

Big Chief's Corner

The Great One?

The GTO, the one that started it all, is back at your local Pontiac dealer. Well, maybe not right this minute but it should be by late this year, according to GM.

The new iteration of the GTO premiered at the Los Angeles Auto Show with none other than Bob Lutz, Vice Chairman of Product Development for General Motors, driving the car on stage. I know, I was watching.

In the cyberage I had a front row seat for the unveiling via a webcast on my computer. There wasn't much fan-fare. A GM official made some general comments regarding the car, a curtain went up and then my eyes bugged out. On the back lot, behind curtain number one, was a collection of vintage GTOs. Out of the middle came a bright red, uh, car.

Then the curtain went back down. WAIT A MINUTE! I'd rather have seen the stuff out back because what was on stage in no way resembled those gorgeous beautys of yesteryear.

The Monaro, I mean GTO, is an imported car from the Holden division of GM in Australia. It is an incredible car in its own right. A true four seater that screams with LS1 power and tons of nice, modern comfort.

That said, the styling stinks. It looks like every other bubble car cruising the highway. Ever notice how it's hard to tell the difference between a Ford, Chevy and Dodge in that intermediate class? Well add the GTO to that list.

Where are the scoops? Where is the hood tach? Where are a multitude of styling cues that could have borrowed from a heritage of performance and given a nod to the fantastic cars of yesterday? Oh, yeah, it has some fender badges on it that look like the old ones but now say 5.7 litre.

GM defends the looks, saying they had less than a year to bring this car to the buyers. Hello! You screw up the styling and you won't have any buyers. Word is that there will be a re-design by 2005. GM is even taking comments via email regarding this. It should have scoops by then.

I'm guessing Lutz doesn't care about the "old school" thinking on this one. Right now he wants to lure the buyers of BMW, Lexus and Mercedes out of the import market and back to GM. He intends to do this with the new GTO and the four door Grand Prix. He has his work cut out for him. I wish him luck.

Meanwhile, have you seen the 2005 Mustang concept car...

Plans for show, cruise ins, racing being made

The January meeting of the Arkansas Pontiac Association set the tone for the coming year. Members provided positive feedback regarding events the APA will participate in during 2003.

Minutes from the previous meeting were read by Tammy Ritter and Dusty Palmer delivered a treasurer's report. Palmer and Chris Ritter explained that a check had not been written to Children's Hospital as was decided at the last meeting. The reason for the delay

was caused by some unexpected last minute expenses including a filing fee for the group's non-profit status and some receipts that Ritter had to be reimbursed for to cover postage and club shirts.

After some discussion it was determined that APA will have \$400.00 left in the treasury after this final accounting. Ritter will contact Children's Hospital regarding how to deliver this money.

Ritter read a letter to the group regarding APA's non-profit status. The IRS is reviewing the group's request and APA should hear something within 120 days.

The availability of an associate membership status was presented by Ritter and Wayne Major. The group agreed that non-Pontiac owners who wish to join the club will be allowed to do so. They will pay the same dues as full members but will have no voting privileges with the group.

The floor was then opened to discussion regarding events for the coming year.

The first event discussed was cruise ins. It was decided to resume our monthly cruise ins beginning in April. A new location with addi-

tional parking will be sought since we had outgrown the Sonic in Maumelle. We will resume using the same format as last year with a meeting prior to the cruise ins. Cruise ins will take place on Sunday afternoons. Ritter asked for a volunteer to chair the work regarding cruise ins. Wayne and Stacy Majors agreed to take charge these events.

Some members expressed a desire to have additional drag racing events this year. Ritter is seeking a chair for this event.

Another car show was a unanimous favorite with the group. Ritter and Bruce Rhoads will chair that event. They intend to have a date set and report to the group regarding this at the next meeting.

Ritter requested input regarding what national shows the group might like to attend in 2003. There were three

major events that topped the list. They were Pontiac Southern Nationals, the POCI National Convention and the Branson Cruise. Anyone interested in attending these events should contact Ritter.

The Poncho Power Tour was another huge favorite with the group. It was agreed that we should attempt another this fall. Ed and Beth Helmstetter will be chairing that event.

