

West Michigan POCI
5574 Whitetail Court
West Olive, MI 49460



**PONTIAC-OAKLAND
CLUB INTERNATIONAL**

*west michigan
chapter*

the arrowhead

Newsletter for the Pontiac Enthusiast

March 2008

The following is the second part of an article first written in April 1992 edition of The Arrowhead! It was written under the heading entitled: Warrior of the Month. I have since found out that either Dan Jensen or his brother wrote this. Dan wasn't sure. If you have any articles you would like to submit, you can reach me at lakemithor@gmail.com. I'll try to fit in the articles as space permits each month. Thanks much. Hope you enjoy the second part to last month's article. Melanie.

Warrior of the Month

1973/74 Pontiac Super Duty 455 Firebirds

Owner: 1295 Fortunate SD-455 Owners in the US & Abroad

Description: Available only in the Trans Am and Formula 455 Firebirds

Part II- The Super Duty 455 Story Continues.....

As you might recall from last month's history of the SD-455 development, that it struggled from its inception every step of the way to its eventual production. It was approximately a three year period filled with the factories de-emphasis of high performance cars, rising environmental concerns, and the insurance companies ever increasing rates on muscle cars. This and more almost derailed one of the finest powerplants ever to roll off anyone's production line.

Initially, the engineers at PMD had very big plans for this motor and it was to be assembled with the finest components available as well as run on the highest octane gas available, too! Of course, this was not meant to be, and thus began the sad saga of detuning a potential legend to an acceptable and respectable level of performance by the powers-that-be. Fortunately, the SD-455's final state of tune was still strong enough to be one of the most powerful engines ever produced. One can only imagine the potential this engine possessed in its original configuration (see Part 1 in February's newsletter/Feb 1992). The actual '73-74 production SD-455 was underrated at 290 SAE net horsepower. This figure was derived by dynoing the engine in the car with all the hardware operational and through the factory exhaust system. This translates to approximately 400 gross horsepower on the old scale with only 8.4:1 compression ratio! The engine's original design had a probably horsepower output of 500, or simply, more power than any other production engine except for Chevy's L-88 and ZL-1! It would have embarrassed 454 LS-6 and 426 Hemi owners without a doubt and the production SD-455 is in their league performance-wise. The SD-455 had everything going for it and everything against it and the engineers knew they had a fight on their hands to keep it alive... Actually, the SD-455 that was to be released for production was rated at 310 horsepower because it was equipped with the Ram Air IV version crankshaft. This bumpstick's

specs were 308/320 degrees intake/exhaust duration respectively with 87 degrees overlap and .480" lift with 1.50:1 rocker arms. But, due to the EPA questioning all of PMD's V-8 engine EGR valve/TCS switching and wiring as well as the initially high warm-up emissions from this cam, PMD was forced to redesign the emission devices, how and when they functioned, and slip a milder camshaft in the SD-455 engine to get certification. The new camshaft was very similar to the early Ram Air I's and III's specs with 298/310 degrees intake/exhaust duration with 76 degrees overlap at .410" lift with 1.50:1 rocker arms. This accounted for the 20 horsepower difference. Most automotive publications that tested SD-455 equipped Trans Ams incorrectly listed the early unofficial 310 horse rating even though they were the 290 horse versions. It's interesting to note that the engineers, in their never ending quest for the engine to have more power, would bend the EPA rules as much as possible and make their own interpretations as well. The early EGR pollution control systems were cleverly designed to only function until the engine reached a certain temperature when a solenoid attached to the EGR valve would deactivate, thereby bypassing its function, thus creating more power by not diluting the air/fuel mixture with exhaust gasses! It took almost seven months for the EPA to discover that the Pontiac engineers had pulled the wool over their eyes and made PMD redesign the system to meet their approval. This occurred on March 15, 1973 which was well before the release of the SD-455 for public consumption. It was at this time that the EPA made them change the camshaft in the SD as well. All V-8 engines, starting with serial number 532727, were to be painted a darker shade of aqua blue and be equipped with the new EGR system. The SD-455 installation didn't begin until well into May of 1973 which only left two months for production before the '74 models were introduced! Plus, coupled with the fact that so many of the connecting rods and pistons had disappeared over the course of time that PMD had to delay SD-455 production until they had adequate supplies! That is why only 295 SD-455 equipped Firebirds rolled off the assembly line in 1973. Since Pontiac couldn't make the engine like they wanted to, they made it clear to the press that the SD-455 was designed with a high degree of after-market adaptability built-in. They said that 100 extra horsepower at the rear wheels was available just by adding tube headers. Engineers claimed that 550 horsepower was possible by installing 12.5:1 pistons and a solid lifter General Kinetics cam in conjunction with open headers, 600 with and aftermarket aluminum intake manifold and an 800 cfm Holley carb!

The production SD-455 equipped Trans Ams tested in the spring and summer of 1973 ran very respectable times at the dragstrip. Car and Driver continued.....

