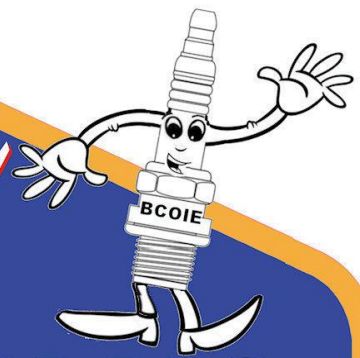


May 2025

# Studebaker SPARKPLUG

*The Official Newsletter of*



1964 Indy 500

Best wishes to  
"Dan"  
Bobby Unser.

## Chapter Information

BCOIE Chapter Meetings are on the 2nd Saturday of each month at:  
**Polly's Pies 18132 Imperial Highway, Yorba Linda, CA 714-572-9679 ~ at 4:30 pm**

**\*\*\* Please bring cash for purchases to pay the chapter, so the chapter can pay the bill with one check. \*\*\***

For additional information please contact any chapter officer or check the calendar of events in each newsletter or on our website.

**BCOIE Chapter membership is \$20.00 per year, due January 1<sup>st</sup>.** You *must* be a member of the National Studebaker Drivers Club prior to joining any Chapter. Please mail your dues promptly to:

**Debbie Stockey – Membership**  
**17410 Golden Maple Lane**  
**Yorba Linda, CA 92886**

**Newsletter Information** - The Studebaker Sparkplug is the official publication of the BCOIE Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club, Inc. For ads or classifieds contact the editor listed below.

### BCOIE Chapter Officers

<b>Elected</b>	President	Rosiland Metzker	714-315-8292	roldstudes@earthlink.net
	Vice President	Jonni Elmore	951-545-2664	elmorejonni@gmail.com
	Secretary / Sunshine	Dee Gruver	562-946-2249	cwgruverconst@aol.com
	Treasure / Membership	Debbie Stockey	714-524-7965	debizoo@aol.com
<b>Appointed</b>	Newsletter Editor / Webmaster	Dan Scott	818-558-1791	dansct@sbcglobal.net
	Facebook Administrator	Jim Studebaker	949-235-4707	jstudebaker5@gmail.com

### Pacific Southwest Zone Officers

<b>Elected</b>	Zone Director	Ed Smith	602-290-1045	edcollects@gmail.com
	Zone Coordinator	Dan Scott	818-558-1791	dansct@sbcglobal.net
<b>Appointed</b>	Regional Manager - Calif. South	Catherine Chen	310-431-8179	CatherineLchen@gmail.com

**SDC Website:** <https://studebakerdriversclub.com/>

**BCOIE Website:** <https://www.studebakersocal.com/>

**BCOIE Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/BCOIESOCAL>

**BCOIE Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/bcoiechapter/>



## President's Message Rosiland Metzker



Hope your April was good, and you had a great Easter. Hopefully your cars are ready for the show season and going to events as now the time is here. There are so many places to take our cars to and share the Studebaker story and history.

La Palma will be on Sunday, September 28, 2025. There will be people choice awards in each division. Our Vice President, Jonni Elmore, has been busy scheduling our 2025 calendar of events. Our newsletter highlights what is happening.

On May 10 at 1:00 promptly, our event is at the Richard Nixon library and our own Jeanne Ertel will be leading our group as our docent. She donated 4 tickets for the event which were raffled off at our April meeting. She has volunteered there for many years. We will have our meeting and dinner afterwards. Please plan on a 4:00 start for our meeting this month.

June 7-8 is the Huntington Beach Concours

Come join us at our activity and have a great May!

Respectively,  
Rosiland

## Meeting Minutes



Meeting minutes for BCOIE Chapter – April 12, 2025  
The following members were in attendance: Jack & Fay Weber, John & Rosiland Metzker, Bud & Dee Gruver, Sam Wheeler & Cheryl, Jack & Debbie Stockey, Dennis & Jonn Elmore, Jim Studebaker and Jeanne Ertel.

PRESIDENT Rosiland Metzker called the meeting to order at 4:55 p.m. President led members in the Pledge to the Flag. The President welcomed all members.

SECRETARY Dee Gruver reported that the March minutes were printed in the April newsletter. Membership voted to approve minutes as printed. Dee reported that birthdays and anniversaries of members will be in newsletters. Please include that information on your

renewal form if we do not already have it.

TREAS/MEMBERSHIP Debbie Stockey reported the current financial information. The membership report shows 23 paid members to date. Please bring your 2025 membership up to date. Motion to accept the report as given was made and approved.

