



WESTERN WASHINGTON FIREBIRDS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

July 2025

PRESIDENT: Jeff Driscoll (206-349-1282) Vice President: John Barceanas (206-948-2533)
Secretary/Treasurer: Neil Warren (740-816-6957)

Website: www.wwfirebirds.com Facebook: Western Washington Firebirds

Hello Fellow Firebird Enthusiasts,

Welcome to July 2025! I hope you all are having a good summer. The weather has been actually pretty nice so far. Not too hot and not too cool. Just perfect. Perfect to get out there and enjoy our Firebirds, whether at shows or cruises or weekly cruise-ins going on all over the area. 2025 has not been too good for me. I broke my foot and have been in a boot on my left foot since May 2nd. So I haven't been able to get out and enjoy my Firebird yet in 2025. But I am hoping that it will be changing by August. We usually try and schedule a big summer cruise in July, but this year it didn't pan out. So, for July we only have one club event scheduled. The Club Meeting on Saturday July 19th at the Burien Round Table Pizza at 5pm. Details later in this newsletter. There are lots of great events going on all over Western Washington in July, I kindly ask that if you go to any of these events, please take some pictures and post them on the club's Facebook page. Thank You. So I hope to see you at the meeting.

Happy 4th Of July Everyone! Stay Safe Out There!

July Club Event

July Club Meeting At The Burien Round Table Pizza at 5pm. Round Table Pizza is located at 15730 1st Av Burien WA. We will

discuss normal club news and concentrating on the All Pontiac Show & Shine coming up on Sunday August 17th at Griot's Garage in Tacoma. Neil has the pre-registration set up on the club's website at www.wwfirebirds.com, so please if you haven't registered yet please do so. I make life so much easier. And please spread the word about the show at all the car events you go to. And go ahead and download the flyer so you can post all over social media. And remember, if you have any raffle prizes to donate to the show, please contact Diane Tappero or Sarah Mills so you can meet up with them as they are in charge of raffles for the show. You also bring them to the club meeting. It's all of us who make this show such a fun and exciting event! I will also go over The Goodguys Northwest Nationals at the Puyallup Fair on the weekend of July 25th-27th. I know several members go almost every year and we can set up meeting times so we can all cruise in and park together. We also want to begin discussions on the club's events for the fall and Christmas season. We also have a really great event we would like to do next year, your input is greatly needed on this. So, there is a lot to go over. Come on out and enjoy good food and hang out with awesome people and discuss all things Firebird. Hope to see you all there!

What we did in June

June 1st was our 6th Annual Firebird & Camaro Show. We changed it up this year. Instead of the usual first week in September at Griot's Garage in Tacoma, to our new original location. The old XXX Drive-In in Issaquah. Only now with The Burgermaster taking the reigns and doing car events again. We all know June in the PNW is always a crap shoot weatherwise. June can be very cloudy and cool and wet. Not this year! The weather was perfect. Partly cloudy and around 70 degrees. And I guess folks missed that location because this was the biggest Firebird & Camaro Show we ever hosted! The cars started rolling in 3 hours early. And by 11am, we had 97 cars on the field! Total registered was 100. Everything just clicked. Burgermaster management was on hand to check us out and they were very happy. Everyone just had a blast and that burgermaster food was excellent. We were really their kickoff car event, and we did not disappoint. Great music, Beautiful Cars and awesome people made for a fantastic day for all who made it out. Check out the website and our Facebook page for pictures from the show. I want to thank everyone for pitching in during all phases on show day. Set up was quick, we had raffle taken care of and manned the whole show. And tear down was a breeze. I was broken footed and hobbled around as much as I could, but Johnny B was also broken footed as well. But Neil and Kathy Warren, Jim Paradiso, Brian Sargent and everyone who helped out THANK YOU! And Brian Sargent, thank you for letting us borrow your LP gas powered generator! We wouldn't have had power without it. Construction on the old XXX building caused the power outlet to no be on.

Saturday June 21st Club Cruise and BBQ To Celebrate The Clubs 35th Anniversary. We were supposed to have an awesome fun valley to valley cruise with this celebration, but June being June, it rained most all of the day. So we just turned it into the 35th Anniversary of Western Washington Firebirds BBQ and potluck meeting and gathering

at Mike & Diane Tappero's home along the Green River in Auburn. Attendance was great, considering the weather. Mike Flynn, Jim Powell Bill & Martha Young, Marvin & Vondra Zeller, Rod Richardson, Ken & Lori Fagan, John Barceanas, Jeff Kamberg, Aaron Potter, Brian Sargent, Mark & Dee Lunde, Karen & I, Jeff Tweeten, Wally Santella and our gracious hosts Mike & Diane & Sammy Tappero. I know there were a few more, but they didn't sign the attendance sheet. But the food was awesome, Mike killed it with his grilling skills, chicken and steaks, so tender they easily cut with plastic forks! Yum!! Marvins famous mac & cheese, awesome BBQ meatballs, lot's of great sides and deserts. We had a discussion on how awesome the Firebird & Camaro Show was. How great everything fell into place. 97 cars on the show field. The club profited \$2,632.35. Thank You, everyone who worked the show and helped set up and teardown. We discussed the upcoming All Pontiac Show & Shine. Let everyone know that registration is set up and running on the club's web site, www.wvfirebirds.com. Registration was low at the time of the meeting. Registering on line just make day of show registration much much easier. So please, register early. We also discussed the need for raffle items and the contact Sarah Mills or Diane Tappero as they are the coordinators for the Pontiac Show raffle. We discussed The Northwest American Muscle car meet on June 29th, and the Northwest All Muscle Car Meet at Pop Keeney Stadium on Saturday August 16th. Wally Santella from the GTO Club gave us all the info for both shows. We were still looking for someone to coordinate a north end cruise. On the discussion of our car shows, we have booked Burgermaster in Issaquah for 2026 dates. Firebird & Camaro show June 7th 2026 and The All Pontiac Show & Shine August 9th 2026. We went over the club's books as reported by Neil Warren. We have \$7,348.93 in checking and \$1,001.33 in savings. We paid the trailers insurance of \$183.00 in June. It was motioned for the club to purchase awards for the Black Diamond Eagles Car Show. over Labor Day

