



# The Commander

## Potomac Chapter

### Studebaker Drivers Club



Vol. 56, Issue Number 2 — April - May 2024



Frank Philippi's '60 Lark convertible makes a great cover car this month and it's also **FOR SALE** — see page 12 for details.

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#### Next Meeting

TBD



## Steering Column Steve White



April 2024 is upon us, and The Potomac Chapter of the Studebakers Drivers Club will commence activities beyond our wonderful newsletter, *The Commander*, our busy Facebook page, and our cool Internet homepage. We are spurred on by our new Activities Director, Chris Thomas, of northern Virginia. I find it difficult to put my appreciation into words that we have such a fine young man at the helm of our Chapter's 2024 events. Chris is a relatively new member of our chapter. He told me that he was essentially "born into SDC." He's grew up around his Dad's Studebakers and he and his wife, Kirsten, are proud owners of a '63 Gran Turismo Hawk and a '63 Avanti. You'll read more about how you can shake the winter doldrums off by attending one of our events.

We held an officers Zoom meeting on March 14 so that Chris could review his ideas for the spring. His ideas were met with enthusiasm. I'm hoping that you'll get a chance to meet Chris and his wife at one of this year's early events. Of course, please let Chris know if you have an idea for something we can do as a SDC Chapter.

I hope you can get out in your Studebaker now that spring is with us. I awoke my GT Hawk from its winter slumber and took it out for a spin a few weeks ago. I'm happy to say it performed well although there is work to be done. I was going to head over to the Shady Grove Road cruise in the Hawk on the next day but, unfortunately, rain forced me to keep it in the garage. It's a Friday morning as I write this column and tomorrow, Saturday, I'm hoping to take a drive down to the Bethesda Cars & Coffee at the Corner Bakery (10327 Westlake Dr. Bethesda MD; adjacent to the Montgomery Mall) that takes place every Saturday morning.

Now we have just one open officer's position and that is for secretary. Please let me know if you are interested. There isn't much work associated with it. I think it's confined to taking minutes during our meetings. That is an easy task because I always have an agenda prepared in Microsoft Word, so you only must write a synopsis of what was said. I need somebody to step forward so I don't have to do it. We don't have that many meetings so please volunteer.

I hope to see you soon. Please feel free to email or call me if you have any ideas or concerns.

*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](#).

## Chapter Officers (2024-2025)



**President:**  
Steve White  
17801 Farley Farm Road  
Rockville, MD 20855- 1661  
301-977-2627

**Vice President**  
Ron Hoff  
1005 Bedford Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502-1206  
301-724-1617 ; 301-784-9548  
(C)

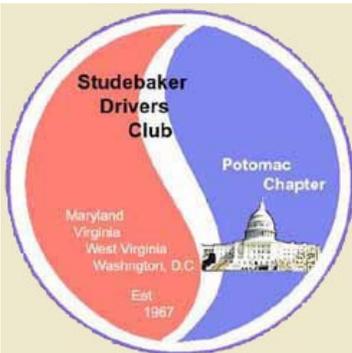
**Treasurer**  
Dave Farris  
852 Baltimore Pike  
Gardners, PA 17324  
240-461-7676

**Secretary**

**VACANT**

**Activities Director**  
Chris Thomas

**Membership**  
Stephen Walter  
14916 Chestnut Ridge Court  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878



**Historian**  
Ed Lemanski  
7875 Red Jacket Way  
Jessup, MD 20794  
301-776-9893

**Web Master**  
Bob Johnstone  
12161 Holly Knoll Circle  
Great Falls, VA 22066  
703-450-0754

**Newsletter Editor**  
Pete Rutledge  
5102 Cannon Bluff Dr.  
Woodbridge, VA 22192  
703-853-8209 (C)

## 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.

## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR NEWS

We had an excellent response to the renewal reminder in the last newsletter and the subsequent email reminder I sent out. As of 3/23/24 we have had 42 renewals and only 4 members still need to renew. Thank you to those who have renewed. Again, we have had two new members this year including Chris and Kirsten Thomas and Rafael and Barbara Andrino. Chris has also volunteered to fill the position of activities director, a vital job for retaining interest in the members. Thank you, Chris! I will be sending another email reminder directly to the holdouts that have not renewed as of yet. 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, I cannot drive anywhere these days without getting positive comments and questions. Please contact Membership Director Stephen Walter at [stephen.walter1@verizon.net](mailto:stephen.walter1@verizon.net) if you have any questions.

## A Scam Warning from Our President

Beware of scammers asking you to send a membership renewal check somewhere in an email from a bogus Steve White. I was just reading some SDC GroupWorks postings on this subject. Apparently our chapter isn't the only one being targeted.