V-PRESIDENT Jonni Elmore reported the following club events have been scheduled as follows, See Calendar.

Information on future events will be reported when scheduled.

OLD BUSINESS: La Palma Meet plans are progressing. The park fees are paid in full. The meet will take place on the grass area as in the past. Watch for more updates. Sam Wheeler reported on attending the LA Chapter show on April 6. There were 31 cars. Jim Studebaker attended a show in San Clemente recently and his Studebaker drew a lot of attention. He reminded everyone that there are many shows to show off our Studebakers and with summer here we need to get the cars out on the road!

NEW BUSINESS: the 2025 roster is available. Contact Jack or Debby Stockey.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted  
Dee Gruver, Secretary



*From the desk of the editor*  
Dan Scott

In the house I grew up in the month of May only meant one thing, the Indianapolis 500. Now, it takes on another meaning, La Palma, but since this year's annual car show won't arrive until September, it's only the "Indy 500" again. So, I'll take advantage of this time to revisit Studebaker's roll in the Greatest Spectacle in Racing.

Thanks to **Sam Wheeler** for the photos from the Los Angeles Chapter's Classic Car Show on Page 14.

If you have any Studebaker parts, cars or memorabilia that you'd like to sell, let me know and I'll post it on the Chapter's website. Don and Jeri Cox recently sold one of their flock, a '62 GT Hawk.

## BCOIE Calendar



Saturday, May 10th	Richard Nixon Library Tour, Yorba Linda – Chapter Meeting to follow at 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, June 8th	<a href="#">Huntington Beach Concours d'Elegance</a> (Link)
Saturday, June 14th	Chapter Meeting 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 13th	Members meeting and Our Annual Picnic, Yorba Regional Park – Shelter 6
September 13th	Members meeting @ 4:30pm "DRIVE YOUR STUDEBAKER!"
September 16 – 20th	The 61st Annual SDC International Meet - Washington County, Pennsylvania
September 28th	La Palma Car Show and Swap Meet, La Palma Park, Anaheim – 8:00am – 3:00pm
December 13th	Members meeting & "Our Annual Christmas Party!" @ 4:30pm 18132 Imperial Hwy. Yorba Linda

### Birthdays

Rosiland Metzker	3
Denise Frink	12
Yesenia Willison	25

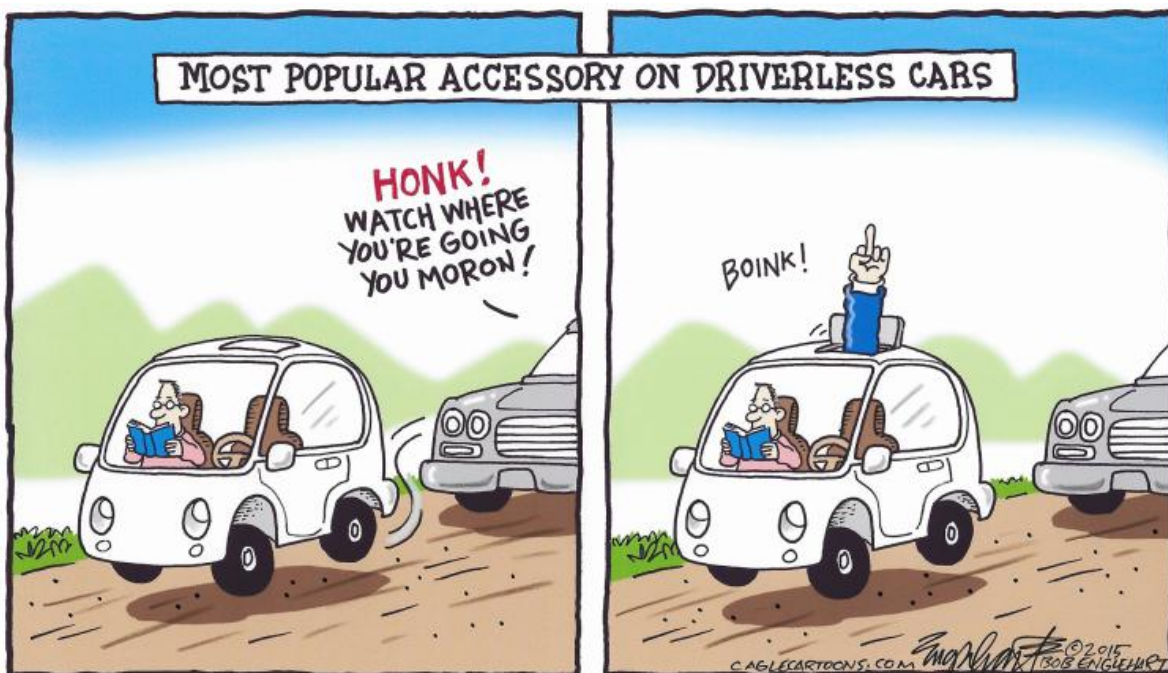
### No Anniversaries this Month

*Happy Birthday to our May Members*

*May your day be as bright and shiny as a brand new Studebaker*



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Cheers!!! ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