Weekend. Seconded by Mike Flynn and unanimously voted yes. So, 4 awards at \$25 each for a total of \$100. I had brought some old photos of past club shows and cruise as part of the Clubs 25th Anniversary. Jim Powell, the club's founding President was there with his original club jacket and told stories of the club's early days and He and I and Brian Sargent, president #4 went over the time lines of club memories. Judy Paradiso made cupcakes with the Tri-Birds logo on them and Diane Tapparo made an awesome cake with the clubs logo. Both were delicious! So we adjourned the meeting and spent the rest of the evening just hanging out and talking about all things Firebird! Huge Thank You to the Tapparo's for once again hosting this fantastic meeting/ club BBQ and 35th Anniversary of Western Washington Firebird! It was great watching everyone interact and just having a great time. This is what being in a car club is all about!

Your Upcoming Summer 2025 Club Events, Please Mark Your Calendars And Let's have Fun!

July 12th Cruise Puyallup

July 19th Club Meeting Burien Round Table Pizza

July 25-27th 37th Good Guys Car Show Puyallup Fair Grounds

Saturday August 16th Northwest Muscle Car Meet 8am to 3pm Pop Keeney Stadium Bothell
Sunday August 17th Our 22nd All Pontiac Show & Shine 9am-3pm Griot's Garage Tacoma
No Club Meeting Scheduled for August

Western Washington Firebird club sponsored events. Things may change, but as of now this is your official list And, these will also be posted in more detail on club website and Facebook group.)

Other Events of interest Non Club Sponsored:

July 12th VFW Post 10018 Car Show 4741 N Baltimore St Tacoma WA 10-3pm

July 12th Edmonds Orphan Car Show 10am-3pm \$20

July 12th Sharon Care Center Car Show 1509

Harrison Ave Parking Lot #2 Centralia WA 11am-2pm

July 19th Cruise The Couve 2315 Main St Vancouver WA 11am-10pm

July 27 19th Annual Roadwar NW-Star Car Concours Classic Star Car Show 541 Church St Wilkeson WA 11am-3pm

July 27th KCE's Cove to Cove Car Cruise 4720 Bethel Rd SE Port Orchard WA 2pm

July 27th Duh Kwooz! Wilkeson/Carbonado Cruise August 2nd & 3rd Seafair, Dick's Drive In Classic Car Show On Hydro Weekend 1985 and older. Pre-register Only Go To Seafair Car Show 2025 to register. Spots will fill up quick!

August 8th Hot August Night Cruise In 5634 Park Ave S Tacoma WA 4pm-9pm

August 9th Cruise In For The Youth Puyallup WA 8am-3pm

August 23rd 5th Annual Hot Rodders Car Show Shelton WA 9am-3pm

August 24th Cruisin The Ave IX Tower Lanes Tacoma WA 9am-3pm

(This section I will post non club hosted events, but these events you may be interested in going to.)

For a complete list of all car related events in the northwest, please visit:

www.cruzinmag.com/calendar.html or

www.good-guys.com or

www.nwcareventscalendar.com

Local Cruise-In Spots

Here is the cruise-in list. If you know of any, please let me know so we can get it on this list, thanks!

We will also be supporting Wileson and Carbonato, who just had the rug pulled out from them when the state shut down a 100 year old bridge that brought folks into their towns. They are hosting a cruise In/Show on the last Sunday of the month. Dates are as follows: May 25th, June 22nd, July 27th August 24th, September 28th. 1pm to 5pm

Cruiz'n Cole Enumclaw WA first Friday of each month. 2025 Dates are: May 2nd, June 6th, July 5th, August 1st, September 5th
Cruise Puyallup Dates Are: April 26th, May 10th, June 7th Cruise Into Meeker Days, July 12th, August 9th, October 11th, December 13th Christmas Cruise
Binford's Field Of Dreams Every Friday Evening 4pm-10pm. Live music, food trucks and An Awesome Way To End A Crazy Week! Kent WA
First Saturday of every month is Caffeine & Gasoline @ Griot's Garage 8am to 10am.
Starting May 3rd Every Friday Night 4pm-8pm Covington Wal Mart.
Thrashers Corner on Friday Nights
Saturday evenings Marysville DQ
Clearview McDonalds Saturday nights 4pm-8pm Starting in mid to late May.
Sunday mornings at the Lake Stevens Les Schwabis Cars and Coffee
Friday Night Cruise In Every Friday 2pm-9pm Cruise to The Village 3509 72nd St E Tacoma
First Saturday of every month is Caffeine & Gasoline @ Griot's Garage 8am to 10am.
Starting May 10th Friday Nights 4pm-8pm Covington Wal Mart.
Clearview McDonalds Saturday nights 4pm-8pm Starting in mid to late May.
Friday's At Dairy Queen At Thrashers Corner 3-6pm
Friday Nights Binford Metals in Kent Starts at 5pm Starting Late April- October
Saturday's Farmboy Drive-In Olympia 3pm-8pm Starting May 25th through September
Saturday's Sunrise-Village Puyallup 5pm till Dusk June 7th – August 30
Wednesday's Newport Hills Bellevue 3pm-6pm May-September
Cruise-In At The Drags Pacific Raceways Kent WA \$20 entry fee. Events are May 10th, May 31st, June 14th, June 21st, June 22nd, August 23rd

More will be added as soon as I know more details on other cruise-in locations. If you know of any, please text me at 206-349-1282. Just need the place, day of cruise-in, and time. Thanks!

