settings include an automatic 4WD mode that functions essentially as an all-wheel drive system—basically, 2WD when traction is plentiful, apportioning torque to the front wheels when system sensors detect slippage at the rear.

The system also includes a high-range 4WD setting and low-range 4WD for max traction in creepy-crawly situations, like muddy forest trails.

Interior Features - Leather is one of the invariable hallmarks of automotive luxury,

and the Navigator's interior is slathered with plenty of it—rich, creamy, and smooth. Roominess is another luxury in any form of transportation, and the Navigator has lots of this as well, along with seating for eight—comfortable quad captain's chairs in the first two rows and a bench seat in the rear, elevated slightly to give the rear passengers a view of what's going on up front.

Leg, head, and hip room are plentiful in the first two seating positions, though the third row is limited and not really suitable for folks of adult stature. On the other hand, there's a lot of cargo space. The rear seat-backs flop forward to expand stowage, the rearmost seat is readily removable, and the spare tire stows underneath the rear rather than inside. Beyond that, bins and cubbies are scattered around the interior for small items.

The Navigator's instrument panel is basically the same as the Expedition's, with the same oversize controls for the audio and standard automatic climate control systems—easy to operate when the vehicle is moving and well-marked for function. Luxury licks include tasteful strips of walnut trim and a handsome wood steering wheel with leather wrapping on the sections of the rim that are gripped most of the time.

The wheel spokes are adorned with auxiliary buttons for the audio and climate controls, and the switches for the power windows and mirrors are easy to identify by touch, a trait common to most Ford vehicles.

As you'd expect of a sport-utility vehicle, the driver's seat affords a commanding view of the road, and driver sightlines are above average in all directions, thanks to the Navigator's vast glass area. A wide range of power-adjustability for the seat—as well as height-adjustable seatbelts—should make just about anyone comfortable here, and the seats themselves afford lots of room for wriggling around during long hauls.

Driving Impressions - Although its dimensions stop short of the gigantic Suburban, the Navigator is a big vehicle. The curb weight of the 4x4 version tops 5500 pounds, which is a lot of mass to move.

With mass in mind, we found this vehicle's all-around performance to be a very pleasant surprise. The 5.4-liter V8 gets the Navigator moving without straining, and it thrives on freeway cruising. Our 4x4 tester logged a steady 17 mpg during some extend-

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More about the 1998 Lincolns

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to seek inspiration from Neeson in creating Optimus Prime's body language. Neeson appeared as Alistair Little in the BBC Northern Ireland/Big Fish Films television drama *Five Minutes of Heaven*, which tells the true story of a young Protestant man convicted of murdering a Catholic boy during *The Troubles*.

Later success - In 2008, Neeson starred in the action film *Taken*, a French-produced film also starring Famke Janssen and Maggie Grace, based on a script by Luc Besson and Robert Mark Kamen and directed by Pierre Morel. Neeson plays a retired CIA operative from the elite Special Activities Division sets about tracking down his teenage daughter after she is kidnapped. *Taken* was a worldwide box-office hit, grossing \$223.9 million worldwide, making almost \$200 million more than its production budget. Neeson has said in interviews that he believed that *Taken* had put some people off the idea of actually travelling to Europe.

Taken brought Neeson back into the centre of the public eye and resulted in his being cast in many more big-budget Hollywood movies. That year he also narrated the documentary *Black Holes*; *The Other Side of Infinity* and again lent his voice to Aslan in *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* (2008). He also provided a voice for Hayao Miyazaki's anime film *Ponyo on the Cliff* by

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ed mountain driving in California—impressive for a vehicle in this size class—and the interior noise levels were lower than any sport-utility in our experience.

Handling and all-around ride quality were also pleasantly surprising. We think the Navigator is the smoothest operator in its class, but it still manages quick maneuvers without excessive rock and roll, and its steering is best in class. With disc brakes and standard ABS, braking performance is also remarkable, both for power and resistance to fade.

Our California travels also included a trek through the rocky wastes of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and we were impressed once again with how well this big vehicle handled off-road trundling, particularly when the 4WD system was called on to claw its way up stretches covered with deep, loose sand.

Summary - The Navigator has some excellent competitors in the luxury sport-utility field, in particular the Range Rovers, the Lexus LX450, and Toyota Land Cruiser twins. The Range Rovers lead the league in posh appointments and off-road capability, but their pricing starts in the mid \$50,000 range. LX 450 pricing starts under the \$50,000 frontier, but it lacks the power and roominess of the Navigator, as do the Range Rovers.

