

Vol. 33, No. 9

Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Sep 2026



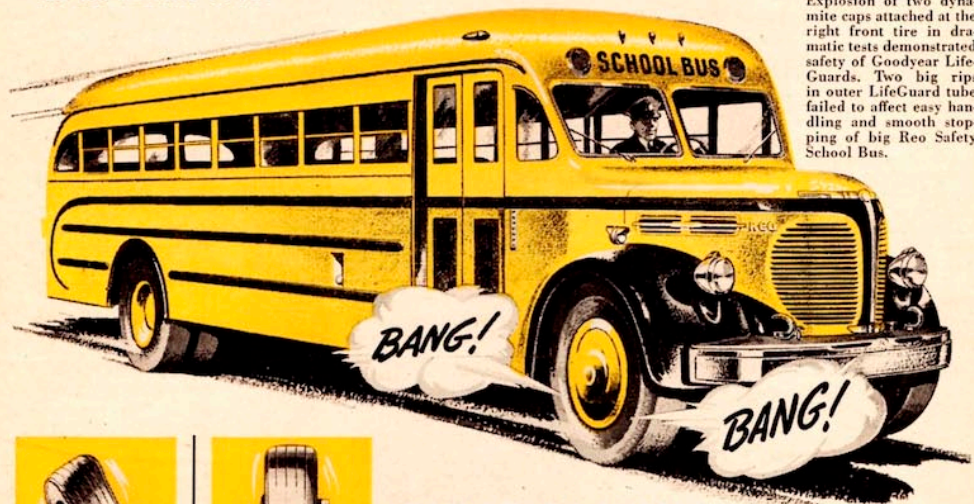
• **Special AACA Grand Nationals
Issue**



**YOUR CHILDREN CAN NOW RIDE TO
SCHOOL WITH GREATER SAFETY!**

Reo Safety School Bus Now LifeGuard Equipped*

***AT NO EXTRA COST!**

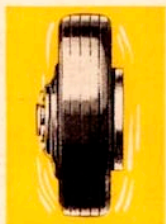


Explosion of two dynamite caps attached at the right front tire in dramatic tests demonstrated safety of Goodyear LifeGuards. Two big rips in outer LifeGuard tube failed to affect easy handling and smooth stopping of big Reo Safety School Bus.



ORDINARY TUBE

Blowout completely deflates tire, often throwing bus out of control.



LIFEGUARD TUBE

Supports tire because of air reserve—vehicle is brought to safe, smooth stop.

REO LEADS AGAIN!

Reo is out in front again with additional protection for America's school children. To prevent the tragedies that so often follow tire blowouts, Reo adopts Goodyear LifeGuard Safety Tubes as standard equipment AT NO EXTRA COST. No other school bus offers this and all the other Reo safety and quality features.

Remember, Reo was first with a complete school bus. Reo was first to incorporate as standard equipment all the school bus safety features recommended by the National Education Association. • REO MOTORS, INC., Lansing 20, Michigan.

Since 1904, Reo has pioneered these important features in the truck field: Dry disc clutch
Electric lights and starter • "Inside" gear shift • Pneumatic tires • Hydraulic brakes
Reo also gave America the Speed Wagon, the Flying Cloud and More-Load truck design

Vintage Advertising

School is nearly back in session, so let's shift gears with a look at how kids traveled back and forth to class safely in 1946. This is an ad for the Reo Safety School Bus, which added Goodyear LifeGuard Safety Tubes as standard equipment.

Reo was building trucks since 1904, most notably the Speed Wagon. They had stopped auto production in September, 1936 despite the return of Ransom E. Olds as chairman after retiring three years earlier. Their final run of Flying Cloud autos totaled 3,206 units.

Reo would continue building trucks and buses through 1957. It was then acquired by White, which merged Diamond T with Reo. Diamond Reo was liquidated in 1974.

In This Issue

AACA Grand National winners

Two tales for one price from Phil Boffa

The SIRAACA Garage previews the 2027 raffle car

The SIRAACA Time Machine finds an earlier version of a well-known shop

Did you know? In 1927, Ford dealer A.L Luce collaborated with a blacksmith to build the first steel-bodied bus, leading to the founding of the Blue Bird Body Company.

