

The Straight Arrow



The Monthly Newsletter of the Pontiacs of Central California
May 2006

www.pontiacsofcentralcalifornia.org
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Contents

Volume 13, Issue 5



President's Message
April Minutes
Upcoming Events
For Sale/Wanted



*Cruise to
Kragens*

President's Message

It's funny how you can forget certain things that have occurred over the years then recall them and say—oh yeah, I remember that. One such tidbit in car history was the move during the years between 1987 and 1990 by the automotive manufacturers to just forget about making convertibles. Rather this was for safety concerns or just a lack of demand, I don't really remember. However, not many American cars were made as convertibles during these years.

To answer what must have been some continuing desire by Firebird and Camaro fans, GM saw at least some limited opportunities in the convertible market during these years. In response to this they did not build convertibles directly but decided to offer a convertible conversion. To get a Firebird convertible during these years you would visit your local Pontiac dealer and place your order after laying down about an extra \$5000. These orders were then sent to aftermarket manufacturer that was selected by GM as an exclusive contractor. After this, your former Firebird coupe would eventually emerge as a really cool looking Firebird convertible.

What is amassing is the lack of documented history on the convertible conversion process. Considerable controversy exists on the how the process worked, who could place the order and how many of the cars were converted. The contractor for these conversions was ASC (Automotive Specialty Company), who fitted each authorized conversion with an ASC tag on the door jamb. However, beyond this is where the controversy begins. Just browsing through the different web site forums you can see the differing opinions and lack of any documented history for the cars.

The consensus of what really happened seems to be as follows. If you wanted a Firebird Convertible during the affected years you would visit your Pontiac dealer and place an

Minutes of the April 10, 2006 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Bill Richards

No guests were present this month. Last months guest, Paul Castro, is now our newest P.O.C.C. member.

The agenda for the meeting was passed around and approved.

The minutes for the March 13, 2006 meeting were approved.

The Treasurer's report was read by Bill Truckell and approved.

There was no newsletter report as Sam Fisher is recovering from - - - - - and not in attendance.

There was no Webmaster report as Brian Massey was not in attendance.

Previous Activities

—Joel Garrett reported that about 10 of our members represented the P.O.C.C. at the Grand opening of the new Kragen's store at Ashlan and Blythe Ave. April 1st. The Kragen's District Manager, Mr. Ed Sandoval, provided pizza and drinks for everyone.

—Carl Smith attended the Tower District Car Show and said that it was about twice as large as last year. He said that there were a lot of really nice cars there.

—Caliche's started their events on April 7th. The next week they were rained out, but plan on continuing their Friday night events.

—Chubby's will be having events Friday and Saturday night starting April 16th.

—Full O Bull will be having a Sunday night event.

Upcoming Activities

—Joel reported that Sam Fisher told him that the Madera High School Car Show will be May

5th. Contact Joel or Sam for more info on this event.

—Ron Berglund reported on the Reedley Street Faire 18th Annual Car Show on May 7th.

—Ron has set it up so all P.O.C.C. members that want to attend can park together. Contact him if you plan on going so he can arrange parking for everyone. Registration is \$25 with a shirt and \$15 with no shirt.

—Ron Berglund also reported on the Shriner's Car Show. It will be June 10 at Manchester Center. Ron will probably be getting entry forms for us when they are available.

—Joel reported on the National event in Ontario again. If you're going, get together with others that are going to plan when you're leaving and what route you're taking.

—The Kingsburg Car Show will be April 22. Hopefully it won't rain as their back-up date is the same as our Madera Show April 29th.

The P.O.C.C. Central Valley Classic Car Show

—On Friday the 28th we will be meeting about 5:00 pm at Bonander's for the Bar-B-Q.

—There will be parking for those that brought two vehicles and want to leave one at Bonander's. Saturday, Joel wants everyone to meet at the Courthouse Park by 6:30 am.

—I think I'll get there just to see if Joel is there at 6:30.

