



WESTERN WASHINGTON FIREBIRDS



Official Newsletter

March 2026

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Secretary/Treasurer Web Guy: Neil Warren (740-816-6957)

Website: www.wfirebirds.com Facebook: Western Washington Firebirds All Pontiac Show & Shine
Firebird & Camaro show

Hello Fellow Firebird Enthusiasts,

I am experimenting with the newsletter as you can see starting this month. Some folks didn't like the columns, so we will try this way. So welcome to March. We are heading into spring, finally. And we have a lot of planning and confirming of events for this summer. At the March meeting, hopefully we can get a few more things nailed down. All the cruise events are already posted on Facebook and on the website. If you hear of any cruise-ins not listed or that are new please contact me so we can get it listed. We want you all to know when and where all the great area shows and cruise-ins are. This new newsletter format will take some getting used to by me, just because that old format was used since 1994. But, hey change is good! For March we have our club meeting at the Federal Way Round Table Pizza March 14th at 5pm. Details a bit later in the newsletter. Also, just a reminder that dues are due starting in January each year, and we are getting lots of renewals, so thank you all. And for folks who join late in the year, they are paid for through the following year. Also, we need more pictures of your cars for the members' rides section on the website. Just send Neil a few pics and a little description of you and your car. Really simple. Reminder, Midnight on March 8th don't forget to "Spring" your clocks forward one hour, or you will be late all day! Yep, it's Daylight Savings. And March 17th is St. Patrick's Day and the first day of Spring is March 20th. Longer hours of sunshine bring us closer to Firebird Season! Remember, Keep Those Fabulous Firebirds Flying!

March Club Event

Saturday March 14th is our Club meeting. Starting at 5pm. At the Federal Way Round Table Pizza (34410 16th Av S Federal Way WA 98003). We still have a lot to go over as far as upcoming club events for this summer. Do you want to host a club meeting or host a cruise? Contact any club officers and we will make it happen. You can bring your suggestion to the meeting, and we can knock out Summer 2026 club events. We will be celebrating America's

250th Birthday every chance we get. How many of you were around and remember how awesome the summer of 1976 was? I want to have that same feeling for this year. And remember Pontiac started in 1926, so we want to remember that birthday as well. We are a Firebird club, but if there was never a Pontiac, there never would have been a Firebird! So, let's celebrate that as well wherever we go as a club this year. So, come on out, weather permitting, bring your Firebirds, enjoy some good pizza and good conversation with awesome members of this club and help plan and make the summer of 2026 AWESOME!

What We Did In February

Saturday February 7th we held our club meeting at the Lynnwood Round Table Pizza. Attendance was small, but we got some major things discussed. Those who made out, thank you. Those who attended were Neil & Kathy Warren, Jim & Judy Paradiso, Steve & Pricilla Leary, Jeff Kamberg Brian Sargent, Mike Flynn and Jeff Driscoll. We quickly went over January's meeting topics. Like The Early Bird Swap Meet in Puyallup, and whether we should skip swap meets all together as club purchasing booths. Swap meets are not what they were even 10 years ago. Very low attendance overall. So, we decided to pretty much not do swap meets. Brian Sargent will keep our spots at the Monroe swap meet in May, but only one booth. For new business we discussed show sponsorships and of course replacing the huge hole left by O'Reilly's pulling out. But we have Fenders & Fins \$300 for each show, super awesome Miker Flynn. We were still waiting on commitments from Firebird & Camaro Central, and Thermo Tech and Classic Car Addictions and Panther Road Classics. We did get \$100 from Northwest Classic Insurance for \$100. But Neil is still beating the bushes with Discount Tires, Les Schwab, and Ames is on board with swag. Also Waiting to hear from Butler. So, things are good, but we need more class or multi-class sponsors, I got in touch with Brett Liukkonen for car show flier art. More info on that later and we will show you this year's flyer art. I spoke on the need for more sponsorships for shows. And we went over the Cruise Puyallup 2026 schedule, and we brought up the need if any members would like to host any BBQ's or cruises. And I brought up if we should maybe make some stickers or clings to celebrate Americas 250th Birthday and Pontiacs 100th Anniversary using the club's logo. Most everyone liked the idea, so it probably will be discussed at the March meeting. We had an open discussion with Jim Paradiso, we discussed the upcoming Pontiacs on the Columbia show over Memorial Day weekend in The Dalles Oregon. We can gather and cruise down as two groups, some are going Thursday and others will go Friday. . Registration for the show on open. Just go to www.northwestlegends.com for all the information on this awesome show. Neil Went over the accounts \$6204.36 in checking and 1001.41 in savings so \$7205.77 total in the club's account. We had 49 renewals as of the February meeting. Neil was also asking for more members rides pictures. Just send Neil like 6 pics and a short write up on you and your car. And Neil does appreciate feedback, good or bad so he knows what you all think. We also discussed opening the Club Online Store, and it opened February 12th and closes March 20th. You still have time to check it out. So please go check it out and get all the club swag you will need. Also, a great suggestion was made that some items would make great raffle prizes for our

