

Summer Show Season Fun with Family, Friends, and Wagons!

Pontiac-Oakland Club
International, Inc.
(POCI)

Custom Safari Chapter

SUMMER 2021

Volume 25, Number 2

In this issue

President & Editor Pages
POCI National Convention Report
Request for Expertise
News Briefs
Member Feature Story
Expanded Classifieds Ads



We have a winner!

Chapter President Lou Calasibetta presents our Chapter's "Best Safari" award at the POCI National Convention Popular Vote show to Bruce and Kathryn Deane of North Carolina.

Cloudy skies and the threat of rain did not dampen the spirit of our Chapter Safarians who attend this year's POCI National Convention in Uncasville, CT. The Mohegan Sun Casino & Resort did not fail to impress. Their indoor car show area made the weather irrelevant! The Las Vegas styled lobby, great food, and long walks to the parking lots made for an unforgettable experience.

Also, unforgettable was the sight of seeing seven Safari wagons on display together in Redondo Beach, CA. Safarians had gathered to support the Semper Fi & America Fund, They enjoyed one of the best all-makes car shows on the West Pacific Coast.

Look for our special reports of these two great coast-to-coast Chapter events in this special 26-page newsletter.

From the President's Garage

Hello Everyone,

So, here I am, still the leader of "the pack of wagons." It is really an honor to still be the Chapter President. For those members who did not attend the Convention, all Chapter Officer positions will remain filled by our same members. Makes one wonder if anyone will ever step-up to the batter's box?

It is hard for me to believe that the National Convention is over. It was a hot! But we now have some great memories, saw old friends, and made some new friends too. This year's Convention was held at the giant-sized Mohegan Sun Resort in Connecticut. A lot of footwork was required to move around our Convention site. On a single day, I walked 18,544 steps! Wow!! My cell phone almost overheated!!!

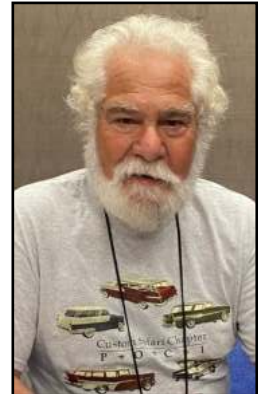
I want to give Robin Petry, our Secretary/Treasurer, a big and sincere THANK YOU! She is a fantastic person and a great Safari Chapter supporter. I do not know how she does so much and keeps a cool head. If you were at our annual Chapter meeting, you would have seen her in action. Great job Robin!

We have signed up more new members at the Convention. Welcome Kathleen & Wheeler Bradley. They brought two fantastic '57 Safari wagons and a beautiful '57 2 dr hardtop. We are glad to have you in our Chapter. We are looking forward to seeing more of you and your '57 Pontiacs.

Did you know that our Chapter was awarded our 45th year plaque by the POCI? Fantastic! It is great to be recognized by our club leaders. I am not going to do the math to compare our age with other chapters but for a special interest chapter, we are looking good for our age.

Next year, we should all head to Catoosa, Oklahoma. It is close to the middle of our Country so, please try to attend. I expect a large turn-out, but it can only happen if you plan to attend. We'll see how it all plays out for us wagon lovers. I am looking forward to be at the POCI 46th National Convention. Hope to see you there!

Lou Calasibetta



Survey Coming! Electronic Newsletter Distribution.

During our Annual Chapter meeting, the question of electronic distribution of our newsletter was brought up for discussion. Our Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, Robin Petry, will issue a request to all members by email or mail to tally member's preference on receiving our Chapter newsletter. Our email version of the newsletter will generally arrives 3 to 6 weeks in advance of the printed newsletter. It is issued in PDF format which means that your computer must be set to read PDF files. Since the cost of emailing a newsletter is dramatically less than printing & mailing, annual dues will be adjusted to a lower cost, depending on how many members elect emailing for their preference. The printed newsletter offers a thick glossy paper with colorful graphics and photos. No need to log-on or have Internet access. So, the choice is yours! **Robin will be contacting you for your preference.**



Under the Hood with your Editor

Hello Everyone!

There is no doubt that our Chapter members who attended the POCI National Convention in Uncasville, CT had a great time. The resort was fantastic. Seeing old friends and making new ones was commonplace. The cars and trucks were outstanding as usual. You can say the same thing about the Wounded Warrior car show for the benefit of the Semper Fi Fund in Redondo Beach, CA. It's the only venue in our Country where you can see a record number of Safari wagons parked side-by-side. The location is next to the Pacific Ocean which means the cool ocean air always manages to keep temperatures perfectly comfortable during the peak of summertime heat. Nice!



A few of these trophies were taken home by Chapter members at the POCI National Convention.

Congratulations again to all the folks who took trophies home from the POCI National Convention and Wounded Warrior show. Our Chapter has some the best 1955-58 Custom Safari wagons in the world and the evidence is in the number of trophies that members have earned. Great job everyone!

I want to give a big THANK YOU to everyone who contributed photos of the POCI National Convention. Without your photos and updates, we could not have a National Convention *Report* in this newsletter. I want to give a special thanks to Lou Calasibetta and Robin Petry for providing me with daily text photos that I could share on our Chapter's Facebook page. We were able to report to over 230 Chapter Facebook members about our activities at the convention in real time.

Welcome new members, Kathleen and Wheeler Bradley, Terry and Lisa Brogan, Allen and Jean Hejl, John Kennedy, and Orren Volk. We hope you will enjoy our group of Safarians. Together, we have decades of knowledge that we can share with you about 1955-58 Custom Safari wagons.

Most of you received your SPRING newsletter initially by email. We did this so that you could receive the newsletter at the earliest time possible. Since the printed newsletter takes between 3 to 6 weeks to process, print, and distribute, email was the best way to get the newsletter to you. Impacts from COVID-19 also has contributed to long delays. Getting our SPRING newsletter out to you electronically and in print was significantly delayed. Future newsletters will also be late in distribution. It has been far too challenging for me to keep pace with newsletter deadlines. If someone would like to take the helm, please step-up now. Otherwise, the delays will continue, and newsletter production will eventually take a pause. I appreciate your patience, but your support is essential.

