

1957

1967

1977

1987

1997

2007



*In 1957 author "Dr. Suess" wrote **The Cat in the Hat**. Dwight D. Eisenhower, inaugurated President of the United States for a second term that same year, sent troops to Little Rock, Arkansas to prevent violence as the schools were desegregated. The Soviet Union announced that it had successfully launched a man-made earth satellite.*

And – at the Congress Hotel in Chicago there was a meeting of fleet managers over lunch to determine the need for a fleet association. The date was March 12, 1957. Less than a month later on April 11, 1957 NAFA's articles of incorporation were signed. The National Association of Fleet Administrators was established and incorporated as a nonprofit organization.

For many Americans, 1957 was the best of times – Eisenhower was president, the country was at peace and the nation's treasury was carrying a surplus. The founders of NAFA were hopeful and facing a future that they knew would bring more and more companies to furnish automobiles for transportation of field representatives. They had a dream for their industry, one in which they saw an avenue they could travel to pursue their interests and professional goals.

The articles of incorporation for the new association were signed on April 11, 1957 by Emerson J. Parker, James



Sam J. Lee

H. Bekkering and Sam J. Lee.

Within the first year NAFA's membership doubled. In attendance at the first annual meeting there were 27 Members out of a 50 Member roster.

George Wilson, there from the beginning and a NAFA Member to this day, recalls, "It all started as the New York Roundtable Group. There were three or four of us – let's see, there was Walter Langseder, Sam Lee, Jack Sibley and me...we would go every year to the Society of Automobile Engineers meeting in Detroit. We would complain that we were primarily interested in fleet management and there wasn't anything happening at this meeting for us."

With a chuckle Wilson goes on, "So Sam Lee (the instigator) finally says to us 'why don't you guys stop complaining and form your own organization.' And we did."

In 1960 NAFA hired Willard H. DaSilva as legal counsel and to this day Bill DaSilva remains steadfast in his representation of the association. Speaking from his office on Long Island he says, "For almost 50 years I have had the rewarding experience of serving a group of dedicated fleet managers who, through NAFA, have achieved international recognition as true professionals."



Bill DaSilva

During NAFA's first eight years the Members were the catalyst for the organization in managing events, publica-

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tions, and membership along with developing regional chapters.

The dedication and fortitude of these Members was the foundation on which the association was built. They literally *carried NAFA on their backs* until, in March of 1965 an executive director in the person of Robert Berke took over full time management of NAFA. In 1966 a headquarters office was established in New York City.

In the 1960s the association moved full force into education, developing seminars on basic fleet management and in 1966 the Education Committee was successful in coordinating seminars in conjunction with New York University. Likewise, this first decade saw a growth spurt as membership reached 500 by 1970 due in part to the Affiliate category being established in 1967.

The annual conference took an international step over the border into Canada for the first time in 1967. The Distinguished Service Award was initiated in 1969; NAFA's magazine expanded to 12 issues a year; the **First Fleet Safety Manual** was published; and the first Law Enforcement Group (LEG) Conference was held. NAFA membership hit the 1,000 mark in 1974 and just five years later in 1979 there were 2,000 Members.

The beginning of NAFA's third decade saw new chapters emerge as the association truly came into its own with the presentation of an award for NAFA's efforts in planning fuel conservation during the height of the fuel crisis. A. Warren Feirer traveled to Washington, D.C. to accept the award from President Jimmy Carter.

Today Feirer has fond memories of networking with other Members. Commenting on the meetings held years back he says, "The good old days were when you knew most of the attendees at the annual NAFA Conference (now FMI-LEG)."

Approaching the end of that third decade, a time in which



NAFA'S FOUNDING MEMBERS

Emil J. Ames	.....C.I.T Financial Corp.
W. McKeever	.....B.F. Goodrich Co.
J.E. Anderson	.....General Tire & Rubber Co.
S.W. Natkin	.....RCA Service Co.
James H. Bekkering	.....Gerber Products Co.
W. Newstetter	.....Lease Motor Vehicle Co.
E.A. Gilbertson	.....Intl. Minerals & Chemicals Corp.
J.C. Overholt	.....Quaker Oats Co.
D.A. Kepler	.....General Tire & Rubber Co.
Emerson J. Parker	.....Hartford Fire Ins. Co.
I.V. Kimball	.....National Cylinder Gas Co.
Floyd H. Piper	.....3M Company
M.M. Komen	.....Brunswick-Balke-Callender Co.
R.K. Reese	.....Kraft Foods Co.
S.L. Landau	.....Picker X-Ray Corp.
A.J. Reid	.....Diamond Alkali Co.
Walter H. Langseder	.....Thomas J. Lipton Inc.
I.B. Schlosser	.....Fairbanks Morse & Co.
Sam J. Lee	.....Lee Fleet Management
J.O. Sibley	.....U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty Co.
John W. Limpert	.....Standard Brands, Inc.
C. B. Whitaker	.....General Mills, Inc.
John W. Lovato	.....American Cyanamid Co.
George E. Wilson	.....Lever Brothers Co.
Frank Luzzo	.....John Sexton & Co.
C.F. Zak	.....Beatrice Foods