upcoming shows. Just sayin'. With that we opened the floor for discussion and adjourned the meeting. Rember, the meeting minutes are posted on the website.

Ferbruary 14th and 15th was the 58th Early Bird Swap Meet. Brian Sargent and I set up on Friday and jack also came by to drop off a few items to sell. Saturday morning I got there early to set up and Bill Rosen had a few '69 Firebird parts and his book display. Bill wrote a very informative book about how to buy and sell cars. It was a great day Saturday, no rain! But crowds were not what they used to be. It was awesome just hanging out and discussing Firebirds and other stuff. I didn't sell one thing. But Brian did well and Bill sold a few books and some of his Firebird parts. Jack Tindall sold a couple things. We didn't bother with Sunday, because overall attendance was not good, and Sunday would have been worse. Still had a lot of fun!

Your Upcoming 2026 Club Events. Please Mark Your Calendars

Saturday March 14th Club Meeting 5pm Federal Way Round Table Pizza

Saturday April 11 Club Meeting/ TBD

May 16th & 17th The 53rd Monroe Auto Swap Meet, Monroe Fair Grounds

*May 22nd-24th The Pontiacs OnThe Columbia Car Show Dalles Riverfront Park, The Dalles
OR*

June 7th 6th Annual Firebird & Camaro Show Burgermaster Issaquah WA

June 27th Movie & A Car Show Yelm WA. Car show 9am-1pm After awards, Smokey & The Bandit is The Movie. And there will be awards for Bandit Class All Firebirds.

June 28th 14th Annual NW American Muscle Car Show Griot's Garage

July 24-26th 38th Goodguys Pacific Northwest Nationals Puyallup Fair Grounds

August 9th 24th All Pontiac Show & Shine Burgermaster Issaquah WA

August 15th 38th Annual Northwest Muscle Car Meet Pop Keeney Stadium Bothell WA

*August 16th All Pontiac Club Presents 1st Annual All -American Car Show Groit's Garage
Tacoma WA*

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

Other Events of Interest Non Club Sponsored:

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 Wilkeson and Carbonado, 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. 1pm to 5pm

Cruiz'n Cole Enumclaw WA first Friday of each month. Dates are May 1st, June 5th, July 3rd, August 7th, September 4th

Cruise Puyallup Dates Are: April 25th, May 9th, June 6th, July 11th, August 8th, October 10th, November 28th, December 12th

Binford's Field of Dreams Every Friday Evening 4pm-10pm. First Binford's May 8th Live music, food trucks and An Awesome Way To End A Crazy Work 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.

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.wvfirebirds 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.

Welcome to our newest Club Members!

Thomas and Serena Renz from Graham WA. They own a Red 1978 Trans Am with a healthy 400 Chevy Small Block. Welcome to the club! Can't wait to see your car in person.

CAR SHOWS

2026 7th Firebird & Camaro Show (June 7th @ Burgermaster)

2026 23rd All Pontiac Show & Shine (Sunday August 9th) at Burgermaster

Just a reminder that we lost our Title sponsor for both shows. \$2,000 we cannot count on this year. We are making steady progress on sponsorships, but of course we always need more. So, we need your help with going to local businesses and even online to try and get as much local support for our shows. Remind them that we are 501c Non-Profit and we donate proceeds from the show to donate to Northwest Harvest, and well as a huge toy drive to benefit Santa's Castle. They can use any money or items donated as a tax write off as Advertising Expense. If you need a downloadable file with sponsorship levels, and receipt, just contact Neil Warren or myself and we can get them to you. The Firebird & Camaro show is approaching fast, so we will need volunteers to help set up, and raffle sales. We will send out a sign-up sheet with positions we will need help with. Good thing about the Firebird & Camaro Show is folks can park where they want. Very easy. Also, since the club online store is now open, what a great way to donate to both car show's raffle prizes! Something to consider. And we have car show art! Brett Liukkonen has once again volunteered his services with updated show flyer art. You will see them at the meeting March 14th, and they will be on Facebook and the website after the meeting.