Tom



Left: The best "surfin Safari" at the POCI National Convention in Uncasville, CT.

This Safari looks like it would be a lot of fun to drive!

Look closely! It has perfectly worn paint, the coolest decals, custom pinstriping, a spotlight, window shades, nine passenger capacity and best of all, a surf board. This "standard" Safari looks ready to hit the beach and cruise main street, USA!

Annual Chapter Business Meeting Report

The Mohegan Sun Resort in Uncasville, CT was a great place for Safarians to gather for our Annual Chapter meeting. Our Vice President Rich Pye and Editor, Tom Young were unable to attend the Convention. But we were in good hands with our Secretary/Treasurer, Robin Petry and President, Lou Calasibetta, (pictured right). With a meeting agenda in hand, they reported on all our Chapter's essential business. Without their leadership, we would not have one of the best world-wide chapters of the POCI.

Here is Robin's report:

July 14, 2021: Custom Safari Chapter Meeting Minutes, Uncasville, CT.



15 Members in attendance: Lou Calasibetta, Mark Petry, Robin Petry, Lee Hadley, Ruth Hadley, Carl Loftis, Jack White, Jill White, Starr Evans, Henry Hart, Andrea Cook, Bill Walkinshaw, Carol Walkinshaw, Wheeler Bradley, Kathleen Bradley.

7 Guests in attendance: Dana Thomas, Sue Petry, Karl Petry, Don Lemay, Ralph Keller, Ron Maurer, Ron Scott.

President, Lou Calasibetta, called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm. He welcomed everyone members and guests introduce themselves. He recognized members who have died over the last year: Aspen Pittman, Richard Nemechek and Barry Zalesky.

Meeting Minutes: 2019 chapter minutes were published in the Summer 2019 newsletter. Starr Evans made a motion seconded by Carl Loftis to approve as published. Motion passed with no votes against. There was no 2020 Chapter meeting since the convention was held virtually. 2021 Chapter meeting minutes will be published in the 2021 Summer newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Robin Petry submitted the following treasurer's report: 4/16/20 starting balance was \$2,191.65. Income \$2,131.09 (Dues = \$1,914.80, T-shirts = \$216, Checking acct interest = 0.29). Expenses \$1,323.21 (3 newsletters and postage = \$1,225, Web Hosting Fee = \$77.21, Deposit error = \$21). Ending balance as of 7/14/21 = \$2,999.48.

Membership Report: Robin Petry reported the current roster as of 7/14/2021 is 101 dues paying members/families but 10 have not renewed for 2021. 10 new members joined since July 2020. Those not renewed have been sent reminders through text, email, and mail. If they have not renewed after the Spring Newsletter goes out, they will be removed from the roster. Of the current 101 members/families, 10 are not POCI members = 10% of our membership are not POCI members.

Editor's Report: Robin reviewed Tom Young's editor report that was published in the electronic version of the Spring newsletter emailed before the convention. The hard copy will be mailed after the convention and will include 2 extra pages that could not be included electronically by Tom due to internet issues. He welcomed CSC member, Dennis Dana, to the newsletter publishing team and they will collaborate on articles. Since he will not be able to attend this year's POCI convention, he encourages all to submit pictures and details of events.

Old Business:

PayPal: Robin reported that it was offered as an option for paying for dues and t-shirts. Overall, it went well. 16 people used it to renew dues or pay for club t-shirts = 16% of members. 5 had fees deducted but that only came to \$4.87 and Robin felt this was reasonable to be able to offer this convenient option to members.

Facebook: Tom Young has been managing our Facebook page. He reports that it has doubled in size since the last report and is now at 220 members. Due to Facebook changing guidelines that anyone can join a public group without permission, he is changing the status to private so members must request to join and assure they have a sincere interest in Safari wagons.

T-shirts: We still have an adequate stock. Robin will talk to Tom about offering to those on our Facebook. For those who purchase at this convention, the \$4.50 shipping fee is waived.

New Business:

Group emails from Robin Petry: Robin reviewed that when a member wants to share information or ask a question of members, she can send out a group email. It will look like it is only sent to her but that is because all members are blind copied to avoid regularly displaying members email addresses and channeling replies to just her or the person needing information.

2022 officers: Lou Calasibetta is willing to serve another year as president, Tom Young is willing to serve another year as the newsletter editor and Facebook manager, Rich Pye is willing to continue to serve as vice-president and webmaster, Robin Petry is willing to continue to serve as treasurer/secretary. If other members are interested in those roles, they can self-nominate and contact any of the current officers.

Questions/Discussion: The club newsletter printing and postage is the main chapter expense. Starr Evans opened discussion among the group and following options considered: 1. See if there were members who would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically versus in print. Many members like the hard copies and collect them but some may prefer just electronic. 2. Continue color printing for all pages, keep the front and back pages of the newsletter in the thicker, glossy paper but change the inside to normal weight paper. 3. Consider different dues structure for choice of receiving electronic versus hard copy newsletters. After group discussion, a motion was made by Starr Evans and seconded by Carl Loftis to have Robin Petry survey members to see if there are members who want to receive the newsletter only by electronic means. For now, no change in the newsletter paper or club dues' structure.

Best Safari Award and Long-Distance Award: Chapter members to meet at the Custom Safari popular vote area at 11am on Thursday, July 15th to vote for the best Safari among chapter members and present the Best Safari plaque to that member and award the member that drove their Safari to the convention the farthest distance with complimentary dues for 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 2:54pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Petry

Custom Safari Chapter Secretary/Treasurer

Right: Safarians who attended our meeting.

The sprawling grounds of the Mohegan Sun Resort provided motivation for some members to rent electric scooters. You can see one parked against the wall.

These prized transportation warriors provided much relief for those who preferred not to walk seemingly miles of hallways and pathways of the resort grounds.

Some members reported losing weight because of unexpected long walks!



TOO HOT AT THE CONVENTION?

For everyone who has attended a Pontiac-Oakland Club National Convention, you all know that weather can be one of the most important factors that impact our comfort and health. Since most of our Chapter members are over 50 years of age, many of us, whether we admit to the fact or not, are significantly impacted by hot and humid weather. Our bodies are challenged as we spend time outdoors. Sometimes, our health can be at risk.

