

Vol. 31, No. 6

Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Jun 2024



- **Mt. Loretto Recap**
- **New Dorp High School Show**

Vintage Advertising

In 1986, Yugo ran this ad in an attempt to equate their cheap auto with the iconic Ford Model T and Volkswagen Beetle. Alas, the Yugo fell quite short of those lofty goals. It was sold in the US from 1985 through 1992, selling a total of 141,651 on our shores. The Yugo was built by Zastava Automobiles, known more for collaborations with Fiat in Europe. Malcolm Bricklin eventually acquired import rights after Yugo displayed at the 1984 Los Angeles Auto Show.

Alas, a combination of poor quality, the unraveling of Yugoslavia and subsequent NATO bombing of Zastava's auto division instead of their arms division was enough to kill the Yugo here.

By comparison, Ford sold more than 15 million Model Ts, and VW sold more than 21 million Beetles.

In This Issue

Raffle Car at The Mount.

New Dorp High School show.

The SIRAACA Garage has another century-old car in its midst.

The SIRAACA Time Machine visits the Prospect Garage and its surroundings.



Introducing the same old idea.

Every generation or so, some smart people figure out how to make basic transportation at an affordable price. The old "car in every garage" idea.

First came the Model T, a basic affordable idea that put millions behind the wheel who had only seen the rear end of a horse before.

But then, over the years, bigger and more expensive became the way to go.

Until the economical Beetle brought things back to reality again.

But then the Beetle went away,

and there was nothing to take its place.

Until the Yugo.

The Yugo gives you dependable, front-wheel drive transportation, imported from Europe, for only \$3990. No, it's not a typographical error.

On one hand, the Yugo is very

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basic. But on the other, it's not so basic. It's actually better equipped than many of those "sticker shockers" you've seen.

For instance, there's an overhead cam engine (yes, Virginia, the engine is included), 4-wheel independent suspension and rack and pinion steering, to name just a few goodies.

Every generation, some smart people figure out how to make basic transportation at an affordable price.

For all the other smart people who want to buy it.

Did you know? The Yugo's 1,100cc engine made 55 horsepower, and its top speed was 86mph. It was the slowest car sold in the USA.

Trivia Question: The first car with a modern speed control system was the 1958 Imperial, called "auto-pilot". Which company renamed and marketed it as "cruise-control"?

Answer: Cadillac. In 1965, AMC called it "cruise command"

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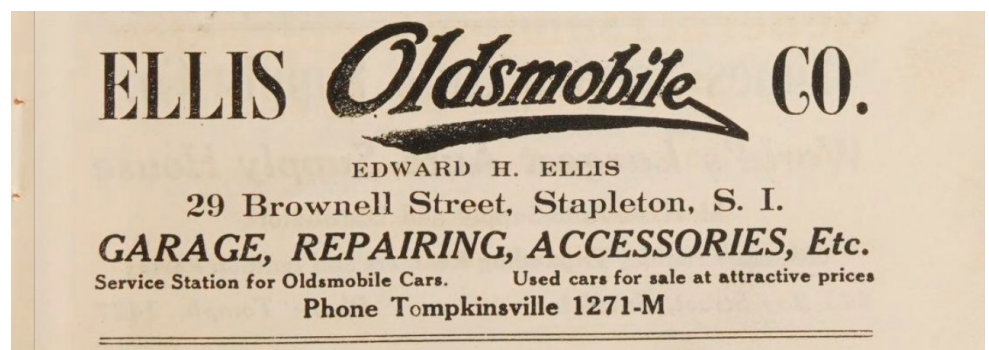


Minutes of the 576th Meeting

May 7, 2024

1. The 576th meeting of the Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 7:15 pm on May 7 at The Square on Annadale. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and offering a moment of silence, the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read.
2. Paul Jr. began with a recap of our Spring Dust-Off. Considering an AWOL deejay, a chilly day and a car fire in the spectator parking lot, we still made out well. A special thank you to Bob Ferone for "dusting off" his DJ equipment to provide us with sound and tunes.
3. The raffle car took in \$2,035 at the Dust-Off. Its next appearance will be at Hot Rods & Harleys in Rahway on May 11. Members volunteered to help judge at that show as well as sell raffle tickets.
4. The raffle car will also be on hand at the New Dorp High School show on June 2. Members will also help them select their Top 50 award winners.
5. The Food Truck Festival at Mt. Loretto will be on June 7-9. We will once again have our raffle car alongside the performance stage and will ask members to volunteer for one of several shifts to sell tickets. The event features live music all weekend long.
6. Members wishing to participate in the Memorial Day Parade on Forest Avenue should check in with Artie Guarnieri. There are local cruise nights planned for the end of June on South Avenue and at Sunrise Assisted Living in New Dorp. Details on those to follow.
7. The club began discussing ways to commemorate our 50th Anniversary with swag and media.
8. Phil gave a treasury report, with all in order.
9. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20. The 50/50 collected a whopping \$92. Joe D'Amore won \$46.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony DiAngelo, Secretary



