



## March 2015 FVEAA Newsletter

### Fox Valley Electric Auto Association

The FVEAA is a Not-For-Profit Illinois Corporation and the Chicago-area chapter of The Electric Auto Association

#### Next Meeting

**Friday March 20, 2015**

#### Community Christian Church

1635 Emerson Lane

Naperville, IL 60544

[Google Map](#)

#### Agenda

- 6:30 p.m. Doors Open
- 7:00 Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions
- 7:10 Committee Reports.
- 7:15 Old Business / New Business
- 7:25 Presentation: Bob Baker part 2 of 3 on How to Build an Electric Vehicle
- Break -
- 8:30 Presentation: Ted Lowe, Dakota project battery and charging system plans
- 9:15 Close

#### President's Words

*Bruce Jones*

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the warming days of March. The ice is finally beginning to melt and I'm looking forward to Spring thaw where we can get back to our core purpose of building electric vehicles, promoting and providing education on electric vehicles... without icycles!

Last month we learned all about the Cadillac ELR and Chevrolet Volt thanks to John Walton, VP of Black Dog Corporation who gave an excellent in-depth presentation. His counterpart, Lou Scapellato provided ride-n-drives of the ELR during the last half of the meeting. Thanks also to Rich Carroll who always provides insightful presentations, and his talk on alternative battery chemistries was no exception. Appreciate it guys!

This month we have Bob Baker back again for the second of three presentations on how to build an electric vehicle. Bob gave his first presentation in January and we're glad he's back this month. Ted Lowe will also enlighten us on his experience with an open source charging station kit that he and other FVEAAs are starting to build.

#### OIL GLUT

According to an article <http://fortune.com/2015/03/13/oil-is-back-in-the-doldrums-as-the-iea-warns-of-glut/> by Geoffrey Smith, the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA) said in its latest global oil market report

that demand for oil continued to pick up in February but it was more than met by supply from outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries rising by a particularly strong 1.4 million barrels a day in February, relative to a year ago.

So due to the increasing supply from the US and other non-OPEC countries, the fact that oil storage facilities are nearly full, and here has been only a slight increase in demand, we have not seen the bottom in oil prices. I hear we'll possibly see \$30/ barrel of oil pricing in the near future which will be very nice for those with gasoline cars, but it will put a damper on electric vehicle sales, and it could actually spell economic catastrophe for countries dependent on oil production. This environment with a reduction of oil being imported from foreign countries is what many of us were hoping for. Combine that with higher ICE fuel efficiency, more electric vehicles, and lower pollution, our energy production/consumption landscape is changing rapidly. But buckle up, as things out there in the economic world of energy could get rough in ways we may not have anticipated.

## MEMBERSHIP

if you are interested in "club promotions" such as putting ads in newspapers, getting the word out in social media, making phone calls to previous members, inviting other groups to meetings or sending a newsletter to someone new, let me know. Let's pump membership back up!

See you Friday!

Sincerely,  
Bruce

**FVEAA is on Facebook - Like Us!**

Grant Gerke

<https://www.facebook.com/FoxValleyElectricAutoAssociation>

## This Month's Presentations

- Bob Baker - is back to present Part 2 of 3 on "How to Build an Electric Vehicle"
- Ted Lowe - Dakota project battery and charging system plans, which include an open source battery monitoring system, an open source EVSE and a new modular charger product.

## Membership Update

Ted Lowe

We currently have **85** paid-up members, up 2 from last month! We live in a large metro area with 8 million people and EVs are the latest buzz so we should be able to grow the FVEAA! **Please invite your friends, neighbors, family, colleagues**, etc. to FVEAA meetings and EEvents. Volunteer to attend EEvents on behalf of the FVEAA (with or without an EV)! Your ideas on how to help grow the FVEAA are welcomed at anytime, thanks! Howard Hansen had a **great idea**... giving an FVEAA membership as a gift!

## Photos

John Walton VP of Black Dog Corporation talks about the Cadillac ELR, Chevy Volt and the Bolt

Lou Scapellato of Heritage Cadillac provided ride-n-drives of the Cadillac ELR.



## Meeting Minutes -

*Jeff Miller*

7:00 Bruce Jones opened the meeting and had audience introduce themselves

7:15 Committee Reports – none

7:20 No old Business / New business

8:00 John Walton of Black Dog Corporation gave an excellent talk on the Cadillac ELR, the Chevrolet Volt and the upcoming all-electric BOLT

Break

7:45 Rich Carroll presented on Alternative Battery Chemistries, and discussed efforts by Argonne National Labs and others to use computer simulation to predict what battery chemistries will provide cheaper, more powerful energy dense batteries.

