

# HOOSIER TAILFIN



A publication of the Indiana Region of the Cadillac and LaSalle Club

**SPRING 2024**





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*On the Cover: Bambi Sheperd's 1969 Eldorado in original Wisteria*

*Above: 1933 Cadillac V-16 All Weather Phaeton, highest price realized for a Cadillac at Mecum Indy 2024, \$495,000.*

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# Thoughts from the Director

Warner Young

Here we are almost to summer (already). Leap day is behind us and the great eclipse was a big deal. Our winter was mostly mild and this spring/summer is forecast to be warmer than normal. That's good weather for driving the old Caddy's. Although we can argue that any day is good day to drive the old Caddy.

We experienced a good outing at the Skillman Collection in Greenwood at the end of January. Adding other clubs really boosted the turnout. I like the idea of a large turnout.

We had very nice visit to the Charlie Mullen collection in April. It was good to have Buick and Lincoln join our visit. I have new members mention that they would like to see more day trips. We will be working on that.

Note a nice article in this Tailfin from new member Cameron Wright. He may be wondering whether to laugh or cry. The laugh option is usually best. Jeff Shively has some of the same emotions from the restoration of his '65. He may, just maybe, see that back fully functional this year.

We have several good articles from members in this edition. The Tailfin is looking in good shape with our member contributions. Financially we are in good shape. We had \$9,100 in assets in April. Note that we donated \$2,000 to the Cadillac Museum building fund in November. Our income has primarily come from hosting two Grand Nationals in the past 20 years. The National shares profits with the host region. We were also in the black from hosting the National Driving Tour last September. Jeff Shively and the Shepherds did a fine job managing that event.

Happy motoring.

## EVENTS

**June 1st:** BOPC, Lebanon: See page 11

**June 10 - 15:** Grand National, Gettysburg

**June 15:** Columbe Picnic

**August:** Saturday Drive, TBA

**August 10:** BOPC, Stoops Buick

**Aug. 27 - Sept. 1:** CLC National Driving Tour, Kansas

**Sept. 14:** Artomobilia, Carmel

**Sept. 27 - 28:** CLC Fall Festival, Gilmore Museum

**Dec.:** Annual Meeting & Holiday Party, TBD

## In Memoriam

Indiana Region CLC extends our sincerest condolences and sympathies to the family and friends of **Barry Wheeler** over the loss of Barry's wife, Gay. Positive thoughts to all at this time of sorrow.. You can read her obituary at: [dayandagenda.com/obituaries/lovely-gay-wheeler](http://dayandagenda.com/obituaries/lovely-gay-wheeler). Gay and Barry have been long time supporters of CLC and the Indiana Region. Indiana Region will be making a donation to the CLC Museum in her memory..

**Bill Hedge** passed away in February. Bill was an attorney in LaPorte for 50 years. He was active in the Indiana Region for many years and several years ago served as co-Director of the Indiana Region along with his wife Mary. Bill was very active in civic organizations around LaPorte. You can read his obituary at: [cutlerfuneral.com/obituaries/williambill-hedge](http://cutlerfuneral.com/obituaries/williambill-hedge).



# Barn Update

Lars Kneller



Typing away on my keyboard on March 5, the thermometer reads 75 in sunny Northwest Indiana. And the snowdrops and crocus are blooming. Go figure. However it is still “winter” in the barn, and

