

‘BRITISH’ Feb 2026



Austin A 40 Farina – BMCs intended competition for the VW Beetle

No, this isn't our 'feature car of the month'.

It is here so you can compare it to the feature car.

Here is the story of how Farina Design Studio got involved in the design of BMC sedans and the MGB sports car – as I remember it.

At a national UK auto show in the 1950's, Charles, the Prince of Wales, now the King of England, stopped at the BMC booth and after reviewing the models, spoke to the Chairman, Sir Leonard Lord. The Prince said something like, "Must British cars always be so stogy?" Lord must have been shocked at that comment, if he was a traditionalist – as so many British are. But Sir Leonard must also have taken it to heart, and reviewing his design people, decided that there was no one in-house to modernize up their cars to world standards. Pinin Farina was contacted and a contract was formed. Farina made modest improvements on all Austin/Morris cars until the merger with Leyland. They still looked British, but at least not 1930s British. The A 40 (Farina, not County) always seemed to Yr. Ed. to be one of the happiest results (and the MGB roadsters and GT cars). And one of our club members owns one of the best A 40s (maybe the best) in the US.

READ ON

‘BRITISH’

>Well worth reading some of the time<

Feb, 2026 Issue

**The monthly publication of the British Iron Touring Club of North West Arkansas.
Dedicated to the preservation, touring, towing, racing and discussion of British cars.**

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Monthly Meetings:

At the All American Steak House and Sports Theater at 3492W Sunset in Springdale. The second Thursday of every month except for December.

Other Meetings:

As announced on Meeting Nights or on our BI-List email server.

Meeting Night, Jan 8th: Pretty easy driving south tonight, with only one full stop on I49. We had 45 members turn out, despite this being ‘pay your dues night’. I got lucky tonight – ordered the Shrimp Caesar salad and this time the shrimp were fresh off the grill and hot! Much better. At our table the subjects were falconry and costs vs. ‘the old days’ – among other things, such as old car nostalgia. We had one guest – Jeff – who has an Aston Martin DB 9, if I heard that correctly. Marcy spoke briefly on future club rides – to be formulated in February. The 2026 car show will be on October 22nd and Tim Suddard will be our guest speaker. Bill Watkins is looking for a new club President after 26 years and we can’t blame him, but it seems unlikely that anyone else could handle the job nearly as well. Elaine announced \$5700.xx in the treasury *before* she picked up tonight’s checks.

On Meeting Night, January 17th was chosen to finish the club video “Using an oscilloscope to diagnose an engine” (“and avoid being a BSer, wasting time and money”). I haven’t seen the first part – theory and faults illustrated on a white board – but suspect it is pretty bad. The second part will be hands-on with a British car to demonstrate. This is all very well, but if no one takes home a Sun Scope Instruction Manual to study after the second session, I’ll know I’ve wasted my time. Oops! The 17th didn’t work out.

Follow-up on last month: The Honda Si (made in England) drain plug oil leak and new serpentine belt (which was only 23 years old) were both handled by Brad Esslinger in two short sessions. Thank goodness for younger friends. Thank you, Brad. What a guy.

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BEHIND THE WHEEL (from the right-hand side) by Bill Watkins

As I mentioned at the last meeting, I have been president of this fine organization for at least 25 years now. That is ludicrous. While I am not tired of the job (well, maybe a little bit once in a while), I think it is unwise and unhealthy for a club or non-profit to be run by the same person for so long. Stability is nice, but fresh ideas and energized leadership are important, too. At the last meeting I mentioned that I intend to talk to a few of you about stepping into this role. I would not ask you to take on the car show chairmanship, just run the meetings and other business of the club. It's not that hard. I have talked to a few of the Aold heads@ about this and have narrowed my thoughts about whom I will approach. I will only talk to two or three people, so don't be offended if I don't talk to you. Maybe consider yourself lucky?!?!

I've done a little research on this subject and found that most non-profit organizations have a regular policy of rotating leadership. What I will propose is either a 2 or 3 year term. The idea being that I (or my successor) will spend the first year of the term assisting the new office holder who would then have at least 1 year - if not 2 - of knowing how things work on their own. So whomever takes this role, now or in the future, would not just be thrown in and told to sink or swim. I hope you all find that reasonable.