## Studebaker at the Brickyard (Thanks to the Studebaker National Museum)

The Indianapolis 500 is considered by many to be America's greatest racing spectacle. Many legendary names have competed on the 2.5 mile oval on Indianapolis' west side. In the early 1930s, the Studebaker Corporation entered the Brickyard fray.

Through much of the 1920s, the '500 was dominated by expensive purpose-built race cars. In fact, Studebaker sponsored one such entry in 1924. Increasing costs led to fewer and fewer entries as the 1920s progressed, leading race organizers to enact drastic rule changes for the 1930 contest. The new rules outlawed superchargers, increased maximum engine displacement from 91 to 366 cubic inches, and reinstated the riding mechanic. The rule changes encouraged the use of production-based engines, such as the Studebaker President's 336.7 cubic inch inline eight.



### 1932 #37 Indy 500

Two private parties entered the 1930 race with President-powered race cars. The "Russell 8" was constructed by Detroit-based Russell Snowberger, and the "ROMTHE Special" was built by a group of Studebaker engineers. The ROMTHE Special (named for the initials of its builders) retired on the 112 lap due to a ruptured fuel tank, but the Russell 8 finished an impressive 8th overall.

The two cars returned for the 1931 '500, this time joined by a third Studebaker-powered entry, the "Hunt Special." The car was named for and built by Studebaker's Supervisor of Testing George Hunt. The car was not officially sanctioned by Studebaker but was built at Studebaker's facilities as an "off books" project. The Hunt Special was very similar to the other two cars, but featured a chassis built by noted Indianapolis race car builder Herman Rigling and certain other detail differences. As for the race itself, The Russell 8 grabbed the pole position and finished 5th, the Hunt Special briefly held the lead before crashing late in the race, and the ROMTHE Special renamed the Richards Special for 1931, also crashed near the end of the race.

### 1932 Indy 500



The success of the Studebaker-powered racers in 1930 and 1931 led to a full-fledged factory backed effort in 1932.

Using the Hunt Special as a template, Studebaker built four additional racers for the 1932 race and fielded a five-car team. All five cars finished the race, with the #22 car driven by Cliff Bergere finishing a team best 3rd. The Studebaker team returned for 1933 with four of the cars featuring new streamlined bodies. The #34 car driven by Tony Gulotta finished a team best 7th, and the lowest finish was a mere 12th.

The 1933 race was the last Studebaker race at the Brickyard. The company entered receivership in March of that year, and its racing program was a casualty of its financial situation.

The Studebaker team cars were sold off, although some continued to compete privately at the '500 into the late 1930s. All but one of the factory team cars is accounted for today.



## Setting the Pace: Studebaker's Pace Cars (Thanks to the Studebaker National Museum)

The Studebaker Corporation was selected to provide the pace car for the Indianapolis 500 on four occasions: 1929, 1940, 1952, and 1962. The concept of the pace car in motorsports originated at the first 500 in 1911. A rolling start was desired instead of the customary standing start, and a pace car was introduced to keep the field in line.



The 1929 race was paced by a 1929 President Roadster driven by Studebaker engineer George Hunt. The actual pace car was finished in special two-tone paint – black hood and fenders with an aluminum-colored body. Following the race, Studebaker produced 30 replicas of the President pace car for sale to the general public. None are known to survive today. The 1940 Indianapolis 500 marked one of the few times a closed car was used for pace car duties. A 1940 Champion Club Sedan was selected. In accordance with a practice begun with the 1936 500, the race winner was awarded the pace car. In 1940, Wilbur Shaw took home the maroon Champion for his victorious effort.

In 1952, Studebaker marked its Centennial. Race weekend that year was a celebration of Studebaker's 100th birthday. Studebaker brought most of its museum to the Speedway and hosted several special events throughout the weekend. The company paraded its museum vehicles around the track prior to the race. All of the operable vehicles were driven, while the horsedrawn vehicles were placed on floats. A Commander Convertible served as the pace car and was driven by Studebaker executive P. O. Petersen. Race winner Troy Ruttman earned the keys to the Commander.



