



LAND OF ENCHANTMENT GTO's

THE TIGERS' ROAR

[HTTP://WWW.LOEGTOS.COM](http://www.loegtos.com)
MEMBERS PASSWORD: 389TRIPower

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Events for April 2005

- * April 9, 2005 - Los Lunas Cruise
- * April 16, 2005 - LOE GTO's Spring Cleaning Day & Monthly Meeting - *MCD, LLC Workshop*
- * April 23, 2005 - Park 'n the Park Show - *Rio Rancho*
- * April 24, 2005 - Spring BOP Car Show - *Quality Pontiac*

Tiger's Roar to Move to Mid-Month

Beginning this month, the LOE GTO's newsletter will be published mid-month rather than at the beginning of the month. For this reason April will have two issues of the "Tiger's Roar". Look for complete National Convention coverage in the upcoming May issue!

April Car of the Month

Paul "PC" Shipe's 1965 GTO Convertible has been selected as April's Car of the Month! Check out the website for a complete photo gallery of a car that stars in the upcoming film "Elvis Has Left the Building"!

"xXx" Directors Cut DVD Releases this Month

To shortly preclude the opening of "xXx: State of the Union", a director's cut of "xXx" will be in stores on April 19, 2005. This 2-disc DVD set includes additional movie footage, directors commentary, "Making of" featurettes of both movies

and all sorts of behind-the-scenes goodies!

American Muscle Cars Make a Strong Comeback

By John Jurgensen / The Hartford Covenant

With one arm hugging the steering wheel of his 1970 Chev-elle SS 396, Brian Chaffee flips the ignition key. The engine under the long berry-colored hood roars to life, then settles into an idle that sounds like a mechanical beast gargling hot motor oil.

It's a noise to make the owner of a hybrid car shudder.

But it's a shiver down the spine to committed car nuts like Chaffee, the owner of a Middlefield, Conn., restoration shop, and a league of initiates who have surrendered to the throaty siren song of the American muscle car.

The reign of this automotive species was brief. Built for speed and looks beginning in the mid-1960s, its fumed demise came in the early '70s, followed by decades of junkyard obsolescence. But now -- thanks to the cycles of pop culture, baby boomers with money to burn and an automotive industry ready to cash in on its roots -- muscle cars have come screeching back.

Can you smell the tires cooking?

Vintage vehicles are literally being born again in Chaffee's shop, E-Muscle, which began as an eBay business in 2001. After selling parts for 10 years, Chaffee and his wife, Paula, saw the muscle trend coming as vehicles that nobody had wanted began fetching thousands of dollars at auction.

"You used to be able to buy a Chevelle for \$250. Now a plain-Jane Chevelle is \$8,000. That should tell you what it's come to," he said.

Chaffee's typical client spends about five times that to have "the love of his life, second to his wife, of course," taken apart, dipped in the fountain of youth and put back together again. Chaffee has built his business around such upscale customers. He sends them weekly progress reports by e-mail, including digital photos.

A scented candle burns on the desk of Adam Gootkin, the marketing manager Chaffee hired to handle E-Muscle's image.

"If you're going to ask a guy to drop \$40,000 or \$50,000 on a car, you don't want him to see a place that's dirty, dank and



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dingy," Chaffee said.

And they definitely don't want any scrimping on the details.

Out in the shop, the shell of a '69 Camaro, a drag car belonging to local racer Rodney Bitgood, is being prepared for painting.

Hovering on a lift nearby is the forest-green fiberglass body of a '67 Corvette convertible. Within days it will be reunited with its skeletal chassis, which Chris Morrell has been rebuilding bolt by shiny bolt.

Standing over it, Morrell said, "I've reproduced every mark that they put on it as it went down the assembly line."

The owner of this machine, Charles Lynch of New Canaan, Conn., has half a dozen more vehicles waiting for the same treatment.

