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Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Aug 2026

• **August Brings Auctions &
AACA Grand Nationals**



Will this be just another summer of Pontiac-watching?
(or are you set to get a Catalina of your own?)

While we're out here building Pontiacs, we know what you'll be doing with yours: Having a wonderful time. Wish we were there. Ah, well, even all alone you can enjoy Pontiac's satiny sort of ride. And you can get your kicks from the Trophy V-8—it's about as eager as a small boy on opening day of baseball season. And who could ignore that Wide-Track roadworthiness? Nobody who's ever tried it, that's for sure. The place to start this sweet summer is your Pontiac dealer's. You might be surprised at the price he'll let you in on. **WIDE-TRACK PONTIAC**

Did you know? 1963 was the first year for Pontiac's vertically stacked headlights, which went horizontal again in 1968.

Vintage Advertising

We are in the midst of summer, so we turn to this Pontiac ad from 1963 to maintain that vibe. By then, the Catalina was well into its place as a standalone model, but the name was originally used for something else.

Beginning in 1950, the name "Catalina" referred to a trim line on hardtop body styles. These pillarless designs allowed an open air feeling with the windows down, with no posts getting in the way. Chevrolet used "Bel Air", Buick used "Riviera", and Olds used "Holiday" in the same manner. Catalina became a model name in 1959, replacing "Chieftan" and "Super Chief"

Several engine set-ups were available, ranging from 389's with 2bbl, 4bbl or Tri-Power carburetion, up to 421's in "A", "HO" and Tri-Power configurations. Total production for '63 was 234,549.

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AACA Grand National prep

A road trip with Kevin and Phil

The SIRAACA Garage welcomes a new denizen.

The SIRAACA Time Machine carspotting challenge, 1952.

Trivia Question: What long-running flagship model took its numerical name from its Series plus the number of cylinders in its engine?

Answer: The Oldsmobile 98. The Series 90, referred to as the Custom Cruiser, debuted in 1940. The 98 was one of the oldest US nameplates when it was discontinued in 1996.

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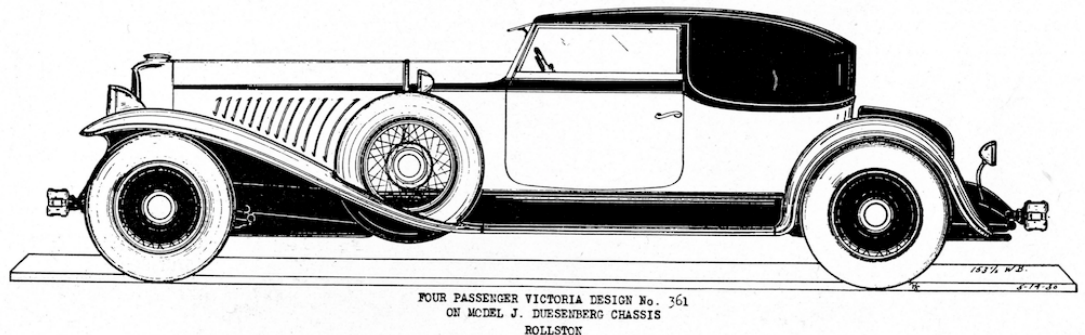


Minutes of the 599th Meeting

August 4, 2026

1. The 599th meeting of the Staten Island Region AACA was called to order on August 4 at 7:20 pm 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. Members who attended "Macungie" recapped their visit to the car show and accompanying toy show and flea market.
3. Upcoming events include New Hope, the cruise night at Sunrise Assisted Living, and the AACA Grand Nationals. A good number of our members will be competing in Allentown, and others plan to attend as spectators.
4. Members who attended the Hop Shoppe Cruise-In near the Mall reported on the difficulty the location presents for such an event.
5. Trophy donation efforts are in full swing. Please continue to seek out returning and new donors. Thanks to all who have handed in donations already.
6. Members discussed the possibility of moving the fall flea market to the far end of the show field closest to South Avenue.
7. Members celebrated Frank Provenzano's 90th birthday with cake and candles.
8. The NYPD's Video Game Trailer is expected to attend our show.
9. Phil Boffa presented a treasury report showing all is in order.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm. The 50/50 collected \$85 and Enrico Ferrara won \$43.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony DiAngelo, Secretary



Prepping for the AACA Grand National

An AACA Grand National Meet is held once a year, typically alternating between locations east and west of the Mississippi River. It is a show limited to AACA Senior Award winning vehicles, allowing the best of the best to stack up against each other for a Grand National Award. Cars are still judged on a 400-point basis, but the minimum score required to win a Grand National First Prize is 380 points. That said, you have to score within 5 points of the highest scoring car to still win first prize. The tiers continue for second and third place awards (370 and 360 point minimums, respectively) but keeping within the five point spreads set by the top car in class. Vehicles that have already won a Grand National First Prize move up to compete for Senior Grand National, which requires a score of 390 or better to win. Senior Grand National winners can go on to win repeat awards at that level.

