

# THE PUGET SOUND ROCKET

## Newsletter of the Puget Sound Olds Club

An Official Chapter of the Oldsmobile Club of America

OCTOBER 2018



### 2018 BOP BEST OF SHOW WINNER!

The sun is reflecting off the chrome and paint of the 1949 Olds 88, the “Best of Show” winner at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BOP Show on Sept 2, at the XXX Root Beer Drive-In in Issaquah. Owner, Ken McCandless, not only took home the trophy for the Best Olds but the overall winner of Best of Show. This fine Olds is sporting the chrome trim of a '50 Olds plus a tri-power set-up in the engine compartment. As you can see in the photo, Ken opened the doors, hood and trunk for spectators to admire and enjoy this fine car.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BOP Show was a spectacular success with 75 cars filling the show field. There was a very even distribution of brands with an equal number of Buicks, Olds and Pontiacs on the show field. Photos on page 9/10.

The weather for the BOP Show could not have been better with clear skies and the temp a very comfortable 75 degrees. The local Chamber of Commerce would have called this day a typical Washington day for a car show. They would have been correct!

If you missed this show, put the date on your calendar for next year, Sept. 1.

**Between the Bumpers**  
Page 3

**MEETING MINUTES**  
No minutes for Sept.

**CLASSIFIEDS**  
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**Puget Sound Olds Club  
2018  
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**PSOC Website:**

**[www.pugetsoundoldsclub.org](http://www.pugetsoundoldsclub.org)**

## President's Message

PSOC Members,

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BOP Show at the XXX Root Beer-In in Issaquah on Sept. 2 was an outstanding success! 75 Buicks, Oldsmobiles and Pontiac gathered for our best show in five years. Voting results and photos are in this newsletter. The skies were clear and the temp about 75 degrees. A great day!

We are resuming our regular chapter meetings at one of the King County Libraries beginning with the October meeting. There are three important items on the agenda that our membership will be discussing at the October meeting; nominations for 2019-chapter officers, the location for the 2018 Christmas dinner and the dates for the shows in 2019 that the chapter hosts.

If you have not been to a chapter meeting for a while, you are encouraged to attend the meeting on **Oct. 7 at the Mercer Island Library**. Membership input is important. If you have a suggestion to make our chapter better, please bring it to the October meeting

Directions to the Mercer Island Library are in the newsletter on page 6.

**See you at the October meeting...**

*Ed Konsmo*

President

### **DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE NEWSLETTER:**

Information to be considered for submittal in to the newsletter needs to be received by the 25th of the month. Please send your information as an e-mail or attach it to your e-mail in word document form. If you have problems or questions, call Ed or Pam at 253-845-2288. Please e-mail your submittal to: [ekonsmo@msn.com](mailto:ekonsmo@msn.com)



## “BETWEEN THE BUMPERS” ... By Ed



### The last of the first American Automatic Transmission-equipped cars



**...will be up for auction at the Hershey Lodge on Oct.12.**

All technology has teething problems. Not all technology has teething problems that lead to its near-extinction in the wild, but such is the case with Oldsmobile's Automatic Safety Transmission, considered the first American automatic transmission, which reportedly exists nowadays in just one vehicle, a convertible that will cross the block at Hershey.

Of course, in automotive technology, terms like “first” come with many asterisks and qualifiers. To begin with, the Automatic Safety Transmission, which requires a clutch to get the car moving, should technically fall under the category of semi-automatic transmissions. Manually shifted and double-clutched transmissions in early automobiles often required a good deal of strength, skill, and practice to master, and many an automotive engineer dreamed up alternatives like friction drive — a sort of predecessor to modern continuously variable transmissions — and the Owen Magnetic's drive system — an intriguing application of what we would today call hybrid technology. The planetary transmission in the Ford Model T was chosen over a sliding-gear transmission specifically to avoid the gear-crunching frustration of leading contemporary transmission design.

That frustration with the status quo led Earl A. Thompson to start tinkering. A native of Portland, Oregon, Thompson “was a familiar figure in Portland streets in the 1920s, driving Cadillac, Rickenbacker, and Buick automobiles in which he was testing his transmission,” according to a [January 1964 report in \*The Oregon Journal\*](#). By 1925, he'd perfected the synchromesh concept, “which for the first time enabled a driver to shift from low to second and from second to high or vice versa while the car is operating at any speed and without clashing of gears” and traveled to Detroit to present it to General Motors, which put the technology into production on 1928 Cadillacs.



