



WESTERN WASHINGTON FIREBIRDS



Official Newsletter

April 2026

Co-Presidents: Jeff & Karen Driscoll (206-349-1282) Vice President: Jim Paradiso (206-930-3234)
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,

Ok, it seems like most everyone likes the new format for the newsletter so we will keep it. The 2 column days are now part of the club's history. Happy Spring Everybody! March sure was wet and a cool one for sure, but days are getting longer and with more sunshine, comes warmer weather. Karen and I were lucky as we got to get a little taste of summer on our Texas trip in March, which was why we missed the club meeting. But we had a sunny week and saw 80's and low 90's temperatures, and it was AWESOME! We got to go to the local 1/8th mile race track and watch diesel vs gas shootout. Very cool and some very quick pickup trucks. During test and tune, the gas powered cars were sandbagging, because when the actual rounds started, the gas-powered cars kicked butt. And it was total heads-up racing, no brackets. There was one Tesla that went down the track for test and tune, he was super quick & silent and would have kicked most street cars butts. He ran low 6 seconds times, at like 125mph. So, April's club event is the club meet on Saturday April 11th at 5pm at the Tappero's home in Auburn. Details later in the newsletter. We are hoping for decent temps and no rain for the meeting so we can maybe drive our Firebirds to the meeting. Hope to see you all at the meeting! And **Happy Easter!! Also, Let's Keep Those Fabulous Firebirds Flying!**

April Club Event

Saturday April 11th is our Club meeting. Starting at 5pm. At the Tappero's home, located at 21209 SE Green Valley Rd Auburn WA. This is going to be a Create Your Own Pizza Party! We will start the meeting part at 5pm and hopefully start the pizza party by 6pm. We still have a lot to discuss with upcoming club events and trying to get everything set up and coordinated. We are still in need of show sponsorship. But things are coming along. We should have items ordered on the club's online store, which was opened for a few weeks in late February and middle of March.. So please bring sides and desert type items to compliment the pizza. This will be a super

fun evening, and let's hope for fair weather so we can possibly drive our Firebirds to the meeting. And who knows, maybe have a fire to hang out by and enjoy the Green River. Please, if you have questions and RSVP please contact Diane Tappero at **253-350-5804** or email her at **didi66@comcast.net**

What We Did In March

Saturday March 14th, we held our club meeting at the Federal Way Round Table Pizza. Karen and I were on our Texas trip so Jim Paradiso and Neil Warren led the meeting. The meeting was at the Federal Way Roundtable Pizza. Those who attended were Neil & Kathy Warren, Brett Liukkonen, Jon Vollstedt, Thomas Renz, Mike & Diane Tappero, Jim & Judy Paradiso, John Barcenas, Brian Sargent, and Rod Richardson. Old business discussed, was the continued need to gain more sponsors for both shows. Still trying to hammer down Panther Road Classics and Thermo Tech. Need as many as we can get, even at the \$100 level, every little bit helps. Also discussed the Club merchandise online store was open till March 20th, and items ordered will be available at the April 11th meeting. And a reminder about the Monroe Swap Meet coming up May 16th, 17th and 18th. Flyer art is done and first round will be printed as soon as possible. Sean Thatcher is on board to do the printing again for us. That saves a big chunk of money for both shows. Will try to have them by the April meeting. A huge shout out to Brett Liukkonen and Sean Thatcher for doing the artwork and printing of the flyers. Their help is immeasurable for the shows. Huge cost savings for the club. Registration will be open online for the Firebird & Camaro show starting April 10. We also had Bill Nelson from the NW Legends GTO Club with a presentation for the upcoming Pontiacs On The Columbia Show, over Memorial Weekend. Please register ASAP, as it's very simple on their website, www.northwestlegends.com. The hotel rooms are going fast! So go to the website for all that important info and get your room. We will be trying to get caravans to the Dalles Jim Paradiso will be going over on Thursday May 21st. And I am sure there will be one leaving Friday May 22nd in the morning. For the Presidents Report, I was asking for input about the new newsletter format. Check the website and Facebook page for upcoming club events. Also, let me know of any shows or cruise-ins in your areas so we can coordinate members to show up and support events. We need more north end meeting locations and asking for volunteers to maybe host a meeting at your homes. Neil and Kathy Warren found a possible location in Issaquah, the IHOP. They have a meeting area. And maybe a Burgermaster? And looking for anyone who has a great idea for a cruise. For the Vice Presidents Report, we left the floor open for discussion. For the Treasurers Report, as of the end of February, we had \$7637.29 in checking and \$1,001.42 in savings for a total of \$8,638.71. We had \$134.68 in expenses and revenue of \$1,499.20. For the website discussion, any suggestion for events or shows we want to do as a club. Contact any of the officers and we can get it all worked out. Also we need more pictures for the Members Rides section on the website. Just send the pics to Neil with a short simple write up, with your name and tell us about your car, and maybe a little about how you became a Firebird Fan. Also please provide feedback as to how you like the website of what you think could be added to improve it. They announced that the next