—The final car show meeting will be 6:30 April 20th at Carl's Junior at Willow & Shaw.

As there was no more business to discuss, the attendance drawing was done. The winner is once again Mr. Glen Igo. And as before, Glen was not in attendance. Next month \$10 more will be added to the pot.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Dennis Schwarz



order. This appears to be the one and only way you could get a Firebird convertible. You could not visit the ASC manufacturing facility and say—here's my Firebird, please convertible it. To get the official conversion you had to order through a dealer. As previously mentioned the average cost for this conversion was around \$5000. I don't fully remember what car prices were during these years but I think \$5000 was a pretty good chunk on top of the purchase price. In about four months your limited edition Firebird convertible would arrive at the dealer.

One of the areas that make it difficult to track the history of this process is that GM did not officially denote these cars as convertibles. Checking VIN's on one of these vehicles would do nothing but verify it as a Firebird coupe. You could visit the door jamb and see if the ASC tag was still there but that could be missing. To attempt to fully verify that you have the "official convertible" you could go to ASC, but they really only have a less than accurate listing of VIN's of cars that were converted. This is another area of controversy. There seems to be about a 20% variance in the number of authorized conversions between what GM says and ASC has accounted for. The numbers that appear most accurate are as follows.

	Firebird	Camaro
1987	173	955
1988	104	4605
1989	330	6473
1990	???	5394

Looking at the very limited number of firebirds produced I think I can see a future for them in the collector car world. What is interesting is that they're fairly difficult to find but they're still cheap to buy. This might be interesting to follow over the next few years.

CRUISE TO KRAGENS

by Joel Garrett

Last month Dennis Schwarz had been in contact with the manager of a new Kragen auto parts store. The store manager was planning a Grand Opening event and invited the members of the Pontiacs of Central California to display their cars.



After meeting up at the corner of Ashlan and West streets, approximately nine cars caravanned to the new Kragen location at Ashlan and Blythe. We had a designated area of their parking lot to display our cars with a nice grass area to set up our chairs and our club banner. The weather was great and we were treated to snacks, soft drinks, and then a pizza lunch.

There was a live radio broadcast from the location, and a very nice free raffle where many nice items were given away.

Dennis also was able to have the manager of the store donate some raffle prizes for our car show. Thanks to Dennis Schwarz for organizing a great POCC activity.



Automotive News

Pontiac will drop the GTO this year.

Jamie LaReau

February 21, 2006

DETROIT — General Motors has told Pontiac dealers that it will discontinue the GTO coupe at the end of this



model year. GM will make the last deliveries of the vehicle to dealers by the end of September, sources close to Pontiac say.

GM will produce 10,000 to 12,000 more GTOs before dropping the nameplate, one source close to the situation says. Last year, Pontiac sold 11,590 GTOs compared to 2004 when it sold 13,569. That's a 14.6 percent drop.



When Pontiac launched the GTO in 2003, it projected 18,000 annual sales. The

vehicle was criticized for bland styling, and some fans of the original GTO complained that it lacked nostalgic styling cues.

A Pontiac spokesman confirms the GTO will be discontinued after the 2006 model year.

"There are some changes in the federal regulatory standards. One is an airbag deployment standard that would require some very expensive re-engineering of the car," says Jim Hopson, Pontiac spokesman. "Since the architecture of this car is being phased out around the world it's not economically feasible to continue this car."

Pontiac will continue to build the GTO through the end of May, Hopson says. The last "boatload will hit the ground in June", he adds.

The GTO first came to dealerships in December 2003 as a 2004 model, Hopson says.

The GTO is built on a rear-wheel drive architecture from GM's Holden division in Australia. The present model is going out of production as GM constructs the new Zeta RWD architecture, says the source.



There is no replacement coupe planned at this time and because of the strong Australian and weak U.S. dollar, the GTO had to be priced thousands over where GM originally wanted it — in the mid-twenties, the source says. "It never did as much volume as we had hoped," the source says.

Pontiac is considering a replacement in the lineup for a RWD performance vehicle, but does not have anything to announce yet, Hopson says.

