



Pontiacs of the Valley

August/September 2025 | Newsletter of the Valley of the Sun Pontiacs Club
Chapter #107, Pontiac Oakland Club International

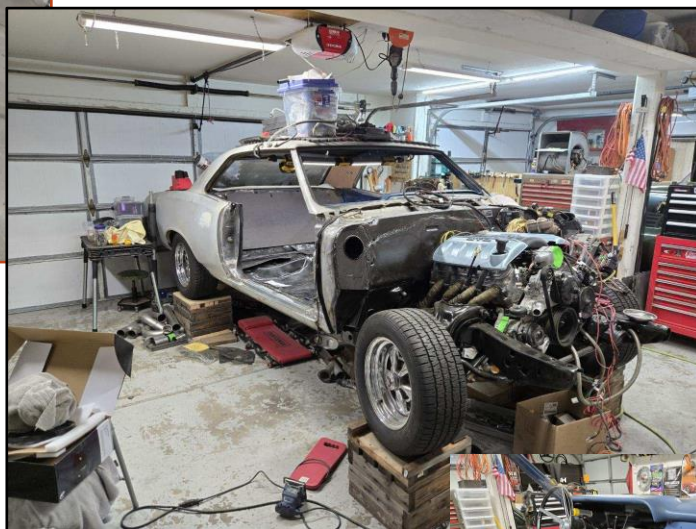
Next club meeting is Sept. 17 at Rudy's Country Store/BBQ



**Summertime is the right time -
to get our Pontiac projects on
the road!**



Scott Moore's 1970 Trans Am project (top) is getting worked on at Blattner Auto Works. Tim Blattner and Sean Fowler (left) work on the interior.



Dave and Carol Reichel's LS2 powered, Tremec 5-speed equipped 1967 GTO (top, right) is a work in progress. He is getting it ready for the Hot Rod Power Tour West in December. Larry McCown's '64 GTO (left) is getting body work and new paint.



*"Summer, it turns me upside down.
Summer, summer, summer, it's like a
merry-go-round*

from the song "Magic" performed by the band *The Cars*

by Mark Neumann

Summertime gets hot in the Arizona desert, so that limits our car club activities. But it is a good time to start or finish Pontiac projects. For Valley of the Sun Pontiac Club members like Rick Unterseh, Dave Reichel, Scott Moore, Jeff Snyder, Larry McCown and others, it

can indeed be like a merry-go-round: rebuilding motors, bodywork and new paint, refurbishing old interiors, assembling new drivetrains.

But parts and new assemblies don't always go in like people tell you "it should" – or if you are waiting for a crucial part, watch as the "ETA" from your favorite Pontiac supplier moves to another month.

What is cool about some of these projects is the importance of the self-imposed deadlines for completion set by their owners – debuting their cars for a special show, giving grandchildren a ride, putting the car in a parade, or getting it ready for a cherished photo of bride and groom. It's why these classics are a important part of our lives.

Dave and Carol Reichel – 1967 GTO

East Valley residents and club members Dave and Carol Reichel have had their '67 GTO for 15 years. But this Dec. 5-7 is their D-Day – when they hope to have the car ready for their second *HOT ROD* Power Tour West – and their grandchildren to ride along with them.



"I've told my son about the plan, but not the grandkids yet – in case we can't have it ready," Dave said.

Dave has had other car projects in between – like his '71 El Camino – and finishing the GTO has had some challenges along the way, like finding ways to keep that LS2 (left) strapped into place (it has dynoed at 621 hp). The original 4-speed car now has a Tremec 5 speed. Dave is getting the interior sheetmetal prepped for paint after dealing with fit problems for speakers and re-creating the sail panels. If all

goes well, "I'll have it at least together and running" for the Power West Tour with grandkids in the back seat. The Power Tour will hit several California race tracks, including the famous Willow Springs Raceway.

