

August 2019

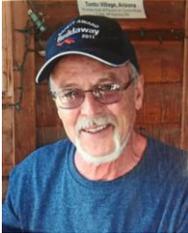
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Valley of the Goats/Express

Next joint Cactus GTO/Desert Renegades General Meeting Wednesday, Sept. 11 7:00 pm Denny's

Memorial services for Cactus GTO Club member Bob McBrayer



Bob passed away from complications related to pneumonia on June 30. A celebration of his life will be held at 12 noon on Saturday, August 17th at Greenwood Memory Lawn in the Serenity Chapel, 2300 W Van Buren, Phoenix, 85009. More info on Bob and his life is at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/phoenix-az/charles-mcbrayer>



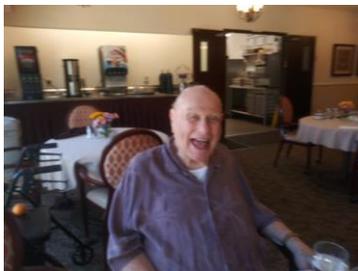
A visit with #1 GTO fan Jim Wangers

By Bill McCoy

Many of you know Jim Wangers or have heard about him from the early days of the Pontiac GTO. Jim was the advertising executive that marketed Pontiac during those “Glory Days.” By the way, that was the name of the book he wrote about his days working with John DeLorean and many others at Pontiac. Jim is also known as the “Godfather of the GTO.”

As I’m sure many of you know, Jim for over 30 years was a guaranteed speaker at just about every Pontiac major convention and car show. He was always good for a great story about the good old days. Many of his stories were told over and over but Jim always told them as if it was the first time he had told them. His style was so friendly and interesting that it never got tiresome. I must have heard his talks at least 25 times over the years.

Throughout the 1990s, the Southern California GTO club would have a western regional show over Labor Day weekend. Often times members of the Cactus GTO club would caravan over to the car show to hear Jim speak. We became good friends. He was always glad to see everyone he saw or met. He should have been a politician. In many ways he was for the GTO.



(left) Jim enjoying a day with Bill McCoy at the Silverado Memory Care facility in Escondido, Calif. (right) Wangers singing “Lil GTO” on his 90th birthday at the GTOAA Nationals in Bellevue, Wash.



About 10 or 12 years ago, our club flew him to Phoenix and rented a room at the Doubletree hotel near Sky Harbor so he could give his presentation about the history of Pontiac. We had over 50 people from our club and the Desert Renegades come to the meeting.

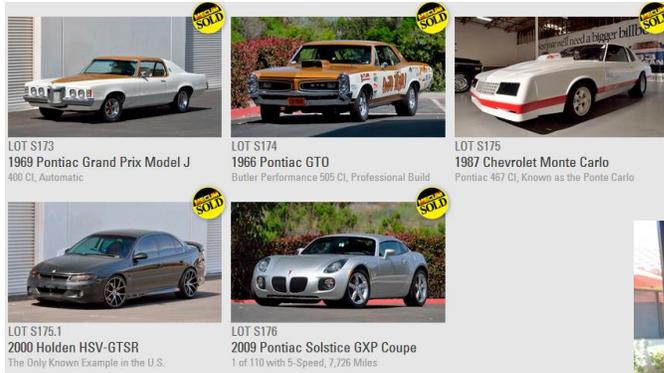
Steve Barcak had Jim over several times to speak and set up a table at his Pontiac Heaven events. Jim loves people and Pontiac people even more. He always enjoyed his visits to Arizona, especially to drag race his GEETO Tiger or his Ponte Carlo when he could.

Wanger's Muffins

I was in LA about a week ago and decided to drive down to visit Jim at the Silverado Memory Care facility in Escondido. Jim is 93 now. Thanks to Thom Sherwood from the Southern Arizona chapter of POCI, who visited Jim on his birthday, I was able to connect with the lady that coordinates Jim's care. I drove the two hours down from LA in the morning, arriving at 11:00 am at the appointed time. I signed in at the front desk and was told which room to find Jim. I found Jim's room, but it was empty. I asked the staff where he was. We found him - sitting at a table with about 15 other senior men and women. They

were being shown by one of the staff how to make corn muffins! Jim was at the other end of the table from the demonstration with his head down asleep!

I couldn't help thinking, "Jim I don't blame you"... after all what's one of the most brilliant auto promoters of all time



(above) Jim's caregivers sold most of his remaining automobile collection at a Mecum auction in Indianapolis earlier this year. The 2000 Holden HSV-GTSR is the only known one in the U.S.; the 2009 Solstice GXP Coupe was 1 of 110 with a 5-speed. Jim and Bill (right)



and the ultimate car guy supposed to do watching a demonstration on "How to make corn muffins"? I thought this might have been a big mistake driving 2 hours to see him and he's comatose. But then things started to look up in a big way as Jim was woken up by the staff. He raised his head and gave me the biggest smile as I told him I am Bill McCoy from the Cactus GTO Club in Phoenix. They took us to the dining room, and we had the room to ourselves for half an hour until lunch was served.

