

Vol. 28, No. 7

Ragtops &

Rumbleseats

Jul 2021



• ***SIRAACA To Return with Summer Show***



"SPIRIT OF AMERICA" VEGA HATCHBACK.



EXTERIOR FEATURES

- Gleaming all-white exterior.
- White vinyl roof.
- Sporty red, white and blue accent stripes.
- White GT wheels.
- White left-hand remote-control sport mirror.
- Custom exterior moldings.
- White lettered tires.
- Self-adjusting front disc/rear drum brakes, Full Coil suspension, counterbalanced hatch and electric windshield washers.

INTERIOR FEATURES

- Special all-white interior with red, white and blue insert trim on the door panels.
- White bucket seats.
- Custom appointments.
- Bright red accent carpeting.
- "Spirit of America" insignia inside and out.



Litho in U.S.A. — Prepared by Chevrolet Merchandising Department — Passenger Car, W/V 12/73

Vintage Advertising

For whatever reason, Chevrolet opted to push a trio of "Spirit of America" vehicles in 1974 instead of in conjunction with the Bicentennial of 1976. This one is the Chevy Vega. They also built "SoA" Novas and Impalas. Apparently, there are also El Caminos with the same treatment.

The Vega featured white paint, blue and red stripes and various decals. Interiors in white vinyl with red, white and blue accents carried the theme inside. The package was a \$399 extra.

Other auto makers got in on the Spirit of '76. Volkswagen made a special edition bicentennial Super Beetle convertible in 1976. All were triple white with commemorative decals. Each U.S. dealer was given just one to sell.

In This Issue

It's show time!

Rudy and the raffle car.

A chance to visit a local collection in support of charity.

The SIRAACA Time Machine tracks down a piece of Packard's past.



SPECIAL EXTERIOR TRIM. SPECIAL INTERIOR.
We have just received a special version of our sporty and very popular, Vega Hatchback. It's the gleaming all-white "Spirit of America." You'll recognize this special car by its distinctive red, white and blue accent stripes, white vinyl roof, white GT wheels, sport mirror and all-white interior with bright red accent carpeting. "Spirit of America" insignia further identifies the Vega as a special car.

"Spirit of America" Vega Hatchback

Did you know? Cadillac opted to show their patriotic side in 1976 with a special Bicentennial Edition Eldorado. They built 200, all finished in Cotillion White with white tops. White leather interior was trimmed with red piping to match the red dash and carpet, and red and blue pinstripes completed the theme.

Trivia Question: What was the name of Pontiac's rebadged version of the Chevy Vega?

Answer: The Astre, which debuted in the United States for the 1975 model year. It and the Vega were cancelled after the 1977 model year.

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 -

Jonathan Schulman

jschulman30@gmail.com

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS -

Rocco Pompa

WEBMASTER - siraaca@yahoo.com

Frank Nathanson

www.siraaca.aaca.com



Minutes of the 547th Meeting

June 1, 2021

1. The 547th meeting of The Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 7:30 on June 1 at Pro Sho Sound. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and offering a moment of silence, the minutes of the 546th meeting were accepted as read.
2. Thanks to all members who attended this years Memorial Day Parade on Forest Avenue. There was a great turnout and plenty of car clubs on hand. It was important that we had representation there.
3. The NJ Alzheimers show scheduled for Freehold in August has been canceled.
4. Our Dust-Off is now a Special Summer Show, to be held on July 18. The dash plaque will feature Don Bosco's 1931 Packard.
5. Wheels are in motion for our 44th Annual Show in September. That means members should be selling raffle tickets and looking for trophy donors.
6. We are considering inviting a medical group to offer free PSA screening at our fall show as a service to the community.
7. The club has been approved to have its raffle car at the upcoming Food Truck Festival at Mt. Loretto on June 11-13. Members are needed to help man our tent and sell raffles.
8. The AACA Spring National Meet in Saratoga, NY is June 17-19. Good luck to any members who will be showing their cars.
9. Paul Jr. relayed the tale of Bad Luck Baker's record breaking speed run on Staten Island, which occurred on May 31, 1902.
10. Phil Boffa gave an updated treasury report, showing all in order.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15. The 50/50 collected \$49. Rocky Pompa won the \$25.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony DiAngelo, Secretary



Special Summer Show

Our Special Summer Show is Sunday July 18. All members are expected to be there to help us run the event. There will be various tasks, beginning with field set up at 6:30 AM. We will need folks to man the entry gates, help direct show cars, and sell raffle tickets. At some point, members will be grouped in pairs to go out and select trophy winners, and organize the parade of champions towards the red carpet. All of this will be discussed at the July meeting.