the oil embargo was forcing fleet managers to alter fleets to smaller vehicles, two new annual publications were produced – **NAFA's Fleet Manager's Manual** and **NAFA's Reference Book**.

Robert Berke retired in 1985 and David Lefever moved into the position of executive director as the headquarters staff grew from three to seven. That same year legislative counsel in Washington D.C. was hired. Major heights were reached during this period as membership climbed to 2,500 Members and, in 1988, to 3,000 Members. The total number of chapters went to 29 and, with the end of the Wharton CFM and CCFM Program in 1989, the door opened for NAFA's CAFM certification program.

The late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed the advent of the Masters Forum and Fleet Management Seminars; biodiesel was introduced as an alternative to fuel; public service applications and references were added to the revised CAFM study materials; NAFA's new website is introduced; and job postings are added to NAFA's publications to help with Member networking.

In 1992, NAFA established the industry's first and only

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“My tenure as president was focused on two things, Fleet Manager Education and Clean Air Legislation. I believe we all can be proud of NAFA's excellent educational programs. Plus, it was a once in a lifetime experience being involved with the Presidential Advisory Committee on Greenhouse Gas Reductions and the Federal Fleet Conversion Task Force. People in Washington really do wear Rose Colored Glasses.”



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Reductions and the Federal Fleet Conversion Task Force. People in Washington really do wear Rose Colored Glasses.”

Patsy Brownson, CAFM

central source for information, research, resources and other fleet – and auto-related information – the Fleet Information Resource Center. The NAFA homepage debuted in 1997 as the organization celebrated its 40th anniversary.

Issues now presented to the fleet industry – Clean Air Act, cellular phones, global tracking, airbags in police vehicles, electronic fuel cards, vehicles ergonomics, e-commerce and E-Z Pass. NAFA Members testified in Washington D.C. and aided the U.S. Department of Energy's decision that private fleet and local government fleet mandates are not necessary and therefore should not be imposed under the Energy Policy Act (EPACT). Entering the new century membership reaches 3,784.

Dave Robertson, NAFA president from 2001 to 2003, states, “I enjoy my relationship with NAFA because there is an avenue to fleet related materials and resources that no other entity has. I would encourage all members past and present to build on their relationship with NAFA for the betterment of themselves and the association.”



Dave Robertson, CAFM

In the spring of 2005 David Lefever retired after 20 years with the association. Phillip Russo, CAE, previously on staff at NAFA, returned to accept the post of executive director. FleetEd is introduced to the membership; product development is at an all time high as the Fleet Management Institute and Law Enforcement Group Conference reaches exceptional goals in terms of attendance, exhibitors and the quality and quantity of its educational presentation.

A NAFA Member for over 30 years, Betty Linck, CFM, states, “When I first entered this profession, NAFA meant a network of colleagues who I could go to for advise, information and just to share experiences. Thirty years later, I look back on the many friends in the industry that I have met throughout the country, and now I seem to be the one contacted for advice and information.”



The NAFA headquarters leaves Iselin, New Jersey after 18 years and moves to the Princeton Forrestal Village in the historic and academic community of Princeton, New Jersey. The dawn of a new era in 2006.

NAFA in the 21st century serves up technology to an ever-expanding membership with an even broader need for instant information, immediate networking capabilities and overwhelming environmental and alternative fuel concerns.

From a fledging association to the premier organization representing the international fleet industry – not a bad 50 years. **Congratulations, NAFA.**

50 Years of the Best of NAFA – Our Presidents

■ **1957-58 John W. Limpert, Standard Brands**

Ford Motor Co.'s Edsel, with push-button transmission, competes directly with GM's Oldsmobile.