The last two conventions have been hard on us. We have sweated, become dehydrated, and watch our beautiful cars in open show fields reach interior temperatures hot enough to fry an egg! Most everyone will agree that temperatures in our Country have increased. Summers are hotter and longer lasting. Now, add the fact that we are not getting any younger, many members are beginning to rethink about driving their factory original, non-air-conditioned car to conventions. Some simply have growing health limitations that hold them back from long travel. In essence, many of us are getting too old to enjoy our national conventions that traditionally have been held during the middle of the summer season.

So, why do we continue to hold national conventions in the middle of the summer? That is a million-dollar question!

Once upon a time, many decades ago, during the early years of the POCI, much of the membership was under 40 years old. Many folks were raising families. Schools followed a traditional calendar which started in early September and ended in early June. The weather was generally much cooler than now and with our abounding youth, warm summer season temperatures were not much of an issue.

Fast forward to today, our club officials have recognized the need to recruit the next younger generation of members to assume the benefits of our club including ownership of Pontiacs and managing the club's future direction. But at this point, most of our convention attendees have grey hair, some have no hair! Although some recruitment success is evident, it is the grey hair folks who dominate our

conventions. With no kids to raise, or worry about school schedules, many members have talked about why we continue to have conventions during the heat of the summer season. Perhaps it is time for our leadership to take action so that we can meet during a cooler time of the year. May or early June seems ideal.

We all understand that our club is limited in their ability to pick dates and venues that are best suited for us. Costs, consumer demands on venues, support from local chapters, location rotation, venue features, and much more all factor into the decision-making process. It is a huge challenge to meet.

Please let us know your thoughts about the timing of our future national conventions. Should they remain the same or would you like to see the timing change from July to some other time? Your brief reply is greatly appreciated.

If we receive enough comments, we will send a letter to the POCI leadership to show our support for fostering change in convention date selection.

Send your comments to: Tom Young, Custom Safari Chapter Editor.

- Email: pontiactom1957@gmail.com
- Mail: 204 Acacia Road,
Newbury Park, CA 91320
- Facebook: Post a comment on our Custom Safari Chapter Facebook page.

Thank you for your consideration and comments.

National Convention Field Report



The scenery at this year's POCI National Convention was spectacular! A beautiful river, gentle rolling lush hills, and a gorgeous resort full of some great looking Pontiacs made a long-lasting impression to the group of Safarians who enjoyed all that the Convention had to offer.

Due to lingering impacts from COVID-19 and other personal matters, many Safarians remained at home. However, for those who attended, the experience was priceless.

Chapter members brought a total of 3 Safari wagons.



Bruce and Kathryn Deane - 1955 Pontiac Safari wagon.



Bradley & Kathleen Wheeler brought two 1957 Pontiac Star Chief Custom 2 dr wagons!

Convention Fun

Shortly after their arrival to the POCI Convention, Mark Petry and Lou Calasibetta "found" a beautifully restored 1955 Safari wagon in the parking lot. The owners were initially a mystery to them but soon they learned that the Safari belonged to our very own members, Bruce and Kathryn Deane. The Deane's completed all necessary details to make their Safari ready for everyone attending the Convention to enjoy. As Lou would say, "they knocked it out of the park" with their restoration work.

The look of a freshly restored Safari wagon is unbeatable! Just ask Lou. He could not help himself from touching the gorgeous Safari!



Carl Loftis and Robin Petry share a relaxed moment at Carl's parts vending display. Carl had plenty of spare parts awaiting a new owner.



Andrea Cook proudly stands next to our Chapter display. Thank you Robin for your great work in creating our display. Note that our Chapter trophy is back.



Ames Performance Engineering continued their long-time tradition of providing club members with over-the-counter parts for their Pontiacs. Note the wire wheel covers in the foreground. Possibly 1955-56?



Chapter member Mark Petry

Those folks who are experienced with POCI National Conventions know that the gathering of members from around our Country is not limited to looking and talking about Pontiacs. It's about seeing the local area sites and experiencing unique local cultures. No doubt many of our Chapter members took advantage of the activities planned by the POCI. One of the most favorite adventures was a boat tour of the beautiful Connecticut coastline. Dozens of lighthouses were spotted along the tour.



The POCI Convention team brought in some famous cars to the convention for everyone to enjoy.

Hey, hey with the Monkees! The Monkees TV series custom Pontiac, created by George Barris, was on display at the convention.

The Pontiac powered "Red Baron" was nearby. This car was available as a model kit by Revell in hobby and department stores.



John Deloran's famous 1964 Pontiac Banshee was on display.

All photos taken by Robin Petry.



The styling of the first year of the Star Chief Custom Safari 2 door wagon is truly a classic. Sporty, trendy and one of the most unique wagons on the road. The Deane's Safari is stunning and drew a lot of attention from on-lookers wherever it was parked.

The Wheeler Collection



Kathleen and Bradley Wheeler brought three 1957 Pontiacs to the Convention. Wow! A friend helped them drive their beautiful Pontiacs from home to the Convention. The hardtop is Kathleen's car. Bradley maintains the family fleet of '57 Safari wagons which includes a '57 Safari in Limefire & Seacrest green that is currently being restored.



This Safari has been in the Wheeler family for well over 4 decades. This is a special Safari wagon that was restored by father and son.

The Best Safari Voted by Members



On Friday, July 15th, Chapter Safarians gathered during the POCI National Convention Popular Vote show in Uncasville, Connecticut. They met at the 1955 to 1958 stock Safari wagon class area to conduct the Chapter's annual member vote for the BEST SAFARI of the show. Each dues-paying member voted for their most favorite Safari wagon. They chose between the Deane's '55 Safari and the Wheeler's two '57 Safari wagons. Congratulations to the Bruce & Kathryn Deane! Their Safari received the most votes per Safari. They will receive a one-year of free membership for 2022. The Wheeler's Safari wagons are very popular too. Combined, they received more votes. Everyone's wagons are winners! Thank you for sharing your wagons with us.