Mike Gorgia has confirmed the attendance of 18 or so vintage police cars ranging from 1940 through the mid-1990's. They will be displayed together in the first parking section just outside the Commons Cafe. Joining their display will be Tony Ventrice's Model T, which will be "dressed up" as a period correct NY Police Car.

Travis 4th Of July Parade

Members interested in driving their cars in the upcoming 4th of July Parade in Travis are welcome to join us in the staging area within the Showplace Bowling Alley parking lot between 11:00 and 11:30. Convertibles will be used to carry Miss NY and local pageant winners. The parade kicks off at 12:00 noon, and makes a slow loop up the service road onto Cannon Avenue, through to its end at Victory Boulevard and back down to Showplace.

Rudy and the Raffle Car

The club had its raffle car on hand for a weekend Food Truck Festival at Mt. Loretto, which saw large crowds drawn outside for food and live music. It was parked alongside the stage, and was repeatedly promoted between music sets by emcee Bobby Johnson, helping us sell \$1960 in tickets. Ten of those dollars came out of the pocket of former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who popped in for a visit on Sunday. This isn't the first time Rudy came face to face with our raffle car. Before he was mayor, he was campaigning in the Staten Island Mall on Labor Day weekend. At that time, we used to display our cars and the raffle car in the mall's center court, and he stopped by to check out the Mustang convertible we were giving away.



Former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani gives our raffle car the thumbs up after purchasing two raffle books at the Food Truck Festival. Club VP Artie Guarnieri looks on in approval. (photo by Sandy Arena)

Happy 4th of July!

from the
Staten Island
Region AACA



From the President

As I write this it's 97 degrees outside, so this probably sounds out of whack. New members that have joined since we last ordered club jackets are encouraged to speak with Artie Guarnieri about placing an order for the next round. There are several options, and the club will subsidize part of the cost. With that out of the way, let's turn our attention to our Special Summer Show. This is our first hosted event since the fall of 2019. Many of us are veterans who know what to do the day of the show, but we're all a bit out of practice. I trust all of you will not only attend the July meeting to be part of the final planning, but will also be on hand all day on July 18 to ensure we live up to our standards. Like our Spring Dust-Off shows, this show is less formal than our fall show, so it'll allow us to ease back in to our normal day-of-show routines. If for some reason you'll not be around on July 18, please let me know so I can make sure our responsibilities are covered. Most importantly, get excited and enjoy yourselves. I think we're in for a great turnout following last year's cancellations, as long as it's not 97 degrees outside. - Paul Jr.

- NEXT MEETING - July 6

Our July meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 6 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.

Unique Fundraiser Invitation

Courtesy of our members now living in New Jersey, we are sharing this upcoming fundraiser for anyone interested in attending. In support of Allaire Community Farm, which works with people with special needs, veterans and families battling cancer, avid local collector Art Sommers is opening up his private collection of more than 75 antique cars, antique tractors, extensive Civil War artifacts and a hearse used to carry Abraham Lincoln. Tickets are \$100 per person, and attendees are treated to food, drinks and live music as well. Andrew Napoli will have tickets available for purchase at our July meeting, which saves you the processing fee.

Must Attend Fundraising Event!!!
"WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS"
for
ALLAIRE Community Farm
We Nurture Through Nature
A NJ 501 (c) 3 Non Profit

Every Dollar raised will be matched by a generous benefactor up to \$500,000!
All money raised will be used to enhance current programs and pay down the mortgage!