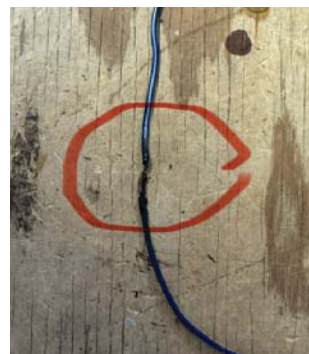
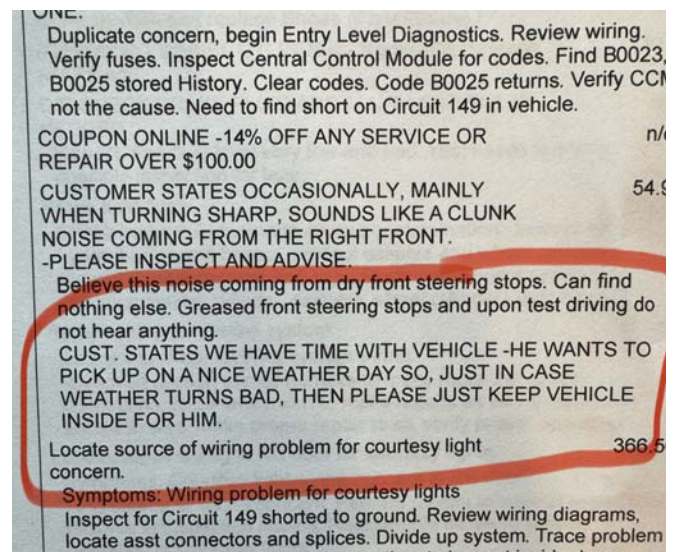
projects keep progressing.

I found a new seat switch for the 2005 Bentley for a somewhat “reasonable” price, as Bentley parts go. I removed the seat after having to purchase a set of star bits to get the rear bolts out. I also had to unplug a plethora of wires. The switch was easy to replace, and perhaps could have been done with the seat in place knowing what I know now after removing it. The seat could double as a boat anchor, but with Jaunda’s help I successfully got it out of and back into the car.

My friend was able to fix the cute little motor in the HVAC controller of the 1984 Eldorado, and now I have both heat and A/C again. I sent the digital dash unit to Cadillac Tim, and it has returned. I haven’t had a chance to install it yet to ensure proper operation, but it will be nice to have all the LED’s working, and not having to punch the buttons several times and swear at it to get it to change.

You may recall from the last Update, the 1993 Fleetwood was having issues with its leveling not working, and the interior lights not turning off. The problems exhausted my knowledge. About this time I received an email from my mechanic stating they were having a Valentine’s Day special of 14% off labor over \$100. The weather had been dry and the streets were clean, so I decided to take it in. Plus they could keep it as long as they wanted. My mechanic traced the light issue down to a short in the ground. He methodically one by one disconnected each circuit, and found the culprit to be the rear passenger door. He took off the door

panel and found a wire that had had its insulation rubbed through by rubbing on the window regulator. Once he replaced that wire, problem fixed! While he was in there, he found the plastic clips that hold the regulator arms to the window were broken. I bought a bunch on EBay and now that window is fixed. He thinks the other rear



window has the same problem, but I told him my free Kneller labor could fix that one.

As to the leveling he found a couple wires in the harness under the car (where the pump is located) has corroded in half inside the insulation! He replaced those wires, and now the leveling is working. While there, I asked them to check and see if the brake fluid needed to be replaced. He found the rear half of the master cylinder empty, and the rear brake cylinders leaking. Fast forward and I have



all new rear brakes (fluid flush included with the service). I had the coolant flushed and filled while there, so this car should be good to go for a while.

The 1955 Thunderbird continues to move ahead. I had the rear leaf springs, front coil springs, and various other suspension components sandblasted and powder coated. I rebuilt the steering box (quite easy following a YouTube video). I cleaned multiple layers of almost 70 year old grease and grime off of all of the steering components, sandblasted and painted, and now everything looks like new again. The rear leaf springs, steering box, pitman arm, and drag link are now installed on to the frame. My body man, Dick, is claiming the body is taking more work than he expected, but is working on it despite his complaints. I buy him lunch once or twice a month which helps. A couple weeks ago I called Adam my machine shop guy to give him a nudge. He claimed he was just about caught up on other projects and my engine was next in line to be torn down. We'll see....

