

Vol. 33, No. 4

# Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Apr 2026



• **2026 Season Gets Underway  
with Arrival of Spring**

## Vintage Advertising

Economic uncertainty in 1958 led to a creative push to renew optimism as winter turned to spring. Dodge introduced Spring Editions, replete with new colors, additional trim and brightwork as a way to drum up interest and drive sales.

New accent parts included a wide, chrome rear license plate mount on the trunk lid, full-length chrome moulding, bright fin endcaps and a special grille emblem.

New colors introduced for spring included Poppy Red, Frosted Turquoise and Paris Rose. Chrysler also shipped the new trim to dealers to freshen up existing inventory, but not every such car got every trim piece, so variations exist.

## In This Issue

Spring Dash Plaque

Grand National update

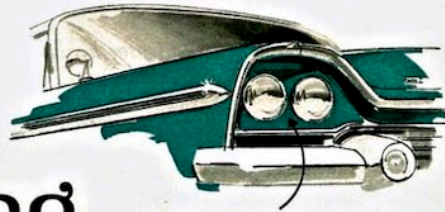
Another tale of "My First Car"

The SIRAACA Garage has a new old car

The SIRAACA Time Machine returns to the early days of Wagner's Garage

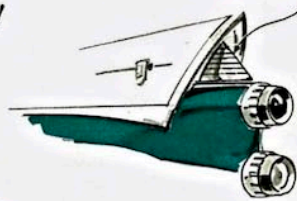
DRAMATIC DODGE ANNOUNCEMENT CATCHES SPRING BY SURPRISE!

# New Spring Swept-Wing

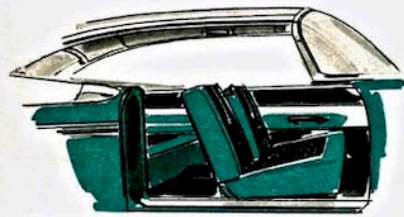
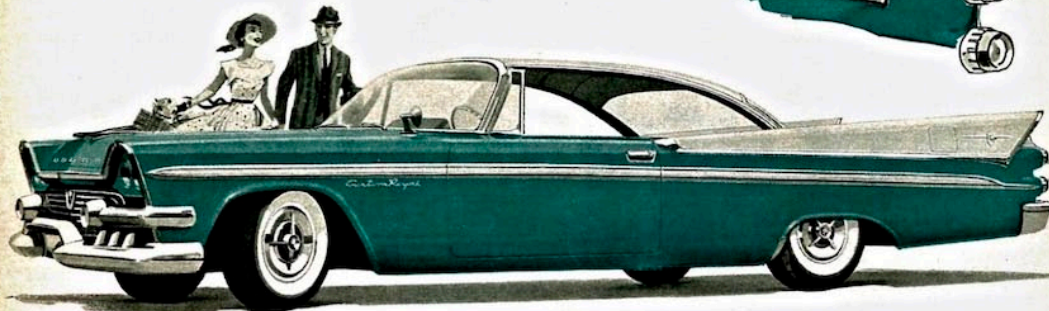


New fashion colors carried out in headlamp shield

Sculptured crown of gleaming chrome highlights soaring fins



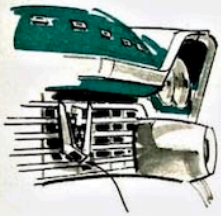
Broad new sweep of chrome from front to rear



New Color-Keyed Interiors

Let Winter's Gloomy-Guses sit by the stove and mope! Here's a new-as-Spring Swept-Wing to put the show on the road. Colors are just plain knock-out—Poppy Red, Frosted Turquoise, Paris Rose. Bold new accents of gleaming chrome bring out new beauty of line and contour. Striking new interiors are Color-Keyed to give a lift to your spirits. We suggest you get in to your Dodge dealer's *now* for the finest Spring tonic that ever came down the pike!

It's new for Spring to give you more . . . Get all the car you're paying for!