Steve White

## A 1954 Studebaker Ambulance from George Hamlin



**POTOMAC CHAPTER, SDC**  
**2024 Planned Activities**  
**(Updated 3/28/24)\***

Event (location)	Date	Contact
<i>Cars &amp; Coffee weekend</i>		
<b>Katie's Cars &amp; Coffee</b> Katie's Coffee House 760 Walker Road, Great Falls, VA	Saturday, April 20th 06:30 to 08:30	<i>non-Chapter event in Virginia</i>
<b>Burtonsville Cars &amp; Coffee</b> Burtonsville Town Square 15662 Old Columbia Road Burtonsville, MD	Sunday, April 21st 07:30 to noon	<i>non-Chapter event in Maryland</i>
<i>Cruise-In Night</i>		
<b>Juke Box Diner</b> 7039 Columbia Pike. Annandale VA	Sunday, May 19th 05:30 to 7:00	<i>Chapter event in Virginia</i> contact: Chris Thomas <a href="mailto:topher_thomas71@yahoo.com">topher_thomas71@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Walker's Tap &amp; Table</b> 2465 MD-97 (Georgia Ave.) Glenwood, MD	Sunday, May 19th 05:30 to 7:00	<i>Chapter event in Maryland</i> contact:
<b>Sully Car Show</b> 3650 Historic Sully Way Chantilly, VA	Sunday, June 16th (Father's Day) 10:00 to 3:30	<i>non-Chapter event in Virginia</i> pre-register by June 12
<b>Drive Your Studebaker Day</b> winery visit and tour	Saturday, September 14th 10:30 to 3:00	<i>Chapter Event in Maryland</i> details TBA <b>hold the date!</b>
<b>Rohr Car Show</b> Manassah Masonic Lodge 182 9810 Cockrell Road, Manassas, VA	Saturday, September 21st 8:00 to 3:00	<i>non-Chapter event in Virginia</i> \$25.00 pre-registration
<b>Rockville Antique &amp; Classic Car Show</b> Glenview Mansion at Rockville Civic Center Park 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville, MD	Saturday, October 19th 11:00 to 3:30	<i>non-Chapter event in Maryland</i> registration opens July 1st

**\*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 or other activity for the chapter, please advise Chris Thomas.**

# Odds 'n Ends — Pre-vacation Checklist

By Pete Yuan

Nice weather generally means more travelling, more time on the road and more of an opportunity for something to go wrong with your car.

## **Advance precautions:**

You can, of course, make some advanced precautions to make sure you don't run into problems. A lot of them can be made on your own driveway or garage.

The first thing is to check your radiator. Make sure that you have enough coolant. Make sure that your battery is charged and the terminals and posts or side connections are clean and free from corrosion and grime.

Check the oil and transmission fluid, get them up to approved levels. If it has been a few thousand miles or many months since the last oil change, it is time to do it again. When changing the oil, also change the oil filter too.

When checking the transmission fluid, the engine must be operating and warm when you check. Prior to the checking, set the parking brake and have the transmission in neutral. Wheel chocks in front of the wheels would not be considered a bad idea. When checking, the transmission mode is set in DRIVE. When you get out of the car, remember that the engine is running and the transmission is in DRIVE. Walk only beside or behind the car and not in front of it. It is a matter of trust. Do you trust the parking brakes and the wheel chocks that they will keep the car from moving forward? Do not overfill the automatic transmission. If the transmission level is low, just add a little at a time.

**Tires:** It is important to check your tires. Look for signs of wear, or thinning tread. Do a pressure check on each tire, including the spare tire. Bring the pressure up to the manufacturer's specifications. Remember, if you do have to change a tire, you do need a jack so check to make sure that there is one in the car. When using a jack set it up so it is safe to work on removing and installing another tire. Tires more than 6 or 7 years are considered, OLD. Old tires are considered to be unsafe.

## **Lights**

Have someone start the car for you then walk around the car to check the brake lights, tail lights and head lights. Any burned out bulb is to be replaced.

## **Shock absorbers:**

Push down hard on the fender of the car. If the car does not come back to level or the car keeps bouncing up and down, the shock absorbers need to be replaced.

## **What else:**

Remove the air filter, tap it on the ground a few times to knock out the dust. If it is still dirty, change it.

Test the brakes while driving. If the pedal goes to the floor or very near the floor, the braking system needs to be checked out. You do not want this to happen out on the highway so do it close to home.

Bring extra keys, just in case you lose a set.

Keep windshield clean, both, inside and outside especially if you are driving towards the sun.

# FROM RICHES TO RAGS

By and Thanks to Dan Kuhl



One 1936 Studebaker President magazine ad stated: “Styled Throughout by Gifted Helen Dryden”. In her day she was the best, however, her story is somewhat sad and thought provoking as to how her career ended so abruptly.

Helen Dryden was born on November 26, 1882 to a wealthy Baltimore family. Her future as a socialite in a prominent family was cut short with the failure of the family business. Soon after the business failed the family moved to Pennsylvania where she attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts to study landscape art. She soon found her real interest was 18th Century French design and dress. Sometime in 1908 she moved to New York City to show her fashion portfolio to the publishing industry. After numerous rejections she was hired by *Vogue Magazine* where she flourished until 1923. It was at this time she became a trendsetter for the social elite while becoming the highest paid female artist in America. Her first encounter with Raymond Loewy, who was also a fashion illustrator, was also at this time. It is worth noting that she was cultivating a second career as a Broadway costume designer.