Thus the Navigator looks like a good idea. It has the feel and features of luxury, with more muscle and more room than its key competitors. Add off-road competence to the mix, and you have an excellent recipe for success.

If you're thinking of roughing it in high style—and comfort—the Navigator shapes up as the best buy of an exclusive bunch.

1998 Lincoln Continental - Lincoln-Mercury says its Continental is designed to provide "exemplary comfort and ride quality in a highly maneuverable sedan with distinctive styling." Lincoln has accomplished that mission and more, with improved ride quality, enhanced maneuverability, subtle styling changes, and a sophisticated new instrument panel. All told, there are more than 400 enhancements for 1998.

Offered in just one model this year, the Continental offers the latest in technology with electronically adjustable suspension and steering systems and futuristic instruments. These whiz-bang electronics are not intrusive,

however, as owners can choose to use them to tailor the car to their driving style and environment, or they can simply ignore them, relax and enjoy the cruise. Regardless of your level of involvement, the Continental is a satisfying luxury car.

Walkaround - There are facelifts that are so obvious you don't have to look closely to know what was done, and then there are those so subtle you don't know what was done but like the overall effect. The Continental underwent a very subtle facelift for 1998.

The front overhang was reduced. The headlamps and turn signals are covered with a single, thinner lens. Although the grille retains its basic design of vertical bars, it is slightly bigger from top to bottom and looks more prominent; it's also more resistant to damage.

Massive Lincoln taillamps sweep around into the rear quarter panels. Front fenders, hood, and decklid are made of a sheet molding compound (SMC) that is more resistant to dents and dings. This material will allow Lincoln to revise the styling more often to keep the Continental in step with evolving aesthetic trends. Overall, the Continental looks rounder than before and makes a distinctive design statement.

The trunk lid raises high enough not to be a head bumper for all but the tallest. The trunk boasts nearly 19 cu. ft. of cargo capacity and a low lift-over height make loading and unloading much easier.

Lifting the hood reveals an attractive engine compartment filled with the 4.6-liter V8. Washer fluid, oil filler, and other necessities are out in the open, and the cooling system is maintenance-free. The 32-valve double-overhead-cam engine produces a healthy 260 horsepower at 5750 rpm and 270 foot-pounds of torque at 3000 rpm. The ignition system has a coil for each plug for reduced maintenance and a cleaner appearance. New knock sensors mean premium fuel is no longer required, though it is still recommended for maximum performance.

The engine drives the front wheels through a four-speed automatic linked electronically and mechanically to the engine. The two talking to each other means shifts are remarkably smooth. Traction control is standard. Four-wheel disc brakes with ABS are also standard.

The front suspension is independent with MacPherson struts. Ford's short- and long-arm

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1998 Lincolns continued...

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the Sea, which received an August 2009 release.

In 2010, Neeson played Zeus in the remake of the 1981 film, *Clash of the Titans*. The film was a huge box-office hit, grossing \$475 million worldwide. Neeson also starred in Atom Egoyan's erotic thriller *Chloë*, theatrically released by Sony Pictures Classics on 26 March 2010. *Chloë* had enjoyed commercial success and became the Canadian director's biggest money maker ever. Later the same year, he played John "Hannibal" Smith in the spin-off movie from the television series *The A-Team*. Neeson voiced Aslan once more in the sequel *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (2010).

In 2010, Neeson made a guest-star appearance on the Showtime series *The Big C*. In 2011, he played himself in BBC2's series *Life's Too Short*. In late 2011, Neeson was cast to play the lead character, a journalist, in a new album recording and arena production of Jeff Wayne's *War of the Worlds*. He replaced Richard Burton, who had posthumously appeared in the arena production through CGI animation. Neeson did not physically appear on the stage, instead playing the role through the use of 3D holography. In 2012, he also starred in *Taken 2*, a successful sequel to his 2008 blockbuster.

Following the success of the *Taken* films, Neeson has become increasingly known as a star of action thriller

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independent rear suspension is designed to maximize control of wheel movements for better ride and handling. The rear shocks have soft, normal, and firm settings controlled by the driver. Speed-sensitive power steering offers driver-selectable settings for low, normal, and high effort.

Flat tires are less of a concern with optional "run flat" tires that can go 100 miles without air. The Michelin MX4ZP tires are part of a system called SecuriTire that includes an overhead console lamp that lights when a tire pressure drops below 18 psi; it starts flashing at 10 psi in case the driver didn't notice the light.

A passive anti-theft system uses an encoded radio frequency between the key and the ignition capable of generating 72 quadrillion codes, making it virtually impossible to be beaten by even the most persistent bad guy.

