

The Commander

Potomac Chapter

Studebaker Drivers Club



Vol. 55, Issue Number 6 — December 2023 - January 2024



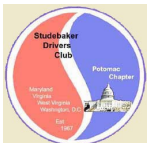
60 years ago, in December, 1963, Studebaker closed its factory doors in the US, and yet here we are in the SDC, keeping the spirit alive!

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Next Meeting

Dec 9 at the
Holiday Party
(see flyer on p. 8)



Steering Column Steve White



As our cover indicates that even though the Studebaker Corporation name was restored in 1962, the South Bend plant ceased automobile production sixty years ago this month. I always think of how incredibly cool the Gran Turismo Hawks were in those last three years and wonder what they would have looked like if the Studebaker Corporation had lived on. I have a couple of Studebaker stock certificates now that I think of it but cannot remember where I filed them. I would imagine some of you have them too. They were very impressive looking, but the value is in their relation to our classic cars.

Now for some discussion about today's business: It's cold outside but my '62 Studebaker GT Hawk is safely tucked in the garage. Hopefully, we'll have a few warm days soon so I can take it out for a short drive. Speaking of short drives, Dave Farris is working on our Holiday/Christmas luncheon. The last I heard from him he was working on the menu. We'll be returning to the same restaurant in Hagerstown, Maryland, we enjoyed last December. I hope to see you there.

The best thing for our Potomac Chapter this past year has been Pete Rutledge's editorship of our *Steering Column* newsletter. He's really kept us together in a year that saw very few chapter events. I'm sorry about that. I'm hoping that 2024 will invigorate us to volunteer to coordinate a tour or a luncheon or something that will allow us to visit face-to-face with one another. The other best thing is Ed Lemanski's postings on our Facebook page. Ed keeps the page fresh with new photos and links. Please ensure that he gets "likes" for his pictures and other postings. I would never have guessed there were so many postings about Studebakers in general and our club history specifically if it was not for Ed.

I was able to get together with three of our members at the Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show. Unfortunately, the weather rained on our "parade" and the turnout of classic cars was remarkably down from 2021's event. Nevertheless George Hamlin, Steve Walter, and I made it there and stuck it out for the day. The Rockville City organizers shortened the hours, so we were able to leave at 1:30 PM. Former member Chad Prince was there too with his 1955 Commander. I'm sorry to say I didn't get a chance to talk with him and bring him back into the fold. Yes, I left a little early as I wasn't enjoying the weather as much as my Hawk. Please check out my report of the show and look at the photos. All indicators were that we would fill up the lawn with beautiful classic automobiles but the rain put the kibosh on that so we will have to wait until next year.

I wish you all a very happy holiday season and look forward to seeing you in your Studebaker next year.

Steve



The Commander is the bi-monthly publication of the Potomac Chapter, Studebaker Drivers Club. Subscription is by membership to the Potomac Chapter at \$15.00 yearly (with emailed newsletter) or \$30.00 yearly (with mailed hard-copy newsletter). Canada/Mexico \$20.00 (with emailed newsletter), all other countries \$25.00. (with emailed newsletter). Direct all membership correspondence to the Membership Director. Direct all correspondence relating to The Commander to the Editor, who retains the right to edit or modify any contribution. Deadline date is the 15th of the month for the following month's issue. The Commander is also an internet publication.

The Potomac Chapter is an officially chartered chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club, Inc.; its by-laws were approved, and charter granted by SDC in June 1967. Membership is recruited from the states of Maryland, West Virginia, (northern) Virginia, and Washington, DC. Those from other areas wishing to join the chapter are welcome.

Potomac Chapter, Studebaker Drivers Club

The Potomac Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club, was chartered in April 1967. It encompasses the area of Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Current membership approaches one hundred. Our members hail from as far away, as New Zealand, the states of Hawaii, Florida, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Our mission is well defined in our [Chapter Bylaws](#).

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VACANT

Potomac Chapter Volunteer Needed ASAP

A volunteer is needed as soon as possible to assume the duties of **chapter secretary**. Please apply to our Chapter president, Steve White.