### “First Automatic Transmission” continued from page 3

Thompson, however, wasn't yet done. He sold his patents to GM and went to work for Cadillac, where he was given free rein to develop a transmission that would require even less skill to master than the synchronized manual: a fully automatic transmission.

To accomplish that task, he decided to build upon the concept of the planetary gearset. Originally developed as an automobile transmission as early as 1901 in the Curved Dash Oldsmobile, planetary gearsets proved far more adaptable to automation than sliding gear transmissions, so Thompson combined two of them in series to produce four forward speeds. However, as Paul van Valkenburgh noted in the January 1994 issue of *Automobile Quarterly*,

*“What was novel was the use of hydraulic pressure to engage the planetary clutch packs and the ring gear brake bands. This was also the first use of accelerator pedal position and vehicle speed sensors to determine automatically the correct gear selection. Under normal driving conditions, the primary determinant was a speed-controlled governor, but when the accelerator was pressed to the floor, the transmission automatically downshifted to the next lower gear.”*

According to Helen Jones Earley and James R. Walkinshaw's [\*Setting the Pace: Oldsmobile's First 100 Years\*](#), Buick actually supplied the Automatic Safety Transmission (so named because, along with the column-mounted gear selector, it allowed the driver to spend more time with his or her hands on the wheel) to Oldsmobile, which had earned a reputation as GM's innovation brand.

Oldsmobile announced the AST as an \$80 option for eight-cylinder models only in June 1937 and started encountering trouble with the transmission soon after. Longtime Oldsmobile employee Hoyt Penabaker told Earley and Walkinshaw that, during testing, some of the transmissions “would holler like hell” at exactly 48 miles per hour “so they would throw it out.” After as many as 8,000 transmissions failed testing — and after Buick's engineers allegedly told their Oldsmobile counterparts “That's your baby now” — Penabaker said he discovered that a single spiral gear needed additional machining, something Oldsmobile offered to do for an additional \$75.

Van Valkenburgh said the transmissions suffered from additional flaws, including constant adjustment, which likely led to total production of less than 30,000 over the 1937, 1938, and 1939 model years (Buick used it too, but only in the 1938 model year). In total, Oldsmobile produced nearly 460,000 cars over that time span, so the AST take rate totaled somewhere near 6.5 percent. “But they did prove that there was a large enough market for simplified shifting to justify the immense development and tooling costs,” van Valkenburgh wrote.

In turn, Thompson and Oliver Kelley took the AST, reworked its operation, added a dual-element fluid coupling in place of the manual clutch, and came up with the Hydra-Matic, GM's first fully automatic transmission. Those too proved troublesome in the beginning, but they also vastly democratized driving.

Of those 30,000 transmissions, one found its way into [a 1938 L-38 convertible coupe](#), one of 475 that Oldsmobile built that year, the last for rumble seats. In addition to the AST (by 1938, a \$100 option), the convertible was also fitted with dual side mounts (a \$65 option), the deluxe radio (a \$66.50 option), electric clock (a \$15 option), fog lamps (a \$6.25 option), and a heater (a \$15 option).

According to RM's description of the convertible, it's the only surviving Oldsmobile with the AST as well as a Best of Show winner at the 1973 Oldsmobile Nationals and a Senior First Prize winner with the AACA in 1974. RM's pre-auction estimate for the convertible ranges from \$55,000 to \$75,000.

The convertible will cross the block as part of RM Sotheby's Hershey auction, scheduled for October 11 to 12 at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Additional photos on page 5

## Photos of the 1938 L-38 Convertible



This article was written by David Strohl of *Hemmings Daily*

Photos by RM Auctions

## MEMBER NOTES & CHAPTER INFO

This page features notes of interest for and about our members. If you have something interesting to report, please send an e-mail to your editor at [ekonsmo@msn.com](mailto:ekonsmo@msn.com), or call and leave a message, 253-845-2288.

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Omitted from the birthday list in the September Puget Sound Rocket was Ed “Pinky” Booth whose birthday was on September 5. Ed, please accept our apology.

This month we will resume our regular monthly meetings at one of the King County Libraries. We will be meeting at the Mercer Island Library at 1 PM on Oct. 7.

