



Summer 2015 Vol 19 No 2



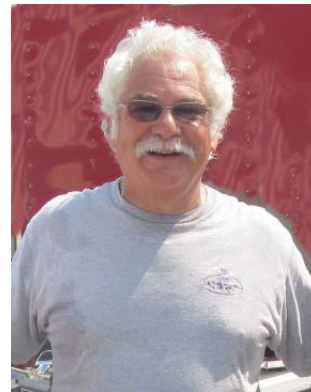
## Custom Safari Chapter

Pontiac Oakland Club International

# From the President's Garage

By Lou Calasibetta

*The 2015 POCI convention is history. As usual it was in another place of the country, Louisville, Kentucky. For those that went, we experienced a lot of beautiful Kentucky. Louisville is quite a marvelous city, with so much history and attractions. For me I enjoyed the local rib house and the Louisville slugger museum. This along with visiting my Pontiac friends made this convention memorable.*



*We had some real nice Safaris at the convention. All three years plus a transcontinental were shown. Unfortunately there were not any '58 Safaris in attendance. As we all know these wagons area becoming scarce. Seeing one at a show usually is nonexistent and seeing one at a convention is very rare. We are all lucky individuals to have and own one of these rare long roofed wagons.*

*Our annual meeting was a success thanks to the assistance of Robin and Tom. I hope all of us can see the time and dedication that contribute to our chapter. Also I want to thank the loyal members who attended each meeting and for taking time out from the show to sit in on the meetings.*

*We always try to take photos at the convention. As president I want to thank all of you who send Rich photos and notes on the show. Without your help our newsletter wouldn't be filled with great pictures. We appreciate you sharing your thoughts and contribution.*

*In closing, and as current president, I want to thank you for your help and interest in our chapter. Our team work is what makes this a success. Always keep in mind it is the members who make it happen not just Robin, Tom, Rich or I.*

*Have a great day, I will see you all next year in Iowa, and keep the wagons Hooooo!!!!*

Sincerely,

**Lou**

Lou Calasibetta





# Behind the Wheel in the Editor's Seat

By Rich Pye

Hello Everyone,

*Wow, how time flies.....That phrase can be applied to just about every situation. Whether it's watching kids grow-up, enjoying a vacation or the collector car "season" in the North and East. Sadly, as I finish the "Summer" issue, it's almost time for some of us to put away our favorite rides for the season. No laughing from you guys in the South and West!!*

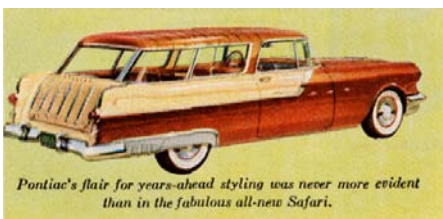
*It was a weird Summer for me, having sold my '55 Safari and trying to adjust to not being employed full-time for the first time in 34 years. Everyday it felt like someone was yelling "squirrel", as my head spun in multiple directions determining which project car or project in general I needed to work on during my new-found free time. Funny thing about the word free. It also implies there's no money exchanged, which is a whole other subject I'd rather not discuss!! Needless to say, the '57 Safari is still tucked away in the barn with the headliner laying on the back seat, the '69 Firebird actually moves on it's own now, but isn't finished, and we're not even going to discuss the '69 GTO.*

*I also had this newsletter half done in the beginning of September when I trashed my hard drive. Being stubborn I was determined not to start from scratch and get that thing recovered. After a few weeks I was successful, but then ran into the busiest month in a long while. Finally caught up, this article completes it.*

*I want to reach out to all the folks that contributed to this newsletter. Randy Kerdoon for the Wounded Warriors article. I could not believe the number of '57 Safaris that showed up.....dwarfing the POCI Convention participation. Awesome turnout!! Tom Young for the survey, short story and other encouragement. Robin Petry for the Convention photos and meeting minutes. And Lou Calasibetta for his President's message and friendly nudges to get this newsletter completed and printed!*