meeting will be April 11th at the Tappero's home. With that the opened the floor for discussion. And the adjourned the meeting.

Your Upcoming 2026 Club Events. Please Mark Your Calendars

Saturday April 11 Club Meeting 5pm The Tappero's home in Auburn WA

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

May 22nd-24th The Pontiacs On The Columbia Car Show Dalles Riverfront Park, The Dalles OR (Hotel Rooms are going FAST! So go on their website for hotel info.)

May 24th and 25th The 26th Annual Cruizin' To Colby Car Show. All info at www.cruizn2colby.com

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

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

Other Events of Interest Non Club Sponsored:

Saturday April 12th Cars & Lunch Cruise-in Dairy Queen Marysville WA

April 17th-19th At The Washington State Spring Fair (The 2nd weekend) Cruise Into Spring Car Show Puyallup WA

April 17th 5:30pm Classic Car Cruise-In at Maynards, Silverdale WA

April 24th 1st Top Gun Muffler Early Spring Cruise In 4pm-7pm Sumner WA

April 25th 43rd Annual Tulip Ralley Mt. Vern April 30th Mt. Vernon WA

April 26th 11am Les Schwab Tumwater Car Meet Tumwater WA

April 30th 9am Vintage Car Show/Collector Car Appreciation Day Vancouver WA

Please contact me if you here of and shows or cruises you find out about, so I can add them to these lists. 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.

Cruise To The Village Open every Friday 4pm-7pm Starts April 17th 3509 East 72nd Tacoma WA 98443

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!

Michael Harding from Kent. He has a 1978 Y88 Gold SE Trans Am

Jon Vollstedt from Seattle. Jon has a 1967 Firebird 400, black with Red interior.

John Lassa from Puyallup. John has a white 1982 Trans Am 350.

Welcome To Western Washington Firebirds and can't wait to meet all of you and your cars!

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 me 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. Registration for the Firebird & Camaro Show will be open starting April 10th.

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.wvfirebirds.com

The Origin Of The Beloved “Screaming Chicken”

A beloved symbol of 1970s car culture. An icon of disco era design. A redneck’s red-letter regalia. It’s gaudy. Garish. Tacky. Even vulgar. And we love it! This is the story of Pontiac’s Screaming Chicken, the largest and most recognizable decal in automotive history.

Lost to time is the name of the man that first referred to the graphic as a “Screaming Chicken.” The nickname came quickly. By the late 1970s, even *Car and Driver* was using the label. No doubt derogatory, over time the epithet has become one of endearment, although the brand’s hardest purists still hate it. That bunch landed on “hood bird” four decades ago and refuse to budge. Others go with “Rising Phoenix” or simply “Firebird.” The ignorant usually refer to the massive flaming fowl as an Eagle or a Hawk, or a Phoenix.