Above: Past long-time Chapter member Eric Foehr (left) is speaking with Bruce and Kathryn. Eric's visit with our Chapter members was appreciated. We are all glad to know that he is well and still loves Safari wagons.

Left: Another photo showing Lou presenting the Best Safari Chapter award to Bruce & Kathryn.

Convention Show Results

We Have Some Winners!

Conventions are not only about showing cars, but they are also a platform to gather, share common interest, create, or maintain friendships, and simply to enjoy life by having some fun. But when it comes to the final days of any convention, automobiles dominate everyone's attention. Countless hours of work, significant financial costs, and good decision making all come together so that everyone can enjoy viewing some of the best Pontiacs in our Country.

Chapter members never fail to deliver some great Safari wagons to enjoy. Congratulations to Bruce & Kathryn Deane, along with Bradley and his mother, Kathleen (pictured right), for taking home a handful of awards during the Convention Awards dinner show. There is nothing better than sharing a tasty dinner with friends followed by special recognition from fellow club members.



Left: Bruce & Kathryn took home the *Most Outstanding in Class, 1955-58 Custom Safari* award for their 1955 Safari.

Right: Chapter members Noel & Starr Evans broke tradition by bringing a non-Safari to the Convention. Their 1929 Oakland not only took *Best of Class*, but they also took home the coveted *Best of Show, 1909-58 Award*. Wow!



Happy Birthday Custom Safari Chapter!

During the Convention Chapter Appreciation dinner, we received recognition from the POCI for the many years of our existence.

It was about 45 years ago that our founder, Steve Cory, and others formed our Chapter. Technically, our Chapter took a break from about 1987 to 1993. So, we have about 39 active years under our belt.

Newsletter recognition awards were given at the Awards Dinner too but our Chapter did not receive attention for our past accomplishments.



In The News

Mystery Safari Spotted

Chapter member Randy Kerdoon reports..... *Look what popped into the latest episode of comedian, Kevin Hart's show on the MotorTrend app! That blue '57 Safari look familiar? It was caught on film at the "Timeless Kustoms" shop in Camarillo, CA.*



Look for Season 1, Episode 7, "No F's to Give." Aired August 12, 2021 on the MotorTrend app and available from MotorTrend's On-Demand website. Kevin Hart's Muscle Car Crew is a fresh series that combines comedy with muscle car ownership to a new level of entertainment.

A Flash From The Past.....

Early POCI member Len Sokol recently wrote: *I just looked at the Winter issue online, another great piece of work! I know it's a bit after the fact, but with all that info on Keith Anderson's '55 I thought I'd send this picture along. Too late to use in Safari News, unless you feel like adding it next time. Otherwise, you might want to pass it along to the Dickey's if you think they'd be interested. It's from the 1980 Convention at Gettysburg, and this was the day of the Safari Chapter meet. Keith won the 1st place '55 Safari award.*

Dan & Carla Dickey have received this early photo of their Safari wagon. The Safari continues to link members of the past with the present.



Early POCI member **Keith Anderson** with his '55 Safari at the 1980 POCI National Convention in Gettysburg, PA.

Auction Report

Results from Mecum's January 2021 auction in Kissimmee, FL:

\$55,000

HIGH BID



LOT G137 – KISSIMMEE 2021
1956 Pontiac Safari Wagon
350/355 HP, Automatic

\$121,000



LOT S43 – KISSIMMEE 2021
1956 Pontiac Star Chief Safari Wagon
LS1, Automatic

\$79,750



LOT T166 – KISSIMMEE 2021
1957 Pontiac Star Chief Safari Wagon
Automatic, Factory Air

Brian Bettinger's Memorial

Custom Safari Chapter member Luke Miller posted of Facebook that on October 3, 2021, he went to Brian Bettinger's memorial party in Marshfield, Wisconsin. Many friends and acquaintances were there to help his family celebrate Brian's life.

Brian passed away in early December of 2020.



Luke Miller's '56 Safari joined Brian's '56 at the memorial.

Auction Report

Len Sokol reports that a 1956 Pontiac Safari is an early consignment for Mecum's Kissimmee - January 2022 auction. Lot R592.

The seller states that this Safari is previously owned by Bob Shane of the Kingston Trio.



Passing Of Another Long-Time Safarian

We extend our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Chapter member **Barry Zalesky** of Boynton Beach, Florida. He passed in May of this year. Barry was a long-time POCI and Custom Safari Chapter member. He is best remembered for his big, friendly smile and passion for mid 50s Pontiacs. Barry restored a beautiful 1955 Safari wagon.

We do not have much about life story, but we can tell you that he loved his family and that he passed away after a long battle with cancer.

In early spring, Barry said that he was putting his life affairs into order which included selling his '55 Safari before his passing. He sold his Safari to another POCI member. We will miss Barry.



The last Chapter photo of Barry with his 1955 Pontiac Safari.



Right: In June of 2019, Barry traveled from Florida to California. Chapter members throughout the state open their doors for his visit. Everyone gathered at the world-class *Nethercutt Museum* for a tour with Barry. He quickly became overwhelmed by the vast collection of the Nethercutt family. Barry was also introduced to the locally famous *Bear-Pit BBQ* restaurant which is known for tasty food and a friendly atmosphere.

Barry attended one last POCI National Convention during the summer of 2019. He flew out to Gettysburg and spent a wonderful week meeting with old friends while making new ones too. Since he did not bring his '55 Safari or have a rental car, Barry found that he could get rides in some great Pontiacs to club events.

Left: Barry's headstone design shows his beloved '55 Safari wagon.

Rest in peace Barry.



Above: Barry hitches a ride in a '57 Pontiac Chieftain coupe during the Chapter lunch cruise in Gettysburg, PA, July, 2019.

Social Media Report

So, what's happening on our Facebook page? Well, members saw some cool posts about our Chapter at the POCI National Convention or Wounded Warrior car show. As usual, members enjoyed a wide variety of posts including cars & parts for sale, discoveries at car shows, restoration tips, and cool pictures.