By 1929 her influence on automotive design is documented in *Automobile Topics*, a weekly automotive news magazine. In 1930 she appeared with several celebrities in a Studebaker ad that stated “styled as befit champions by those whose word in art carries authority”. (Author’s note: There’s that name “Champion” that Studebaker would name their last all new car in 1939).

In 1935, in an article about the New York Auto Show in the *New York Times*, Ms. Dryden is listed as an industrial design and style expert. The following year she and Raymond Loewy were contracted as design consultants by Studebaker. Her salary at this time was reported to be \$100,000. This relationship continued through the 1938 model year, in which the Studebaker line was reported as the most beautiful car manufactured by the *Magazine of Art*.

By 1940 Helen Dryden’s art deco style was no longer fashionable and with the pending war, she was no longer in the limelight. Her future was beginning to change at age 58. She was now on welfare and would be until her death in 1972. Although a sad ending, she should be remembered for her contributions: in the art world for her fashion designs; three of the most beautiful Studebakers ever manufactured that bore the red lazy “S” emblem that she created; and most of all that women could function in a man’s automotive world. She also realized that women were important automobile consumers and that cars should be attractive to this segment of the buying public.



Justifiably so, her work was the foundation of things to come as exemplified in the 2018 book *Damsels of Design*, about the ladies who designed auto interiors for GM during the Golden Age of Automobiles.

References: Fox, Fred K. “ 1936 Studebakers, A new Styling For Fast Paced Times” *Turning Wheels* Vol 41 No. 12 (December 2009): pp. 6-14.

Smith, Constance. “Damsels of Design: Women Pioneers in the Automobile Industry, 1939-1959”. (2018). Shiffler Publishing Ltd.

Check out another good article about Helen Dryden here: <https://www.hemmings.com/stories/article/helen-dryden>

## What Did You Do to Your Studebaker?

### John Sartorius in Gerrardstown, WV

After years of being bugged to do so by a Florida-based friend, I sold my 1959 Silver Hawk and am now hard at work on my future Studebaker 289-powered 1928 Model A Sport Coupe hotrod. It will probably be a year before it's on the road, but I hope to have the chassis completed, engine and transmission (200-4R) installed, and final mounts done for the body by the end of the year. In the meantime, I'll be driving the '59 Transtar to shows.



## What Did You Do to Your Studebaker?

**Pete Rutledge — '64 Studebaker Avanti R2, 4-speed**

My body panel replacement project on the Avanti has gone slowly (it was a winter project), but that did give me time to make sure it was done as well as I could do. I think it turned out pretty well. All together I replaced about 60% of the nose panel, the front 25% of the right front fender, and the headlight bucket. The pictures below show the patch panels glued, glassed, filled, and sanded in place.



However, while I thought my fiberglass work was done (and the biggest part of it is done), I did notice an old repair of a break in the lip of the right front wheel well and I am now planning to fix this, too, with a small patch panel. I've asked Jon Meyer for a small piece of the right front fender adjacent to the wheel well from one of his donor Avantis. If that doesn't pan out, I will fabricate a patch. The next major project after that will be shooting the whole car with a sprayable filler (to repair damage done to the surface by soda blasting). Hopefully, I'll have a lot of progress to report in the next issue of The Commander.

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

**2024 Great Race Route**

**June 22-30, 2024**  
Owensboro, KY to Gardiner, ME



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](mailto:hjs66@yahoo.com)

Bill Krueger: 248.348.1768

[wckrueger@yahoo.com](mailto:wckrueger@yahoo.com)

## April-May Birthdays\*

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!!!!

### April

Linda Winokur—Apr 1  
Hal Hermann—Apr 8  
Margaret Bjarnason—Apr 19  
Sue Scott—Apr 20

### May

Peggy Conner—May 8  
Allen Greenlee—May 10  
Shirley McDaniel—May 10  
Larry Pugh—May 10  
Peter Lefkin—May 14  
Paul Johnson—May 21  
Bob Wilson—May 24  
Donna Coffin—May 25  
Anne Mortensen—May 29  
Darlene Pugh—May 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

**1960 Lark convertible.** Great driver quality car. Powered by '57 vintage 289 which was rebuilt by retired Studebaker mechanic in 2007. Flightomatic with first gear start, power steering. I have owned this fun car for 26 years and during my ownership have had it reupholstered, had a new top installed, had some pot metal parts rechromed, and have maintained it well. Asking \$18,000. If interested, call.

Frank Philippi

703-408-9122 [stude289v8@yahoo.com](mailto:stude289v8@yahoo.com)



## FOR SALE, FREE, and WANTED (cont'd)

**FREE:** I have a home made sign (the big white one in the picture) that was used for one of our meets some years ago. I am offering it for a fair price — FREE! Any one?

[luvmyvan2@frontier.com](mailto:luvmyvan2@frontier.com)

Bob DeVore



# 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](mailto:stephen.walter1@verizon.net))  
14916 Chestnut Ridge Court  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

**Yearly dues apply from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 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, EMF, Avanti)

Year	Make	Model	Body Style
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

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