Pontiac officially called it the Trans Am Hood Decal and introduced it as option code WW7 on the 1973 Trans Am. At \$55, it was popular and would remain on the pony car’s option list, in one form or another and attached to many different option codes, for 11 years. In 1976, Pontiac’s Firebird brochure referred to the Screaming Chicken as “the available giant Firebird hood decal.” Starting that year the unmistakable graphic was glued to the hood of every Special Edition, Anniversary and Pace Car model Trans Am sold until 1981.

Many inside General Motors did not like the large illustration and were surprised by the public’s enthusiasm for the enormous hood bird, as was *Car and Driver*, which in 1977 called the Trans Am’s graphics cornball. GM designer John Schinella wasn’t surprised by its success. He knew it was going to be a hit and fought his bosses for years to get it on the car.

Norm Inouye was its creator, and his efforts on the project got him working with Bill Mitchell, GM’s legendary design czar. The young artist was employed in GM’s Graphics department from 1968–71 and put the first oversized hood bird on the new 1970 ½ Trans Am, at the request of his boss Bill Porter.

“Pontiac proposed to do a decal at the time,” Inouye told author Michael Lamm for his book *The Fabulous Firebird* published in 1979. “Bill Mitchell walked through the paint shop one day and saw them working on it and didn’t like it. He didn’t want to do it, so the whole idea was shelved for two years. Actually, all the working drawings for that large decal were done before I left in April of 1971. But it didn’t appear on the car until 1973.”

Porter, who designed the 1968 Pontiac GTO, was in charge of the Firebird design studio and is responsible for the shape of the Second Generation Firebird and Trans Am, as well as Pontiac’s Honeycomb wheel. The man is a genius and a national treasure. Big surprise: he’s also the guy that came up with the first hood bird concept, sketching it on a napkin in 1970. He thought wrapping the bird’s wings around the Trans Am’s reverse-facing hood scoop would help integrate the appendage into the car.

“The original idea for the big bird decal was done in my studio on a proposed 1971 show Trans Am, in blue and white,” he told journalist Gary Witzenburg for his 1982 book *Firebird: America’s Premiere Performance Car*. “But Mitchell saw it in our paint shop and hated it. He told me to get it off the car. ‘It looks like something on a Macy’s truck,’ he said.”

It wasn't the design of the graphic that chaffed Mitchell, it was its enormous size. On Mitchell's watch smaller winged bird badges appeared on GM's Firebird III in 1959, a radical concept car designed by Norm James, as well as first and second-generation production Firebirds from 1967–72.

Until 1970, these images all had the animal's wings pointed down toward its feet. Norm Inouye's version, however, flipped that, pointing the wings, now shaped more like flames, up past the bird's head. His new design first appeared on the 1969 Banshee II concept car and a tweaked version was used on the nose of 1970–72 Trans Ams. It wasn't exactly small; the decal on the beak of those early second-generation cars is about 12 inches wide.

In August of 1971 Schinella took over the Firebird studio from Porter and began work on updating the Trans Am's visuals for 1973. He ditched the blue base color and stripped the car of its stripes. "I felt the old stripe up the middle was sort of dated and trite," he told Witzenburg. With Roy Hill, who had just returned from assignment at Vauxhall in England, Schinella then added two new colors, red and Brewster Green. Then he went to work resurrecting the idea of the Screaming Chicken, taking his cause to the people. He started driving around town in a Formula Firebird dressed with a Trans Am rear spoiler and a TA hood decorated with the oversized bird. "We took it out to a few gas stations and drive ins and the people went berzerk [sic]," he told Witzenburg. "I mean, absolutely came unglued! They couldn't believe it and they loved it! 'Where'd you get that? Where can I get one?' It attracted so much attention it was almost like you were walking down the street with no clothes on."

Encouraged—no, convinced—Schinella decided to repitch the idea to his bosses, including Mitchell who still thought the bird was in bad taste. He started refining the idea with Bill Davis, experimenting with the decal's shape and size. "We did take the Firebird emblem, though, and by using that as a basis and adding our own designs, the 1973 chicken began to evolve," he told Lamm. "We started working on it in 1971–72, and believe me, the development program to get that bird just right became very intense."