A 56-year-old who sells oil tankers for a living, Lynch fits the profile of the midlife muscle-car enthusiast (although he's been buying and selling cars for years).

"I graduated high school in '66. A car like that (Corvette) brings back memories. I remember my neighbor bought that car for \$3,100 back in '67," he said on the phone from his Stamford, Conn., office. "When someone gets to my age and looks back, he says to himself, 'I want that car, I can afford that car today, and I'm going to buy it.' . . . I would say it's a piece of art."

But the real proof that muscle can still flex is that automakers have recently revived this lineage -- at least in name. In 2003, Pontiac brought back the GTO with much fanfare. And later this year, Dodge will reissue the Charger.



The remake getting almost universal applause is the 2005 Mustang. Although the Ford "pony car" never went away, it had suffered a long stretch of, shall we say, emasculation.

"What's interesting is that it has come back as a vehicle that does everything well. The new Mustang is a nice everyday kind of car. It's very livable," said Jake Fisher, senior engineer at the East Haddam, Conn., auto test center for Consum-

ers Union, which publishes Consumer Reports.

With a V-8 engine capable of about 400 horsepower, the 2005 Mustang GT has not only the power of its forebears but also a look copped from the Mustang fastback that Steve McQueen manhandled in "Bullitt" in 1968.

But the intervening years weren't kind to the Mustang and its fraternity.

After Ralph Nader's 1965 indictment of the Big Three automakers, "Unsafe at Any Speed," Congress investigated safety standards, and insurance agencies raised premiums on the "over-powered" vehicles so popular with young men. The Clean Air Act of 1970 and the gasoline shortage a few years later tore the muscle for good. As the last of the steel strongmen rolled off the assembly line, most of America said good riddance.

"There was a time when muscle cars were worthless. Thankfully they didn't all end up in the crusher," said Jim Brown of Branson, Mo.

For years, Brown and his wife, Dawn, like other enthusiasts around the world, have stood vigil at the graves of countless Barracudas and Road Runners, once-proud vehicles left to rust in junkyards, barns and swamps.

Pictures of their carcasses -- up on blocks, stranded in mud, obscured by vegetation -- are posted on the Browns' Web site CarsInBarns.com.

"All my life I've looked for old cars," said Brown, 36.

"You meet some strange people, like the old hillbillies in the salvage yards who say they don't want to get rid of their car because that's where the dog sleeps," or the husband who leaves his ex-wife's Mustang in the front yard so she can see it rotting every time she drives by.

"Cars find themselves in some difficult spots," said Brown, who talks about abandoned vehicles the way an animal rescuer might about dogs tied to trees. "It's hard to watch them just rot away, especially when (the owners) claim to love the car. At least go out and throw a tarp over it. It's not a living being, but it still deserves better than that."

For him and his wife and the other treasure hunters who send in photos of their finds, the thrill of discovery is unmatched.

"Just giggly," said Brown of his state of mind when he stumbled across his biggest find, a rare Trans-Am edition of a Dodge Challenger sitting in an abandoned building in Springfield, Mo.

"This car was a survivor," said Brown, who bought it for \$10,000 -- half of what it was worth, he figures.



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John Z. DeLorean Dies at 80

The GTO community lost one of its founding fathers when John Z DeLorean died of complications from a stroke on March 19, 2005. He was 80 years old.

John Zachary DeLorean was born in a modest home in Detroit, Michigan on January 6, 1925. He was the eldest of four sons born to Zachary and Katherine DeLorean (nee. Pribak). His father was an hourly Ford Motor Company employee for over forty years.

From this humble beginning John became a powerhouse in the automotive industry due in large part to his parents and his uncle, Earl Pribak, stressing the value of education and dedication.

After graduation from Cass Technical High School, he served in the US Infantry during WWII. He attended Lawrence Institute of Technology where he formed a dance band and wrote a humor column for the school paper. He graduated with highest honors.