POTOMAC CHAPTER, SDC
2023-2024 Planned Activities
(Updated 11/28/23)*

| Event (Location) | Date | Contact |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| 2023 Holiday Party and Meeting, Hagerstown, MD (see flyer on p. 8) | Dec 9, 2023 1-4PM | Dave Farris |
| Chapter activities to be determined | 2024 | |
| Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show | Oct 19, 2024 | |

*NOTE: Members will be notified of any future updates separately by email and/or in the next newsletter.

PLEASE NOTE: If you would be willing to organize a cruise for the chapter, please advise Ron Hoff.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER (updated 11/28/23)

The years seem to just keep going faster and faster, but once again a new year is here. This means it is once again time to renew your annual membership for 2024. We had a good year and currently have 49 active members. But don't stop now, continue to promote our club when you are out and about. Our annual dues remain at a modest \$15 for an emailed newsletter or \$30 for a mailed newsletter. If you joined as a new member after July 1, 2023, no additional dues are needed until January 1, 2025. As usual you will find an application form on the last page of this issue of The Commander; carry one in your car/truck. Your car/truck is our best advertisement; you will not drive your Studebaker anywhere these days without getting positive comments and questions. Please contact Membership Director Stephen Walter at stephen.walter1@verizon.net if you have any questions.

A Report on the 2023 Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show

Oct. 14 in Rockville, MD

By Steve White

The 2023 Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show was held on Saturday, October 14, from 11 AM to 1:30 PM. There were only 150 cars on the field because of the inclement weather. Most of us thought that was an optimistic number but apparently not because the 150 count was based on the number of cars that arrived at the Show. There were 650 cars preregistered and the registration was closed three weeks before the show. Rain was the obvious culprit but the city's meteorologist's weather forecast was for the rain to clear for the main part of the show (11:00 AM - 3:30 PM). The question remains how to improve the weather policy. I commented that the 1:30 PM closing time was an excellent idea for this year. There will be no rain dates but there may be a cancellation in the future. Prior to this year's event 580 cars was the most on the field. The city had 100 staff on site this year.

Rockville staff mailed the program and dashboard plates to those classic car owners that did not make it to the show.

The number of public attendees was a pleasant surprise. The buses that transported the visitors from Rockville High School were kept busy all afternoon.

Many of those volunteers who have been long-time leaders of the show (e.g., Charlie Carroccio) have resigned or moved from the area. Rockville is looking for volunteers to step forward to coordinate special displays in the future.

The ubiquitous local car club banners were not used and may not be in the future because they are fading and ripping. The Rockville staff are not sure what they will use in the future.

The last item was in regards to Special Displays. This year there was a fine Lotus display coordinated by the Lotus club representatives. There is a request that a club volunteer for 2024. There will be no special display if there is no volunteer.

The 2023 Mayor and Council Award Winner was the 1955 Lotus MK IX owned by Kevin McGovern.

The 2024 Event details are as follows:

Saturday, October 19, 2024, 11:00 AM - 3:30 PM at the Rockville Civic Center Park.
Registration will open on July 1.

(Rockville show photos on next page)

Pictures from the 2023 Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show



Late in the show with Steve White's '62 GT Hawk and Chad Prince's '55 Commander.



Chad *et al* with his Commander



Early in the morning with George Hamlin and Steve Walter standing by George's Studebaker with Steve White's Hawk in the background



Steve White with long time Potomac Chapter member Tom Powers

ODDS 'N' ENDS (courtesy of Pete Yuan)

Noises and Causes

At one time or another, most motorists have heard some type of noise coming from their cars. They are often an indication of a problem that can be nipped in the bud. Some of the problems are:

Vibration noise

If the car vibrates at moderate speeds you should check to see if your wheels are in balance. This is a common cause. If the front wheels are out of balance, you will feel most of the vibration in the steering. When the rear tires are out of balance, you will generally feel it in the back seat. A bent drive shaft will also give vibration but it will be noiseless. The vibration will be felt more on the back seat also.

Thumps

If you hear a steady "thump" when you are driving, check your tires. You may have a foreign object like a stone that is wedged in the tread. **You may also have an air bubble on the tire surface, which is critically dangerous.** If it is an object, just remove it carefully so that you do not damage the tire. If it's a bubble, **change the tire immediately as it is unsafe to use.** Bubbles mean that the tire is very thin and it could explode while you are on the road.