Symbol of the Spring Swept-Wing—this proud medallion on grille

SPRING SWEPT-WING  
by **Dodge**



License plates framed in massive chrome escutcheon

3

Did you know? Dodge also changed the headlight trim midway through the '58 model run, unrelated to the Spring Special. Later cars have a wide lower edge compared to the early thin edge.

*Trivia Question: What Chrysler designer was responsible for "The Forward Look" on 1955-1963 models, showcasing a fondness for tailfins and rocket-age styling?*

*Answer: Virgil Exner. His designs changed the course of styling in the years to come. GM designers caught wind of his '57 designs and ordered a redesign of their '59 models.*

**April 2026**

**Volume 33, Number 4**

**SIRAACA Who's Who**

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# Minutes of the 594th Meeting

## March 10, 2026

1. The 594th meeting of the Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 6:45 pm on March 10 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. Phil Boffa was able to renegotiate the fees we pay for holding our show at The Commons Cafe, cutting \$500 off of the proposed increase and we have locked in the rate for three years.
3. Spring Dust-Off posters were handed out to help us advertise the upcoming show. These are primarily designed to drum up spectators, as our mailing list targets car owners.
4. Special awards for the Spring Dust-Off will include a Class of 1976 winner as well as a Pontiac 100 winner.
5. We will raise the requested trophy donation amounts this year as follows: \$60 for First, \$50 for Second, and \$40 for Third. All three will be \$120. Use your discretion if your donors are hesitant. \$100 for all three is better than \$60 for one.
6. Upcoming events include the NJRAACA 73rd Annual Spring Show on May 3, and Chris Haynes' new charity car show on May 31 at South Beach.
7. The raffle car will return to Staten Island ahead of the spring Dust-Off after hibernating all winter in a tent in Kevin Keenan's NJ backyard. Thanks to Kevin for keeping it warm.
8. Phil Boffa presented a treasury report, with all in order.
9. Our newsletter was given an Award of Distinction by the AACA Publications committee.
10. The April meeting will focus on the logistics of the upcoming Dust-Off, and we encourage all of our members to make an effort to attend.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm. The 50/50 collected \$48 and Matt Safford won \$24.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tony DiAngelo, Secretary

## AACA Grand National Meet

This year, the AACA Annual Grand National Meet returns to the eastern half of the United states, and lands directly in the state known as the heart of the AACA. It will be held in Allentown, PA at The NB Center for American Automotive Heritage. The show will be held on Saturday, August 22, and there are events leading up to that day for those interested in a longer stay. These include the display of all 18 Zenith Award Nominees and judging of those cars on Saturday. The Zenith Award is presented to the best restored car of the year, and spans nearly all types of cars eligible for AACA shows. Saturday also sees Race Car & Motorcycle checks on the show field and an evening Ice Cream Social at the nearby Mack Trucks Historical Museum.

The NB Center is a 27-acre campus devoted to preserving, restoring and driving significant American automobiles. It maintains a 200 car collection spanning 1910-2017. Grand National registered show car participants will have the opportunity to access select buildings during two sessions on Saturday.

The host hotel is the Hyatt Suites Allentown West, 22 minutes away from the NB Center. There are alternate hotels in the area that are also recommended. Show car registration is open to all AACA Senior or Grand National vehicles, and is capped at 500 cars.

## Raffle Tix Available

Members are encouraged to start selling raffles on the 2005 Mustang Deluxe Coupe that we will give away in September. Tickets are always available at the meetings, and you can also contact Paul Arena if you want to pick some up in between. Note that each member is asked to sell at least \$60 worth. At five tickets for \$20, that's only three sales. Of course, we see many members sell much more than that, and the total number the club sells this way makes up a significant contribution to a profitable year. A raffle flyer will be available soon to help you promote the car, as well as a cover shot of the car on a future newsletter.