■ **1958-59 Frank Luzzo, John Sexton & Co**

American Motors introduces the Rambler, a 14-foot 10-inch compact designed to compete with Volkswagen and the new Ford Falcon. • The average U.S. automobile wholesales at \$1,880, up from \$1,300 in 1949.

■ **1959-1960 Charles Whitaker, Standard Brands**

Volvo obtains a patent on a three-point lap/shoulder seat belt invented by company engineer Nils Bohlin, 39, but makes no effort to protect its patent rights.

■ **1960-61 Emil Ames, C.I.T. Financial Corp.**

U.S. auto registration figures show one passenger car for every three Americans. There are 74 million motorcars on the U.S. roads, up from 32.6 million in 1941. • The Chevrolet Impala is introduced by General Motors. Chrysler halts production of the DeSoto, introduced in

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1927 but used now mostly for taxicabs. • Ford discontinues production of the Edsel.

■ **1961-62 Lee A. Westberg, Thomas J. Lipton**

The United States has 11.7 million trucks, up from 8.62 million in 1951.

■ **1962-63 Walter Langseder, Gerber Products**

The Trans-Canada Highway formally opens July 30 at Rogers Pass, British Columbia, after 12 years of construction (more than 3,000 kilometers remain unpaved).

■ **1963-64, C.E. Fenger, Abbott Laboratories**

Two-thirds of the world's automobiles are in the United States (which has 6 percent of the world's population). • The **Sheboygan Press** publishes an article on NAFAs annual meeting. Fifty-five private firms and agencies attended.

■ **1964-65 Robert H. Stirling, Travelers Insurance**

Connecticut lawyer Ralph Nader, 30, submits a report on what the government should do about auto safety. • Studebaker-Packard breaks with the majors, becomes the first U.S. maker to offer seat belts as standard equipment, but quits the auto industry by year's end. • The '64½ Mustang introduced at the New York World's Fair in April by Ford Motor Company.

■ **1965-67 B. Leslie Groser, Lever Brothers**

A court order requires General Motors to make its bus patents freely available to other bus makers and to sell parts, engines and designs to other bus makers in settlement of the suit brought by the Justice Department in 1956, but GM's grip on the bus market will remain virtually undiminished.

■ **1967-69 Clarence G. O'Dell, Proctor & Gamble**

A new Chevrolet sells for less than \$2,500 in the United States. • U.S. automobile production reaches 8.8 million; truck and bus production approaches 2 million.

■ **1969-1971 A. J. Cavalli, Avis**

The Ford Maverick is a compact car designed at the behest of Ford president Lee Iacocca to compete with Volkswagen and other foreign makes. • General Motors prepares to introduce its Chevrolet Camaro compact. With the success of the \$2,500 Maverick, other automakers come up with sporty designs to attract the baby-boom generation. •

The average U.S. automobile wholesales at \$2,280, up from \$1,880 in 1959.

■ **1971-73 J. Alex Latimer, Pfizer**

General Motors has sales of \$30 billion, marketing 537,268 Chevrolet Impalas.

■ **1973-75 Donald W. Callum, Imperial Oil Ltd.**

A nationwide 55-mile-per-hour highway speed limit act signed by President Nixon makes federal aid for highways conditional on state enforcement of the new speed limit. • The Jeep Cherokee, introduced by American Motors, is a four-wheel-drive vehicle that soon has sales of 6,000 cars per month as it woos drivers away from conventional station wagons.

■ **1975-77 Richard A. Beltz, Northern Pacific Railway Co.**

The Honda Civic introduced in Japan has a CVCC engine that combines high fuel efficiency with low emissions. • A Cadillac convertible rolls off the assembly line at Detroit April 21; it will be the last production model U.S. convertible for more than 5 years.

■ **1977-79 Raymond A. Breault, Revlon**

A 1973 Ford Pinto explodes in flames after being struck from behind by a van near Goshen, Indiana. Criminal charges are brought against Ford, a jury clears the company of any wrongdoing 1980 after Ford shows that it did everything it could to recall the Pinto. • Germany's last Volkswagen "Beetle" sedan rolls off the assembly line January 19 at Emden.



Raymond A. Breault

■ **1979-81 A. Warren Feirer, Standard Brands**

Renault saves American Motors (AM) from bankruptcy by purchasing a controlling interest and arranging to have AM dealers market Renaults. • The Chrysler Loan Guarantee Bill passed by Congress December 27 saves the 54-year-old automaker from bankruptcy. The measure guarantees \$1.2 billion in loans to America's 17th largest company.