More details at <https://www.hotrod.com/features/2025-hot-rod-power-tour-west-information-tickets>

Rick and Judy Unterseh – 1970 Trans Am

The Untersehs have always been Pontiac drag racing fans, helping to organize local outings to drag strips in Arizona and running Outlaw Pontiac Racers West (visit their Facebook page).

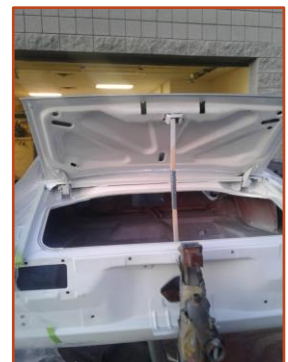


They have always been Firebird fans, too, with a '80 Trans Am drag racer to go with their Pontiac-powered dragster.

Now, the garage has a new project.

"The Trans Am came to us completely out of the blue," Rick said. "I started a job with a new company. I saw the Firebird in the back of the shop up on a rotisserie and just asked other and they said it had been back there for many years and the project just sort of stalled."

Rick originally thought it was just a standard Firebird, but later found out it was actually a '70 Trans Am. "The company owner heard Judy and I talking about it at a company party and how nice it was and how



cool it would be if we could find something like that. We didn't think anymore about it after that.

"About a year later, the owner asks if I was still interested in the Firebird, and I said, 'Sure, but I don't know what kind of money you're looking for,' and he said, 'Don't worry about that – I will make you a deal you can't refuse.'

"So we talked about what needed to be done, what parts were bought and what went with the car. A little bit later we talked finances and he got the title and already had it notarized in my name on it and said, 'You just bought a car.'

"The only requirement is that I have to drive it to work once I get it running," Rick said. The plan is to use all the original parts – transmission, rearend, body – when putting the Trans Am back together. "The original engine is gone, but we do have a 1969 400, with Kauffman aluminum D-ports and an Edelbrock performer intake. I will build a Q-jet for it, not sure on the exhaust yet, but we will figure that out when it's time."

Jeff Snyder: 1968 Lemans

Jeff and his convertible are regulars at East Valley car shows – and he doesn't mind getting up early for those Cars 'n Coffee events. But not this summer.

While Frank Gostyla was building him a motor based on a '67 400 block, bored .30 over and stroked to 462 cubes to replace the car's original 350, Jeff put the Lemans in the body shop for fresh paint. After stripping it down, the shop found rust repairs were needed



in the driver rear quarter. The car should be ready for the paint booth on Sept. 1.

"I'm going with a tropical glitz color called cosmic teal" laid over a silver base with a blue and green metalflake, Jeff said.

He hopes to have the Lemans ready by Oct. 1 for the car show season.

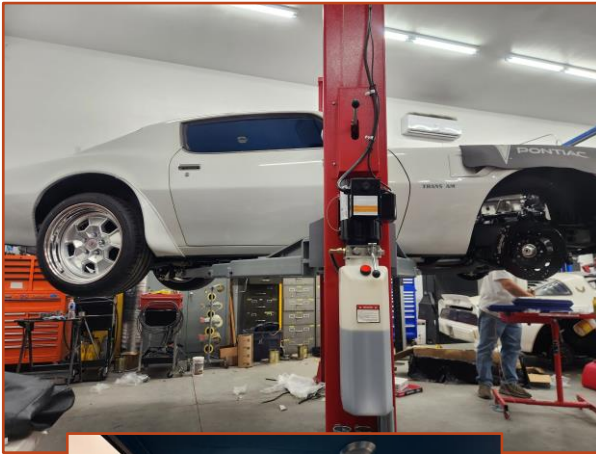


At our club meeting Sept. 17!

Check out the Vapor Trapper demo

We'll have a special Tech Minute presentation by a company that sells and installs a device called the Vapor Trapper, which helps to eliminate that gas smell from our cars after we drive them back in the garage after a cruise. Check out a video demo here of the Vapor Trapper installed on club member Pete Senese's '69 Firebird. <https://www.instagram.com/p/DNgXrv7gJIQ/>. The meeting is being held at Rudy's Country Store and BBQ on Wednesday, Sept. 17 starting at 5:30 pm.

