

Vol. 28, No. 6

# Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Jun 2021



• **SIRAACA Special Summer Show July 18**





## Vintage Advertising

We're celebrating the 50th anniversary of Class of '71 with this look at a debut from Pontiac that year. The new Grand Ville was advertised as a "true luxury car at a sensible price." It replaced the Bonneville as their top-trim model. Factory price from the fall of 1970 ranged between \$4255 for the coupe to \$4464 for the convertible. Only 1,784 rag-tops were built in its first year.

The car was moderately successful until all full-size cars fell out of favor during the oil crisis in 1973-74. 1975 saw the last Grand Ville's roll off the line, and 1976 brought the return of the Bonneville Brougham atop the Pontiac lineup.



GRAND VILLE 4-DOOR HARDTOP

A completely new Pontiac that never existed before. The first true luxury car at a sensible price.

Let's consider what we mean by "true luxury car." First, it has to look the part. With all modesty, Grand Ville does.

The true luxury automobile has to be roomy. Grand Ville is unusually spacious. Through the shoulders. Above the head. As much rear-seat leg room in the 2-door hardtop as you'll find in most 4-doors.

A true luxury car has to have an impressive roster of standard features. Grand Ville does not disappoint.

The engine is a 455-cu.-in. V-8. Steering is variable-ratio power. Brakes are power with discs in front.

Something else that invariably separates a true luxury car from the pretenders is richness of interior.

The seat fabrics used in Grand Ville are unusually rich. In both the hardtop coupe and 4-door hardtop, there's a wide-pleat motif in knit nylon trimmed with color-matched Morrokide. In the convertible, upholstery is all Morrokide.

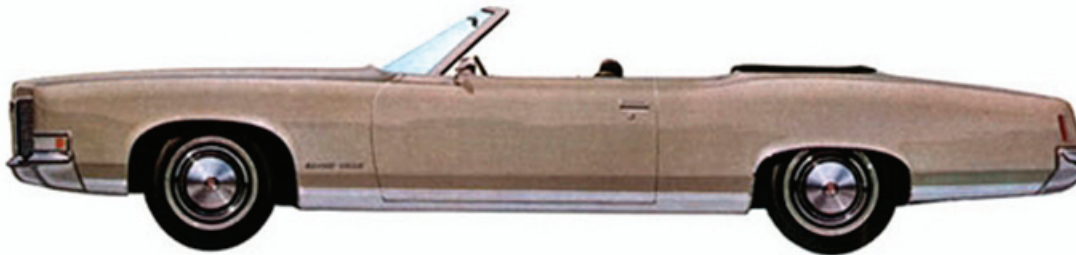
Grand as all this is, it just complements everything else. The new instrument panel

with Carpathian burl elm vinyl accents, the loop-pile nylon-blend carpet. Even the trunk is attractively trimmed.

No matter how elegant Grand Ville's standard interior is, you still might prefer ordering the added luxury of the Grand Ville Custom Interior. Available on the hardtop coupe and 4-door hardtop.

One thing we haven't covered yet on Grand Ville is its sensational new ride. We figured out some new ways to marry the body to the chassis so that the ride is unbelievably luxurious. Our smoothest and quietest ever. And that's saying a lot.

### The First Grand Ville



GRAND VILLE CONVERTIBLE



GRAND VILLE HARDTOP COUPE

Did you know? 1971 was a year of shifting names at Pontiac. Catalina remained the base trim, but the outgoing Executive series became the Catalina Brougham. The Executive line replaced Star Chief in 1967.

## In This Issue

Club members drive in the local Memorial Day Parade.

SIRAACA Special Summer Show is July 18.

Raffle car outing planned for June 11-13.

Ragtops & Rumbleseats wins an AACA award.

The SIRAACA Time Machine stops by two gas stations.

*Trivia Question: A 2021 Corvette paced this year's Indy 500. What was the last year that something other than a Chevrolet did so, and what kind of vehicle was it?*

*Answer: In 2001, an Oldsmobile Bravada was the pace "car" for the Indy 500, even though it was an SUV.*

## RAGTOPS & RUMBLESEATS

June 2021

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### SIRAACA Who's Who

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# Minutes of the 546th Meeting

