

Wisconsin Society of Automotive Historians

wisconsin-auto-historians.org

January 2024 Newsletter

Officers

President: Ken Nimocks

Vice-President: Don Gullikson

Secretary: Dan Manola

Treasurer: Gary Koehnke

Directors

Don Chandler

Jim Morris

Jessica Zdanowicz

January meeting/event announcement and details

President's message

Minutes from September 16, 2023 meeting

Nominations for Officers and Directors

JANUARY WSAH MEETING/EVENT, SATURDAY JANUARY 20, 2024 at 11:00* a.m.

This year's winter meeting and event will be a bit different...not automotive related, but certainly related to Wisconsin History. Treasurer Gary Koehnke thoughtfully offered to set up an event for our January get together, and among his ideas was visiting the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame and Lambeau Field. The guided tour includes the premium seating area, players tunnel, and the field level view. Also included is a self-guided tour of the Hall of Fame Museum.

We will gather in the Atrium to meet the tour guide at 11:00 a.m. sharp(!) Plan to arrive with plenty of time to spare because it is a huge area. The main address for Lambeau Field is 1265 Lombardi Avenue, and it appears the Atrium entrance faces the east parking area. We should be able to hold our meeting at 1:00 and get members on the road (or over to Kroll's West for a burger or such) at a decent time.

It is very important for this event that we have a count of those who will be attending. If you have not already, please let Gary know your intentions, even if you have to change your plans at the last minute. Email Gary at garyk7140@gmail.com as soon as you can.

We are aware of Wisconsin's January inclement weather possibilities and daylight hours are short, but we are hoping for a good turnout and a great time!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, here I am...trying to put together a newsletter again, in an effort to keep WSAH viable for at least another half-year. Let's think realistically about what happens after our July 2024 lola meeting. Will someone step up and become president? I hope so, and then we can continue, probably with some reorganization. Will WSAH just fold up and everyone goes their way – maybe with a reunion every year at lola? I truly don't have enough ego to think that without me, WSAH folds...but I'm thinking realistically here. I have often wondered, and I think I have mentioned, if maybe most members would prefer to make this a simple social organization. Would a new president have more success at getting members to pitch in and share the tasks required to keep the organization functioning? I am not one to just assign tasks; I am not your employer or your military officer or your grade school teacher. I believe that - especially in a volunteer organization - those who are told what to do, rather than being asked if they want to do it, are less likely to do a good job.

Although many of you have a good idea of what I do, I will list some of those things, with comments of course, hoping that someone will be confident enough to give leadership a try. I can't believe that others would expect a newly elected president, or any other officer, to jump right in and seamlessly take over where the previous office holder left off.

To begin, it is common for the president of an organization to conduct the meetings...not all that difficult and the procedures followed are often flexible and informal, but loosely based on "Robert's "Rules." I suggest "Robert's Rules of Order Cheat Sheet for Nonprofits," found online, which is a couple pages. Compare that to nearly 700 pages of Robert's Rules, which might be followed more formally, such as for congressional proceedings.

Next, is planning the meetings and/or events. This should be so easy that anyone can handle it and do a great job. Don't know why I didn't think about it until now, but with three Directors (whose duties aren't really spelled out), each could be in charge of setting up one meeting/event per year. The lola meeting is assumed and only needs to have the day and time set. Some of our other "regular" venues (Wisconsin Auto Museum in Hartford, The Automobile Gallery in Green Bay, etc.) are not much more than a phone call and setting the date and time.

We have a secretary, whose major responsibility is writing the minutes of each meeting. This should be rather straightforward, however when the secretary is not at a meeting, it causes a set of problems. First, someone needs to take notes - shouldn't be difficult for

anyone who didn't have to repeat high school English more than twice to pass with a D-minus. Can't keep up? Don't write out sentences, just a few key words and abbreviations, or...use a good ol' tape recorder or your smartphone or tablet. Another useful tip is to have a form of some sort. I use a form for everyone to sign in, which eliminates having to write down names during the meeting. Also, have a few major headings like Treasurer's Report and New Business, with plenty of space to make notes in each section.

Whatever, dig in and try it. (This is an especially sore spot with me. In the secretary's absence I have had to ask for someone to take notes and more often than not, I ended up doing it myself while trying to conduct the meeting.)

Volunteering to take notes doesn't necessarily mean you have to write the minutes. That's the secretary's job, so the note-taker could get the notes to the secretary and possibly work with that person if there are questions. Writing the minutes shouldn't be as difficult as some make it. I am very fortunate that spelling, grammar, organizing thoughts, and all that goes into writing has been easy for me (I wish welding came as naturally to me). But...meeting minutes don't have to be all flowery and fanciful - just the facts, thank you - is good enough. For several years I have served as the proofreader, but I no longer care to do that. Things can be published as written, or ask anyone you trust to read your writing. And, of course, use spell-check and grammar-check on your computer to help.

Next, there is the annual report to the Wisconsin Historical Society. This has become easier every year since they finally got the bugs out of the system for completing it all online. Most of the report is already filled out unless there are changes after the previous year. I forward the completed form to officers and a few others so they know what's involved. It doesn't have to be completed by the president.