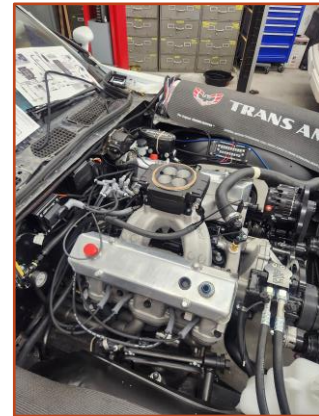




Scott Moore: 1970 Trans Am

Scott has a pristine '79 Black 'n Gold Trans Am – you have seen it at our Pontiac Night at Pavilions shows. But “I love the 1970-73 period – it’s my favorite,” he said.

He found a rust-free, original Ram Air III, polar white 1970 Trans Am with deluxe blue interior that



had been in storage as part of a car collection for the past 10 years (“I saw the car for sale and within 90 minutes of talking to the seller I was on a plane flying to El Cajon, Calif. to purchase it,” he said). Instead of having it shipped back to Phoenix, Scott actually drove the six-hour ride home with the car and had

no problems.

But he had other ideas for the Trans Am. “As with many of my cars I only felt comfortable purchasing this car knowing I have Tim Blattner and Frank Gostyla helping me with this build. Those two are the best, having built cars with them in the past,” Scott said. “What was important to me was starting with a solid, all-intact car that included being a real Trans Am with great paint and interior.”

The original motor was missing and the owner had replaced it with a 1970 Pontiac 400 that came out of a GTO. “The motor was fully stock and cool, but not the power I’m used to having, like in my other cars. My other Trans Am, a real 1979 SE, started very similar as this one. Both all intact, great cars but both missing original engines. That gave me the freedom to do what I love, which is build them up to pro-touring monsters.”

Since his ‘79 already has a Gostyla-built 535 ci Pontiac all aluminum motor, Scott wanted to do something different. “Frank built a 555 ci motor pushing close to 800 horsepower, backed up to a Tremec Magnum 6 speed manual transmission.

“Tim stripped the undercarriage and built a full Ridetech four link, coil over suspension with subframe connectors and rebuilt the original 12 bolt with a Detroit lock up differential. He mini-tubbed the car so we could add 335/40 R18 rear tires mounted on 18x12 Honeycomb custom wheels and 295/40 R18 front tires mounted on a set of 10” wide matching fronts.

“I wanted the car’s interior and exterior wheel wells to look stock and with Tim’s expertise and magic that’s exactly how it turned out,” Scott explained.

The rest of the car was fully redone including installation of Dakota Digital gauges, Vintage Air, power windows and door locks. “Looking at it almost completed, the original perfection accomplished by GM is still there today,” he said.

Other club members, including Sean Fowler and Owen Zangle, helped with the build. "This car will debut at the San Diego Cops and Rodders show coming up at the end of September. I look forward to the drive, especially knowing my engine builder and car builder are driving there with us!" Scott said.

Larry McCown: 1964 GTO

After several years of working to get his 1964 GTO mechanically where he was happy with it, Valley of the Sun Pontiac Club Board member Larry McCown got on body work and painter Colin Stevens' schedule in June to get the body, trim and interior finishes up to show quality, including an upgraded sound system. "To my surprise when we started the body alignment and prepping for paint it was discovered that the left rear quarter panel had been hit and previously repaired. I decided to have the panel replaced, I knew that additional metal work would be required because my trunk leaked," Larry said. "As a result we also had to replace the metal between the roof line and the trunk lid."



John McWilliams at the shop replacing all the damaged metal. "At this point we are waiting on several pieces of chrome and stainless window, vinyl top and body trim to come in. While this is going on I need to decide on wheels and tires" to replace the 14" Hurst wheels on the car now.

"I'm hoping to have everything done by the first of November and be ready to drive in the Fiesta Bowl Parade," Larry said.