Interior Features - There is so much to see and do inside a Continental. The luxurious interior, covered in leather, wood, and premium carpeting, features a plethora of electronic doodads and high-tech instrumentation.

Even everyday instruments offer surprises. Switch on the ignition, and a blank area where the instruments should be lights up with instruments. But with a difference! The numbers are lighted from behind, and the red pointers for the tach, speedometer, fuel, and temperature gauges seem to float above the gauge faces. That may sound a bit gimmicky, but it makes the gauges very easy to read, and we applaud the technology.

A set of controls are mounted on the dash just to the right. This is the fun center. It's used to set variables for ride quality and power steering assist along with trip information, such as miles to empty, average mpg, and instant mpg. Push the check button, and the status of various systems is shown.

Owners can program a myriad of functions, such as whether to have the doors lock when the car moves forward or to have the horn chirp when the remote locks the doors, or to have the rearview mirrors dip when the transmission goes into reverse. And all of that can be stored in a pair of memory buttons so that different drivers can have the car tailored to their preferences, eliminating potential trouble spots between spouses. Simply push the driver ID button, select 1 or 2, and all

your preferences will be selected.

Our test car came with comfortable bucket seats covered in handsome leather. Both seats offer power adjustments and the driver's seat has a two-position memory. We liked the seating position, and visibility was good in all directions. With lots of rear seat legroom, three adults can sit in back with reasonable comfort. The interior can hold six when a front bench is selected. Either way, the leather is standard.

An optional Remote Satellite Cellular Unit, called RESCU, is automatically activated when the airbags are deployed. It combines satellite locating with an active voice to bring assistance. The options package includes the run-flat tires, an upgraded sound system, and a garage door opener.

Driving Impressions - The Continental delivers on the promise of comfort, ride quality, and good handling. And we can't leave out performance. The 32-valve V8 has plenty of power to move this 3,868-pound sedan with some authority. Merging onto the freeway is easy, and there's plenty of power in reserve for passing on two-lane roads. However, the Cadillac Seville has an edge in the power department, with 300 hp and 295 lb.-ft. of torque at 4400 rpm.

The Continental is a big car, but it doesn't feel heavy, unwieldy or sloppy on the road. And while it is roomy inside, the design of the instrument panel, the real wood accents, and the leather work together to provide an intimate interior that we found most pleasant.

The semi-active suspension with adjustable ride should appeal to owners who want more control and driving excitement. We preferred the firm setting on the highway for a more controlled feel. In the plush setting, swales in the road and gentle undulations set up a porpoising action, but for low speeds on rough roads, the plush setting absorbed the bumps and thumps nicely. Adjusting the steering effort between high and low effort is most noticeable in tight maneuverings, such as turning into a driveway. The speed-sensitive rack-and-pinion steering automatically increases steering effort for improved road feel on the highway.

Overall, the Continental's drive feel is not as taught as a BMW or Mercedes. It's tuned toward traditional American tastes. The ad-

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Just a little more about those 1998 Lincolns

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films. Besides his aforementioned action-thrillers made in collaboration with Collet-Serra, other recent action films starring Neeson have included *The Grey*, *A Walk Among the Tombstones*, *Cold Pursuit*, *Honest Thief*, *The Marksman*, *The Ice Road*, *Blacklight*, and *Memory*. Neeson has indicated a desire to retire from the action genre though the films have taken his acting career in a new direction.

Activism - Neeson opposes what he sees as the unrestricted right to own firearms in the U.S. and has made calls for gun control. In January 2015, he repeated his views, calling U.S. gun laws a "disgrace" in an interview with Emirati newspaper *Gulf News* when replying to a question about the *Charlie Hebdo* shootings earlier that month. In response, U.S. gun manufacturer *Para USA*, which provided the prop weapons used by Neeson in the *Taken* film series, stated: "We will no longer provide firearms for use in films starring Liam Neeson and ask that our friends and partners in Hollywood refrain from associating our brand and products with his projects."

Neeson narrated a video for Amnesty International in favor of the legalization of abortion in Ireland, which some conservative and pro-life commentators claimed was "anti-Catholic."

In September 2017, Neeson compared the U.S. presidency of Donald Trump to

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justable steering and suspension are an attempt to let an owner dial in some European feel.

Summary - The Lincoln Continental is a luxury car in every sense of the word, but a luxury car with a difference. The difference is the unusual exterior design and the integrated feel of the interior. There is more than sufficient performance, and its over-the-road manners are impeccable. If more luxury car intenders would take a Continental for a test drive, Lincoln would sell more Continentals.