Two different Studebakers served as pace cars for the 1962 contest. Studebaker's new Avanti served as the "honorary" pace car while a Lark Daytona Convertible handled the actual pace car duties. The Daytona was driven by 500 veteran Sam Hanks.



The Avanti, the 34th one produced, was awarded to winner Rodger Ward. As a special tribute, two of the original Studebaker Specials returned to the Speedway – the #22 car and the #34 car then owned by Brooks Stevens.

In addition to the pace cars, Studebaker supplied numerous "festival" cars to the 500 for the 1952 and 1962 races. In 1952, twenty-two Commanders, three Champions, three R5 1/2 tons, and one R10 were supplied for the race, and in 1962, thirty-four Lark convertibles were sent for the race weekend, plus four identical Lark Daytona Convertibles equipped for pace car duty. The whereabouts of these cars today is unknown.



## Studebaker National Museum Acquires Rare Studebaker Indianapolis 500 Race Car

By Tara Hurlin March 22, 2024

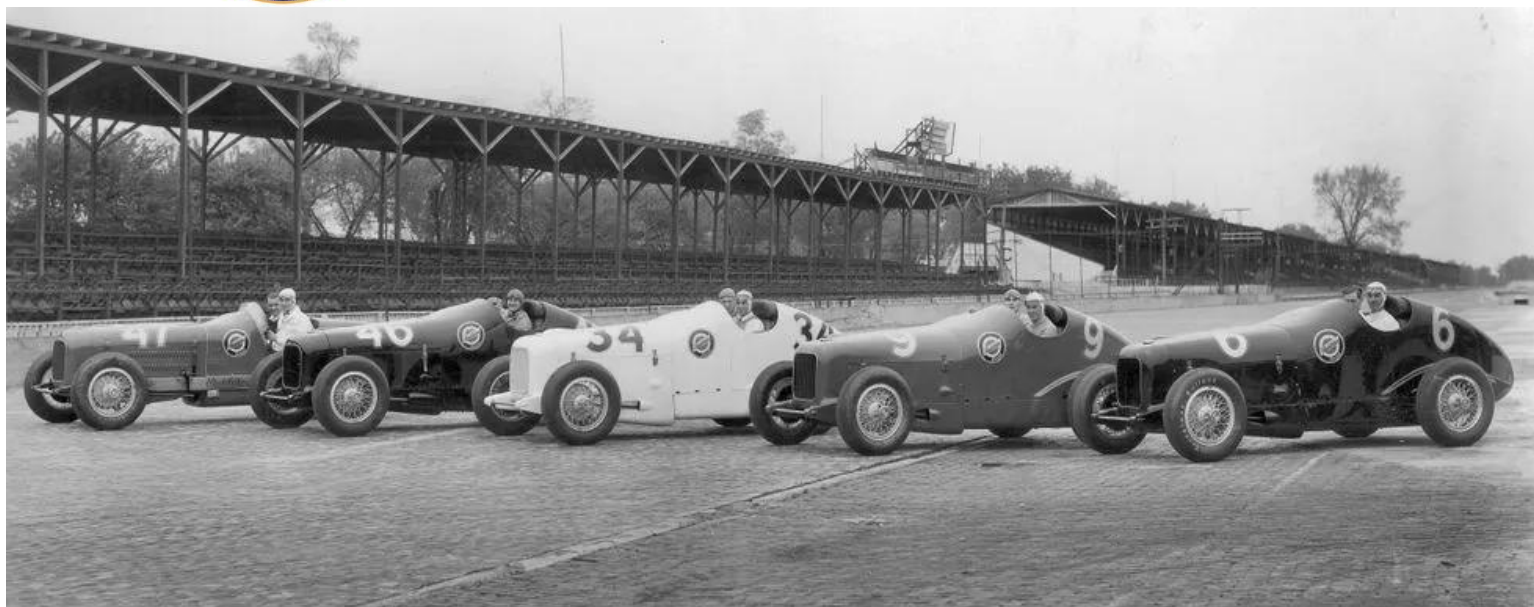
The Studebaker National Museum announced the arrival of the #34 Studebaker Special Indianapolis 500 Race Car, the only surviving factory-built example in existence. Just five of the historic race cars were made, each featuring streamlined coachwork in 1933. Number 34 is now on display at the museum as of October 24, 2023.

Acquiring a Studebaker Indy Car has been a dream of the Studebaker National Museum for decades. “The Indianapolis 500 is the United States’ iconic automobile race,” said Andrew Beckman, the archivist at the Studebaker National Museum. Studebaker’s five-car entry into the 1932 Indianapolis 500 was one of the of the race’s largest factory-backed efforts. The team’s top driver finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, with Studebaker also claiming 6th, 13th, 15th, and 16<sup>th</sup> places.