Ritter passed out a letter to use with the sponsorship forms and asked that members begin seeking sponsors. Two sponsors, Wescon Machining and Blocker Performance and Restoration have already signed up. Velma Spradlin asked if letters asking for renewal had been mailed to last year's sponsors. Ritter said they had not but he will send them a note to see if they will renew.



Paul Crutchfield adjust the VCR so members could see video highlights from the recent drag racing session by the APA.

Dues, sponsorship needed for club to succeed

Members are reminded that it is time to renew your annual dues. The cost is \$25.00 per family and \$20.00 for an individual.

The club is dependent on those revenues to fund our events, keep our web site running and produce these monthly newsletters for you.

While we welcome mem-

bers at any point in the year we really depend on renewals to give us some indication of what type of budget we will have in the coming year.

Please don't wait. Renew today by mailing your checks and renewal forms to:
Arkansas Pontiac Association
18 Turquoise Drive
Maumelle, AR - 72113

If you no longer have a renewal form, send you name, address, phone number, email address, type of car along with the money to us. We want to verify this information against our current database. Even if nothing has changed, please help us by providing it.

Any member who has not

See Dues, Page 2

Idle Thoughts

By Bruce Rhoads

Hello to everyone in Pontiac land! I'm going to write one newsletter for both The Arkansas Pontiac Association (APA) and The Inland Empire GTO Club (I.E GTO's)

I was sitting at my computer, reading some E-mail and saw that some of the members of the APA were heading to Centerville for a little racing action. The reason I wasn't there is that I was in southern California visiting my Dad and some friends over the Thanksgiving week.

It all started when Bryan (my brother) had one of his truck drivers take a load to California via Las Vegas. Bryan asked Sean (the driver) if he would mind if I rode with him. Sean was totally cool with the idea as long as Keith (my boss and dispatcher of Bryan's trucks) was OK with the it.

I was worried he wouldn't go for it since I haven't been there very long. To my surprise Keith was cool with the idea! So I had to get to the bank, get home, shower, pack, and go! I made a quick call to my dad to give him the good news. Now it's Viva Las Vegas!! Then to California!

You do see a lot of beautiful country when riding in a big rig. We left Little Rock on Friday night and were in Las Vegas by Sunday evening.

It's not easy driving an 18-wheeler through Vegas. We finally found a place to park, and grab some grub, mexican food, of course. We took a short stroll around the casino and then it was time for some shut eye. We had an early load to drop off.

I awoke the next morning to strong, gusty winds. If it's this strong here, I wondered, how bad will it be going down the hill? We made our drop and then it was California time!

I thought we would be heading straight to the Inland Empire, but Sean talked me into taking the load to a brand new Holiday Inn across from Magic Mountain. After the load was

dropped off it was time to head to Ontario, California to meet up with Cheryl (some of you will remember Cheryl from my pool and Christmas parties.)

I don't think Sean was ready for the California traffic. I told him that people in Arkansas couldn't even begin to understand how much there is.

Cheryl made her way to the truck stop and picked me up. She asked me if I was hungry and I replied with a big "Yep"! We went to Rubio's Baja Grill where they serve the fish taco's and Carne~Asada burritos I love (they're almost as good as mine).

Fast forward to the next day. I got my rental car and the first place I went was by my old job site to see if it was still there. Well, it was almost there. The entire warehouse and half the main plant was gone. I sat in the driveway in disbelief. This is where I spent 22 years of my life.

I whipped a U-turn to go to State Farm to say hello to Jan and Nancy. We visited for an hour catching up on old times.

From there I visited Yolanda, who rode to work with me for many years. You should have seen the look on her face when she opened the door. I received a great big hug. Her husband Leon came in a few minutes later and also gave me a big hug.

Yolanda and I talked about all the things that went on at Johns-Manville plant we worked at. Some of it was good stuff, and of course, the bad when it closed.

After leaving I decided to head to Dill's (I.E. GTO club president) house to see what he'd been up to. When Dill saw me he did a double take and gave me a big hug. We did what any red-blooded guy's would do and headed for the garage to see his 66 GTO. He showed me his Wensler dual quad manifold that will be on his 455. The conversation was great, just like old times.

We discussed a lot of things about fast Pontiacs, and club stuff.