Trivia Question: GM partnered with what famous company to share managerial, engineering and scientific talent to develop a new lacquer finish for autos called Duco ?

Answer: DuPont. Up until 1923, the only durable and cheap auto paint was oven baked, black enamel popularized by the Model T.

September 2026

Volume 33, Number 9

SIRAACA Who's Who

EDITOR -

Paul Arena, Jr.

parena2@verizon.net

PRESIDENT -

Paul Arena, Jr.

parena2@verizon.net

VICE PRESIDENT -

Artie Guarnieri

artie.guarnieri@verizon.net

SECRETARY -

Tony DiAngelo - badbird70@aol

TREASURER -

Phil Boffa - phil.boffa@gmail.com

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY -
(currently unfilled)**

who@where.com

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS -

Bob Ferone - rferone@gmail.com

WEBMASTER - siraaca@yahoo.com

Frank Nathanson

www.siraaca.aaca.com



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 Das Awkscht Fest in Macungie spoke about the event.
3. Upcoming events include New Hope and the AACA Grand National Meet in Allentown on August 22. Many members will be attending the Grand Nationals, either competing or enjoying the show as spectators.
4. The Cruise Night at Sunrise Senior Living on New Dorp Lane is set for August 15.
5. Trophy donations and raffle sales are top of mind for many of us as we get closer to our fall car show. Be sure to bring in what you have when we meet in September.
6. Members discussed the possibility of relocating the flea market at our fall show to the main show field, perhaps on the South Avenue side. Recent vehicle attendance suggests this might work.
7. We may have the NYPD's video game trailer at the fall show, but it's not guaranteed.
8. We continue to search for a suitable raffle car for 2027. Send in any leads you have.
9. Phil Boffa presented a treasury report showing all is in order.
10. The club celebrated Frank Provenzano's 90th birthday with cake and candles. Happy birthday, Frank!
11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm. The 50/50 collected \$85 and Enrico Ferrara won \$43.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony DiAngelo, Secretary



Staten Island Wins Big at AACA Grand National Meet

Several of our members competed at the AACA Grand National Meet in Allentown, PA on August 22. Rain never materialized, leaving a mix of clouds and sun instead of rain. All of their hard work and preparation was on display for the judges, and all were rewarded for it. Congratulations to the following: Phil Boffa's 1979 Monte Carlo - Senior Grand National (bottom photo); Andrew Napoli's 1984 Oldsmobile Delta 88 Brougham - Senior Grand National (below photo); Kevin Keenan's 1978 Chevrolet Caprice - First Grand National; Joe D'Amore's 1993 Cadillac Sixty Special - First Grand National; and Paul Arena's 1967 Olds Cutlass - Second Grand National. In addition Paul's brother-in-law Paul Padovano won a Repeat Senior Grand National with the family's 1964 Buick Riviera, and friend Joe Fauci won a Repeat Senior Grand National with his 1977 Cadillac Coupe deVille and a First Grand National with his 1990 Cadillac Fleetwood Brougham. Peter Taliercio, another Staten Islander, won a First Grand National with his 1977 Cadillac Seville.



(photos by Paul Jr.)



Top: Joe D'Amore is all smiles after accepting his Grand National Award as well as his AACA Preservation board, where he can display additional Preservation tabs from future AACA National Meets.. Bottom, a New Jersey crew, including SIRAACA members Andrew Napoli, Kevin Keenan and Phil Boffa, join friend Mike Adler (left) to show off their awards. (photos courtesy of Joe D'Amore and Phil Boffa)



From the President

The cream of the crop was on full display at the recent AACA Grand National event, providing everyone in attendance plenty of cars to admire, ranging from a 1902 St. Louis Motor Carriage to a 2000 Pontiac Grand Prix. They covered the rare and the common, the expensive and the affordable, and the elegant and the utilitarian. Yet they all had something in common beyond condition - they all had stories to tell. The best part of such a show is chatting with the car owners, and learning more about the car itself or the efforts to bring it up to the condition worthy of a Grand National Meet. I caught up with the owners of a 1930 Ford Model A Town Car Delivery, the renowned 1934 Packard "Car of the Dome", and a 1913 Carnation among others. Each owner, equally passionate, spoke of the history of their car and the journey of discovery, restoration and ownership. Later on, I found myself telling similar tales to those who approached me about my Cutlass, and our other members all did the same. No matter what show you're at, make sure you spend time talking with other car owners. - 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.