February is always the month where we set the club activities calendar for the year. Marcy, Alan, Lee and Greg have met and will have a report with ideas and dates at the meeting on the 12th. They have told me that their planning has focused on your responses to the club survey and designed to meet your stated preferences. That being the case, I hope that you all will support the various events we have this year. I look forward to the committee=s report.

Speaking of committees, the car show committee will meet between the day I am writing this and the date of our next regular meeting. I can report that Tim Suddard has confirmed as our guest speaker and told me that he, like Andy last year, wants to come early and participate in the driving tours. I have told Tim that our focus this year is on promotion with the goal of 200 cars. His magazine staff has provided me with pricing for advertising, so one of the things we will discuss (or, by the time you read this, will have discussed) at the committee meeting is establishing an advertising budget for the very first time. An ad in *Classic Motorsports* ain't cheap but we will discuss the value it does or doesn't provide to us.

I, and vice-chair / chair-in-waiting (how's that for a title?) Mark Holzer have a meeting with Kelli Stabbs from the ALS Association Monday afternoon, the 9th. This is a meeting she asked for to start getting organized on her end for 2026. I find that encouraging. I have asked Lisa Kellogg, our past presenting sponsor, for a good time for us to talk so that I can determine their involvement for 2026. Cross your fingers that it goes well. There is no reason to think it would not other than the always possible change in their circumstances or interests.

This weekend a few of us will gather at the Brit Stop for part 2 of the tutorial on using the Sun Diagnostic System. This will be videoed and, once completed, will be uploaded along with the first session to our website. This way we can preserve lessons from the Scope Whisperer about how to use this equipment. This machine is an excellent benefit for the club and as many of us as possible need to know how to use it. We will let you all know when this gets put on the website.

The crappy weather has de-motivated me from working on my cars lately. My small shop is not heated so no way I wanted to fool with the Alvis. The Jensen doesn't really need anything other than some interior cosmetics which don't excite me much. Maybe when it warms up.

The February meeting is always important since we set the calendar for the Year. Hope to see you there.

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Coming Events

To be decided at February's Meeting Night?



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Yr. Ed's Honda Si, bought new in 2002 and now approaching 90,000 miles, will be for sale as soon

as I can find some true indication of value. Nothing wrong, I just no longer can physically maintain it by myself, and that annoys me. Trouble is, many of the various sources for finding value don't include the Si model and/or assign a very high mileage!

My computer needs to be restarted in the morning. It automatically shuts down "No video signal" after a few seconds - I'm sure that isn't a sign of imminent failure. Of course not.

The Triumph Herald

So weird you should know about it

It so happens that the guy who introduced Yr. Ed. to our club in 1997 owned a Triumph Herald, which he nicknamed "Hark" – cute. He soon moved back north (way north – Fargo?) but I'm grateful to him. Let's look at the car, the early models of which I consider completely unsuitable for the US roads. You may disagree. That's allowed.

The Triumph Herald is a **small two-door car** introduced by Standard-Triumph of Coventry in 1959 and made through to 1971. Ed. notes: *Squinting at the car, you may see a resemblance to the Austin A40 Farina. I consider it a homely cousin of the Austin, but what do I know? They were assembled in the UK, Australia, India, Belgium, Italy, Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, Philippines and South Africa in quantities that make TR 6 and TR7 output look puny.*



The **Triumph Herald** is a [small](#) two-door car introduced by [Standard-Triumph](#) of [Coventry](#) in 1959 and made through to 1971. The body design was by the Italian stylist [Giovanni Michelotti](#), and the car was offered in saloon, convertible, coupe, estate and van models, with the latter marketed as the **Triumph Courier**. *I recall some years of bolt-together bodies.*

Herald & Herald S (948 cc)