The 1966 Toronado is moved on to the lift. I noted the front brakes were grabbing really bad when I pulled it out of the other barn. The holes to adjust them are nowhere near the adjusters at all, so I pulled the drums off. The adjusters were pretty grimy and hesitant to move, so off they came. They are all cleaned up now and move with little to no effort at all. I haven't checked the rear brakes to see if they are part of the problem. My main goal this winter is to get the cruise control working. To remove the controller from the dash, I have to lower the steering column, and then unbolt the dash and lean it down on top of the steering column. The cable from the dash to the unit on the engine is very stiff and hard to move. The gear

in the dash controller doesn't work all that great either. I had no luck finding a used (66-67 only) Toronado cable. I ended up buying a used 1964 Cadillac cable from Jason Edge, but the end that attaches to the engine unit is a little different. So....I ended up buying the part it attaches to from him also, and should be good to go once I get everything put back together. Mike Cascio, a national CLC member in New Jersey found a guy in Canada that is reproducing the dash gear I need, with 3-D printing. That has been ordered and should arrive shortly. While the car is on the lift, I plan to replace the transmission fluid and filter, and leaky pan gasket. I also want to work on the cantankerous power steering pump, and the gear leaks too.

One last issue I tackled was on my 93 year old father-in-law's 2009 Cobalt. He hasn't driven in almost a year, and has decided to sell his car. However we have been unable to get the hood to open when the lever is pulled inside the car. Again, with the help of a YouTube video I discovered the latches on these cars are prone to rusting and getting stuck. So, with Jaunda's help pulling the lever out, I gave the hood a good shove a couple times, and it popped open! I doused the latch in PB Blaster, so hopefully it won't be a two-person job in the future.

Let's hope for an early spring!



# The Dutchess

Andrew Shepherd



I have been around the old car hobby almost my entire life, I'm 46 now. I was lucky to marry a woman who liked old cars. Barbie and I had been married a few years and the discussion around her buying a car, too, came up. I replied something like, "someday I'm sure you can." I already wrote an article about her second old car, but I must tell the story of her first old car.

A little time went by. I had our '68 Eldo parked outside, and a gentleman, Walt, stopped by and we started talking. He lived close and was a fellow car collector. He said he had a '69 Eldo that was purple and he wanted to sell it. His price was reasonable. I said I will talk to my wife and see if she is interested. I got his phone number and said I would call if she was interested. I told Barbie about the car when she returned home. She wasn't really interested in the car as she didn't really like the '68. I called Walt and thanked him but we had to pass.

I remained in contact with Walt since he was a fellow car collector. Some time would go by and eventually I made a trip over to his house to see his collection. Barbie came along. As we looked at Walt's collection, she immediately fell in love with the purple '69. He agreed to get the car out the next day for a test drive. In the meantime, I took a picture of the data plate to decode everything that night. I was skeptical of



the purple color, but the owner insisted the car was all original. The car did present as original. Well, it turns out purple is a color for 1969! The factory color was Wisteria.

We arrived the next day and I brought my dad with us. Dad and I concluded that the car was all original. The paint, interior, and engine all matched! We took the car for a spin and it drove nicely. Barbie had to have it. We offered an amount close to his asking price and we struck a deal. The car has been Barbie's ever since.

Barbie has driven the car to just about every show we go to as a family. While the car is not a trailer queen, it is a very nice clean quality driver. Some of the paint is faded and there are a few cracks in the interior. Barbie has won a few people's choice and a few trophies with the car.



Everyone is amazed by the factory color. What I love about the appearance of the car is that the top is black. From what I have seen and read, most Wisteria Eldorados had a white top. We have some history on the car. It spent much of its life in Arizona before being hidden away in a barn in Whitehouse, Ohio. We have owned the car for 12 years now. Not much has been required of the car as far as work. Just regular maintenance, brakes, radiator, some hoses and water pump. It is due for some tires and a new gas tank (if it's filled over 3/4 it has a very small leak).

We name all of our cars. Barbie named the car "The Dutchess" because the purple reminded her of royalty and the prior owner lived on a street named Dutch.

Over time Walt and I would become friends. In fact, we would end up buying 5 cars from him including an '89 Allante, a '64 olds, '98 convertible, a '59 Pontiac Starchief, and of course the one I'm telling a story about, the '69 Eldo!

The pictures for this article were taken in the late fall. Barbie had just got home from work and I was putting the car away for the winter. She wanted one last cruise for the year. Off she went.