The original design was much larger than the bird that went into production in 1973, and the initial tests required a seam down the center because no company at the time produced decal material that could handle a design that large. "So while 3M got busy trying to come up with a material big enough, Bill and I proceeded to make up new birds in different colors—reds, blues, and light greens with a little yellow kicker to them," he told Lamm.

When the day came Schinella had three Trans Ams, one white, one green and one red, each festooned with color-coordinated chickens, waiting for his bosses in the GM Design Center Auditorium. No one was impressed. But then Pontiac General Manager Jim McDonald green lit the graphic that would become synonymous with the Trans Am. "Let's give this a try," he said. "John wants the bird standard on the Trans Am, but let's make it an option. We've got nothing to lose. If it's not accepted we can withdraw it from the market. If it is, we can expand on it." "I don't know how John did it," Porter said later in an interview. "Maybe times had changed. John had a way with Mitchell that I never did."

With the Trans Ams growing sales and the bird's popularity, even Bill Mitchell praised the decal, telling Witzenburg years later, "It was terrific. It was that kind of thing that really put them ahead of Chevrolet. The Camaro didn't have anything like that."

The Screaming Chicken was so successful, other manufacturers began to steal the concept, especially after *Smokey and the Bandit* ignited Trans Am sales. Just to name a few, Jeep dressed the CJ, J10 and Cherokee with the Golden Eagle package starting in 1976, Ford put a giant snake on the hood of the King Cobra Mustang in 1978 and Chevy got into the act with the El Camino

Royal Knight that same year. Schinella was a hero, he would go on to design the Trans Am's numerous facelifts throughout the 1970s, and is the creator of the black and gold paint scheme that debuted in 1976 and made cinematic history with Burt behind the wheel in 1977.

As engine power and performance waned through the decade, Trans Am sales increased and the Screaming Chicken only got bigger as its design evolved. The original bird, measuring 45.5-inches wide and 44.5-inches long, lasted until 1978. This is the bird that also appears on the black and gold (Y81 or Y82) 1976 50th Anniversary Limited Edition model and the Y81 or Y82 1977 and 1978 Special Edition.

However, in 1978 there were actually two Screaming Chickens. A new larger bird with more elaborate wings debuted on the new Y88 Gold Special Edition, which cost an extra \$1263, four dollars more than the Y82 and Y84 Black Special Editions. The larger bird was 47 inches wide and 55-inches tall, and it was the first with its head pointed toward the passenger side of the car. Pontiac retired the original Screaming Chicken design in 1979.

That year all Trans Ams, except the 10th Anniversary cars, got the new larger bird used on the 1978 Gold Special Edition. A new even larger bird with its wings extending onto the front fenders was used on the Anniversary models.

In 1980 and 1981 all naturally aspirated Trans Ams used the same bird as the standard 1979 models, only now the pattern was an inch wider. Pontiac also created, for the new turbocharged Trans Am, a new Screaming Chicken with a more feathery wing design to go with the asymmetrical hood bulge.

Once again the bird faced the same side of the car, but this time it was spitting an enlarged flame up the hood bulge toward the driver's face. A variation of this bird appeared on the 1980 Indy 500 Pace Car model, the 1981 Daytona 500 Pace Car Edition, and the 1980 GMC Indy Hauler pickups, although on the truck it was smaller and the bird's head faced the passenger side of the vehicle. Th

The following year the all-new third-generation of the Firebird and Trans Am hit the streets. Trans Ams were no longer turbocharged, but they retained the asymmetrical hood bulge design. Sadly, the oversized Screaming Chicken was gone.

In 1985 Pontiac refreshed the Trans Am's styling, flattening its hood and a simplified "outline style" version of the big bird was back. At 38 inches wide and 41 inches tall it was considerably smaller than previous versions, and its face was again pointing to the passenger side of the car. Option code DX1 was called Hood Applique Decal and it cost \$95. But times had changed and the Screaming Chicken was no longer popular. Pontiac discontinued the iconic graphic after the 1987 model year.

