

Valley of the Goats

Newsletter of Cactus GTOs Inc. • Phoenix, Arizona

www.cactusgto.com

August-September 2006



Letter from the Editor

Most people think about cruising to California to beat the heat. Those of us who made the trek to Ontario, Calif. for the POCI Nationals on June 28-July 2 found a much *hotter* place than we expected! I stayed about an hour south in Huntington Beach. It was worth the gas to find cooler weather, clear skies, and the ocean.

There were some standout cars at the POCI Nationals, including a beautiful Pontiac Bonneville convertible owned by Barry Bales (and formerly owned by Pontiac engineer Bunkie Knudsen), and a Pontiac Catalina convertible done in Mary Kay colors formerly owned by GM designer Harvey Earl's wife, and partly restored by the Bale family. It was good to see Cactus GTO Club members Bill McCoy (club veep), Stu Shindler, Dave Bertram, Mike and Dee Baumgardner and their family, and Glen Gibbons at the show. Lots of pretty GTOs, Grand Prix, Firebirds (I saw a '74 Trans-Am that was identical to the one I had in high school) and some vintage big Pontiacs. Desert Renegades members were there as well. Overall, a nice show.

On the last day, we helped Jim Wangers celebrate his forthcoming 80th birthday. Jim opened up his Pontiac-filled warehouse in Oceanside, and we enjoyed listening to him being interviewed by ESPN Radio.

DON'T FORGET!! JIM WILL BE OUR SPECIAL GUEST ON SEPT. 27. SEE FLYER IN THIS ISSUE OR GO TO THE CACTUSGTO.COM WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS!

Someone also brought by the '07 turbocharged Pontiac Solstice GXP, painted in my favorite color – screamin' yellow.

Special note: For those of you heard at our July meeting that my '87 Fiero GT had been stolen – good news. I got it back. It was found abandoned around 67th Avenue and Greenway. Except for a broken ignition and some keyed scratches (and a mysterious black stripe running the length of the car), the car is mechanically sound. Nothing major missing (except for the seat covers, license plate, and registration). They did leave their calling card: a set of rosaries on the rear view mirror. Nice to know someone out there is stealing cars for Jesus...

If anyone knows someone in the club who can replace the ignition mechanism, please let me know. Finally, PLEASE check out our revamped website at www.cactusgto.com. Webmaster Scott Svenheim has done a great job of bringing a new look to the site. Lots of good information!

— Mark Neumann

News Notes

Do you want to be part of the '07 virtual GTO Club Calendar?

Organizer Scott Svenheim needs photos of your favorite GTO...ASAP!

The clock is ticking away and Scott needs time to prepare the calendar.

We need digital photos only, please. Contact Scott if you have any questions.

Scott Svenheim: scottsvenheim@cox.net

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From the Driver's Seat...

August 2006

This time I am really writing from the driver's seat, it seems. The club treasurer and I have logged about 3,500 miles thus far and are presently enjoying a green, humid and cool respite in the rural countryside of western New York state. Covering this distance in quiet, air-conditioned comfort at 28 mpg instead of driving our '67 GTO did not get us any "Hey - cool car!" comments, though. Of course at prices nearing \$3.50 for a gallon of premium, there was some compensation for the lack of attention :).

I understand that there was a nice turnout for the Rock Springs CafŽ/Prescott run. Thanks to Bill McCoy for leading this in my absence and thanks to all who braved the heat to participate. By the time you read this, the bowling event will be history and I hope that everyone has a great time. We're sorry to have missed sharing good times with you all and I of course miss driving my GTO, but we are with you in spirit, anyway. Cool "summer" evenings at a couple of local circle tracks keep feeding my most-things-automotive appetite, though. It's the season for local car shows here as well (before the snow sets in again....) and we are seeing some really nice examples of what can be done if one is determined enough to fight the rust. When I see all the work and effort that these rust belt folks go through, I realize once again that we in the desert are truly blessed - in spite of how it feels some days when the sidewalk heat is coming up through the bottom of your shoes! Although Elly and I will miss the bowling, we are looking forward to