The GTO suggested retail price starts at \$31,990, including shipping. One GM source says, "the 2005 and 2006 were pretty well sold out, and sales were especially strong in areas of GM weakness, like Southern California. It's a shame it has to go — for now."

You may e-mail Jamie LaReau at jlareau@crain.com



Upcoming Events

(POCC Club events are in bold).

POCC monthly meetings are held at the Denny's at 710 West Shaw in Clovis. Order dinner between 6:00 and 6:30, meetings start at 7:00 pm.

Meeting location changed for May. See new location and details on page 7.

May:

8th: Monthly Meeting; Meet in the banquet room at Applebee's for the May meeting only. Dinner at 6:30pm, meeting at 7 to 8:30pm.



14th: Mother's Day

20th & 21st: Hughson Fruit & Nut Festival. From 9am to 4 pm each day. Contact Hughson Fruit & Nut Festival Office at (209) 883-2800 for more information.

June:

12th: Monthly Meeting; Meet in the banquet room at Denny's, 710 W. Shaw Ave. Clovis CA. 559-298-8706. Dinner at 6:30pm, meeting at 7 to 8:30pm.

16th: 6th Annual 50's in the Park Classics Car Show at Chowchilla Veterans Park from 4:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Entry fee of \$25.00. Contact Chowchilla Chamber of Commerce at 559 665-5603 for more information.

24th: 7th Annual Bonander Car Show: Show runs 2 to 9pm. Registration is \$20.00 "pre", and \$25.00 day of show. It

will be at Bonander's Turlock store, 231 South Center Street.

June 27 to July 2: The 2006 POCI National Convention in Ontario, California. For more information contact Kate Santoro at 1-714-854-9852 or email poci2006@sccpoci.com with "2006 Convention" as the subject. Registration form in .pdf format at <http://www.sccpoci.com/images/events/sccpoci2006registration.pdf>

July:

10th: Monthly Meeting; Meet in the banquet room at Denny's, 710 W. Shaw Ave. Clovis CA. 559-298-8706. Dinner at 6:30pm, meeting at 7 to 8:30pm.

22nd: Mid Summer Nites Classic Car & Truck Show for Charity. Proceeds will benefit Hughson FFA. 4pm to 10 pm at Hamilton's Main Street Diner in Hughson. Contact Dennis (not a POCC Dennis) at (209) 883-4138 for more information.

?rd: Summer BBQ. TBD!

August:

14th: Monthly Meeting; Meet in the banquet room at Denny's, 710 W. Shaw Ave. Clovis CA. 559-298-8706. Dinner at 6:30pm, meeting at 7 to 8:30pm.

September:

11th: Monthly Meeting; Meet in the banquet room at Denny's, 710 W. Shaw Ave. Clovis CA. 559-298-8706. Dinner at 6:30pm, meeting at 7 to 8:30pm.

?th: Ronald McDonald House

For Sale

1955 Pontiac items for sale. '55 Pontiac bumper/grill guard. It is in original condition, but it does bow down some in the middle but no rust, no cracks or splits or pitting. Asking \$300. Perfect set of 1955 Pontiac Chieftain 2 door hardtop stainless trim. It does need to be polished, but this trim is PERFECT! No dents, scratches, dings, cracks, nothing. Asking \$400. Email Rob Radcliffe at chopt50@msn.com for more info.

Tempest, GTO & LeMans 1964 to 1967 parts. Left & right fenders, some trim, lenses and miscellaneous parts. Call Andy Hoff at (559) 298-4527 for complete list and prices.

Weather striping, seat covers, head liners, sun visors, seat belts and carpets for most makes and models. Call Dennis Baker, (559) 322-8441.

Miscellaneous 69 Firebird parts. Convertible brackets, pump and cylinders. Hood, tail lights, dash, grills, rear seat springs and console. Also a 66 GTO rear bumper and miscellaneous trim. Call Victor Weitzel at (559) 692-2900.

