



[waukeshaoldcarclub.org](http://waukeshaoldcarclub.org)

# *Spark and Sputter*

*June - July, 2026*



**268 Nash Automobiles in Lake Michigan**

STORY ON PAGE 3

# 2026

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**Marcia Golla wins Spectators Choice at Hartford Car Show**

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## ***“Sign Me Up”***

At the January club meeting, It was suggested that we tour the Frank Lloyd Wright’s commercial buildings at S. C. Johnson in Racine.

Besides the SC Johnson Administration campus the Johnson family also engaged Frank in designing their home Wingspread also in the 30’s.

14 club members weathered the cool and windy weather during the clubs May 1<sup>st</sup> tour. The 90-year-old Administration and Manufacturing complex is in outstanding state of upkeep. Shirley our tour guide was very knowledgeable and enthusiastic.



### ***Headquarters Comments***

“Did not know what to expect of the Administration Building, and was I impressed”

“Hoped to see one of the many SC Johnson products being manufactured”

“Learned a lot about Frank Lloyd Wright’s. demeanor”

### ***Wingspread Comments***

Following lunch members headed out to Wingspread, the 1939 home of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. generation Johnson family. Amanda our tour guide was equally knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

“Up close feel for living experience in a Frank Lloyd Wright home”

“ Massive great room and fireplace”

“Now I want to go see Tailiesin in Spring Green, WI”

Every time we use; Raid, Pledge, Off, Ziplock, and Windex we will be reminded of our experience at S C Johnson and Wingspread.

I do not feel I am alone when leaving both properties Impressed with the five generations of Johnson’s family members commitment to the well-being of their employees and community.



***Bob Kelley***



## Nash Automobiles in Lake Michigan

**T**hanks to Gordon Lightfoot, when it comes to the legends of the Great Lakes, the one shipwreck we know best is the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald. But while the lake they call Gichigami, (Lake Superior), never gives up her dead, neither does the body of water the Ojibway call Michigamme, (Lake Michigan). It

was 46 years before the winds of November came early, bringing doom to the Edmund Fitzgerald that a collision in heavy fog sent the SS Senator to the icy depths. Her cargo of 268 Nash automobiles bound for Detroit, remains the largest disaster of its type in the world, and they are all still down there.

Nash Motors was part of Wisconsin's early automaking history. It was founded by Charles Nash, one of GM's most successful presidents, a man with a background that's the quality of self-made man. Charles Nash was abandoned by his parents at the age of six and sent into indentured servitude as a farmhand, he was later hired as an upholsterer at the wagon and cart factory that would become the core of General Motors. Within six months, He was running the entire factory.

As GM's fifth president, Nash took the company from the brink of financial collapse to doubling profits the next year. Unfortunately, he got stuck in the middle of a power struggle with those with financial interests in GM and eventually turned down a salary of \$1M per year, vowing to never work for anybody again.

Meanwhile, Thomas B. Jeffery, the president of the Jeffery automobile company was aboard the RMS Lusitania off the coast of Ireland when a submarine fired upon the ship and sank it, resulting in the staggering loss of over sixty percent of passengers and crew. Charles T. Jeffery survived, and as he was not only the president of the company but also an heir to the family business, he decided to sell the company and enjoy the rest of his life. Nash bought the company in 1916 and renamed it Nash Motors one year later.

By the end of the 1920s, Nash Motors was doing very well, its advertising slogan, "Give the customer more than he has paid for," embodying the brand's popular, feature-filled offerings. Under Charles Nash's stewardship Nash Motors grew into the fourth-largest auto manufacturer in the U.S., behind Ford, Chrysler, and GM. It was said that a Nash car leaving the production line was already sold. For the 1930 model year, an inline-eight engine had been introduced to better keep up with the likes of Hudson and Buick. Meanwhile, the Nash Light Six offered a little higher build quality than you might expect in a mid-priced car.

As with so many businesses situated around the Great Lakes, Nash took advantage of shipping as an effective means to transport vehicles. In October 1929, 268 cars were lined up on the dock, then driven into the hold of SS Senator that had newly been fitted with an elevator for automotive ferrying duties.



