

## Big Chief's Corner

# It's that time again

Here we go again. It's the end of the year and we have a new slate of officers. I'd like to thank the members for giving me a second term and the opportunity to keep things moving with the Arkansas Pontiac Association.

It's time to go back to work on sponsorship and member dues.

We were fortunate to have five very good sponsors last year. Each of them donated \$100.00 to give our club the funding it desperately needed. I was proud to announce the sponsor trophies in their name at the car show. We couldn't have done it without them.

I'd like to double that number this year. I think we can find ten sponsors, if we all try. We can now point to our tax ID number and explain where we are with our non-profit filing status. That should help.

It is also time to collect dues for the 2003 year. The annual fee is \$25.00 for family and \$20.00 for individuals. This money is used to keep your newsletter coming, the web site running and fund many of our events. Dues will be required by the end of February. Anyone who hasn't paid their dues at that point will be dropped from the rolls and no longer receive the newsletter.

You will find a sponsorship form and membership renewal form in the envelope with this newsletter. I'm sure all of you will help by promptly filling out the membership form and paying your dues as soon as possible.

I'd also ask each of you to take that sponsorship form and ask at least one business to help us. What's the worst that could happen? They might say no, but if they say yes we can expect more money at the end of the year to donate to Children's Hospital.

I realize this is difficult for many of us. Asking someone to sponsor our group is never easy but this is for two very good causes, our car club and Children's Hospital.

Let the sponsor know they get value for the investment. We place their name on our banner, add their name to our sponsors page on the web site (with a link to their web site) and announce them as sponsors of individual trophies at the car show. I'd encourage you to hit those points when talking to prospective sponsors.

Let's all hit the bricks and get the money situation settled. Then we can dedicate ourselves to scheduling the fun for 2003!



There are two things you can count on at an APA pot luck dinner meeting. Good food and good company.

# Food, Awards, Officers Wrap Up Last Meeting

The Arkansas Pontiac Association wrapped up the year's regular meeting schedule with a pot-luck dinner at the newest meet-

ing room at the Arkansas Aerospace Education Center.

After the dinner, President Chris Ritter took the floor and presented certificates of appreciation to the outgoing officers. He also announced the member of the year award winner. That honor went to Velma Spradlin.

New officers were elected. Chris Ritter was re-elected as president, Bruce Rhoads was elected vice-president and Tammy Ritter was elected secretary. Dusty Palmer agreed to

stay on as Treasurer until the work on obtaining a non-profit status for the club was finished and then a special election will be held for his office.

Dusty had reported that the current balance for the APA treasury was \$654.87. After discussion, it was decided that a donation of \$500.00 would be made to Arkansas Children's Hospital on behalf of the club. The

balance will be used to cover club expenses until dues and sponsor fees are collected for 2003.



President Chris Ritter (left) presents Vice-President Bryan Blocker (right) with a certificate of appreciation while Tammy Ritter (center) applauds.

Dusty then reported that the club had been granted a federal tax identification number. This is one of the steps toward our non-profit status.

Ritter reported that he had contacted the Central Arkansas Library administration regarding the use of the meeting room. The club will have use of the room for the year of 2003 unless a special event forces the library staff to use the room.

Ritter brought up the idea of having a club librarian, as suggested by Archie Williams. Ed Cherry suggested that his person also be the club historian. Ritter pointed out that there was already a club scrapbook that Tammy Ritter had been keeping. It was decided that Wayne Major would be the club librarian/historian. He will be responsible for keeping up the scrapbook and pooling printed information provided by club members for shared information.

## APA Puts In Some Track Time At Centerville Drag Strip

Sunday, December 1, dawned clear and cold. Racers from the Arkansas Pontiac Association gathered at the Cracker Barrel in Conway before trekking north to the 1000 foot drag strip at Centerville.

Attending this season ending

session were Paul Crutchfield, Chris and Tammy Ritter, Bryan and Laura Blocker, Daniel Sullivan and his father, Carroll. Ken Trantham, who lives in Russellville, joined the group at the track.

One of the first orders of busi-

ness, after the group arrived at the track, was to set up the grudge match between Tammy and Chris Ritter (see the sidebar story on page two). Other members filled the lanes and began making passes in the test and

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tune portion of the program.

The group was invited to participate in a heads up, street radial class. Most members passed on the offer but Paul Crutchfield lined up and won one round before being eliminated.

Members Ken Trantham and Chris Ritter decided to give the crowd the opportunity to see two of Pontiac's unique power plant creations race each other.

Trantham's Firebird sports a revolutionary, for its time, overhead cam, six cylinder motor while Ritter has the legendary Super Duty 455. Ritter alerted the track officials so the crowd and starter would know what was happening.

The two staged and when the lights went green Ritter gave Trantham a 5 second head start. Trantham never missed a beat. Ritter made a hard charge but didn't have the horsepower to catch Trantham on the top end. Trantham's first generation Firebird was an easy winner over Ritter's car. Ritter is asking for a rematch but will only allow a three second head start the next time the two meet.