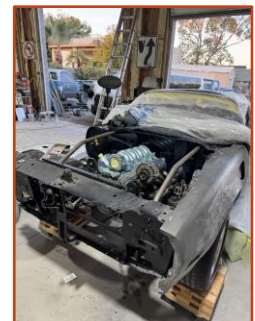
Michael Cichonsky: 1979 Trans Am

Michael has owned his Trans Am for 3 years and chose to go through every part of the car to "build a fun 'OEM+ Cruiser' style build," he said.

The Trans Am was originally sold in Scottsdale in 1979 as a Nocturne Blue/gold car, and has been in Maricopa County its entire life. "Once discovering that, Bethany and I chose to bring it back to its original color," Michael said. "After finding the original paint color on the underside of the mirror, we went through a bunch of different variations of paint combos to get a 'modern' version of Nocturne Blue, sprayed over a silver base to get the color it will become soon."



The car has gone through extensive body work to shave/smooth the body, marker lights, and firewall, creating custom inner fenders and tubular subframe stiffeners, as well as converting the body flares and spoilers to fiberglass prior to the engine swap. Michael and Bethany had enough of the car together to bring it to our BOPC show this past March.



“When I purchased the car, it had already been swapped from the 403 to an Olds 350 Rocket engine, so I chose to go with a modern aluminum 5.3 motor with some nice power adders added in.

“Once the paint is complete (hopefully within the next month) it will be receiving a custom gold graphics kit with some larger decals (similar to the 10th Anniversary TA birds), and a full TMI interior,” Michael said.

Mark Neumann: 1970 GTO

Of all the models of The Great One, I always thought the '70 GTO had the best lines. The front end had the clean look from the '69 GTO, the body lines were muscular, and the stance was smooth. Having previously had a '69 GTO convertible, and a '70 GTO hardtop, I knew what I wanted for my 'forever' car: a 1970 GTO convertible.



I had looked at a few cars until Valley of the Sun Club member and treasurer Mike Fleury stumbled across one in his Scottsdale neighborhood: all original, numbers matching GTO with only 35,000 original miles.. The GTO (left) was solid but needed things: new interior seats, top and a motor.

Again, Pontiac engine builder and club Board member Frank Gostyla came to the rescue, rebuilding the 400, stroked to 462, and added a Gear Vendor transmission unit for highway driving. New interior material was obtained from Legendary (including the legendary *wait* to get the materials) and westside Phoenix upholster Chuck Booth put it all together. The Top Shop added the new canvas top, and we were ready to roll – except for the paint.

The original color on this car was Palisades Green, but the previous owner wasn't a fan. So he went with a dark blue and by the time I got the car, it was starting to check and had lots of scratches.

With the summer coming on I sent the car to

my new friends at Maaco Auto Body. Yep, those guys. But it's a great shop (on Main Street in Mesa) with car guys and they did a beautiful job on my Bonneville. I wanted a high quality paint job – I picked Atoll Blue – but one that still allowed me to drive the car and enjoy it.

As with all our restoration projects, things have gotten a little sideways. We decided to go with new rear quarters rather than patch the originals – no problem, Original Parts Group had them, sorta. Driver's side is in stock. Passenger side? Might be in a container at the Long Beach, Calif. port of entry. The ETA for it has moved 3 times.

But my financee Heather and I took a 14-hour road trip recently to OPG's headquarters in Seal Beach (top, left) to get what we can so the body shop can get to work.

My deadline? Heather wants a pose at our upcoming Oct. 25 wedding with the convertible top down as we drive off for our new life ahead together. She's ready. Will the car be ready? I know I don't want to miss this deadline.