1998 Lincoln Mark VIII - Although nearly 50 years have passed since Lincoln first introduced the Mark series, its mission remains To attain the perfect balance between luxury-line comfort levels, under-the-hood power, and sport-coupe handling. The Mark VIII LSC is a proud inheritor of that legacy. It comes with elegant styling, a refined interior, a muscular 290-horsepower 4.6-liter V8 engine, and a taut suspension that does a marvelous job of taming this beast of a coupe. Last year, Lincoln redesigned the Mark VIII with fresh styling, a new interior, and major technological advances in the lighting department. The new styling brought smartly rounded corners and gently sloping lines that are sleek and elegant. High-intensity discharge headlamps deliver nearly three times as much reflective light as standard halogen lamps. That translates into much greater nighttime visibility. At the same time, they control the output to prevent glare from blinding other drivers. We applaud this improvement as most vehicles offer poor lighting performance, with headlamps being designed more for style than their ability to light up the road. At the rear, a unique new neon taillamp with big brake lights and mirror-mounted turn signals were designed to enhance safety by making it easier for other drivers to see and react to dynamic driving situations.

Lincoln's big coupe comes in two trim levels: Mark VIII and the sportier LSC. LSC stands for Luxury Sport Coupe. We drove an LSC in the popular white pearl color. Its base price was \$39,990 and came equipped with three options: that rich metallic paint (\$365), heated seats (\$290), and the trunk-mounted CD changer (\$670). It also came with electronic traction control that was a no-cost option. The total cost of the package was \$41,315. (All prices include destination

charge.)

Walkaround - Last year's Mark VIII was redesigned with new quarter panels, front and rear fascias, a lightweight aluminum hood, an enlarged grille, and modified exhaust tips. The Mark's trademark tire hump, which is a tradition that dates back to the days when tires were bolted onto the rear bumper, was redesigned for a more understated look.

The Mark VIII is differentiated by its chrome trim, including the grille, bodyside moldings, and headlamp and taillamp surrounds. Body-colored trim distinguishes the LSC and gives it a more sporting persona.

The wraparound headlamps are enormous—the largest in the industry—and they throw off a cool beam of light that's wider and reaches out farther than standard halogen beams. We've all become accustomed to seeing relatively yellow headlamps, and the light given off by the high-density discharge headlamps is so white that it appears blue. Objects and reflective signs show up sooner in the driver's field of vision, while curbs, ditches, and other roadside hazards are better illuminated. While safety is enhanced by improving the driver's visibility, Lincoln takes it a step further by providing better signals to drivers following along behind.

The rear neon taillamps present a unique three-dimensional effect that's stylish and high-tech. A single 48-inch wide neon tube stretches across the back of the car and wraps around the rear fenders. The tube itself is covered by body molding, but it casts the light downward onto a reflective surface and then projects it out through a clear acrylic lens. According to Lincoln, the rear brake lights illuminate one-fifth of a second faster than standard incandescent bulbs. At 60 mph, drivers following along could theoretically reduce their stopping distance by an average of 17 feet, which could translate into fewer or less severe rear-end collisions.

More signals come from the outside mirrors. Whenever the turn signals are used, red LED lights on the mirrors blink in synchronization. These turn signals are visible to vehicles trailing behind or riding in blind spots. However, they are invisible from inside the Mark VIII cabin, so they don't distract the driver. The outside rear-view mirrors are also fitted with puddle lamps illuminating the ground below whenever the door is unlocked with the keyless remote, making it easier to

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1998 *Lincolns* continued...

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the Watergate scandal of Richard: "Democracy works and no man—and certainly not the president—is above the law. He has to be accountable."

Personal life - Neeson lived with actress Helen Mirren during the early 1980s. They met while working on *Excalibur* (1981). Interviewed by James Lipton for *Inside the Actors Studio*, Neeson said Mirren was instrumental in him getting an agent.

Neeson then met actress Natasha Richardson while performing in a revival of the play *Anna Christie* on Broadway in 1993. They were married on 3 July 1994 and had two sons together, Micheal (born in 1995) and Daniel (born in 1996). In October 1998, they won £50,000 (\$85,370) in libel damages after the *Daily Mirror* wrongly claimed that their marriage was suffering. They donated the money to victims of the August 1998 Omagh bombing. In August 2004, they purchased an estate in Millbrook, New York. On 18 March 2009, Richardson died when she suffered a severe head injury in a skiing accident at the Mont Tremblant Resort, northwest of Montreal. Neeson donated her organs following her death.