When Studebaker returned for the 1933 season with more power and wind tunnel-tested streamlined bodies, the #34 car finished a team-best 7<sup>th</sup> and took home \$1,300 in prize money. The race car was passed on through several owners after its retirement, finally landing with industrial designer Brooks Stevens in 1957, who restored it and stored it in his private collection until his passing. It switched hands to August Grasis of Kansas City, Missouri in 1996 and was campaigned in numerous vintage racing events. It most recently competed in the 2021 Weathertech International Challenge at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin.

“Adding the #34 Car to the Collection allows the Museum to connect the history of Indiana’s signature automotive event, the Indianapolis 500, with its most prominent automotive manufacturer. When the opportunity to acquire this remarkable vehicle became available, the local community and Studebaker enthusiasts rallied to make this dream a reality. We are incredibly grateful for all of the generous supporters who made this possible,” Studebaker National Museum Executive Director, Patrick Slebonick, stated in the press release.





## 1933 Studebaker Indianapolis 500 team

Beckman added: “Studebaker’s Indianapolis 500 racing team was one of the Speedway’s largest factory-backed campaigns and represents an almost mythical era of Studebaker history. The Studebaker Specials’ competition included entrants from legendary builders Harry Miller and Fred Duesenberg and the team skillfully showcased Studebaker’s top-notch engineering and reliability. This is a day I never thought would come and am overjoyed to have #34 back home in South Bend.”

## Pace Car Myth Busters

By Hemmings Admin March 25, 2024

May we finally lay to rest what is probably the most insidious Indianapolis 500 Pace Car myth? Researching “1962 Indianapolis 500 Pace Car” on the internet will inevitably expose you to a stubborn falsehood concerning the 1962 race.

It goes something like this: “The [Avanti] prototype was slated to pace the 1962 Indianapolis 500 Mile Race, but the decision was made at the eleventh hour to substitute a Studebaker Lark convertible.” That statement is patently false. Nonetheless, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum used those exact words to describe a 1963 Studebaker Avanti in the museum’s special display of Indiana-built cars last winter.

Although the new Avanti was being developed at the time, the idea that it was supposed to pace the 1962 Indianapolis 500 is an urban myth. Instead, we can document the new 1962 Lark Daytona convertible as having been chosen at a time when convertibles were all but mandatory as Indianapolis 500 Pace Cars.

This promotional photo, taken on the infield of The Indianapolis Motor Speedway, first appeared in the December 1961 Studebaker News, the monthly newspaper for Studebaker dealers. Studebaker National Museum archivist Andy Beckman reports the photograph being recorded in Studebaker Corporation’s Negative Index Book





on November 6, 1961. That means it was taken no later than that date... and probably much earlier, judging from the foliage on the trees.

For this photo to have been taken before November 6, 1961, the 1962 Indianapolis 500 Pace Car had to have been chosen by October 1961. Those graphics, which also adorned all 33 500 Festival Daytona convertibles, had to be designed, approved, and hand painted sometime in October. The car had to be shipped 140 miles south to Indianapolis from South Bend. Arrangements had to be made for the gentlemen and the professional photographer to meet at the Speedway for the photo shoot.

Surrounding this photograph in the Studebaker News was a 520-word report about the new Daytona convertible having been chosen to pace the 1962 500. The report does not mention the Avanti, or “Studebaker’s new sports car,” or anything of that nature. It simply says the 1962 Lark Daytona convertible was chosen to be the 1962 Pace Car. Period.

Speedway President Anton “Tony” Hulman Jr. was known to favor his native Indiana. So, having a sharp new Lark Daytona convertible pace the 1962 race might logically flow from his happy Hoosier disposition. Here, he is flanked by Indianapolis’ largest Studebaker dealer, Charlie Stuart, on his right. Studebaker- Packard Corporation President Sherwood Egbert is on his left. Sadly, all are deceased.