*I hope many of you can attend next year's convention and can bring your Safaris. As usual the timing conflicts for me with other commitments, but you never know..... I also need to shout to everyone to send in articles. Doing this for 16 years, (how time flies.....), I am beginning to get that little itch that I need to be motivated more and more. Involvement from multiple people will keep me going, so take a few minutes and gather something interesting together and send it on to me. Photos are always encouraged. You may not think it's interesting or important to other members, but trust me, people love hearing about what other members are doing with their cars. It motivates them also.*

*Okay, enough for now. I PROMISE to get the next newsletter out before the end of the year. Take a few more drives before the snow flies and put away your patio furniture!!*



Rich

# Chapter Meeting

By Robin Petry

## Custom Safari Chapter Meeting Minutes at POCI National Meeting, 7/23/15, Louisville, KY

**13 Members in attendance:** James & Sandy Bowers, Lou Calasibetta, Lee Hadley, Jack & Jill White, Tom Young, Michael Usinger, Mark & Robin Petry, Noel & Starr Evans, Wilf Kaszanits

**2 Visitors:** Phil Lamb and Les Howard

Lou Calasibetta, CSC President, called the meeting to order at 11 am.

Members introduced themselves.

**2014 minutes of the chapter meeting:** Were printed in the newsletter after last year's meeting. Minutes were distributed for review and comments. Motion to accept as printed made by Starr Evans, seconded by Jim Bowers and approved by membership.

**2015 Treasurer's report:** 6/20/14 Starting balance \$2073.50, Income \$1217 (dues), Expenses \$1290.63 (2014 and 2015 convention trophies 101.24, 2014 convention snacks and postage 53.47, Web site domain 70, Printing 4 newsletters 640, Postage 4 newsletters 376.42, Envelopes 16.20, returned check and fee 33) to give 7/23/15 ending balance as of \$1999.87.

**2015 Membership report:** Current number of registered families/members is 67. Maximum membership in June 2014 was 62 registered families/members.

### Old Business:

#### Chapter TShirt:

Current inventory: 3X-four, 2X-none, XL-none, L-none, Medium-three, Small-two. Discussion at 2013 and 2014 convention chapter meeting discussed either having more printed or a new design. The concern is that having more made with the current design would cost \$600-\$700 and since most members have the current design we might have a stock slowly moving. Discussion ensued about a new design. It was decided to email the general membership 4 options: Keep the current CSC Logo design but don't put the Safari on the back so people could have their own car individually screen printed on it OR Use the 1955-1958 Pontiac Script from the older design Tom Young has with Custom Safari Chapter on it and 4 Safari Travel Logs OR 1955-1958 Pontiac Script with the Custom Safari Chapter on it and nothing on the back or front OR members can suggest a design. Once we have a design, Starr can check with her vendor about cost, members would need to preorder and if a woman's T-top design would have to be requested.

**Newsletter Support:** Lou recognized and thanked Rich Pye for his time, energy and dedication to the chapter newsletter. The chapter newsletter is our main commodity and mechanism to connect members. It is important to support him with articles and short briefs. Tom Young will work with Marvin Morton on an article about disk brake conversions. Starr encouraged members who attend a car show to send a picture of their car at the show and a short write up about it. New regular features: Robin is going to send a new member update to Rich for each newsletter and will write up the Member of the Quarter questionnaires and send to Rich. Robin can also remind those with email of the deadlines to send information to Rich for the next newsletter. It was suggested that anyone who has GM Tech Bulletins specific to the 55-58 Safaris submit a copy to Rich for the newsletter. Noel has some for 56, 57 and will send. Lou has some for 55 and will send to Rich.

**Chapter Display:** Thank you to Tom Young for the work on it and to Lou for bringing it to the convention. Robin brought the chapter travel trophy and notebooks of past newsletters.