Neeson holds Irish, British, and American citizenship, having been naturalized as an American citizen in 2009. He primarily identifies as Irish. After taking up American citizenship, he was adamant he was not turning his back

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step inside the car on dark and stormy nights.

Interior Features - Inside our roomy LSC, the plush perforated-leather seats were accented in grand fashion by authentic burlled-walnut trim on the door panels and console. The gauges on the instrument panel are bright and nicely styled. A multi-function electronic message center permits the driver to track the time between oil changes, control seat and mirror positions, switch the traction control system on or off, change the display unit from English to metric, and operate the auto lamp-delay function. The alpha-numeric display also provides cellular telephone data, and Mark VIII's optional cellular phone can be used either inside the car or from a remote locale.

The leather seats are cozy and offer the driver a lot of cushion. Power seats that provide six adjustments offer enough configurations to ensure a comfortable and proper seating position. To ease exit from the vehicle, the driver's seat floats back two inches, and the steering column ascends upward whenever the key is taken out of the ignition.

Because the Mark VIII LSC sports a \$39,000-plus base sticker price, it should come as no surprise that the vehicle is equipped with a long list of luxury features as standard equipment.

They include: anti-lock brakes (ABS), traction control, speed-sensitive variable-assist power steering, 16-inch chrome wheels, air conditioning with automatic climate control, power windows, power door locks, power heated mirrors, message center with a trip computer, burlled walnut wood applique, leather seats, leather-wrapped steering wheel, and shift knob, power-tilt telescoping steering column, driver's seat memory with remote recall, six-way driver and passenger power seats, and remote keyless entry.

Trunk-mounted CD changers offer the advantage of being able to load up a magazine with hours of music without having to mess around with compact discs, a nice feature when traveling. Their disadvantage is that they are a bit fussy when you've got a disc in hand that you want to try out quickly.

Driving Impressions - The Mark VIII is quiet. To reduce engine noise, Lincoln's engineers positioned the air intake system away from the passenger cabin. They also used generous amounts of body insulation

and sealing. The 4.6-liter V8 engine on the standard Mark VIII delivers 280 horsepower and 285 pound-feet of torque. It comes with four valves per cylinder (32 valves) and double overhead cams (four cams).

A slightly more powerful version of the same engine is used in the LSC that puts out 290 horsepower. That power provided a burly burst of acceleration in all situations, from standing starts to critical highway-passing scenarios. In cruise mode, it was smooth and quiet. Lincoln's engineers extended tune-up intervals to 100,000 miles with a coil-on-plug ignition system; each spark plug has its own coil.

When tackling sharp corners or freeway on-ramps, the Mark VIII provided impressive handling capabilities for such a large car. The speed-sensitive variable-assist power steering offered precise control. A four-wheel independent suspension with computer-controlled air springs automatically adjust for changes in the load, while gas-pressurized shocks with integral rebound springs help keep the car taut. Large front and rear anti-roll bars reduce body lean in corners. The LSC comes with even larger front and rear anti-roll bars for flatter cornering response. We found our LSC impressively nimble when along the twisty roads in Detroit's fittingly tony northern suburbs. Lincoln's Mark VIII uses a rear-wheel-drive layout, and the all-speed electronic traction control system reduces wheelspin in slippery conditions.

Summary - The Mark VIII competes in a luxury sport-coupe market that includes the Cadillac Eldorado and the Lexus SC 400. It's a niche where designers are always on the lookout to steal customers away from one another with a synergy of elegant styling, graceful luxury, and sport-performance engine muscle.

Lincoln Sales for 1998

Model	Sales
Town Car	97,457
Continental	35,210
Navigator	43,859
Mark VIII	14,357

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on his Irish roots. In 2009, nearly four decades after he was an undergraduate in physics and computer science at Queen's University, Belfast, it awarded him an honorary doctorate, presented to him in New York by Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Gregson. Neeson's mother, Kitty, died in June 2020. He was unable to return to his hometown for her funeral due to travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social views - Neeson was criticized for his comments on Ireland's *Late Late Show* in January 2018, during which he described the Me Too movement as a "witch hunt" and cited Garrison Keillor's dismissal from Minnesota Public Radio as an example.

