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Contact information for club Leadership can be found on our **Club Website**:

www.sharktoothsportscarclub.com

Webmaster: **Jen Maher**, *Maverick MKG*

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INTRODUCTION

Greetings Sharks and Happy Summer! I trust that everyone is doing well.

The first half of 2024 has been an exciting time for the club. We have had several good speakers present to the club, our members have stepped up and organized a number of fun events, with the trip to Southeastern Guide Dogs being perhaps the most inspirational. We have also enjoyed a number of good dinners as well. We had a number of our members participating in the annual vehicle photo shoot earlier this year, it was brisk (upon second thought, it was cold) when eating pizza afterwards. I think next year we push it back a month or two.

The annual scholarship award presentation at the May meeting made us all feel good. Further, since the meeting was covered by a reporter from the Venice Gondolier, the follow-up article that appeared in the paper was really quite impressive and was a public relations masterpiece for our club.

We recently returned from our first road trip where we had an opportunity to visit the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green KY and then went on to Nashville, TN where we toured the city and thanks to Phil Mannino, we were given a VIP tour of the Gibson Guitar manufacturing facility where we saw and learned about the making of their guitars. We then drove on to the Jack Daniels distillery in Lynchburg, TN, followed by a tour of the George Dickel Distillery in Tullahoma, TN. We concluded our trip with a visit to the Beechcraft Heritage Museum - before you ask, yes there will be a road trip planned for next year. We are looking forward to another exciting six months as we close out 2024.

So, what do we have planned for the second half? Well, I am confident that Janice Love our Social Event Coordinator, collaborating with our members will have a number of fun events to look forward to and restaurants to dine at. Dave Love as always, will be looking for car shows or coffee & cars for us to go to and I will do my best to look for speakers that can enlighten us at our meetings.

There is one area where I again ask for your assistance. We need to continue to grow our membership to be able to thrive as a club. We expect to lose several members every year due to relocation, health, etc. So, despite that we are several members shy of reaching our

goal of thirty (30) memberships, we need to add up to six (6) new memberships by year end. So, can I ask all of you to ask a couple who have a sports car and who you think would fit in well with our club to consider attending a meeting as a guest and give them an opportunity to join our club. Enjoy your summer and remember YOLO (You Only Live Once).

Ken Maher

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



So, let me ask: What determines where you purchase your gasoline*? Is it the first place you see when you notice the gas gauge is pointing toward "E" (which as we all know does not mean "Enough")? Is it price**? Is it the ability to get gas and coffee at the same time? Is it brand loyalty?

*Gasoline is said to be a shared commodity, often stored in common containers until it is purchased by a major retailer. The retailer then treats the gas with specific additives, thereby giving the fuel its brand identity.

**A study by AAA found that 75% of U.S. motorists choose a gas station based primarily on price

Whatever the reason may be, when you pull up to the pump island and get out of the car and approach the pump, what do you look at other than where to put in the credit card? Do you look at the price per gallon? The octane rating? The percentage of ethanol with 10% being the norm?

I bet the one thing you do not look for is whether the gas you are about to pump into your tank is Top Tier gas. Like me, you may have noticed Top Tier decals on gasoline pumps at some locations, but not all. So, what is Top Tier gasoline? Is it just a marketing gimmick? I decided to investigate what these decals represent, and this is what I found.

It's important to understand that most of the major oil companies today have moved away from refining crude oil into gasoline. The refining is done by independent refineries. The fuel is shipped and stored at terminals waiting to be sold to retailers. While normal fuel contains antioxidants and some detergents, Top Tier gasoline has additional antioxidants and specialty detergents. It is these additional additives that differentiates a Top Tier gasoline.

Top Tier fuels (i.e., gasoline and diesel) was created to promote better fuel quality. It sets forth specifications for a higher detergency fuel and was developed in 2004 by General Motors, with the support of BMW, Toyota and Honda. The purpose was to go beyond the minimum standards for detergent additives to better protect increasingly sophisticated engines from carbon buildup and deposits on the intake valves – which can result in a rough idle, acceleration hesitation, knocking/pinging, and reduced fuel economy.

In addition to the “founding” automakers, several other major automakers – Audi (2013), Mercedes-Benz (2013), Volkswagen (2013) Stellantis (2015), Ford (2017), and Subaru (2024) have united in support of Top Tier gas in order preserve their engines original performance and emissions over time.