Towards the end of the 1950s Standard-Triumph offered a range of two-seater Triumph [sports cars](#) alongside its Standard saloons, the [Standard Eight](#) and [Standard Ten](#), powered by a small (803 cc or 948 cc) [4-cylinder engine](#), which by the late 1950s were due for an update. Standard-Triumph therefore started work on the Herald. The choice of the Herald name suggests that the car was originally intended to be marketed as a Standard, as it fits the model-naming scheme of the time (Ensign, Pennant and Standard itself). But by 1959 it was felt that the Triumph name had more brand

the Herald used soft white plastic (natural rubber looking) bumpers. Total Herald sales numbered well over half a million. The [Triumph Vitesse](#), [Spitfire](#) and [GT6](#) models are all based on modified Herald chassis and running gear with

equity, and the Standard name was phased out in Britain after 1963. As [Fisher & Ludlow](#), Standard-Triumph's body suppliers became part of an uncooperative [British Motor Corporation](#), it was decided that the car should have a separate chassis rather than adopting the newer [unitary](#) construction. The main body tub was bolted to the chassis and the whole front end hinged forward to allow access to the engine. Every panel – including the sills and roof – could be unbolted from the car so that different body styles could be easily built on the same chassis. As an addition to the original coupé and saloon models, a convertible was introduced in 1960. The [rack and pinion steering](#) afforded the Herald a tight 25-foot turning circle. At the front coil and double-wishbone front suspension was fitted which was in time directly copied by such as [Lotus](#), the [Bill Thomas Cheetah](#) and [Reliant](#). *The tight turning circle may have been the highlight of owning a Herald. I remember owners proudly showing off that feature. Many US homebuilt, small displacement race cars used the Herald front suspension.*



Far left: 948 Herald coupe. Near left: 948 convertible – 1968



Herald 1200:

Standard-Triumph experienced financial difficulties at the beginning of the 1960s and was taken over by [Leyland Motors](#) in 1961. This released new

resources to develop the Herald and the car was re-launched in April 1961 with an 1147 cc engine as the Herald 1200.

Above: Herald 1200 Saloon and Coupe. Look like the 948 cc cars, don't they.

Sales picked up despite growing competition from the [Mini](#) and the [Ford Anglia](#). The coupé was dropped from the range in late 1964 as it was by then in direct competition with the [Triumph Spitfire](#). The Herald 1200 remained in production until 1970.

Herald 12/50 An upmarket version, the Herald 12/50, was offered from 1963 to 1967. It featured a tuned engine with a claimed output of 51 bhp in place of the previous 39, along with a sliding (Weathershield) vinyl-fabric sunroof and front [disc brakes](#) as standard. The 12/50, which was offered only as a 2-door saloon, was fitted with a fine-barred aluminum grille.



The power output of the 1200, which remained in production alongside the 12/50, was subsequently boosted to 48 bhp.

Left: [Herald 12/50](#)

Herald 13/60 In October 1967 the range was updated with the introduction at the London Motor Show of the Herald 13/60. The 13/60 was offered in saloon, convertible and estate-bodied versions. The sun-roof remained available for the saloon as an optional extra rather than a

standard feature. The front end was restyled using a bonnet similar to the [Triumph Vitesse](#)'s and the interior substantially revised though still featuring the wooden dashboard. Interior space was improved by recessing a rear armrest in each side panel. The engine was enlarged to 1296 cc, essentially the unit employed since 1965 in the [Triumph 1300](#), fitted with a [Stromberg CD150 carburettor](#), offering 61 bhp and much improved performance. In this form (though the 1200 saloon was sold alongside it (though the 1200 saloon was sold alongside it until the end of 1970) the Herald Saloon lasted until December 1970 and the Convertible and Estate until May 1971, by which time, severely outdated in style if not performance, it had already outlived the introduction of the [Triumph 1300 Saloon](#), the car designed to replace it and was still selling reasonably well but, because of its labor-intensive method of construction, selling at a loss.



Much improved with the nose job! Edited from Wikipedia and YouTube

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Viewpoint (Editorial Page) OK, half page

It started out as a kindness, an inclination to help someone in need, a tiny chance for profit and a solution to an emergency situation.

And then reality trumped good intentions.

We created an indoor junkyard in a space inaccessible to potential buyers, restricted access to our bathroom, the spark plug cleaner and our car lift. We also sold a large piece of seldom to never-used equipment (good) and then overflowed that space with junk (bad). The original intention was to sell the used auto parts on various web sites, paying a volunteer member a tithe for his time and troubles. But I've seen my wife sell stuff on-line and it is a lot of work. Needless to say, our junk pile mountain and outdated tires is not noticeably smaller after several months.