I didn't want

the evening to end. Before I left, I met the newest member of the family, Dill and Heather's son, Colt Brandow, who is a few months old. Welcome to the Pontiac family Colt!

The next day I was off to see my Dad and catch up on some father and son stuff. It was great! When I returned to Riverside I stopped by Dill's to say good-bye, knowing I would be leaving California soon. Dill gave Terry Brown a call and told her I was at his house. I think Terry broke the sound barrier getting there.

Terry has something in common with our club president's wife Tammy. They both hot rod around in black, 1998 Ram Air Trans-Ams. Pretty cool, huh?

I showed both Dill and Terry our (A.P.A) club shirt. Both clubs started looking at doing shirts in May. We had our shirts by mid-June. I told them just put the "Tiger" and the 6.5 liter logo on the shirt and be done with it. Spend a little money and do it right.

A couple of hours later it was time to say my goodbyes. It was hard to do. The next evening (Monday) I was back on the truck with Sean and headed back to Arkansas.

I don't think I said a word for the longest time. I was too choked up, leaving the place, and friends I've known for many years. I miss those guys.

The good news is I'm the new vice-president of the A.P.A. and I have a very good President in Chris Ritter to help me out. The old V.P., Bryan Blocker, did a great job at his position, but running his business (Blocker's Performance) has kept him very busy.

So now you have the story on why I wasn't racing at Centerville. Maybe next time.

I want to wish everyone in both clubs a very be-lated but heart felt

HAPPY THANKSGIVING, MERRY CHRISTMAS, AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Dues, continued from page 1

renewed by the next meeting will be dropped from the membership rolls and will no longer receive a newsletter.

Sponsors are equally important to our survival. Each of you were provided a form in last month's newsletter. An additional cover letter is included with this month's newsletter.

It is up to all of the members to contribute towards locating sponsors. The cost and benefits are explained on that form. An additional benefit is being provided this year with the placement of an ad for the sponsor in our monthly newsletter and providing a free copy of it to them.

If there are any questions regarding dues or sponsorship, please contact Chris Ritter at 501-803-9219.

**DON'T DELAY!
RENEW
TODAY!
STAY IN APA!**

Home of the BHVIS
Restoration - Mechanical
Paint - Body

BPR

Blocker's Performance & Restoration, Inc.

501-529-8020

**Wescon
Machining Inc.**



Mark Your Calendar

February 8th

Vilonia Vintage Car Valentine Show and Shine

2:00 to 6:00 p.m. - Vilonia Senior Citizens Bldg.

Hula Hoop, Twist contest and a Karaoke along with awards for best dressed in the 50's style and other awards.

Several club members are planning to attend. Call Chris Ritter - 501-803-9219

February 15th

SLP Customer Appreciation Days

<http://www.slponline.com/cad2003/cad2003.asp>

Texas Motorplex in Ennis, Texas

You have to own an approved car. Check the web site before making any plans.

Racing, car show, burn out contest and more.

February 16th

Regular meeting. 2:00 p.m. at the Arkansas Aerospace Education Center, 3301 E. Roosevelt Rd. in Little Rock. Come in the main entrance and go downstairs. It's the meeting room between the library and theater entrance

March 8th & 9th

Cool Fest Car Show

Simple Pleasures and State Police sponsored to benefit Special Olympics. War Memorial Stadium. Registration - 6:00 - 11:00 a.m. on Saturday 127 classes.

Saturday is for the locals. Sunday is for the out of state low-riders says Larry Powell. Contact Larry Powell at 501-455-3257

They need judges. Anyone feel like volunteering? If so call Chris, 803-9219.

March 14 - 16

Southern Trans Am Regionals

University Mall, Pensacola, Florida. Same bunch that runs the Trans Am Nationals. Dash plaques for first 200, swap meet, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd trophies. Points judging. Entry fee of \$35.00 includes a Tshirt (more for larger sizes). No phone number or web site on this flyer so you'll have to mail them. STARS C/O Mark Parrett 801 South Drive Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547

Arkansas Pontiac Association Membership

We added some new members and I've made corrections. Keep it handy to contact fellow members.

Remember, to stay on the list and in the club, you must renew you dues by February 16th.

