

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Don't forget special Kruse Auction meeting on Jan.16@Denny's!

Valley of the Goats

Newsletter of Cactus GTOs Inc. • Phoenix, Arizona
www.cactusgto.com

November-December 2007



Letter from the Editor

Thom Mohr and I had a conversation a few weeks ago about the future of the American automobile—specifically, what it will take to make a good quality, fuel-efficient, performance sedan in America. We talked about the new Pontiac G8 – coming to our shores later in '08 from the Australian 'mates that brought us the GTO. An article in the *Arizona Republic* on Dec. 22 (azcentral.com) details its arrival. A GXP, station wagon, and possible El Camino-type pickup may come over along with the sports sedan in the future.

But GM's decision to import this car begs the question: is there a reason why we cannot design, build, and sell a *U.S.-made* performance sedan?

Next month, my lease ends on my 2005 Pontiac Bonneville GXP. I've had the car for three years and I'm NOT sorry to see it go. It was a great idea – dump the big Cadillac Northstar engine into a full-sized sedan. Spruce it up with some nice bodywork, wheels, and electronic handling gizmos. It was a pretty package for the swan song of the Bonneville.

But looks aren't everything...fit and finish has been a chronic problem, the electronics proved unreliable (sensors, electric mirrors, stereo systems all failed at some point), and at 45,000 miles, my Pontiac technician told me to consider putting in new motor mounts. Why? "Well, it's hot out here in the desert...and that Northstar's a heavy engine..." I declined to spend \$1,200 for new mounts. I told him I think the motor mounts on the Highlighter – my 1970 GTO -- are most likely original – at 110,000 miles. "They don't make them like they used to..." he said. "Maybe they should," I replied. He may have been just selling me some service; but the groaning noise from my front end every time I back up (the car, not me) suggests it might be a real issue.

It may be the last time I get behind the wheel of a new Pontiac (perhaps this is why they created auto leases.) I gave the General a chance; he disappointed. At least I can always say I had my own little Indian tribe for a while....

Hope everyone has a joyful holiday season. The Cactus GTO Holiday Party was great! Thanks Pam and Dave (see Thom Mohr's Prez Letter from Dec. 17). Don't forget to sign up for Kruse!

Dues are due! Annual dues for the Cactus GTO Club membership is \$12. Our dues help to cover the cost of things like the newsletter, club activities, GTOAA memberships, and special events. **Still the best bargain in the automotive universe!** Your \$12 buys you benefits worth several times that (so long as we have Kruse, anyway). Make checks payable to: Cactus GTO's and send to 5546 E. Shangri-la Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85254. **by Jan. 1** You can use the envelopes addressed to Elly. Please mark the \$12 check "dues"

Don't forget! 2008 Cactus GTO Calendars are here!

These beautiful spiral bound calendars make great gifts for friends, family...or you! Cactus GTO Club member price is \$10.50. If you have ordered some, make arrangements with Thom Mohr and Tony DeAngelo to pick them up.



From the Driver's Seat...

This month, I want to talk about the wonderful work we are doing with our fellow muscle care enthusiasts from the First Generation Camaro Club. You can check out the progress and pictures on this project at www.camaros.net. Click on the Camaro Project Iraqi Veteran link in the top-center of the page. That link is <http://www.camaros.net/veteran/225.jpg> More info on <http://www.camaros.net/forums/showthread.php?p=900153>. Some of the text below comes from the First Generation Camaro Club.

This is a special project for Corporal Jared Foster, a 24-year-old Iraq war veteran, who was severely wounded during his tour. His wounds were such, that he will have a permanent disability for the rest of his life. He does have the ability to stand and walk; however it will not be an easy journey. Corporal Foster has been undergoing many surgeries and intense rehabilitation for almost two years now.

Photos from a recent day at the shop...



He bought what can best be described as nothing more than the shell of a 1968 Camaro coupe. His hope was to build a nice car for himself, but the effects of his injuries make it difficult for him to do "those car tasks" that require good physical agility. His wounds won't keep this good man down. He's been trying to do as much as he can on his project---sandblasting, wire brushing parts, clean-up, etc. But it's some of the other aspects of working on a car that are a problem, such as leaning, crawling underneath, working under the dash, etc. He is also realizing that he has taken on a major project, one that may be more daunting than he realized at first.