### New Business:

**Chapter Member Car Pictures:** Robin is working on collecting member car pictures and creating a file for Rich to use to update the chapter website.

# Chapter Meeting

By Robin Petry

## Chapter Officers:

Robin is willing to serve another year as secretary/treasurer. Lou is willing to serve another year but encourages other members to step up and volunteer for the office as change brings new ideas and growth.

**Tom Young** distributed a survey regarding perception of how many Safaris still exist, restored price and favorite Safari. When collected and tabulated he will submit the article for the newsletter. Also, he shared some interesting research he is working on regarding Safari Body Style #s DF vs F models. The later is related to Safaris that were built for lease use.

## Membership Discussion:

Brake discussion: Jack White shared the 57 Buick wheel cylinders work on the 57 Transcontinental and gave more breaking power. Mark Petry discussed when getting new brake drums that having them arched to fit the brake drum make them more effective by increasing the contact area to 100%. Noel shared that the tolerances can be dialed into the arching making. Rear brakes in mid-70's GM station wagon axel flange is the same width and better shoes.

Tom Young has a California person looking for a fully restored 57 and is willing to pay up to \$60,000 and to contact him with any leads.

Lou Calasibetta knows of someone selling a 57 in New Jersey that is not running for around the mid-teens. Members discussed the challenge of finding good reproduction parts and when members do that would be good information to share in the newsletter.

Robin said this kind of discussion is what members need and is there a member that could set up a discussion thread on the internet for this kind of communication. Tom thought Randy Kerdoon might be a good resource and can talk to him.

Members at the convention to meet Saturday, July 25th at 1pm at CS popular vote class area to vote for the "Best Safari" at the convention and determine which member drove their Safari the longest distance.

Noel Evans made the motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Tom Young and the meeting adjourned at 12:12pm.

Respectively submitted,  
Robin Petry  
CSC Secretary/ Treasurer





# Counting All Safari Wagons *By Tom Young*

Hello folks!

The POCI National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky is now history but during our chapter meeting our members took a poll on the numbers and monetary value of Safari wagons. They received a form that asked four questions covering all years of Custom Safari wagons. The purpose was to collect thoughts from our members and represent those thoughts in terms of relative numbers. With a little bit of math applied to the numbers collected, the results will engage us to talk about the rarity and value of the wagons that we so very much cherish. Before we can publish the results, we need some more responses from you.

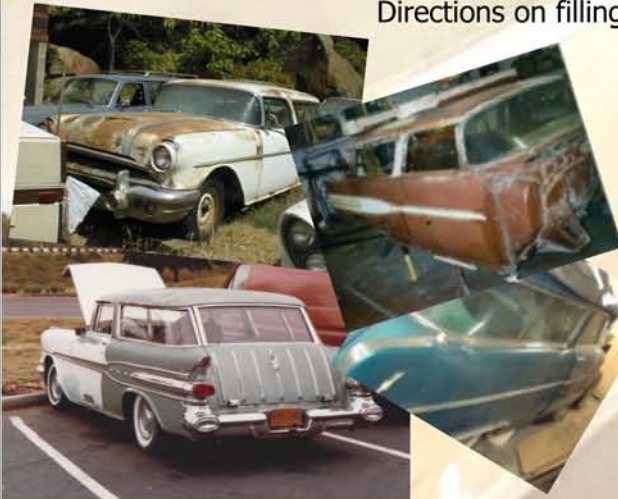
**Your participation is WANTED!** For those folks who could not attend the Chapter meeting, please fill out the form at the bottom of this page. Your identity will not be disclosed with the results. Only numbers will be published. Please mail your response to:

**Tom Young,  
204 Acacia Road  
Newbury Park, CA 91320** or.....

You can also take a photo of your responses and email to: **pontiactom@ix.netcom.com**

As always, your participation will be greatly appreciated.