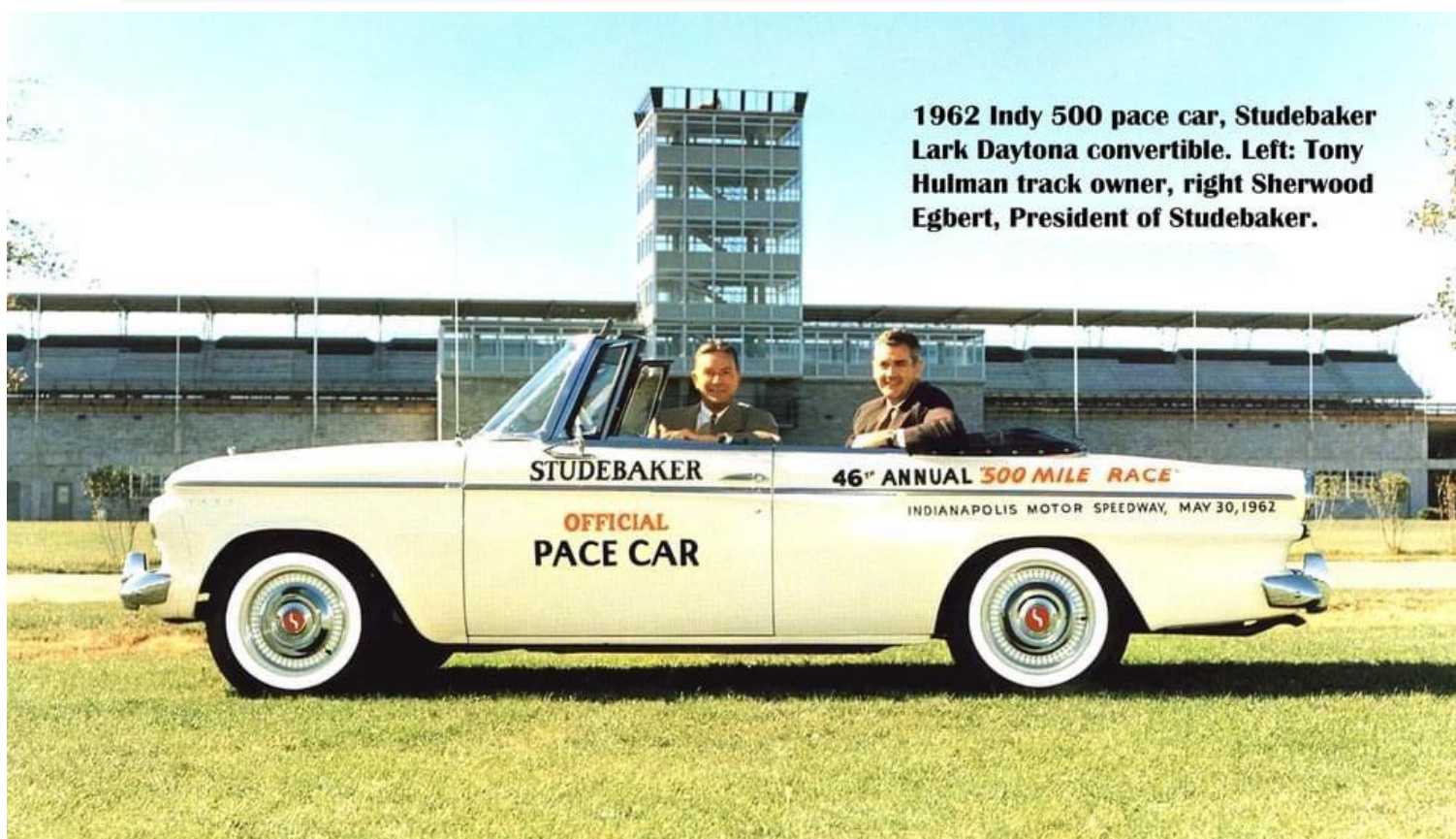
The sporty Daytona series was new for 1962. It was the first time the larger 289-cu.in. Studebaker V-8 was available as a regular production option for Larks other than the Cruiser and commercial vehicles. Some sources further report, again erroneously, that the pace car had the 210-hp two-barrel 289 V-8, but the two actual pace cars (one a backup) had 225-hp four-barrel engines. This is verified by my copies of their special production orders.

A four-speed, floor-shift transmission was available for Daytona V-8s, a “first” for Larks; the actual pace cars were so equipped. All 33 500 Festival Daytonas, however, had 259 V-8s with Flight-O-Matic.

“The Avanti was supposed to be the pace car” nonsense undoubtedly issues from what happened after Rodger Ward won the 1962 race. Production of the new Avanti was somewhat underway by then, albeit with logistics problems. Regardless, Studebaker’s PR people optimistically encouraged Ward to order a new Avanti, which he did, instead of being awarded the Lark Daytona Pace Car. Although he has passed away, his Avanti survives in good condition.

So, the next time someone tells you (or you see in print) that the new Studebaker Avanti was supposed to pace the 1962 Indianapolis 500 but a Lark convertible was substituted at the last minute, ask them this: How does the Lark’s formal selection and continuous promotion beginning at least seven months before the race constitute “the last minute?”