*SS Senator, loading coal*

The SS Senator was a typical steel steamship of its era, constructed in 1896 and used to haul everything from coal to corn. It also had the dubious distinction of being sunk previously, when another steamer ran into her on the St. Mary's River, in that case, the quick-thinking crew had just enough time to run the ship into shallow enough waters, so she didn't slip below the waves. Salvage crews were able to repair the damage and refloat the Senator.

The last weeks of October 1929 were particularly bad, you had the Black Thursday crash that started the Great Depression, and in terms of shipping on Lake Michigan, it was a complete disaster. On Tuesday, October 22nd, a train car ferry sank, the entire crew was lost. One week later, another steamship went down, with eighteen crew members lost. Two days later, on Halloween, the Senator headed out from Kenosha with its cargo of Nash automobiles

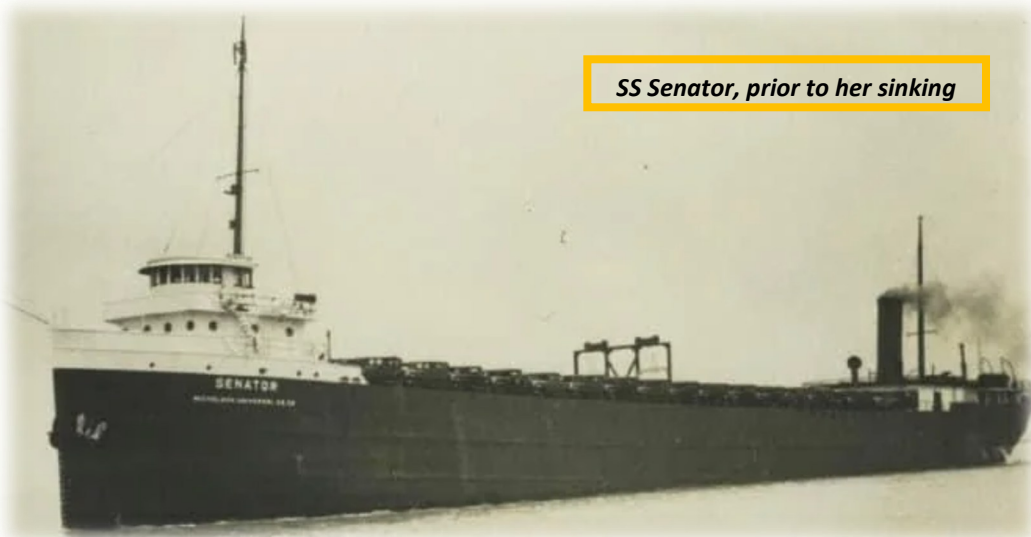
Conditions were foggy that night, but the Senator's captain was in a hurry to stay on schedule. Despite the poor visibility, he ran the ship at full speed, sounding its foghorn at regular intervals. Meanwhile, the SS Marquette, a similarly sized bulk carrier with 7000 tons of iron ore on board, was also out there in the dark, and running at full speed. News reports of the era indicate that the ships were signaling to each other by their horns, but their crews couldn't see each other.

As the bow of the Marquette suddenly appeared out of the fog, Captain Kinch on the Senator spun the wheel to avoid a collision. The Marquette hit the Senator slightly behind amidships, puncturing the side of the Senator. The cold October waters of Lake Michigan swiftly rushed in.

This was not a slow sinking like the Titanic. It was violent and swift. From initial impact the Senator slipped below the surface in just eight minutes. Some of the survivors only made it because they jumped aboard the Marquette as it scraped past.

The Marquette did not stop to search for survivors. for this reason, its crew was roundly scorned when it made harbor. Luckily, a passing tugboat heard the crash and arrived to rescue survivors from the freezing water. More than a third of the Senator 's 28 crew members were lost.

Today the wreckage of the SS Senator sits in deep, cold, dark waters of Lake Michigan undiscovered until 2005. It would take another eleven years before the wreck was properly explored, when cinematographer Evan Kovacs and archaeologist Tamara Thomsen sent a remotely operated submersible (ROV) down to the wreck. There, they saw the cars that had once sat on deck scattered across the lakebed, but the ones in the hold still sat in neat and tidy rows. Some look so good you felt as if you could just wipe off the dirt and drive away. Preserved by the cold, water, the metal of those underwater Nash automobiles has not corroded away, although the leather and wood has rotted. If you could somehow remove a Nash from the deep, it would not be out of the question to restore it.