Ironically, thanks to nostalgia and the collector car market's invigorated enthusiasm for Second-Generation Trans Ams, the big hood bird is today an enduring symbol of the defunct GM brand. Pontiac and the Firebird might be dead, but the Screaming Chicken's flame flickers on.

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

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ed@racingautotrans.com

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Website: www.classicindustries.com

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Website: www.yearone.com

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Just a few pics of the local 1/8 mile dragstrip in Academy Texas. Super fun and warm March night.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

The codes that count on the 1979 Firebird.

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO

After a two-year stint with the cat's-eyes front end treatment and three years with the same tail panel design, the Firebird got a much needed facelift for the 1979 season.

The new nose featured a gentler slope from the hood to the bumper tip to improve the aerodynamics. The fascia's most striking feature, however, was the illusion of a grilleless front end; the split grilles were lowered to the bumper area. Besides providing cool air for the radiator, the grilles housed the parking lamp/turn signal units and were shaped much like the contemporary Corvette. The quad headlights were retained, but they were separated and tunneled into the soft plastic nose cone. There was even a Halogen headlight option that came standard on the Anniversary T/A's. Of course, the front air dam and wheel spats had to be redesigned to integrate with the new front end. Changes to the rear spats and spoiler followed. All were made from a new plastic that was more forgiving than previous composites.

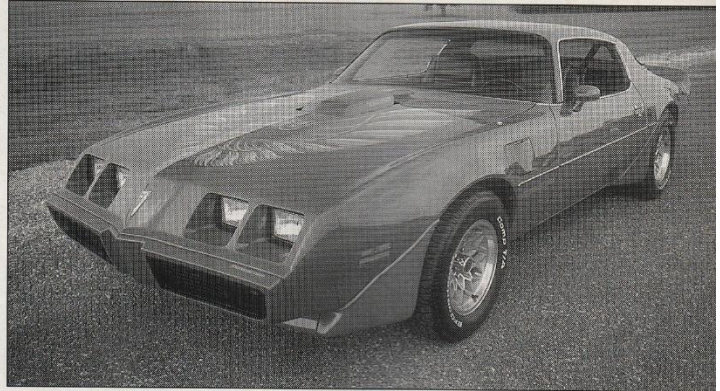
The license plate mounting point was dropped to the bumper and the gas door was styled to look like the taillight lenses, creating a full-width taillight effect in the rear. Trans Ams and Formulas got blackout covers on the lenses. Overall length increased from 196.8 inches to 198.1, and width decreased by four-tenths of an inch to 73 inches.

The T/A production surpassed 100,000 units for the first time and overall Firebird sales soared past 200,000. Nineteen seventy-nine would be the most successful year for the Firebird and Trans Am alike in the first- and second-generation bodies. And all of this with a 10-year-old design.

TOTAL PRODUCTION

Of the T/A 6.6 engines held over from 1978, 8,326 were installed in Trans Ams and 346 were installed in Formulas. Red Bird production totalled 4,248. Of the 24,851 Formulas produced, 16,831 were equipped with the W50 Appearance Group.

Model	Man. Trans	Auto Trans	Total
Firebird base V6, V8	—	—	38,642
Esprit V6, V8	—	—	30,853
Formula	—	—	24,851
Trans Am 301 (L37)	1,590	7,015	8,605
Trans Am 301 T-Top	1,530	3,301	4,831
Trans Am 400 (W72)	2,485	—	2,485
Trans Am 400 T-Top	2,917	—	2,917
Trans Am 403 (L80)	—	48,488	48,488
Trans Am 403 T-Top	—	30,728	30,728
SE 301 (W87) T-Top	213	360	573



Model	Man. Trans	Auto Trans	Tot
SE 400 (W87) T-Top	1,107	—	1,107
SE 403 (W87) T-Top	—	9,874	9,874
10th Anniversary 400	1,817	—	1,817
10th Anniversary 403	—	5,683	5,683
<u>Model Total</u>			<u>117,101</u>
Grand Total			211,451