The last time I had spent time with Jim was 3 years ago at the GTOAA Nationals in Bellevue, Wash. He was signing his books and talking to people but at that time did not feel he was sharp enough to give his normal presentation, so we just talked for a while there.

This time, I had to keep bringing up topics from his past. He seemed to remember the things I brought up, but his comments were much shorter than in the past. I asked him about John DeLorean. He kind of took a deep breath and said, "He was really something."

I had to keep asking Jim questions. I asked if he had ever been invited to John's home for dinner. He said, "Oh sure, a few times." He said "John's first wife was a really sweet lady. She was really a nice person." I said I wish we could have found out what GM would have been like if John DeLorean could have made it to President of GM. Jim felt that John was a little too full of himself to be able to stay at GM. Jim said John was the most brilliant engineer there ever was, but he was also a real risk taker.

Birthday celebration in June

I asked Jim if he had seen many other Pontiac friends recently for his 93rd birthday. He said not too many. I found out later from Barbara, his care coordinator, that about 40 had been there to celebrate his birthday at the end of June. I guess he kind of forgot about that one. At 1:30 pm I told Jim I needed to drive back to Phoenix that afternoon. I could tell he was sad to see me go. But it was great to see him. I told him my father had passed away nine years ago, and that I kind of thought of him as my adopted father. After all, he is known as the "Godfather of the GTO"!

By the way for those that never liked his toupee...it's gone. But he's still the good old car guy we all managed to adopt as one of our best friends. If you are in the area, I'm sure he would love to see you. Silverado Escondido Memory Care Community, 1500 Borden Rd, Escondido, CA 92026
Phone: (760) 737-7900.

P.S. I promised I would get Jim the recently released movie, "Framing John DeLorean." The movie will be available on DVD October 1st. He said, "That would be nice."



Pontiacs In Pictures



We had a great turnout for the film showing of "**Framing John DeLorean**," starring Alec Baldwin. Very in-depth movie, with the director combining Baldwin's portrayal, original clips of DeLorean during the trial, and interviews with his two kids. Interesting note: he originally sought Chevy V8s from GM to power the DeLorean's but was turned down. Obviously, he had burned that bridge. He ended up with Renault power, which didn't do much for the car's performance.



He was working on DMC II in 2005 when he died of a heart attack at age 80. A DVD of the movie will be available Oct. 1.

"Watch 'ole Bandit run!" was the handle as black Trans-Ams and other muscle cars were on the road in June for the **2019 Bandit Run** that ran from Dallas, Texas to St. Louis, Mo. Cactus GTO and Desert Renegades club members Tom Knecht ('77 T/A), Paul Albinger, Jr. ('69 Firebird), Tim Blattner ('78 T/A), Mike Naegeli ('79 T/A), Brandon Kachel ('73 T/A), Sean Fowler ('79 T/A) and Marc Shutro ('78 T/A), ran their 'Birds on the Run.



Stops include Texas International Raceway and the Gas Monkey Garage (headquarters for the "Fast and Loud" series.



Car Show Alert

Cool off in Flagstaff on August 24 at Thunder over Flagstaff



Host - Route 66 Car Club and EAA Chapter #856

Event Location - Flagstaff Pulliam Airport, 6200 S Pulliam Dr.

Event Hours - 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Entry Fee - \$20.00 per vehicle; early registration closed

Charity Show and Shine in conjunction with air show. Car entry fee includes entry to air show and food truck festival. Awards and raffles for car show participants.

More info: dennyliz@cox.net; website: www.eachapter856.org/thunder

Thunder Over Flagstaff
Route 66 Car Club
Charity Show & Shine
August 24, 2019
Registration



Name: _____ Spouse/Guest: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ E-mail: _____

Club Affiliation (if any): _____

Year: _____ Make: _____ Model: _____ Color: _____

Special Features: _____

LIABILITY RELEASE

In consideration of the acceptance of the right to participate in the Thunder Over Flagstaff/Route 66 Car Club Charity Show & Shine, the participant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the EEA Chapter #856, Flagstaff Airport, Route 66 Car Club of Flagstaff, Coconino County, property owners, members, agents, volunteers and anyone else connected with the management or presentation of the Thunder Over Flagstaff/Route 66 Car Club of Flagstaff Charity Show & Shine event from and against all liability of the loss that the participants, guests or family members may sustain or incur as a result of claims, demands or judgments arising from the participants involvement in the Thunder Over Flagstaff/Route 66 Car Club of Flagstaff Charity Show & Shine event. I certify that my vehicle is properly licensed and insured to meet the legal requirement of liability. I also agree that images taken at the event of vehicles and people can be used in all media formats without compensation or restriction. *Selling of cars or parts during the event is prohibited.*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

IF UNDER 18, PARENT OR LEGALGUARDIAN _____

Event Will Take Place Rain or Shine!

Pre-Registration Must Be Sent By July 24, 2019!!!!

For More Information go to:

www.route66carclub.com

E-mail: route66mem@gmail.com

Or call: Richard Federico (480-206-4227)

Make Checks (\$20/Vehicle)

Payable to:

Route 66 Car Club

Box 30066

Flagstaff, AZ 86003

SORRY – NO REFUNDS



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AAHC Representative: Dan Huskisson

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