Awards and honors - In 2000, Neeson was offered the "Freedom of the Town of Ballymena" by the Ballymena Borough Council, but because of objections made by members of the Democratic Unionist Party regarding his comments that he had felt like a "second-class citizen" growing up as a Catholic in the town, he declined the award, citing tensions. Following the controversy, Neeson wrote a letter to the council, stating; "I will always remain very proud of my upbringing in, and association with, the town and my country of birth, which I will continue to promote at every opportunity. Indeed, I regard the enduring support over the years from all sections of the community in Ballymena as

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Wisconsin Dells Car Show



Mark Platt brought a 1937 Zephyr Coupe to the show. The car is owned by Paul Jensen of Wisconsin and is in the process of undergoing complete restoration.

The 2023 car show season started Saturday, May 12, in Wisconsin Dells at Mark Platt's Collector Car Garage, where Mark and Sue hosted our seventeenth (Traveling) Lincoln Car Show. This year I thought this would be a great location away from the Minneapolis and St. Paul area to hold this car show. The location was the best and our hosts the Platt's were fantastic with a great facility, food, and events for us to do. Our only problem was we only had ten Lincolns and nineteen persons attend. Wisconsin Dells is where Mark houses his car and tow truck collection from when the family business started back in 1919. Mark houses his collection in a brand-new building, 60 x 140', that he designed and helped build. What is inside is a sight to behold with all the memorabilia that is grandly displayed, toy cars, signs of all kinds, motorcycles, featuring an oval bar that he saved from a restaurant where he had worked when he was a kid.

On Friday morning, we had three cars caravan from Hudson, Wisconsin to Wisconsin Dells. Mike Martin, Tina Zimpel, and Bob and Mary Johnson. After we checked into our rooms at the Ambers Inn & Suites, Mark Platt had set up a van to pick us up at

the motel to take a tour on the Wisconsin River in the Dells Army Duck boats that have been running since 1946.



Mark Platt, with his son, along with Matt, Margaret, and David Foley, are about to go for a great ride in Mark's 1953 Lincoln. A real red Letter day.



Chris Lee owns this 1975 Mark IV.

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For Sale - 1979 Town Car

Linda Fenelon has decided to sell the car that she and her late husband, Ron, enjoyed for 20 years. The rust-free California Town Car has 106,000 miles. It is mechanically sound and has a nice interior. The clear coat paint is fading. The tires are nearly new. For a personal inspection or more information, contact Linda Fenelon, Alexandria, Minnesota, 320-763-4197 or 320-491-4484. \$6000/offer.

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being more than sufficient recognition for any success which I may have achieved as an actor." Subsequently, on 28 January 2013, Neeson received the Freedom of the Borough from Ballymena Borough Council at a ceremony in the town.

Neeson was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II in her 2000 New Year Honors. The American Ireland Fund honored Neeson with their Performing Arts Award for the great distinction he has brought to Ireland at their 2008 Dinner Gala in New York City. In 2009, at a ceremony in New York, Neeson was awarded an honorary doctorate by Queen's University, Belfast. On 9 April 2016, he was honored with the Outstanding Contribution to Cinema Award by the Irish Film and Television Academy (IFTA) at the Mansion House, Dublin, with Irish President Michael D. Higgins presenting the award. In 2017, Neeson was listed by UK-based company Richtopia at number 74 in the list of 200 Most Influential Philanthropists and Social Entrepreneurs Worldwide. In January 2018, he was awarded the Distinguished Service for the Irish Abroad Award by Irish President Michael D. Higgins, who described it as an award "for Irish people abroad who are making a contribution to humanity".

From the internet.....

Wisconsin Dells Car Show continued



Best of Show, People's Choice Award went to DuWayne and Theresa (on the right) Jennings of Trevor, Wisconsin, for their most beautiful 1997 Mark VIII.



We hope that Mark Platt will furnish us a few pictures and a story about the restoration of this Zephyr. I am sure that it will be a prized possession for many years to come.



Mark Platt showing off the 1937 Zephyr project car. A little soap, some polish, a little elbow grease, and we will have a brand new car. In all seriousness, the value of these coupes has gone out of sight in the past ten years. Many are selling for well over \$100K. Who would ever have thought?



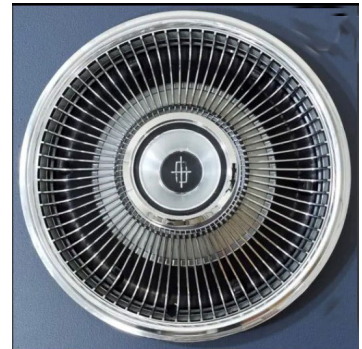
Bruce Nichols from Fitchburg, Wisconsin arrived in his 2006 Town Car and Tina Zempel drove over from Minneapolis in her 1993 Town Car. Both vehicles are excellent road cars and are now getting the attention of those who now want a fine car for both touring and show.