Raffle Car at Food Truck Festival

Once again, we were welcomed back by Catholic Charities of Staten Island to their Food Truck Festival at Mount Loretto for a three day event featuring great food and live music. Parked in our usual spot alongside the performance stage, we took advantage of fantastic weather and strong attendance to sell a total of \$2,490 in raffles on our 1987 Camaro IROC-Z. As always, we thank the members who volunteered to spend some time with us that weekend and help us reach our best total for this event. Special thanks to Bob Johnson, who serves as the emcee for the event and routinely reminds the crowds to stop by our tent. Another shout out goes to Mike Gorgia, who walks among the revelers in the beer & sangria garden to sell them raffles. To date, the raffle car has appeared at four key events, beginning with our Spring Dust-Off. We have sold \$6,661 across those events, running ahead of last year at the same point in the season. There are a few cruise nights coming up at we wrap up June next where we hope to keep the momentum going.



Paul Arena, Sr. Memorial Award Presented at NDHS Show

A number of SIRAACA members were on hand at the New Dorp High School Car Show to help the organizers judge entrants and select a few special award winners. Others set up our tent and manned the raffle car ticket sales, reminding buyers that last year's winner was a NDHS teacher who bought her tickets at the same event. Paul Jr. was asked to pick a vehicle from the 1960's to receive the newly created award in memory of his father. With the choice coming down to three cars, he was then also asked to pick a Best Corvette and Best in Show. Suddenly, all three cars found a place among the winners, with Tony Yeras winning the 1960's trophy for his AACA National Award winning 1968 Grand Prix. Best in Show went to a 1969 Camaro (next page) and Best Corvette to an NCRS Top Flight 1965 Roadster. Afterwards, Tony promised that the trophy would be displayed right next to his AACA National Awards for all to see.



From Paul Jr.

Well, it looks like this newsletter will only be three weeks late, so I've reduced the backlog just a bit. I aim to get July out before the Fourth, ideally by our meeting date of July 2. Yes, we are into the summer, with every weekend seemingly booked for a vacation or BBQ or car show. Hopefully, the erosion at Great Kills Park doesn't continue to swallow up the parking lot where we gather every Sunday morning, and we have our weekly outlet for a morning cruise. If evening cruises are more to your liking, there will be one starting at 5:00 PM on the last Wednesday of June, July, and August at Pienza Pizza, which is at Corporate Commons Three, behind the Commons Cafe on South Avenue. For those of you that recently attended the AACA Meet in Saratoga, the Cadillac LaSalle Nationals in Gettysburg, or local shows in the area, please send me a pic and an email with some details and I can fill these newsletters with ease (I'm certain we'll have a Phil Boffa-Kevin Keenan tale to tell about the AACA Spring National Meet). Until next time, stay cool! - Paul Jr.



- NEXT MEETING - June 4

Our next monthly meeting is on Tuesday, June 4. Odds are we are returning to The Square on Annadale, and we will confirm that with all before that date.

Start time is typically around 7:00 PM.

The club will provide pizza and soda, and members can purchase additional or alternate items on their own.

Trophy Donations for 2024

As the summer months draw near, please begin efforts to ask for trophy donations for our fall show. Many of you have repeat donors who graciously give each year, and some of us have brought in new ones in the last year or so. Inevitably we lose some, and hope to gain more in their place. Any business is suitable, as are "personal" donors who choose to do so in memory of someone or just to show their support. As a reminder, a First Place trophy is \$50, a Second Place is \$40, a Third Place is \$30, while all three are \$100. You can use the business side of our fall flyer as a means to collect the donation. If you need help recalling who you brought in last year, ask Paul Jr. If you want help from seasoned trophy sellers, ask Tony DiAngelo or Mike Signorile for tips. Remember, trophies are our biggest expense but our efforts can easily cover their cost if everyone pitches in.



1969 Camaro SS was a Best in Show winner at New Dorp High School car show. See story on previous page. (photo by Paul Jr.).

