

by Tim Dye

2009 Co-Vention

Having attended 15 POCI conventions over the years it has often occurred to me that although everyone is there for the same event, one persons experience can be very different than another. This was never more true than at the 2009 POCI/GTOAA Co-Vention.

With over 1,100 cars on hand it was easy to miss seeing all of them. With the rain on Saturday, the one day all the cars were on display it cut down on the time to view them all. This became very apparent when I returned home and saw pictures on the internet from the Co-Vention featuring cars I did not see there. There were so many tours, events and meetings scheduled that there was no way to attend them all. I felt like I missed a lot of things that I would very much like to have seen or done. I am guessing that many of you feel the same. I thought I would highlight a few of the things I did get to see and do, and a few of the many wonderful and unique cars that I saw. Chances are you may have missed some of them too.

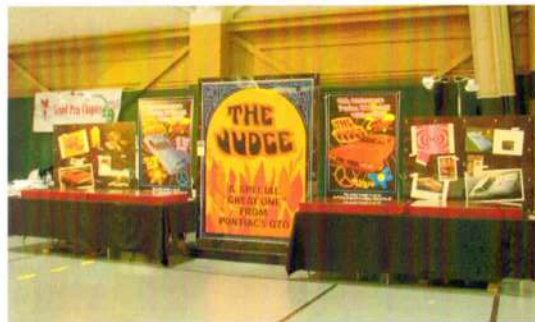
We arrived on Monday with a full truck and trailer. With the unique situation of the combined conventions I wanted to do a special display, the 40th anniversary of the Judge provided me the theme for my display. The first order of business was getting the display unloaded, luckily there were a couple of unsuspecting friends hanging around the Nutter Center that I could recruit. It took Arthur Barrett, Greg Kersul and myself to get the centerpiece of the display in the building. It is an original 1969 Judge poster sandwiched between cloth covered plywood and plexi-glass to protect it, measuring approxi-



Arthur Barrett, Greg Kersul and the little guy is my grandson Chris, all helped me wheel the big Judge poster inside.

mately 8' x 5' and quite heavy, a handful for even the three of us. Besides thanking these two, I have to give a big thank you to members of the Grand Prix Chapter for helping me load it back up on Sunday.

Tuesday was the Board of Directors meeting where I had a presentation to give. Many of you may not be aware that each year at the convention there is a meeting of the Board to take care of club business. It's the only time during the course of the



The 40th Anniversary of the Judge display. 21' of original Judge memorabilia.

year that the entire Board gets to meet, and it can take up the better part of a day. After my business was completed there it was back over to the Nutter Center to get my display set up. It was a lot of work to build and bring the display to Dayton, but I enjoy this kind of work. I received a lot of favorable comments from those viewing the over 50 pieces

of original Judge memorabilia, that really made it worth while. There was a lot of activity in the Nutter Center as everyone else was getting set up as well.

On Wednesday the Co-Vention really started with a long list of meetings, tours and activities to attend. Among

Granddaughter Alyssa floating in space at the Air Force Museum.

them were the Grand Prix Chapter Slow Drags, the tour to the Packard Museum and the Ames Performance Kickoff Cruise-In. Registration and tech inspection went into full swing as well. We brought two of our grandchildren, Chris six years of age and Alyssa eight. Wednesday my wife Penny and friend Dee Barrett took them to the Air Force Museum. This is a great facility that



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one could easily spend an entire day at. Many of the specialty chapters have their own activities at the convention and we are part of the All American Oakland Chapter. Wednesday evening members gathered to relax and visit. We played Tic Tac TOakland, a game Marge Sawruk created.

Thursday morning was the annual Oakland Breakfast & Tour. We brought our 1931 Oakland Sport Coupe to the Co-Ventio which turned out to be the only Oakland in attendance. We load-

ed the grandchildren in the rumble seat and headed to Clifton Mill restaurant. This was a fifteen mile tour through the countryside to the location of the authentic mill, a great setting for

this event. Tours this day included a private car collection, shopping, historic Dayton and Wright



Above: our '31 Oakland at Clifton Mill Restaurant. Right: grandchildren cruising in the rumble seat.