Directions on filling out the form:



For the first question, provide you personal estimate on the total number of safari wagons that you think still exist in any condition; from parts car to fully restored. For the second question, estimate the number of cars that you think that are in road worthy condition, both modified and stock. They must be running, not dead cars sitting in storage. For the third question, please pick only one safari for your answer. And for the last question, estimate how much a Safari wagon is worth in modified or restored condition. Think of the best of the best... and give a value. Thanks everyone!

QUESTIONS	1955 Pontiac 2 dr Custom Safari Wagon	1956 Pontiac 2 dr Custom Safari Wagon	1957 Pontiac 2 dr Custom Safari Wagon	1957 Pontiac 4 dr Custom Safari Wagon
How many Safari wagons exist in all possible conditions?				
How many Safari wagons are in restored or modified condition?				
Which year is your most favorite Safari?				
How much money is a fully restored Safari worth?				



# HOW DOWNEY CALIFORNIA ENDED UP WITH "MORE '57 SAFARI'S THAN A PONTIAC SHOWROOM!"

By Randy Kerdoon

With only 1,292 Pontiac Custom Safari Wagons being built in 1957, finding 1 or 2 on any Pontiac showroom across America would be a bit of a challenge. Finding 3, would be difficult. Finding 4, rare. Finding 5 or 6, well that dealer had to be well connected. But SEVEN? Actually there were almost EIGHT 1957 Custom Safari wagons at Mike Green's 2015 annual Wounded Warriors show at the classic Bob's Big Boy Broiler in Downey in late August.



Many Chapter members enjoyed a breakfast at Bob's, and then gathered under Aspen Pittman's large awning to talk about their cars and escape the heat.



Some of the highlights....new Safari members Cornell and Susie arrived in his freshly restored blue '57, a frame off restoration that took over 2 1/2 years and was the only "frame-off" in the group. His efforts were rewarded with one of the show's "top ten" awards

Aspen's restored '57 was coming off an electrical and mechanical overhaul by California's pied piper of Pontiacs, the man with the plan, (and plenty of old parts in his garage) Tom Young. After it received some nice body detail work, Aspen's car received the "Best Orphan Car" Award. Orphan? a Pontiac? oh, yeah....right.



A similar looking car (dark red with ivory inserts) to Aspen's was also there. It belonged to Bill Baquet. Once again our former fearless leader Tom, helped get that car through a litany of maladies allowing it to attend as well. Bill called it's appearance a "work-in progress". Tom called it...a "moving miracle". The car had issues with brakes, electrical and even fuel before it was made roadworthy enough to attend. Fittingly...it needed a bit of Chevron fuel cleaner to get it started so he could drive it home. Apparently the plan for Bill's baby is to make it the perfect red/white "twin" to Aspen's Safari.

Looks like our west coast group could be awash in red/white Safaris. Ron's Jet Black 57 looked great....i'm told it is a former Cordova/Red Car with a Kenya Ivory insert. There was yet another red/white Safari that nearly made it there, but more on that in a moment.



# Wounded Warriors Show



Looks like our west coast group could be awash in red/white Safaris. Ron's Jet Black 57 looked great....i'm told it is a former Cordova/Red Car with a Kenya Ivory insert. There was yet another red/white Safari that nearly made it there, but more on that in a moment.

Of course, Mike Green's brown restomod '57 was there....as well as Marvin's silver '57 with the black spear as well as a couple of blue and white '57s.

My '57 (the one on the flat bed wearing Cragars) was supposed to be there. but it's coil went bad on a trip to Anaheim two days before the show. Thanks to Triple A's 100 mile tow option....It was sent back to my mechanic in Calabasas....who swapped out the coil. Then I noticed gasoline dripping from the tank. Turned out a crack developed in the tank, and the car was not able to make it. Sometimes things just aren't meant to happen! I managed to take my '64 Dodge Polara as Plan B. A great car, but not when you could have been the EIGHTH 1957 Pontiac Safari at one show. THAT would have been an all time record in these parts. Oh, well, there's always 2016!!