Several of our members will be competing at the upcoming Grand National Meet in Allentown, PA on August 22. They include Phil Boffa, Kevin Keenan, Joe D'Amore, Andrew Napoli and Paul Arena, plus his brother-in-law Paul Padovano and friend Joe Fauci. They all have been spending the last few months getting their cars ready for the big day. It's important to note that none of their cars are being trailered to the show. Other members are planning to drive out as spectators, and we expect many other familiar faces on the field that day. 500 cars are registered to compete, a gathering of the best our hobby has to offer. Good luck to all!



Top: Paul Arena, Sr. won a Senior Grand National in 2001 with his 1964 Riviera. Twenty-five years later, his son-in-law is shooting for a repeat with the same car. Bottom, Paul Jr. won a Grand National Third Prize in 2020 and is just happy to be on the field. In preparation for this year, he's putting new tires on his 1967 Cutlass. (photos by Paul Jr.)



Clove Lakes Display

The club has been invited to return to Clove Lakes Rehab on Saturday, September 19 for a two hour display of old cars for their residents and staff, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. They serve coffee and donuts and have a kitschy duo perform American Standards. Those who wish to attend should gather in the shopping center parking lot on Manor Road near the SI Expressway between 9:30 and 9:45.

Trophy Donor and Raffle Push

With less than one month remaining before our 49th Annual Car Show, it's important to push for any outstanding trophy donations and raffle sales. Ideally we collect all monies for both at our September meeting, giving us time to ensure donors are properly identified on trophies and in our show pamphlet. If you are still chasing afterwards, we can take donor names up until a few days before the show, but those will not make the pamphlet's press deadline. Thanks to all.

From the President

It's likely that we all have a bucket list item or two that revolves around our enjoyment of our hobby. In this case, I'm not talking about the other list we all keep of cars we wish to own, so I'll save that for another column. This list is built around the places we want to go or the experiences we wish to have associated with collector cars. In my case, one entry is attending the Pebble Beach Concours, which is arguably the pinnacle of car shows. This year's event featured 218 hand-selected cars, including 33 international entries, highlighting the uniqueness of this show. Where else can you go to see such a collection? If you attended it this year, you got to see a 1935 Due-senberg SSJ Speedster originally owned by Clark Gable take Best of Show over a 1938 Delahaye 165 from Switzerland, a 1955 Ferrari 375 Berlinetta from Thailand and 1954 Ferrari 375 America from Texas. Aside from the Concours, if you can afford to be out there all week, there are many other ancillary events happening - auctions, tours, cruises - to put you in car nirvana. Someday.....

- Paul Jr.



- NEXT MEETING - August 4

Our next monthly meeting is Tuesday, August 4. 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.

August Brings Auction Heat

For anyone wanting high end auction action in August, turn your attention to Monterey, CA. Built around the venerable Pebble Beach Concours, Monterey Week features an abundance of seven and eight-figure price tags. Houses such as RM Sotheby's, Bonhams, Gooding, Mecum and Broad Arrow will compete for attention and deep pocketed buyers. American and European classics, pedigreed racing machines, supercars, hypercars, prototypes, early motoring icons, and more ensure that no matter what you like, you'll have plenty to choose from or drool over.

We've flipped through the catalogs and one interesting trend jumped out of us - dune buggies. RM is pitching a 1967 Meyers Manx (\$60k-80k), Bonhams offers a 1963 Manx (\$70k-90k), Gooding has a '67 Manx (\$40k-60k) and a 1966 Allison Daytona (\$60k-80k), and Broad Arrow offers a 1968 Manx with a rare optional Corvair six-cylinder (\$75k-\$100k). Who will win the Battle of the Buggies?

Other significant autos crossing the block that week include Tucker #19, estimated to fetch over \$1 million (RM), Clark Gable's 1935 Due-senberg JN convertible coupe, looking for \$6mm-\$8mm (RM) and a 1963 Corvette Grand Sport, one of five built and the first of three coupes, hoping to knock down \$13 million.

The Grand Sport's rival, a 1964 Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe, will seek a new owner for more than \$25 million (Gooding). Maybe the 1968 Karmann Ghia convertible at Mecum seems rather cheap in comparison, hoping to change hands for \$25k-\$35k).

You can visit each auction house online to view their online catalogs or lot listings. Some makes present countless choices (Porsche), and some few and far between (Packard). France is well-represented too, with Bugatti, Delahaye, Delage and Citroen leading the way.

If you prefer two wheels, there are plenty of motorcycles coming up as well - Mecum expects to sell 100 of them that week.

Play the lotto, dream big, and make your choices. It won't be easy to pick just one, but you'll have fun trying..

Inside the SIRAACA Garage

Make room for another Mopar in our SIRAACA Garage. Member Bobby Lombardi just acquired this sharp-looking 1970 Dodge Challenger convertible, sporting 55,700 miles on it's 383 V-8.

Challenger and Challenger R/T models both came in convertible form, with dwindling production totals as you go through the eight powerplant options, stopping with just nine made with a 426 Hemi.