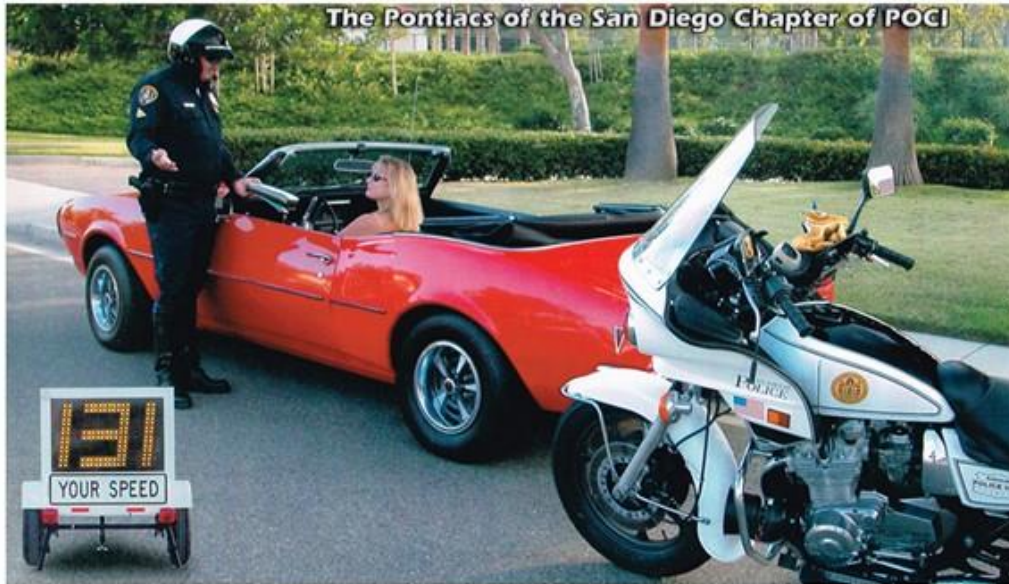
Sunday September 28th 2025
COPS & RODDERS
FALL POW WOW



Sanctioned by the San Diego Association of Car Clubs

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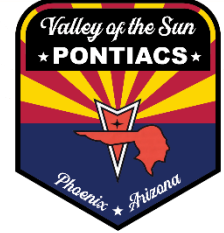
JC Dumas by email y2kchief@att.net or phone (619) 405-6319
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By execution of this registration form, the above named entrant hereby agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Pontiac Oakland Club International, Chapter 58, the San Diego Police Museum, the San Diego Unified Port district, Seaport Village, the Embarcadero, and their agents and employees respectively from any and all liability, including attorney's fees, by personal injury, death or property damage arising from participation in this event.

For more information about our Valley of the Sun Pontiac Club caravan to the show, contact Tom Knecht at t77transam@gmail.com.

Welcome new club members in 2025!



- Mike Acuna
- Tony Arcaro
- Michael "Blue" Arries
- Steve Dorsey
- Ren Fahey
- Rick and Carla Gamboa
- Jerry Giesinger
- Edward Gurski
- David Hutchison

- Harold and Roxanne Legreid
- Jose Loza
- Michelle McAdams
- Philip Pelura
- Randy and Sally Pittaluga
- Jeff Snyder
- Lindsay Sorenson
- Glendon Yoder



Harold and Roxanne Legreid's 64 GTO (top);
Michelle McAdams' '68 GTO (right)

Pontiac-Oakland Club International
KEEPING THE PONTIAC LEGACY ALIVE SINCE 1972
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WE INVITE YOU TO ATTEND
OUR 54TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
PONTIAC, MICHIGAN
JUNE 23-27, 2026

For more information about joining POCI and registering for the convention, visit www.poci.org.

President's Message

Hello Pontiac fans and club members:

Barb and I are in Wisconsin with a very busy summer. We have only had two car shows we have been able to attend. Normally we do 2 each weekend. We won't be back 'til late September and will be bringing our '69 Firebird convertible with us for the San Diego Show and then to AZ.



It is just about that time for the next meeting of our Valley of the Sun Pontiacs chapter on Sept. 17 and getting into action again! In my absence, our capable vice-president Mark Neumann will be handling the meeting (see info on a presentation at the meeting from Vapor Trapper elsewhere in this issue).