Membership Information

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Membership Dues are \$30 U.S. per year and are renewed each year in January. Just go to the club's website, www.wwfirebirds.com and follow the links to renew and we use Paypal so it's quick, super easy and safe. Note: Each person on the membership list (spouses included) may receive the newsletter by email. Let us know if you would like this option. And make sure you give us their e mail address.

We want to welcome our newest member Stu Farmer from Issaquah WA. Stu owns a 1984 Trans Am.

CAR SHOWS

22nd Annual All Pontiac Show & Shine
Sunday August 17th 9am-3pm And it's at Griot's Garage again for 2025.. Need volunteers for day of show help, set up, teardown and working registration and ballot counting. We need your help getting items for raffle and sponsorship money. We are actually doing well so far. John and Mike Flynn have been kicking ass on sponsorship money, but we can never have too much. Again, a big thank you to Brett Liukkonen for flyer art work and Sean Thacher for printing. We can't thank them enough! They are saving us huge money, which makes being able to put on these shows possible. Also Please, PLEASE go to our club web site and pre-register. It is up and working at www.wwfirebirds.com. It's Super easy and helps out a lot. And we booked the Starvin' Marvin Food Truck Again This year!

WEBSITE

Be sure to check out the club website. It has been completely revamped, thanks to Neil Warren. It is way easier to navigate and works awesome on phones or laptops. For tech articles, links to other clubs and nearly all things Pontiac related in addition to all of the great pictures and articles of Member's Rides. Contact Neil Warren and he will give you all the info you need to give him so he can upload your pics and a short write up about you and your car.

The Members Rides web pages continue to grow, but we have plenty of room for more. This is your chance to show the world your own Firebird! Send or e-mail pictures of your car, with a little of what you would like everyone to know about it, and we will add them to the rest. If you have your own web page featuring your car, send us your URL. We will link to it from the Members' Rides page. For pictures and descriptions of many of our member's cars, check out the club website at: www.wwfirebirds.com

TECH

The Muscle-Car Era's Last Hurrah

The muscle-car era was a wild time for Detroit car makers. There was a lot of variation in performance levels, as not all muscle cars were created equal. Some were very well thought out, and others were badge-and-stripes presentations with a little exhaust rumble. A few muscle cars had tuned-in staff, that is designers and engineers with a passion for performance. The Firebird had its share of them. The unofficial short story has it that after model-year '70, the muscle-car party was over due to insurance rates, new exhaust emission controls, and safety regulations. Most manufacturers quickly watered down or

dropped their muscle cars.

Passion can be a powerful force, and despite all odds, the Firebird line managed to survive. As I mentioned in last month's department, towards the end of '72, the F-Body line came perilously close to being axed. This makes the '73 and '74 Super Duty 455 Trans am and Formula Firebirds all the more amazing.

The pony-car market hit its high point at 1968 with an 11-percent market share. By 1971, its market share had fallen to just 3.9 percent. Then in the spring of 1972, the United Auto Workers initiated a strike at the F-Body assembly plant in Norwood, Ohio, and it lasted nearly six months. Production of '72 Firebirds fell from 53,127 units in 1971 to 29,951. To add insult to injury, approximately 1,100 unfinished Firebirds were scrapped because they could not meet the new-for-'73 bumper and interior materials flammability standards set by the feds. It all came together to create the perfect justification for killing the F-body lines.

Here's where the passion in Pontiac saved the line. It was no secret that the Norwood strike was dragging on, so it wasn't a surprise when the automobile magazines began to speculate the F-Body's future. One magazine even published a mock obituary. Regardless, it was a serious topic inside GM. Were it not for the lobbying efforts of Pontiac Assistant Chief Engineer Bill Collins and Chevrolet Director of Engineering Alex Mair (later to become Pontiac general manager), the F-Body line would have surely ended with the '72 models. Mair, with Collins' support, argued that Pontiac had developed a very strong, although not high, volume of loyal Firebird followers. Also, customers wanted cars with precision handling and good looks at a reasonable price. Perhaps it was Mair's and Collins' grounded, engineering approach, but they convinced the decision makers within GM that keeping the F-Body line was the right thing to do. So

with the Firebird line saved by a feather, what did Pontiac's engineers and designers serve up for the '73 Firebird line? A muscle-car legend. It was as if Pontiac didn't know the muscle-car era was over. There were two new Firebird options that stunned Pontiac fans—the large hood bird and the Super Duty 455 engine. The hood graphic treatment was designed by Bill Porter as a way to integrate the non-functional, reverse hood scoop design proposed by Collins and Special Projects Engineer Herb Adams. As chief designer for the new Firebird, Porter argued that for the scoop to work properly (facing forward), the hood would have to be molded in fiberglass, which would increase cost. He also felt the scoop interrupted the front-end center nose theme, which was supposed to flow straight back to the windshield without interruptions. The double-scoop design eventually used on the Formula was originally designed for the Trans Am. While the design worked better, the reverse scoop was much more entertaining and quieter. There was also the challenge of how to apply such a large decal. First, 3M had to come up with decal material large enough, and then procedures had to be created to apply the decal onto the hood. While still on the shelf, Pontiac designer John Schinella worked with designer Bill Davis to refine the hood bird. When they came up with the look they wanted, Schinella had the art painted on the hood of his personal Trans Am and took it to the streets of Detroit. The response was instantly positive, but management wasn't convinced. The designers wanted the graphic to be standard on the Trans Am. Then Pontiac General Manager Jim McDonald said, "Let's make the graphic an option. We've got nothing to lose." The Screaming Chicken became the Trans Am's new signature feature. But it was the Super Duty 455 option that was over the top. Adams was developing