## Spring Dust-Off is April 26

Our 19th Annual Spring Dust-Off Car Show & Flea Market is scheduled for Sunday, April 26. For many of us, the logistics of the event remain the same. Nonetheless, here are a number of things to keep in mind for that day. Members are encouraged to bring their antique cars to this show, as our turnout is typically lower than the fall show. Our cars will be parked in the very first parking area of the first row, opposite the Commons Cafe. Members are asked to arrive by 6:30am to help set up the field, and should wear their red "Show Staff" shirts. Club jackets and sweatshirts are also fine if the weather is cool. There are no envelopes or judging sheets to hand out in the spring. The first 200 entries will get a dash plaque, and the only other handouts will be flyers for our other two shows. As a reminder, show vehicles pay \$25. Tony DiAngelo will run the flea market set-up beginning at 7:00am. The vendors will be located further down the first row, beyond our members' cars. We will have a team of judges walk the field to identify our special award winners, with specific assignments such as Best Foreign Car, Best Corvette, etc. We will have a single 50/50 drawing, and the red carpet awards presentation will be sometime around 2:30. If anyone has questions

## 1922 Ad Spurs Time Machine

**HAYNES "55"**  
**New Low Prices**  
 Effective Immediately — F.O.B. Factory

<p>The new, improved Haynes 55, Five-passenger Touring Car</p>  <p>Now \$1495</p>	<p>The new, improved Haynes 55, roomy, Three-Passenger Roadster</p>  <p>Now \$1545</p>
<p>The new Haynes 55, roomy, Three-Passenger Coupelet</p>  <p>Now \$2095</p>	<p>The new, improved Haynes 55, Five-passenger Sedan</p>  <p>Now \$2395</p>

**Wagner's Garage**  
 SHOWROOM: 446 Richmond Rd., Concord, N. I. Telephone Tompkinsville 93  
 SERVICE STATION: 854 Richmond Rd., Concord, N. I.

## From the President

April brings with it the start of our season, and we are ready for our 19th Annual Spring Dust-Off Car Show & Flea Market scheduled for April 26th. We will run through the logistics at our April meeting, so we hope to see as many of you as possible on April 7. We are also making plans to celebrate America 250 with a special show on June 13. More to come on that effort. Also, please keep in mind that we are planning our annual appearance at Hot Rods & Harleys on May 9 in Rahway. We are looking for ten judges as well as a number of folks to work our club tent and sell raffles on our 2005 Mustang. We'll start a volunteer list at the April meeting. The weather has teased us enough to expect that Sundays will now be warm enough for cruising into Great Kills Beach, so we look forward to seeing everyone there in the coming weeks as well. If your car has been hibernating all winter, now is the time to get it ready for spring. Check your fluids, make sure your tires are inflated properly, and that your registration/inspection/insurance is up to date. As they say, "Happy Motoring!" - Paul Jr.

## - NEXT MEETING - April 7

Our next monthly meeting is Tuesday, April 7. The meeting is held at The Square on Annadale, and that is confirmed by text in the days leading up to the meeting.

The start time is usually around 7:00PM.

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

## 2026 Dust-Off Dash Plaque

In sync with Pontiac's founding 100 years ago, this year's Spring Dust-Off "dash plaque" features Pat Colabella's 1966 Pontiac GTO. We returned to an illustrated image of the car without requiring the vendor to redraw a photo, because we do it ourselves. We will determine what member will have their car on the fall plaque based on length of membership of those who have yet to be featured on one.



## Award of Excellence 2024



As for the recent mention of "missing" dash plaque designs from recent years, Bruce Campbell pointed out that we skipped a few years in the fall and replaced the plaques with calendars. That explains why we couldn't find anything from 2015 and 2017. We did produce a special magnet in celebration of our 40th Annual show in 2016. That leaves us with 1978, 1980, 1988, 1990, 1995, 1996, 1999 as years we are still seeking a copy or image of the fall dash plaque. The hunt continues - please share any leads you might have. We plan to put a call out on social media next.

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## Inside the SIRAACA Garage

The SIRAACA Garage just admitted its latest resident, and we have a little preview for you. This is Bob Ferone's 1986 Cadillac Fleetwood Brougham D'Elegance.

Some like to call these a barn find, considering they have been left behind untouched for some time. This one-owner car was last driven in 2006, a hard-to-believe twenty years ago. It sports 35,000 original miles on its 5.0 liter Olds V-8, and a lot of dust. The interior looks super clean, with leather seats that show no wear.

