



## Colorado Chapter Pontiac-Oakland Club International

### **COLORADO WIDE TRACKS**

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JUNE 2015



Colorado Chapter Event

June 13, 2015

Cruzin' Havana Show and Poker Run

10 A.M. TO 5 P.M

Let's meet at Lamar's Doughnut Shop at Parker Road and Iliff Avenue at 9 am, have coffee and join the cruise. Lamar's has a big parking lot and is located west of Havana Street and east of Parker Road.

Cruzin' Havana is free and sponsored by the business owners on Havana Street. It runs from The Stampede at Parker and Havana to the Concorde Medical site at 2nd Avenue and Havana. There are five sites: Stampede, Gibby's, Havana Auto parts, Mike Naughton Ford, and Concorde Medical.

Meet at Lamar's Doughnut Shop at Parker Road and Iliff Avenue at 9 am.

### **The July Chapter Event**

JULY 18, 2015

Potluck Cookout/BBQ

@

Rich Galvin's Home

Colorado Springs



**Collector Car Council of Colorado, Inc.**

[www.collectorcouncil.com](http://www.collectorcouncil.com)

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**Minutes of Meeting, 6 May 2015**

The meeting was held at the ColoRODan's clubhouse in Longmont, 209 Kimbark St.

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 pm by President Dick Thompson. Officers in attendance were Dick Thompson, president; Tom Mansfield, 1<sup>st</sup> vice president; Mel Bacon, 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president; Dick Fritz, secretary, and Tom Kay, treasurer. 34 member clubs were represented. Don Whissen of the Denver Model T Club was welcomed back. Don represented the council at legislative hearings for many years. The ColoRODans were thanked for hosting the meeting and for providing snacks.

**Legislative matters:** Leo Boyle was unable to attend.

**Guest Speaker, John Kurowski:** John is organizing the **Cruise with a Vet** event on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 9 am to 1 pm. Veterans are to be given a ride in a collector vehicle (any type) to the Colorado Freedom Memorial. The event will have a \$25 entry fee to raise funds for the Memorial. Pre-registration is required. John can provide information about veterans who would appreciate the chance to take part. For registration, or to get more information, contact John at 303-972-8680, [john@kurowski.com](mailto:john@kurowski.com), or [www.cruisewithavet.org](http://www.cruisewithavet.org). This could be a good club activity.

**Guest Speaker, Ron Douglas:** Ron is with the Pit Rally organization that is involved with auto speed events at Front Range Airport, and they are putting on the War Bird aircraft and car show at FRA on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The management of Front Range Airport has changed completely since the CCCC put on the swap meet in conjunction with the air and auto show in 2013. For information about the War Bird Show, call 303-586-1258.

**Guest Speaker, Rob Endter:** Rob outlined the events that are part of the "Speed Gone Wild" weekend. This will include driving skills competition, car show at Boulder County Fairgrounds, Cruise night in Longmont, CanyonBall Rally, and conclusion at the Oskar Blues Brewery. Details on line at [speedgonewild.com](http://speedgonewild.com).

**Bill Wagner:** Bill, a past president of the Old Car Council and co-founder of the Colorado Classic Thunderbird Club has died. There were no services. Bill was a good friend to all car enthusiasts.

Minutes of the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting were approved as published.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Tom Kay submitted balances as of April 30th:

Operating Account:	\$ 1662.37
Govt.Relations Account:	\$ 5674.40
Cruise Account:	\$ <u>50.45</u>
Total, 2015 Accounts:	\$ <u>7387.22</u>
Reserve:	<u>\$24796.03</u>
Total:	\$32183.25

A total of 48 clubs have renewed for 2015.

**Shirley Zaner Memorial:** Approximately \$400 has been collected (plus an unknown amount sent directly) to be sent to the Studebaker National Museum in memory of Shirley and her work on behalf of the car collector hobby.

**Club Charitable donations:** Dick Thompson reported that Colorado club donations to charitable causes have totaled over \$165,000.

**Grocery Cart Races to benefit Comitis Shelter in Aurora:** This fun and fund-raising event will be held May 12<sup>th</sup> at the Safeway store, 1677 S.Havana St. in Aurora. CCCC is hoping to raise a team to compete again. *Note: CCCC had to cancel its entry when not enough team members were recruited.*

**Cruzin' Havana June 13<sup>th</sup>:** Mecum Classic Car Auctions will hold the Denver auction June 26 & 27. Their promotional trailer will be parked at one of the Cruzin' Havana sites. Mecum will be one of the sponsors for Cruzin' Havana. We need T-shirt sizes for site volunteers and quarter page ads from participating clubs as soon as possible. **A Change:** The Friday night (June 12) VIP **dinner** will be held at the Havana Machine shop meeting room, 840 S.Havana in Aurora instead of the Radisson Hotel.

