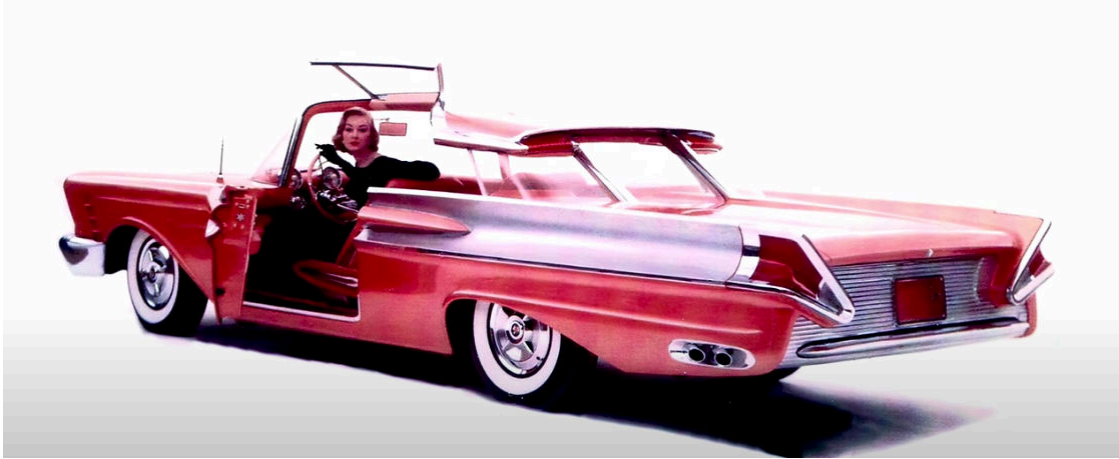


FLORIDA REGION
ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA

The Running Board

Published Monthly in the Interest of the Preservation of
Antique Motor Vehicles



1956 Mercury X-M Turnpike Cruiser April 2025

Coming Events:

Apr 14	Florida Region Club Board Meeting, All Saints Church, Winter Park FL, Thomas Center in the Mary Martha Room.	6:30 PM
Apr 14	Florida Region Club General Meeting, All Saints Church, Winter Park FL, Thomas Center in the Mary Martha Room.	7:00 PM
Apr 19	Old Car Cruise-in, Perkins, 989 West OBT (US441) Apopka 32703	2 to 5PM
Apr 26	49th Heritage Classic and Antique Car Show, 493 S Lakeview Dr, Lake Helen FL	7AM to 3PM



For the latest Florida Region club news visit our website
www.FloridaRegion.aaca.com



THE RUNNING BOARD	
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Send your article submissions to:
 boardeditorfl@gmail.com
 Deadline is the 20th of the month

April Birthdays

Linda Bryant	April 1
Bob Rader	April 6
Perry Lynn Rader	April 6
Don Wiederhold	April 26

Board and General Meeting –

The Florida Region AACA Club general was held on March 10 at All Saints Church in the Mary Martha Parlour. Sixteen members

attended the general meeting after the board meeting.

President Charlie Jones called the meeting to order at 7:12PM. The minutes from the February meeting as presented in the TRB newsletter were accepted by the club. The Treasury report for January was presented by Treasurer Don Allen and was accepted by the club members.

Charlie introduced two new club members: Don Wiederhold (1929 chevrolet) and Jim Klien (73 Javelin AMX).

Charlie asked a show of hands for who could bring their cars to the Mead Garden 85th anniversary of Mead garden on March 20. None of the members could support the show.

Don Allen discussed the plan for the club directory distribution for 2025. Don will not issue a new directory but instead will send out a list of the new member's info as an addendum to the directory. He will send out a directory to those who do need a new directory

Next, the club winter show was discussed. The current plan is that the show will be Jan 31 2025 at the Mt Dora Baptist Church. A suggestion was made to try to get an auto dealership as a show location alternate. It was agreed that it was a good idea. Members were asked for the possible dealer locations that could be available.