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE MERCER ISLAND LIBRARY**

#### **From the North on I-405**

At exit 8, take ramp right and follow signs for E. Mercer Way  
Turn left onto E Mercer Way  
Turn right onto SE 36th St  
Road name changes to Gallagher Hill Rd  
Turn right onto SE 40th St  
Turn left onto 86th Ave SE  
Turn left onto SE 44th St  
Turn right onto 88th Ave SE  
Arrive at 88th Ave SE on the left

#### [Mercer Island Library](#)

4400 88th Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040

#### **From the South on I-405**

At exit 8, take ramp right and follow signs for E. Mercer Way  
Turn left onto E Mercer Way  
Turn right onto SE 36th St  
Road name changes to Gallagher Hill Rd  
Turn right onto SE 40th St  
Turn left onto 86th Ave SE  
Turn left onto SE 44th St  
Turn right onto 88th Ave SE  
Arrive at 88th Ave SE on the left

#### [Mercer Island Library](#)

4400 88th Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040.

# CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

No meeting minutes for September



***Happy Birthday  
to our Chapter Members  
and Their Spouses***

## **OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS**

<b>5</b>	<b>Darlene Wascher</b>	<b>Arlington, WA</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Ed Straw</b>	<b>Bothell, WA</b>
<b>7`</b>	<b>Pete Salazar</b>	<b>Kent, WA</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Jamie Cox</b>	<b>North Saanich, BC</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>John Hogan</b>	<b>Everett, WA</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Anne Wallis</b>	<b>Bancroft, Ontario</b>

### **CHAPTER MEETING HOSTS\***

**OCTOBER – Erik Martinson**  
**NOVEMBER – Jim & Nina Rogers**  
**DECEMBER – Christmas Dinner**

**\* Provides Snacks for the Meeting**

# BOP Show Voting Results

**Best of Show Ken McCandless 1949 Oldsmobile Club Coupe**

1st Place Buick Randy Bowden 1933 Buick Victoria

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Buick John Stewart 1955 Buick Special

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Buick Jan Pelroy 1931 Buick 56 C

1<sup>st</sup> Place Oldsmobile Ken McCandless 1949 Club Coupe

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Oldsmobile Dan McDowell 1955 98

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Oldsmobile Charles Wascher 1970 442

1st Place Pontiac Gary Tripp 1962 Pontiac Grand Prix

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Pontiac Dennis Brown 1955 Pontiac Chief

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Pontiac Al Yaros 1964 Pontiac Bonneville



## Photos from 2018 BOP Show



**Charles Wascher – 1970 442**



**A row of Olds – hoods up**



**Gary Tripp - '62 Grand Prix**



**Dan McDowell – 1955 98**





**Jan Pelroy – 1931 Buick**

**John Stewart – 1955 Buick Special**



**The shirt matches the car!**



**A row of Buick GNX Turbos**



**A contrast of colors...**



**A nice '49 Buick Roadmaster**



## Swap Meets and Shows in October

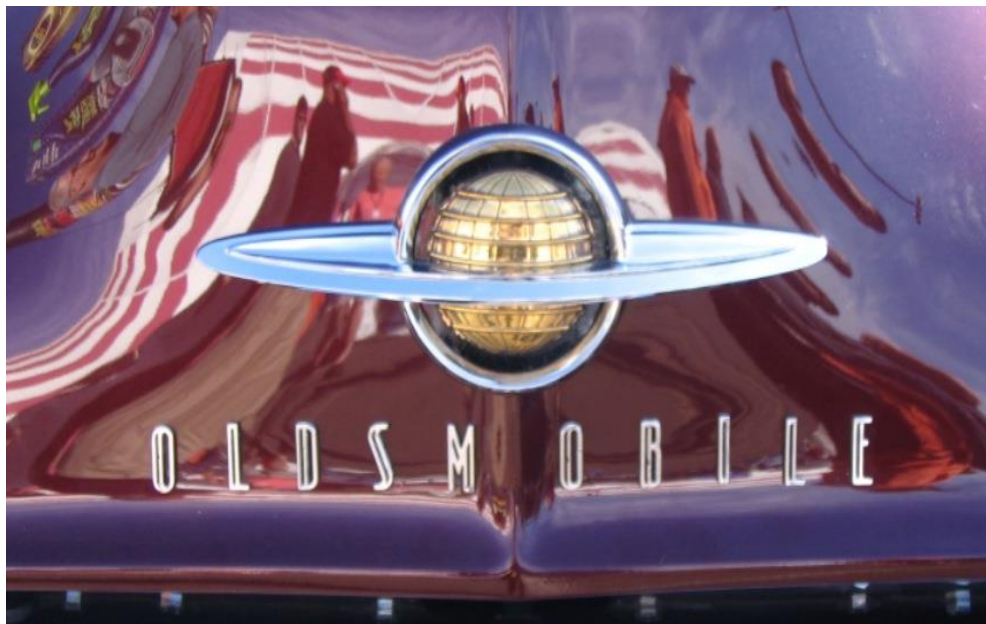
**The swap meets and shows are selected based on convenient locations.**