9:30 Closed the Meeting

## Rich's Ramblings

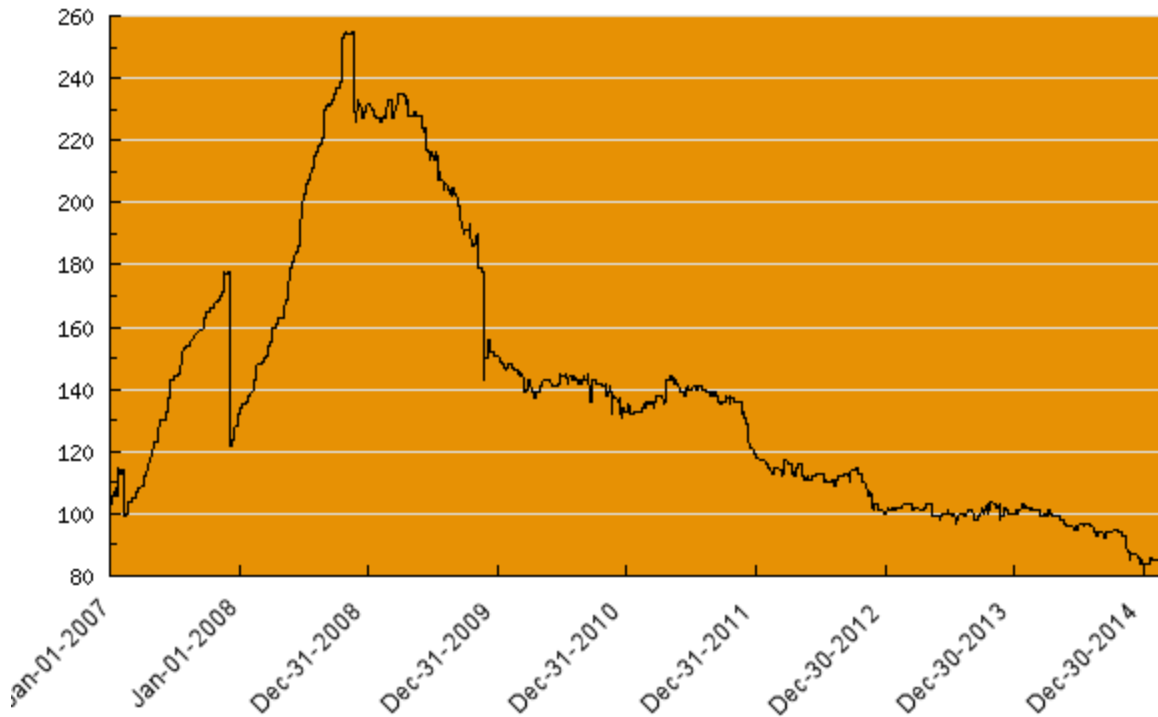
*Rich Carroll*

Heresy.

I realize what I am about to discuss will likely be called heresy by some FVEAA members. I did schedule my March 20th evening to help at the local PADS, which is a loose association of local churches that alternate the evening of feeding and providing care and overnight lodging for local residents who are homeless. Local scout groups take turns in helping by creating an evening meal, assembling bedding, passing out toiletries, etc. Unfortunately the Boy Scout Troop that my grandson is in has an obligation to help on the third Friday of each month. Thus, every month, I have a calendar conflict, and did offer several months ago to help prepare and serve the evening meal on March 20. So I won't be at the FVEAA meeting this month, but don't take this as an avoidance of discussion of the issue I want to discuss.

I am troubled by the current FVEAA membership numbers. You have read Ted's note above, mentioning that we have 85 paid members. This is lower than any time in the last ten years.

## FVEAA Paid Up Members as of March 14, 2015 7:58am



We need to analyze that we have gone from a high of over 250 members, down to mid 80s in members.

I can present some factors, but I know there are others, you are welcome to chime in. Yes, there is a big change in membership numbers in ten years, is there a big change in what we offer to members?

- Five or ten years ago, if you were committed to driving electric, you either had to make some significant compromises, or build it yourself. You likely needed lots of information, preferably from multiple sources, you needed advice, and in some cases, you needed help.
- In 2008, there were almost a dozen cars in stages of construction within the membership of the club. In addition, there were a dozen cars that had been put together by club members, and were inoperative but could fairly easily be returned to the road. Members needed several things for their EV
  - Information on components
  - Advice on how to assemble a powertrain for their car
  - information on proposed legislation, and information on current legislation
  - Representation on committees that would make decisions on charging station buildout
  - The ability to network with members who had similar situations, or had been in the same situation in the past.
  - More information than was easily available on the internet about EV construction, sales, licensing, laws, rebates, etc.
- Our \$15 annual dues brought you information about a dynamic club, with a history of showing at major events, including suburban shows and shows at major Chicago convention spaces, such as McCormick Place.
- Your \$15 brought you a choice of a printed newsletter, an electronic version, or both.