DON'T DELAY -RENEW TODAY - STAY IN APA

Eddie Anderson	16817 Raines Rd.	Little Rock	AR	72210	501-455-3515
Bryan Blocker	118 Mirimar	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-851-0612
John Brooks	171 Tower Loop	Lonoke	AR	72086	501-676-2725
Russell Butler	914 West Holland Ave.	White Hall	AR	71602	870-267-1772
Chris Cambron	11416 Davis	Conway	AR	72034	501-541-5249
Paul Crutchfield	343 Highway 291 North	Prattville	AR	72129	870-699-4425
Michael Cherry	271 Stringham Rd.	Searcy	AR	72143	501-742-5756
Marvin Dunnahoo	2044 Horseshoe Loop Rd.	Little Rock	AR	72206	501-888-8084
Lynda Flieg	49 Rosewood Dr.	Beebe	AR	72012	501-882-6070
Claudio Garcia	251 Deer Acres	Cabot	AR	72023	501-843-0731
Richard Griggers	1401 Right of Way Rd.	Augusta	AR	72006	870-347-2474
Bryan Hartje	87 Pine Valley Drive	Conway	AR	72032	501-470-1843
Rob Haynie	8201 Leatrice Dr.	Little Rock	AR	72227	501-223-0420
Ed Helmstetter	715 Trevino Drive	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-851-8370
Ken Hodge	518 Cherry Ave.	Sherwood	AR	72102	501-833-8886
Robin Hood	303 N. Rhoads #23	West Memphis	AR	72301	870-761-5699
James Ireland	7810 Preston Dr.	Little Rock	AR	72209	501-565-1602
Dan Joslin	7 St. Thomas Drive	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-851-1544
James Lane	9016 Leatrice Dr.	Little Rock	AR	72227	501-223-9691
Jonathan Lobb	19 Crepe Myrtle Place	Little Rock	AR	72210	501-455-1175
Wayne Major	3900 North Cedar	North Little Rock	AR	72116	501-758-5840
James Matchett	25 Blackstone Circle	North Little Rock	AR	72118	501-753-6108
Bill May Sr.	106 Elmwood	Sherwood	AR	72120	501-831-0509
Jerry McCraney	4300 W. 16th Street	Little Rock	AR	72204	501-541-5534
Vance Morgan	720 Carter Drive	Marion	AR	72364	870-732-6101
Steve Mosely	16 Riverwood Place	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-851-4407
Dusty Palmer	29 High Trails Dr.	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-851-6191
David Payne	33 Ferncrest Dr.	Little Rock	AR	72223	501-821-3979
John Ramey	P.O. Box 276	Wrightsville	AR	72183	501-397-7545
Brian Ray	13 Shenadoah Cove	Cabot	AR	72023	501-843-0960
Bruce Rhoads	9 Par Drive #10	Little Rock	AR	72210	501-455-9706
Tony Riddick	15015 Claude Dr.	Little Rock	AR	72206	501-888-3096
Frankie Rider II	399 Tower Road	Locust Grove	AR	72550	870-668-3724
Chris Ritter	18 Turquoise Dr.	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-803-9219
Marty Ritter	5310 Prospect Rd.	Jonesboro	AR	72401	501-933-7428
Geoffrey Schwark	450 Deer Creek	Cabot	AR	72023	501-941-2834
Shane Shelton	1820 Eagle Point Way	Benton	AR	72015	501-315-3881
Charles Shirley	117 S. Poplar	Marianna	AR	72306	870-295-3950
Jerry Spradlin	2802 College Ave.	Conway	AR	72032	501-329-5519
Daniel Sullivan	522 Ray Young Rd.	Carlisle	AR	72024	501-920-8950
David Templeton	114 Mirimar Dr.	Maumelle	AR	72113	501-851-0891
Ken Trantham	350 Cagle Rock Circle	Russe			

RENEWAL FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____

ZIP _____ **PHONE (** _____ **)** _____

EMAIL _____ **CAR** _____

Family dues (\$25.00) **Individual dues (\$20.00)** **Renewal...Yes** ___ **No** ___

Mail To:
Arkansas Pontiac Association
18 Turquoise Dr.
Maumelle, AR - 72113