## **Andy Granatelli - A Look Back at His STP Sponsorship & Indy 500 Win**

Greg Zyla 7/1/2024

I have seen reports that Andy Granatelli, who owned STP, once drove a Studebaker Avanti at Bonneville and went 196mph. How did all this happen and wasn't Granatelli famous more for his Indy 500 win with Mario Andretti? What do you feel Granatelli was most famous for as I remember you wrote many years ago about his involvement with the Studebaker and the supercharged Golden Hawks back in the 1950s?

That's one tough question about the late, great Andy Granatelli, indeed the Godfather of the STP oil additive and winner of several Indy 500s. If I were to answer that question strictly on a business and marketing perspective, I would have to say his sponsorship with Richard Petty and the Petty clan's STP red and blue Plymouth and Dodge NASCAR entries rank right up there with his most famous achievements.

But there's much more to the Granatelli story, so let's start here. Looking back on Granatelli's career, he was the moving force behind Studebaker Racing in the late 1950s to mid-1960s, and was also involved with the McCulloch Supercharger Company that supplied super-chargers in 1957 and 1958 for the famous Studebaker Golden Hawks. Later, as noted in your question, Granatelli became involved with the 1962-63 Studebaker Gran Turismo Hawk and Studebaker Avanti, both which utilized Paxton Superchargers under the hood as standard equipment.

Important is the McCullough and Paxton supercharger connection, as they were pretty much one and the same corporately and the brainchild of Robert Paxton McCulloch. McCulloch established a separate Paxton Supercharger division in 1956 and then sold it off in 1958. Clearly, nomenclature aside, Paxton and McCulloch were always connected at the hip in supplying extra horsepower.

The beautiful 1957 and 1958 Studebaker Golden Hawk came with McCullough superchargers on its 289-inch V8 engines. Then in 1962, Studebaker purchased Paxton Super-chargers at a time when Granatelli was president of Paxton and head of Studebaker's Racing Division. Granatelli became more and more involved with the supercharged Hawk and Avanti, the latter which he did indeed drive to new speed records at Bonneville's Salt Flats. Granatelli posted a speed of 196.58 in his Paxton super-charged 1963 Avanti after previously running a best of 170.78 mph in 1962 and proclaiming Avanti as the world's fastest street car.

This, in a nutshell, is the connection of the auto racing legend Granatelli to Studebaker and the super-chargers, although Granatelli would go on to greater fame with his STP Indy Cars and his Richard Petty long-term STP sponsorship. In 1964, Granatelli became CEO of the STP Corporation, an oil additive he developed, and he already knew first-hand that motor racing delivered consumer sales and product loyalty.

Notable is Granatelli's exceptional Indy 500 efforts, where he twice brought turbine powered cars to the speedway (1967 and 1968) only to see victory snatched away both years with the checkered flag in sight. Specifically, Parnelli Jones suffered a \$6.00 transmission bearing failure with just 3-laps to go while leading in 1967, snatching victory from him and car owner Granatelli. Then in 1968, Joe Leonard was driving Granatelli's STP Lotus 56 Turbine to victory and winning with just 9-laps to go when the turbine stopped running due to a flameout condition and making for back-to-back heartbreaking incidents.

However, in 1969, Granatelli's fortune finally changed and he experienced victory at the Indianapolis 500. As most all older racing fans recall, it was Mario Andretti that drove the more conventional STP Ford powered Hawk chassis to victory, leading 116 of the 200 laps and then receiving the famous victory lane kiss from team owner Granatelli. This is

what I would consider the most notable single achievement Granatelli is known for as that victory lane photo was circulated around the world by numerous press associations.

Little did we know that Andretti's win would be his family's only win at the Indy 500 as all of the Andretti drivers, including sons Michael and Jeff, grandson Marco, cousin John, all either came close to winning, ran well or broke down while in the lead over 75 times to date. Most recently, John passed from cancer, and Marco announced he would cut back his IndyCar driving from full-time to only the Indy 500 in 2021. Marco did win the Indy 500 pole last year in dramatic fashion but finished 13th in the race. (Mario's twin brother Aldo, father of John, also just passed away recently). On the good side, team Andretti Auto-sport, led by Michael, has won the Indy 500 five times with different drivers.

Granatelli won the Indy 500 again in 1973 with Gordon Johncock, and his successes and failures are covered in detail in his autobiography book, *They Call Me Mister 500*. It's a great read and available in used condition from many book retailers.