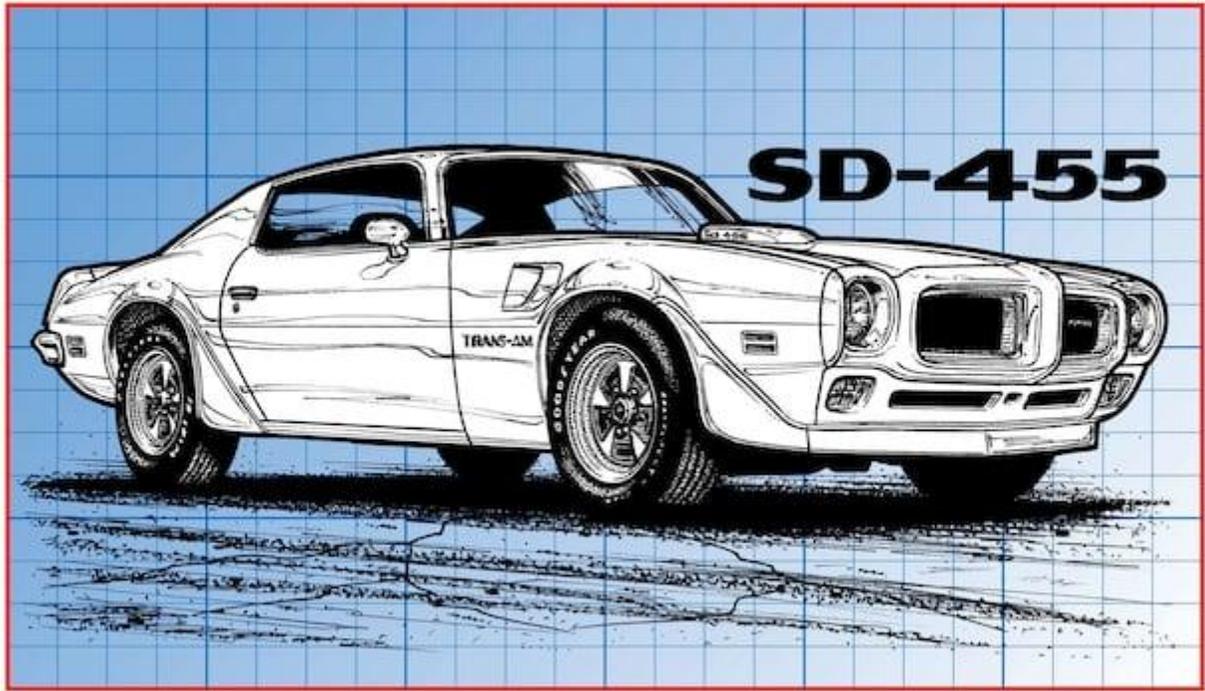
WEBSITE

Be sure to check out the club website. It has been completely revamped, thanks to Neil Warren. It is way easier to navigate and it 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 please include a short write up about you and your car.

The Members Rides web pages will continue to grow, but we need you all to send Neil pictures so he can get them on the website. We have plenty of room for lots 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 members' cars, check out the club website at: www.wwfirebirds.com

The 1973 Super Duty 455 Trans Am And Formula Firebird

Written by The Author on June 9, 2014
Scott Teeters – High Performance Pontiac Magazine



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.

MEMBER'S UPDATES

Bill Rosen has written a book and he would like you all to check it out. It's a very cool book. Lot's of great information in there!

You may already know this, but in case you don't I wanted to tell you that I wrote a book that was released this past Sunday. It's definitely a car book, just not Pontiac or Firebird specific. It's called *Bill's Guide: Buying and Selling Used Cars*. It's doing well on Amazon with 5-star reviews. Currently #1 in Automotive Buyers Guides. See the screen shot from today.

Would you mind following the link for Amazon below and take a look at the summary and reviews of the book? I'm wondering if it's something that might interest the club. Maybe I could share about the book for a few minutes at some future meeting, why I wrote it and its purpose. It is super practical for anyone who ever buys or sells a used car, Firebird or otherwise. Let me know what you think.