Our Facebook page is now private meaning that nobody can openly join or see our site without permission. Facebook recently made a significant change allowing anybody to join a public group. Their policy opened the door to allow people who may not share our same interest or could disrupt our group. Changing our group to a private, *approval only status*, allows us to maintain a more focused group. Our private group status has not impacted membership growth. We have grown about 15% since July and we are likely to see our membership reach well over 300 by the end of this year!

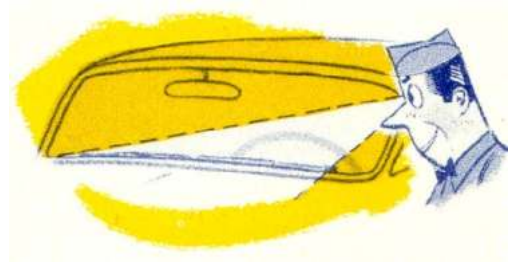


Some of the most favorite posts on our Chapter Facebook page are pictures of our members at car shows. Our Convention and Wounded Warrior shows offer plenty of photo opportunities and stories to be shared.

EXPERIENCE WANTED!

That's right folks! Your experience with your Safari wagons is valuable and with some help from your editor, we can share your knowledge with others. I am looking for help in any of the following areas:

- Disk brake conversion (especially 14 inch rim fit).
- Generator to alternator conversion.
- Fuel systems replacements, EPI, Edelbrock carbs, etc.
- Replacement rims, modern name brands and sizes.
- Experience with radial tires on stock 14 & 15 inch rims (use of American bia ply looking tire).
- Best modern engine & transmission replacements.
- Sub-frame & suspension modifications.
- Chrome plating tips & services.
- Stock fuel pump rebuilding services.
- Stock carburetor rebuilding tips & services.
- Stock radio rebuilding tips & services.



Your editor, Tom Young, is looking for almost anything that might help for the development of future tips and restoration articles. He has just over 40 years of experience but he certainly does not “know it all.” But with some collaboration, we can get some good information to others who could use it either now or in the future.

If you can help, please give Tom a call, mail, email or send a personal message through Facebook.

The best way to contact Tom is by email at: pontiactom1957@gmail.com Thank you for your help.

Photos of Safari Wagons Wanted

Whether you are hauling a Safari or come across one at a show, parking lot or wrecking yard, remember to take a few pictures, and send them to your newsletter editor for publication. Mention a few details too.

Send your photos to your editor, Tom Young, at pontiactom1957@gmail.com

Your contributions are always appreciated.



The Wounded Warrior Car Show Report

It was another picture perfect sunny August day in Redondo Beach, CA during the 14th annual Wounded Warrior car show. A cool ocean breeze, a great raffle, and a super gathering of automobiles made this one of the best shows in Southern California. No wonder why Safarians choose to gather at this show every year!

This year, seven Safari wagons attended the show. Ten were scheduled but a broken dishwasher demanded the attention one Safarian while another Safari was in repairs. Many more members without wagons also attended the show.

Every year, car show participants vote for the 10 Best Cars of the show. This year, Floyd & Carolyn's Huffman's '57 Safari wagon took home a clear plexiglass trophy. (see photo right and look real close). Well desired, but hard to see!



Just after the show ended, Safarians gathered their Safari wagons for a photo opportunity. Missing is Mike Gomez's Kenya Ivory & Cordova Red '57 Safari.



Safarians, from left to right: Bill Baquet, Marvin Morton, Randy Kerdoon, Carolyn Huffman, Mike Green, Danny Arant, Mike Gomez, Jack Johnson & Cathy Lanigan, Rick Diehm, Cindy & Bob Garacochea. Missing from this photo are Floyd Huffman & Tom Young, (photographer).

Honors for the Long Distance traveled this year goes to Jack Johnson who brought his 1955 Safari wagon all the way from Tucson, AZ. Jack would have seen some competition from our Chapter's former president, Robin Clark, from Virgin, UT but Robin's '57 Safari has a transmission issue that prevented long road trips. Besides, his Safari is so rusty that it would leave a trail of rust on the highway for hundreds of miles! He already has a clear view of the ground from the driver's seat. Very rusty floors!

We missed Pam and Rich Gabrielson of Hornbrook, CA. They contracted Covid-19 before the show. Rich had planned to drive his restored 1955 Safari wagon on a 10-hour drive to Southern California. Thankfully, Rich & Pam are now well.

For those who are interested to attend this gathering next year, but do not live within commute distance of Redondo Beach, CA., here are tips for you. If you want to fly-in, LA Int'l Airport is about 15 mins away! Hotels are nearby. Some members might be able offer a secure place to park your Safari overnight. And bring extra cash to help out with raffle. The prizes are excellent and the money will truly help veterans.



Above: Former Chapter President, Robin Clark.

Center Above: Bob Garacochea proudly displays his Chapter t-shirt.

Center: Mike Green & his '57 Safari.

Below Left: Bob G, Randy Kerdoon & Bill Baquet at the Chapter's pop-up "club house".



Above: Jack Johnson, Cathy Lanigan & Mike Gomez

Below Center: Danny Arant with his '57 Safari sporting a fresh engine make-over and hood springs that work!

Below Left: Marvin Morton with his very original '57 Safari.



1955 Pontiac Safari— Another One Saved!

A new member shares a story about getting his 1956 Safari back on the road.

By John Kennedy

Back around the mid 70s, my '56 Safari was owned by a friend of my older brother. He often took it to the Baylands Raceway in Fremont, California. Wednesday night grudge races let you race against other amateur racers. During one of those races, my brother's friend blew up the 389 c.i. motor so, he offered the car to me for \$650. When I told my father about the car his ears perked up and he said, "let's go take a look at it."



John's Safari was sitting for over 20 years before the rejuvenation process.



When he saw that it's a Safari, he told me to buy it. After getting the car home, we started looking in swap meets for a motor replacement. After 3 months, we found a 389 with 3 deuces and a correct hydramatic built by B&M for \$750. We replaced all fluids, belts, hoses, spark plugs & wire's, and she roared back to life. The motor had 12.5-1 pistons with a Crane cam. It ran really well. The interior had two bucket seats and shag carpeting, perfect for a teenager. The car also had American aluminum slot mag wheels.

