

# Classy Chassis

Volume 54

Westerly-Pawcatuck Region AACA

July 2020

## July Meeting to be held

**June 25, 2020:** The executive committee of our club met during June at the home of Gerry and Beth Lynn in Pawcatuck, CT. It was our first glimpse of the Lynn's new home. It is a very nice abode. I especially liked the high up view from their back yard deck.

**Parked in Gerry's driveway** was a beautiful and powerful Plymouth Valiant convertible in bright red. This is the newest acquisition of the Calabrese family. A feature article about this car is on page 5.

Several discussions ensued and a summary of them is below:

**Proposed AACA car meet** hosted by our club: Dave Calabrese has done some investigation on this subject. One idea was to solicit the cooperation of a nearby attraction to be the host for such an event. Dave approached the Mohegan Sun with his proposal. They were not interested in giving us any kind of a break on costs and they showed no enthusiasm for the idea. They did indicate that such an event would require a minimum investment on our part of \$10,000 to be paid to the casino.

**Dave Calabrese announced** that he and his wife Pat will once again host the Calabrese Picnic. It will be on Saturday, September 12. Please put this on your calendar. This is always great fun. Hopefully we will be past all this Covid19 mess by then. In any event I can assure you that plenty of folks will be there even if we still have to wear masks and do social distancing at that late date. Thanks again to Dave and Pat for opening their home to us!

**Club Meetings to Resume in July:** Our treasurer, Dave Calabrese, has contacted the management at the Westerly Senior Center. The center is currently undergoing some renovations. It will be available to us this July. We will be able to meet in the very large hall that you see immediately upon entering the building. This will allow us to observe social distancing and avoid close spaces. All club members will be required to wear masks. **There will be no refreshments at all.** At this point at least 20 members have indicated that they will attend. The exact meeting date will be announced by email. We expect to have the entire hall to ourselves during the meeting. After the business meeting there will be a short (30 minute) film that highlights some of the antique car videos available on YouTube.

**An East Greenwich Assisted Living facility** has requested that we do a drive by of their facility. This would be a fun diversion for the residents. Merrill will gauge interest and discuss a date at our July meeting.

**For those of you who are interested, Misquamicut** is still having their drive in movies. The seating (car parking) is limited. [See their website](#) for additional information. Raise your hand if you think this would be a cool activity for a small group of us to do together? Of course, old cars would be a plus.

**The Oak Harbor Cruise Night** in Exeter, RI is on again. The first night is Monday, July 6. We have this information straight from the DJ Car Guy:

“We will start the Oak Harbor Cruise Night on Monday July 6 at 4 pm to 8 pm. See cruise flyers on [www.djcarguy.com](http://www.djcarguy.com).”

That says it all!

**Our club is taking a monetary hit** since several venues that we usually get paid for will not be happening this year. We are OK financially but could use a boost. To this end George Coon has offered to make a quantity of his famous whirligigs and birdhouses available to club members. He will bring them to a meeting (possibly July). All proceeds will be donated by George and Barbara Coon to the club treasury! This is a wonderful gesture by the Coons and it is a great opportunity for club members. George’s creations are truly magical!



Other interesting topics and proposals will be discussed at the July meeting.

## Suggestions for Down Time Viewing

Several members have been sending in internet links to interesting videos, stories, or other old car-related postings. Some of the references we have received follow:



**From Charlie Nash:** Maybe you guys already knew this but I found it interesting. Today's Buick badge may be all-American red, white and blue, but its origins come from a land far away.

<https://www.foxnews.com/auto/what-buick-logo-means>

**From Gerry Lynn:** I'm not sure exactly what this link is. Haven't had time to explore it thoroughly but it has a lot of old car ad brochures, shop manuals for free and links to old cars for sale. (Editor: this is a great resource site.)  
<http://oldcarbrochures.org/>

**From Ralph Roark:** The OLD Orchard Beach Car Show: three member's cars are in it. <http://www.myclassiccar.com/episode/23/23/> (Editor: this was really cool. Can you spot who is in the video?)