It has not gone unnoticed that a significant number of members kept going all summer long, meeting up and attending numerous shows, cruise ins, and cars and coffee's. Way to go guys and gals and by the way, TY to Mark for keeping everyone in the loop.

Our club secretary Vinnie LaMacchia has informed me that he is unable to continue on in his capacity for this year due to work commitments and traveling. I have contacted our two co-secretaries, Owen Zangle and Robbie LaMacchia, and they are willing to pick up the responsibilities. Thank you, Owen and Robbie for your continued commitment to our club to make it the best it can be. Thank you, Vinnie for your service and assistance. Best of luck!!!

I am looking forward to a very active Pontiac year and some cool club events. Board member Valerie Johnson, who is organizing some of our club events this year, will be back soon as she and her husband Richard leave the valley for the summer. I look forward to hearing what Val has cooked up.

See our list of club-affiliated events already planned for the rest of the year, including the upcoming **Cops and Rodders show** in San Diego (flyer in this issue; contact Tom Knecht for registration and hotel details). I also have planned events that I will announce at the October meeting, where I hope and intend to have a full calendar year schedule available.

In the meantime take care, have fun, and I will see you soon.

Paul

Paul Albinger, Jr.

Join us for our first club meeting for 2025-26!

The meeting is being held Wednesday, Sept. 17 at Rudy's, starting at 5:30 pm. The address is Rudy's Country Store and BBQ, 15257 N. Northsight Blvd., Scottsdale.



COVENANT HOT ROD'S

10th Anniversary

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL CAR SHOW



EVENT LOCATION
DOWNTOWN OCOTILLO
Bottle & Bean
2577 W. Queen Creek Rd.
Chandler, AZ. 85248
bottle-bean.com

DATE OF SHOW
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 15TH, 2025
REGISTRATION
OPENS AT 7:30 AM CLOSES AT 10:30 AM
REGISTRATION
FEE \$35.00

T-shirt & Goodie bag included with
registration.

THESE VEHICLES WELCOME
Street Rods – Muscle Cars – Rat Rods - Sports
Cars - Custom Cars – Trucks – Classics
Vehicle Classes on Reverse Side

Pre-register and pay at:
<https://register.covenanthotrod.com>
Part of all proceeds go to support:



Don and Barbie Webb

480-205-7925

donchra91@gmail.com
www.covenanthotrod.com

**Covenant Hot Rod
Association**



REGISTRATION INFORMATION *(Please type or print clearly)*

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

T-Shirt Size- **Circle One:** SM MED LG XL XXL XXXL

Club Affiliation: _____

VEHICLE INFORMATION: Year: _____ Make: _____ Model: _____

Brief Description: _____

Modifications: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

LIABILITY RELEASE

In consideration of the acceptance of the right to participate in the Covenant Hot Rod Association Car Show, the participant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless, CHRA, CHRA LLC, Covenant Hot Rod Association, Downtown Ocotillo Plaza L&G Land LLC, STLT LLC, Spike Ocotillo LLC, Ocotillo Executive Building LLC, Spike Lawrence Ventures, Bottle and Bean 2577 W Queen Creek RD, Chandler, AZ 85248, volunteers and anyone else connected with the management or presentation of this event from and against all liability of the loss that the participants, guests or family members may sustain or incur as a result of claims, demands or judgments arising from the participants involvement in the CRHA Southwest Regional Car Show.

1	Original Cars 1900-1989	16	T-Bird: all others
2	Street Rods	17	Mustangs: 1964-1/2-1973
3	T-Buckets	18	Mustangs: all others
4	Muscle Cars: 1958-1987	19	Trucks Stock
5	Sports Cars/Exotics	20	Trucks Modified
6	Corvette 1953-1967	21	Orphan Cars
7	Corvette 1968-1972	22	Tri-Fives 55-56-57
8	Corvette 1973-Current	23	Rat Rods
9	Camaro/Firebird/Trans Am: 1967-1969	24	Special Interest Vehicles
10	Camaro/Firebird/Trans Am: 1970-1981	25	Mopar All Years
11	Camaro/Firebird/Trans Am: all others	26	VW: Bugs, Busses, & Karmann Ghia
12	Chevy II/Nova	27	Shelby/Cobra's
13	Chevelle	28	Imports
14	Custom Cars	29	Work in progress
15	T-Bird: 1955-1957	30	Low Riders / Tail Draggers

Pre-register and pay at: <https://register.covenanthotrod.com> or send the completed form and checks payable to: CHRA •1063 W Mendoza Ave Mesa, AZ 85210. For more information contact Don Webb (480-205-7925) or email us at donchra91@gmail.com.