We haven't always picked things that looked like obvious winners. In 2011 (was it really that long ago?) we assembled a good team to tackle Green Fest, a giant show at McCormick Place featuring many exhibits from different green aspects. I admit this looked like a winner. We invested over \$3,000 of our club money, countless hours of time by more than a dozen active FVEAA members, and created a very interesting display that told our story well. We had a special way to track new members from the auto show, and after

the show, we had lots of good stories, a history of working together well, and ONE NEW MEMBER. I did not even want to know the name of the new member who came from the Green Fest show, I decided that knowing their name would forever poison my view of them as “the \$10,000 member.” While it certainly did not pay off in membership numbers, it did pay off in other ways.

Are we still doing outreach? Yes, each year the National Drive Electric Week is a national event, and FVEAA has always put on one of the best outreach programs in the nation. Our cost is a couple of hundred dollars each time. Is it worth it? Again, we don't generate a lot of new members, but we do impress many manufacturers and dealers, who use paid staff (many on overtime) to do the same thing we volunteer for.

So, what is the disconnect? We are trying to grow, continuing to present our members with current updates about legislation, charging infrastructure, rebates, etc. but our numbers are dwindling.

Here is my suggestion. We are giving our members less than before. That .pdf file is likely read once and filed. Paper copies sit on your desk/table/bathroom magazine rack and get read again and again. We really only participate as a group in Drive Electric Week for a few hours each year, and it doesn't appear so big that we can't do it easily ourselves. Green Fest meant we had to reach out to new members and involve them, where we don't have the same impetus for Drive Electric Week.

But, perhaps more important than anything else, while giving our members less and less, we raised dues. First we made the paper newsletter a 'premium option,' then we summarily raised dues. We seem to have more funds in the bank than I think we need on a year to year basis, so we did not raise dues in order to survive. we did it for convenience.

Other car clubs I know have had similar, cyclic problems. Every one of those other clubs was healthiest when they were working together on a big project, like a national convention, or a big regional display. Every club had membership declines when the club stagnated and no big events were on the horizon. And when each club had a period of membership losses, they reacted by raising dues. The theory was less members, less dues income, and the need to keep a place to meet, and minimal club expenses meant that dues had to go up. And every time I have seen a car club raise dues, membership dropped further. Only one of the clubs I know well has had a turnaround in membership, and theirs came after new events like shows, picnics, tours, parades, and get togethers were planned.

So, how do we accomplish this? Every club member needs to realize they have a show or parade near them that FVEAA could participate in. Every member can consider hosting a picnic, tour, or just a backyard party. And since we seem to be giving members less, we should reduce our \$20 individual dues. We were healthier at \$15 dues. Going back to \$10 isn't quite enough to pay bills without deficit spending. But if we went back to \$10 dues, we would attract more members, and we seem to have enough funds in the treasury to sustain a year or two of deficits.

Heresy, you say. Not really. Give the members what it is worth, get them involved, and watch.

We have more than enough in our treasury to sustain our club for an extended lean spell. Ask Jeff Miller, our treasurer, about our exact financial status. If we lost \$830 each year (dropping dues to \$10 and not having any membership numbers changes) we could survive for a long time. Again, ask Jeff.

Our bylaws have a section on dues. They state, “The Board of Directors may decide to change the dues structure (levels and amounts) as necessary to support the Corporation's mission and operations...” As a member of the Board of Directors, I would like to make a motion, that individual dues be dropped to \$10 per year.

All members are strongly encouraged to discuss this with any/all board members.

As of March 14th we have the following:

Savings: 10,820.21

Checking: 7,322.90

PayPal: 1,100.00

Total: 19,243.11

Expenses over the last twelve months:

Two charging stations: \$6000 but we got reimbursed by the EAA for \$2537.26 so out of pocket \$3462.74

Event Expenses \$690

Annual fixed costs \$296.68

Total expenses over the last twelve months \$4449

On June 30th 2014 our financial picture was very similar with a total of \$19,313.70.

Jeff Miller's comments to Rich's Ramblings

Our business members make a difference in our checking account and in theory it is easier to maintain and build relationships with businesses when the active membership is bigger rather than smaller. We don't have any rules that say guests can't attend meetings, as it is counter to our mission, and most guests that attend sign up right away so long as they are interested in doing a conversion or build type project. Recent new members seem to have plans to convert a classic car or something along those lines and the 20 dollar fee doesn't seem to be an issue.