**First Responders Tribute, incl. Colfax Cruise, September 12, 10 am – 5 pm:** Denver's Channel 9 News will be the media sponsor which should be great for publicity. There will be a police and fire equipment display at Denver's East High School and the car show and cruise site will be at Mile High Stadium. This will be a significant time for recognition of Denver's First Responders.

**Lincoln College of Technology:** Dick Thompson is working on a partnership with Lincoln Tech which would include promoting car events where we have mutual interests such as forming a car club and putting on events. There may be an opportunity to hold a swap meet at their location (I-70 & Peoria in Aurora) in conjunction with their annual car show. Dick is also looking into establishing a scholarship.

**Avoiding late registration fees:** For vehicles with a title but undergoing restoration one option to avoid the late registration fee is to pay the ownership tax. To do this, one should go to the Colorado Dept. of Revenue office at 1881 Pierce St. in Lakewood. This is also the location to inquire about Year of Manufacture and Horseless Carriage plates.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, June 3, 2015, 7:30 pm at the **Havana Machine Shop** location, **840 S. Havana in Aurora.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Dick Fritz, secretary

# Why GM Really Killed Pontiac

Monday April 27th, 2015 / 3:52 PM By Jim Campisano

When Pontiac joined the Oldsmobile and Oakland in the GM cemetery in 2009, there was a lot of outrage among the faithful. The most common cry was, “They should have killed Buick instead.”

GM’s retort was that Buick made a billion dollars a year while Pontiac lost that much. This, of course, was an oversimplification. The other key reason was Buick was huge in China, where its prestige rivals that of Mercedes-Benz to this day. In fact, GM sells more Buicks there than it does in the United States. Had the General killed Buick in this country, it would have severely damaged the brand in the world’s largest market—or so went the corporate logic.

Pontiac was in an interesting state when it was euthanized. Thanks to Bob Lutz, it had unique products that no other GM division sold, the rear-drive G8 and G6 two-door coupe and convertible among them. It also had the Solstice roadster, shared only by the Saturn subsidiary. For better or worse, the Solstice and the G8 were little more than niche vehicles, unable to sustain the division in the long run. Bottom line: In a status- and label-conscious world, the name Pontiac had about as much cache in 2009 as Rambler. And that’s what killed it.

True confessions: I just purchased a used 2009 G8 GT (pictured). It is an outstanding machine and I love it, though it might have the worst name in history—say G8 GT 10 times fast. It’s the best BMW Pontiac ever built, and it tried to construct quite a few over the years. Problem is every time I tell people I bought a Pontiac I get that look normally reserved for the guy whose cell phone is ringing I church. Some seem to feel sorry for me, like I’m being punished for some unknown sin. “What’s that?” is another common reaction.

After Semon E. “Bunkie” Knudsen transformed Pontiac in the late ’50s, it became an aspirational brand, the “Wide-Track” division. Bonneville. GTO. Firebird. Trans Am. In the ’70s, the Grand Prix defined the personal luxury car. Laugh now, but they flew off dealer lots back in the day.

Then came the bad times. Plastic body cladding proliferated (ribbed for her pleasure?). Rebadged Chevy (and Korean) compact cars. Inferior build quality. Minivans. The Aztek. A once proud division became the butt of jokes. No matter how good or interesting its last vehicles were, the Pontiac name had zero equity in the market.

In a way, the brand was ultimately doomed. Having four or five divisions selling essentially the same cars in the 21st century was unsustainable. There’s also infighting in the Pontiac hobby. There’s a vocal camp that doesn’t acknowledge anything built after 1981 because they didn’t have “real” Pontiac engines in them. The third- and fourth-gen Firebird guys are off on their own, and 2004-’06 GTO owners are shunned. Ultimately, Pontiac went away because no one bought its vehicles, including the very folks who professed to love them.