**From Bill Ricker:** You guys have probably seen this already, but fun to watch. The factory workers are almost dressed up and the heat must have been horrible in summertime. The workers shown in this video likely wouldn't have imagined that folks in 2020 would be able to watch them at work and driving. Hope you enjoy this one; click on the link to the right... <https://safeshare.tv/x/ShbgvwazCZ>

## Passing of Former Member, Pete Steelman

Pete Steelman recently passed away. He was a former member from way back. He recently began attending meetings again and reconnected with many of his old friends. We have now heard that he passed away last month. A number of emails regarding Pete have come to us and they are reprinted below:

**From Harold Miner:** Good morning Ken,  
I have sad news, a former member of the club passed away. My brother in-law Pete Steelman, he was a member for many years before moving to Florida. He was liked by all of the members. He seemed to be in perfect health, so this was a shock to our family.  
If you would, pass this information on to the club members.  
( Here is Pete's Address: 4125 Abbotsford St, North Port Florida, 34287)

Thanks, Harold

**From George & Barbara Coon:** That's a shock!! So sorry for the family. Barb & George

**From Bob DeGoursey:** All of the pets in the world will be crying tonight. He was a friend to everyone and everything. A great veterinarian and a great guy.  
Bon voyage Dr. Pete

## Additional Event Notices:

[The Yankee Yesteryear](#) fall show in Brooklyn, CT is cancelled. Please click on the blue link for additional information.

## AACA Forums

Check out these conversations. Can you guess or provide a solution? The forums are open to all AACA members. Of course you can also post your own questions.

[Replacing the seal on a vent window](#) – it may not be as difficult as you think.

[Cars For Sale](#) – Exactly what it says. These are mostly cars owned by AACA members.

[Pre-WWII Photos](#) – All original photos of cars from this era. No new stuff. Amazing!

[Old Car Videos](#) – Expect the unexpected here.

[1947 Chrysler Windsor Issues When Hot](#) – Members help troubleshoot an issue.

# 1964 Plymouth Valiant Convertible

By David Calabrese with Tom Link at my side

In early March 2020, I sold the 2006 Chevrolet SSR that I have been driving for the last 4 years. I then began a search for another classic driver. I was looking for a 2005 Plymouth Barracuda, but the cost for a driver was not realistic. As I was searching, I came across several 1964 Valiant Convertibles, which are basically the same car as the Barracuda, but a lot more affordable. I settled on a 1964 Plymouth Valiant Convertible from a dealer in Georgia. The car had belonged to a party in North Carolina, and had extensive work completed. After reviewing multiple photos, and several conversations with the seller, I paid for the car and had it delivered by enclosed trailer, arriving on March 23, 2020. When it arrived, most of the vehicle was as promised, but as usual, there were a lot of hidden issues that needed to be addressed.



First photos in the garage.

The engine is a 225 CID Inline Slant 6 with an Offenhauser intake manifold and a Holley 4 barrel carburetor, and a stock 4 speed manual transmission with Hurst floor shifter. The engine had been rebuilt, a new interior installed, a new top installed, and the floor pans had been replaced.



The first project was to go through the brakes. Shoes and drums were new, but the emergency brake cables were frozen and the e-brake levers were missing from inside the rear drums. It took a couple of weeks and some searching, but I finally obtained the new cables and the levers (very rare) for 9 inch brakes.

The battery would not hold a charge, so a new alternator and voltage regulator were next. The manual steering was not to my liking, so I searched out a correct pump, steering box and steering column to convert to power steering. 2 months later, I installed the power steering.

With the help of Tom Link, we started troubleshooting the persistent hesitation when shifting gears and accelerating. The accelerator pump was leaking, so a replacement kit was installed. Valve adjustment was checked, Distributor vacuum advance was changed, wires were changed, and a timing mark indicator had to be found from one of Tom's old contacts from Pleasantville, NY, so we could adjust the timing correctly. Tom used all his experience to properly adjust the carburetor, but to no avail. Finally we contacted a Holley Technician who told us to check the vacuum pressure, and divide that number by 2 to get the correct sized Power Valve for the Carburetor. Stock size is 6.5 and the vacuum check indicated we needed a 9.5. 2 Weeks later waiting for parts, and a quick change of the valve and the base gasket, and the hesitation disappeared. Success at last. So now Tom was confident enough to install the Pertronix electronic ignition.

Throughout this process, I was adding my personal touches to the vehicle. Leather steering wheel cover, GPS system, upgrading the radio to AM/FM/Bluetooth, LED Lighting, convertible boot cover, center console, and a new spare tire were all added, and few things I am sure I forgot. Although this might seem like a lot of extra money, I am still \$10,000 ahead from the sale of the SSR, and I have a great driver. Most important is that now I join Sonny, Al, and of course Tom driving a Plymouth.

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Brought to you by:

## Club Officers

President: Merrill Moone  
Vice President: Charlie Nash  
Secretary: Ken Carr  
Treasurer: Dave Calabrese

## Volunteers

Newsletter: Gerry Lynn & Ken Carr  
Sunshine: Camille Carr  
Trip Coordinator: Don Oster  
Webmaster: Ken Carr

