

The Arrowhead



West Michigan Chapter

Established in 1987

Newsletter for the Pontiac Enthusiast

NOVEMBER 2024

Chief's Chatter

Bob DeBoer- WMPOCI President

Well, I guess this is my last Chief's Chatter for 2024 as your president of the West Michigan Pontiac Club. It's been my pleasure and an honor to once again lead this club; but as I've said before it's the great people, we as your board members have behind us that really makes this club work. I thank you very much...EVERYONE!!

Now onto the "chatter". It's been a very busy November. Since our last meeting we have had our Fall Color Cruise with perfect, sunny weather. A big thank you goes out to Scott VanTamelon and Bob McCarthy for planning such a fun event. It went very smoothly, though a few of you brought our Indianapolis trip to mind when we were trying to find one of our tour spots, but we ended up together and found the restaurant where we do our best work...eating! We toured the Gilmore Restoration area where we have donated monies to for the past several years and also had a tour of the brass section of the museum with our own "club member" tour guide Chris Duvall.

We held our nominations and voted for our new club president Scott VanTamelon along with our other board members retaining their respective positions...Bob McCarthy as VP, Linda Walker as

Treasurer, Dan Jensen as Secretary, and Tena Schulte as Newsletter Editor. Thank you all.

We as a united country had our National Presidential Election. I for one am glad all those ads are finished, and we can get on with some normalcy in our country. Thank you for doing your Civic Duty of voting and contributing to our society for this great nation.

On the 12th we held our Valve Cover races at the VanZytveld family cave with many of the club members participating. Please see Dan's minutes for the results. We also realized that we had our founding club members in attendance Tuesday night, Kay Postma, Dan Jensen and Dennis Jensen. We're still going strong after all these years.

We held a coat drive for the People Helping People organization. Thanks to everyone who participated and to Ken and Sylvia V. for heading that up again this year. Because we had an abundance of money in the membership drawing, we kept pulling the names of people present and there were three couples who won a whopping \$93 each. The drawing will be held again beginning January 2025. Congratulations to everyone who won this year.

We were also invited to tour Tiara Yachts Company of Holland, MI on the 14th. It was quite an impressive tour. Jeremy Sturgeon, their Interior Designer for the yachts, was our tour guide and has a passion that we all were very impressed with. We ended the evening with some very rewarding ice cream floats.

For our upcoming December meeting we will be holding our holiday dinner at the Trestle Stop Inn. Please see further details within this newsletter. At this dinner we will take up a donation for two charities: People Helping People of Pullman, MI and Covenant House Homeless Shelter in Grand Rapids, MI. Please come prepared to participate; the club will match what is collected that evening. If anyone forgot your coat donations on the 12th, I'm sure Ken will still be able to take them to PHP. We

will also have some local Holland talent to entertain us.

Once again thank you for a wonderful year as your club president. It's been a real ride... May you all have a Blessed Christmas and please remember to keep those people who are sick or can't get to our monthly meetings in your prayers.

Oh, and one more thing; I'd like to give a big thank you to my lovely secretary (wife) who has helped me out a lot this year. I love you Rox!

Signing out now,

Chief-Bob

NEXT MEETING

Friday, December 13, 2024

We will be going to Trestle Stop Restaurant at 3366 M-40 in Hamilton, MI 49419 at 6:00 pm with dinner being served at 7:00 pm for our Annual Christmas Party. We will be entertained by some local Holland musicians. Donations will be taken for People Helping People and Covenant House.

If you are unable to attend but would still like to donate, please send your donation to:

Linda Walker 2814 Air Park Dr, Zeeland, MI 49464

Make your checks payable to: West Michigan Pontiac Club

Annual Dues

You can mail in your payment to the following address:

West Michigan Pontiac Club

430 E. 8th St

PMB 157

Holland, Mi 49423

Also, if you signed up after July of 2024 you do not have to pay again already.
Your next payment will not be until January 2026

Please be sure to include your POCI number when renewing as well.



BOATS & FLOATS TOUR

Just a couple of photos submitted from the Tiara Yachts Tour.



Noteable Notes:



Forty-four WMPOCI members attended the meeting held at the VanZytveld compound on November 12th. About half dropped off their valve-cover race cars in the adjacent garage where the racetrack was set up. Pizza, drinks, and desserts were served in the family room, followed by a quick business meeting.

President Bob DeBoer started our meeting off by thanking Ron and Elaine for being such gracious hosts!

Our Christmas Party will be held on Friday, December 13th. The cost is \$10 per person. Anyone planning on attending should contact Linda Walker. She needs to have a head count for the restaurant.