Event Details - Adults only
• Date: July 24, 2021
• Time: 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm
• Location: Sommers Farm, Wall Twp.
• Ticket Price: \$100.00
Includes: Food, drinks, and live music by Just Us 2 and Company (rain or shine)

Art Sommers, a friend of the farm and avid local collector, will be displaying his private collection for the first time in over 20+ years. Experience this rare opportunity to see one of the most extensive private collections in our area. Some highlights of the collection that will be available for your viewing pleasure:

- Over 75 antique cars on display
- A vintage Duesenberg
- President Abraham Lincoln's hearse
- Antique Tractors
- Extensive Civil War Memorabilia
- 1950's Diner with ice cream parlor and General Store

Come visit the past and help build a better future for Allaire Community Farm as they help those in need.
Make a donation that will be matched:
• Buy Tickets - Eventbrite
• Paypal
• ACF website: allairecommunityfarm.org/donate
• Checks made out to Allaire Community Farm
With Donations marked as "When Opportunity Knocks" in the memo.
Mailed to: Allaire Community Farm
1923 Baileys Corner Road
Wall Township, NJ 07719

Scan with your smartphone to buy tickets on Eventbrite

Scan with your smartphone to donate to Allaire Community Farm



Inside the SIRAACA Garage

In line with the Class of 1971 that will be recognized at our upcoming show, we look at one of those classmates inside the SIRAACA Garage. This is Mike Gorgia's recently reacquired 1971 Plymouth Fury I. Mike was the third owner and now 7th owner of this unique car.

What makes it unique? It's a great example of basic transportation, with a 225 cu-in 6-cylinder, three-speed manual on the column, no power steering nor brakes, and no air conditioning. The only identifiable option is a set of rear bumper guards. The original owner, who was from Pittsburgh, was interested in a basic commuter car and ordered it this way. It was such a "bear" to drive that he stopped using it, and it only has 37,336 miles showing on the odometer.

The car has a partial repaint and excellent vinyl interior. Originally targeted as the basis for an NYPD RMP clone, Mike has decided to leave it as is considering it's strong original condition. Besides, an NYPD Fury would have had a 727 automatic instead of three on the tree.

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.



(Photos courtesy of Mike Gorgia)



Upcoming Events

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



- 1st Wednesday of Each Month Cruise, Olive Garden in Woodbridge, NJ
- Tuesday evenings, Raritan Bay Cruisers, Pizza Hut in Woodbridge, NJ
- Carlisle Ford Nationals. Carlisle, PA - June 4-6
- SIRAACA Special Summer Show, Commons Cafe - July 18
- 58th Annual Das Awkscht Fescht. Macungie, PA - August 6-8
- New Hope Auto Show, New Hope, PA - August 14 (US), 15 (Foreign)





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The SIRAACA Time Machine

The SIRAACA Time Machine was back on the hunt for old dealership buildings, and this one was pinpointed by the remnants still visible today. Packard West Brighton Company operated at 1784 Richmond Terrace. Packard dealer records also show a location at 120 Bay Street, which is now a restaurant on the corner of Slosson Terrace. The building on Richmond Terrace still stands as home to large beverage distributor, but more importantly, it still sports the painted Packard signage across its brick facade. Considering Packard was done by 1956 before a two-year dance with Studebaker that ended in 1958, this sign is at least 63 years old. One can only guess what might have been left behind when it shut its doors, or if anything Packard still lies hidden in the rafters or cellar.



In 1940, Packard was covering a wide set of markets with One-Ten, One-Twenty, One-Sixty and One-Eighty offerings. (photos courtesy of NYC Dept. of Records and Google Street View)



Looking back at last month's column, we asked readers to identify a pair of service stations. They are both located in New Dorp. The Gulf station is now the Colonial Shell at the corner of New Dorp Lane and Richmond Road. The Sinclair station was once J&A Sound on New Dorp Lane, and is now Car Tunes Customs.



43 Hillel Place
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Tel 718.859.3137
Fax 718.421.4761

sales@farbetterprinting.com
www.printingservicebrooklyn.com

Joseph Portagallo

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year and condition.
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