303 Pontiac engines for SCCA racing and 366 engines for NASCAR. Management asked why he and his team were working on racing engines when Pontiac wasn't involved in racing, and then suggested they apply what they had learned to create something potent for the street. So team engineers Tom Nell and Jeff Young went right to work on what would become the Super Duty 455. Pontiac engineers took the biggest-cubed engine available and added everything they could within the limitations of mass production. What the Chrysler Hemi was to Mopar, the Super Duty 455 would be to Pontiac—a stout engine that could be easily converted to racing. The team started with a four-bolt main block (the standard 455 had a two-bolt main block) with reinforced bulkheads and beefier camshaft and lifter bosses. Due to GM's low-compression mandate, 8.25:1-compression forged pistons and rods were used. The crankshaft was cast-iron, but nitride heat-treated and with greater oil clearances. An 80-psi oil pump and a baffled oil pan kept everything lubed, and the block was set up with a plug for a racing dry-sump oil system. These guys were very serious. The heads had a similar design as the '69 Ram Air IV units, with big, round exhaust ports, and larger intake valves with 45-degree seat angles instead of the regular 30 degrees. The cast-iron exhaust manifolds were designed like headers and were only for the Super Duty 455. The camshaft profile used the same duration as Ram Air IV—308/320 degrees, but with 0.470-inch lift for the intake and exhaust. Rocker ratio remained at 1.5:1. The published rating of 310 hp at 4,000 rpm was somewhat misleading. Remember, these were the early days of net power ratings, and the engine could easily rev to 6,000 rpm. That much power from an engine with only 8.25:1 compression is mighty impressive. The objective of the Super Duty

455 was to provide a strong foundation upon which buyers could build Firebird racecars. Running high 13s in the quarter-mile out of the box, the Super Duty 455 could have easily run with the 454 Chevys and Hemi Mopars of '70.

But performance has never been cheap. The Super Duty 455 option listed for \$675. (In comparison, an LS4 454 Corvette engine was only \$250.) To take the edge off a little, the Super Duty 455 could be ordered on the less expensive Formula Firebird. The Formula Firebird cost \$3,276 and the Trans-Am cost \$4,204. Buyers who wanted a Trans Am, the Super Duty 455, and few other goodies were looking at \$5,000. While the Formula didn't have the bling of the Trans Am, the car used the same Y99 handling package as the Trans Am, and all the standard Firebird options were available. Not everyone was thrilled with the Super Duty 455. Management aside, the biggest obstacle was the assembly plant. Adams said there was very little cooperation in the engine plant—their attitude was “ho-hum.” The car magazines did a great job of stoking the enthusiasts, and in short order, there were approximately 600 orders for the Super Duty 455. The plan was to have enough parts to build at least 1,000 engines, but mysteriously 400 sets of Super Duty 455 parts were pilfered! Yes, stolen! Or possibly disposed of. Remember, these were the days of bad blood between labor and management. Consequentially, dealers were charging as much as a \$1,000 premium on the engine. For the company, the Super Duty 455 was somewhat of a headache, as it was a low-volume option and didn't make much money for all the trouble. A total of 295 were built in '73, and 1,001 in '74. That was it. While the '73 Super Duty 455 option didn't save the Firebird, per se, '73 was a pivotal year for the Firebird. The screaming chicken hood-decal option provided Pontiac with a signature graphic for its new flagship

performance car. Designers and engineers proved passion for performance can save a car line.

Originally written by Scott Teeters printed in High Performance Pontiac Magazine

MEMBER'S UPDATES

Welcome our newest member, Becky Britten from Lake Tapps WA! She owns a 1994 25th Anniversary Trans Am and a GTO. The Trans Am is an LT1 350 and a 6spd manual transmission. 1 of only 172 produced with the 6 speed manual trans, with t-tops and it is number 103 produced of the 25th Anniversary Trans Am run. Sounds like and Awesome Car, Welcome to Western Washington Firebirds!

Please contact me, Jeff Driscoll, on any new updates to you or your Firebird or any new purchases or anything exciting you would like to share with the club in the newsletter.

WANT ADS

CLUB MEMBER ADS

Want ads are free to members and will run for four months unless updated or canceled. Please update your ad on a monthly basis. All ads with *4 will not run the next month, unless resubmitted. (The number after the * shows how many months the ad has run without a change.) Please send all Parts for Sale, Cars for Sale, and Wanted ads

For Sale:

Please Contact Me, Jeff Driscoll if you have any parts for sale or if you need parts. E mail a70frmula400@aol.com or text me at 206-349-1282

Parts Wanted:

Please Contact me if you are looking for any parts for your Firebird so I can list it here or on the website

NON-MEMBER ADS

I will add any non member items that are for sale here

Member Owned/ Recommended Businesses

If you own a business and want to add your contact information, I will put it here. Also if you have a business related to our awesome Firebirds, please let me know and I will add it here.

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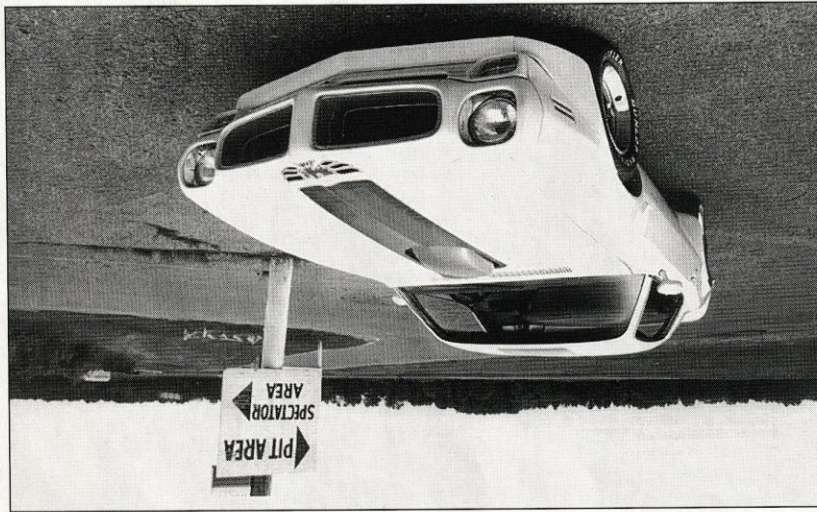
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NUMBER CRUNCHING

The codes that count on the 1970 Firebird.