## May 4, 2021

1. The 546th meeting of The Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 7:22 on April 6 at Pro Sho Sound. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and offering a moment of silence, the minutes of the 545th meeting were accepted as read.
2. We are now targeting July 11 for a Dust-Off replacement and have asked the Commons Cafe to confirm that date.
3. Cruise nights return on Thursday's to the Applebee's in the Bricktown Shopping Center in Charleston (near Home Depot/Target).
4. The car show at Holy Family on May 8 is only a motorcycle event.
5. Plans are made to get the raffle car out of storage and have it ready to go. All members are reminded to see Paul Arena for raffle tickets.
6. The grinding truck needs a tire replaced and that too will be addressed in time for the July show.
7. The AACA is raffling off a 1973 Jeep Commando with a soft top, and will give it away at the Fall Meet in Hershey. The club purchased 10 tickets, which supports the new headquarters/library.
8. Phil Boffa gave an updated treasury report, showing all in order.
9. Mike Signorile's bypass surgery went well and he is recuperating nicely. We expect him back in the next month or so.
10. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30. The 50/50 collected \$23. We cannot recall who won the \$12.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony DiAngelo, Secretary





## Honoring Memorial Day

Staten Island's traditional Memorial Day Parade returned to Forest Avenue this year to honor those Americans who lost their lives in service of our nation. The large turnout lined a two mile stretch and watched as veterans, first responders, marching bands and more made their way down the route. There were plenty of car clubs on hand as well, including ours. Representing SIRAACA with cars were Paul Arena, Artie Guarnieri, Bruce Campbell, Matt Schoffel, Joe Rego, Rocky Pompa, and Tom LaGuidice, as well as club friends Tony Yeras and George Elder.



Above: Looking out across the hood of Paul Arena's 1964 Riviera as it follows Tom LaGuidice's 1982 Datsun and Rocky Pompa's 1967 Mustang. George Elder is alongside with his Impala. Below: Matt Schoffel's 1969 Buick Electra is staged and ready to roll. (photos by Paul Jr.)



## Show Plans for July

We are now official with plans for our return car show after canceling all of last year's events and this year's Spring Dust-Off. We are presenting a Special Summer Show & Flea Market on July 18. Note that this is one week later than we originally targeted.

The Staten Island Region AACA presents a

## Special Summer Car Show & Flea Market July 18, 2021



**Commons Cafe**  
2 Teleport Drive  
off of South Avenue



- \$20 vehicle entry fee • no classes • no cut-off year • rain date July 25 •
- no points judging • red carpet awards in expanded categories •
- gates open at 8:00 am • dash plaques to first 200 vehicles •
- spectator entry fee: adults \$5, children \$2 • \$40 vendor fee •
- food & drinks • music • 50/50 drawings • raffle car •
- info: call 917-626-0233 or e-mail [siraaca@yahoo.com](mailto:siraaca@yahoo.com) •
- visit us on [www.siraaca.aaca.com](http://www.siraaca.aaca.com) or [facebook.com/siraaca](https://www.facebook.com/siraaca) •

### Adherence to Any Covid Protocols In Effect Required

Although this is not a judged event, we will have an expanded selection of awards to be presented on the red carpet at the end of the show. Along with ten Decade Awards and two Best in Shows, we will present awards for Oldest Car, Best GM, Best Ford, Best MoPar, Best Corvette, Best Cadillac, Best Orphan Marque, Best Truck, Best Foreign, Best Survivor, Favorite Custom, Drivable Dream, Future Collectible and Class of 1971.

We will review the plans for the event at the June meeting, as well as begin laying the groundwork for our fall show, which is scheduled for September 12, with a rain date of September 19.

## From the President

It is beginning to feel normal again around here. The great numbers of those who have been vaccinated have led to easing restrictions across the board, opening up the chance to return to our regularly scheduled programming. That means car shows and other events where folks can gather in larger numbers in outdoor settings. We are expecting a good turnout for our Special Summer Show in July, and equally expect our members to do their part to ensure we run a great event. While we won't be judging cars on a points basis like we do in September, we'll need members to select our special award winners. This will give us a chance to teach new judges what to look for in the fall. - Paul Jr.

## From the Editor

I'm excited to learn that our newsletter has been given an Award of Excellence by the AACA and their Publications Committee. It's especially gratifying considering that the majority of issues had very little to report on in terms of events, as Covid shutdowns affected the entire hobby. Thanks to all of the members that contributed ideas or photos to help fill each issue. - Paul Jr.



## - NEXT MEETING - June 1

Our June meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 1 at 6:30 PM, to be held at Pro Sho Sound's warehouse at 4401 Arthur Kill Road. Thank you to Frank Provenzano and son Frank Jr. for providing the space. Food will be served.