Amazon link: <https://a.co/d/oB27WFO>

Bill Rosen
1969 Firebird 400 4 speed convertible (restoration under way)

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 open 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 to me at a70formula400@aol.com or text me at 206-349-1282 so I can get them in the newsletter.

***2 For Sale:**

Russ Nobel has some parts for sale. Here is what he has: Jeff, I have parts that I took off my 1967 Firebird 400 engine:

Alternator

Fuel Pump

Power Steering Pump

Edelbrock Water Pump

A/C compressor and mounting brackets and hardware

Billet pulleys for crankshaft with A/C and waterpump

I also have an OEM fan and an electric fan.

I really don't know how much to ask for them. I'm not looking to get retail or top dollar, I just don't want to give them away. I'm cleaning out my garage, so I need them gone fairly soon.
Russ Nobel

This is from Member Jerry Swenson:

*2

Hi there. I'm one of your invisible members in the south sound. I have a question. We have a real nice '69 Firebird, but it's going to be completely reincarnated over the winter. That means I'm going to turn it into a real nice pro-touring car. All of the running gear and front clip and rear suspension is going to be replaced. I'm going to have a pile of good parts looking for a home at ridiculous (cheap) prices. The original 350 runs great. I'm curious if someone in the club might want a killer deal on stuff. It's a running and driving car today, so they can see that it works before I tear it apart. If you know someone, please keep us in mind. I'm in Olympia and visits to my shop are always welcome.

Thanks much,

Jerry Swenson

360-250-8004

JERRYANDHELEN@gmail.com

Non-Member Ads

If you see something for sale that seems like a great deal, but maybe you don't need it, text me and I will get it listed in here.

<p>Member Owned/ Recommended</p>

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.

Racing Automatic Transmissions

13435 1/2 Greenwood Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98133 Ed Roark, (206) 579-6160 E-mail:

ed@racingautotrans.com

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Below I an continuing the Firebirds Numbers Crunching. If you have been following, it is supposed to be the 1977 Firebirds, But I can not find that issue! So, I am going with the 1978 Firebirds. I will go through and find the 1977 Firebirds Numbers Crunching for April's newsletter. And One Last Note.....

Congratulations To The Seattle Seahawks and Sam Darnold!

Your 2026 Super Bowl 60 Champions! Go Hawks!!

NUMBER CRUNCHING

The codes that count on the 1978 Firebird.

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO

When it came to the Firebird in 1978, the prevailing philosophy at Pontiac seemed to be, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Thus, '78 was a year of subtle refinement. Alterations to the body shell were minimal, but there were a few enhancements under the skin to cheer about. One was a 20-horsepower increase applied to the W72 400 T/A option. Retaining the previous year's power rating was considered an achievement in the emissions-laden 1970s, but to pick up another 20 was cause for celebration. Another was a new handling option code named WS6.

True corner cravers got beautiful 8-inch-wide Snowflake wheels, 225/70x15 raised white-letter radials, a .75-inch rear sway bar in place of the standard .625 piece, along with beefier springs, stiffer shocks and constant ratio 14:1 high-effort power steering with this option.

T/A sales were still on an upswing and there was no end in sight. The mere sight of the nine-year-old body style with the wide rims and fat Goodyears was enough to get the adrenaline pumping in any red-blooded, lead-footed "Amerkin."



The VIN is stamped on a plate that is attached to the driver's side of the dashboard and is visible through the windshield. A sample serial number for a Trans Am model appears as follows:

2W87Z8N100001

2—Pontiac

W—Trans Am (U-Formula, S-base Firebird, T-Esprit)

87—Hardtop coupe

Z—400 Pontiac (A-231 Buick, U-305 Chevy, L-350 Chevy, K-403 Olds)

8—Last digit of model year

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

100001—Consecutive Sequence Number

COWL DATA PLATES

A data plate was attached to the top of the cowl, just ahead of the windshield, on the driver's side. The Van Nuys plant rejoined Norwood in producing Trans Ams in 1978. An example of a Norwood plate for a Trans Am reads as follows:

Line 1: BODY BY FISHER

Line 2: ST 78 2FS87 N 123456 BDY

Line 3: TR 62B A51 24L 24U PNT

Line 4: 06D A31 WS4 TN

Line 5: 240951

Line 6: GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

Line 1 is self-explanatory.