I offer two solutions:

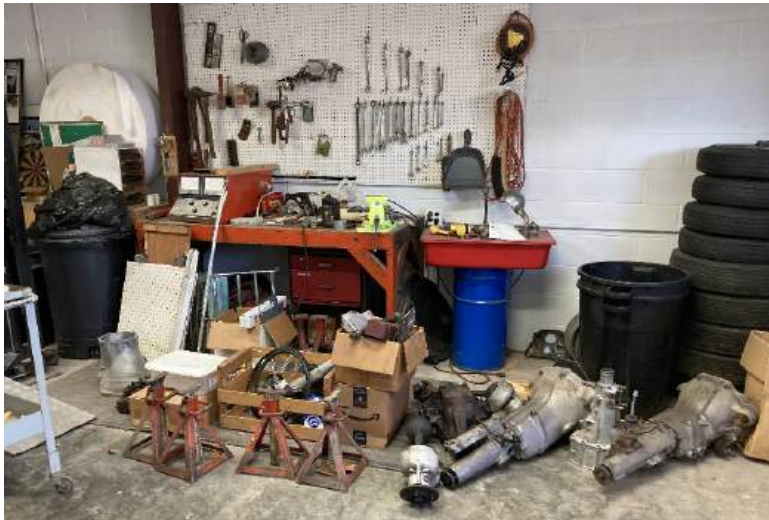
Second best solution - Reduce the estimated value of all parts by 50%, pay our volunteer member half of the selling price (minimum) and the remaining money goes into our treasury, not ALS.

Best solution - Put all that crap into a pickup truck or two, haul it to Rogers Iron and Scrap Metal and get rid of it! We have enough money in the treasury; just get that junk out of our shop.

Speaking only for myself, I'm dismayed that we have turned our clubhouse/shop into a junkyard and tripping hazard. I may be in a minority. We should hold a vote on a meeting night about this situation. **It would be required, of course, that the strongest opponents to my proposals, who might think these old parts valuable, then take all the junk to their own homes.** I believe that this literal mess can be resolved without rancor, if we try.

Look at the photos. It reminds me of a certain type of house...

Wil Wing



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Encounters in business with the mentally...peculiar

I'm not going to say 'insane' or 'crazy', because I'm not qualified to make that judgement. But figure 28 years, mostly six days a week, deducting two weeks a year and averaging four or five jobs going through the shop daily... I come up with about 30,000 to 35,000 total jobs. Many were repeat customers, of course, but still... a lot of people and a big variety of personalities. Here are a few weird ones that made a lasting impression.

Background: When America and other countries first started manufacturing radial tires, I recommended only French Michelin tires to my customers. After all, Michelin had decades of experience. Many 'beginner' companies seemed to have no quality control. I myself was a victim. Sears advertised a Michelin sale and I bought four new tires for my business Ford Econoline van. But they weren't French and were defective, causing squirming and vibration. After several hours of roadtests and messing about, Sears agreed to put my old tires back on and refund my money.

- 1) A guy called my shop and said he had a vibration at highway speed – could my dynamometer determine the cause? I said yes, providing it was the rear axle or rear tires. He brought it in and I found that the rear tires were both 'out of round' and had radial runout. But he wasn't satisfied. He said it was much worse on the road and wanted to show me. Okay, I said – the Jersey Turnpike was only 10-15 minutes away and it was a slow morning. But instead of turning north as I asked, he turned south – the next exit/turnaround was much farther away. The front tires were bad as well. I explained his choices: he could have the tires ground round in a tire shop – his car hopped up and down on the dyno – but he should try to get his money back on obviously defective radial tires. Then it got weird. He didn't really care about fixing his 'problem' – he loved it! He said he had been to many shops but no one had been able to fix it and he rejected my solutions. I finally realized that he loved wasting people's time and loved his 'baffling' problem. **"The world centers on me!"**

The first 12 years in business, I serviced only imported cars. I found them fun and especially enjoyed tuning SCCA race cars.

Background: When I had a race car scheduled, my mechanic/s handled the routine stuff of the day and I devoted myself entirely to the dyno. It was very rare that I couldn't find some more power in a stock - or especially a modified engine.