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FOR SALE - Stained glass wall hanging, 9x12 V12 inside of a teardrop. \$100. Call Faythe Oberg 651.739.9754

Wanted



Full set of extremely nice or NOS luxury wheel covers for a 1969 Continental Sedan. Please contact John at 701-729-6839 or email Jtrandem@gmail.com

More Wisconsin Dells

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In 1946, the world's first Duck tour was launched. While other Duck rides have come and gone, only Original Wisconsin Ducks have been delivering fun and adventure on both land and water non-stop ever since. The Classic Duck ride splashes into the Wisconsin River and Lake Delton, climbs over sand bars, traverses over four miles of exclusive scenic wilderness trails, and has been thrilling passengers for 75 years and counting. Journey on an amphibious vehicle used during World War II. These restored ducks travel by land and water on trails tucked away among the natural beauty of Wisconsin Dells. Squeeze through the narrow walls of Red Bird Gorge. Coast around the exhilarating curves of Roller Coaster Hill. Plunge into the Wisconsin River. Experience 8-1/2 miles of breathtaking views from towering sandstone cliffs to scenic wilderness trails.



Mark and Sue Platt, with their commemorative award plaque presented in appreciation for their efforts in making this event special for all who attended/



Background... Tina Zempel's 1993 Town Car and foreground.. Bob and Mary Johnson's 1989 Lincoln Mark VII.



Bruce Nichols with his People's Choice Award.

Wisconsin Dells continued...

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Matt, Katie Margaret, and David Foley went on Duck Boats Saturday afternoon after the car show, they did not bring a Lincoln to the show because they needed seat belts for the children and their Mark II does not have them. They came to the car show to view Platt's collection and experience first hand, the Wisconsin Dells area. They are members who like the region's fellowship and meeting new LCOC persons. Saturday started with setting up a table for car show registration which was inside Marks's collector car garage, where he had coffee and doughnuts ready to consume. Our registration area was not used much as we only had ten cars to register but was the center for conversation as everyone viewed Mark Platt's Lincolns', tow trucks and memorabilia. The weather Saturday turned out to be the best day of the weekend very mild mid-70s and sunny with a slight breeze. Mike Martin from North St. Paul was responsible for getting four Lincoln Mark VIIIs to attend this show. Mark Platt towed over to our show a 1937 Zephyr that he had in his shop to put a rebuilt motor and transmission in plus floor panels and get running for Paul Jensen from Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The Zephyr according to Mark, had been featured on one of the Lincoln club magazine covers. This was before it was left to sit outside for 20 years. Ron Schneider, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, also attended the car show. He brought a grill for the 1937 Zephyr that Mark Platt is working on, which is networking at its best to find parts for these old Lincolns.

Our show field was in a great spot just across the street from Platt's Collector Car Garage. Parking was on black top with our registration inside his new building. With this still being early May, all the trees were in about 50% leafage, and the fruit trees were in full bloom. We had a delicious lunch featuring ham sandwiches, salads and dessert, no one went away hungry. A big thank you goes to Mark Platt for hosting this car show

At 2 p.m. we announced the awards for this car show. Our

People's Choice Award - Best of Show was won by DuWayne and Theresa Jennings, Trevor, Wisconsin, with a black 1997 Lincoln Mark VIII. Our Long-Distance award went to Luke Ashton driving a 1997 Lincoln Mark VIII from Elk River, Minnesota. Our Top 10 awards went to Bruce Nichols, Fitchburg Wisconsin, with a 2006 Town Car. Tina Zimpel, Minneapolis Minnesota with a 1993 Town Car; Mike Martin, North St Paul, Minnesota, with a 1997 Mark VIII; Jacob Dougherty, Madison, Wisconsin, with a 2017 Continental Sedan, Chris Lee, Madison, Wisconsin with a 1975 Mark IV Lipstick Edition, Luke Ashton, Elk River, MN with a 1997 Mark VIII, Erick Martinson, White Bear Lake, Minnesota with a 1997 Mark VIII, Mark Platt, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin with a 1937 Lincoln Zephyr Coupe in restoration for Paul Jensen, Bob and Mary Johnson, Shafer, Minnesota with a 1989 Mark VII convertible. This show had four 1990s Mark VIIIs at one show, that has to be a record for our Region car shows going back to 2003, and again that has to be because of the effort of Mike Martin in getting them to come to this show. The show was definitely a Mark VIII day and thank you to everyone who was able to attend

Saturday night, Mark Platt driving his Red 1953 Lincoln convertible with top down with Matt Foley and children, led us to the Vue Waterfront restaurant for fine dining where we, too, capped a fabulous day.

