



The newsletter of the Motor City Chapter of
Pontiac-Oakland Club International

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Meetings held at
Bakers of Milford
www.bakersofmilford.com



March 2020

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Next General Membership Meeting

March 19th, 7:00 PM

Baker's of Milford

2025 S Milford Rd, Milford Charter Twp, MI 48381

Everyone Is Welcome!

Kenny and Linda Galdes Win Two Awards At Autorama

Kenny and Linda Galdes' 1952 Chevrolet pickup won two prestigious awards at this year's Detroit Autorama!

In the photo below, they pose with the truck and their trophies for first place in the Semi-Modified Pickup Class and for Outstanding Truck. (More photos on the next page.) Congratulations Kenny and Linda!



Kenny and Linda Galdes Win Two Awards At Autorama (continued)



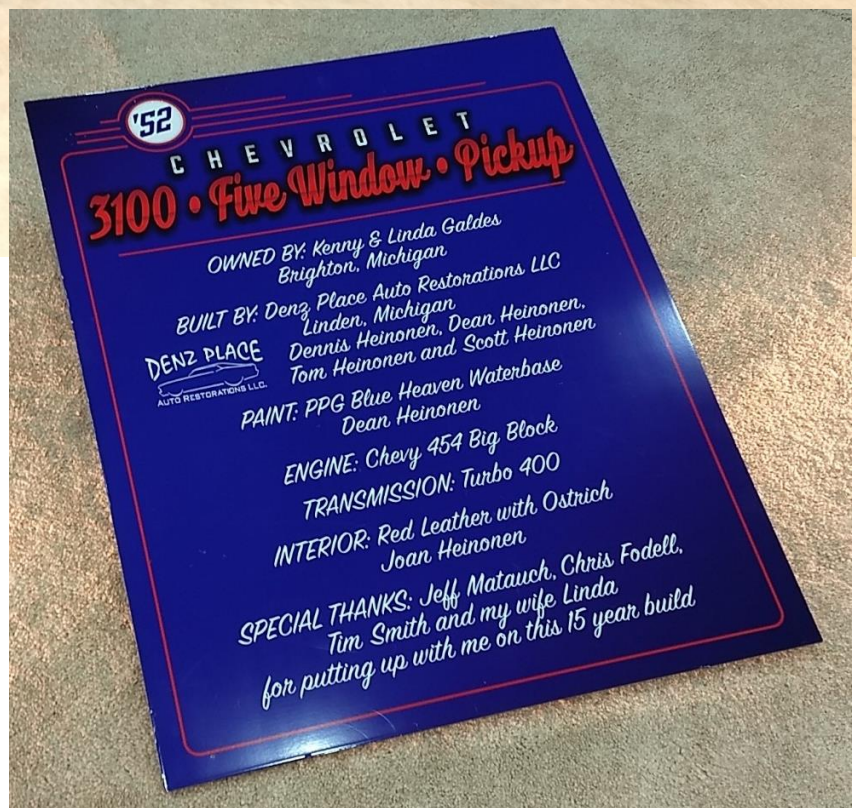
Kenny and Linda Galdes Win Two Awards At Autorama (continued)



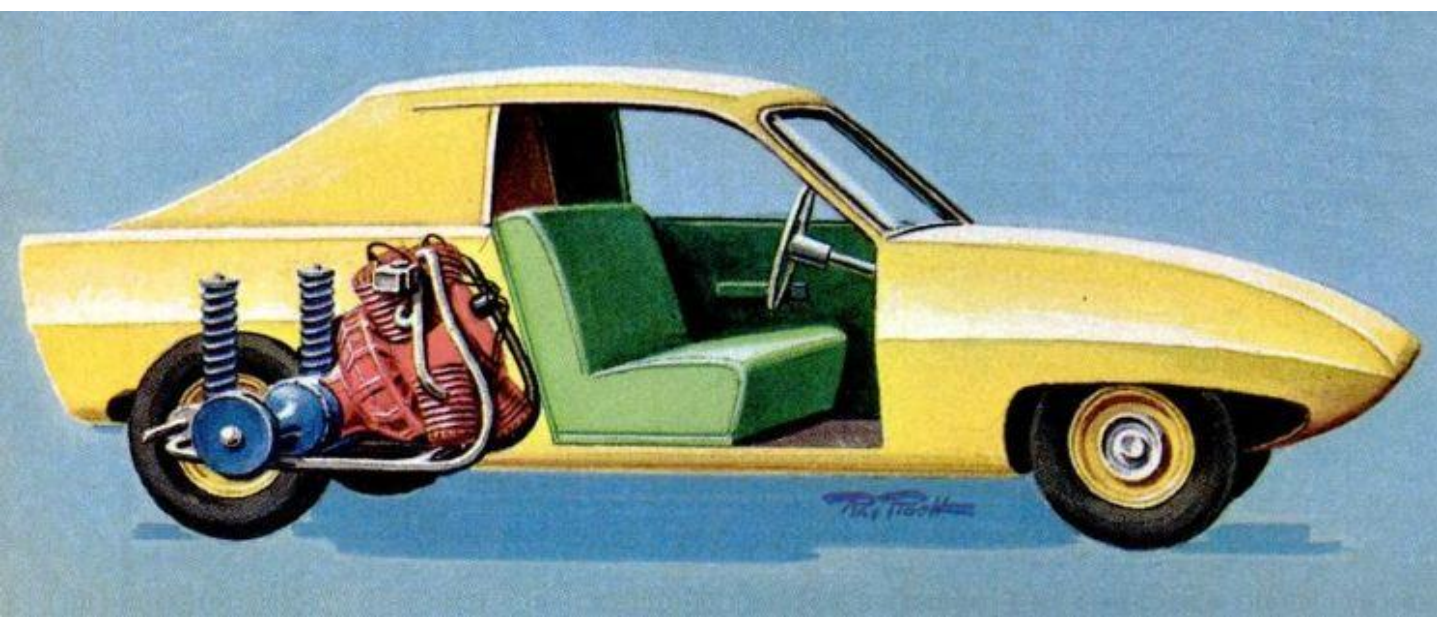
Kenny and Linda Galdes Win Two Awards At Autorama (continued)