Bangs on bumps

If your car 'bangs' while going over a bump, it means that the suspension is hitting bottom or bottoming out. This may be the result of worn-out shock absorbers or broken springs.

Grinding

When the brakes are applied, sometimes you will hear a grinding noise like metal being scraped together. It may mean that you have worn brake shoes or pads in the case of disc brakes. It is a problem of gradual wear. **It is a problem that should not be ignored. Things are not going to get better, only worse things happen.** When this happens, have it checked out by a competent mechanic.

Chattering

If you turn on the ignition and hear a chattering noise, you may have a problem with the starter. Check the battery and the cable connections first. A bad connection of the battery cable on the battery terminals may cause insufficient amount of current flow to the starter through the solenoid. The solenoid chatters. A low charge on the battery also gives the same effect. In this case, get the battery charged up. Some batteries will not charge directly from the charger that you may have. You may need to connect the charger to another battery, then have jumper cables attached to the battery that needs to be charged. If this does not work, then you consider buying a new battery.

Squeaks

Squeaks are often caused by the rubbing of metal-to-metal surfaces. Movement or vibration can cause this to happen. In some cases, the source just needs to be located and oiled or greased. In other cases, an insulating material such as rubber can be placed between the metal to keep it from squeaking. Squeaks can also come from mice that have found a home in your car. Solution? . . . Get rid of them.

The Potomac Chapter Studebaker Drivers Club
Invites YOU to Join us for
Our 2023 Holiday Party



Saturday, December 9, 2023, Time 1 pm - 4 pm Meal Served: 1:30 to 2:30 pm
Bulls & Bears Restaurant and Pub, 38 S Potomac Street, Hagerstown, MD 21740

Charges Remain the same this year is \$39 per attendee. Delicious Food, Great Fellowship and We WILL be having the 50-50 drawing where someone will win half of the money collected. PLEASE, plan to attend this festive and fun event. Please fill out the form below NOW and mail it to me ASAP. I need a final count for the Chef by December 6, 2023.

We will have a business meeting We have an opening for the Club President, Secretary, Activities Director. Hopefully the remainder of the current officers will continue in their position. If you are interested in becoming a member on the Board of Directors, PLEASE call President Steve White at 202-257-7368 or email him at SteveDK66@yahoo.com.

The Buffet Luncheon includes: **SALAD** - House salad, **ENTRÉE CHOICES** - Chicken Marsala finished with Marsala mushroom demi grace, and Sliced Roast Beef Served with Brown Gravy, **SIDE CHOICES** - Vegetable Medley and Roasted Red Potatoes. Unlimited Water, Iced Tea and Lemonade

Directions from I-70, take Exit 32B (West) toward Hagerstown, you exit onto Dual Highway. Stay on Dual Highway for approximately 4 miles and turn left on N Potomac Street. Bulls & Bears is on left. Just past the restaurant turn Left. About ½ a block turn Left into the narrow alley and IMMEDIATELY turn left in Parking Garage. GO to 3rd deck (keep going past the second level to the 3rd deck), you should see the sign for the walkway to Bulls and Bears. Parking is \$3-\$5 for the time we will be there. Last Year no charge for parking because it was on a weekend.

Make all checks payable to Potomac Chapter SDC

Mail to Dave (Mike) Farris, 852 Baltimore Pike, Gardners, PA 17324

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Adults: _____ @ \$39.00 each. Total = \$_____ Children 4 and under: _____ (free)

P.S. You can bring your completed 2023 membership application with payment and give to Steve Walter at the meeting. Save the time and cost of the stamp.

Food for Thought: Possible Venues for a Chapter Event in June 2024

2024

HEMMINGS MOTOR NEWS

GREAT RACE

OWENSBORO, KY TO GARDINER, ME

PRESENTED BY COKER TIRE

2024

VINTAGE RALLY!