Sunday morning, we departed for home and drove in the rain all the way to Hudson. We had a very good time and met many new friends

We really appreciated Mark and Sue Platt's work for hosting and providing the location and facilities for this show. Please let them know you appreciate their efforts in putting together this wonderful weekend for us.

North Star LCOC events

- June **Saturday, June 17, 2023.** 14th Annual Lincoln Car show at Bloomington Lincoln, Bloomington, Minnesota 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Free lunch and awards at 2 p.m.
- July **Saturday, July 16, 2023.** Maple Grove Days Car Show, Breakfast 8 a.m., Car show 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Saturday, July 29, 2023.** 1st Annual North Star Lincoln and American Collector Car Show. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All American made collector cars welcome, stock or modified. At the Blacksmith Lounge, 17205 Forest Boulevard, (Old Highway 61) Hugo, Minnesota
- August **North Star Picnic. Sunday, August 27, 2023,** 11:30 a.m. Carlson Park picnic area. Please bring your own picnic basket and refreshments. We will enjoy fellowship with our North Star members, and you are invited to bring anyone that would be interested in our Lincoln cars and club activities.

Annual Bloomington Lincoln Car show Saturday, June 17, 2023

at Bloomington Lincoln, Bloomington, Minnesota

10 p.m. to 2 p.m. Free lunch at noon and awards at 2 p.m.

For those who say there is no such thing as a free lunch, you are wrong. Bloomington Lincoln will serve up lunch and it will be the best. There will be door prizes and Bob Johnson will be there to give out "hearty handshakes" to all who attend. It will be a fun day, see you there on Saturday, June 17.

North Star Lincoln and American Collector Car Show

9 a.m.– 3 p.m. **Saturday, July 29 at the Blacksmith Lounge**, 17205 Forest Boulevard, (old Hwy 61), Hugo, Minnesota. All American made collector cars are welcome. Entry fee \$10. Food available on site. Bring your American Classic whatever the make and model and come to this first of a kind show. Ford, GM, Chrysler, all are welcome.

For more information, contact Bob Johnson at 651,257,1715 or email arbor-bob41@aol.com. See you on July 29.

BACK ISSUES OF THE NORTHSTAR NEWS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE
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The Back Page



For Sale - 1941 Continental

Call Larry Jaehnert 651-491-0522

1941 Lincoln Continental Cabriolet V-12. This car was an early 1941 model year, serial number 16H-56-96. It has less than 14,500 miles since a complete mechanical restoration, including the engine, transmission, Columbia 2-speed rear axle, steering sector, etc. The engine rebuild was done using Bob Olmsted (Ford engineering staff) upgrades for increasing oil pressure and delivery. The engine was cleaned and hot tanked, bored, decked, and balanced with new valves, pistons, insert bearings, etc., and I have receipts for all of the above. The engine has new aluminum polished heads and a polished intake manifold. The Columbia rear axle was rebuilt and bullet-proofed. All new Rhode Island wiring was installed thru-out. It has the hot air heating system, complete and restored but not currently installed. The top, floor coverings, and trunk lining have been done recently and are in pristine condition. The dash has been wood grained as original, and most inside gauges and metal trim are gold-plated. Exterior paint is not up to high point judging standards. All exterior plating is done to show quality. Price is \$49,500.



I am a very fine car that desperately needs a new home. I have been with my present owner(s) since the early 1980s, and it has now time for me to be much loved and well taken care of in the way that I have become accustomed to by a new family. I have an excellent pedigree that can be easily verified by all of my present masters' documents.

I am a 1979 Lincoln Mark V, having traveled less than 35,000 miles in my lifetime. I have always spent my nights and days safely stored inside, in a nice secure garage,

except when my mom and dad took me out for special rides and bring to car shows. I finished in a Diamond Blue metallic paint, which was rare in 1979. Both my inside and outside are spotless, with no dings, dents, or scrapes. I look almost as good as the day my first owner took delivery of me from the dealership. I have a moonroof and virtually all of the accessories that Lincoln offered in 1979. Plus, I come with all the owners and factory manuals too.

Would you please come to see me and check me out? I will not disappoint you and provide you and your family with many years of enjoyment behind the wheel and pride of ownership. Plus, my owners' price aligns with current Mecum auction results for similar Mark V's, most having more miles than I do. Very fairly priced at \$14,500 obo.

Further inquiries should be directed to Ann at 612-695-6524. She will be awaiting your call.