Barbie now has 2 Cadillacs. The '69 Eldo and the '76 Eldo. She has had other daily Cadillacs, a 2001 Catera we leased new, (now that's a story lol) and a 2004 DTS she drove as a work car awhile back. I've tried getting her to upgrade the '69 or '76 to a nicer or more iconic model, hopefully, even a convertible. While she would consider the '76 for the right upgrade, she will not part with this '69. Barbie says you can never get rid of your first classic car. I can't argue with that as I own my first classic car, which I purchased all the way back in 1994. I guess if she won't upgrade, we will just have to add another one!



# Skillman Collection Visit

Greenwood, Indiana, January 27, 2024 Warner Young



Four clubs joined together for a visit to the Skillman Collection in Greenwood: CCCA, Buick, Lincoln as well as CLC. We had an excellent turnout with about 50 members participating. The collection is just west of the Skillman Ford dealership. The Buick Club was the most represented with 20 members present. Everyone was ready for a day to think and talk about cars after surviving a few weeks of winter weather.

Ray Skillman has put together a large and impressive collection of automotive culture. There is also a merry-go-round in the middle of the collection. Fifteen years ago, car dealer Ray Skillman turned his collection of classic cars into a museum. Every car is in excellent showroom condition. Originally the museum was mostly collectible cars of the 50's through the 70's. In recent years he has added an impressive collection of racing cars with a concentration on Indy cars, sprint cars and midget racers. His museum must have one of the best collections of USAC era cars in the country.

Since the Covid pandemic, the collection is open by invitation only.

There are hundreds of collectible items in the museum in addition to the cars and of course the merry-go-round. There is an impressive collection of neon and product signs. One side room has a recreation of an older garage from the Speedway. The collection has several mechanics working full time restoring these cars to mint condition. Several were working during our visit. Ray restored his first car at age 14. He took the time to talk to our group about current happenings at the collection. This is a special facility and well worth our time to visit.

For lunch went drove a short distance north on US 31 to the Smokey Bones restaurant. And yes, another opportunity for storytelling. All in all, a very good day for car people. CLC members present: Tom Beale, Charlie Drane, Cliff Fiscus, Bill and Beth Reedy, Jim Smith, Donn Wray and Warner Young.





Ray Skillman in Gray



# 1950 Series 62 Sedan Update

Cameron Wright



*Editor's Note: A 2024 update for "restoration" of Cameron's 1950 Series 62 sedan. He is a new member from last summer and has shown great patience with the process. (what else can you do?) This car was purchased last year from Florida. It looked pretty good in the pictures (we all know this story). The car is black with a tan interior. Fortunately, all the pieces were there. He has found that mechanically it needs about everything updated. But progress has been made.*

You'll find this funny. My car is **STILL** with the restoration place down in Greenwood. They've had it all together and running at least twice, and then had problems appear with parts that were supposed to be "good."

They had sent the radiator out to be cleaned, pressure tested, and repaired/rebuilt. It came back from the radiator shop and they rebuilt the car with it. It immediately sprung a new leak when doing a shakedown drive. So, the radiator came back out and they went ahead and got a new one.

Buttoned it back up, and they were doing some fiddling with the carburetor and doing more test driving and the front seal on the crank was leaking engine oil. Of course, it is a felt seal. A brand new felt seal, but still just a felt seal. This is where the CLC forums are worth their weight in gold. There's half a dozen pretty solid discussions of people encountering issues with the felt seal and talking through solutions. Basically, the day they called me the forums were still down, but the following day they were back up. So, I was able to do a little searching and provide some possible solutions.

I don't have an ETA on when I'm getting the car back. I've effectively gotten storage of the car over the winter in their shop, which isn't breaking my heart. At this point, it seems like they are pretty close to getting it wrapped up. Should have it just in time for spring!

*Cameron – the Indiana Region is pulling for you to get a good outcome for the '50!*

## Tailfin Quiz

1. The first year for a Cadillac V?  
A.. 2001 B. 2004 C. 2006 D. 2007
2. At one time the CTS-V held the fastest time for a sedan at the Nürburgring. True or False?
3. The deVille name for Cadillac is a long-standing model dating to about 1930. True or False?
4. Cadillac once produced a Seville (SLS) in China. True or False?
5. The CTS was designed as a replacement for the Catera in the 2003 MY. True or False?
6. What year did Fisher Body purchase Fleetwood?  
A.. 1921 B. 1925 C. 1932 D. 1947
7. In 2023 Cadillac sales in the US were:  
A. 119,500 B. 129,900  
C. 147,200 D. 160,982
8. What was Cadillac's best-selling model worldwide in 2023?  
A.. XT5 B. CT4 C. CT5 D. Escalade
9. The new 2025 Optiq will be Cadillac's first hybrid. True or False?
10. The 1957 Cadillac on average made 17 mpg. True or False?
11. Base price for the 1965 Calais in 2024 dollars was \$49,000. True or False?

