

59th Annual SDC International Meet Recap

by Steve Kanter, Wisconsin Region SDC President

For years, our late and past Wisconsin Region SDC president, Rick Reчек, talked about his dream of bringing the international meet in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. In fact, he started doing some legwork in the summer of 2021, talking to the visitors' center and touring hotels in the area. Unfortunately, Rick passed away in January of 2022. That's when four of our members: Dick Pollen, Jim Pepper, Chris Krause and myself decided we wanted to put on the meet – especially since no other chapter stepped up to the plate. We put our ideas forth at our spring meeting in 2022. We applied to the SDC Board, got approval, and moved forward. Our Meet Committee spent less than a year coordinating and marketing this large event at the Manitowoc County Fairgrounds.

Our response from the local community and businesses was outstanding. We applied for and received a \$2,500 grant from Visit Manitowoc to help assist us with marketing expenses to draw people to the area from both inside and outside the Studebaker Drivers Club. We really emphasized making this a community event as well, and we were very successful.

Steve Kanter used his marketing communications experience to create all of the marketing materials (Meet Guide, Calendar, Signage, Social Media) and took care of public relations with radio and TV. We provided marketing support on all signage, calendar, and meet guide by adding logos and



photo by Jim Pepper
Steve Kanter on Fox News.

ads for Visit Manitowoc. Our committee of Dick Pollen, Jim Pepper, Chris Krause, and Steve Kanter created public events to generate public enthusiasm for our cars – and we advertised local businesses in our meet guide. Everything worked beyond expectations. Our efforts drew over 200 Studebakers, nearly 1,000 club members, and 500 members of the public over the 5-day event.

We received great media coverage on Fox 11 Green Bay (four segments), local Seehafer radio stations, and WOGB in Green Bay. Plus, the Fox station in Milwaukee also picked up the Fox 11 broadcast.

The meet attendance was beyond all expectations with people coming from all over the U.S. and four foreign countries. Our club felt that we did a great job highlighting our cars and the benefits of our beautiful Lakeshore area, both to our members and the public.

Our parade from Manitowoc to Two Rivers had over 120 cars and hundreds of the public lined Maritime and Memorial Drive to see our cars roll by. Our local businesses enjoyed increased revenues and we filled up most of the hotels in the area (the third most rooms this year, according to Visit Manitowoc). Local restaurants reported extremely busy days during the event. The fairgrounds provided a great venue for a swap meet, car display and judging, a sock hop and, at the end, a community car show featuring all makes of cars. Hundreds of locals flooded



photo by Jim Pepper
Andy Beckman on Fox News.

photo by John Cosby



Remembering Wisconsin Region SDC members Wayne Detjen and Buzz Beckman, some of their Studebakers were on display in the corner of the swap meet hall. From left to right: Wayne Detjen's '51 Champion; his '55 Commander Coupe; Buzz Beckman's R Series pickup, and his '64 Daytona Convertible.



photo submitted by Jim Pepper

Host chapter meet committee, left to right: Cindy and Jim Pepper, Steve Kanter, Chris Krause, Dick and Bernice Pollen.

the fairgrounds on Friday and Saturday. We even had a Studebaker first – wine and beer tasting – which went over extremely well.

We displayed cars that were restored by the late Buzz Beckman and Wayne Detjen – both prominent members of the WRSDC and SDC.

WRSDC Vice President, Jim Pepper, did a beautiful job organizing the seminars. They were very well attended. He knows what he’s doing when it comes to Studebakers, and people loved to hear him talk. Chris Krause led the Studebakers to Lambeau Field and helped us with details we never even thought about. Meet Treasurer, Jan Young, kept track of the money and, along with International Meet Chair, Jane Stinson, who is also the SDC Treasurer, were a huge help in figuring out how to finance this event.



photo by John Cosby

We had comments from Studebaker attendees who said this was a fun meet, plus our social media comments are nothing but positive. *“Beautiful area,” “You ran an excellent show,” “It was a week that will be hard to top,”* and *“Unforgettable experience”* were just a few of the comments we received on social media. Many people walked up to the volunteers and expressed their happiness with the meet. Some said that they would love to live in such a nice town as Manitowoc. Many enthusiastic people from Manitowoc outside the club volunteered many hours during the meet. Plus, we had ample volunteers from our club and local area people.

The host hotel, Holiday Inn, and other area hotels did a fantastic job accommodating the guests. There were absolutely no complaints about poor service. Plus, attendees were very impressed with friendly Manitowoc and Two Rivers people as well as local businesses who commented that Studebaker people were nice, patient, and very polite.

The smooth coordination of preparing the fairgrounds, organizing the camping, setting up a swap meet and keeping Steve Kanter on task with weekly meetings checking and double checking what we needed to do – fell to our committee member, Dick Pollen.

Dick (who is on the Manitowoc Fairgrounds Board) and his wife, Bernice, spent countless hours of doing the grinding organizational work to make this meet come to fruition. If something needed to be done during the meet, Dick and Bernice were Johnny on the Spot.

We would like to thank all our volunteers at WRSDC, our SDC members for attending, and the great support we got from the SDC Board and *Turning Wheels*. We could not have done it without all of you. See you in Dubuque in 2024!