I feel that our membership is being hit because we are no longer the easiest path to an EV. In that regard I feel that our membership numbers are a victim of the commercial EV's success. I certainly feel that conversions will always have a place in our club but more and more of our members seem to buy a Volt/Leaf and after a year of ownership stop coming to meetings. Some day when those car's start operating outside of warranty we may very well become the cheapest path to maintaining those commercial EV's and in that way we could regain our relevance to those members. First year (2012) commercial EV's should be going out of warranty this year. Will we find ways to serve those users needs or will we tighten our focus up and be a conversions / DIY only club?

We know Leaf's have some issues with pack life and we could work on figuring out the repair process for those packs and it would become a benefit of being a member. The dealership charges around \$5000 for that repair but \$20 dollars for a membership wouldn't be expensive if we enabled the members to repair their own packs for a few hundred. I also know there are other little issues with these vehicles and becoming a source for those repairs and workarounds is valuable too. Do we need to become a commercial EV focused club and leave the conversions to a different group / subgroup?

Or can we serve both of those groups in a way that keeps everyone happy? \$20 isn't very much if you are active or gaining access to repair processes that keep your EV operating costs down.

Our generous business members could support the group, at our current expense levels, indefinitely if we dropped the membership fee to \$0. I am not saying that we should do this however as we may just inflate our numbers without changing our active members. At the end of the day having a club with 10,000 members but only having 25 at the meetings / working in the community isn't accomplishing anything more than we are today. We need active members that are out in the community helping people with EV's in every way possible. With low oil and gas prices we are facing an uphill battle over the next year but if we can find relevance, with the commercially produced EV owner segment, we should do well in the long run.

Our organization is out to promote and teach about EV's. It takes active members, not just paying members, to make that happen.

## Membership Form

Ted Lowe

### FVEAA Membership Application Form - Version 2014-01-01

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Type: Home \_\_\_ Work \_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one: New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the FVEAA ? \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Types and Annual Dues (please circle one):

Individual	\$20
Business	\$100
Premier Business	\$250
Charter Business	\$500

Newsletter Delivery Type (please circle one): No Newsletter      Electronic

Please make checks payable to "FVEAA" and postal mail it with this membership application form to:

**FVEAA**

**PO Box 214**

**Wheaton, IL 60187-0214**

Attn: Membership

## FVEAA Business Members



**ELEVATE ENERGY**  
Smarter energy use for all

ComEd Residential Real-Time Pricing Program (linked to [ComEd.com/RRTP](http://ComEd.com/RRTP))  
Administered by Elevate Energy, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring smarter energy use for all.

322 S Green St, Suite 300  
Chicago, IL 60607

Phone: 1-888-202-RRTP (7787)  
Web: [ComEd.com/RRTP](http://ComEd.com/RRTP)

The ComEd Residential Real-Time Pricing (RRTP) program is an hourly pricing program for residential customers. This program allows you to pay the hourly, market price for electricity. With real-time hourly market prices, it is possible for the price of electricity to be negative for short periods of time, typically in the middle of the night. Since ComEd RRTP participants pay the market price of electricity (with no markup), they are actually being paid to use electricity during negative priced hours, making it an ideal fit for electric vehicle owners who charge at night. Contact an RRTP specialist to see if you are a good fit for the program.

# Bill Jacobs

## Bill Jacobs BMW

Nancy Chafin, Marketing Director  
2495 Aurora Ave  
Naperville, IL 60540  
Phone: 630-357-1200  
Web: [www.billjacobsbmw.com](http://www.billjacobsbmw.com)

Bill Jacobs BMW specializes in Automotive Sales, Service and Parts. With over 50 years automotive experience Bill Jacobs BMW has set the standard in automotive retail excellence. Bill Jacobs BMW is family owned and directly employs over 300 people



---

Exclusive worldwide distributor of  
WarP™, ImPulse™, and TransWarP™  
electric motors for use in electric vehicles  
and electric vehicle conversions.

---

WWW.GO-EV.COM      800 S State St. Suite 4  
Lockport, IL 60441  
630.243.9100



## Bob's Hillview Auto

Bob Baker  
4c Hillview Dr  
Lake Barrington, IL 60010  
Work: 847-842-9543  
Email: [bobshillviewauto@gmail.com](mailto:bobshillviewauto@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.bobshillviewauto.com](http://www.bobshillviewauto.com)





**Innova UEV**

Roman Kuropas

16w235 83rd St Suite A

Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Phone: 630-568-5609

Email: Roman@innovauev.com

Web: [www.innovauev.com](http://www.innovauev.com)

\*\*\* Please sponsor the FVEAA ! \*\*\*