seeing Jim Wangers again at our club's special meeting in September. While the meeting will be at the usual time and on the usual last Wednesday of the month date (September 27th), we will be meeting at the Doubletree Inn just north of Sky Harbor - more details to follow. We will share our meeting with the Desert Renegades and have as our guest speaker someone who was instrumental in developing the GTO legend. For those of you who have met Jim, I am sure that you are looking forward to seeing him again and hearing some of his vast collection of "war stories" about GM and the GTO. For those of you who do not know Jim, you are in for a real treat. He has a tremendous amount of history to share and does so in a most entertaining style. Jim can really tell you how it was because he was there to make it happen! If you have not read his book "Glory Days" I would encourage you to do so - a great excuse staying inside and keeping cool this summer :) For those of you who have a copy of his book, I'm sure he would be happy to autograph it for you. Look forward to seeing you all there...

— Thom Mohr

MEET OUR MEMBERS

We often hear that one of the best things about the Cactus GTO's club is meeting other members and their families. There are some really nice folks and quite a few new members involved in our activities but never enough time to really get to know them. It was always popular when the newsletter featured a story about some member so we're thinking of doing it on a regular basis. There's a reason that each person joined and we'd like to know your story. Don't worry about the format, it can be a few lines or as much interesting information as you'd like to share. Just write and we'll put it in shape for the newsletter. We'll get your OK before we publish it. Here are some possible things that you could tell us:

1. Members of your family, wife, kids ages, interests.
2. When/where you got interested in GTO's (or other cars)
3. Describe your car(s) and other interesting cars you've had
4. Is there something special you're looking for, a favorite? Why?
5. Your occupation, other interests & hobbies
6. What can you offer other club members? (skills, parts, tools, advice, "show & tell" a collection, a place for a club party, car storage space etc.)
7. Your favorite club events
8. Things you'd like to have the club do, ideas for future activities
9. Are you looking for particular car, parts or help with something?
10. Experiences that others may enjoy hearing about...you all have them!

Stories about your childhood, places you've been, people you've met (especially with your car). Just e-mail your info (don't forget to include your name) to Elly MYLLE1@juno.com or mail it to 5546 Shangri-la Scottsdale 85254 or bring it to the next meeting you attend.

Pontiac/GM in the News

The Camaro is Coming Back

Oh! GTO, Wherefore Art Thou?

By Bill McCoy

August 15th, 2006—Last week, GM announced that the board had approved the planned production of a 2009 Camaro that would go into production in late 2008. Unfortunately, there was no mention of a Firebird for those of us that just can't seem to have enough Firebirds. (Yours truly.) However, the board approval of the Camaro does give new life to comments from Bob Lutz a few months ago that the GTO would make a comeback in 3 or 4 years. The implication is that the Zeta based Camaro platform could accommodate a GTO wrapper. Could it happen possibly in 2010? This would be a situation similar to how the Solstice became a Saturn Sky within one year of the Solstice hitting the road. The Zeta platform has been designed to allow easy installation of different sheet metal styling without costly restyling of the undercarriage and drive train.

I found an interview on the Ultimate GTO website with designer Mike Simcoe of GM-Holden. He outlines in general terms the strategy that GM is using to allow interchangeable drive trains for different car concepts. He has some interesting comments about how they need to come up with ways to design cars that will provide larger sales volumes to be profitable. As we all know GM is going through a major restructuring process right now. Let's hope they can get things working again so we can see more fun cars. Using a standard platform seems like a good way to improve profitability. Chrysler survived the 80s by making everything they had on the K platform. It worked for them. Let's hope the Zeta platform is good enough to be a big money maker for GM.

Here are a few interesting things to think about. In a recent quality/satisfaction survey conducted by the University of Michigan, out of a possible 100 points Toyota was number one with 87 points and Buick came in second with 86. Honda and Lexus had 86 also. BMW's rating came in at 85. The average overall was 81. If Buick can score so high why can't the rest of GM do similarly? Ford has fallen over the last year or two to the lowest of all the makers with a score of 77. Overall quality is up in the industry.

Interesting that Hyundai, as one of the lower priced brands, has scored higher than many of the better-known brands.