ME

VT

NH

MA

CT

RI

PA

NJ

MD

WV

VA

IN

OH

KY

Seal Cove, ME

Owls Head, ME

Freeport, ME

Providence, RI

Loudon, NH

Montgomery, NY

Binghamton, NY

Lewisburg, PA

Gettysburg, PA

Frostburg, MD

Marietta, OH

Morgantown, WV

Purcellville, VA

Lancaster, OH

Lawrenceburg, IN

Owensboro, KY

OVERNIGHT STOP LUNCH STOP

2024 Great Race Route

June 22-30, 2024

Owensboro, KY to Gardiner, ME

PARAGON

TIMEWIS

8

HEMMINGS

HAGERTY
Drivers Club

COKER TIRE
Performance Tires

McCollister's
Auto Transport

Roco
FASTENER CO., INC.

SOUTHERN STAR

SAMUEL SMITH

Get ready, Get set..Go!..mark your 2024 calendars now!

AOAI returns to Metro Detroit

The Motor City

...1995: last in The Motor City

- **What:** Avanti Owners Association International's Annual Convention
- **Who:** All with interest in classic cars, having fun, making friends & having a plain ol' good time



- **Where:** Embassy Suites Detroit-Livonia
- **When:** September 17-20, 2024
 - **Special:** Media Day on September 21
- **Why:** Avanti Owners want you (!) to see and know about Avanti and us !

Contact Co-Chairs

Harvey Snitzer: 734.634.2285

hjs66@yahoo.com

Bill Krueger: 248.348.1768

wckrueger@yahoo.com

What Did You Do to Your Studebaker?

Pete Rutledge — '64 Studebaker Avanti R2

Well I've been distracted by other hobby activities and moving slowly (and carefully) on the Avanti. If you compare the picture below to the one you saw in the last issue, you will notice some changes: 1) More of the front end fiberglass has been cut away; in fact, I won't be cutting away any more fiberglass; 2) I have glued on some bonding strips to support the new panels at butt joints. I'm still making adjustments to the replacement panels so that they will fit perfectly when glued in place, which should be soon. It will nice to see the car looking whole again.



Picture from last issue of The Commander

Current picture

John Sartorius — '59 Silver Hawk and '58 Transtar

We retired and moved to WV (from VA) with our Studebakers this year.

New contact information:

John Sartorius

487 Vixen Lane

Gerrardstown, WV 25420

801-309-3852 (mobile)

On the next two pages are photos of John's Studebakers and what he has been working on.

What Did You Do to Your Studebaker? (cont'd)

John Sartorius — continued

The '59 Silver Hawk and '58 Transtar in their new WV home

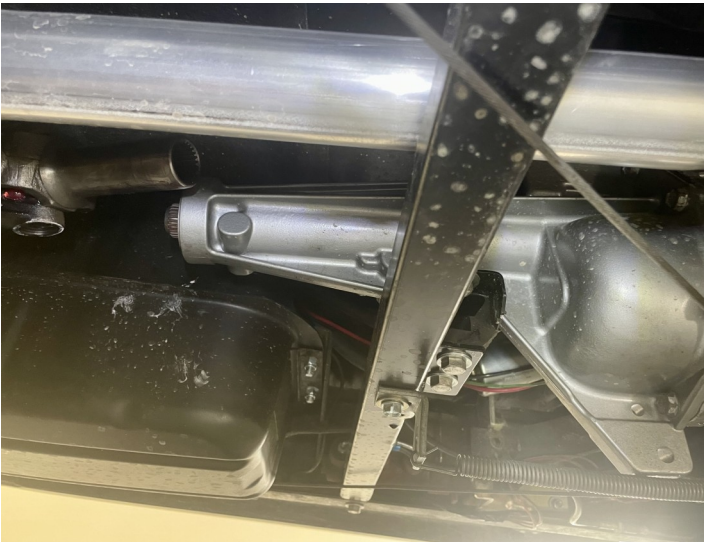


What Did You Do to Your Studebaker? (cont'd)