## Upcoming: Raffle Car & Food Trucks

The Staten Island Region will be attending the upcoming "Food Truck Festival at The Mount" with our 1992 Camaro raffle car, from June 11 through June 13. This is Staten Island's largest food truck festival, to be held on the grounds of Mt. Loretto on Hylan Boulevard in Pleasant Plains. Along with 20 or so food vendors, there will be live music, amusement rides, beer, wine and a "sangria garden". Expect regular favorites like sausage & peppers and kettle corn, along with empanadas, cheesesteaks, lobster rolls, mac & cheese, ice cream and much more. The festival organizer is Catholic Charities of Staten Island, and major sponsors include Staten Island University Hospital Northwell Health and ShopRight.

Set up on Friday begins around 2:00, at which time we will bring the car in, raise our club tent and lay out our space. Gates will open at 6:00, and the first night will run until 10:00. Saturday and Sunday will run from noon through 8:00. Some club volunteers have already signed up to help man the tables and sell raffles, and if you have yet to sign up and want to help out, please let Artie or Paul know.

Thanks goes out to Frank Provenzano and Bobby Johnson for making the connection to allow us to attend. Considering what we don't have scheduled through Historic Richmond Town for 2021, this offers us a new venue to sell raffles and promote our upcoming shows.

## Hemi 'Cuda Update

Last month we highlighted the pending Mecum auction of a rare '71 Plymouth Hemi 'Cuda convertible. Estimates for a selling price fell between \$5,750,000 and \$6,500,000. The bidding topped out at \$4.8 million, a record, but enough to sell the car. The previous record for a traditional muscle car is another 1971 Hemi 'Cuda convertible that sold for \$3.5 million at Mecum in 2014. It was one of the other two that came with a four-speed.

Mecum did see some million dollar sales that weekend, including a 1967 Shelby 427 S/C Cobra Roadster for \$2,800,000.



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## Inside the SIRAACA Garage

This month, we return to the SIRAACA Garage for a look at Frank Provenzano Jr.'s 1968 Chevrolet Camaro.

The first generation Camaro has become a beloved car among all types of hobbyists, from drag racers to customizers to stock purists. And why not? It's a timeless design, and Frank's '68 presents it fantastically, rolling on redline tires and rallye wheels, sporting Cordovan Maroon paint with white stripes.

The first generation spanned three years, and there are tell-tale cues to help identify the year. The easiest ones to remember? 1967 is the only one with vent windows. 1969 is the only one with "gills" on the quarter panel in front of the rear wheel. A '68 has neither. There are other, more subtle differences in grilles, side marker lamps and bumpers, for example.

A total of 235,147 coupes and convertibles were built in 1968, with ten different engine choices ranging from a 230 six to the rare L89 (396 cid/375hp). Frank's fender badges call out the 327 under its hood.

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.



1968 Camaro also saw the switch from a circular to a rectangular side view mirror, and the placement of engine size emblems on the front of the fenders. Inside, much of the bright trimwork was changed to a brushed finish to reduce driver glare. (Photo by Paul Jr.)

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## Upcoming Events

Load up your car and head out to these local and national events:



- Weekly Thursday Night Cruise, Applebee's in Charleston
- 1st Wednesday of Each Month Cruise, Olive Garden in Woodbridge, NJ
- 1st Friday of Each Month Cruise, Old Bridge Shoppes, Old Bridge, NJ
- Carlisle Ford Nationals. Carlisle, PA - June 4-6
- AACA Eastern Spring Meet, Saratoga, NY - June 17-19
- Father's Day Car Show, Long Branch, NJ - June 20
- SIRAACA Special Summer Show, Commons Cafe - July 18





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## The SIRAACA Time Machine

The SIRAACA Time Machine doesn't run on gasoline, but it loves stopping by old gas stations. On a recent trip back to 1940 to find interesting locations and vehicles, we paused outside these two gas stations, located within six blocks of each other. One pumped Gulf, while the other pumped Sinclair. Today, one location still pumps gas and repairs cars, while the other still works on cars, but in a different sense. Can our readers identify these locations? We'll post answers next month.

In terms of carspotting, that's a new 1940 Plymouth parked on the right of the top photo. The bottom photo also looks to have a Plymouth waiting to enter the lubritorium. The panel truck has a distinctive dip in the rear bumper, but we cannot match it up with the appropriate make. The rest of truck's details likely point to a 1937 Chevy, so maybe the original bumper was replaced with something else at a point in time.

We powered our way back to 2021, and are planning more trips to gas stations of the Island's past, many of which still operate in some capacity today.



(photos courtesy of NYC Dept. of Records)



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