- SEPT 30 Snohomish, WA; Snohomish Classic Car and Hot Rod Display**  
 Downtown Snohomish, 21 Ave A, Snohomish, WA 98290; 10am – 4:30pm;  
 Adm. Free; Reg. Fee - \$25; Snohomish Chamber of Commerce; 425-344-8533;  
<http://www.snohomishchamber.org> (Your editor has attended this show. It is  
 one of the last great car shows of the season. Lots of trophies)
- OCT 5-6 Ocean Shores, WA; Show 'n Shine at the Shores**  
 Quinault Beach Resort and Casino, Ocean Shores, WA 98569; 12pm – 4pm;  
 8am – 2:30pm; Adm. Free; Reg. Fee - \$20; Quinault Beach Resort and Casino/  
 Push Rods of Hoquiam; 360-593-1497; [firstaidcpr@comcast.net](mailto:firstaidcpr@comcast.net)
- OCT 6 Tacoma, WA; Caffeine & Gasoline**  
 Griot's Garage, 3333 S. 38<sup>th</sup> St. Tacoma, WA 98409; **8am – 11am**; Adm. Free;  
 No reg. fee; Griot's Garage; 800-345-5789; [info@griotsgarage.com](mailto:info@griotsgarage.com)
- OCT 6 Tacoma, WA; Halloween Car Show**  
 Griot's Garage, 3333 S. 38<sup>th</sup> St. Tacoma, WA 98409; **11am – 3pm**; Adm. Free;  
 Reg. Fee TBA; Griot's Garage; 800-345-5789; [info@griotsgarage.com](mailto:info@griotsgarage.com)
- OCT 6-7 Monroe, WA; Monroe Swap Meet**  
 Evergreen State Fairgrounds, 14405 179<sup>th</sup> St. SE, Monroe, WA 98272; 8am – 5pm;  
 8am – 3pm; Adm. Free; Reg. Fee - \$40; Vendor Fee - \$40+; Antique Auto  
 Restorers Club of Bellingham; 360-941-9460; [fallswapmeet@gmail.com](mailto:fallswapmeet@gmail.com);  
<http://www.aarcbellingham.com>
- OCT 21-22 Springfield, OR; The Roadster Show**  
 Bob Keefer Center for Sports & Recreation, 250 S. 32<sup>nd</sup> St. Springfield, OR 97478;  
 9am – 9:30pm; 9:30am – 5pm; Adm. Fee - \$8; Reg. Fee - \$35; Vendor Fee - \$150;  
 Branches of Valor; 541-345-3458; [info@BranchesofValor.org](mailto:info@BranchesofValor.org)
- OCT 28 Bellingham, WA; Punkin' Run Car Show**  
 Hardware Sales parking lot, 2034 King St. Bellingham, WA 98225; 10am – 2pm;  
 Adm. Free; Reg. Fee - \$10; 4<sup>th</sup> Corner Elites Car Club; 360-384-2733;  
[Realtorrawls@comcast.net](mailto:Realtorrawls@comcast.net); <http://fourthcornerelitescarclub.com/>

# Future Oldsmobile National Meets

**2019     June 26-30     Wichita, KS; Hosted by the OCA  
Hyatt Regency Wichita**

**2020     Date and location still being considered.**



**\*\*\*\*\* OCA News \*\*\*\*\***

**CORRECTION:** Last month we reported that Jamie Cox worked on updating the OCA Bylaws. Jon Manji oversaw the committee working on the Bylaws. Jamie headed the Contractors Committee. They reviewed salaries, job descriptions, performance evaluations, JWO Editor, printing companies, etc. Jamie and his committee are now evaluating OCA Zone allocations.



