

The Northstar News

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In Memory of David Gustafson

Eulogy for David Gustafson

Delivered by Matt Foley on Feb. 1, 2024

David Gustafson was the Chair of the Publications Committee at the time of his passing. Many of the changes you have seen in the pages of the Lincoln and Continental Comments are a direct result of his leadership. The LCOC owes this gentleman quite a debt of gratitude, and none more so than your editor, who was brought onboard by David. -Ed.

Yet, that vehicle brought me into permanent contact with David when he was the first person in the Club to respond and welcome me when I reached out for help with that restoration project. Almost immediately, we both recalled our first meeting. In the coming months, we discovered other connections, like the fact that Marion, his wife and the love of his life, knew and had



For those of you who may not know me, my name is Matt Foley, and I came to know David through the Lincoln & Continental Owners Club, where we were both members and served together on the North Star Region Board of Directors.

When the family asked me to speak today, it did not take me long to think about what I would remember most about David. While I could talk about his life and accomplishments, which are not insignificant, it would betray his quiet humility. Instead, what I will remember most are the mental and moral qualities he exemplified, and which I will always respect and admire. In short, his character.

But where to begin? The best place is probably at the very beginning. I will never forget the day I first met David in July 2013. Although I came to know him through the LCOC, ironically, it was one of his Imperials that sparked our connection when I struck up a conversation with him at a Walter P. Chrysler Club national meet held in Lake Elmo, Minnesota, that day. We shared an interest in many of the same vehicles, and in his own quiet and unassuming way, he offered me some sage advice on what to look for in a Lincoln vehicle when I expressed an interest in buying one after he told me about his beloved Lincoln club. I say sage advice because less than a year later, after I bought that vehicle and began its restoration, I wished I had followed it to a "T." Suffice to say, that was the last time I did not follow one of his recommendations!

RIGHT David with everything he held dear—his late wife Marion, beloved pet Faithie and his 1951 Lincoln Cosmopolitan.





ABOVE The very special canines in David's life, immortalized on canvas. He was fortunate to be able to enjoy this painting before his passing.

worked with my father at the old Abbott Hospital in Minneapolis.

Very quickly, I came to know and admire David's knowledge and intelligence with equal speed. Sharing similar interests in technology, I was amazed to hear stories of how, in his youth, he seemingly effortlessly put together Heathkits for friends and, as an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota Duluth, proposed and established an FM radio station. Perhaps most of all, it was his knowledge of computer technology that amazed me. I will own up to the fact that at 45, I am in a phase of life where it is hard to stay on top of technological

changes, but how many of us can say their go-to guru for any questions about computer hardware or software is well over 80?

David's knowledge and intelligence extended into many other things he was passionate about, whether music, current events, or reading. I think on average he read a new book, often mysteries, every two days in addition to the many newspapers and other publications he devoured. And I hope his passion and knowledge of all things automobile goes without saying! David had the unique blessing of smarts that were not limited to the technical and intellectual but also included street smarts. He was tactful and respectful, but he had a no-nonsense way of getting things done that was an asset in his professional and personal endeavors.

David was also blessed with what I can only categorize as artistic talent. He was a gifted photographer, seeking and capturing the perfect shot, often unbeknownst to the

subjects he was photographing. Whether it was a newsletter article, a Christmas letter, or even a personal e-mail, he was also a gifted writer. This was one part of his talent as a storyteller. I cannot tell you how many times, be it at a board meeting or a brunch, a circle would form around David, enraptured as he spoke of past or present goings on. His style was so unique you could hear his voice in reading his written word, and his stories, written or spoken, were always peppered with his mischievous sense of humor!

Above all qualities, what I will probably remember the most was David's generosity. Quite simply, he may be the most generous person I have ever known. Both personally and at a distance, I saw his material generosity, a quality also shared by his wife, Marion. Whether it was a book he knew would be of interest or a part or tool he knew would help to complete a project, he gave thoughtfully and without fanfare or





LEFT David was a Lincoln man through and through. Although he also had an Imperial and a Cadillac or two, Lincoln was where his heart was. In his later years, he didn't travel as much as he would have liked. When the LCOC had a Mid-America National Meet that wasn't too far away, he would show off his prized 1951 Cosmopolitan.

expectation of anything in return. In that same vein, I know of other, bigger gifts given anonymously to others who, likely, to this day, do not realize it came from David. This material generosity extended to groups and institutions he was passionate about, be it animal shelters or the many car clubs to which he belonged. A small example I am sure many of the LCOC members here today will remember, and still appreciate, was the color calendars he created featuring photos of fellow club members with their prized automobiles.