Kenny and Linda Galdes Win Two Awards At Autorama (continued)



The Pontiac X-4



Not counting horseless carriages and other early automobiles that placed their engines under and behind-ish the driver, the Pontiac Fiero is often hailed as the first mid-engine American production car, arriving 35 years before the mid-engine Corvette. But, as it turns out, Pontiac's engineers had investigated the mid-engine layout 50 years ago, long before the Fiero.

True, the XP-21 Firebird I placed its gas-turbine engine behind the driver, making it a mid-engine design, but all three gas-turbine Firebirds were considered GM designs, not of any particular brand, similar to the XP-8 Le Sabre and the Futurliners.

We did recently come across mention that GM considered switching the Firebird and Camaro to mid-engine in the early days of the third-generation F-body's development. However, it appears those ideas progressed no further than drawings and scale models, and the GM folks involved spent more time debating whether the third-gens – in pursuit of lighter and more fuel-efficient packaging – should be front-wheel drive than they did debating whether they should be mid-engine.

The Pontiac X-4 (continued)

But even before then – coincidentally in the same year that Pontiac first used the Fiero name on a V-8-powered two-seater showcar – Pontiac’s engineers screwed together a small runabout with a curious drivetrain. As [Jim Dunne wrote for *Popular Science* in its April 1969 issue](#), the X-4 “combines the chassis layout of a racer with the power potential of an airplane engine.”

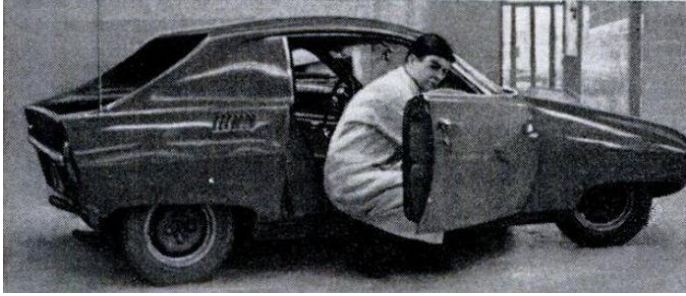
Though Dunne noted that neither Pontiac nor GM would confirm the car’s existence, he had photos (one of which reportedly showed John Sawruk working on the car) to prove it was real and plenty of information on its construction from a personal inspection of the car.

The mid-engine layout – much like the Fiero that followed 15 years later – was chosen not for its sporting capabilities but for its compactness, a feature that went hand-in-hand with a radial four-cylinder engine placed near-vertically between the rear axle and the bench seat. The engine, though it used a cylinder configuration similar to [Eugene Farkas’s experimental X-8](#), was two-stroke rather than four-stroke, thus eliminating the valvetrain, and paired each set of opposing pistons via a Scotch yoke, vastly simplifying the piston/connecting rod/crankshaft assembly.

According to Dunne, the engine design evolved from GM’s X259, a two-stroke airplane engine that the company tested in cars just prior to World War II. While the X259 produced roughly 200 horsepower, the X-4 was good for about 80 in its 100-cu.in. form.

Curiously, rather than work out a independent rear suspension design based on the Tempest transaxle, the X-4’s engineers bolted the radial engine and its torque converter directly to a solid rear axle with the planetary gears of a three-speed automatic transmission incorporated into the axle. The entire unit, as Dunne wrote, moved as one with its 12-inch tires, adding unsprung weight and thus making the car’s handling erratic.