Something to think about: Ford had about the same market share in 1995 as GM has now

with about 25.7% of the market. Will GM be down to Ford's current market share of 18% in about 10 years? Let's hope not.

Below you will find the article about GM-Holden's Monaro design plans.

Until next time, keep the gas flowing and those GTOs running.

New Monaro, sister for GTO?

Andrew Heasley, *The Age*, 26/07/06

The man who designed the last Monaro, General Motors' Michael Simcoe, says another one is on the way, just not yet.

"There will be another Monaro eventually but it won't be here in the next six months or year or so. It'll still be a little while," he told Drive.

The secret to its return was using the new VE platform, the Zeta architecture, in enough numbers to make the coupe's production economical.

"You couldn't, I believe, do a Monaro with Monaro volumes again - that was a freak. That happened because of Holden's position in design, engineering and manufacturing at the time.

"To do that again with a brand-new architecture would not be as easy.

"Clearly, we'd never want to do a Monaro by itself. We'd want to find a sister vehicle, or a shared vehicle to give us some volumes so that you could do the job properly."

Another Pontiac GTO? "Maybe," he said.

However, speculation is rife that the next-generation Chevrolet Camaro could provide the production volumes and Holden its architecture.

"The point of this architecture is that it is global, so it can be built anywhere. This architecture will be used for vehicles in the States in one form or another," Mr Simcoe said.

He said the Zeta platform had been set up so that different models could be built by adding different body styles.

"You set up the architecture so you have to do less change to get a different vehicle: all you're doing is putting a different body on the top - and that's the cheap part of the business. If you start to change all the stuff underneath that's where it gets very expensive," Mr Simcoe said.

Cactus GTO Board of Directors and Officers meet to discuss goals for '07

On July 12, the Cactus GTO Club Board of Directors met to discuss the future direction for the club. Here are the minutes from the meeting.

Meeting Called to Order – 7:00-7:20 pm. In attendance: Officers: Bill McCoy (VP), Thom Mohr (Pres), Scott Svenheim (Sec), Elly Mohr (Treas) Board Members: Murray Nevin, Dan Husskison, Tom Burton, Mark Neumann, Bob Paris

Topics Discussed

1. Cactus GTO photo calendar: There was considerable discussion about several obstacles to a successful '07 calendar effort: 1) A calendar from the Washington State GTO club is already out for sale, is very well done with funding sponsorship and we would be at a serious disadvantage trying to sell outside the club against this competition. 2) If we reduce the numbers of printed calendars, unit cost goes up considerably. 3) With no new GTO this year and GM's cutbacks, it seems unlikely that we would get dealer participation either as buyers of calendars or as sponsors. 4) Thus far we have only seven photos suitable for full-page printing and time is running out.

We discussed several alternatives to the type of printing we have done the past several years, including the spiral-bound type that you can have made at Kinkos, Office Max, etc. We also discussed making the calendar more of a club-oriented calendar with photos of cars and owners, club event photos, etc. And, making it our year-in-advance event calendar at the same time. Decision: Minimize cash outlay by proceeding with an on-line version that can be viewed online or downloaded and printed. Also decided to offer a CD version for a nominal fee (to be determined) that could be loaded on a PC or taken to be printed by the buyer. This will enable us to extend the time for photos to be submitted as we do not have the printer's lead time. Deadline for photos and other information to be included is now September 1, 2006. Addition of "Cactus GTO" Watermark / Ghost image on all pictures/pages.

2. Kruse There was considerable discussion about what to do regarding the Kruse auction. We need to avoid another fiasco like last year and have a written contract that will protect Cactus GTO's from a repeat. We discussed the strain on the relative few individuals who run the line and interface with Kruse versus the income the club derives.

A budget and tracking of club expenses will help us understand what our alternatives might be if we can't come to terms with Kruse. Decisions: 1. Send a letter to Kruse explaining our concerns and what we believe need to be done to improve the auction, emphasizing that the current operation has serious negative effects on customers and Kruse business. Letter to go out in the next week. 2. Submit a contract to Kruse (both e-mail and registered US Mail) at least three months prior to the auction date. Use the contract we wrote prior to last year's auction (which was never signed) and add some additional language regarding re-numbered cars, re-runs, pre-sold sale time-slots. 3. Insist on a signed, written contract no later than two months prior to the auction date. We need to be prepared to give up the auction if we cannot get a reasonable contract signed (we may not get everything we want, but need to do better than last year). 4. The Board and Officers need to review the budget (see below) so that we know what the tradeoffs are when it comes time to make a decision. We will meet again in September to decide on that and an events calendar for 2007 (see below).