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO



It is debut at the Chicago Auto Show on February 26, 1970 marked the rebirth of the Firebird. The car was a radical departure from the previous models; they had little in common save for the drivetrain, wheelbase and name.

Pontiac engineers wanted to capture the European feel and styling in a true American GT car. While the Chevy version of the new F-body was still trying to do battle in the ponycar wars, Pontiac's General Manager John Delorean, who was still a bit unhappy with GM for crushing his 2-seat sports car idea, zeroed in on the Corvette. The mission of the 1970 Firebird was to be the quickest, best-handling, most capable car on the road, period. It would offer more value than any other car regardless of price or country of origin.

Unlike the 1967 model, which was thrust upon PMD in the final stages of development, the 1970 model carried much more Pontiac design influence. The entire semi-fastback roofline is a Pontiac creation replacing the original Chevy roof, which was basically a sedan with rear quarter windows. Other body features were borrowed from Italian coachwork and integrated into the Firebird shell. The beltline was reminiscent of the Lamborghini Miura, and the grille work showed a Maserati influence.

Delorean knew the importance of model identification. The Firebird had to differentiate itself from its Bowtie counterpart, not an easy task considering both cars share the same bodysell. The major differences were in the front and rear. The Endura front bumper, surrounding split semi-oval grilles and single headlamps, flowed extremely well with the bodywork, creating one of the cleanest designs in the industry. Chevy offered a similar layout with its split-bumper option, which offered an Endura grille flanked by chrome bumperettes. It had boy-racer appeal but still was not as clean as Pontiac's full Endura treatment.

The rear of the Firebird featured eyebrow-shaped tailamps that rode above a thin full-length chrome bumper. The lenses were molded to match the slope of the rear quarters, as opposed to the Camaro's tailamps, which were reminiscent of the Vette. Another very subtle difference is at the beltline. The Firebird line is lower and less pronounced than the Camaro's, adding to the fluid form of the body.

It's ironic that with all the creative ideas Delorean put into the Firebird design to make it different, he was promoted to

general manager of Chevrolet before the car was introduced, and was now leading the company with which he enjoyed an inter-divisional rivalry for so long.

TOTAL PRODUCTION				
Model	Manual Trans	Auto Trans	Total	
Firebird base L6 & V8	2,899	15,975	18,874	
Esprit	2,104	16,857	18,961	
Formula 400	2,777	4,931	7,708	
Trans Am R/A-III	1,769	1,339	3,108	
Trans Am R/A-IV	59	29	88	
Total	9,608	39,131	48,739	
FORMULA 400 PRODUCTION				
Code	Engine	M13 M20 M21	Manual Trans	Auto Trans
WT	Sid.	286	1,637	458
YS	Sid.	15	192	189
WS	R/A-III	15	192	189
YZ	R/A-III	301	829	647
Total			829	647
TRANS AM 400 PRODUCTION				
Code	Engine	M20 M21	Manual Trans	Auto Trans
WS	R/A-III	802	967	
YZ	R/A-III	59		
XP	R/A-IV			
Total			967	
M40 PRODUCTION				
Code	Engine	M20 M21	Manual Trans	Auto Trans
WS	R/A-III	802	967	
YZ	R/A-III	59		
XP	R/A-IV			
Total			967	
M40 PRODUCTION				
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YZ	R/A-III	59		
XP	R/A-IV			
Total			967	
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XP	R/A-IV			
Total			967	

NUMBER CRUNCHING

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SERIAL NUMBERS

For Firebirds produced at the Van Nuys plant, the third digit of the serial number for 1970 was a specific numeral denoting its model; Firebirds produced at the Norwood, Ohio, plant were coded differently (see data plate below). A zero in the sixth place denoted model year. The seventh digit is an "N" or an "L," which represents the Norwood assembly facility or the Van Nuys, Calif., plant. The next six digits are the car's production sequence; V8s ran from 100001 forward, and 6-cylinder Firebirds ran 600001 and up. The serial number was stamped on a plate that was attached to the driver's side of the dashboard and was visible through the windshield. The serial number appears as follows: 223870N100001

22387—Base model; 6-cyl., 8-cyl.

* 22487—Esprit

* 22687—Formula 400

* 22887—Trans Am R/A-III, R/A-IV

0—Last digit of model year

N—Assembly plant: N—Norwood, L—Van Nuys

100001—Consecutive Sequence Number, 8-cyl.; 600001, 6-cyl.

*Used at Van Nuys plant only.

COWL DATA PLATES

A data plate was attached to the cowl, just ahead of the windshield, on the driver's side. An example of a 1970 plate for a Trans Am produced at Van Nuys reads as follows:

Line 1: Body by Fisher

Line 2: ST 70 22887 BL 012345 BDY

Line 3: TR 201 10 10 PNT

Line 4: 05B 115835 080122

Line 5: General Motors Corporation

A sample of the same car built at the Norwood plant would read:

Line 1: Body by Fisher

Line 2: ST 70 22387 NOR 012345 BDY

Line 3: TR 201 10 10 PNT

Line 4: 05B WS4

Line 5: General Motors Corporation

Line 1 is self-explanatory.

Line 2 denotes the last two digits of the model year (70), followed by the body style number, 22887 (Trans Am) on the first plate and 22387 (base model) on the second plate. (Norwood denoted the Trans Am option with code WS4 on Line 4.) The Fisher Body assembly plant code, BL, was used at Van Nuys, and NOR was used for Norwood. The remaining numbers (012345) comprise the consecutive body number, which has no direct correlation to the VIN.