The Pontiac X-4 (continued)



Still, the entire package made for a light car, coming in at about 1,500 pounds, and probably one that, due to its simplicity, could sell for peanuts compared to the rest of the Pontiac lineup. Dunne seemed convinced that Pontiac, with its reputation for experimental designs reaching production, would actually put the X-4 in showrooms once its engineers worked out an independent rear suspension and a two-stroke engine design that smoked less than the prototype.

However, with emissions already an issue by the late Sixties, a two-stroke air-cooled engine was a non-starter. In addition, fuel economy wouldn't become an issue for U.S. auto engineers to confront for another four years or so, and by that time the Pontiac Astre version of the Chevrolet Vega (which Dunne tangentially references at the end of his article) was already on its way to the U.S. market.

Spiritually, the X-4 and the Fiero share a number of traits, but given that the Fiero started out as a clean-sheet design a decade after the X-4, it's unlikely the later design borrowed anything from its predecessor. Also, given the paucity of references to the X-4 outside of Dunne's article, it's unlikely the X-4 still exists to this day. We'd be happy to be proven wrong, though.

As far as whether it's the first mid-engine Pontiac, we believe that another, much earlier, experimental mid-engine Pontiac did exist. Should we ever track down more information on it, we'll elaborate on it in a future article.

This article originally appeared at www.hemmings.com as "Today we learned: The Fiero wasn't Pontiac's first mid-engine car." Reprinted with permission.



Attention

Save the dates for three MUST ATTEND shows!

Three great shows, now including the following brands:

Pontiac, Oakland, Buick, Oldsmobile and GMC Trucks

June 13, 2020

The Michigan Widetrackers

June 13, 2020

32nd Annual Spring Dust Off

@Springfield Oaks County Parks 12451 Andersonville Rd. Davisburg, MI 48350

For additional Information go to our website www.mlwidetrackers16.org

Portion of proceeds to benefit The ChadTough Foundation <http://www.chadtoughfoundation.org>

July 11, 2020

Motor City POCI's 7th Annual

July 11, 2020

Motor City Summer Roundup

@ Bakers of Milford 2025 S. Milford Rd. Milford, MI 48381

For additional Information go to our website www.motorcitypocl.com

Portion of proceeds to benefit The Joe Kocur Foundation for Children www.joekocurfoundation.org

Sept. 20, 2020

Seller Buick-GMC 32nd Annual

Sept. 20, 2020

Indian Summer Car Show

@ Sellers Buick-GMC 38000 Grand River Ave, Farmington, MI 48335

For additional Information go to our website www.sellersgm.com/carshow

The Trifecta Prize Give Away

Attend all three or any of the shows to be entered into the prize drawings.

The more shows you attend the bigger the prize!

Attend all three shows-you have a chance to win a \$150 Gas Card

Attend any two shows-you have a chance to win a \$100 Gas Card

Attend any one show-you have a chance to win a \$50 Gas Card

Motor City POCI 7th Annual Summer Roundup

Saturday - July 11, 2020

@ Bakers of Milford 2025 S. Milford Rd. Milford, MI 48381

Open to all Pontiac, Oakland, Buick, Oldsmobile & GMC Trucks



Schedule of Events

Registration.....8-10:30am
Car Show & Silent Auction Start.....10:00am
50/50 & Silent Auction Ends.....1:00pm
Pickup auction items by..... 1:30pm
End of Car Show & Awards.....2:30pm

Awards

Top 50 – Judged by Independent Judges
Best of Show Joe Kocur Award
Bakers Award LaFontaine Award
DeLorean Award—Pontiac's ONLY!



Portion of proceeds go to the
Joe Kocur Foundation for Children
www.joekocurfoundation.org

Show updates & registration forms at www.motorcitypoci.com

Pre-registration \$20.00 (includes show shirt) Must be Postmarked By June 22, 2020

Make Check payable to: Motor City POCI Mail to: Motor City POCI 1595 Vanstone Dr., Commerce Twp., MI 48382

Year _____ Make _____ Model _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Select the size shirt you want

☐ Mens ☐ Womens

☐ Medium

☐ Large

☐ X-Large

☐ 2X ☐ 3X

I accept and assume full liability for any loss to me and/or my property. I release the sponsors and their agents from liability from such loss or injury and agree to provide my own insurance.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**More information
on other side**

EXCITING NEWS!

Please join Motor City POCI
in supporting the Joe Kocur Foundation for Children!

2020 Celebrity Charity Softball Series- **Saturday, Aug. 22nd**

The **Joe Kocur Foundation for Children** has been assisting children's organizations, non-profits and local families in need by developing fundraising events that are both family friendly and provide for an opportunity to interact with others in the community that value the spirit of giving. Since the formation, the foundation has assisted local charities with the primary goal of focusing on families that need assistance either by financial means or logistical support.

www.joekocurfoundation.org



2019 Best of Show – Roger & Judy MacZura with their 1965 GTO



From August 2013 to March 1, 2020, we donated \$29,896 to various organizations.

www.motorcitypoci.com



Online registration available at www.poci.org

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