Like most of these, it'll need some replacement fillers and a thorough mechanical going over. That means it won't make its debut at the Dust-Off, but we know we'll see it this season once Bob gets the dust off.

Bob credits Mike Signorile for the lead on this car. No word if he credits any of the Caddy clubs for giving him the itch to own one (or wear a velour track suit).

Once cleaned, or after we get a look at the build plate, we'll know if its the standard Commodore Blue or the optional Corinthian Blue Firemist.

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.

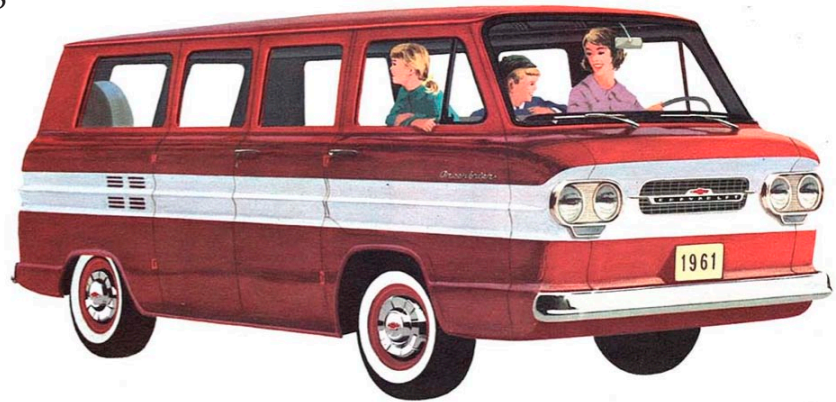


1986 was the last year of the Fleetwood Brougham name at the time, becoming just Brougham in 1987. Caddy build 49,115 Fleetwood Broughams in '86. (photo by Bob Ferone)

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## Upcoming Events

Fill up your tank, grab some friends, and head out to these upcoming events in our area.



- Edison Light Cruisers Thursday Cruises, Home Depot, Route 1 South. Edison, NJ - April through October
- SIRAACA 19th Annual Spring Dust-Off, Commons Cafe - April 26
- NJRAACA 73rd Annual Car Show, Danville, NJ - May 3
- 23rd Annual Hot Rods & Harleys, Rahway, NJ - May 9
- 1st Annual Cars Care Car & Jeep Show, South Beach - May 31

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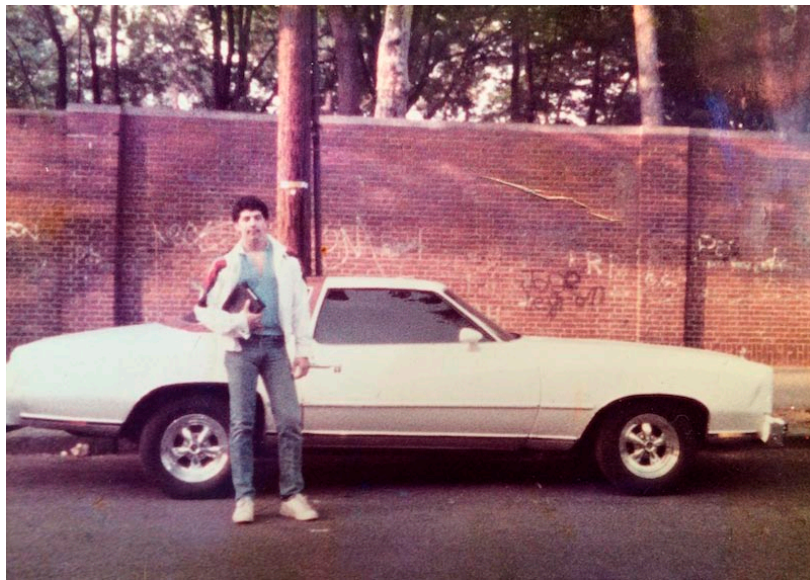
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# My First Car - 1977 Chevrolet Monte Carlo

(Editor's note: Ron Connor submits this tale of his first car as we continue this new monthly series)

I could not wait to get my driver's license. The moment I turned sixteen, I was at the DMV getting my permit, dreaming about freedom on four wheels. I ended up being the last of my friends to take a road test, but I made sure to pass it just before turning seventeen. I was back at the DMV that same day to get my license in hand. There was one hitch, however. No car.