SERIAL NUMBERS

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:

2W87Z9N100001

2—Pontiac

W—Trans Am (U-Formula, S-base Firebird, T-Esprit, X-10th Anniversary)

87—Hardtop coupe

Z—400 Pontiac (A-231 Buick, Y-301 Pontiac 2-bbl., W-30 Pontiac 4-bbl., G-305 Chevy 2-bbl., L-350 Chevy 4-bbl., K-403 Olds)

9—Last digit of model year

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. An example of a Norwood plate for a 10th Anniversary T/A reads as follows:

Line 1: BODY BY FISHER

Line 2: 79 04D 2FS87 N 123456

Line 3: 152 15L 16U . L

Line 4: A51 CC1 A31 Y89

Line 5: SIL 7340136

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Line 1 is self-explanatory.

Line 2 denotes the last two digits of the model year (79) followed by the date code for when the body was assembled. On the data plate, "04" represents the fourth month of the year (April); "D" represents the week, the fourth week of April. The body style number is 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: Code 152 is the trim code for the silver leather that came standard in the anniversary model, which is followed by body color code (15L, 16U) Platinum lower and Dark Charcoal upper. The "L" code denotes lacquer paint. The period following the 16U may be just a place holder for the accent color. On other Pontiac models that offer two-tone paint schemes, such as the Grand Am, a paint code followed by an "A" would appear here. Also, if your Firebird were equipped with a Canopy top, its code would appear followed by a "T."

Line 4: Code A51 is the modular seat code, CCI denotes T-tops and code A31 is power windows. Anniversary T/A's have the "Y89" option code stamped in line 4. A "WS4" code denotes a Trans Am, a "W66" the Formula.

Line 5: "Sil" denotes the special silver interior found in the Anniversary T/A. Number 7340136 has not yet been deciphered.

ENGINE BLOCK CODES

Pontiac stamped the three-letter engine block code (listed here) on the front passenger's side of its V8 block below the cylinder deck and on scanner labels that appear on the right and/or left valve cover. The last eight digits of the VIN can be found adjacent to the timing cover on the passenger's side of the block. Engine production reached 50,364 for the L27, 301 2-barrel and 32,080 for the L37 301 4-barrel. The (W72) Pontiac 400 was a T/A- and Formula-only engine. It was installed in 8,693 F-bodies.

Oldsmobile placed its 403's engine code on a scanner label that was affixed to the rocker cover on the front driver's side. The L80 403 4-barrel was installed in 102,504 Birds.

The Chevrolet-built 305 and 350 had their block codes stamped on a machined pad located on the cylinder head deck on the front passenger side of the block. Pontiac mounted 4,120 LG3 305 2-barrels and 1,089 LM1 350 4-barrel engines in various Firebird models.

Cu. In.	Code	Carb	Net HP	Trans
301 Pontiac	PX7,PXF,PX9,PXH,PXP	2-bbl.	135	Auto
301 Pontiac	PXR	2-bbl.	135	Auto
301 Pontiac	PWB,PWA	4-bbl.	150	Manual
301 Pontiac	PXL,PXS,PXN,PXT,PXU	4-bbl.	150	Auto
301 Pontiac	PX4,PX6,PXW	4-bbl.	150	Auto
305 Chevy, Calif.	DND,DNK	2-bbl.	135	Auto
350 Chevy high alt.	DRY,DNX	4-bbl.	165	Auto
400 Pontiac	PWH	4-bbl.	220	Manual
403 Olds	QE,QJ,QL	4-bbl.	185	Auto
403 Olds, Calif.	TB,TD,TE	4-bbl.	185	Auto
403 Olds, high alt.	N/A	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 they are as follows:

Cu. In.	Net HP	Casting No.
301	135/150	01
400	220	6X

CARBURETORS

All carburetors are Rochester's.