David's generosity was far greater than any material gifts given, though. With equal thought and generosity, he shared the gifts and talents I have mentioned today and many others he possessed. One of them is his patience. Although never one to suffer fools, I saw him do incredibly thoughtful things for people who had pained him in the past or just downright annoyed him.

All this belies an additional form of knowledge and intelligence David possessed. His emotional intelligence. As an only child with few relatives and someone who was not blessed with children – something I believe he felt keenly – he could understandably have been a very selfish and self-centered man. Perhaps even bitter. But he was not. He had joy and enjoyed life. He cared deeply and sincerely for others, be they human or animal. And as much as I am tempted to mention love, I think he would appreciate that sentiment even less than the well-deserved praise I hope I have given him today. As I mentioned when I began, his quiet humility would not allow it. Out of respect for that quiet humility with which he did the many things I have mentioned, I will try to leave you as he left us.

Matt Foley is an LCOC member from Chanhassen, Minnesota.

This announcement is how many of us outside the Northstar Region learned of David's passing back in January.- ed.

It is with great sadness that I announce the death of David Gustafson, who passed away on the evening of Jan. 21, 2024.

David was a very involved board member and, without hesitation, took over as the Co-Publications Manager during a tumultuous board meeting. David accepted this role 125% and turned the entire process of creating and publishing the Lincoln and Continental Comments into a smooth-running machine with the capable assistance of Pat Corbett as Co-Chair. They divided responsibilities, which was especially important during the transition in editors and others on the Publications Committee. With the help of Paul Temple, he identified Jeff Shively as a potential editor who complimented the team and improved both the content and process of delivering the main product to the membership. There are many memberships, computer hardware, and labor costs that David just took upon himself to cover to help the Club—a true unsung hero.

David will be greatly missed, as I enjoyed our conversations with him over the years.

Sincerely,
John Talbourdet
President, Lincoln & Continental Owners Club

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT David was not one to be stuck in the past. He embraced new technologies and new Lincolns, like his last-generation Continental. **David with a very honest friend** outside the Lincoln Motorcar Heritage Museum at the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan. **Raise a glass** in memory of our friend!





David's life's work for the LCOC was also memorialized by the Club's national secretary, Darren Klingler.- Ed.

David began his journey with Lincolns in 1980 when he purchased a 1951 Cosmopolitan. Over the years, he enjoyed owning older and newer Lincolns as daily drivers. David joined the LCOC in 1997 and was an active member of the North Star Region's Board of Managers, and served as membership secretary for over 20 years. David also has been the editor and publisher of the monthly *Northstar News* for over 20 years and over 200 consecutive issues. During this period, membership has continued to grow, and the newsletter is the backbone of a very active region. He continued to work hard to provide value to the membership and create an environment for all to enjoy. Good, active regions are an essential part of a successful LCOC.

David has served over a dozen years as a national at-large director. Several years ago, he was asked to serve with Pat Corbett on the Publications Committee. David and Pat have worked hard to improve the process of publishing the *Lincoln and Continental Comments* through the use of updated technology, software, and improved process plans. We switched to printing every issue of the *Comments* in full color. Additional updates were developed to improve the magazine content, brighten the presentation, and continue working toward making the *Comments* the best club publication. "By all of us working together, we really can make a difference," David would say.

David was a quiet but impactful person. He was passionate about our Club and Lincolns and their preservation. He supported our Club in his articles, editing, and financial support of the *Comments* and our editors. David was always there to help whenever and in whatever way possible. I am sure there was a brand-new computer with all the publishing software available so he could contribute to *Heaven Magazine* when he showed up at the Pearly Gates in a new Lincoln. David was a true gentleman and will be missed by his family, friends, colleagues, fellow Lincoln enthusiasts, and LCOC members. David, thank you for your LCOC service! Rest in Peace!

With Deepest Sympathy,
Darren Klingler
Secretary, Lincoln & Continental Owners Club





*Thank You
David Gustafson
for all you've done
for LCOE*