Line 2 denotes the last two digits of the model year (78) followed by the body style number (2FS87 base model). Code "N" denotes the Norwood assembly plant. The remaining numbers (123456) comprise the consecutive body number, which has no direct correlation to the VIN.

Line 3 indicates the interior trim (TR) code (62B) in this car:

TOTAL PRODUCTION

Model	Man. Trans	Auto Trans	Total
Firebird base V6, V8	—	—	32,671
Esprit V6, V8	—	—	36,926
Formula	—	—	24,346
Trans Am 400 (L78)	6,777	57,035	63,812
Trans Am 400 (W72)	4,112	4,139	8,251
Trans Am 403 (L80)	—	8,969	8,969
Special Edition 400 (Y82)	489	2,856	3,345
Special Edition 400 (Y82)	20	68	88
Special Edition 403 (Y84)	—	210	210
Gold Edition 400 (Y88)	1,267	6,529	7,796
Gold Edition 403 (Y88)	—	880	880
Model Total			93,943
Grand Total			187,294

SERIAL NUMBERS

The first character is a number denoting the Division. The second is a letter that indicates the series. Symbols three and four denote hardtop coupe, which was the only Firebird configuration. In the fifth place is an alphabetical code indicating the engine. The sixth place holds a digit for the year and the seventh is an "N" for the Norwood, Ohio, assembly plant or an "L" for the Van Nuys, Calif., plant. The final six digits are the sequence number that ran 100001 up.

HIGH PERFORMANCE PONTIAC 19

NUMBER CRUNCHING

Continued from page 19

camel velour bucket seats. A51 is the modular seat location code followed by body color code (24L 24U) Martinique Blue. Note the use of a double coding for the paint. If the car was ordered with a Canopy top, the "24U" would be replaced with the corresponding letter code of the top color. "L" and "U" designate lower and upper body. Van Nuys-built Trans Ams have a "W" before each paint code, possibly denoting the water-based enamel used at that plant.

Line 4 lists the date code for when the body was assembled. On the Data plate, "06" represents the sixth month of the year (June) and "D" represents the week, the fourth week of June. Code A31, we have been told by two reliable sources, denotes power windows. The "WS4" code denotes a Trans Am; the Formula's code would read "W66." We have also found a few Norwood-produced, Gold Edition T/A's with the "Y88" option code stamped in place of the "WS4."

The final notation on line 4 is "TN." In all the cars we've seen, this notation matches that of the dash and console, while the trim code on line 3 (62B) matches the bucket seat color. Since our example has velour camel interior, the coding may seem redundant unless you take into account the fact that there were multiple interior color combinations offered in '78. This leaves the possibility that Fisher Body began to split-code the interior with bucket seat color code listed on line 3, and dash and console color listed in letters on line 4 to commonize the coding procedure. This has not been verified yet, so regard this information as a speculation.

Line 5 may possibly be an accessory line. It has not yet been deciphered.

Line 6 is self-explanatory.

ENGINE BLOCK CODES

Pontiac stamped the two-letter engine block code (listed here) on the front passenger's side of its V8 block below the cylinder deck. The last eight digits of the VIN can be found adjacent to the timing cover on the passenger's side of the block.

Oldsmobile placed its engine code on a scanner label (sticker) that was affixed to the rocker cover on the front driver's side of its 403 engine.

The Chevrolet-built 305- and 350-cubic-inch engines had their block codes stamped on a machined pad located just below the cylinder head deck on the front passenger's side of the block.

Cu. In.	Code	Carb	Net HP	Trans
305 Chevy	CTH	2-bbl.	145	Manual
305 Chevy, Calif.	CRZ,CTT,CTZ,CTK	2-bbl.	135	Auto
305 Chevy	CEM,CTJ,CTX,CTR,CRX	2-bbl.	135	Auto
350 Chevy	CHR	4-bbl.	170	Manual
350 Chevy, Calif.	CHJ,CHT	4-bbl.	160	Auto
400 Pontiac	YA,YU	4-bbl.	180	Auto
400 Pontiac	WC	4-bbl.	220	Manual
400 Pontiac	X7	4-bbl.	220	Auto
403 Olds, high alt.	U2, U3,U5,U6	4-bbl.	185	Auto
403 Olds, Calif.	VJ,YK,VL,VN	4-bbl.	185	Auto

CYLINDER HEAD CASTING NUMBERS

Cylinder heads on Pontiac V8s can be identified by a two-

digit casting number/letter found above the center exhaust ports. For 1978 Firebirds, they are as follows:

Cu. In.	Net HP	Casting No.
400	180/220	6X

CARBURETORS

All carbs are Rochesters.