Brothers tour. Seminars included Jim Mattison, George DeLo-rean, Milt Shornack, Don Keefe, Pete Basica and Jim Wangers. Thursday night was POCI Chapter Night, there was a banquet held at the Hope Hotel where chapter awards were presented. This is an important event that recognizes the work people do throughout

Very well done ice sculpture at POCI Night.



the year. Annually at this event the official announcement is made of the location of the next convention. The West Virginia Chapter will be hosting the 2010 POCI convention July, 2010 in Charleston, West Virginia. An unexpected surprise

at this years POCI Chapter Night was a large ice sculpture as the centerpiece on the hors devour's table located right in the center of the room. It was in the shape of the Pontiac Indian Head and Oakland Shield, a nice addition to the evenings festivities.

Friday was drag racing out at Kil-Kare Raceway which was very well attended. However, back at the Nutter Center there was a full slate of activities. One of the more interesting tours took place that morning at the Air Force Museum, this was a special tour of the presidential aircraft hangar and the restoration hangar. This part of the museum is not ordinarily open to the public, you had to turn your name in prior to the tour so they could check you out. I was very disappointed that I could not attend this tour as everyone who went said it was outstanding. That morning happened to be when I was scheduled to give a seminar on Pontiac/Oakland history. I joked to my wife in advance that there was so much going on that there would probably only be three people there, but there was a pretty good turn out. That afternoon was a seminar hosted by Jim Ewen. Jim a former automotive stylist and Pontiac designer had never attended a convention before. Regrettably I was unable to make it to his seminar but he did speak briefly at the Grand Prix Chapter meeting where we were able to meet. Jim and his wife Rose took the time to stop by and visit us on their way back home, which I thought was very kind of them. We enjoyed their stay and the opportunity to spend some time with them.



Jim Ewen (right) and myself at my outdoor museum.

Knowing he had never been to a convention I asked Jim what he thought of the Co-Ventio and he said it was a wonderful event. He and Rose were glad they went and both had a memorable experience.

A memorable experience for us at the Co-Ventio was the Dinner Under the Wings on Friday evening. I liked the patriotism of the color guard and I thought their presence added some formality and a kind of validation to the proceedings, something we lack in so many things these days. The food was good and

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the keynote speaker John Middlebrook had a nice talk but it seemed to be over all too quickly.

The Air Force band that entertained us wasn't too shabby either, and their rendition of Little GTO sounded pretty good, especially when you consider that it is not part of their usual repertory. The surroundings of course were like no other banquet we have had, as I mentioned earlier, the museum is

an unbelievable place. After all the planned activities were over we were given time to

look around at our leisure. I asked our good friend, longtime POCI member and retired Air Force Flight Examiner, Aircraft Commander Merle Green to take us around and point out some of the historically significant aircraft on display. I find the museum fascinating, but when you have someone like Merle who is very knowledgeable pointing out advances in our aviation history it allows you to appreciate it on a whole new level.

Saturday was the popular vote car show, and what a show. The weather was great all week, but wouldn't you know on the day of the show there was rain. There were so many great cars to see outside, I was able to get around to some of them but like everyone else the rain forced me inside. This was not a total loss



Color guard at Dinner Under the Wings.



John Middlebrook, keynote speaker at Dinner Under the Wings.



Merle Green with a T-38, one of the aircraft in the museum he used to fly.

by a long shot, there were a large number of cars on display inside as well. The arena floor was packed with beautiful and rare Pontiacs, as was the upper level circling the entire arena. Ultra rare Pontiacs almost seemed common place here as you were surrounded by Super Duty cars, Ram Air cars, Judge convertibles, famous race cars and historically significant Pontiacs of all sorts. Every car present was an outstanding car so it is impossible to say that one or two is a favorite. It would probably drive you nuts to even attempt it, but as Jim Wangers once pointed out, I sometimes have a penchant for the unusual, so I wanted to mention a couple of the cars that were on display.

I have always found Canadian Pontiacs an interesting part of Pontiac history, and although some Pontiac guys turn their noses up at them because they have Chevrolet engines, in retrospect they were just ahead of their time. On the arena floor was a beautiful gold Acadian. Some Canadian Pontiac models were Pontiac bodied with Chevrolet chassis and drive train. The Acadian body was based on the Chevy II Nova with Pontiac trim. This is a rarely seen model in the United States and this was an excellent example.

Since the early 1980s, off and on I have owned a 1973 GTO, and have always liked them. Again it is probably just my appreciation for the unique models, and just like the Chevrolet powered Canadian Pontiacs most Pontiac enthusiast kept their distance from the lowest production year GTO. But at this show I saw a new interest in these models, there were some very nice examples on display. The black one on the upper level was spotless, just a beautiful car. Outside was an

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