Over the past two decades, engines have become far more precise. Further, the Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) has targeted cleaner emissions and improved fuel economy. Top Tier gasoline exceed the additive standards set by the EPA. A test was undertaken by a lab that specializes in fuel analysis. They found that on average, non-Top Tiel gasoline had 19 times more carbon deposits on injectors, on intake valves and in the combustion chambers. These carbon deposits impact your engines performance and fuel economy.

It is important to understand that when a retailer sells Top Tier gasoline, all octane grades from regular to premium must adhere to Top Tier standards. It is not necessary to upgrade to premium to gain the cleansing benefits.

Given the price difference between a non-Top Tier gasoline and a Top Tier, for a nominal investment, studies show that we would benefit from using Top Tier. After all, we drive performance cars, so why would we not want them to perform the way they were designed to.

The next time you pull in for gas, look to see if a Top Tier logo is displayed on the pump. While you may think that all the major brands are Top Tier certified, BP for example lost its certification in 2021, raising questions about its current reliability. On the other hand, Chevron has a reputation for providing the highest quality gas is well established.

The following retailers in our area sell Top Tier gas: Citgo, Chevron, Costco, Exxon, Marathon, Mobil, Shell, Sunoco, Texaco, and Valero. Approximately 50% of 150,000 U.S. retail stations are registered Top Tier approved providers, equating to about 70% of the gasoline sold. It was also interesting to learn that 7-11's gas is known for its inconsistency, which stems from its independently run locations. The variation in gas quality makes 7-11 an unreliable choice.

As you might suspect, your car does not require the use of Top Tier gas to run, it simply runs better, with fewer emissions and better fuel mileage.

Lastly, check the Fuels Section of your Vehicle Owner's Manual. It just may recommend the use of Top Tier gasoline. In the event of an engine failure, would the manufacturer test the gasoline and if it is determined that you were not using the recommended gasoline, would they void any claim you might have under the warranty. Hmmm!

Well, while it was fun doing the research on what the Top Tier decal represents, I guess I am no longer filling up at the local WaWa. I'm really going to miss filing up and then going inside to get an Apple Fritter pastry. No wait. I just now need to make two stops

. One for the car and the other for ME!

Ken Maher

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Collector Car Hobby

So you have decided you want to get into the Collector Car Hobby. Awesome, go for it! But, what are you getting yourself into? Here's a quick look.

Collector cars can really be anything, as long as you or someone else wants it. You can find collector groups for '85 Plymouth Reliants or '79 YUGOs. But, lets look at some more interesting examples.

American Classics, like the Model A or the '32 Dodge Sedan might be good examples. American Muscle cars, like the Tri-5 Chevy ('55,'56,'57) or the '56 Crown Victoria are extremely collectible. Unusual cars like the Bricklin or DeLorean have a large following. Does this mean they are great cars? Not necessarily.

Many of you have driven at the Car Auctions in the last few years. How many times have you driven a nice looking '55 Chevy or '67 "Cuda, only to walk away muttering to yourself "what a piece of junk!. I can't believe it sold for that much". I've told many of you this story- A couple of years ago, I drove a '64 Corvette that was 100% original, right down to the tires. As they say, they are only original once, which makes original cars very collectible. This particular car was very rough but looked pretty good from a distance. It was a chore to keep it running enough to drive it across the block. I had a discussion with myself about how one could buy this car for \$6000 or \$7000, put \$50K to \$60K into it and have a nice \$45K car. That was my thought. It sold at auction for \$100K!! It will likely never be restored, as that would probably reduce the value significantly. What do I know?

But, that's all boring. Lets talk real money. After all, if you are going to enter the collector car hobby, let's go for broke (literally).

Hagerty Marketing keeps a watch on the collector car market, mostly from auctions. They rate the strength of the market on a 1-100 scale. In the summer of 2022, the market hit its high mark of 79. In 2024, the mark is expected to fall below 55, its lowest point since 2011.

As of 1/1/'24, the market had slowed some. In 2023, there were 7 cars sold in the US that were over \$10 million. 2014 and 2017 had 7 and 8 cars over \$10 million respectively. 2015 and 2016 had 23 cars over \$10 million for the 2 years. 2024 is expected to have 10 cars in this category. So the market for these super high end cars doesn't seem to be suffering too badly. In 2021, a McLaren F1 Road Car (Race Car) with 400 km on the odometer sold for over \$20 million. It has been suggested that the McLaren F1 may be the next Ferrari 250 GTO.

