

SILVER STATE

Volume 22, Issue 6

# PontiAction

## PONTIAC HISTORY

### PONTIAC HISTORY CONTINUES

#### Pontiac 1971-1989

Increasing insurance and fuel costs for owners coupled with looming Federal emissions and safety regulations would eventually put an end to the unrestricted, powerful engines of the 1960s. Safety, luxury and economy would become the new watch-words of this decade. Engine performance began declining in 1971 when GM issued a corporate edict mandating that all engines be capable of using lower-octane unleaded gasoline, which led to dramatic drops in compression ratios, along with performance and fuel economy. This, coupled with trying to build cars as plush as GM's more luxurious Buicks and Oldsmobiles, contributed to the start of a slow decline of Pontiac in 1971. In mid-1971 Pontiac introduced the compact, budget-priced Ventura II (based on the third generation Chevrolet Nova). This same year, Pontiac completely restyled its full-sized cars, moved



1971 Tempest II



the Bonneville, and replaced it with a higher luxury model named the Grand Ville, while Safari wagons got a new clamshell tailgate that lowered into the body while the rear window raised into the roof.

The 1972 models saw the first wave of emissions reduction and safety equipment and updates. GTO was now a sub-series of the LeMans series. The Tempest was dropped, after being renamed 'T-37' and 'GT-37' for 1971. The base 1972 mid-sized Pontiac was now simply called LeMans.

For 1973, Pontiac restyled its personal-luxury Grand Prix, mid-sized LeMans and compact Ventura models and introduced the all-new Grand Am as part of the LeMans line. All other models including the big cars and Firebirds received only minor updates. Again, power dropped across all engines as more emissions requirements came into effect. The 1973 Firebird Trans Am's factory-applied hood decal, a John Schinella restylized interpretation of the Native American fire bird, took up most of the available space on the hood.



(Continued on Page 3)

## PREZ SEZ:

Like the song says, “Good night, sweetheart, well it’s time to go”. And it is my time to go. I have enjoyed being your president the last two years and getting to know everyone a little more. I want to thank our Vice President, Mike Nowicki, Treasurer Jim LeBar and Secretary Terri Schuff for all they have done. Also large kudos to Hugo, Dwala and Cindy for their roles. I am looking forward to our new slate of officers and I will give them all the support I can.

Dale Lowery



It’s going to be a lot of fun at our Christmas Party on December 19 at the Auto Museum. It’s not too late to sign up if you haven’t done so. Hope to see everyone there.

A big thanks to Rhonda Kelly for putting this all together and for all the functions she and Carol Smith have coordinated during my time as President.

So it is time to go!! Thank you and Happy Holidays!

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## EDITOR’S CORNER

PontiAction is the official newsletter of the Silver State Chapter of the POCL. We need members to submit articles, jokes and life experience stories. New members, we would like to hear your car stories. All articles are appreciated. Let me hear from you. **LET’S TALK PONTIAC**. Submissions are due on the **FIRST** day of the month. Submissions received after that will be in the next newsletter. Submit to: [nevadabird@charter.net](mailto:nevadabird@charter.net) **OR** **MAIL TO:** Jacque Lowery, 12520 Westridge Dr., Reno, NV 89511



SILVER STATE PONTIACS

(continued from Page 1)

Also in 1973, the new Super Duty 455 engine ("Super Duty" harkening back to Pontiac's Racing Engines) was introduced. Although it was originally supposed to be available in GTOs and Firebirds, only a few SD 455 engines made it into Firebird Trans Ams that year. One so equipped was tested by 'Car and Driver' magazine, who proclaimed it the last of the fast cars. But the pendulum had swung, and the SD 455 only hung on one more year in the Trans Am.



1975 GrandVille

For 1975, Pontiac introduced the new sub-compact Astre, a version of the Chevy Vega. This was the brand's entry into the fuel economy segment of the market. It was offered through the 1977 model year. 1975 would also see the end of Pontiac convertibles for the next decade.

The 1976 models were the last of the traditional American large cars powered by mostly big block V8 engines. After this year, all GM models would go through "downsizing" and shrink in length, width, weight and available engine size. The 1976 Sunbird, based on the Vega and Monza's equivalent, joined the line. It was

first offered as a Notchback, with a Hatchback body style added in 1977. The Vega Wagon body style was added in 1978. The Sunbird was offered in its rear-wheel-drive configuration through the 1980 model year.