The Tiara Yacht Club tour was Thursday, November 14th. Many of our members were able to attend.

Linda Walker gave her Treasurer's Report. We had income from the Pure Stock Drags, club dues, and the Christmas Party. Expenses included pizza and supplies for the October meeting, our donation to the Gilmore Garage Works, and cash for our Fall Color Cruise.

Ten members showed up on Thursday, November 7th at the VanZytveld's for a valve cover Test & Tune.

The GR Auto Gallery held their annual open house recently.

The members all sang Happy Birthday to Curt Lennerth!

Club officer nominations and elections were held last month. The only position to change is the President's. Scott VanTamelen will take over for Bob DeBoer in January.

We always choose a couple charities to donate to prior to our Christmas Party. This year we decided on People Helping People and Covenant House of Grand Rapids. You can give your donation at the party, or send a check made out to the Pontiac Club to Linda Walker.

Keep Nancy DeJonge in your prayers as she battles her illness. Also, Wendell Miller as he battles pancreatitis.

Doug and Judy Mesman won the 50/50 raffle worth \$58!

The kitty for the Attendance Drawing was large enough to split into three winners worth \$93 each! The lucky winners were Ardee and Chris Rocha, Scott and Michelle VanTamelen, as well as Dennis and Diane Jensen.

The last item of business was choosing the food for the Christmas Party. The menu will now consist of baked chicken, roast beef, mashed redskin potatoes, and vegetables.

We had 21 race cars participating in our annual Valve Cover Races. The format was best-of-three. First round losers then competed against each other. Ultimately, the top three cars were flushed out. First place – Ken VerMeulen, second place – Sandy Goulooze, and third place – Cary Hirdes. Best of show went to Gary Laarman. Congratulations to all our winners!

Everyone have a safe and happy Holiday Season! Weather permitting, I hope to see you at the Christmas Party!

Dan Jensen

OFF TO THE RACES!!!



SPECIAL SUBMISSION!! From Kyle Niewiada

Kyle had some special help in the design of his Valve Cover Car from his 2 year old son.



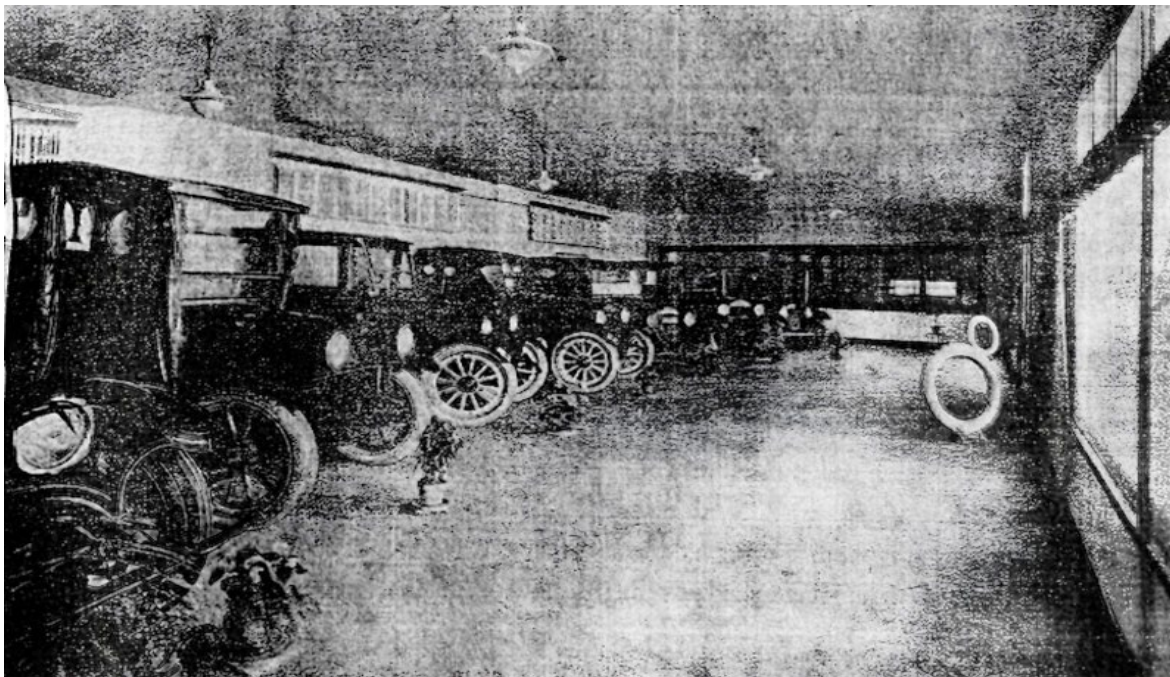
Another project that Kyle took on this summer was tracking down the lost history of the Pontiac Dealer where his great-grandfather purchased his Grand Prix from.