3. State of the Club We discussed the difficulties in getting membership turnout for events, meetings and especially getting people to volunteer to take some leadership responsibility for even one event a year. With many of the past members, people's interests seem to be changing and they are less involved with the club. Dues collection is dragging out past midyear, causing problems for the Treasurer and is perhaps indicative of flagging interest. Getting a club event calendar set up further in advance might help, as this year we have not given enough advance notice on events. See 07 Calendar above. Perhaps Board members and Officers could sign up to take leadership of an event during the year as part of their job description. Also discussed either "going dark" during the summer months or confining activities to indoor, "GTO-optional" events. This led to a general discussion that perhaps some people did not come to events or meetings if they could not drive their GTO for some reason. Perhaps we need to emphasize that we want people to attend and socialize more than anything else and limit the number of events that strongly encourage bringing your GTO. Decisions: 1. Add to the attendance signup sheet that we circulate at each meeting an Activity column with space for a "Yes/No" asking if people will be participating in next months events – the hope is to get people to feel some commitment to showing up. I will edit the attendance sheets. 2. Emphasize in event publicity that it's the people and the social aspects of the event that are of interest. If your GTO comes with you - great, if not... well drive whatever you can, we'd like to see you.

If you have another special interest car, we'd like to see that too. 3. Declare a few events each year as strongly encouraging driving your GTO... showing up at the BOP show in a Ford would not be so good. 4. Defer the "going dark" in the summer (or indoor-only events) until the September Board meeting when we decide on an '07 event calendar. 5. Send a bill for dues with a specific cutoff date (to be determined). (Promote "What do I get for my \$12" – emphasizing on the benefit of membership.) 6. Promote just a few "big" events a year, making a real effort to get as many GTOs involved as possible - lots of advanced publicity and encouragement. Possible candidate events coming up: KOOL radio show at the new Cardinal stadium, "Toyz for Totz" run to Wickenburg. holiday charity, 7. Promote just a few "big" events a year where actual hands on participation is the focus, such as Basha's holiday charity, Channel 8 phone bank, helping at St. Mary's, etc. 8. We also discussed "Member Picture/Info Catalog both on paper and online...with out personal information (First names only).

4. Newsletter timeliness This ended up being a discussion on the real purpose of the newsletter and on communications in general. Using the newsletter as a reminder of the next club meeting gives a deadline for publication (a +) but we have not been meeting that deadline (a -). It was observed that those people who do not have/use e-mail do not seem to attend meetings or events, so perhaps we use e-mails for reminders? It was noted that people seem to appreciate a phone call but this is time consuming and phone trees have pitfalls too. Decisions: 1. No longer use the newsletter as a meeting reminder, but have it printed up and ready to hand out and the meetings - mailing the rest (that are not picked up). This will give an extra week to get the newsletter put together and save postage. 2. Use a regular (weekly) e-mail message to keep people informed and not put out so many spontaneous, unscheduled e-mails. Try to make these regular messages in a consistent format and interesting to read. Club President tasked to do this. 3. Publish a full newsletter every other month and a postcard on alternate months. 4. Mark N said we would work on a 'set' production schedule for newsletter.

5. Associate Dues. There was a brief discussion regarding the purpose and fairness of the "Associate" member status as well as its' relevance. Decision: 1. It was decided to discontinue the "Associate" member status. Beginning in 2007, dues will be for member and spouse (or whomever would have filled that "Associate" status in the past. 2. Scott will edit Membership forms – dropping Associate info.

6. *Financial Reports.* There was a brief discussion of the summary reports prepared by the Treasurer. Reports on 2006 calendar expenses and sales were distributed as well as an Income & Expense Report for Jan 1 through June 30, 2006. A proposed budget was distributed for Board member's consideration. We discussed the need to understand our income and expenses better so that we can make a better-informed discussion about whether or not to continue with Kruse. Decision: It was decided to review and finalize a budget at the next Board meeting in September.