Jarred recently approached John Bauler, President of the First Generation Camaro Club here in Phoenix, in search of parts for his Camaro. Upon getting acquainted with Jarred and examining the car, it was found to need a great deal of parts, as the car did not have an engine, adequate running gear, interior, body trim, wiring, etc. It was also discovered that this car needs much of its sheet metal replaced.

Upon getting more acquainted with Corporal Foster, John Bauler quickly realized that Jarred would probably not be able to complete this car anytime soon, due in part to his physical disability... John decided to approach the club and ask them if they were willing to assist in taking on this project, as a way of thanking this young veteran.

The club was more than willing to accept this challenge and ... a group of people from the First Generation Camaros of Arizona, the Cactus GTO Club, and a few Chevelle club members are coming together to assist in any way possible on this project. As a token of thanks to the Corporal, everyone has been very eager to assist, by providing parts, labor and financial support as needed.

Corporal Foster is unaware of the contribution aspect of the project at this time, and the clubs supporting this project are intent on making it a "surprise unveiling" for him at a later date. This is a local version of the hit TV show "Overhaulin" if you will. We want to give him the car of his dreams.

Many used and gently used parts have been donated thus far. Thanks to each of you that have done so. It really helps. We are getting donations and calls from all parts of the country---NJ, TX, IL, MA, CA, FL, AL, WA, and British Columbia!!!! Thanks to those of you that have donated your money time and efforts - we'll keep you posted as the project.

Thanks again on behalf of Corporal Jared Foster and First Generation Camaros of Arizona and the Cactus GTO club. For more information on helping on this important project, contact Lance Baker at 480.229.5691.

Other important notes - KRUSE AUCTION: Don't forget to sign up to help at the Kruse auction (dates are Jan. 24-27 at the Arizona State Fairgrounds). More info is available at <http://www.kruse.com/home/main.asp> and <http://www.kruse.com/auctions/index.asp> For the benefit of our new members who may not be aware of it, Cactus GTO's has provided auction car driving services to the Kruse auction for almost 20 years. This is our club's only real fund-raising event, so it is critical to us. It is also an opportunity to get up close & personal with a huge variety of collectable cars. The great variety of cars makes this a truly

unique event - your day at the auction might look like: drive a '69 GTO up to the staging area.... jump into a Rolls Royce and take it across the auction block... try to figure out how the start an immaculately restored Model A Ford and drive it to where it needs to be... go get that '32 Ford highboy roadster with the big block Chevy and take it back to it's parking spot. Oh, yeah... help tow that '35 Ford "barn find" across the block, too :-)

I still have openings for leadership positions and of course people who want to drive. If you'd like to talk about what's involved, please feel free to call me at 480-991-6106.

- Remember the Memories on Main Street Cruise in Mesa on November 9? It was a great success and a sponsor has come forward for a repeat event - scheduled for Friday, March 14! Details are still being worked out. Mark your calendar and spread the word.

I invite your comments and questions thomohr@cox.net or 480-991-6106

*Thom Mohr
Club President*

Legislative News for the Auto Hobby

From SEMA's Driving Force newsletter, December 2007

“It Was a Very Good Year”

Efforts By SAN Members Score Legislative Victories Across the Country in 2007

The cooperative efforts of both automotive hobbyists and members of the specialty-equipment industry who participate in the SEMA Action Network (SAN) continue to score numerous legislative victories across the country. In 2007, SAN acted on a broad range of legislative and regulatory issues critical to vehicle hobbyists that led to the overhaul of existing statutes and created brand-new programs to safeguard and expand the specialty-equipment aftermarket. The SAN's efforts have also resulted in the defeat of several adverse and poorly formulated measures.

“With the eyes of government firmly focused on our hobby, lawmakers continue to introduce new legislation that impacts the automotive specialty aftermarket,” said Steve McDonald, SEMA's vice president of government affairs. “Our successes in 2007 once again demonstrate the benefits and importance of active hobbyist involvement across the country.”

Some highlights from western states...

*****Arizona New Car Exemption***:** SAN-supported legislation that would allow the state to adopt rules exempting new vehicles from the emissions inspection program was approved by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Janet Napolitano. The emissions exemption applies to new vehicles for the period before the sixth registration year after the initial purchase or lease.