He has been researching the history of Soo Machine & Auto Co., a former Pontiac dealer up in Sault St. Marie, Michigan. It all started when he became curious about the dealership where his great-grandfather bought the 1964 Grand Prix back in '63. Turns out, this dealership has a fascinating story born from the early days of the automotive industry right here in Michigan (starting back in 1911!).

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| To assure the protection on this vehicle as set out in the New Vehicle Warranty, the original delivery date (or date vehicle was first placed in service) must be entered below in ink or typewritten. | |
| Original Delivery Date | <u>11/13/63</u> |
| (Or date vehicle was first placed in service) | |
| Vehicle Identification No. | <u>[REDACTED]</u> |
| <u>Soo Machine & Auto Co.</u> | Dealership Name |
| <u>Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan</u> | Dealership Location |
| <u><i>Dwight M. Jellison</i></u> | Dealer Signature |
| | Secretary |

This was the *original* Owner Protection Plan booklet that includes a page showing Kyle's vehicle was placed in service on November 13, 1963, at Soo Machine & Auto Co. in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

When he went online to learn more about the dealership, he couldn't find *anything*. After a lot of digging, help from the Chippewa County Historical Society, and newspapers from the Evening News archives, he thinks he's managed to piece together a pretty good historical highlight reel of the business.



Soo Machine & Auto: Interior view of the beautiful show room on Maple Street

Here is his research post with his findings, that he thought this group would especially appreciate. It's quite long as he had a lot to share:

<https://www.kyleniewiada.org/blog/2024/09/soo-machine-and-auto-ai-amplified-legacy/>

Here are some of the many highlights:

-Soo Machine & Auto Co. started in 1911 as an engine shop, and quickly became a major player in Sault Ste. Marie

-In the winter of 1915, they managed to sell \$4,000 worth of cars (which is a surprise when roads weren't usually plowed in the winter). This sets their future of automobile sales in motion.

-By 1920 they had the largest single-floor garage in Michigan with 35,000 square feet of floor space and storage for 100,000 parts! The building covered most of a city block.

-While they always sold used cars, Soo Machine first carried the Pontiac line from 1934 to around 1937. After a 20-year gap, Pontiac returned to the dealership in 1958.

-When Hollingsworth Auto Sales (their name after 1964) opened their new location in 1968, they had a 12 stall service department and a cutting-edge paint booth – only the second of its kind in the Upper Peninsula.

-Sadly, the dealership closed in 1981 due to poor economic conditions and the closure of the nearby Kincheloe Air Force Base. However, its legacy lives on in the memories of those who lived in Sault Ste. Marie.

-All of these buildings still stand today.



Soo Machine & Auto Co. ca. 1940 with a 1940 Pontiac Deluxe Six (or Eight) parked outside. Used with permission from Chippewa County Historical Society, Sault Saint Marie, MI, ca. 1940, Walter Materna Collection.



If you have any questions or memories related to Soo Machine & Auto Co., Kyle would love to hear them! Here he is with his father and his son (the next generation of Pontiac enthusiasts!).

Meetings:

The West Michigan Pontiac Club holds monthly meetings throughout the year. Most often those meetings are held at a local restaurant in the West Michigan area, but there are instances when that may vary, so please see the upcoming events page, or check out our website for specific times and locations.

WMPOCI Officers:

President: Bob DeBoer..... 616-644-5809
Vice President: Bob McCarthy.....269-372-7382
Treasurer: Linda Walker.....847-609-3910
Newsletter Editor: Tena Schulte.....616-218-5356
Newsletter Editor Email: t.schulte@wolverinecrane.com
Secretary: Dan Jensen.....517-896-0398

Check out our latest events and activities on our website www.wmpontiac.com

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 and events.

The Arrowhead serves as one of the tools to which the Club can fulfill it's goals, as well as, provide information.



Upcoming Events

West Michigan Pontiac Monthly Meetings:

December 13th: Christmas Party to be held at Trestle Stop Restaurant in Hamilton. There will be musical entertainment this year. Please let Linda Walker know if you are able to attend so we can let them know how many of us to plan for.

Follow our club on Facebook and on our website at: www.wmpontiac.com

TOY DRIVE

Collecting *New Unwrapped Toys*
for Area Children in Need

December 7th • 11am - 4pm

TerryTown RV
WORLD'S LARGEST RV SHOWROOM

GR Classics Auto Museum @ TerryTown RV • 7303 Division Ave in Grand Rapids



Louisville, Kentucky
June 8-12, 2025