# CLASSIFIEDS

**Classified ads are free, unlimited words, within reason. Ads will ONLY run for three consecutive months unless renewal is requested. Please submit your classified advertisement in electronic format by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to [ekonsmo@msn.com](mailto:ekonsmo@msn.com).**

## FOR SALE:

**1968 Ninety-Eight Luxury Sedan** – Extremely straight rust free. NO ENGINE OR TRANS. You will have to tow the car home. \$200 OBO. Jim Long 360-893-8293, Graham, WA (3)

**1973 Delta 88** – Wine color, 74,000 miles, one owner; Call Carl Werner, 604-266-0041 or 604-266-5127; Vancouver, BC (1)

**1978 Cutlass Supreme w/T-Tops**; Project car. Engine is out and interior needs to be finished. Call Mike at 360-516-9108 for the price. (1)

**1978 Cutlass**. 109,000 miles, new head liner. Call Susan Nordeen at 360-384-2904 or e-mail at 360-384-2904 or e-mail [ssnordeen@gmail.com](mailto:ssnordeen@gmail.com) for a price. (1)

**1985 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme Brougham** 5.0L V8 4BBL Coupe 2D 49,444 ORIGINAL miles - runs great! Car has always been in the same family. Free AutoCheck Vehicle History Report Interested? Please email [oldsmobilecutlass85@gmail.com](mailto:oldsmobilecutlass85@gmail.com) Car located in Indianola, WA (1)



He said it would be an easy restoration!

## NEEDS and LEADS:

**NEED - Intake Manifold** for 4-barrel 394 motor. Call Jim Long 360-893-8293 (1)

**NEED - Radiator shroud** for '57, '58 or '59. Call Erik (425) 433-6480 (1)

**NEED - Power Antenna and the name of a Wonder Bar radio repair person.** Call Ed Booth; 253-752-6158 (1)

**NEED -1941 98 – Rear axle shaft;** Call Ralph 253-222-5098; [TacomaRain@gmail.com](mailto:TacomaRain@gmail.com) (1)

**LEAD -1963 F85 Convertible** – free chrome parts – Don O'Kelly; 509-589-1201 (3)

**LEAD -1968 Cutlass Convertible 442 (clone).** Has 350 block and power glide automatic. New interior kit ready to install. Paint is fantastic, just cut and polished. Runs and drives, just needs interior installed and dash/ electrical put back together. Low mileage. \$16,740 as is (interior parts included) or \$23,500 finished with interior completely installed and finished. Call Jim 206-406-1313. Located in Gig Harbor, WA. (1)

**NEED** – OCA and PSOC chapter member. Looking for a '70-'72 442, W30, W31 or SX convertible or hardtop, any condition. The more original and documented, the better. Prefer numbers matching car. I would like to be the next caretaker of your prized Olds. Looking for any NOS parts or parts collection for these cars. Call John Bumb at 314-713-3444 or email [johnbumb@charter.net](mailto:johnbumb@charter.net) (1)

**LEAD - 1973 442** – Portland, OR; Selling father's car; Call Dan anytime for price and details; Contact Ed K. for photos if interested. 503-421-1510 (2)

421-1510 Call my any time

**IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING ADS:** Some of the ads have already run for a number of months. This month most of the ads have a three (3) after the ad. If you have sold or no longer need the item or car, please let us know and we will remove the ad. Thank you

**OLDSMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA**  
**PUGET SOUND CHAPTER**  
**2018 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if this is an address change

HOME PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTHDAY      MONTH \_\_\_\_\_ DAY \_\_\_\_\_  
SPOUSE        MONTH \_\_\_\_\_ DAY \_\_\_\_\_

**\$20.00 annual dues payable. Please make checks payable to Puget Sound Chapter and mail to:**

**Kathi Straw**  
**PSOC Membership Chairperson**  
**P.O. Box 82042**  
**Kenmore, WA 98028**

**Please assist us in updating our roster by listing your current Oldsmobile(s) below:**

1) YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ MODEL \_\_\_\_\_ COLOR \_\_\_\_\_

2) YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ MODEL \_\_\_\_\_ COLOR \_\_\_\_\_

3) YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ MODEL \_\_\_\_\_ COLOR \_\_\_\_\_

4) YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ MODEL \_\_\_\_\_ COLOR \_\_\_\_\_

**Please print this form and mail to Kathi**

## The Parting shot...



**You think that you are having a bad day?**