Special Note: AZ auto hobbyists also won a victory this year in emission exemptions for vehicles of historic value. Any vehicle at least 15 years old and that is insured by a collector car insurance company is exempt from vehicle emissions. The state counts about 7,000 vehicles that meet the stipulations for exemption. Also, motorcycles in Pima County are exempted (all years; state estimate is about 6,200). Motorcycles in Maricopa County had been part of the original legislation, but the DEQ determined that exempting the 22,000 motorcycles registered in Maricopa County would have a negative impact on air pollution. ***Special thanks to the Arizona Automobile Hobbyist Council and its club members (including Cactus GTOs) and Board of Directors who pushed this through.***

Other bills passed in the 2007 legislature:

HB 2051 - Motorcycle safety fund / current bill removes the \$150,000 cap from the motorcycle safety fund. / Signed 5/1/07

HB 2753 - vehicle impoundment and immobilization / makes changes to current statutes for vehicles operated by persons without valid driving privilege. / Signed 7/02/07

SB 1531 - vehicle emissions inspection; sunset extension / continues the vehicle emissions inspection program until 2019. / Signed 5/1/07

*** *Keep up to date on legislative news impacting our hobby! Go to www.azautohobbyist.com*

California Annual Inspection: SAN-opposed legislation that threatened to require annual Smog-check inspections for vehicles 15 years and older was defeated. The bill also would have required that funds generated through the additional inspection fees be deposited into an account that can be used to scrap older cars.

California Gas Guzzlers: SAN-opposed legislation to establish a progressive surcharge tax on newly purchased “gas guzzlers” was defeated. The surcharge on a new vehicle would increase to \$2,500 based on the volume of carbon emissions. Collected funds would be used in part to underwrite discounts for hybrids and electric cars.

Montana Exhaust Noise: SAN-sponsored legislation to permit vehicles with modified exhaust systems that do not emit an excess of 95 decibels as measured by SAE test standard J1169 was signed into law by Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer. Under the SAE standard, a sound meter is placed 20 inches from the exhaust outlet at a 45-degree angle, and the engine is revved to three-quarters of maximum rated horsepower. The highest decibel reading is then recorded.

Montana Collector Items: Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer signed SAN-supported legislation that would clarify that collector vehicle owners must pay only a minimal one-time registration fee into law. Under Montana law, collector vehicles must be more than 30 years old and not used for general transportation.

Nevada Replicas: A version of SEMA-model legislation to create a registration category for replica motor vehicles was signed into law by Governor Jim Gibbons. Under the bill, replicas

are defined as vehicles manufactured after 1968 to resemble vehicles manufactured before 1968. Replicas will be exempted from all emissions-inspection requirements applicable to other vehicles in the state. Registration as a replica vehicle will be open to 100 such vehicles each year and use will be limited to occasional transportation and other hobby-related activities.

Wyoming Street Rods/Customs: Prior to the Legislature's adjournment, SEMA-model legislation to create vehicle titling and registration classifications for street rods and custom vehicles was approved by the full Wyoming House of Representatives and the Senate Transportation Committee. Due to time restrictions, the bill was not considered by the full Senate and will be reintroduced in 2008. The bill defines a street rod as an altered vehicle manufactured before 1949 and a custom as an altered vehicle at least 25 years old and manufactured after 1948. Under the measure, kit cars and replica vehicles will be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.

For the Record...

Cactus GTO Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 28, 2007

Meeting brought to order by Vice Pres. Bill McCoy – at Denny's, 7:05 pm
24 members in attendance

Returning member: Charlie Miller – finally completed his move from the east coast!

Treasurer's report – N/A

Secretary's report – September meeting minutes were accepted as posted (there was no meeting in October)

Member introductions –

Bill McCoy gave a status of the restoration on his 1965 GTO coupe. The car is in primer and being block sanded.

Bill McCoy's 1970 Formula Firebird is the cover feature car in the February 2008 issue of *High Performance Pontiac*. The issue is available now and Bill had a copy he shared with the members.

2008 Club Calendars - First batch are in! Some were distributed to those in attendance. A second bulk order is planned so please contact Thom or Bill to reserve yours. The cost will be \$10.50 each. If your car was featured in the calendar, you get one copy free!

Board and Officer Elections -

The current slate of officers has volunteered to remain for another year. Each position was called and accepted by majority vote:

President – Thom Mohr
Vice President – Bill McCoy
Treasurer – Elly Mohr
Secretary – Tony D’Angelo

Two new board members were nominated and accepted:

Charlie Miller
Kevin Akbari

Current board members remaining in term are:

Murray Nevin
Bob Paris
Jim Zeivel
Dan Huskisson
Mark Neumann

Bill mentioned that the Board had raised the recommendation to change the current officer election month from December to May. Similarly, board member terms should be staggered such that the entire roster is not rotated out at a single election point. In general this was agreed but no formal vote was taken. The club by-laws would need to be updated if these changes are formalized.