*SS Senator, prior to her sinking*

Information for this article taken from Hagerty and SS Senator websites

# *Waukesha Old Car Club Meeting Highlights*

## April 13, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President, Ron Herman.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Officers and Board Members were introduced

New member, Brian Novak was introduced

### **Presidents Report:**

- Ron talked about the Wings and Wheels Show at the Waukesha County Airport. The show cars will be parking on the tarmac and the spectators will be parking in the airport parking lot. The Commemorative Airforce Club is looking at obtaining additional parking at the Sports Complex across Northview. The WOCC will be selling the food and drinks and Roberts Meats will be doing the cooking. The WOCC will be handling the parking.

### **Vice Presidents Report:**

- Hartford Auto Museum will be hosting an event on June 12 &13 starting at 9am. The museum will open at 10am.
- Hartland Memory Care will be hosting a Car Show on August 1. Lunch will be provided to those who show their car.

### **Secretary's Report:**

Marcia read the minutes from the March meeting, the report was accepted as presented.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- Lynn gave a Treasurer's report for the month of March. The report was accepted as presented.

### **Sunshine Committee**

- had no report.

### **New Business**

- The Annual Club Member Appreciation Dinner will be this Saturday, Cocktails at 5pm with Dinner at 6pm

### **Old Business**

- None

### **Tech talk**

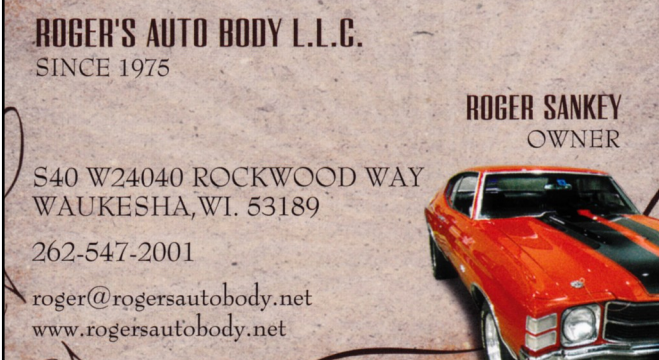
- Nic Gengler is selling one of his Volvos, asking \$4500.

Meeting Adjourned



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# Waukesha Old Car Club Meeting Highlights

May 11, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President, Ron Herman.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Officers and Board Members were introduced

New member, Dennis Olsen was introduced

## Presidents Report:

- Ron said that the Club has an old sound system that is no longer needed. It will be given away unless someone is interested. Talk to Nic for more details.
- The Wings and Wheels Show will be September 20. It will be a joint venture between WOCC and CAF. There will be a \$10 charge for participants, spectators are free. WOCC will bring the food tent and sell the food. Roberts Meats will do the cooking. The show will be 9am to 4pm, with clean up afterwards. Music will be provided by the CAF. There will be an appreciation dinner for the volunteers at a later date. Show volunteers will receive a free T-shirt. When you sign up to volunteer include your shirt size so the correct size shirts can be ordered.
- The Board is discussing magnetic name tags for the members to wear when they are attending a car show. Also magnetic car signs or traffic cones with the club logo.

## Vice Presidents Report:

- The tour of the SC Johnson facility was very interesting. It was attended by 14 members.
- Steve will start looking for sponsors for the *Spark and Sputter*.
- We are always looking for Feature Cars for the newsletter

## Secretary's Report:

Marcia read the minutes from the April meeting, the report was accepted as presented.

## Treasurer's Report:

- Lynn gave a Treasurer's report for the month of April, the report was accepted as presented.

## Sunshine Committee

- Had no report.

Continued next page



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**New Business**

- The Annual Club Member Appreciation Dinner was very nice, 56 members attended.
- The club is looking for speakers.
- Ron Wichinski said that he will be attending a drag racing event in Joliet IL this weekend.
- Linda Ubele talked about the car show at State Fair Park this weekend. She was invited to display her car in the Bennett's Coachworks booth.
- The June meeting will be at Bubba's.

**Old Business**

- Jefferson Swap Meet had good weather for a change.

**Tech talk**

- None.

Meeting Adjourned



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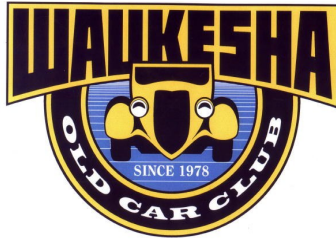
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