Line 3 indicates the interior trim (TR) code: standard blue interior (201) and Polar White exterior (10). Note the use of a double coding for the paint. If the car was ordered with a Cordova top (not offered on a Trans Am), the second "10" would be replaced with the corresponding letter code of the top color.

Line 4 lists the date code for when the body was assembled. For both data plates, 05 represents the fifth month of the year (May); B represents the week, the second week of May. The other codes for this car in the Van Nuys example have yet to be

deciphered. The WS4 code denotes a Trans Am in the Norwood example. If this car was a Formula, the code would read W66.

Line 5 is self-explanatory.

ENGINE BLOCK CODES

Pontiac stamped several letters and digits on the front passenger's side of its V8 block below the cylinder deck. The most important of these is the two-letter engine block code (listed here) and a portion of the car's VIN (the year, assembly plant and serial number). On V8 Firebirds, all codes beginning with W are manual-trans cars, and all codes beginning with X and Y are auto-trans cars.

Cu. In.	Code	Carb	Hp	Trans	Comments
350	WU	2-bbl.	255	Man.	Std.
350	YU	2-bbl.	255	Auto	Std.
400	XX	2-bbl.	265	Auto	Std.
400	WT	4-bbl.	330	Man.	Std.
400	YS	4-bbl.	330	Auto	Std.
400	WS	4-bbl.	345	Man.	R/A-III
400	YZ	4-bbl.	345	Auto	R/A-III
400	WW	4-bbl.	370	Man	SD R/A-IV
400	XP	4-bbl.	370	Auto	SD R/A-IV

CYLINDER HEAD CASTING NUMBERS

Cylinder heads on V8s can be identified by a two-digit casting number found above the center exhaust ports. Ram Air IV heads, however, are identified by a three-digit casting number found above the No. 1 and No. 8 exhaust ports. For 1970 Firebirds, they are as follows:

Cu. In.	Hp	Casting No.	Comments
350	255	11	Std.
400	265	11	Std.
400	330	12	Std. man.
400	330	13	Std. auto
400	345	12	R/A-III, man.
400	345	12/13	R/A-III, auto
400	370	614	SD R/A-IV

CARBURETORS

Cu. In.	Hp	Trans	Size	Part No.
350	255	Man.	2-bbl.	7040071, 471
350	255	Auto	2-bbl.	7040062, 63 (w/A/C)
400	265	Auto	2-bbl.	7040060, 61, 64
400	330	Man.	4-bbl.	7040263, 563
400	330	Auto	4-bbl.	7040264, 564
400	345/370	Man.	4-bbl.	7040273, (573 in CA)
400	345/370	Auto	4-bbl.	7040270, (570 in CA)

INTAKE MANIFOLDS

Cu. In.	2-Bbl.	4-Bbl.	Comments
350	9799067		Std.
400	9799067	9799068	Std.
400		9799068	R/A-III
400		9799084	SD R/A-IV

EXHAUST MANIFOLDS

Cu. In.	Right Side	Left Side	Comments
350	490142	490143	Std.
400	490142	490143	Std.
400	9799720	478140	R/A-III
400	9799721	478141	SD R/A-IV

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DISTRIBUTORS

Cu. In.	Hp	Trans	Part No.
350	255	Man./Auto	1112008
400	265	Auto	1112007
400	330	Man.	1111176
400	330	Auto	1111148
400	345	Man.	1112024
400	345	Auto	1112009
400	370	Man./Auto	1112013

TRANSMISSION CODES

A two-letter code was stenciled on manual transmissions near the top of the case. Automatic transmissions had a two-letter code stamped on an aluminum tag riveted to the passenger's side of the case.

Cu. In.	Man. Trans		Auto Trans		Comments
	3-Sp.	4-Sp.	2-Sp.	3-Sp.	
350	R4				Col. shift
350	DG				M13, HD
350		WB			M20, Wide-ratio
350			EA		M31, Powerglide
350				JF	M38, Turbo-350
400	DG				M13, HD
400		WB			M20, Wide-ratio
400		WL			M21, Close-ratio
400				PF	M40, 2-bbl.
400				PK	M40, Turbo 400
400				PQ	M40, R/A-III, SD R/A-IV

REAR AXLE CODES

A two-letter code was stamped on the driver's side axle tube to the left of the carrier case just below the brake line clip, to indicate axle ratio and type.

Gear Ratio	Standard	Safe-T-Track
2.73	CRX	CRY
3.07	COS	COT
3.08	COE	COF
3.31	COU	COV
3.36	COK	COL
3.55	COW	COX
3.73	—	COZ

EXTERIOR COLOR CODES

The data plate on the cowl denoted body color with a number code. Pontiac factory paper work denoted body color with a letter code. For those of you comparing your Firebird's paper work with its data plate, this list shows how the numbers and letters correspond with the exterior colors.

Color	Fisher Body code	Pontiac code
Polar White	10	C
Palladium Silver	14	P
Bermuda Blue	25	D
Lucerne Blue	26	F
Keylime Green	43	L
Palisade Green	45	H
Verdoro Green	47	Q
Goldenrod Yellow	51	W
Coronado Gold	53	S
Granada Gold	58	Z
Palomino Copper	63	B
Carousel Red	65	V
Castillian Bronze	67	J
Cardinal Red	75	R
Attol Blue	28	V

INTERIOR COLOR CODES

Color	Std. Bucket	Custom Bucket	Cloth
Blue	201	211	—
Brown	—	213	—
Red	—	214	—
Saddle	205	215	—
Green	206	216	—
Sandalwood	207	217	227
Black	208	218	228

CORDOVA (VINYL) TOP COLORS

Once again Fisher Body used a different coding sequence than Pontiac. In this instance cowl plates used a letter and the factory used a number.