I had a lot of fun driving my Safari but after 6 years of driving, she was parked after I suffered from a seizure. My driving days we're put on hold.

Thankfully, my epilepsy got under control with time and medication. My old girl waited patiently while I recovered.

She is a pretty straight car and never been in a accident as far as I can tell.

I recently decided that it was time to give her some well deserved love so I started to get her back on the road.

(Continued, next page).





I have pulled the motor, transmission and front clip off to clean as much of the frame as possible without pulling the body off the frame.

The front suspension is my first project. My plan is to paint the firewall and frame after replacing some worn parts. So far, I've replaced the king pins and put on a disc brake conversion. The motor is going to be rebuilt with the compression ratio down to 9.5 to 1, and a stroker kit from Butler Performance to up the size to 461c.i. I am also thinking of a newer trans with overdrive, probably a 700r4.

My plan is to change the paint from the original salmon color & white to a blue & white two tone combination.



Editor's Note: John is looking for tips on how to best set the front-end alignment from any member who has experience with suspension systems. You can contact John at: johnkennedy896@gmail.com.

We look forward for more reports about John's project Safari. If you would like to share a story about your Safari, please contact Tom Young at: pontiactom1957@gmail.com Thank you!



Technical Tip #12



Above image taken from the November, 1956 issue of the Pontiac Service Craftsman News.

If you maintain a factory air cleaner on your 1955-57 Safari wagon, you are familiar with the oil bath system that cleans incoming air. The design works well. However, the filter does require constant maintenance. The oil must be changed when it becomes dirty and the wire mesh filter assembly has to receive a good cleaning which can be a bit awkward and time consuming.

Not along ago, Curtis French, was restoring his father's 1957 Chieftain 2 dr hardtop when he came across the idea of updating the air cleaner with a modern fiber filter element. After hours of time in a local California parts store, he found the perfect fit, a fiber filter that requires no modification to fit 1956-57 Pontiac oil bath air cleaners.

The bottom line..... If you want to eliminate the use of oil in a factory air filter assembly, consider use of a modern fiber air filter.

The fiber filter that Curtis found is from the highly rated NAPA GOLD line of filters. It usually costs less than \$40 and may be in stock at large Napa Auto Parts stores.



Factory wire mesh filter



NAPA Gold fiber filter

Use of the fiber filter requires no modifications to the air filter housing or carburetor mounted stud. The fiber filter will seal against the top of the air filter assembly once the top is firmly in place.

Although changes in engine performance are unconfirmed, one test using a vacuum meter showed approximately a 2% to 3% increase in engine vacuum at idle with the fiber filter vs the factory wire mesh. The engine used has a burnt valve and rebuilt carburetor.

Quick Reference: **1956-57 Pontiac Air Filter Modification**

Where to buy: NAPA auto parts stores, country-wide.

Parts Number: **6255** Most large stores will have it in-stock. (Other manufactures may offer a similar size filter)

Estimate Cost: From about \$32 to \$38 new, (tax not included).

How to apply: Simply remove the oil and mess filter from the air cleaner. The new filter will self center.



CARS FOR SALE

Safari wagons listed come from various media resources. Owners may not be Chapter members. Please take the time to thoroughly check the seller and wagon before making an offer.

Chapter Member Brian Bettinger's 1956 Safari Is For Sale.

Brian's family is hoping that someone will become the next steward of his well traveled 1956 Safari wagon. His car was maintained for many years by a reputable shop.

If anyone is looking for a driver quality Safari that is ready for the road, give Brian's Safari some consideration.



1956 Pontiac Safari Wagon. The odometer reads 23901 but the title states exempt so the mileage is not confirmed. This Safari comes with many spare small parts. The exterior shows like it is all original patina. The interior does need some work. It has a 316.6 V8 engine with an automatic transmission, Power steering, Power Brakes, AM radio with a FM converter, and it is an A/C car. But the A/C is not complete. There has been a lot of work done in the past. The engine and transmission have been rebuilt about 5 years ago, the rear pinion seal has been replaced, all new updated wiring from the dash forward, brakes have been all redone in the last 5 years, a new heater cores were installed along with new carpet and the lights have been all upgraded to LEDs. The floor was completely resealed while the carpet was out. The vehicle has all new hoses, and the radiator has been recently re-cored. The starter was replaced, and the generator has been rebuilt. When the engine was rebuilt the exhaust seats were changed to harden seats and the engine is 30 over with a 20/20 crankshaft, new valves, and an updated camshaft. The tires have 8/32-inch tread. The speedometer was rebuilt, the ignition system has been upgraded to electronic (Petronix), the wipers were upgraded to electric, the carburetor has been recently rebuilt, and the gas tank has been flushed, an electrical fuel pump has been installed, new shocks all the way around, an aftermarket transmission cooler, new exhaust with Smithy's mufflers, and aftermarket cruise control. It comes with a lot of shop manuals and the original purchase contract. This vehicle is set up to drive. The rear hatch hinges could use some work and the hatch is very difficult to close. The steering box leaks more when on jack stands. The family is asking **\$43,995.00 OBO**. We are told only 4,042 of these cars were produced in a three span from 1955-1957. This car was purchased by the family in 1983 out of Oklahoma. This is a great driver that made the trip from central Wisconsin to Minneapolis the past several years for Back to the Fifties auto show. Along with several other long trips including Omro, and Fon Du Lac. We have a third-party appraisal stating the car is worth \$42,000.00. A lot of paperwork and receipts come with the car. There is also the possibility of some memorabilia to be included. Please call **715-384-8507** and ask for **Travis** or **715-305-5654** after 5pm or on weekends.

CARS FOR SALE

Safari wagons listed come from various media resources. Owners may not be Chapter members. Please take the time to thoroughly check the seller and wagon before making an offer.

1957 Pontiac Star Chief Safari Custom 2 door wagon.

This is an outstanding show winning Safari wagon. #470 of approx. 1,292 made. Outstanding running condition with just over 300 miles since older restoration. This Safari is generously equipped with numerous factory options including original air conditioning, Tri-Power carburetion, power steering, power brakes, power windows, six-way adjustable front seat, radio, lighted fender ornaments, spinner wheel covers, and a leather interior. It is an AACA Senior Grand National Trophy winner. I also showed it at 2019 Hilton Head Concours where it won a Corporate Award.