More normal cars? Past sales show some fairly impressive numbers if you are lucky enough to have one of these cars - Dodge Viper Race Car \$700K, Ferrari F550 Race Car \$4.3 million, Aston Martin DB9 Race Car \$2.4 million. Late '90s and early 2000 race cars are transitioning from being "Used Race Cars" to being "Historically Significant". So if you have that old race car in your barn, you might want to take another look at it.

How about American Muscle? Here are a few fairly recent examples:

'62 Shelby Cobra CSX. Sold in 2002 for \$1.595 million

'64 GT40 prototype - \$7 million

'66 Cobra 427 Super Snake - \$5.15 million

'71 Hemi 'Cuda Convertible - 3.5 million

'70 Chevelle SS454 LS6 1.242 million

'67 L88 Corvette Convertible - \$3.2 million

I think I need to look for an old original Cobra that I can pick up for cheap.

I mentioned the Ferrari 250 GTO. Prior to May 6, 2024, the highest price ever paid for an automobile at auction was a 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO. In 2018, it was sold at an RM Sotheby auction for \$43.5 million. Also in 2018, a Ferrari 250 GTO was sold privately for \$70 million.

What about May 6, 2024? Just over a month ago, a new record was set. An ultra-rare Mercedes Benz Gull Wing SLR300 Uhlenholt Coupe (Race Car) was sold at an RM Sotheby auction in Stuttgart, Germany. How much? 135 million Euros, or about \$143 Million. There were only 2 of these ever made and they were both owned by the Mercedes Benz Company.

Now, here's the cool part about this particular sale. No one ever expected that Mercedes would ever sell one of these vehicles, but they shocked everyone when they offered one at auction. It was ultimately bought by an unnamed purchaser (there's a surprise) for \$143 Million. Mercedes has said that "the proceeds from this sale will be donated to create scholarships and educational research into the environment and decarbonization". That's awesome!

I'm gonna go look in the couch cushions for some spare change for my original Cobra.



Dave Love

What Do You Know? (About The Cars In Our Club)

Each issue, we'll focus on a car, chosen at random, that has a representative in our club. It won't be your specific car, but rather a generic description of the Year, Make and Model.

This month's spotlight - 2015 Alfa Romeo 4C Spider

Alfa Romeo, a few tidbits:

Alfa Romeo was first introduced in Turin, Italy on June 24, 1910. Yes, it has been around for a long, long time. It was called A.L.F.A - Anonim Lombardo Fabbrica Automobil. The company was founded by Nicola Romeo, Alexandre Darracq and Ugo Stella.

A.L.F.A., now known as Alfa Romeo, has been recognized from its inception as a manufacturer of sport oriented vehicles. Alfa Romeo has been actively involved in auto racing since 1911. Currently, Alfa Romeo is owned by Fiat/ChryslerAutomobile, Stellantis Europe. Their headquarters are in Turin, with Alfa Production being in Modena, Italy.

The Alfa Romeo 4C was first introduced at the Geneva Auto Show in 2013 as a coupe only. In 2015, the 4C Spider (Targa convertible) was released. 4C indicates 4 cylinder. It was an instant hit. Production was intentionally limited to a maximum of 3500 in any one year. Actual production for the entire production run from 2013 through 2019 was listed as 9117 units. So, a very rare car indeed.

There seems to be a Love/Hate relationship with the 4C, depending on which automotive writer you choose to believe; some Love it, some Hate it. However, all of them agree that it is a remarkable car and an absolute blast to drive. The writers that love it are very fond of the fact that this is a car that you must drive, you can't just be along for the ride. The writers that hate it are very disappointed that this is a car that you must drive, you can't just be along for the ride.

The actual car is fairly straight forward but its designers focused primarily on one thing - weight reduction. The car is centered around a Carbon Fiber tub which weighs only 143 lbs. Attached front and rear are aluminum frame extensions. Altogether, the entire frame comes in at a very lightweight 236 lbs. The 4C body is also Carbon Fiber, with the exterior panels being made of SCM

or Steel Moulding Composite. This has the strength and stability of steel, but at a 20% reduction in weight.