The Pontiac faithful might recoil at the notion of an Australian Poncho, but the G8 was the last great car to wear the arrowhead badge. My only regret is I didn’t spring for a GXP. Could GM have revitalized the brand to the point where it was once again viable? Anything’s possible. Look where Cadillac is now, rivaling the best from Europe in performance and beating them over the head from a styling standpoint. Caddy is once again an aspirational brand, though not yet to the point where GM wants it to be. And that’s a big part of the problem. Status-crazed customers would buy a Yugo for \$90,000 if you put a BMW emblem on the fenders. From what I’ve seen, there was no life left in the Pontiac name. (Many G8 owners add Holden grilles and emblems to their vehicles.)

Why GM Really Killed Pontiac  
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Could Pontiac be resurrected? Anything's possible, but what would be the point? There are too many brands to choose from as it is (with China poised to further dilute the market). Ironically, Mitsubishi, often chided as being the Pontiac of Japan, is teetering on extinction in this country. Perhaps it's best to let this



once-great GM division rest in peace while we enjoy the legacy it left behind.

**Dues Notices** were mail out in April and the response has been good. Dues keep the Chapter going and we appreciate your support. If you have not sent in you 2015 dues, please do.

**Shepler BPOC Car Show** was held Saturday, May 30 and it was excellent. Thanks to John Flathery, John Bauder, RJ Mc Knight, Janice Jensen, Tom Orton, Bret Johnson, and Jim Hume we ran the concession successfully. I will have a summary of the Car Show next

## Firbirds needing a new nest

**For Sale:** 97 Firehawk #70 of 163 made in 1997. Well maintained 2 family owned car. 98% original car with all original parts. LT1 engine, 6 speed trans, gray velour interior. Auburn rear end with AAS aluminum diff cover. 1 of 14 built with extra charge for Sebring Silver paint. Just turned 80K miles, great shape \$8000. Call Alan at 303-775-7831



**For Sale: 1978 Pontiac Trans Am,** Pontiac 400 ci engine, Automatic, 123 k miles. New tires, well maintained and all records available since purchase in 1987. It runs well and needs no major mechanical work. The light blue interior is in great shape except it need a head liner. There is some rust by the fenders and it needs a paint job. Asking \$9000 negotiable.



**For Sale: 1985 Pontiac Trans Am.** Car has a rebuilt 305 engine with 3000 miles and has been well maintained, automatic transmission, spoke wheels. A good project car or driver. Kay (303) 202-0243.



**COLORADO CHAPTER  
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Technical Panel

Bill Arnold (Send e-mail questions to [w.arnold@att.net](mailto:w.arnold@att.net))

**Colorado Chapter POCI Tee Shirts** are available for purchase at \$12 each. All sizes available. To get a tee shirt, contact Gary Canady: [gccanady@comcast.net](mailto:gccanady@comcast.net).

## ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertisements in **Wide Tracks** will be run free for members for a period of **three months**. New or revised ads should be sent to *Colo. Chapter, POCI*, P. O. Box 56, Arvada, CO 80001 or by e-mail to [gccanady@comcast.net](mailto:gccanady@comcast.net).

**For Sale:** 68 Bonneville 2 door HT, 455 ci engine, automatic. Carter Brooks (303) 343-8106. (303) 483-8002.

**Wanted: Ash Tray** for 1979 Catalina Wagon. Brian Davis at [b.e.davis@comcast.net](mailto:b.e.davis@comcast.net).

**Wanted: 1959 Pontiac Gas Cap. Francis, 970 871-0319**

**For Sale: 1977 Gran Prix - 48,000 Original Miles**, One Owner, purchased in California right off the show floor. Runs GREAT, no leaks. Body straight, upholstery in good shape. Contact Lark 303-521-1019 Aurora, CO. \$6,000 negotiable

**Wanted: '57 Chieftain 2 door hard top.** Monty Henkel 303 450-2311

**For Sale. 1988 Chevy Suburban** 350 ci engine, automatic, 4 wheel drive. 80 m miles, runs good and doesn't burn oil. Lousy GM paint. \$ 2500. Gary Canady (303) 632-8727.

**For Sale.** '64 4bbl carb & manifold \$50, 4-15x7 Rallye wheels \$100, 389 crank,'57 short block \$100, '57/'58 AFB carb \$25, '55 Hydramatic \$200, '67/68 Firebird side glass and wing glass, misc. 63 & 64 Pontiac and '67/68 Firebird parts, Chevy Edelbrock Torker 4bbl for small block \$50 Harlan Smith 970-352-6206