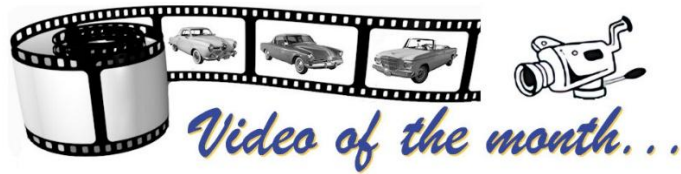
Meanwhile, Studebaker was out of the car business in the U.S. by 1963 though Canadian versions were built through model year 1966. Avanti sold its tooling and continued for many years through several different owners and manufacturers.

Paxton, meanwhile, still sells superchargers as a subsidiary of Vortech, one of the biggest names in supercharging. And finally, STP has grown to include numerous auto-motive products and you can see everything at [STP.com](http://STP.com) along with its history of motor sports sponsorship.

Granatelli passed away at age 90 on December 29, 2013, and will always be remembered for his racing accomplishments and business acumen.



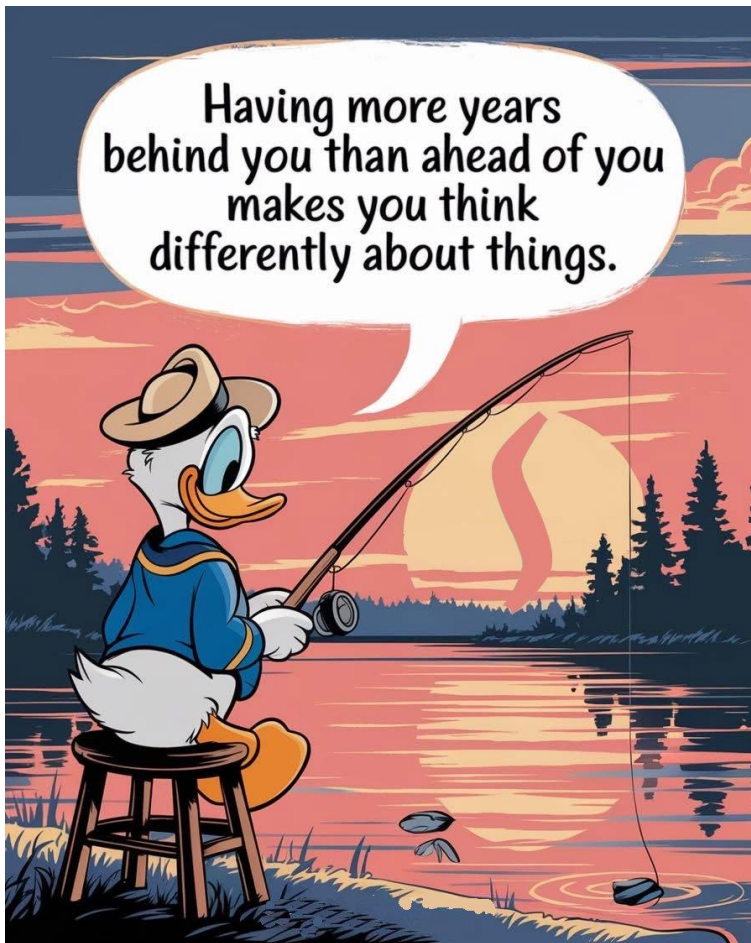




2018 Pacific Southwest Zone Meet – Palm Springs

2024 La Palma 50<sup>th</sup> Studebaker Meet

The Novi Special



The Los Angeles Chapter held their 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Classic Car Show at Bob's Big Boy in Northridge on a beautiful spring day with temps in the low 80's. LA Chapter president, **Howard Brown**, said they had 31 Studebakers, including his '56 Golden Hawk. Congrats to the Los Angeles Chapter on a successful show. Winning first place was Melinda Jessen with her 1949 Studebaker Commander 4 door sedan.





## The Los Angeles Chapter's 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Classic Car Show





Two Studebakers graced the fifth annual **Mr. Mahalo Vintage Car Show** at the **Somerset Winery** in Temecula. There were 76 cars present on Sunday, April 27th, a cool and cloudy day. The Lark won the “Sponsors Choice Award”, a bottle of wine.







~ May 10, 2025 ~

# Richard Nixon Library Tour

18001 Yorba Linda Blvd., Yorba Linda



**Tour Begins at: 1:00 p.m.**

No reservations required, just show up and enjoy.

Question? Call Jonni Elmore @ 951-545-2664



## TICKETS

Adults:	\$29.00
Senior (+62):	\$26.00
Ret. Military:	\$23.00

**RICHARD  NIXON**  
PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

*Until next month... Happy Studebakering*