Cu. In.	HP	Trans	Size	Part No.
305 Chevy	145	Manual	2-bbl.	17058111-121
305 Chevy, Calif.	135	Auto	2-bbl.	17058412-414
305 Chevy	135	Auto	2-bbl.	17058112-114
350 Chevy	170	Manual	4-bbl.	17058203
350 Chevy, Calif.	160	Auto	4-bbl.	17058502-504
400 Pontiac	180	Auto	4-bbl.	17058276-78
400 Pontiac	220	Manual	4-bbl.	17058263
400 Pontiac	220	Auto	4-bbl.	17058266
403 Olds, Calif.	185	Auto	4-bbl.	17058553
403 Olds, high alt.	185	Auto	4-bbl.	17058258

INTAKE MANIFOLDS

Casting numbers for Pontiac-made intake manifolds are as follows:

Cu. In.	2-Bbl.	4-Bbl.
400		10003395

ALTERNATOR

Part No.	Amps	Application
1103043	42	Std. (305, 350, 400, 403)
1102480/486	61	A/C or R window defog (400, 403) A/C and R window defog (305, 350)
N/A	63	A/C and R window defog or HD (400, 403)

TRANSMISSION CODES

Transmission codes (for V8s only) and locations are as follows:

4-Speed Manual Transmissions: Coded M-21 on the option which would lead one to think Muncie M-21, the transmission was installed in the W72 T/A is actually a Borg-Warner gearbox. A two-letter code was stamped on the rear of the side cover case to identify the Warner 4-speed transmission. The Muncie light-trans, code MM4, was used behind the 305 and 350 Chevy engines (or the 301 Pontiac—see asterisk below). It is identified by a 2-inch high code stenciled in yellow on the passenger's side of the case.

3-Speed Automatic Transmissions: The Turbo 350's code is the governor cover found on the middle rear driver's side of the case. Also on the cover are the build date code, production year shift. The VIN was stamped on the lower driver's side of the case.

Cu. In.	Man. Trans	Auto Trans	Comments
	4-Sp.	3-Sp.	
301 Pontiac	ST	—	Muncie *
301 Pontiac	—	MR	Turbo 350 *
301 Pontiac	—	MX	Turbo 350 *
305 Chevy	ST	—	Muncie
305 Chevy	—	KJ	Turbo 350
305 Chevy	—	JC	Turbo 350
350 Chevy	ST	—	Muncie
350 Chevy	—	MA	Turbo 350
350 Chevy	—	JD	Turbo 350
350 Chevy	—	MJ	Turbo 350, Calif.
400 Pont.(W72)	ZT	—	Warner T-10
400 Pontiac	—	MG	Turbo 350
400 Pontiac	—	MJ	Turbo 350 Calif.
400 Pontiac	—	MT	Turbo 350

400 Pontiac	—	MC	Turbo 350
400 Pont.(W72)	—	MK	Turbo 350
403 Olds	—	MZ	Turbo 350, Calif.
403 Olds	—	LP	Turbo 350, Calif., Alt.

* The 1978 Service Manual lists these trans codes for 301-powered Firebirds. The service manual makes no additional mention of 301s being available for the Firebird in 1978 nor does any other source. All sources indicate that the 305 Chevy was used in place of the 301, as stated in 1977 Number Crunching (Feb. '95).

REAR AXLE CODES

A three-character code was stamped on the front of the passenger's side axle tube to the left of the carrier case, to indicate axle ratio and type.

Gear Ratio	Standard	Safe-T-Track
2.41	2PJ	2PS
2.56	2PH	2PT
3.08	2PC	2PW
3.23	2PD	2PX
3.42	2PE	2PY

WHEELS

Wider 15x8 Snowflake wheels were available for the T/A as part of the WS6 handling package.