Color	Pontiac code	Fisher Body code
White	1	A
Black	2	B
Sandalwood	5	E
Dark Gold	7	H
Dark Green	9	G

1970 FACTS

The 1970 Firebird was only offered in the coupe configuration. The 108-inch wheelbase and 60-inch rear track were retained, while the overall length was increased to 191.6 inches and the front track was increased to 61.3 inches. The secret to the low-sports-car look of the Firebird lies in the cowl height, which was set lower than any Pontiac prior to 1970.

The subframe and front suspension were completely redesigned. The frame was beefed up with wider side rails and one heavy-duty crossmember as opposed to the earlier thin-rail dual-crossmember setup. The steering system was moved ahead of the wheels because, according to Bob Dorn, the Chevrolet engineer responsible for the move, it created "lateral compliance understeer," which stabilized the car during hard cornering. Other advantages are improved crash protection and easier serviceability of the bottom end of the engine (the oil pan can be removed without pulling the engine or dropping the steering linkage). A-arm length was extended to improve ride characteristics and front disc brakes became standard on all Firebirds.

The rear suspension was much more difficult to design; the passenger compartment was moved back 3 inches relative to the wheels, and overhang was extended an inch at both the front and rear. This resulted in a loss of 2 inches of suspension space at the rear. Dorn decided with much trepidation that the axle would be located outboard of the seats, and it would not have the traditional one-third of the multi-leaf spring ahead of it and two-thirds behind. None of the fears of an evil-handling rear suspension system came to pass. In fact, it turned out to be quite impressive. The rear had the correct amount of understeer built into it and the suspension as a whole was extremely forgiving in all situations.

Stand-out features of the body construction are as follows: raised driveshaft tunnel to add more vertical rear suspension travel; twin steel roof panels, which add strength and reduce noise; protective door beams for side crash protection; steel barrier between the passenger and luggage compartments to add safety and rigidity to the shell; acoustically tuned passenger compartment to remove unwanted sounds; and trapped edge window seals to eliminate wind noise.

The interior was all new. While the standard gauge package offered the run-of-the-mill 120-mph speedo and "idiot lights," the optional Rally gauges were an enthusiast's dream. There were large round bezels for the 8000-rpm tach (which had a 12 o'clock

redline and a built-in clock) and 160-mph speedo; they were split by a smaller pod that housed oil pressure and water temperature gauges and was placed directly in front of the driver. The main cluster is flanked by the volt and fuel level instruments residing in two small bezels to the right, and lights and wiper switches to the left. The heater controls, in their usual horizontal format, were placed under the fuel and volt meters; to the right was the lighter and a panel for adding options controlled by aircraft-type toggles. The radio was centrally located in its own molded casting. Radio antennas were imbedded in the windshield on all '70 Firebirds. The instrument panel trim could be had in imitation woodgrain or an engine-turned appliqué, depending on options.

The seats, upper door panels and console were all covered in soft vinyl, giving a rich luxurious look and feel to the cockpit. The lower door panels featured molded-in map pockets, and the seats could be ordered as part of the custom interior option with cloth inserts. The console, which encased an optional 8-track tape player, flowed up into the dash creating the integrated wrap-around feel that Pontiac had pioneered with the Grand Prix the year before.

The optional Formula steering wheel (standard on the Trans Am) was a 14-inch-diameter, flat-faced, 3-spoke design that featured full padding, thumb spats and a leather-look cover. The horn button was gear-shaped with a Firebird emblem in the center.

The big news for the base car for 1970 was the removal of the famed OHC-6 from the lineup. Production costs and diminished customer demand contributed to its demise. The Chevy-made 250 L6 replaced it, resulting in a drop of 20 horsepower.

The 350 HO option was dropped, leaving only the 2-barrel version, rated at 255 horsepower, for use in the Firebird. A new addition to the 400 lineup was the regular-fuel, 2-barrel engine, rated at 265 horsepower; it was offered optionally in the Esprit model.

The R/A-III code L-74 was rated at 345 horsepower, and the SD R/A-IV code LS1 was rated at 370 horsepower (the latter was the same rating as the GTO). The R/A-III was still 21 hp underrated, but it, too, was functionally identical to the GTO engine.

Pontiac returned to the 1967-68 "Magnificent Five"-style ad campaign of offering multiple personalities in the same car by varying the trim options. The '70 models were broken into a four-tier program that theoretically offered a car for everyone.

The standard Firebird listed for \$2,875 with its Chevy-built 250-cubic-inch 6-cylinder and 3-speed manual trans. The suspension featured a 15/16-inch front sway bar, a front spring rate of 300 lbs., and a rear spring rate of 89 lbs. Also included were Endura front bumper, vinyl-covered bucket seats, simulated woodgrain dash, manual front disc brakes, E78-14 blackwall tires, hubcaps and bright rocker moldings. For the first time the base Firebird could be had with an optional V8, a 2-barrel 350. Both engines could be mated to a 2-speed automatic available at extra cost, and the 350 could be ordered with a wide-ratio 4 speed.

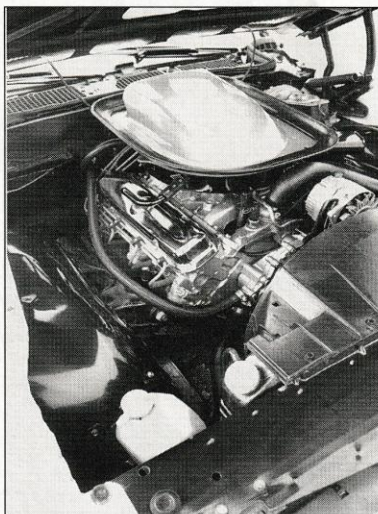
The Esprit was the luxury model of the Firebird line. It cost \$3,241 and gave the buyer a custom interior that included cloth inserts for the bucket seats, dual sport mirrors with remote control for the driver's side, concealed windshield wipers, deluxe steering

wheel, trim rings and bright wheelwell moldings.