I had to borrow my mom's old Dodge Dart whenever I could. I was working at Chuck E. Cheese in Brooklyn, taking the train every day. It was pure misery for a kid itching to drive. That certainly motivated me to keep working. I saved every paycheck until I had \$2,000 to my name, and I was constantly watching for anything even close to affordable. And then, I spotted it: a 1977 Chevy Monte Carlo for sale for \$2,500. It was already ten years old by then, but to me it looked absolutely awesome - cool, yet classy - everything I wanted in a first car. My mom couldn't help with my \$500 shortfall, but she had a friend known as "Uncle Sonny", a neighborhood guy who was known to "lend" people money. She told me to go see him. When I did, I didn't even have to explain, as he already knew why I was there. Sonny had a soft spot for my mom, so he handed me the \$500 I needed. No interest, no questions, just a grin and a reminder, "Pay me back fifty bucks a week". And that's how I got my first set of wheels.



The Monte had a 305 under the hood, and for me it might as well have been a Ferrari. I loved my car. Drove it everywhere, crashed it more times than I want to admit, and fixed it up each time. It became part of who I was, and so many years later, it still lingered in my mind as the car that started it all for me.

Fast forward to the boredom of the COVID lockdown. I'd sold my last motorcycle, and with all of that empty time sitting at home, my thoughts returned to that '77 Monte. So I started hunting for one just like my first car. The search took two years and included a flight out to South Dakota to check out a candidate that didn't quite measure up. What made it so tough was that I refused to compromise. I wanted one equipped like my first one, which meant roll-down crank windows, no power door locks, no swivel bucket seats. Finally, fate stepped in. A matching '77 Monte popped up right here in New Jersey, and it was everything I'd waited for, except better. This one came with a 350 engine and a four-barrel carb, providing a little extra punch for a car that still had all the right soul. Almost four years later, I still get the same feeling when I see it sitting in the driveway. Every time I fire it up, I'm sixteen again - wide-eyed, broke and completely in love with his first car.

## The SIRAACA Time Machine

Before we look at our latest time travel adventure, let's revisit the mystery car challenge our last trip provided. The sedan was a 1934 Oldsmobile. The strange front end in the other pictures belonged to an early 1936 Nash Lafayette. Did any of you get them right?

We've visited Wagner's Garage a few times at various points in time. This month, we dial up another trip farther back than before. In the early 1920's, ahead of the launch of the Chrysler brand, Wagner was selling Haynes automobiles and trucks made by Vim and Diamond T. You can see the VIM signs next to the garage doorway. Vim manufactured lightweight commercial delivery trucks between 1915 and 1923, and we are fairly certain that the trucks we see here are indeed VIM models based on other photos we've seen of surviving trucks. Does that mean the car is a Haynes? Perhaps, based on the timing of our visit. Haynes produced autos from 1905 through 1924 before declaring bankruptcy and going out of business in 1925. Seems like Joseph Wagner had no choice but to find a new brand to sell, and turning to Chrysler kept Wagner's in business selling new cars for more than 60 years afterwards.



photo above from Staten Island NY In Days Gone By

Authorized Agents and Service Station

**HAYNES PLEASURE CARS**

**VIM AND DIAMOND T. TRUCKS**

**JOSEPH WAGNER**

652-54-58 Richmond Road, Stapleton, S. I.      Tel. Compk. 93

Listing from a local business directory for Staten island, 1921-22



Note: This monthly feature began in 2020 as temporary filler for missing content due to government lockdowns in response to Covid. It's turned into a regular feature still going strong through 2025 and we hope that you are enjoying these trips back in time. Feel free to send in your comments, requests or additional information.

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