The Alfa Romeo 4C Spider is a 2 door, 2 seat, mid engine, rear wheel drive car. Weight bias is 38% front, 62% rear. Front suspension is Double Wishbone and rear is MacPherson Strut. Brakes are Brembo vented discs on all 4 wheels. General observations were "Superior Build Quality, Excellent Paint Quality, Consistent Panel Gaps...". Car and Driver said that the car is a delight on the track - as the car has no power steering, "The rich texture of the pavement, every seam and every break in the road is broadcast to your palms". As with most 2 door Sports Cars, entry and exit is a bit of a chore due to the low stance.

In 2015 there were a few options such as Sport Exhaust. This was essentially a muffler delete which resulted in a fairly loud exhaust note - 85 db at wide open throttle, 79 db at cruise. A later option was added, Akrapovič Exhaust. This added a performance muffler which reduced the noise level a bit. Also available was a handling package, Sport Track 2 and 18" front, 19" rear wheels.

Some specifications:

2 door, 2 seat Targa. Mid engine, rear wheel drive. Overall length is 157" and height is 46.7" Engine is a 1.75 liter Intercooled Turbo, 16 valve, overhead cam I4, gasoline fuel Horsepower is 237 and torque is 258 Transmission is a 6 speed dual clutch automatic Total weight is a mere 2507 lbs

Performance (pretty impressive!):
0-60. 4.2 seconds, the same as a Ferrari F40
0-100 11.1 seconds
0-130 22.4 seconds
1/4 mile standing start 12.9 seconds at 107 mph
Estimated top speed 160 mph
Stopping distance 70mph-0 150 ft. Lateral G force 9.6

Of the 9000+ that were built, 30% were White, 20% were Red, 20% were Black, 10% were Grey, 5% were Yellow and a few were done in custom colors or wraps.

Any way you look at it, this is a very cool car!

By: Dave Love

BENEVOLENT FUND NEWS

Twenty two Sharks attended the Beyond the Dark experience at Southeastern Guide Dog's facility in Palmetto. The Sharks (along with some 3rd party participants) gathered in a large room and were treated to very emotional testimonies from a young woman inflicted with night blindness and a US Army Veteran suffering from PTSD. Each contributor sat in the front of the room at separate times during the event, each one describing their experience while their dedicated and highly trained guide dog lay patiently at their feet waiting for their next command. Both attested to the fact that life before receiving their guide dog was extremely debilitating and expressed how very thankful they were to gain some freedom from their conditions due to the help of their guide dog.

We were all given masks to put on while an audio was played simulating two scenarios: the first being a blind person going through their day, with the sounds of honking horns, traffic, etc. in a bustling city, all the while trying to safely get to their destination, and the second scenario being a soldier in the middle of conflict, with shots being fired, bombs exploding, etc.

In addition, two of SEG D's employees explained how they trained the guide dogs individually targeting each dog's training to the person to whom the dog was assigned and that person's specific need.

SEG D provides trained guide dogs free of charge to those in need, which is an awesome lifesaving "gift" to those who have a need for their services, yet unable to pay.

Since SEG D waived our \$20/pp admission fee, we had a few members suggest collecting a voluntary donation on the day of the event; that was a great idea, and we did so! In addition to the \$500 the Club contributed to SEG D, we collected another **\$340** of voluntary contributions, bringing our total donation to SEG D to **\$840.00**, and the Benevolent Committee is so proud to have been able to donate that to them, and we thank everyone for their generosity.

Reporters: Ron & Linda Wencil



After our SEG D event, we went to Whiskey Joe's on the Manatee River for lunch.

Shark Tooth Benevolent Committee presents Devin Anderson, Venice HS Graduate with a \$1000 Scholarship.

Devin will be attending the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering with a Motorsports Concentration. Left to right Devin Anderson, Ron Wencil, June DiLella and Linda Wencil.



Devin, with a 4.1 weighted GPA, is clearly a "car guy" as his email starts with "racer...". He also drives a race car in the Legends series. He plans to attend the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, where he will major in Mechanical Engineering with a motorsport's concentration.

Devin spent a fair amount of time looking at member cars in the parking lot before the meeting, and afterwards had many of us popping open hoods where we were engaged in a Q&A. A definite sports car enthusiast!

We wish him well and hope some day he returns with an application to be a member of our club.