Answers on Page 16

# CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER BUICK CLUB OF AMERICA

PRESENTS THE

36<sup>th</sup> Annual Buick·Olds·Pontiac·Cadillac

Car Show

**EVENT MOVED TO  
AUGUST 10 AT STOOPS  
BUICK IN PLAINFIELD.  
DETAILS TO FOLLOW**

Memorial Park, Lebanon, IN

Saturday, June 1, 2024

A-Pre-War  
B-1946-1959  
C-1960-1969  
D-1970-1979

CLASSES

E-1980-1994  
F-1995-Present  
G-All Modified

All Buick, Marquette, Oldsmobile, Viking, Pontiac, Oakland, Cadillac and LaSalle owners are invited to the 36th Annual BOPC Show at Memorial Park in Lebanon, Indiana on June 1, 2024. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Awards in each class, Best of Show, plus:

Best Buick or Marquette  
Best Oldsmobile or Viking  
Best Pontiac or Oakland  
Best Cadillac or LaSalle

**\$20** advance entry, **\$15** each additional car until May 25. **\$25** per car day of show.

**REGISTRATION** 9:00 – 11:30

**JUDGING** 12:00 – 1:30

**AWARDS** @ 3:00

Contact: **Jim Smith** at 317-847-5565 or at [jjsmith3739@gmail.com](mailto:jjsmith3739@gmail.com)

Memorial Park is located just off of SR 39 at 130 East Ulen Drive, Lebanon, IN, 46052

## ENTRY FORM

Make checks payable to Central Indiana Chapter Buick Club of America

Send check and entry form to **Jim Smith, 14072 Staghorn Drive, Carmel, IN 46032**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Car Year \_\_\_\_\_ Make/Model \_\_\_\_\_ Style \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_



# Rebirth of a 1969 deVille Convertible

Rick Simone

It had been several years since I'd had a "toy" and for the past few years I'd thought about purchasing a long sleek 1960's Cadillac . . . someday. However, with children still at home and all the responsibilities that go along with that, it just wasn't a priority at this point in life.

In the Summer of 2022, I casually mentioned to a recently retired car guy/salesperson in our company about my "someday" car and that if he ever ran across a clean one, someday, to let me know. Well, sales guys know everybody, and two days later I received a call from a gentleman in Auburn, NY, that heard I was in the market for a Cadillac. The story was familiar; he'd had the car many years and somewhere along the line lost interest and the car hadn't been plated in about 20 years. A few weeks later and some pictures sent, I couldn't take the temptation any longer and told my wife I was going to look at the car (just to look mind you). Well, she saw right through that but was in disbelief when I said I thought I'd be leaving in a few hours and how about I take a few of the kids along? We'd stop at Niagara Falls on the way (which was a great memorable side trip by the way). Luckily, she's also a car person!

A little negotiating and several weeks later the car was shipped back to NE Indiana and the initial inspection revealed a surprisingly short list of

"musts" to at least get the car on the road. Over the next few weeks, I installed a new battery and alternator, new whitewalls (which I learned are hard to come by now days!) and replaced a leaking wheel cylinder. I honestly couldn't believe how well she ran after not being truly driven for many years and I enjoyed about two months of top-down bliss before cold weather hit. The one thing that was going to need fixed over the winter was that pesky leaking rear main seal that seemed to be getting worse when sitting overnight.



No shops in Fort Wayne wanted anything to do with replacing the rear main seal on a 1969 Cadillac (nor did I) and I ended up taking it to a friend of the family mechanic that seemed competent and had a lift etc. to replace the seal at his leisure over the Winter months. However, behind schedule last spring, and apparently in over his head while attempting to proactively replace the timing chain, he dragged the project out week after week after week, and I took the car back with the now damaged engine torn apart. I missed the entirety of 2023, including the trip I'd imagined all year to the Cadillac Fall Festival with the driving tour.