The car belonged to the well known "Dr. Eddie Daurer" collection in south FL. He is a surgeon, college professor and major collector of high quality automobiles.

Factory memorabilia included. Car has been driven sparingly since restoration and kept in a climate-controlled environment by the current collector since acquisition. Rides and drives nicely. \$115,000. More photos are available. Contact **Tom Wheeley** at twheeley@hotmail.com FL (non-CSC member)



The factory custom cargo deck trim and back of the front seat ash trays are complete in this high quality restoration. Under the hood, this Safari is fully loaded with just about every option possible.

CARS FOR SALE

Safari wagons listed come from various media resources. Owners may not be Chapter members. Please take the time to thoroughly check the seller and wagon before making an offer.



1956 Pontiac Safari \$59,000. My '56 is FRAME-OFF restoration. It's an AACA first and second place Grand National award winner too. Power steering, power brake, 389, automatic trans, front & rear bumper guards, fender skirts, factory spot light. Frame stripped & painted perfectly. All new or rebuilt suspension. I've really spent a lot of time and money so, I want it to go to someone else that really appreciates this Safari. Call **Don 256-520-6183**. Located in **Huntsville, Alabama**. (CSC member)



1957 Pontiac Safari. Open to offers. This is Carl Loftis' Safari that he has owned since the '90s. This is a "drive-anywhere" Safari that is modified and ready for road trips & car shows.

1957 Star Chief Custom Safari 2 door wagon. Body #117, Custom paint and interior. Chrome redone. Stainless straight & polished. Rebuilt 428 with automatic trans, updated dual master cylinder brakes and cooling systems. Dual exhaust out the rear bumper ports. New AC tied to factory AC dash ports. Tinted windows. Deluxe windshield washer. Electric wipers. New wire harness. Driven about 7k since complete rebuild and custom work. **Carl Loftis (231) 690-0429 (EST)** (CSC member) Photos taken at the 2018 POCI Nat'l Convention in Wisconsin Dells, WI.



1955 Pontiac Safari. \$6,500 Body #1469 PS, PB, factory AC, electric rear antenna, rear bumper guards, under hood light. Cowl tag code: ACC BGIKN. Have trim, interior and chrome parts. No title. Bill of sale only. For information and more photos, contact: **John Hartman** 661-301-6944 or hartman.bustersan.john@gmail.com *Editor's Note: This car is in Bakersfield (CSC member)*

CARS FOR SALE

Safari wagons listed come from various media resources. Owners may not be Chapter members. Please take the time to thoroughly check the seller and wagon before making an offer.



1957 Pontiac Star Chief Custom Safari "Transcontinental" 4 dr wagon. \$59,900. This particular example underwent a frame-up restoration in the 1990s and was a feature at the 1957 Heaven Museum. The entire '57 Heaven Museum was sold by Mecum in 2009 and was sold at "no reserve" for 80k. **Classic Car Studio. 314 567 4200 St. Louis, MO** Info@classiccarstudio.com



1957 Pontiac Safari. \$95,000 Negotiable. Body #992. Fontaine Blue & Kenya Ivory. 347 V8, auto trans, PS, PB, Tri-Power, & factory AC. Frame off, nut & bolt restoration. Museum quality (in my opinion a 9 out of 10). Have pictures of all phases of restoration. All factory NOS parts were used. Also have all factory dealer option books. Very well documented from start to finish. Your inspection or any independent inspections are welcome. Any questions please ask, I'll be happy to answer any and all that you have. This Safari is ready to roll down the road or win a trophy at car shows. For more details, contact the new owner **Allen 512-905-3038**. If no answer please leave a brief message along with a phone # and best time to call. Car is located in **Thorndale, Texas**. *Editor's Note: This Safari was a long and steady restoration by two well-known Pontiac enthusiast and brothers (John and Paul Bonoyer) who are who have now entrusted the safe keeping of their prized possession to a long-time friend. This is an opportunity to buy one of the best. (CSC member)*



1957 Custom Safari 2 dr wagon. This silver Safari is offered at 13K. Most parts included with this car. A good car to restore or custom build. Clear CA title. Located in Southern California.

Contact **Rich** at (714) 245-9800 PST or rich@pontiacparts.net (CSC long-time member)



BEST RETAILER BUYS

1955-57 Pontiac front brake shoes: Soft, heat resistant. Will conform to your drum. Source: The AUTOZONE store. Duralast Part # 192. Last retail list \$24.99 for front set. www.autozone.com

Please note that prices and availability are subject to change. Verify prices before ordering.

PARTS FOR SALE

1955 Pontiac Chieftain Star Chief Day/Night Rear View Mirror w/ flip tab , C984914R : Fits 1955 to 1957 Safari wagon.

\$38.50 plus 10.05 shipping.

This mirror is Rectangular w/ round corners 8 3/4" wide x 2 3/8" high, "Guide"

Contact California Pontiac Restoration (CPR). 714 245-9800 PST CA

www.pontiacparts.net



Editor's Note: This mirror was commonly seen new from the factory on 1955 & some 56 & 57 Safari wagons.