Judging criteria: Tires & Wheels, Paint & Body, Interior (1 window must be rolled down to judge). Engine (hood must be raised to judge).

Trophies will be 1st place only & Best of Show. All judging is performed by CHRA staff.

1964 GTO owned by the late Mecum Auction broadcaster John Kraman sells for \$100k

A 1964 Pontiac GTO owned by the late John Kraman, nicknamed “Professor” while leading a team of Mecum auction TV broadcasters for over 15 years, sold in May for \$101,750.

Kraman passed away on Jan. 14, 2025, after a brief illness. He was 68. He was part of a three-person broadcast team employed by Mecum to review cars as they were placed on the auction block. He was given the nickname “Professor” because of his extensive knowledge of classic cars.



Kraman was the second owner of this 1964 GTO, which he bought in 1976 and included tri-power and a 4 speed.

Photo courtesy of Mecum Auctions.

Kraman, a long-time Pontiac fan and a member of Pontiac-Oakland Club International, talked about the classic car hobby – and his love for Pontiacs – in an interview with *Smoke Signals* in March 2024.

“It’s not just about the cars — it’s about the people, the commonality, the interaction, the going to car shows. It’s about the friends you make, the relationships that you build. It’s a hobby that people enjoy,” he said.



Don't miss a club activity!

Here is what we have on the Valley of the Sun Pontiacs schedule for the rest of 2025 and a bit into 2026. More to come! Always check our website (www.valleysunpontiacs.com) and our Facebook page for updates.

Club meeting dates (third Wednesday of the month, dinner at 5:30 pm; meeting starts at 7:00 pm). Rudy's Country Store and Barbeque, 15257 N. Northsight Blvd., Scottsdale

Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19, Dec. 17, Jan. 21, Feb. 18, March 18, April 15, May 20

The Weekly Car Shows

Every Saturday Night Car Show: Mixteca (67th Avenue and Bell) and Cold Beer and Cheeseburgers (Pima Crossing, Highway 101 and Shea)

Other VSP-affiliated events planned this year

Sept. 24-29: Cops and Rodders Car Show, San Diego, Calif. (see flyer)

Oct. 18: Adopt-A-Highway – Fall Cleanup on the Apache Trail.

Nov. 8: Car Clinic at Frank Gostyla's

Nov. 9: All Pontiac and GMC Truck Show (Arizona Chapter show/Tucson)

Nov. 15: Covenant Southwest Regional Car Show (Ocotillo-see flyer)

Nov. 21-23: Good Guys SW Nationals (Scottsdale)



2026

Jan. 1: New Years Day Cruise (route TBA)

Jan. 3: 53rd annual Fiesta Bowl Parade event

Feb. 14: Car Clinic @ Frank Gostyla's

March 6-8: Midnight at the Oasis, Yuma

March 13-16: Good Guys SW Nationals, Westworld

Awaiting dates on: MAG Classic Car Auction; Buick-Olds-Pontiac-Cadillac+GMC Car Show



Officers and Board of Directors, 2025-26

President: Paul Albinger Vice-President: Mark Neumann

Secretary: Owen Zangle and Robbie LaMacchia

Treasurer: Mike Fleury

Board of Directors: Bruce Almond, Frank Gostyla, Valerie Johnson, Tom Knecht, Dave Koenig, Tom Locke, Larry McCown, Tom Mohr, Mary Sundberg

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www.valleysunpontiacs.com

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