Type	Size	Code	Part No.	Application
Steel	15x6	RF	9590205	Base/Esprit
Steel	15x7	AE	326875	Base/Esprit
Rally II	15x6	KG	526566	Base/Esprit
Rally II	15x7	HW	525710	Base/Esprit/For/TA
Snowflake/gray	15x7	KJ	527040	All
Snowflake/gold	15x7	KH	547928	All
Snowflake/blue	15x7	JB	549361	Sky Bird
Snowflake/red	15x7	N/A	N/A	Red Bird
Snowflake/gold	15x8	JF	10003208	WS6
Snowflake/gray	15x8	JJ	10002467	WS6

EXTERIOR COLOR CODES

Starlight Black and Cameo White remained on the T/A's availability list; Buccaneer Red was renamed Mayan Red; Brentwood Brown and Sterling Silver were replaced with Chesterfield Brown and Platinum. Martinique Blue and Solar Gold (LE only) were new additions and Goldenrod Yellow was dropped. Lombard Blue was exclusive to the Sky Bird.

Color	Fisher Code	Color	Fisher Code
Cameo White	11	Solar Gold	50
Platinum	15	Sundance Yellow	51
Starlight Black	19	Laredo Brown	63
Glacier Blue	22	Ember Mist	67
Martinique Blue	24	Chesterfield Brown	69
Lombard Blue	30	Mayan Red	75
Red Bird Red	42	Carmine	77
Berkshire Green	48		

INTERIOR COLOR CODES

Pontiac mixed up the availabilities of the interior layouts to include a color Appointment Mix package, which combined white seats, door panels, rear seat armrests and other trim with a contrasting color for the instrument panel, carpeting, steering column, console and rear package shelf. Interiors were offered in standard vinyl, custom Doeskin vinyl or Lombardy velour. The white seats with contrasting interior trim package was discontinued in 1978.

INTERIOR COLORS

Color	Std. Bucket	Custom Bucket	Velour
White	11R1	11N1	—
Black	19R1	19N1	19B1
Blue	—	24N1	24B1
Camel Tan	62R1	62N1	62B1
Carmine	74R1	74N1	74B1

COLORED APPOINTMENTS

Colors	Standard	Custom
White/Blue	11R1/24X	11N1/24X
White/Camel Tan	11R1/62X	11N1/62X
White/Ember	11R1/67X	11N1/67X
White/Carmine	11R1/74X	11N1/74X

CORDOVA (VINYL) TOP COLORS FOR FIREBIRD CANOPY TOP

Color	Code	Color	Code
White	11T	Green	44T
Platinum	15T	Sand	61T
Black	19T	Claret	79T
Blue	22T		

1978 FACTS

- Prices rose to \$4,593 for base Firebirds, \$4,897 for the Esprit, \$5,533 for the Formula and \$5,889 for the T/A.

- Powertrain choices were juggled once again, and it was getting more difficult to determine who made the engine under the peaked hood of the Firebird. The 350 Pontiac engine was replaced by a 350 Chevy powerplant and the 301 Pontiac was replaced, as stated in 1977 Number Crunching, by the Chevy 305. The Chevy 350 was rated 170 horsepower federal and 160 in California and in high-altitude regions. The oil pans of the Pontiac 400s were equipped with a baffle to reduce oil starvation in hard cornering.

- The front grille mesh was altered in 1978 to reflect a diamond motif, which matched perfectly with the Snowflake wheels.

- Hood Bird applications for 1978 were as follows: Red/Charcoal is used with exterior color codes 11 and 15, Gold-yellow Orange with codes 19, 24, 69, and 75, Gold/Matte Gold with code 19 and Gold/Bronze (newer-style bird) with code 50 only.

- The Formula got Rally II wheels as standard equipment.

- Fisher body began to produce T-tops for the Firebird in 1978.

The panels differed from the Hurst Hatches in size and color. The Fisher panels were larger; they met with the end of the side window and were better integrated into the body. They had a monochromatic look, losing the bright bands that outlined the Hurst hatches. Both designs were available in 1978.

- The W68 Red Bird package replaced the W60 Sky Bird package at midseason. It was basically the same package with a different color.

- Stereos were enlarged to include an AM/FM cassette and AM/FM CB.

- The Y88 Gold Edition T/A's with Fisher T-tops replaced the black SEs in early 1978. They caught on quickly, but their claim to fame soon became their Achilles' heel. The Van Nuys plant switched to a water-based enamel paint for health and environmental reasons. The new paint could not provide the proper high-gloss finish with the metallic gold. Paint flaws were many, which spurred many warranty claims. Finally, Pontiac reverted to black after 8,666 gold units were produced. 🐦

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Swap Meet Boths at the Early Bird Swap Meet February 14th.