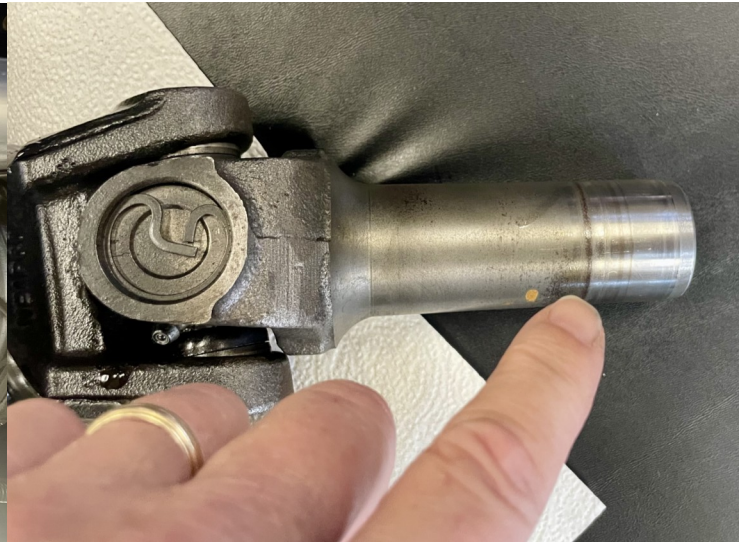
John Sartorius — '58 Transtar (continued)

I installed a floor-shifted T5 transmission in the Transtar 2 years ago, to replace the stock three speed. When we did the swap, we also got rid of the two piece driveshaft and put in a custom-made one-piece unit. But when I swapped the original 259 engine for a full-flow 289 last year, the new motor mounts positioned the engine further forward, and I wasn't comfortable with the remaining (minimal) overlap of the driveshaft yoke on the T5 output shaft splines.

The photos show the issue, and the installation of the new (lengthened) driveshaft (completed this week). Lots of overlap now.



Pulling the old driveshaft



Original T5 yoke showing minimal overlap



New driveshaft bolted in and greased up



Much better spline overlap

What Did You Do to Your Studebaker? (cont'd)

Craig Comontofski — 1955 Commander

Work was performed on my 1955 Studebaker Commander Ultra Vista Regal. Ordered an exhaust system from Parks Pipes complete dual conversion. Installation required heating one header pipe to put it correct alignment. Installed the correct crazy chrome Brooklands type tail pipe extensions. Very nice conversation pieces.



December-January Birthdays*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!!!!

Ann Braham — Dec 1
Pat Merhaut — Dec 7
Bonnie Birkel — Dec 12
Terry McDaniel — Dec 18
Bill Morgan — Dec 20
Joan Matlack — Dec 23
Toni Stroh — Dec 23
Skip Conner — Dec 25
Ronald Hoff — Dec 25
Irma Brigman — Dec 29

Ruth Carr — Jan 9
Edmund Matlack — Jan 27
Irene White — Jan 27
Jeff Bradel — Jan 28
Bee Hamlin — Jan 28
Sam Brigman — Jan 29
Mary Veit — Jan 30

***Please Note:** If we fail to list your birthday, it may be because we don't have your birth date in our membership database. If you would like to see your birthday listed in the future, please let Stephen Walter know just the month and day of your birth date.

FOR SALE, FREE, and WANTED

None this time. Send any ads for future issues to your newsletter editor.

2024
Potomac Chapter SDC
Membership Application or Renewal

Please complete this form and mail a check, payable to POTOMAC CHAPTER SDC.

- ☐ \$15.00 Electronic email copy of Commander newsletter
☐ \$30.00 Mailed hardcopy of Commander newsletter

Send the completed form and check to:

Stephen Walter (For questions email: stephen.walter1@verizon.net)
14916 Chestnut Ridge Court
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Yearly dues apply from Jan 1st to Dec 31st of each year

☐ I am a member of SDC International.
National Membership # _____

☐ I am joining SDC International at this time.
*Upon receipt of your national Membership #,
please send the membership # to
the address or email above.*

This is a ☐ NEW Application ☐ Renewal/Update

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Cell: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____ Spouse Cell: _____

E-Mail: _____

Birthday: ____Month ____ Day Spouse: ____Month ____ Day

I own the following Studebakers (including Rockne, Erskine, EME, Avanti)

| Year | Make | Model | Body Style |
|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF NATIONAL SDC IN ORDER TO JOIN ANY SDC CHAPTER