1968 Hurst Olds. Needs restoration. \$8,900. Call Dennis Baker at (559) 322-8441.

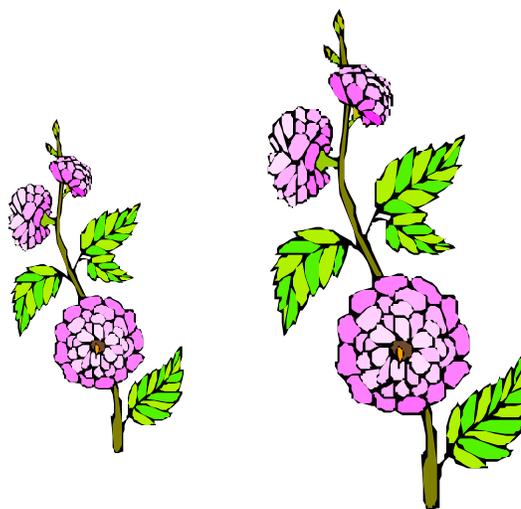
1976 Formula Firebird, 95% restored. Pictures at photos.yahoo.com/gearheads1967. Contact Victor Weitzel at 559-692-2900 or ipw@sti.net.

Four 15 x 7 snowflakes, \$400 OBO. A P.O.P. 12 bolt, 323 none posi. Contact Victor Weitzel at 559-692-2900 or ipw@sti.net if interested.

1964 GTO (California Black Plate/numbers matching) going up for sale this Spring. I am looking for either a 1969 GTO Judge or a 1968 GTO 400 HO. Call or e-mail Les Paciorek at 1-740-543-8861 or loggy@mindspring.com

Newest Member

Our newest member is Paul Castro, along with his wife Kara. They join us with their 1969 Pontiac Firebird convertible. In addition to the Firebird they also own a 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Z28. Be sure to welcome Paul and Kara at the next meeting or event. This brings our current membership up to 29.



Meeting Location Changed for May

It looks like Denny's is remodeling again. They say from May 1 to May 8. I'm guessing that means they will be closed on our meeting night of May 8. Therefore I've scheduled a room at Applebee's for our May meeting. This Applebee's is just east of the Denny's where we regularly meet. It's just east of Minnewawa on Shaw, in front of Rodeo lanes. It would be nice if everybody would order something from the menu to help support our use of the room but if you don't want to, no big deal. The meeting is at the regular time. See you all there, Bill Richards.

PONTIACS



Pontiacs of Central California (POCC) is a club for owners and lovers of Pontiacs. The club members range from young guys and gals to old guys, who own all types of Pontiacs from the Muscle to the Luxury cars. A few members don't even own Pontiacs, they simply like them. Club dues are \$24 per calendar year or \$2.00 per month for the remainder of any calendar year. Members must also join the Pontiac/Oakland Club International (POCI). POCI dues are \$31 per year and includes a subscription to the POCI monthly magazine - "Smoke Signals". The magazine alone is worth the \$31. It's full of interesting Pontiac stories, tips on doing Pontiac things, as well as free advertising for members. Since this magazine goes out world wide, it is a great place to find parts or that special Pontiac you have been searching for.

Pontiacs of Central California Officers for 2006

President	Bill Richards	431-8742 bgrichards@sbcglobal.net
Vice Pres.	Carl Smith	834-4933 gorillaspad@webtv.net
Secretary	Dennis Schwarz	323-1064 gtohorman2c@aol.com
Treasurer	Bill Truckell	226-4049 billtruckell@abcgloba.net
Activities	Joel Garrett	292-9130 calbug61@aol.com
Newsletter	Sam Fisher	664-9431 fisher_s@comcast.net
Webmaster	Brian Massey	645-8018 bjmassey@bigfoot.com

(All area codes are 559-)

Club meetings are held the second Monday of each month at the Denny's restaurant at 710 West Shaw in Clovis. Meetings start at 7:00 pm. Please feel free join us.



Sam Fisher
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May 2006