Finally, aaahh...the big challenge! A newsletter or whatever publication we can have; without a regular communication with all members of an organization, it is likely to die. Our WSAH has gone through various means of communication and has managed to survive: Simple single page meeting minutes and notices of the next meeting, the Spark publication, back to a simple page or two, the Carhart Chronicle thanks to David Gilbert Tesch, the award winning updated Carhart Chronicle thanks to Ralph Kalal, and back to a somewhat simple newsletter. So, what will be next? The Carhart Chronicle set such a high bar that anyone taking on a communique of any sort might be intimidated. I have read various club publications that are nearly cringe-worthy (but then, I'm hopelessly anal), and yet I always tell myself that here is someone volunteering to take on an often-

thankless job, putting in a lot of time and trying very hard, so if they get the message across, that's what counts.

Oh, one more thing...I haven't mentioned being involved with coordinating the lola Car Show Special Exhibit, because, for me, that is separate from WSAH. I expect to continue with lola, just as I intend to remain a member of WSAH.

Now, for something different: As a non-profit organization, we should be donating to worthy causes - especially those relevant to automotive history - and we have. With our volunteer efforts for the lola Car Show, we received compensation that allowed us to make generous donations while keeping our treasury adequately funded. We sent a group email to solicit opinions for or against the specific recipients and amounts and received no negative feedback. Our donation of \$2750 to the very active lola Historical Society was marked for helping fund the acquisition of the 1903 Ford Model A. The car was originally sold in Waupaca County, which includes the village of lola, and was the first car in the county. Chet Krause purchased the car in 1972, and in 1978, when he displayed it in Milwaukee for the 75th anniversary of Ford Motor Company, had it out of Waupaca County for, very likely, the first time. After the Krause collection auction in 2006, the car went to the Antique Car Museum of Iowa in Coralville, before coming back to Waupaca County this year.

A separate donation of \$250 was made to the Chet Krause Legacy Park in lola, marked for ongoing maintenance, as the park itself has been sufficiently funded. Thank you, members, for your unanimous support of the motion to make these donations.

MINUTES from WSAH Autumn Meeting, Saturday 16 September, 2023

Our autumn meeting was held at the site of the 40th Annual Hill & Valley Antique Auto & Americana Show at Baer Park in Cross Plains. The Wisconsin Capital Model T Ford Club, sponsors of the event, provided a canopy, tables, and chairs at a space with a place to prominently display our WSAH banner. Some members arrived early to either walk through the vehicles and other displayed items or catch a ride in one of several Model Ts for the Hill and Valley tour.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by President Ken Nimocks. Those in attendance were President Ken Nimocks; Vice President Don Gullikson; Treasurer Gary Koehnke; Director Jim Morris; Director and Webmaster Jessica Zdanowicz; and the following members: Gene Steinfeldt, David Tesch, Victor Vlasak, Terry Nimocks, Greg Vanark, Randy Nimocks, Robert Barr, George Tesar.

Gary Koehnke presented the Treasurer's report, including a printed copy, and a motion was made by Randy Nimocks and seconded by Gene Steinfeldt to accept as presented; the motion was unanimously approved. A discussion followed regarding ideas for using our funds for donations. Suggestions included the Wisconsin Historical Society, an offer to buy specific needed items or services at the Wisconsin Automotive Museum beyond our usual donation, Rawhide Boys Ranch, and the Chet Krause Legacy Park.

In the absence of Secretary Dan Manola, minutes of the summer meeting held at the Iola Car Show were summarized by President Ken Nimocks. The minutes were also published in the autumn newsletter. An update on the donation of Iola Car Show books to area libraries was discussed.

Don Gullikson reported on the Iola Car Show, which was very successful overall and was also very favorable to our treasury. A concern that we need to address is the lack of help with outside parking of show cars, especially in the Special Exhibit area for which we are considered responsible. Now that we are not selling Car Show merchandise at our tables, having members sitting around, instead of helping elsewhere when needed, is not a good look – and doesn't go unnoticed!

Jessica Zdanowicz asked if there were suggestions for the website. After some discussion, members agreed that she should have the latitude to do whatever she deems appropriate for additions or changes.

Greg Vanark made a motion to donate \$500 to the Model T club to help with expenses for the Hill & Valley event; motion passed with no dissent. The meeting was then adjourned.

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

I have said, several times previously, that after our July 2024 meeting, I will be stepping away from the WSAH presidency after 35 years. The "State Report" that I complete every year in January, for the previous year, has a space to fill in the date of the annual meeting and election of officers. The July meeting at Iola is considered our annual, but I have no idea when we last had an election. Whenever it was, we are now long overdue, so this is an appropriate time to begin the process of creating a slate of candidates for positions of Officers and Directors. This is not to imply that anyone besides myself should be considering giving up their current position; that decision is up to the individual. Prior to our spring meeting, please let me know if you are interested in getting involved as an officer or director or, conversely, if you wish to leave your current position. Also, if you have in mind to nominate another person, that will be helpful.