

# ARKANSAS PONTIAC ASSOCIATION

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www.arkansaspontiacs.org

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## Big Chief's Corner

### Why APA is Here Today

I'm trying to find a way to say how gratified I feel by the turnout at our first meeting. The Arkansas Pontiac Association is now official. An estimated 35 Pontiac enthusiasts, driving cars that ranged from vintage 50's Ponchos to the latest offerings from our Detroit benefactor, rolled into Lake Willastein Park on that gorgeous fall afternoon. If you weren't there, you missed a super day and some great Pontiacs.

I began tossing around the idea of a car club shortly after I moved to the Little Rock area. It was hard to decide what form this club should take. My love is for Pontiac muscle cars in particular and all muscle cars in general. Should I try to start a muscle car club? What about a general interest car club? I have a Trans Am so how about an F-body club?

None of those ideas seemed to fit and here's why. I've been in the car hobby for several years. I've attended my share of car related events. The greatest people I've ever met in the car hobby are, hands down, Pontiac people. Old Pontiac, muscle Pontiac, new Pontiac, it didn't matter. These people are the salt of the earth.

I'll offer you an example. Jerry Spradlin of Conway was on his way to our meeting with his wife Velma in their pristine, 1957 Chieftain. Conway is a short distance up I40 from Maumelle so Jerry elected to drive rather than trailer the car in. Unfortunately, the car broke down a short way from the park.

Jerry and Velma hitched a ride into the park and located me. He explained their predicament. It was impossible for me to leave because people were arriving to register for the club. I looked around and Bryan Blocker was close. I didn't have to ask twice. Bryan, Jerry and Velma borrowed my pickup truck and went to rescue the car.

A short time later, I was thrilled to see them pulling into the parking lot. The mighty chief was wounded but fighting on.

It was impossible for me to see exactly what happened next. I was very busy checking arrivals in at the registration table as one after another fabulous Pontiac pulled in. What I can say is that I saw more than one head under the hood of that vintage Poncho. It appeared that getting Jerry's Chieftain back on the road had become the cause of the day. Needless to say, after some shade tree diagnostics and a new set of points, Jerry was back in action.

Now, here's the kicker. As Jerry and Velma prepared to leave, Jerry reached in his back pocket to pay me for the gas they used in my truck. I refused his offer and told him he could return the favor one day but my point is, how many folks do you know who would have offered to begin with? I know about 35 of them and they were all at our first Arkansas Pontiac Association meeting.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

After this column was completed, I was contacted by Jerry. It seems they were so impressed with the group that they wanted to contribute something extra to help us be successful. He and Velma talked it over and decided they would pay the \$75.00 to get our website started. A special thanks to them for the help.



Newly elected club president, Chris Ritter (right) speaks to the members during the first meeting of the newly formed Arkansas Pontiac Association.

## First Meeting Big Success

*They came from as far away as Marion and Prattsville to participate in the first meeting of the Arkansas Pontiac Association which took place on Sunday, October 21, at the lake Willastein Park in Maumelle, AR. An estimated 35 people joined in to help form the new club.*

Arriving participants were asked to check in at a registration table so application forms could be filled out. After checking in, they were free to roam the park, enjoying the fantastic autumn day and the great selection of Pontiacs on hand. Cars ranged from mid-50's Pontiacs to the latest model GTP/GTX Grand Prix's. 17 different cars were counted.

The first order of business was to elect officers for the group. The new officers are, Chris Ritter, President; Bryan Blocker, Vice-President; Carla Caples, Secretary; David Templeton, Treasurer. Ritter, Blocker and Templeton all reside in Maumelle while Caples lives in Marion.

After some discussion, it was decided that dues will be an annual fee. Dues are set at \$25.00 for family and \$20.00 for an individual. Some dues have been collected

and all who wish to join are expected to be prepared to pay dues at the next meeting.

Club president, Chris Ritter, was asked to start trying to secure a permanent home for the group. He will be reporting, via this newsletter, when and where the next meeting will take place. Monthly meetings, especially during the summer months, were agreed upon.

Ritter is also working to establish a web sit for the group. He had already reserved the URL of www.arkansaspontiacs.org for the group. A rough web site is expected to be in place by the time this newsletter is distributed.

Possible events for the club to sponsor and participate in included a cruise in, poker runs, an annual car show/race, attending other car events as a club and a children's day for the families of the club members. These will be discussed more at the next meeting and committees will be appointed to help support those activities.

Another issue to be decided at the next meeting will be what charity to sponsor. Suggestions include Arkansas Children's Hospital, The Little Rock Zoo, St. Jude Hospital, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Pulaski county and the Arkansas Cancer Research Center. It was the general opinion of the group that one main charity would be sponsored but other charity organizations should be supported.

## Arkansas Pontiac Association schedules second meet

*Holiday pot luck dinner meeting scheduled for December 2nd at clubhouse*

Thanks to the effort of members Wayne and Stacy Major, the Arkansas Pontiac Association has an indoor meeting facility.

The room we will be using for our next meeting is the club house located at the Westland Apartment complex in west Little Rock.

This meeting will be a at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 2 and will feature a pot luck dinner to help celebrate the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday. Those who will be attending are asked to contact club president Chris Ritter so that he can coordinate food. After dinner we ll have a meeting to take care of club business.

To get to the Westland complex: Exit interstate I430 at the Shackleford Road Exit. Go north (towards the river) on Shackleford,



crossing over Markham Street. The next light past Markham is Mara Lynn. Land marks at this intersection include a Kroger grocery on the right and Terry Elementary School on the left. Turn left on Mara Lynn. Go to the first stop

sign. Immediately past the stop sign is an entrance to the Westland Heights apartments on your left. Turn left here. Go to the next stop sign and turn left again. The club house is at the foot of the hill on the right.

Coming soon - Parts exchange, tech tips and a calendar of events.