The standard tires were E78-14 blackwalls. Spring rates of 300 lbs. front and 89 lbs. rear (103 lbs. with the optional 400 2-barrel) worked in conjunction with a 15/16-inch front sway bar, with none available for the rear.

The drivetrain consisted of a 255-hp 350 2-barrel engine tied to a 3-speed manual trans. The only optional engine for the Esprit was a 265-hp 400 2-barrel. Both engines could be ordered with a 4-speed manual or a 3-speed automatic, but only the 350 could get a 2-speed automatic.

The Formula was the true-to-form musclecar of the Firebird lineup. At \$3,370 it offered a no-frills performance package that could run with the best of 'em. It did not have the custom interior,



trim rings or exterior bright work of the Esprit. It did have a blacked-out grille (a musclecar original), a dual scooped fiberglass hood with available Ram Air, and a tail spoiler. For motivation, two 400 engines were available: one with 335 hp, the other with 345 hp and Ram Air. According to Fred Simmonds of Pontiac Motor Division, the famed SD R/A-IV, rated at 370 hp, could be ordered in the Formula. However, none were ever assembled. The standard trans was a Hurst floor-shifted 3-speed manual, with two 4-speeds and an automatic on the option list.

The suspension was comprised of coil springs with a 300-lb. rate for the front and 103-lb. rate for the rear, and a 1 1/8-inch front sway bar paired with a 5/8-inch rear sway bar. Safe-T-Track rear and variable-ratio power steering were optional, and standard rolling stock was F70-14 raised white-letter tires on 14x7 Rally wheels.

The Trans Am was the flagship of the Firebird line, and as such it received the best of everything. Besides getting all of the

performance goodies from the Formula, the Trans Am also featured exclusively an engine-turned appliqué for the dash, Ram Air Shaker hood scoop, fender air vents, front air dam and rear wheel spats. Special paint treatment was also part of the package. It was a Lucerne Blue or Polar White base with a single tri-colored blue/black/white stripe running over the hood, roof and decklid. A Firebird decal was applied to the nose, and Trans Am decals graced the front fenders and tail spoiler.

Rear spring rate for the Trans am was increased to 125 lbs.; harder bushings and revalved shocks were used in conjunction with 1 1/4-inch front and 7/8-inch rear sway bars, and quicker variable-ratio power steering was also added. Deluxe interior, 4-speed trans, full instrumentation, Safe-T-Track rear, and 15x7 Rally wheels sans trim rings and shod with F60-15 raised white-letter tires were standard. All this for \$4,305.

There has been a lot of speculation over the years about the effectiveness of the Trans Am spoilers and fender vents. Some say they were a sales ploy to make the car into a pseudo-racer; others claim that there was a substantial aerodynamic improvement with the add-ons. As it turns out both arguments are partially correct. There is no doubt that the marketers for the Trans Am took full advantage of its outrageous look and the ideas it implied in their promotion of the car. According to Herb Adams, however, these pieces were not just hung on the car for good looks. Jerry Titus, a successful

Continued on page 52

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PONCHO POWER HOLIDAY SHOWCASE

PAW

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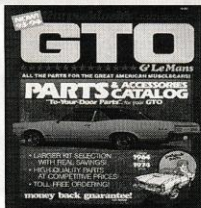
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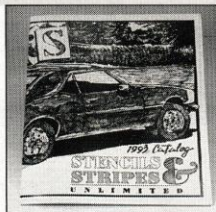
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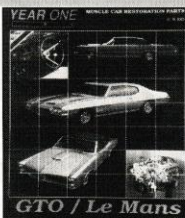
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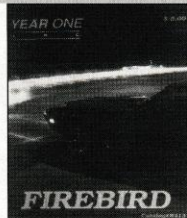
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MATCHING NUMBERS Continued from page 21

Pontiac race car driver, and Paul Lamar, an engineer noted for his work on Jim Hall's Chaparral race car, teamed up with the Pontiac engineers to do aerodynamic testing on the new Firebird. All testing was done on a dry lake at speed. A front air dam reduced lift, and side fender air vents reduced air pressure under the hood, further reducing lift. Wheel flares added to the front and rear wheelwells reduced turbulence around the sides of the car, and the tail spoiler added downforce at the rear. We must remember, though, that the utility of the spoilers and vents were directly proportional to the speed of the car. In other words, they were less effective at low speeds.

The factory invoices for the 88 LS1 Trans Ams list the drivetrain option as "4 BBL SD R/A." The SD initials sparked a controversy that lasted for years. Fred Simmonds and Jim Mattison are sure that while the factory may have intended to install special Super Duty engine parts, no cars were so-equipped. All of the LS1 Trans Ams had the same R/A-IV engines that the GTO did; they even shared the same engine codes.

Twenty-four of the LS1, SD R/A-IV Trans Ams built in 1970 were assembled at Van Nuys and 64 rolled off of the Norwood line. Twenty-five cars were painted Lucerne Blue and 63 were painted Polar White, one of which was built for GM of Canada. Seventeen T/A's were equipped with California Emissions.

In the world of strange color combinations, one T/A was ordered with the Sandalwood Custom Interior and Lucerne Blue exterior, and another was ordered with Saddle interior with Polar White exterior. The latter wouldn't look so strange but remember, the car also had the blue T/A stripes. All of the 4-speed LS1s were equipped with a wide-ratio trans and a 3.73. Safe-T-Track rear.

Pontiac was originally going to name the Formula 400 "Trans Am" and name the spoiled, fender-vented model "Sebring," but Plymouth already owned the name.

I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to Jim Mattison of Pontiac Historic Services, Fred Simmonds of Pontiac Motor Division, Ray Hunt of Warrior Racing, Steve Ames of Ames Performance Engineering, and Glen Uettwiller for their help in preparing this article. Credit also goes to Gary L. Witzenburg, whose book "Firebird!" provided invaluable insight to the design and theory behind the 1970 Firebird.