Inside the SIRAACA Garage

There is always room for Henry Ford's Model T in the SIRAACA Garage. This one is a 1923 touring owned by Enrico Ferrara, a sister to our other '23 owned by Tony Ventrice.

Enrico recently entered it into his first car show at the West Orange Street Fair. It was clearly the fan favorite as it drew many onlookers who all stopped to pose for a picture with it. That's no surprise, as it's not every day that you see a car that's more than 100 years old looking this good.

The touring car was far and away the most popular offering from Ford that year. They initially sold for \$298 when first released on October 17, 1922. Adding an optional starter and demountable rims bumped the cost to \$393. Prices came down a bit by October of 1923. This year's model featured a one-man top and sloping windshield. If it had a starter, the headlamps were six-volt electric and it came with a small electric tailight.

Like all T's, Enrico's features a 177 cu. in. 4-cylinder engine, producing 20hp and a top speed of 45mph. Slow and steady then, and still steady 100 years later..

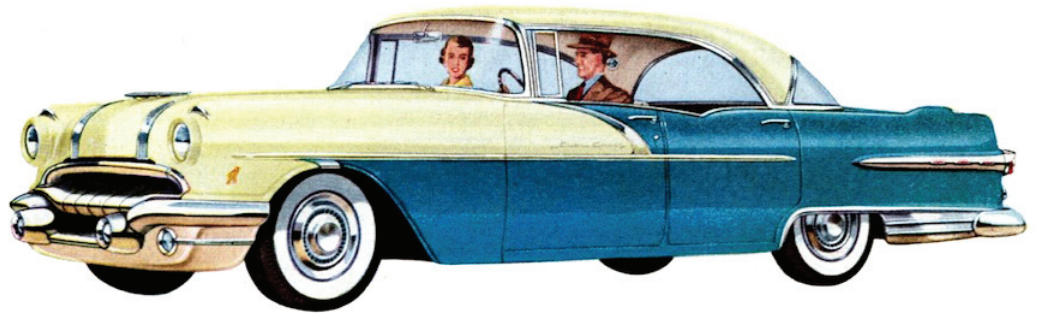
The SIRAACA Garage is home to all of our members' cars, past and present. Has your car been featured yet? Make sure you get the details to Paul Jr. if you want to share your car with us all.



All Model T's were offered only in black from 1914 through 1925. In late 1926, open cars were offered in Phoenix Brown or Gunmetal Blue. Driving one is unlike driving other cars, as the throttle is controlled by hand, and reverse is controlled by foot. (photo by Enrico Ferrara)

Upcoming Events

Load up your car and head out to one of these upcoming events:



- AACA Eastern Spring Nationals, Saratoga, NY - June 20-22
- Cars Care Car Show, College of Staten Island - June 23
- South Avenue Crusie Night, Pienza Pizza at the Teleport - June 26
- New Monmouth Diner Cruise Nights, 1887 Rt. 35N - Mondays
- Arbor Hose Co. Benefit Car Show, 1780 W. 7th St., Piscataway - June 22
- Mecum Harrisburg, Penna Farm Show Complex - July 24-27
- New Hope Automobile Show, New Hope Solebury H.S.- August 10





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The SIRAACA Time Machine

Working off a lead from a 1921-22 listing for the Prospect Garage, we wound the SIRAACA Time Machine back to 1929 for a hopeful look at a still thriving auto business renting fancy Packards and limousines.

The brick building retained the name, but was it still in business? We tried knocking there, as well as the sign shop and machine shop it sat between, but no luck. We jumped ahead 11 years for another look. The painted brick sign was now greatly faded, and a sign in the window read, "Garage for Rent". The other sign, however, read "Packard Cars for Hire". A newer garage was built in place of the rickety old sign shop, and written on its wall was "Cars Simonized". While we had the Time Machine cleaned and waxed, we checked out Mathison's old pick-up truck. We're fairly certain it was a 1933 International D1. We also walked down to the larger building with the loading dock. It was Swift & Company, makers of Swift's Premium ham, bacon and sausage (1940-era truck below).



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In the 1940 phone book, there is a Prospect Auto Laundry listed - perhaps that's the new garage that's offering a simonizing. Today, the view on Prospect Street is much different. Swift's and the machine shop are gone and remain an empty lot. The two garages are incorporated into a single building that may still be called Hall On The Bay. Photos courtesy of NYPL (1929 view) and NYC Municipal Archives (1940 views).