Reporter: Ken Maher

CAR SHOWS



STSCC Area Car Show Schedule 2Q'24

The following listing is accurate as of the date of this publication. Check the club's Monthly Meeting Minutes under "Club Admin" on our [website](#) for updated listings of STSCC suggested area car show events.

ONGOING EVENTS

- Cruisin' on Dearborn 1st Saturday Each Month. Dearborn St in Englewood. 2-8pm
- Wellen Park Cars & Coffee Downtown Wellen Park 1st Saturday each month 8-10am
- Northport Cars & Coffee @ Cocoplum Village \$10 Donation. 1st Sunday Each Month 8-10am
- UTC Mall Cars & Coffee @ Ford Garage. \$10 Donation. 2nd Saturday Each Month. 8-10am
- Stingray's Bar & Grill Cars & Coffee 3rd Saturday Each Month. 8-Noon
- Lynche's Pub St Armands. Cars & Coffee. 3rd Saturday Each Month 8-10am
- AACA Cars & Coffee @ Ideal Classic Cars 4th Saturday Each Month 9-1pm

LANCE'S AREA CAR SHOWS

- Every 1st Saturday Hooters, Sarasota - US41 @ Clark Rd 5pm-8pm
- Every 2nd Saturday Ideal Classic Cars, Venice. 9am-1pm

UPCOMING CAR SHOWS SW FLORIDA

- 6/8/24. Lance's Ideal Classic Cars, Venice. 9-11am
- 6/15/24 Lance's Sarasota Classic car Museum. 9-11am (Note: New Location 7519 Pennsylvania Ave. Sarasota)

- 6/29/24. Sarasota German Car Club presents Milkshake Motor Madness. All Makes, All Years
- PDQ Chicken, 5164 S Tamiami, Sarasota 12-3pm



QUARTERMASTER'S CORNER

Since losing our Club Shirt supplier we have formed a Shirt Committee to review our replacement options. We will be presenting the results shortly.

I would like to thank all of you who responded to my shirt survey. Your input was very helpful.

Embroidery of our logo on items (hats, visors, etc.) is still available at \$10.70 per item.

Margret Barcelo

SOCIAL EVENTS

Hello Sharks,

We have had so many wonderful events this past quarter. A big thanks to the members who have hosted dinners and events in the second quarter of this year.

- Ron & Linda Wencil
- Ken & Kathy Maher
- Roger and Margo Maple
- Carol Parkinson & Tom Lupica
- Dave & Janice Love
- Ed Cashman & Joyce Wiseman

Here's what we have coming up in the next 3 months.

June 14	Tour Venice Water Treatment Plant	Roger & Margo Maple
June 17	Stottlemeyer's Smokehouse	Carol Parkinson & Tom Lupica
June 29	Sage Auto Studios Outing	Ken & Kathy Maher
July 19	Ice Cream Social/Dinner @ Lickity Split	Al & JoAnn Royal
July 27	Visani's Italian Steakhouse & Comedy	Steve & Michelle Iannone
August 19	Monthly Dinner TBD	Rodney & Linda Pennington
September 16	Monthly Dinner	TBD

Monthly Dinners – Date Predetermined – Third Monday of Each Month

Monthly Dinners – Date Predetermined – Third Monday of Each Month

To review, monthly dinners are always held on the third Monday of each month. This was decided upon by group vote so that members can plan in advance. We've had a few requests from hosts in the past, to change the date for the dinner. Rather than change the date, the Social Coordinator will work with the hosts to find a month where the third Monday is more convenient for them to host. The host chooses the location for the dinner and provides the details for publication to the social events coordinator. As the hosts, you will coordinate with the restaurant, receive RSVPs from members,

maintain the attendees list, and assist the members in seating at the restaurant.

Monthly Events – Host to Select Date and Venue

As the hosts of the monthly event, the venue is your choice, as is the date. Keep in mind that the dinner that month will be held on the third Monday and the membership meeting will be held on the second Wednesday. As with the dinners, you will send the event information via email to the social coordinator for distribution.

All dinners and events will be listed on the club calendar located on the website. Everyone has busy schedules, so we ask that you have your event details and dinner locations in place three months in advance. This will give everyone an opportunity to reserve the date on their personal calendars.