Best times for the group were as follows:

**Name - ET - MPH**

- Bryan Blocker - 10.32 @ 99.73
- Paul Crutchfield - 10.84 @ 101
- Chris Ritter - 11.12 @ 96.4
- Tammy Ritter - 11.27 @ 93.8
- Daniel Sullivan - 11.74 @ 88.1
- Ken Trantham - 14.66 @ 70.2



**The pits were full of Pontiacs on Sunday at the Centerville Dragway. The group got a warm greeting from the track personnel and were recognized several times throughout the day over the PA system. Several non-club Pontiac owners stopped by to visit with the group. Hanging out in the pits (left to right) were Daniel Sullivan, his father Carroll and Ken Trantham.**



**Bryan Blocker (helmet) and Paul Crutchfield visit prior to another run by Blocker. Using a recognized mathematical conversion factor, both Blocker and Crutchfield would be running well into the 12 second range on a quarter mile track.**

**Ritter Family Grudge Match Decided**

Tammy had been talking the talk for months. Now the time to back it up was at hand.

After "Wrong Way's" last outing she knew the ropes. As I dry-hopped my car to clear the debris from the tires I saw her roll forward to stage. I eased toward the line while watching her side of the tree. One light, two lights, darned if she wasn't staged and waiting.

I let her cool her jets in the near lane. Slowly, I pre-staged and then lifted the my brake foot to light the second yellow. I wanted to shallow stage because I'd red-lighted on my first pass. There was no way I could let this opportunity be ruined by a foul.

The tree came down. On the third yellow and I lifted the brake foot while beginning to mash the throttle. The green was fully on as I broke from the line. A good, clean start.

Traction had been tricky on my first pass so I was careful not to overwhelm the tires. At about 60 feet the Super Duty found its

legs and I was off.

A quick glance to the right and I could see those black Ram Air nostrils falling behind. The second gear shift gave the back end a quick wiggle. She was a full car length behind now. I let off the gas slightly. There was no need to embarrass her. As she started to close in the 2-3 shift came in and I went to the mat with the gas pedal



again. See you later, honey!

I crossed the line a full car length ahead. She cried foul back in the pits. She said I'd told her to

wait until the light was fully green before leaving. I gave her another shot at it. As a matter of fact, I gave her two more shots at beating me. The final score you ask? Why, 3-0, of course! You know that had to hurt.

Bragging rights have been established for the coming winter months but I won't be resting on my laurels. On that last run I only beat her by one tenth of a second. Sounds like I'd better find some more horsepower!

**WOLE Thoughts**



By Bruce Rhoads

Hello to all you Pontiac lovers, young and old. I was asked by our fearless leader if I could write an article for the newsletter to take some of the pressure off him. So here goes nothing.

First off, let me tell a little bit about myself. It's the least I can do since some of you voted me as club V.P. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Bruce Rhoads, and I come to you from Southern California, where I worked as a chemical processor at Johns-Mansville for 22 years, until it was shut down in June of 2001.

That's when my older brother Bryan and his wife asked me to sell my house and move to Arkansas, so here I am along with my blue 67 GTO.

I was a member of the Inland Empire GTO's for close to 15 years. I served two terms as vice president and two terms as president until the day I left for Arkansas. I have seen the ups and a lot of downs with the I.E GTO Club.

So what makes a successful club? I'm glad you asked. It takes every single person who is reading this newsletter to get involved. Come to the club meetings and let your voice be heard.

If everyone helps out this club will almost run by itself ( Hey Chris, we could be out of a job) .

As far as the newsletter goes, if you have anything of interest, be it car stuff, a family outing, anything you want to share with us, write it up and send it to me or Chris Ritter. Maybe now and then I could pull one of my articles from one of my old newsletters just for the fun of it.

Another fun thing to do for our newsletter... have a feature car of the month. What do you think? Remember this is your club and your newsletter. We welcome your input. Maybe in the off months we can have a house warming party and club meeting at my new home. ( here is where I need the help and input of the ladies )

My next article will be different from this one. I just wanted to let you know who I was and all that good stuff. Oh by the way, congratulations to Tony Stewart and the Joe Gibbs Pontiac Racing Team for winning the Nascar Championship. The bad news is that the Gibbs team is going to Chevys for next year (yuck!) That's just my opinion.

Until next time,  
Bruce

**MEMBER PHOTOS**

As the television commercial says, membership has its privileges. One of those is the right to have photos and some information of your car(s) on our web site.

I'd like to get all club member cars posted on the site as soon as possible. You can send them to me via the internet as .jpg or .eps files or, if you only have prints or negatives and no way to scan them, I can do that for you. Mail it to me. Remember to write something about the car, including modifications. [critter@ardemgaz.com](mailto:critter@ardemgaz.com)  
Chris Ritter  
18 Turquoise Dr.  
Maumelle, AR - 72113

**Mark Your Calendar**

**January 19th**  
Arkansas Pontiac Association  
Regular Meeting  
Aerospace Education Center  
3301 East Roosevelt Rd.  
2 p.m. - Downstairs  
This is the first meeting of the year. We have much to discuss, including upcoming events for the year and what you, the membership, would like to see on the agenda. Come to the meeting and be heard. The officers need input to formulate a plan for the coming year.