Cu. In.	HP	Trans	Size	Part No.
301 Pontiac	135	Auto	2-bbl.	17059160
301 Pontiac	150	Manual	4-bbl.	17059271
301 Pontiac	150	Auto	4-bbl.	17059272
305 Chevy, Calif.	135	Auto	2-bbl.	17059434-436
350 Chevy, Calif.	165	Auto	4-bbl.	1705982-584
400 Pontiac	220	Manual	4-bbl.	17058263*
403 Olds	185	Auto	4-bbl.	17059250-255
403 Olds, Calif.	185	Auto	4-bbl.	17059553
403 Olds, high alt.	185	Auto	4-bbl.	N/A

*Service manual lists this carb as a '78 carb (note the fifth character of its casting number). This may be possible since the engines were a holdover from the 1978 season.

INTAKE MANIFOLDS

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

Cu. In.	2-Bbl.	4-Bbl.
301	10000516	10000518
400	—	10003395

DISTRIBUTORS

Engine	Part No.	Trans	Comments
301 Pontiac	1103314	Auto	2-bbl.
301 Pontiac	1103400	Manual	4-bbl.
301 Pontiac	1103399	Auto	4-bbl.
305 Chevy	1103282	Auto	2-bbl.
350 Chevy	1103353	Auto	4-bbl.
400 Pontiac	1103315	Manual	4-bbl.
403 Olds	1103324	Auto	4-bbl.
403 Olds, Calif.	1103325	Auto	4-bbl.

TRANSMISSION CODES

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

4-Speed Manual: Coded M-21 on the option list, which we lead one to think Muncie M-21, the transmission that 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 face.

3-Speed Automatic: The Turbo 350's code is on 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 and shift. VIN was stamped on the lower driver's side of the case.

Cu. In.	Man. Trans		Auto Trans		Comments
	4-Spd.	3-Spd.	4-Spd.	3-Spd.	
301 Pontiac	ZD	—	—	—	Borg-Warner
301 Pontiac	—	ME	—	—	Turbo 350
301 Pontiac	—	MJ	—	—	Turbo 350
305 Chevy	—	JC	—	—	Turbo 350, Calif.
350 Chevy	—	JD	—	—	Turbo 350, Alt.
400 Pont.(W72)	UH	—	—	—	Borg-Warner
403 Olds	—	LM	—	—	Turbo 350, Fed., C
403 Olds	—	LP	—	—	Turbo 350, Calif.,

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REAR AXLE CODES

A three-character code was stamped on the front of the passenger-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,2PP
3.42	2PE	2PY,2PO*

* A 3.42 axle is listed in the service manual, but no such option shows up on the option sheets.

WHEELS

New Air Flow wheels debuted on the 10th Anniversary T/A. They were made from cast aluminum and measured 15x8 inches.

Type	Size	Code	Part No.	Application
Steel	15x6	RF	9590205	Base/Esprit
Rally II	15x6	KG	526566	Base/Esprit
Rally II	15x7	HW	525710	Base/Esprit/For/TA
Snowflake/silver	15x7	JR	10005104	All
Snowflake/gold	15x7	KH	547928	All
Snowflake/red	15x7	JA	549360	Red Bird
Snowflake/gold	15x8	JF	10003208	WS6
Snowflake/silver	15x8	JT	10005106	WS6
Air Flow (Turbo)	15x8	HA	10007501	10th Ann.

EXTERIOR COLOR CODES

Trans Am color availabilities were expanded to include most of Pontiac's 1979 palette, with a few exceptions noted below. Dark Charcoal (code 16) was used as the lower body accent color on the Formula when upper body codes 11, 15, 19, 29, 51, 75 and 77 were used. It was also used as the upper body color on the 10th Anniversary T/A. Red Bird red (code 80) is actually the lower body accent color. The upper was Mayan Red.