We look forward to another great year of dining and fun.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to working with all of you.
(sbieglecki@gmail.com) and Jen Maher (jen@maverickmkg.com)

Thank you.
Janice Love

Social Events Coordinator
JaniceSharkTooth@gmail.com
505-259-9324

SOCIAL SHARK SIGHTINGS

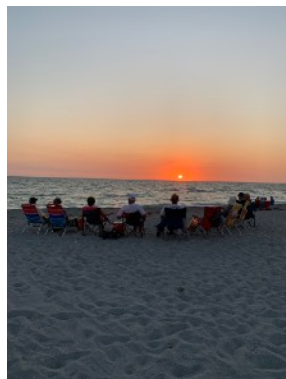


Sharks sighted on **April 15th** at **Oak & Stone** in **Wellen Park**



Shark Tom Lupica discusses options with the Oak & StoneBeer Meister

"We live where others vacation. On **April 19th** Sharks gathered for a casual wine & dine on **Venice Beach** to watch the spectacular sunset."



Sharks put the pedal to the metal on **May 6th** when they descended on the **Tampa Grand Prix Go Kart Track**



From the Left Tom Rossi, Ken Maher and Frank Henneberg



Michele Iannone with the guys



Sharks line up before the big race

Several members of the Shark Tooth Sports Car Club visited the **National Corvette Museum** in **Bowling Green, Ky** on **May 13**.



Several members of the Shark Tooth Sports Car Club tour **the George Dickel Distillery in Tullahoma, TN on May 17**. Of course the tasting was a must but purely for medicinal purposes.



Additional "medication" was required so the Jack Daniel's distillery was prescribed. While we were on the neighborhood, a visit to the



Gibson guitar factory was a must



CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday



July

5 Bobbe Lytle
15 Alex D'Angelo
30 Judy Umbreit

August

21 Mike Connors
28 Margo Maple

September

11 Skip Ackerman

Happy Anniversary



July

3 Parkinson/Lupica
22 Gambino
29 Bieglecki

August

9 Pennington
15 Cashman

September

18 Wencil
22 Connors

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Facts

24 Memberships

48 Members

37 Cars



Manufacturer Representation

Alfa Romeo

Aston Martin

Audi

BMW

Chevrolet

Dodge

Ferrari

Ford

Jaguar

Mercedes Benz

MG

Countries Represented

United States, Germany, United Kingdom and Italy

Primary Sports Car Colors

6	Red	4	Blue
4	White	2	Green
2	Silver/Grey	1	Black
1	Yellow		

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

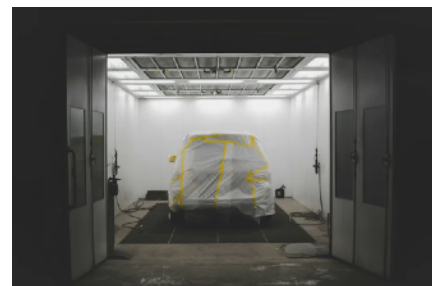
Restoration Shops Today Face Major Challenges

By: Dave Kinney for Hagerty Media



Keeping classic vehicles up and running isn't always easy, and these days, that's just as true for shops as it is for DIYers. I recently talked to four owners or operators of restoration shops to find out what their top business challenges are in 2024. Some of the answers I received were not a surprise. Frankly, everyone has been talking about finding qualified labor in almost every field. But some of the answers I got were eye-openers.

Every independent restoration shop operates differently. Some shops are very well-established with a long track record, and a few have major national or worldwide concours wins under their belts. Some are more focused on their local area, building a reputation as well as a customer base. Many shops also tend to specialize in a particular field, such as engine and transmission rebuilds, paintwork, or a specific type or decade of cars. In 2024, even full-service shops tend to utilize independent rebuilders or repair shops for specific skills such as radiator repair and rebuilding, powder coating, or rebuilding clocks or radios.



The repair, not just restoration business is also thriving at many restoration shops. Those services that might have been handled by a local service station 20 or 30 years ago—tune-ups, hose and belt replacement or air conditioning repairs—now represent part of the day-to-day work docket of many restoration shops.

Adam Hammer, owner of [Hammer and Dolly Automotive Restorations LLC](#) in Traverse City, MI, sees the value in doing many of the small jobs alongside the full restorations that they also perform. The “small work adds more volume, and helps to make sure that everyone in the shop keeps busy” says Hammer.