1957 Pontiac Fender Skirts. NORS in the original box.



Instructions included. Missing mounting hardware \$350.00 plus shipping. **Ed Vassar**, Dunnigan, CA **707 246-4426**

1955-57 tailgate letter "O". Good used condition. Has both studs. A good replacement for a nice driver quality car. \$16.00 includes shipping. **Tom Young**, Newbury Park, CA pontiactom@ix.netcom.com

WANTED

1955 Safari: Looking for the 2 interior L & R upper quarter window trim pieces (long chrome pieces), both L & R door belt trim pieces (on top on the door) and the LH rear wheel trim. Contact **Rick Diehm**. email: rdiehm@twc.com

1955 Safari: Looking for the factory measurements of the cargo deck , spare tire and back seat wood panels. Patterns of the back seat and spare tire panels (with the 3 holes) are especially appreciated. **John Hartman** 661-301-6944 (PST), or email at: hartman.bustersan.john@gmail.com

1955-57 Front Seat Custom Safari 2 dr wagon Ash Trays:



Yes! You are looking at tears on the back side of my 57 Safari front seat!! Can you guess why the holes are there? I need ash trays assemblies! Please help me!! **Randy Kerdoon** talkingaboutcars@gmail.com

1956 Pontiac 2 dr Custom Safari wagon: Need all skid strips & 5/8x1/2 perimeter spare tire cover strips. Also seeking other cargo floor strips. What have you? **Dennis Dana** 91601, 1200 Prison Rd. LCC, Lovelock, NV 89419 mister56safari@yahoo.com

1957 Pontiac 2 dr Safari wagon: Looking for the painted cargo deck metal trim moldings in restorable condition. I need all of them. Also looking for the spare tire cover "cups" and finger pull. Call **Allen** at **512 905-3038**, or email at aj68torino@gmail.com

1957 Pontiac: Looking for a 1957 or a 1958 wagon. 2 or 4 door. Complete as possible or mostly. Original with the drive train. Does run or will run. Not a show car but a light project. I have no place for a car in pieces. Or what do you have? Any help will be greatly appreciated. Call **John** at **417-894-5699**, or email at hotrod34pontiac@gmail.com

1957 Pontiac: Light green plastic ivory steering wheel in useable condition for a Limefire & Seacrest Green Safari. **Jay Ward**. jward@pixar.com

1957 Pontiac: Looking for a pair of nice looking front fender "rockets". They don't have to fly into orbit, just sit on my old '57 Safari wagon and look good. If you have a pair, call **John** in OH. **740 296-9638**. No emails, and my phone hardly ever works so keep trying. Thank you.

1957 Pontiac: Wanted for '57 custom 2 door Safari, rear rubber floor covering in any color, also mint seat stars. Call **George Weaver** at **717 354 5280**, or email at fun57@comcast.net

TO PLACE AN AD: Looking to sell parts or a car? Send your request to Tom Young at pontiactom1957@gmail.com. Your ad should be related to '55 to '58 Pontiacs and include photos when possible.

POCI Chapter #10

www.customsafari.org

The Custom Safari Chapter is an official international specialty chapter of the Pontiac Oakland Club, International, Incorporated. We are dedicated to the limited production 1955 through 1958 Pontiac Custom Safari wagons. The POCI headquarters address is P.O. Box 421, Long Lake, MN 55356, USA. Website: www.poci.org

Anyone with interest in Safari wagons can join. Annual dues are \$21.00. Check with our secretary/treasurer for international rates. Renewals are due January 1st of each year. New member dues are pro-rated quarterly from January 1st. Applicants are encouraged to maintain membership in the POCI. Send a check or PayPal payment to the Secretary/Treasurer, **Robin Petry**. Send PayPal on-line payments to: petrymail@yahoo.com

The *Safari News* is a quarterly publication produced by the Chapter. Volume 1, Number 1 was distributed in June, 1977. Distribution was reset as Volume 1, Number 1 in December, 1993. A limited number of back issues may be available. For additional information, contact the editor, Tom Young; 805 375-1320, or by email at pontiactom@ix.netcom.com

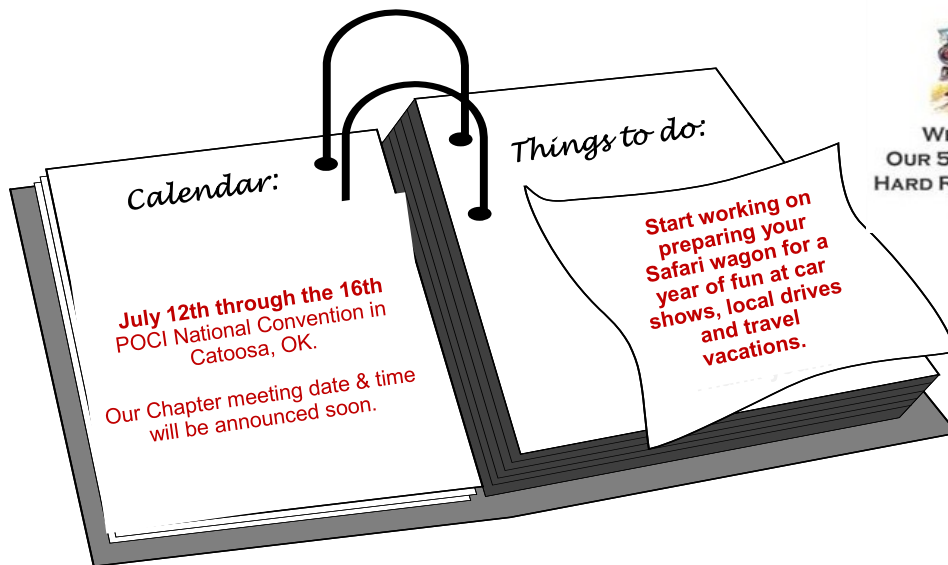
The Chapter website can be found at: www.customsafari.org Find us on Facebook: [Custom Safari Chapter](#)

President: Lou Calasibetta, Box 1957, Stillwater, NJ 07875..... (973) 383-2001
Vice President: Rich Pye, 436 LaDue Rd, Brockport, NY 14420 (585) 637-2720
Secretary/Treasurer: **Robin Petry, 2806 Scarlett Dr, Augusta, GA 30909.... (706) 736-3392**
Editor: Tom Young, 204 Acacia Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320 (805) 375-1320

Directors:

Eastern Region: Lou Calasibetta, Box 1957, Stillwater, NJ 078775
Central Region: Ronn Pittman, 1024 Raddant, Batavia, IL 60510
Western Region: Ed Vassar, PO Box 171, Dunnigan, CA 95937

TOPFLIGHT
Professional Digital Lab



WE INVITE YOU TO ATTEND
OUR 50TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
HARD ROCK HOTEL - CATOOSA, OK
JULY 12-16, 2022

In the next issue of the *SAFARI NEWS*...

Our *FALL* issue will include important information about the future of our Chapter.
Look for some new *Classified Ads* too.