Activities –

Yarnell breakfast cruise – smaller turn out than would have liked but a good time was had.
Fall picnic – Steak fry with the Desert Renegades. Only 3 Cactus GTO members attended; will try and plan more in advance next year.
Adopt-a-highway – also a smaller turn out than would have liked but the job got done.

Bill McCoy took a member poll for preference of activities on Saturday vs. Sunday and the result was about 50%

Upcoming Activities –

Second Saturday night of each month – Pontiac night at the Pavilions, Scottsdale
December 2 – Toyz for Totz cruise to Wickenburg
December 16 – Club Christmas party

Please RSVP Thom if you would like to attend

January 24 – 27, 2008 – Kruse auction, AZ State fairgrounds
February 22-24 - NHRA Nationals at Firebird Raceway

Poll of members interested in attending was few, especially when it was mentioned that day passes are \$25 for Friday, \$45 Saturday and \$80 Sunday!

February 24, 2008 – AAHC show at Sanderson Ford
April 5 - Pontiac Heaven X
April 6 – Muscledar Heaven #5
BOP show – no word to date.

July 15 – 19, 2008 – GTOAA International Meet, Sarasota Springs NY

Bill McCoy will look into a spring event at Rock Springs
Jim Zeivel will coordinate a club trip to the Kingman Air and Car show in October 2008.

The December club meeting will be cancelled; instead we'll meet on the 16th at the Christmas party.

The January 2008 meeting will be held earlier in the month to prepare for the Kruse auction. Meeting date to be announced.

Kruse –

Communications are slow as usual however preliminary word is that the Cactus GTO club will be doing the driving again for 2008.

If you would like to work the auction please contact Secretary Tony D'Angelo at dangeloinAZ@AOL.com and mention which dates and times you can be available. Please provide the names of any helpers you would be bringing. A schedule will be developed for the January meeting.

Food – There was some discussion around what we should do here. There was some concern about the amount of leftovers last year (pre-made sandwiches) and some people have issues with open containers (cold cuts and rolls). We could purchase lunch from a local Subway or similar. Also need to decide about coffee-and in the mornings.

Communications-

Club communications will now feature the Prez's letter, a weekly message to the members to cut down on the number of emails. The club newsletter will continue and will try to get onto a regular publication schedule.

Technical Advisors –

Jim Zeivel and Mark Delano will be new club technical advisors. Matt Luster also volunteered as an additional advisor.

Club Logo Shirts –

Charlie Miller presented some products that were made for the car club in his association. Printed T-shirts (\$8), embroidered golf shirts (\$25 plus \$1 for a pocket) and hats (\$12) could also be made. This particular supplier does not require a large minimum order. There will be a set-up cost dependent upon the complexity of the logo. The club will need to determine which products to order (T-shirts, golf shirts, both, pocket, etc.) and which logo to use. There was substantial interest in using the "old" logo.

If you have an opinion regarding shirt style, color and logo please email Charlie at cmiller@seboardmiller.com, or Thom at thomohr@cox.net.

Charities -

The results of member voting per the ballot distributed, was that the club will contribute \$250 each to the St. Mary's food bank and Toys for Tots organization. Thanks go

out to Bob Paris and Matt Madonna of the charity contribution committee for collecting member input.

Kevin Akbari discussed the Jackie Hartman Memorial Foundation. On February 16, 2008 there will be an event, the first **Community Spirit Celebration**, in memory of Jackie Hartman. Proceeds of the event will be used by the Foundation to assist families in their search for missing loved ones and to provide nursing scholarships in Arizona.

Donations for this event are being accepted up to January 16, 2008. Club participation in this event will be discussed at the next board meeting.

50/50 – First drawing for a Pontiac logo carry bag was won by Bob Paris. Second drawing for a combination die cast and plastic model 1964 GTO was won by Ray Gatz, and the final drawing for cash was won by Jim Zeivel. The total kitty was \$21.

Special Presentation by Steve Barcak –

Desert Renegades club President Steve Barcak gave a presentation of his cross country trip this fall. Steve drove his 1972 GTO 11,000 miles over 7 weeks delivering cars and parts while meeting family, friends and business contacts for his Pontiac Heaven event. Steve had literally a couple of hundred photos of the people and sites he visited and gave a very interesting and entertaining account of his travels which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone in attendance. Thanks Steve!

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Your Cactus GTO Club Leaders – 2008

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