John attended the Chrysler Institute and received a masters degree in automotive engineering. He was then recruited by the Packard Motor Car Company where as a developmental engineer he was instrumental in a variety of major advancements in the then "Top Luxury Car" in America.

When Packard folded, John was recruited by Semon "Bunky" Knudsen, then head of Pontiac. Bunky established a new department of Advanced Engineering and initially John was the entire department.

The many innovations pioneered by John...including the GTO....propelled Pontiac from a ho-hum car to third place in auto sales and the highest profit GM Car Division. John was rewarded for his contributions by being promoted to Chief Engineer and then General Manager of Pontiac.

To strengthen his grip on the non-engineering side of business, John earned a masters degree in business administration at the University of Michigan night school.

John's proven ability to lead and his dramatic achievements resulted in his being promoted to General Manager of Chevrolet Di-

vision, a division that had become an underachiever.

John had a management philosophy of giving responsibility to the lowest possible level ("the janitor knows which broom is best" - was John's motto). John's flamboyant life style was frequently at odds with GM upper echelon and John decided he would be happier running his own car company....and thus the "Back To The Future" car, The DMC was born. The project was backed by the British Government and the plant was located near Belfast. The DMC was a great success, the public was enamored with the vehicle and dealer orders were piling up.

John was pleased with his contributions to the automotive industry. He is credited with over 200 patents. Every car built in the world today contains at least one of his creations.

John was a member of the American Academy of Science, the Society of Automotive Engineers, the New York Academy of Science, the National Geographic Society, DeLorean Owners Club, the GTO Club and the Packard Club.

Beloved husband of Sally (nee Baldwin). Dear father of Zachary Tavio DeLorean, Kathryn Ann DeLorean and Sheila Baldwin DeLorean. Grandfather of Kevin and Acacia. Brother of Charles "Chuck" DeLorean (Shirley), Jack DeLorean (Karen) and George DeLorean. Also several nieces and nephews.

President's Corner

It's April already so this monthly meeting will be a spring cleaning and a barbecue. Will have the clean up on April 16 at Ray's shop. Meeting will be at 10:00AM. The barbecue will start around 1:00PM. Then we will have a cruise for dessert.

The clean up weekend will help all of us get ready for the Park'n the Park show that the Westside cruisers put on April 23 then April 24 is the BOP Show at Quality Pontiac. The Southwest Muscle Car Show originally scheduled for April 8-9 has been moved to the fall.

We need to have a cruise and meeting set for May. If someone would have a idea on a place to go we could use it.

For June let's have a the meeting in Red River at the Red River Classic Car Show June 10-12. More information to come.

We will try and get the "Tiger's Roar" newsletter out by the 20th of each month so that we can plan for the next month. This will also help in where the monthly meeting will be.

--Gary Ebert

Notes from the Vice President

Our April meeting is being held on Saturday, 16th at 10:00AM. The idea is to bring your cars to clean up and get ready for the Park in the Park and the BOP shows. There will be plenty of help from members that don't have show cars so take advantage of this op-



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portunity. We will have a BBQ and then go cruising afterwards.

I would also like to see a good turnout at the two upcoming shows.

Let's show everyone that our club is alive and thriving.

-- Don Fitch

From the Desk of the Secretary

As Gary mentioned the "Tiger's Roar" will be going out mid month instead of at the beginning hencefourth. The May issue will actually go out in mid-April. The May issue will cover the new information for the national convention in more detail.

We need more submissions for car of the month. April's car of the month is PC's Convertible, but we need more people to volunteer information and stories to go along with the photo galleries. If you have any special photos or photos that are not already on the website please get those to me as well!

-- Chris Knight

The Treasurer's Ledger

The collection of dues for 2005 has been a solid success. Just about everyone that has attended meetings in 2005 has paid their chapter dues. Thanks guys!

-- Jim Knight



**SEE YOU
AT THIS
MONTH'S
EVENTS!**