Bill Morris warned members of a phone text scam using the club as a cover to ask for money. It turns out other board members have received the same type of call. Members were warned not to trust any text/phone messages asking for money.involving the club. Charlie suspects that either the TRB newsletter or website was used to obtain the club board members phone numbers.

Next Charlie presented a video as the program for the meeting. The video covered the history of the GM motorama. A total of 10.5 million visitors saw Motorama shows between 1949 and 1961.

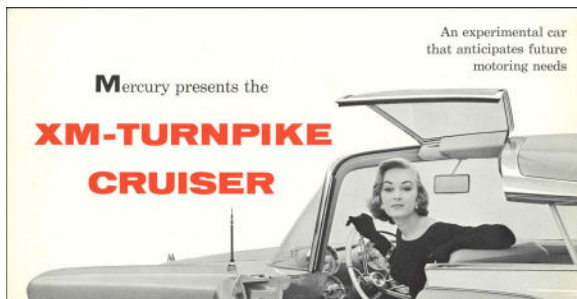


Also Jack Scott had model cars for sale.

Afterward the 50/50 drawing was held and club members had refreshments provided by Betsy Campbell.

Dana Sprague
Club Secretary

1956 Mercury X-M Turnpike Cruiser - Spaceage Show Car



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVcaK3ZFBo>

Designed by Mercury's John Najjar and Elwood Engel, and constructed in Italy by Ghia in 1955 using a 1954 Ford F250 chassis, this 1956 Mercury XM Turnpike Cruiser Concept Car toured the country in a glass-paneled custom trailer with a turntable. Making a splash at the 1956 Cleveland Auto Show, it appeared at the Detroit, Chicago and New York shows as well and paced the Daytona Beach Grand National Race on February 17, 1957.

The model was constructed by Ghia of Italy at a cost of \$80,000, which was a large amount of money for an automotive project. The show car styling became the driving force for the all-new 1957 Mercury line.



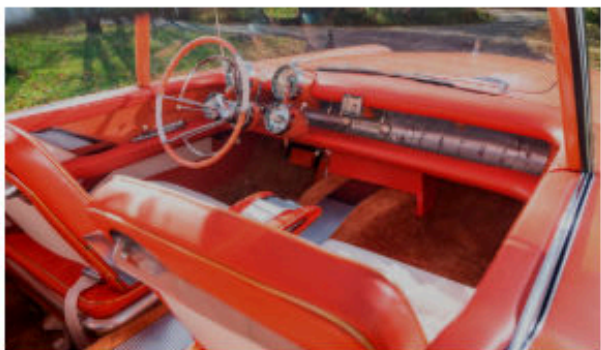
Ford Motor Company called the show car, “an experimental car that anticipates future motoring needs.” Unfortunately, the 1957 Mercurys proved not to be good sellers for Ford Motor Company. Model year production was down to 286,163 units, while calendar year production slumped to 274,820.



Finished in the factory 1956 colors of Persimmon with Pearlescent topcoat, the XM features a number of futuristic design elements, many of which would find their way onto production cars from Ford, Mercury or Lincoln. Some of the more outstanding design features are the double fin coves that wrap around the taillights and are painted Pearl White

over brushed chrome; the transparent butterfly roof panels might have been the idea that inspired T-tops, but these open and close automatically with the doors; the unique exhaust ports exiting through the lower rear quarter panels; stop lights that are mounted under the rear roof corners; front turn signals that are mounted behind the grille and under the headlights; a unique “Big-M” hood ornament, which echoed Mercury’s advertising campaign; hidden outside door handles and split front bumpers with twin jet pods round out the major nuances, but the car is absolutely riddled with details.





In 1971, the show car, which had been in storage for many years, had become damaged. It was sold for \$500 dollars to a man by the name of Baker, who in turn sold the car to Ray Sabo for \$3,000 in 1979. Later after more years had passed, the show car was sold to Tom Maruska in 2017. Maruska has since invested a great deal of money to restore the car to its original condition, saying "finding one of these show cars and restoring it is pretty unique."