SD-455 continued:

turned a 13.75 sec. at 103.56 mph run with an automatic transmission doing its own shifting at 5400 rpm. Hot Rod magazine tested the same car a 13.54 sec. at 104.29 mph by shifting the tranny manually at 5700 rpm. They spent a little more time playing with the car than C & D magazine and with minor carb mods, fresh spark plugs, exhaust cut-outs, sticky M&H tires, and removal of the shaker scoop inlet cover plate, they ran an impressive 13.15 sec. at 106.83 mph! And this was with the stock 3.42 gears! A swap to 3.73's would have netted easy high 12 second runs at around 110 mph! By the way, this sparsely optioned Trans Am weighed 3850 pounds without the driver, so you know that the SD-455 was no slouch and packed tons of performance potential! We hope you enjoyed reading about one of the legendary Pontiac motors and shed a little light on its mystique. We had fun researching old magazine articles to share the SD-455 engines history and development with you.

Hi,

My name is Hillis Mathes. I am running for a POCI Board of Director position for the Upper Midwest Division. Please check out my bio listed in the April issue of the Smoke Signals. This letter is to let you know a little more about my thoughts on the future of POCI.

I recently was told that the POCI membership is down below 9,000 members. The last count I had heard was around 11,000 members. What happened? Are we, the general membership so complacent that we don't care? Or, if we had information, would we ask why and try to help the board seek measures to reverse the downward trend? I feel the key here is the flow of information. We, as paying members of the POCI, have the right and need for information. This can only be obtained from the Board of Directors. The Board's agenda is the member's agenda. Knowledge is the way to secure POCI's future. I would like to see at least one page of the Smoke Signals dedicated to POCI Board business. Having knowledge of Board business and how each Board member voted on that business could help members at voting time. Knowledge could get the general membership more involved in POCI. This in return could help secure a future for POCI. The future of POCI is in the hands of the general membership. A start will be by voting for Directors of your choice. I hope I can be one of those choices. Get involved and vote!

Thank you.

(Note from editor: see "We need Your Vote" in this newsletter.)

March Meeting Minutes

Rox DeBoer had some new business to report. She is trying to get one of the local weather-persons to give us a presentation at one of our upcoming meetings. She informs us that the folks at WOOD TV are in training during the time we wanted them, so now Rox will check with George Lessons and Peter Chan at the other channels.

The club lotto will roll over to the next meeting when \$86 will be up for grabs! Also, Carl Thorwall won the 50/50 raffle of \$13!

Our guest speaker was me! We had some technical difficulties with the TV sets at the restaurant and had to settle for a smaller set, so we could only view my pictures in black and white. Oh well! I showed some of my current cars, some cars I no longer have, some engine dyno sessions, and some of the cars I'm working on for customers. I hope I didn't bend your ears back to hard! Thanks for the opportunity and for listening gracefully!

See all of you in April! (Maybe with some warmer weather please!)

Dan Jensen

We Need Your Vote

We need all of our club members to vote for their Regional POCI Directors and Officers. The information to vote will be in the April issue of the Smoke Signals. The club with the greatest percentage of members who vote will win \$200 for their Club. So VOTE!!!!

March Meeting Minutes

Cary Hirdes opened the March meeting with our Treasurer's Report from Terri Miller. In a nutshell, we have a healthy balance to allow us to do a lot this year! Also, this is the time you want to get your annual dues in to Terri. You don't want to lose your membership and also not get this newsletter.

Turning to business, Cary attended a recent meeting for the upcoming Burn Show. The date is Saturday, May 17th. This show kicks off the car show and cruising season for us in West Michigan! The call has gone out for auction items, new if possible, and they don't have to be car related. Last year about \$36K was raised for the Burn Camp! As usual, our club will be handling the traffic chores.

It's not too early to start making plans for our Elhart Car Show, held the first Friday in August. Coincidentally, the 1st of August is a Friday! Usually we don't have a July meeting because of the POCI National Convention but this year we will to finalize show plans. The first Tuesday in July is, guess what (!), the 1st!

We have a Dust-off Cruise scheduled for Saturday, May 3rd. Details need to be finalized yet, and will be in either this newsletter, or the next one.

Cary asked me for any update on the Pure Stock Drags, held this year on September 12th and 13th. The biggest news is that we now have the track all day so we aren't racing against the clock to be gone by 5 PM. We now have the track until 8 PM, but we probably won't need it that long.

Car Shows and Cruises to Attend

Sunday April 13th 2008

Car Show and Swap Meet

Sponsored by the Northern Illinois Region, WPC Club

@

Larry Roesch Chrysler/Dodge/Jeep

200-260 W. Grand Ave., (just west of York Rd.)

