

## Keeping a Survivor Real

By Bob Schmeichel

You have heard me express many times I have felt that the younger generations' interest in cars is disappearing. Well after attending a car show at Excessive Autosports of Sioux Falls a few of weeks ago I was amazed at the large numbers between 16 to 30 year olds with their cars attending. It was fun to see these kids relating to each other the same way us older car nuts do! These were not only high horse power turbo charged tuners, but a large variety of makes of cars, whatever the owners chose to be different with many unexpected Chevy LS conversions done to them with only speed in mind. I have to say I have a new found respect for these younger people who have no problem explaining with enthusiasm all they have done with their cars, at least as far as what they want you to know. I am smiling knowing that no one tells all their secret go fast tricks.

Dyno tests done there that day during the car show showed 400 plus horsepower at the tires out of Honda four cylinder engines as common place along with many LS converted cars pushing close to 1400 HP or more depending on how they were forced to breathe. Speed is not dead, it's just in a new form, and along with that I am starting to realize and have to admit that younger kids still have an interest in cars that I thought was going away. This is fun to see!

I was also quite enlightened when interviewing some younger club members for our latest GPSR feature car, with their 1952 Pontiac Chieftain. Before we got to the story of the Pontiac, Joshua Frock explained his family background and showed me old pictures of why he is so mechanically inclined. His back ground is pretty deep rooted starting with his grandfather Frock partnering up with Art Arfons in the early 1950's in Akron, Ohio followed with all the builds and endeavors they went thru together. The Art Arfons name might sound familiar to older hot rodders, but for those who don't know or remember, he was the first guy to put turbine jet engines in a tractor for tractor pulls, Bonneville land speed racers, and later jet powered drag cars. If nothing else the "Green Monster" name should help ring a bell which was used on numerous vehicles that Joshua's grandfather was heavily involved with during the Arfons name go fast career. Even though Josh is not very old yet, he is so grateful he grew up around this what he calls crazy go fast time in his life with tractors, cars, and motorcycles. He remembers riding around and learning with his dad and grandfather when parts had to be found for one thing or another they were working on. And other times hanging out at Art Arfons business that they graciously called, "the junk yard dog" with old jet engines hanging all around thru out the business location. Because of 3 families, the Arfons, the Frocks, and the Swensons growing up together in the Akron Ohio area, everyone was friends and worked together towards making each others dreams happen no matter what directions they went in. The memories and history created with these 3 families working together made a definite mark in America's need for speed picture but in a different way with turbine jet engines that hasn't gone away yet.

Josh's main excitement has always been on two wheels although he has found time now and then away from his Air National Guard profession, to help his dad out when it came to getting a 60's car into good running mechanical shape. About 5 years ago his dad David, who is also in the Air National Guard while stationed in Rapid City, asked Josh to go check out some older cars he couldn't get to, at an auction in Chancellor, South Dakota the following weekend. Josh was glad to check out the auction for his dad but had to pick up his wife Lisa at the airport before they left. She too works for the Air National Guard and was returning from a temporary duty assignment that day. After picking her up and still in fatigues she agreed to go to the auction with Josh to see what was there. After getting to the auction location, they walked around to visually check what was for sale. There was a lot of old stuff you typically see at auctions along with a few 50's something Buicks and a single 1952 Pontiac. Josh's wife Lisa immediately fell in love with the art deco front look of the Pontiac in it's pristine condition telling Josh they had to have it. As it turned out they bought the car for themselves and were surprised to find out it had only 7,000 original miles on it since new along with them being the third actual owners.

Because both Josh and Lisa both work for the Air Guard their time off is limited for enjoying the Pontiac. Because the car has sat so long, Josh replaced the fuel tank, fuel lines, and tinkered with the carburetor which has amazed him how well it starts, runs, and drives today. Besides putting new tires on the car and changing all the fluids, Josh and Lisa aren't going to change a thing from the way they found it and enjoy cruising around creating new memories with their children.