Nobody (reputable) wants to work on old cars around here any longer, and after much wringing of hands it was apparent that I'd have to pull the engine myself. A good friend with a very nice home shop that usually only ever touches high-end European sports cars had mercy (more likely pity) on me and took on the project with me. I had the engine rebuilt at a reputable local machine shop over the Winter and just got it back a few weeks ago. I'm filled with anticipation as we prepare to install the shiny, rebuilt engine!



# INDIANA REGION HOLIDAY PARTY ANNUAL MEETING

December 3, 2023  
Warner Young



A venerable group of car enthusiasts met Dec. 3rd at the home of Michael Fellenzer in Indianapolis for the Indiana Region Christmas Party and Annual Meeting. I suspect that even though it was a cool and rainy December day, there were thoughts of the vernal equinox that is only three months away. Our group has an association with many car marques and many brands were mentioned this day. However, one marque stood above all (for this day) and that was Cadillac (let's not forget LaSalle).

Michael Fellenzer welcomed our group to his lovely mid-century home. Christmas is his favorite time of the year and we all quickly got the spirit once we were welcomed into his Christmas wonderland. Our catered lunch (which arrived late) was enjoyed and provided extra time to reminisce about 2023. There were many positive comments about our special desert, pumpkin pie cake, provided by Pat Young.

After lunch we moved along into our business meeting. Nine events for the Region were mentioned from 2023. Jeff Shively stated the Grand National in Albuquerque was very good, although there were fewer cars than most years. Andrew Shepherd reported on the National Driving Tour (Indiana as host region) from September. This was a financial success, with 40 participants from around the country. The committee for the tour consisted of Lars Kneller, Jeff Shively, Warner Young, Barbie Shepherd, Andrew Shepherd and Bill Shepherd. In November we donated \$2,000 to the Museum and Research Center at the Gilmore Museum based on the revenue from the tour. Our bank account remains strong due to revenue from several past National events and steady revenue from the sale of previous Self-Starters by Lars Kneller.

Bob Thomas gave a very informative talk on the current state of affairs



with the collector car market. Bob has a large collector car collection, which is still expanding, and is very knowledgeable concerning this market. Note the market has grown soft for the older cars.

There was a discussion about the possibilities for 2024. The highlights, as in most years, will be our BOPC meet in Lebanon and the Grand National. The GN this year will be in June in Gettysburg.

The spirited members in attendance were: Charlie Drane, Michael Fellener, Cliff Fiscus (joined 1994) and guest Brian Hoyt, John and Jupei Hannon (joined 2003), Gary Henry, Bill and Beth Reedy (joined 2004), George Roller (new member in 2023), Andrew Shepherd (joined 2002), Bill Shepherd (joined 1992), Jeff Shively (joined 1995), Jim Smith, Bob Thomas, Jay and Jane Wignall, Jason Young (new member in '23), Warner and Pat Young.

Thanks again to Michael Fellener for hosting our annual event.



## Steve Henderson's Recently Acquired 1993 Allante

Warner has encouraged me to share a recent acquisition. This past August a 1993 Cadillac Allante joined the team. So far, in spite of the horror stories I've heard about these cars, I love it. It's a great road car, fun to drive and in very decent condition. Color is Euro White Metallic with a maroon interior. I found the car on the internet, advertised by a used car lot in Detroit. My brother and I drove to Detroit, bought the car, and drove it home. I enjoyed the car immensely until the salt was put on the roads when winter began in earnest. It currently sits in the far side of the attached garage reminding me that summer will come again.

## Quiz Answers

1. B. 2004
2. True, 7:59.3
3. False, 1949 Series 62 Coupe de Ville was the first
4. True, 2007-2013
5. True
6. B. 1925
7. 160,982, up 9% from 2022, although 4th qtr. was down 7%
8. C. CT5
9. False, all electric
10. False, 13 to 13.7
11. True, \$5,000 in 1965