7. *Fiscal Year and Elections Timing* There was discussion about the difficulty of a new slate of officers trying to get things organized each year in the midst of doing everything that Kruse entails plus handling all the dues coming in, club calendar sales and GTOAA information requirements. If we could split all this activity up somewhat it would be very helpful. If someone other than the club officers would take leadership in running Kruse, that would help. The Kruse dates and GTOAA commitments are fixed in time, but we could possibly move the time for electing officers and change the calendar for dues. Decision: It was decided that the Board take up further discussion and decision-making about this as part of a (possible) overall events planning meeting in September.

8. *Club dues.* There was discussion about making club dues cover a full 12-month period, with dues payable in the same month each year. Right now, the question of how to handle dues for people joining mid-year had previously been decided - people joining after mid-year end up paying for all year but have membership for only ½ year. Having dues “due” every month would add to the Treasurer's workload that is already impacted by dues straggling in (see previous topic, above). Perhaps shifting the due-date away from January would help with the beginning of the year “crunch”. Decision: It was decided that the Board take up further discussion and decision-making about this as part of a (possible) overall planning meeting in September. 1. Dues collection is dragging out past midyear – Decision to send out Membership Renewal notices each year Sept/Oct timeframe with due date prior to Jan. Meeting Adjourned 10:10 PM

—*Scot Svenheim, Secretary*

KEEP OUR CLUB ON THE RIGHT TRACK!! Yearly dues are needed to keep club activities on track. Your \$12 annually helps the Cactus GTO club fund this newsletter, cover our donations to charity, and pay for special events. IT'S YOUR CLUB - HELP SUPPORT IT! Go to our website at www.cactusgto.com to download a membership form.



Dear Automotive Enthusiasts:

Just a Reminder to those who have not registered for :

Event: ***"Super Run 2006" A Classic Car Experience***

Dates: **September 21, 2006 Kick-Off Get-Together -The District @ Green Valley Ranch**

September 22, 23, 24 On the Streets in Downtown Henderson, Nevada

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- | | |
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| * Show & Shine Competition | * Open Headers Cruises – “Strut Your Stuff” |
| * Slow Drags Competition for Awards | * Burn-Out Competition for Awards |
| * Roaring Engines Competition | * Games * Fan Belt Flip * Lifter Toss |
| * Poker Walk / Trivia / Prizes | * Mayor’s Pick, Police, Fire, NHP Picks |
| * Over 200 Top Vehicles Awards | * Dignitary Picks Awards & Trophies |
| * Ladies Choice * Kids Preference | * People Choice Trophies & Awards |
| * Participant’s Choice Trophy | * Club Participation Trophies |
| * Special Crowd Pleasers Awards | * Specialty Trophies & Awards |
| * Young Star Award Competition for Participants under 25 years old | |
| Special Trophy * Jacket plus Cash Awards to winners | |
| * Special Event T-Shirts | * Commemorative Dash Plaques |
| * Event Ball Caps | * Participants Windshield Show Cards |
| * Plus \$15,000 in Cash & Prizes for Car Show Participants: | |
| Thursday \$2,500 * Friday \$2,500 * Saturday \$2,500 * Sunday \$7,500 | |
| * Fantabulous Drawings & Giveaways | * Automotive Vendors Row |
| * Food & Beverage Concessions | * Classic Car & Parts Corral |
| * Live Remote Broadcasts | * Special Hotel Rates on Web Site |
| * Free Live Oldies Concerts and Music on Stage: | |
| * Little Anthony and The Imperials – Friday evening | |
| * Herman’s Hermits starring Peter Noone – Saturday evening | |
| * Micky Dolenz of The Monkees – Saturday evening | |

All Proceeds Benefit local Children’s Charities & Non-Profit Organizations.

Car Show & Vendor Information: (702) 643-0000

Volunteers Coordinator: (702) 683-2248

- * Free Car Show for Spectators of All Ages * Public Welcomed ***
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Las Vegas Cruisin’ Association

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