The Agony of Preparation, and the Thrill of Victory!

(Editor's note: A special story courtesy of Phil Boffa). In November, when I knew the Grand Nationals were coming to Allentown, I started to get ready. I created checklist after checklist to go over my Monte Carlo, which won a First Grand National in 2020. The car logged countless trips up and down on a lift, and I polished, painted or replaced everything I could see. Spare parts filled new Tupperware bins. I was ready. Then the anxiety set in a week before the show. Bad weather kept me from washing and detailing the car. I checked the maps, watched the forecasts, planned my routes. Logistically, the weekend wasn't going to be easy, and could turn into a nightmare. Friday got off to a good start. The weather was clear and the roads were dry. Even so, following Kevin in the middle lane of Route 78 doing 55 mph is harrowing, with tractor trailers howling past us on both sides. I think my RPM gauge read 1200! We reached the first stop, a museum, and picked up our registration envelopes. About 200 other car owners were there, with a single toilet for us all. We waited an hour for our tour while they wrapped up a private party, lining the sidewalks outside searching for some shade. Andrew Napoli wasn't feeling too well, so we followed Kevin's ancient Garmin through the armpits of Allentown to find our hotel. It took us 45 minutes. We hoped for a nice AACA welcome, including cold drinks and cookies. Nothing doing. The hotel was isolated, so we ate there after a one hour wait for a table. My food was good, Kevin's not so good. My sleep was good, Kevin's not so good. My breakfast was great, Kevin's not so great. I led the way to the show, using a modern GPS system. Almost 500 cars filled the grounds, with thousands of folks in attendance. We saw Artie, Bob and his son Michael join us that day as spectators. As we headed back to the hotel after the show ended, Andrew wondered if they would provide shuttles to the awards banquet. Indeed, they did! The facilities were a little dated, a little small, and the banquet was a buffet with an expensive bar, but it had plenty of bathrooms! Anticipation built as they called the winners, and all of our club members won. I got my Senior Grand National as had hoped, and again had the very best times with friends, adding to fond memories of equally fun times from shows gone by.

Inside the SIRAACA Garage

Out with the old and in with the new, as one raffle car leaves to make room for the next one. In this case, the new one is older than the old one. This is our 1985 Mustang LX convertible.

Mike Signorile spotted the ad for this car, located in Maspeth. His son Michael worked close by and checked out the car for us. It was indeed as clean as advertised, and we quickly made a deal to buy it. It was owned by a high school auto shop teacher, and it shows.

Ford built 9,561 LX ragtops in 1985. Unlike the LX coupe, the convertible came with a 3.8L V-6. It cost \$12,237 when new.

Ours is Jalapeno Red with a white and red interior. White interior packages were only offered on convertibles.

The 1985 model was the first to feature a streamlined nose with a single opening for a grille. The 1984 had a multi-slotted opening. The quad headlamps would remain until 1987.

Tickets are on order and the car is scheduled to make its debut at Mt. Loretto's Fall Festival at the end of October.

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.



Jalapeno Red was one of three reds offered on the 1985 Mustang. The others were darker shades called Canyon Red and Medium Canyon Red. (photo by Mike Gorgia)

Upcoming Events

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



- Dead Mans Curve Wild Weekend, Somerset, NJ - Sept. 3-6
- 44th Annual Lead East, Parsippany, NJ - Sept. 3-6
- SIRAACA 49th Annual Car Show, Commons Cafe - Sept. 13
- 6th Annual Freehold KoC Blessing & Car Show - Sept. 19
- Car Display at Clove Lakes Home & Rehab - Sept. 19
- 2nd Ann'l Loyalty Hot Rod Spectacular, Middletown - Sept. 26
- 8th Annual New Dorp Lane Car Show - Sept. 27

“I Just Couldn’t Believe It!”