A. Warren Feirer

■ **1981-83 Robert E. Davis, Consolidated Gas**

Sales of U.S.-made autos fall to 6.2 million, its lowest level in 20 years. Japanese makers placate U.S. manufacturers by voluntarily limiting exports to America to 1.68 million units.

■ **1983-85 Patrick J. Sheehan, Baxter Travenol**

General Motors and Toyota Motors sign an agreement February 17 to produce a subcompact car on a joint basis in a GM plant at Fremont, Calif. The joint effort put its first automobile on the market June 13, 1985, with the introduction of the Chevrolet Nova. • Chrysler introduces

the Plymouth Voyager, the company's first mini-van. • The Taurus introduced by Ford Motor Company costs about \$3 billion to develop, but it will help the company counter inroads by foreign makes and become more profitable than General Motors.

■ **1985-87 Helen Bland, Hallmark Cards**

The first Jeep Wrangler comes off the American Motors assembly line March 12.

■ **1987-1989 Frank W. Kraus, Lever Brothers**

Chrysler Corp. acquires American Motors for \$1.2 billion August 5, paying mostly for the Jeep brand that it will develop.

■ **1989-1991 J. Paul Hubbard, Imperial Tobacco**



J. Paul Hubbard

Japan's 56-year-old Bridgestone Corp. acquires the 88-year-old Firestone Tire & Rubber in March for \$2.6 billion. Firestone has 1,500 automobile service centers, but it has been hard hit by its recall of defective steel belted radial tires

between 1978 and 1980.

■ **1991-1993 Gordon B. West, Pfizer, Inc.**

Sales of 1993 domestically built automobiles (U.S., Mexico and Canada) increase 31.1 in comparison to the previous year.

■ **1993-1995 Patsy Brownson, CAFM, Cox Enterprises**

The first bus to be powered by a fuel cell goes into service, but fuel-cell technology remains in its infancy. • The average price for a new car paid by a U.S. individual purchaser peaks at \$20,247 in the third quarter of the year.

■ **1995-97 Jim Anselmi, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey**

A \$6 billion highway bill signed into law by President Clinton repeals the federal 55-mile-per-hour speed limit in place since 1974 but widely flouted, especially in Western states. • The number of registered automobiles worldwide reaches 647 million, up from 127 million in 1960; automobile ownership has risen more than twice as fast as the world population.

■ **1997-99 David Ogilvie, Hewlett-Packard**

Both Daimler Benz and Toyota introduce prototype fuel-



Helen Bland



Frank W. Kraus



Gordon B. West



Jim Anselmi

cell-powered cars: Toyota introduces the Prius, a hybrid "eco-car" that runs on both gasoline and electric battery power. • The Ford Taurus loses its position as top-selling U.S. car to the Toyota Camry (the Honda Accord is third, Honda Civic fourth, Chevrolet Cavalier fifth).

■ **1999-2001 Sal Giacchi, CFM/CAFM, Loews**

U.S. sales of sport utility vehicles (SUVs) exceed 3 million, up from 909,925 in 1991. • General Motors announces that it will phase out its Oldsmobile make within 5 years.

■ **2001-2003 David G. Robertson, CAFM, City of Houston Texas**

The last Plymouth automobile rolls off the Chrysler assembly line at Belvedere, Illinois. • Ford Motor Company announces that it will close five North American plants in the next 5 years, eliminate 17,000 jobs worldwide on top of the 18,000 cut in the last 12 months.

■ **2003-2005 Milton C. Reid, City of Gainesville Florida**

A GM HydroGen 3 fuel cell prototype vehicle sets out on a new endurance record for fuel cell vehicles, crossing 14 European countries from the northern coast of Norway to the western coast of Portugal and driving a total distance of 6,200 miles. No other fuel cell vehicle has ever driven so far or under such diverse road and climate conditions. • Ford celebrates its 100th anniversary.

■ **2005-2007 Charles A. Gibbens, Jr., County of Henrico Virginia**

Toyota replaces Chrysler in the No. 3 spot. • GM averts merger with Renault and Nissan, much to the consternation of chief stockholder Kirk Kerkorian, who sells off the remainder of his GM stock that once totaled \$2.1 billion. • Ford announces it is ceasing production of minivans. The car manufacturer will boost production of crossover vehicles instead.



David Ogilvie



Sal Giacchi,
CFM/CAFM



Milton C. Reid



Charles A. Gibbens, Jr.

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