Side Story : My Pontiac was ALSO an original red/white car, that was eventually painted all white, then repainted a non Pontiac red/white by the time I received it. the plan is to keep it as stock as possible but the paint job will likely be a burgundy and white. Stay tuned!!

Side Story 2 : to the best of my knowledge there is no bias towards '55 or '56 Safari's out here in California. Just no one who owns one has joined us at these shows!!



# Convention Update



*President Lou Calasibetta presenting Don Bisson with the Chapter's "Best Safari" award!*

# Convention Update



**ABOVE (left to right clockwise):** Jack and Jill White checking out the car models. Steve and Adhrea Cook. Tom and Summer Young. Lee and Ruth Hadley.

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## Lunch at Lenny's Deli

by Tom Young

*Attending: Mike Green, Marvin Morton, Bob Garacochea, Bill Baquet, Aspen Pittman and Tom Young.*

*On a warm September day, six Safarians gathered in a busy business district of Los Angeles to enjoy some fine local food and share stories about anything that came to mind. It did not take long before lively discussions about politics and local business became the focus of everyone's attention. Talk about Safari wagons and personal careers filtered into the conversations throughout the lunch.*

*No doubt that the old saying, "it's a small world" would hold true when everyone learned that Aspen's father, who owned the famous Bear Pitt BBQ in Los Angeles, received fresh bread from Bob's family bakery years ago. Bob explained that he had to fix the oven conveyor every time his family bakery made bread for Aspen's father. It meant that Bob had to cool down and enter the oven to remove bread that was wedged in the conveyor mechanism. It was a very hot job that Bob has not forgotten!*

*After eating some great food, it was time to go but nobody was eager to jump into the infamous Los Angeles stop & go traffic. Much to the frustration of the parking lot valet, the group lingered as they viewed Aspen's 1992 LT-1 equipped Buick Roadmaster station wagon. Some wondered what the wagon would look like with six chrome ribs on the tailgate!*

*Gatherings of Safarians are few and far between. Thanks must be given to Chapter member Mike Green for spearheading the effort to gather some Safarians for an enjoyable afternoon.*



# Convention Update



*ABOVE and BELOW: Don Bisson's '56 and Noel and Starr Evans' '57 in the Stock Popular Vote class.*





# Convention Update - Checking 'Em Out





# Convention Update



**ABOVE:** Modified class with Jim and Sandy Bowers, Lou Calasibetta and a non-member's Safari. **BELOW:** Don Bisson and his brother Moe. This was the first convention for both and the first trip for Don's '56.





# Convention Update



**ABOVE:** Group picture of the chapter members who won "Louisville Slugger" Awards for their Safaris. (Left to right: Sandy and Jim Bowers won Outstanding Popular Vote in 1949-64 Modified, Lou Calasibetta won Popular Vote Most Outstanding for his 1957 Pontiac TransContinental Wagon in 1949-64 modified, Noel and Starr Evans won Popular Vote Most Outstanding in 1955-58 Custom Safari Only, and Don Bisson and brother Moe Bisson who won Popular Vote Outstanding). Lou is holding 2 Louisville Slugger Awards because he also own Best of Show Post War! **BELOW:** Noel and Starr Evans with their 57. They won this year's "Longest Distance" chapter award for driving their Safari 833 miles one way to this year's convention. They have driven their 57 Safari to 17 POCI conventions from 1994 to 2015 for a grand total round trip mileage of 29,470 miles!! It is 24,901.55 miles around the Earth at the equator....so at 29,470 miles they have driven the equivalent around the Earth plus some!





# Safari Search

## Cars for Sale

**Pontiac 1957 SAFARI 2 DOOR:** Restored in 2000. 1968 428 Motor with disc brakes, Vintage AC - car came with air. 7000 miles since restored. Very nice car. \$50,000. Call 231-690-0429 for more info.