Elmhurst IL

All Makes are Welcome (1988 and older)

Car Show Registration 8am- 11am. Trophies and Raffle at 2pm

Car Show Only-\$12

Car Show and Sale-\$15

Car Corral-\$12

Swap Meet- 8am to 2pm

Swap Meet Admission- \$3 per person

Indoor Vendor Spaces- \$20

Additional Information contact Guy @ 630-721-0662

Cruise Nights

Join the "Sunset Cruisers" for Thursday night cruises around Southwest Michigan area or just "Show-n-Shine" your Rods, T's & Classics while enjoying one of the food specials.

Thursday Night

May 8 to Sept 25

6 pm to 8 pm

Village Market Parking Lot on M-140

In South Haven

FOOD! FUN! ENTERTAINING!

Car Shows and Cruises to Attend

Kruisin' for Kylie
5th Annual Car/Motorcycle
Lucky Card Dash
Friday, July 11, 2009

Kick off the fun of the South Haven Festival of Cars with an adventure filled with a Lucky Card Dash! Kruisin' for Kylie is a casual and fun evening for all motorcycle and car enthusiasts and CF Supporters.

Please join us before the Lucky Card Dash from 5 pm– 7 pm at Village Market (08337 M-140 Hwy.) for a fun-filled evening with a DJ & dinner.

2008 9th Annual
South Haven Festival of Cars
Fri, July 11 & Sat July 12.
Saturday, July 12 registration
begins at 8 am. \$10 Entry fee

Hundreds of vehicles
Swap Meet & Pancake Breakfast
On-Site Camping \$10

For more info, call Linda Edge
(269) 637-4284
www.southhavenfestivalofcars.com

What is CF?

Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is a genetic disease that affects roughly 30,000 children & adults in the US. A defective gene (one from each parent) causes the body to produce abnormally thick, sticky mucus. This abnormal mucus leads to chronic life-threatening lung infections and it also impairs the digestive system.

Although there is currently no cure, the great strides that continue to be made in research gives us much hope.

93 cents of every dollar raised goes directly to the CF Foundation.

Chief's Chatter

If April showers bring May flowers do you know what May-flowers bring? Pilgrims! I know, "old joke", but I could not help it because as I am writing, the sun is out and it looks like spring may finally be arriving. However, I was raised to never put away winter coats until after Tulip Time. It is nice to see the snow go and the road clear. Soon we can get the "CARS" out.

Thanks Dan for last month's informative "black and white" presentation. Maybe we'll get this TV thing figured out and have color presentations at some point. I appreciated the help from the manager of FD's in trying to get us a TV that would work. I was not aware of how far people bring their motors to be worked on by Dan. I do like Dan's write-ups in the Muscle Car magazines.

Maybe by this month all of our "Snow Birds" will be back but we've had very good attendance so far this year so a BIG Thank You for all who attend our meetings. The next month's meeting was supposed to be the "Hippy Dippy" weather man from one of the TV stations but it didn't work out for them so the meeting events are Top Secret unless otherwise published. That's all so "Keep'er on the Blacktop" and see you on the Oneth of April.
Cary

Thanks to all who have paid their dues for the '08 year. The Club appreciates it! There are still a few people who haven't paid. Please send your checks for \$25 (made out to WMPOCI) to Terri Miller, 8830 Taylor Street, Zeeland, MI, 49464 or bring your dues to the April meeting. Thanks much. See the back page of this newsletter for more information.

THE ARROWHEAD

The Preamble

The West Michigan Chapter of the Pontiac-Oakland Club International is dedicated to the ownership and preservation of Pontiacs, all models and years. It is the goal of the chapter to encourage and unite area Pontiac enthusiasts in Chapter sponsored activities and events. The Arrowhead serves as one of the tools to which the Club can fulfill its goals as well as provide information and services to its members.

Club Officers

President	Cary Hirdes	616-772-5494
Vice President	Robert DeBoer	616-538-6712
Treasurer	Terri Miller	616-875-8069
Secretary	Dan Jensen	517-647-2474
Arrowhead Editors	Greg & Melanie Thorwall	616-399-4701

Website: WWW.POCI.ORG, click on 'Links' to West Michigan Chapter

Tuesday, April 1, 2008 at Famous Dave's

We are arranging something different for our April meeting. However, it is "Top Secret"! We hope you all can come. The meeting will start at 7:30 PM. Come earlier and order some good food and chat with other Pontiac enthusiasts. We always have a good time!!! Famous Dave's is located near I196 and 44th Street in Grandville.

Membership Info

Chapter Dues are to be paid January 1st
\$25.00 payable to WMPOCI
Please give to Terri Miller at the meeting, or mail them to:
Terri Miller 8830 Taylor St. Zeeland, MI 49464

National Dues are YOUR responsibility
You must be a member of the National POCI
to be a member of the West Michigan POCI.
Log onto www.poci.org for more information or to
register.

Membership Application

Name _____ Spouse _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____
Pontiac Owned _____
Year _____ Model _____
Style _____ Motor _____
National POCI # (must have) _____
Birthday _____ Spouse's Birthday _____
Anniversary _____

\$25.00 Payable to WMPOCI