For 1977, Pontiac replaced the Ventura with the Phoenix, a version of Chevrolet's fourth generation Nova. Pontiac also introduced its 151 cubic inch "Iron Duke" 4-cylinder overhead valve engine. It was first used in the 1977 Astre, replacing Astre's aluminum-block 140 cubic inch Vega engine. The 'Iron Duke' engine would later go into many GM and non-GM automobiles into the early 1990s. The 151 cubic inch L4 and the 301 cubic inch V-8 were the last two engines designed solely by Pontiac. Subsequent engine design would be accomplished by one central office with all designs being shared by each brand. The remainder of the 1970s and the early 1980s saw the continued rise of luxury, safety and economy as the key selling points in Pontiac products. Wire-spoked wheel covers returned for the first time since the 1930s. More station wagons than ever were being offered. Padded vinyl roofs were options on almost every model. The Firebird continued to fly high on the success of the 'Smokey & the Bandit' film, still offering Formula and Trans Am packages, plus a Pontiac first—a turbocharged V-8, for the 1980 and 1981 model years. In addition to this, The Rockford Files, which lasted for 6 years used an Esprit Firebird. James Garner was given a new model each year.



Introduced in 1982, the wedge-shaped Firebird was the first major redesign of the venerable pony car since 1970. Partly due to the hugely successful NBC television series Knight Rider, it was an instant success and provided Pontiac with a foundation on which to build successively more performance oriented models over the next decade. The Trans Am also set a production aerodynamic mark of .32 cd.

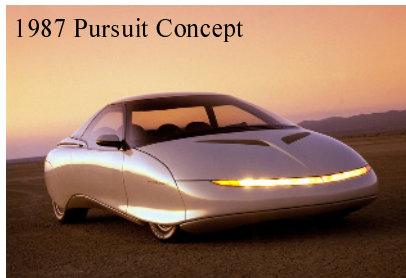


1985 Fiero

Next came the 1984 Fiero. This was a major departure from anything Pontiac had produced in the past. A two-seat, mid-engined coupe, the Fiero was targeted straight at the same market that Semon Knudsen had been aiming for in the late 1950s: the young, affluent buyer who wanted sporting performance at a reasonable price. The Fiero was also an instant success and was partially responsible for Pontiac seeing its first increase in sales in four years

Pontiac also began to focus on technology. In 1984, a Special Touring Edition (STE) was added to the 6000 line as a competitor to European road cars such as the

Mercedes 190. The STE sported digital instruments and other electronics as well as a more powerful V-6 and re-tuned suspension. Later iterations would see some of the first introductions on Pontiacs of anti-lock brakes, steering wheel mounted radio controls and other advanced features.



1987 Pursuit Concept

With the exception of the Parisienne Safari, the Firebird and Fiero, beginning in 1988 all Pontiacs switched to front-wheel drive platforms. For the first time since 1970, Pontiac was the number three domestic car maker in America. Pontiac's drive to bring in more youthful buyers was working as the median age of Pontiac owners dropped from 46 in 1981 to 38 in 1988.



1989 Sunbird



## A Photo Tribute to Chuck Maze

Chuck was a charter member of Silver State Pontiac Club and the first newsletter editor. But he was so much more —



Chuck served in the Navy for over 22 years. At right, Chuck and Georgia at the Marine Corp Ball on Treasure Island in 1979.



He loved fishing & cross country skiing



Chuck became "Bubbles" for Halloween, and was escorted by "Riggins" Georgia. Man, am I jealous of the legs!

Acting was also in his blood—In costume for "The Christmas Carol" at Carson City's Brewery Arts Center in 1988.



An awesome day - the Richard Petty Driving Experience at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway.



Chuck also loved the balloon races and served on launch and land/retrieve teams for over 26 years.



**CHUCK—WE MISS YOU!!**





**SILVER STATE PONTIACS FALL CRUISE**

Great Looking Group!!



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

CLUB EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Regular Club Meeting	November 19	Dennys
Christmas Party	December 19	Harrah's Auto Museum

## \*A RIDE IN THE TAXI \*

A woman and her twelve-year-old son were riding in a taxi in Detroit. It was raining and all the prostitutes were standing under awnings.

"Mom," said the boy, "what are all those women doing?"

"They're waiting for their husbands to get off work," she replied.

The taxi driver turns around and says, "Geez lady, why don't you tell him the truth? They're hookers, boy! They have sex with men for money."

The little boy's eyes get wide and he says, "Is that true Mom?"

His mother, glaring hard at the driver, answers in the affirmative.

After a few minutes, the kid asks, "Mom, if those women have babies, what happens to them?"

"Most of them become taxi drivers," she said.

## BIRTHDAYS

### NOVEMBER

Joel Trematore	2nd
Dianna Daniels	7th
Rick Stefani	10th
Kelly Geyer	16th
Dale Lowery	29th



### DECEMBER

Bryan Cunningham	14th
Harold Irwin	16th
Todd Kelly	16th
Bart Daniels	22nd
Bill Rentsch	26th

## ANNIVERSARIES



### NOVEMBER

Dan Adams & Kathi Juarez	25 yrs
John & Bonnie Saludes	44 yrs

### DECEMBER

Ray & Jan Hollingsworth	44 yrs
Joel & Arlene Trematore	45 yrs
Hugo & Susan Tafel	3 yrs
Bart & Dianna Daniels	28 yrs



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**NEXT MEETING**

**CHRISTMAS PARTY !!!  
DECEMBER 19      6:00 PM**

**HARRAH'S AUTO MUSEUM**