Bobby's is a non-R/T, and believed to be just 1 of 122 such convertibles when you factor in the optional 383. Further research of color combos and options might lower that number even more.

Its paint code is B5, known as Bright Blue Poly, and it features a transverse white stripe around its tail end. Combined with the white top and interior, it strikes quite a pop. Bright Blue was one of 22 colors offered. A subset of colors were deemed "high impact" shades, with names such as SubLime, Plum Crazy and Top Banana. Some figures show that Plum Crazy was the most popular color for a non-RT, V-8 convertible, and Panther Pink was the least popular.

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.



Bobby's "new" convertible recently made its Gateway Park debut "down the beach". (photo by Paul Jr.)

Upcoming Events

Pack your car, grab some friends, and head out to these upcoming events in our area.



- Carlisle Truck Nationals, Carlisle, PA - August 7-9
- New Hope Auto Show, New Hope, PA - August 8-9
- Cruise Night, Sunrise Senior Living, New Dorp - August 15
- Dead Mans Curve Wild Weekend, Somerset, NJ - Sept. 3-6
- SIRAACA 49th Annual Car Show, Commons Cafe - Sept. 13
- 6th Annual Freehold KoC Blessing & Car Show - Sept. 19
- 2nd Ann'l Loyalty Hot Rod Spectacular, Middletown - Sept. 26

Searching for Our 2027 Raffle Car

(Editor's note: A special story courtesy of Phil Boffa. We'll return to "My First Car" soon - please keep sending in your stories)

As I was pruning my bonsai trees, I got a call on my Bat Phone. Typically, that meant Kevin Keenan was on the line. I politely answered, "What now?" He told me he made appointments to look over two cars for sale as potential raffle cars for next year. He needed my experience and companionship to go see the, and added, "Like now!"

I stripped off my gardening gloves, rushed to his house, and jumped into his car. We set our course for Bordentown, NJ. The dealer might have been called "Sleaze Bag Motors", but I can't be certain. Kevin received many texts confirming our appointment and the dealer stated that he and his staff were "waiting to be of assistance". We were expecting a red carpet welcome.

Once we arrived, we circled around a packed parking lot with no visible entrance or exit. Signs saying "Closed" dotted the property, so we parked on a crater-filled gravel driveway and walked over to a nearby building.

We entered it, saw it was nearly abandoned, and found a well-tanned, foreign man and his boxer dog, and a dented, scratched 2018 Cadillac featured as his flagship offering. Once introduced, Kevin asked about the Camaro convertible he had advertised. "What Camaro?", he asked. "Oh, that must belong to another guy who rents space here." He tried calling that other guy, but never got through. "Why the Camaro, it is just a plain car", he continued, trying to hold us there. We had a second appointment about 45 minutes away in Lakewood, and Kevin's patience had run out. As we left, Kevin was mumbling, "what a craphole that place was" and "how can someone not know how to run a basic business."

After 45 minutes, we arrived at a dilapidated gas station/car lot/camel oasis and spotted the second car. Immediately seeing it was a piece of crap, the English-as-a-third-language sales person approached us and asked, "why we not loving this car?" Perhaps he offering to throw in some shawarma and hummus - it wasn't that clear.

We had hopes for the car because everything looks nice in pictures on the web. Maybe these were taken when the car was new, or at the very least retouched.

On the way home, we debated on a place to stop and eat. Kevin is a connoisseur of such establishments of Burger King, White Castle and McDonald's, and a pair of Golden Arches beckoned for us to enter. Kevin noted we weren't in Kansas anymore, as the place was filled with many languages, cultures, and modes of dress.

Almost home, Kevin gets a call from the no-show dealer selling the car in Bordentown. He introduced himself as Sam and offered to bring the car to Kevin's house to look it over. Kevin blasted him, and in so many words told him what he thought of him. As you could guess, it wasn't a pleasant review.

It is always fun being on the road with Kevin, no matter how many languages and smells we encounter. As the search continues, I'm getting ready for our trip to Allentown for the AACA Grand Nationals. I'm sure I'll have another tale or two to tell.

(Editor's note: For many years, Kevin and Phil have been our very own Bob Hope and Bing Crosby)

The SIRAACA Time Machine

The SIRAACA Time Machine passes by the area around the Staten Island Ferry in 1952. This view of a parking lot provides us with a carspotting challenge. How many cars can you identify? There are plenty of details and shapes to go by, and we'll give you a head start. At the very far left, the first car facing forward is only half visible, but the front end is clearly that of a 1949 or 1950 Ford. The rest of that line should be easy for you, and the rear views of the front line will test your knowledge of taillights and trunk handles. We'll identify as many as we can and include the answers next month.

As for last month's single car ID challenge, we asked you to identify the car spotted on an outdoor lift outside the Neighborhood Service Station on Amboy Road. It was a 1935 Plymouth, as evidenced by its tell-tale grille.



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 into 2026 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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