- 2) A guy from Connecticut called two weeks in advance and made an appointment on a Friday for his racecar. He was heading south and wanted his car sorted before the race weekend. Two days before the appointment, he called back to confirm and said he would be at my shop at 8:00 on that Friday and was checking that I hadn't forgotten. Of course on Friday morning he wasn't there. About 10:30 he called and said that couldn't make it because the machine shop hadn't finished the crankshaft in time! Me: ***"You're telling me that you reserved dyno time for a car that didn't even have a running engine?"*** Him: "Well, we were going to work all night putting it together and then drive down to Jersey." This incident perfectly illustrates the mindset of many amateur racers; **totally self-centered and disconnected from reality**. It was also one of the final straws that convinced me to switch to servicing American cars, which were much more profitable anyway.

New Jersey offered legal protection to car owners and garages that I don't believe we have here in Arkansas.

Background: Shop work forms had a small box of legalese. It stated that the garage owner had "Care, Custody and Control" of the customer's car. In other words, it was my responsibility if anything bad happened to the car. It also said that "An express mechanic's lien" is granted to the garage owner, to protect me if the car owner didn't pay for the repairs. Only a fool would neglect to get the customer to sign that statement.

- 3) A new customer had a routine tune-up and inspections done on his American car. The bill must have been about 65 or 70 dollars – this was a long time ago. Two or three weeks later I found out that he had stopped payment on the check. I called his bank to determine the date of the cancelation. The gal at the bank said, "He stopped two checks, one to a body shop. What is the name of your business?" It turned out that he had an accident with the car soon after my tune-up, so why pay me when he couldn't use the car? And after he got the car back from the body shop he canceled that check as well! I called the county court house, assured them that I had his signature on the lien statement, and they offered good advice on a tow service that carried the necessary forms to re-possess the car. We went after supper, after doing the paperwork. A police car had to be present and we were not allowed to break a window to gain access. When we got to the deadbeat's home address, we found a vent window unlocked, got in, and released the parking brake and got the tow truck hooked up. About then the customer came running out of his house screaming and cursing up a storm, mostly directed at me. He was shown the court order (the fees for which, plus towing, were later added to his repair bill) and his car was locked up in my shop overnight. In the morning he showed up and 'apologized' for his foul language, saying that he had a "hot temper"... when actually he had no more self-control than a four-year old. Then he took out his checkbook! I asked if he thought that was funny. I wanted cash. More cursing, shouting and threats. An hour later he was back and sullenly fulfilled his obligations. I guess he represented **"The world owes me a living"** philosophy. By the way, that was the only car I ever had to re-possess. So, perhaps not clinically crazy, but three people with personality types to be avoided.

Going back farther in time, we get to someone who really who really was looney tunes. My partner and I moved from his Shell gas station to a rented building in Linden (1960) and soon found the neighborhood 'crazy'. Jerry and I were a little less than thirty years old and 'Crazy Mary', who lived about a block behind our new business, must have been about ten years older. Our building area had something that endlessly fascinated her – we had a traffic sign in front with half-round red glass beading to catch headlights at night. Mary would put her eye to one of those beads and get lost in her own world... ten minutes to thirty minutes of concentrated staring.

Then she might come into our front door and claim she was the fire inspector and start finding fault with the building. We played along. She was harmless, gentle and certainly represented less an aggravation and profit loss than the three guys described above.

There are all kinds of... 'peculiar'.

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It is interesting to see what others think of our car show. Especially when it rains hard on the day of the show! Roy Chinn gave me a 'heads-up' on an article from the Triumph '6-PACK' club magazine and their editor, Joe Kniesly has approved our use. Thank you! It is also interesting – at least to Yr. Ed. – that I'm not the only one to mis-hear in a crowd. See the last sentence.

Hill County Triumphs – Texas

'Brits in the Ozarks Show' – October, 2025

Six club members drove our Triumphs to Springdale/Fayetteville, AR for the annual Brits in the Ozarks event held from the 18th through the 20th in October. Wiley Cristal made a solo run on the 17th, wanting to participate in the drives on the 18th. Mike McPhail, Charlie Stewart, Jim Wells and I drove together on the 18th, getting in around 7 p.m. Art Graves drove in from Tulsa on the 18th and met us at the motel.

For those who haven't been to northwest Arkansas, the scenery is beautiful and the back roads make for wonderful Triumph driving, that is, when the weather cooperates. Our group that traveled on the 18th stayed off Interstates for all but 40 miles. As we left Paris after a great burger, we saw ominous shies ahead. Torrential rains started about an hour later and continued off and on all the way to Springdale, testing our windscreen wipers and demisters. Some of us needed bailing buckets. Nevertheless, we all made it and enjoyed a pizza before turning in.