## Parts for Sale

**FOR SALE:** Four 15" Rally 2 rims (5 x4 3/4 bolt pattern). Rims restored. Includes center caps and lug nuts. Includes four mounted like new tires. Two are 225.60R.15 and two are 235.70R.15. Asking \$550 or best. Will consider separating them. Please contact Rick at 401-934-0663 or frdigi@cox.net.

**1957 Pontiac:** Front Brake Drums complete with Backing Plates, Shoes, Wheel Cylinders and Wheel Bearings, \$100 each; also Two Radios with Speaker Boxes, one Maroon and one Green, \$150 each; Complete Rear End Differential with 3.23 Gears, \$100; 5 Hub Caps Good Condition, \$100..... call Bill Hanners @ 239-543-3510, FL.

**1955 Pontiac:** Parting out a 2 door Chieftain. email Rich Pye @ rpye@rochester.rr.com or phone 585-637-2720 with needs.

**1957 Pontiac:** Headlight switch, good used condition, all functions work, \$85. 1957 Transcontinental wagon: Still have a few aluminum side quarter panels. No wheel trim or rocker moldings. Missing parts from your steering column? I have a small stock of parts. Let me know your needs. Contact Tom Young at pontiactom@ix.netcom.com

**1955-57 Pontiac:** Custom Safari new gas tanks \$399.00 plus shipping. New lower tailgate assembly, \$850.00 plus shipping. N.O.S 1956 Pontiac lit hood ornament, original box. \$600.00. Jay Hammond. 302.322.1833 jhchevyparts@aol.com

## Wanted

**1955 Pontiac:** OEM side view mirror (#519802) ? and a OEM Non-Glare rear view mirror (#521170 or #988647) ? for a '55 Safari. Not sure about the correct part #'s. NOS is not necessary but would like to find something in good to very good condition with minimal pitting. gpark14@aol.com

**1956 Safari:** Information needed to how to replace rear leaf springs. Contact Cary Birenbaum @ mrpontiac@mindspring.com

**1957 Safari:** Stainless Spear, front of gas door. Trim under the tail lights. Donn Fallenbuchel, (928) 855-5494.

**1957 Safari Car Wanted:** If you have any leads on one, please contact Dwight at dwhitmire3153@charter.net or call cell 770-851-1010 or work 770-531-1010.

**1955-56-57 Pontiac station wagon,** Exterior Tee handle for liftgate on with as many attached parts as possible. Steve Cook [jumbodog54@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jumbodog54@sbcglobal.net) or 314-795-4700

**1957 Pontiac (Any Model):** Air Conditioning components that mount to the engine, brackets, compressor, condensor, etc. Rich Pye, rpye@rochester.rr.com

**1950-52 Pontiac:** Exterior and Interior Trim, contact Paul Gore

To place a free ad to sell a car or parts or to place a want ad, send your request to Rich Pye @rpye@rochester.rr.com. Your ad should be related to 1955-58 Pontiacs, and it is recommended to include photos.

# POCI Chapter #10

[www.customsafari.org](http://www.customsafari.org)

The Custom Safari Chapter is an official international chapter of the Pontiac Oakland Club, International, Incorporated. The POCI headquarters address is: P.O. Box 539 Victor, NY 14564

Annual Dues are \$21.00. Renewals are due January 1st of each year. New member dues are pro-rated quarterly from January 1st. Applicants must be a current member of POCI prior to joining the chapter. Send payment to Robin Petry.

The Safari News is a quarterly publication produced by the chapter. Volume 1, Number 1 was distributed in December of 1993. A limited number of back issues are available. Write for further information.

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For chapter information: Email: [chiefpontiac57@gmail.com](mailto:chiefpontiac57@gmail.com)

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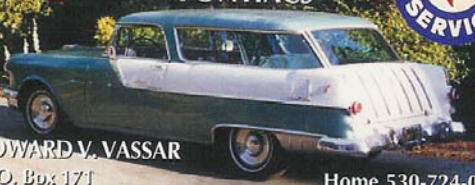
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