Hammer, a graduate of the McPherson College Automotive Restoration program, has been in business as Hammer and Dolly for 13 years, has 10 employees and offers services ranging from full restorations to maintenance. Challenges include increasing costs for parts and equipment, as well as labor. In addition to increased cost, backorders for those parts is also an ongoing issue. Hammer also mentioned environmental challenges, as some regularly used compounds such as paints and solvents are no longer sold, making substitutions, often seen as harder to work with, a necessity. As to finding qualified workers, Hammer says “find the right person with aptitude to grow the skills, and we can teach the skill.”



Husband and wife Ed and Melissa Sweeney are the co-owners of [Proper Noise, LTD](#), a restoration shop located in Mount Penn, PA that specializes in both postwar British and Brass Era cars. In business for seven years, there are six employees including the Sweeneys. They specialize in the mechanical side of a restoration, and will outsource paint as well as some other areas of restoration if needed. When asked about current challenges, Ed focused on a few areas such as the quality of parts that they source from

vendors. The issue is serious enough that Sweeney has turned in-house to scanning and 3D printing parts when necessary. Another challenge? Finding correct tires post-pandemic for those cars that use odd sizes, including many of the Brass Era vehicles he works on. “No one can go into production for just a small amount of tires, making it too expensive for the supplier, it becomes impossible for them to make any money,” says Ed.

Another problem facing all of these small shops? “It’s always hard to say no to clients, but sometimes scheduling work can be very tough.” Sweeney is talking about “job creep”, where a car comes in for brakes, for example, but, upon inspection, tie rods and shocks and more are needed, turning a few days repair into a week, or longer.



[Mechanical Arts](#), located in Tenants Harbor, ME, is owned by Philip Reinhardt, also a recent McPherson College graduate. In business for four years, the shop has three employees. Specializing in repairs and restorations of pre-1980s vehicles, with a sweet spot for cars of the 1930s through 1960s, Reinhardt is facing another common problem in the restoration world: Running out of space to work on client’s cars. Their 3000 square foot shop is overwhelmed with customer cars, forcing staff to “play musical cars.” Although he characterizes this as a “good problem to have” Reinhardt hopes to expand soon, with plans to more than double the size of Mechanical Arts. Reinhardt also sees the “job creep” on client cars which can make effective scheduling tough. “Maine doesn’t have a State Inspection for older cars, so a car coming in for a routine service can have a completely worn out front-end” said Reinhardt. This type of problem is especially important to owners who are new to the old car world, some of whom have grown up in an

era when going 10,000 miles between services is expected.

Finally, Eric Peterson is the manager of [Leydon Restorations](#) in Lahaska, PA, a shop that has been in business for just over 50 years. Peterson has worked there for 16 years, and been manager for 13. Leydon is known almost exclusively for mechanical restorations, which you can expect to see (or hear) at concours lawns around the globe. Peterson has a bit different take on finding talent. With the advent of television “rebuilder” shows and pop culture expectations of the mythical 30-minute total restoration, occasionally managing expectations of potential new hires is a challenge. “The realities of the work-a-day life at a shop is much different than what some might expect. You can’t have someone who is only interested in the glitz and glamor side of the restoration.” That said, Peterson reminds us that good people are an investment, and that he feels very fortunate to have a great crew aboard.



Like other shops, Peterson laments the quality of parts that are currently available. “The quality keeps getting worse. I have one car that has had three ‘bad from new’ condensers. Few things are of the lasting quality (that we used to see).

Manufacturers are just looking for the cheapest way, the least expensive supplier. Charge us more the first time if you have to, but give us a part that works!”

Peterson also brought up a theme that ran through just about all of my discussions with restorers. Perhaps the biggest problem facing restorers in 2024 is simply finding the right specialty shop that can do the smaller jobs that used to be easier to farm out. A town that used to have three, four or five radiator shops might have one remaining. The owner is usually older, too, and often looking for someone to take over. It’s the same deal at a radio repair facility or that automobile clock repair shop. Finding someone who can reline brakes, grind cams or even make replacement keys is becoming increasingly more difficult.

The takeaways are twofold: For the consumer, understand that constraints are tightening for the shops that keep your ride on the road, so once you’ve found a good one, be patient with them. For the entrepreneurs who might be reading: Perhaps you should set your focus on becoming a specialty supplier. Find a need and fill it. And do it soon, because the demand is strong.

Photos: Unsplash/Robin Edqvist