On Friday we had two drives to choose from. We all opted for the wine tasting tour. What followed was a pleasant and sometimes exciting drive of a couple of hours each way through some wonderful twisty two-lane country roads. The exciting part came as we drove around a winding curve and discovered the local roads department had the road closed to one lane with no warning signage. Nothing like hearing screeching tires directly behind you as you try not to hit the car in front. Luckily, we all drove away unscathed and had a nice German lunch at the first of three wineries, in hindsight, it was probably fortuitous that road closure happened on the way to the winery.

Saturday the 19th was the car show. We drove to the University of Arkansas Agri-Park for the event while watching the skies darken. It's a very nice venue with a covered pavilion for refreshments, silent auction and mingling. I don't know the count, but there were lots of cars, especially considering the dicey weather. It rained off and on all morning, but by late morning the fun really started. There was heavy rain and a nasty thunderstorm passed right over us with heavy, close lightning. Somehow everyone was able to cram into the pavilion. By oneish the rain passed and the judging finished.

That night we attended the awards banquet. Judging was "People's Choice." We took three awards. Art Graves took first place for the TR6. Mike McPhail took second in Spitfires. Mike also was recognized as having traveled the farthest since Dripping Springs is definitely farther from Arkansas than Round Rock or Temple.

On the 20th we all trekked home, five of us heading to central Texas and Art going to Tulsa. The

drive back to Texas was uneventful except for a brutal traffic jam in a little place called Hochatown, OK. OK, it took us about 45 minutes to get through the place.

The event was put on by British Iron Touring Club of Northwest Arkansas. They did a very good job and it was well worth the drive, Commendably, the event raised \$11,500 (Oops, Yr. Ed. isn't the only one to have trouble hearing in a crowd. I don't have the exact number in front of me, but \$61,500 is a lot closer) for the ALS Association. +++++

Club event coming up

Event: A Destination Gathering

When: Friday, 20 February: 6:30 pm

Where: "The Momentary" Bentonville 507 SE E St.

Parking in surface lot off E St. OR garage off 8th St.

Being February weather, this will be a Gathering opportunity without an organized Drive. Those wanting a night out should come to The Momentary in Bentonville on Friday 20 February at 6:30 pm and gather in the atrium lobby. A brief explanation of The Momentary will be offered before entering the exhibition gallery.

First: The current exhibition is "**The Greatest Wildlife Photographs**" with 70+ National Geographic wildlife photos PLUS the stories of how and why the photos were taken. These run from dangerous to hilarious. The photo's sizes range from 3ft X 3ft to an entire wall.

Second: An interactive exhibition titled "**JR's Printing Press**" begins in a dime store photo booth. You are given three chances to strike the prefect pose. This can be individual or group photo. Groups larger than five, however, will have to practice contortions similar a high school age stunt of seeing how many can fit into a Hillman Imp. Bring your Groucho Glasses, Deer Hunter Hat and Briar Pipe, Pig Hat or etc. for the photo. Next you are inserted into the "Printing Press" to observe your photo developing into a print. Lastly a B&W, 3ft x 4ft print of your photo drops from the Press. Exiting the Press, with print in hand, you can roll and rubber band it and provide an email for a digital copy.

Third: End the evening by ascending six stories to **The Tower Bar**. A glass walled, 1960s airport styled lounge for a nightcap or just enjoy the elevated view of Bentonville, the Wal-Mart Campus and northern NWA.

Entry to The Momentary and the National Geographic exhibit are free. The Printing Press is normally \$20 per photo. But, we can get a 50% discount if you show your Club badge when getting a ticket. The Tower Bar drink prices are reasonable and just looking is free. Parking is free at either the surface lot off SE E Street or the multistory garage off 8th Street. If you wish to add dinner to the evening there are several restaurants within a block of the Museum, including: The Table on Sixth, Brothers Meethouse, Blu and Yeyo's. Form a group with other Club members and have dinner before. If you have questions please ask Lee on the 12th, check the Club website posting or post them on the BI email. At the March meeting we will present the 2026 Event Calendar and our March Drive. These will also be posted to the website.