(Editor’s note: Another Grand National story courtesy of Phil Boffa. We’ll return to “My First Car” soon - please keep sending in your stories)

It was an entire weekend of “I just couldn’t believe it!” With the Grand Nationals on my mind for months, it still came down to the last few days of preparation. The weather was supposed to be good on Thursday, a good day for final detailing and getting ready for the road. Instead, Thursday storms kept me from finishing. I just couldn’t believe it!

On Friday, I headed out with Kevin Keenan, Andrew Napoli and our friend Mike Adler. Getting to the NB Center was not so bad, but things soon took a turn. The Center had about 200 vehicle owners wanting to pick up their registration envelopes, plus people buying merchandise and others taking scheduled tours. There was only one toilet and mostly aging men with weak bladders. I just couldn’t believe it!

We had tickets to the afternoon tour, and had to wait outside the grounds while they hosted a private reception. Hundreds of us were lined up on a sidewalk with nowhere to sit. We walked back to the parking garage to eat lunch and kill an hour. I just couldn’t believe it!

After the tour, we headed out to the host hotel, riding through the streets of Allentown. At a red light, I was asked if my Monte Carlo “hopped” and couldn’t wait for the light to turn green. The ride took us 45 minutes. I just couldn’t believe it!

The host hotel had no AACA welcome center, no free snacks or water, and no knowledge of anything related to the show. The hotel was pretty isolated, with no Burger King in sight, so we ate at the pricey hotel restaurant. I just couldn’t believe it! (Neither could Kevin - he likes Burger King).

After the show on Saturday, Andrew was concerned about shuttle buses to the awards banquet, with little information about pick up times. He opted out, and the rest of us finally got on a bus for a half-hour trip. The banquet was a buffet, a first for any national meet I attended. Long lines for food as well as the bar. The audio system went out for 20 minutes, dampening the excitement in the room as winners were being announced. The long night coupled with the long day and not much sleep the night before had us ready to hit the sack. Despite all of that, our entire group had all won awards. I just couldn’t believe it!

Scenes from the Grand National Meet



1942 DeSoto features hideaway headlights



1906 REO and a 1914-5 Ford Model T (photos by Paul jr.)

The SIRAACA Time Machine

Many current auto-related businesses on Staten Island have a history of the same business within their current footprint. The SIRAACA Time Machine takes their current address or Block & Lot numbers, dials in a date from years gone by, and makes a pass to see what we find. This month, we zoom back almost 90 years to 6581 Amboy Road, and find Louis Sohl's automotive paint shop, highlighting Duco paint (first used by GM on Oaklands). Back then, you had to be both a body and fender man, since they were distinct parts of the overall automobile. Today, the spot is well known for all sorts of body work, including custom designs and paint, but the facade has been slightly modernized and decorated. Any guesses?



(photo courtesy of NYC Municipal Archives)

Last month's challenge asked readers to identify as many cars as they could from our visit to a ferry parking lot in 1952. Continuing from the 1949-50 Ford we gave you as a head start, we spot the following: 1952 Cadillac, 1941 Plymouth, 1952 Oldsmobile, 1946-48 DeSoto, 1948 Chevrolet and a 1941 Cadillac. From the bottom right working backwards, we have a new 1952 Henry J, a 1942? Chevrolet, another 1946-48 DeSoto, an unknown, a 1950 Chevrolet, a 1946-48 Pontiac and what could be a 1952 Plymouth. What else can you add?

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.

farbetterprinting
ON-DEMAND PRINT CENTER

43 Hillel Place
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Tel 718.859.3137
Fax 718.421.4761

sales@farbetterprinting.com
www.printingservicebrooklyn.com

Joseph Portagallo

M - Th 8 AM - 6:30 PM
Fri 8 AM - 5 PM
Sat 10 AM - 3 PM



SIRAACA