Color	Fisher Code	Color	Fisher Code
Cameo White	11	Sundance Yellow	51
Platinum	15	Sierra Copper	63 ex. T/A
Dark Charcoal	16	Heritage Brown	69 ex. Formula
Starlight Black	19	Mayan Red	75
Atlantis Blue	24	Carmine	77 ex. T/A
Nocturne Blue	29	Red Bird Red	80
Solar Gold	50 (F-body only)		

INTERIOR COLOR CODES

Pontiac mixed up the availability of the interior layouts to include a color Appointment Mix package, which combined Oyster 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 Oxen vinyl, custom Doeskin vinyl or Hobnail cloth with Lombardy velour bolsters. Of special mention is the silver leather interior that was standard in the 10th Anniversary T/A (code 1521).

INTERIOR COLORS

Color	Std. Bucket	Custom Bucket	Cloth
Oyster	12R1	12N1	—
Black	19R1	19N1	19B1
Blue	—	24N1	24B1
Camel Tan	62R1	62N1	62B1
Carmine	74R1	74N1	74B1

COLOR APPOINTMENTS

Colors	Standard	Custom
Oyster/Gray	12R1/16X	12N1/16X
Oyster/Black	12R1/19X	12N1/19X
Oyster/Blue	—	12N1/24X
Oyster/Camel Tan	12R1/62X	12N1/62X
Oyster/Carmine	—	12N1/74X

CORDOVA (VINYL) TOP COLORS FOR FIREBIRD CANOPY TOP

Color	Code	Color	Code
White	11T	Blue	22T
Platinum	15T	Beige	61T
Black	19T	Claret	79T

1979 FACTS

- The Firebird's base sticker rose to \$5,076, while the Esprit garnered \$5,454 for its luxury. The Formula charged \$6,380 for its muscular style, the T/A \$6,699 to be king of the hill and, finally, the Anniversary T/A depleted your wallet by \$10,619 to gain its exclusivity.

- The Formula lost its rear spoiler from the standard equipment list, but it did gain a T/A engine-turned dash, Formula wheel and rally gauges with clock in place of tach. The Formula's standard engine became the 301 2-barrel federally, 350 Chevy high altitude or a 305 Chevy in California. The Pontiac 400 and Olds 403 were optional. The WS6 appearance package was back and with it came that missing rear spoiler. Oldsmobile's 403 was standard in T/A's, while the 301 and 400 Pontiac engines were optional outside California.

- One of the most notable options available was the code Y89 10th Anniversary Trans Am. This special T/A, besides pacing Daytona, spurred a long line of celebrated T/A's that would mark every future anniversary in five-year increments.

The silver anniversary package consisted of: two-tone silver and dark charcoal paint scheme framed by red, silver and gray striping, hatch roof, specific 10th Anniversary decals. A Super Bird decal was pasted onto the hood; it was a different design than the T/A and large enough to overflow onto the fenders.

Inside, the instrument panel was lit in red and A/C was included. For comfort, silver leather seats and a leather-wrapped Formula wheel were installed. For music lovers, there was an electronically tuned digital display AM/FM 8-track stereo with seek-and-scan and power antenna. Other hedonistic features included: lamp group, dome reading lamp, visor vanity mirror, rear window defroster and controlled cycle wipers. Power locks and windows, soft ray glass all around, custom seat belts, floor mats and added acoustical insulation rounded out the cabin.

Under the floorboards was the WS6 Special Performance Package that consisted of front and rear power disc brakes, P225/70-R15 white lettered tires, 15x8 cast aluminum Turbo wheels, .750-inch rear sway bar and optional axle ratio.

Drivetrain choices were limited to two: the 400 backed by a 4-speed or the L80 185-horse 403 with automatic.

- The low-deck Pontiac 301 returned to the Firebird lineup. This time it was available in two flavors: the familiar 135-horse L27 2-barrel and a hotter 150-horse L37 4-barrel.

- For the first time in its history, Pontiac offered a 4-wheel disc brake option (code J-65), which could be ordered with or without the WS6 suspension.

- The Y84 Blackbird SE T/A was also available, but was overshadowed by the 10th Anniversary T/A model. 🐦

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