October 11, 2023

SDC Board of Directors
Denny Foust, President
Turning Wheels Magazine

Dear SDC Board of Directors and *Turning Wheels* Staff,

The Wisconsin Region Studebaker Drivers Club wanted to drop a short note to the SDC Board of Directors and others to thank you for all your help and support during the planning and implementation of the 59th Annual Studebaker Drivers Club International Meet. The SDC Board's faith in the WRSDC to put this meet together in a short time is very much appreciated. Plus the advertising and article support from *Turning Wheels* magazine was absolutely outstanding!

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We'd like to give International Meet Chair, Jane Stinson, a special shout-out for helping us get our meet started. Her helpful advice allowed our committee to get organized and focused to make this meet a great success. Thank you Jane!

Thank you for the opportunity. Our club had a great time putting this together.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephan J. Kanter".

Stephan J. Kanter, President, WRSDC

Trophy Sponsorships 59th IM Manitowoc



Dick Quinn (left) stopped by the SDC registration table to pick up his 55th SDC membership anniversary pin having joined the club back in 1968. Presenting the pin is President Denny Foust who had joined in 1967. Dick was attending his 54th consecutive National meet.

	# of Trophies
Heart of America Chapter	3
StudebakerVendors.com	1
1956 Golden Hawk Owners Register	1
Orlando Area Chapter	3
Studebakerparts.com	3
Keystone Region Chapter, Inc.	9
Ozark Trails Chapter	3
Atlantic Canada Chapter	1
Grand Canyon State Chapter	3
Dave Balek, in memory of Jim McDornott	1
Dave Balek, in memory of Dave Becker	1
Joe Frattone	3
Iowa Hawkeye Chapter	3
Grady & Carol O'Day of the Wisconsin Region Chapter	3
Beach Cities, Orange & Inland Empire Chapter	3
Iroquois Chapter	1
Rock River Valley Chapter	1
Zia Studebaker Packard Club	3
Tri State Chapter	1
Studebakers of Arkansas Chapter	1
Big Bend Chapter	3
Denny & Cindy Foust	3
Black Hawk Chapter	3
Western Lake Erie Chapter	3
Blair T. Polhamus, in memory of my dad, Earl W. Polhamus who gave me my first Studebakers	3
Blair T. Polhamus, to my wife Vickie R. Polhamus who got me back into Studebakers	3
Blair T. Polhamus, to Craig & Garvin Pipes of Watmoreland Antique Car Restoration Shop	3
Hamilton Chapter in memory of Roland Lusted	2
Fred Zernia of the Wisconsin Region Chapter	3
Kaw Valley Chapter	3



photo by John Cosby

The 59th Annual SDC Meet honored several late longtime, well-known members of the WRC including Buzz Beckman. This sign was part of the display, with their Studebakers, in the swap meet area.

THANK YOU to all the chapters and individuals who sponsored the trophies for the Meet.

Manitowoc 2023, a Technical Perspective

by Jim Pepper

Hosting an SDC International Meet was a dream of Rick Recheck. When we decided to go forward with Rick's vision, I agreed to be part of the Meet committee and volunteered to take on being responsible for the on-site seminars. I have always felt that our International Meets should be working conventions. By that I mean, besides catching up with old friends, making new friends, scouring the swap meet, and looking at all the cars, you should be able to learn something useful. Judging by the feedback and the seminar attendance, I believe we were successful. A few seminars ran a little over on time but it was not a problem. (I would have benefitted by a big clock on the back wall).

My wife, Cindy, suggested we try to have some seminars that were not about Studebakers. One of the seminars was devoted to gardening, presented by Master Gardener Sandy Schwartz. Sandy did a phenomenal presentation that was well received by quite a few members.

When one of my seminars presenters informed me he would not be able to attend the Meet, I had to fill his spot. It was decided that we would show and discuss a couple of Bonneville Salt Flat videos. We started out with a presentation by Don Shelton. He showed a five minute video of his 183 cubic inch Studebaker V8 powered '53 Commander Coupe making a 150 mph pass at Bonneville.

It was almost exactly 30 years ago when Ron Hall broke the 200 mph barrier with a Studebaker powered car. Many members bought and watched the 1993 Bonneville video but that was 30 years ago. I did not know if there would be interest today, but I decided to show the '93 Bonneville video. I would PAUSE the video from time to time, interjecting back stories about what was happening on the video. The videos were very well received. The room was nearly full. The interest surprised me.

There was one hiccup during this seminar. Andy Beckman had asked me to wear/model a Studebaker National Museum diamond jubilee T-shirt currently being sold commemorating Andy Granatelli's record setting Bonneville efforts in 1963. (60 years ago). I forgot to do that at the seminar. To

make up for my omission, here it is (*see photos*). It is a nice shirt and you can have one of your own by ordering it from the Studebaker National Museum.

The live Co-Operator seminar had a much different feel to it this year. It had been moderated by Bob Palma since its inception in the early 90s. The whole room observed a moment of silence for

Bob before we started. Wednesday morning I asked the SDC board to consider my request to officially name the International Meet live Co-Operator "*The Bob Palma Memorial Live Co-Operator*". The board approved the request and the name change will be used next year and thereafter.

The panelists were myself, Dwain Grindinger, Carl Thoms, Herman Thoms, and as a guest panelist, Mike Baker. Thank you. We covered many different subjects but the most popular this year was converting older model electrical systems to 12 volts. The reasons for and against doing it were discussed. There is a lot involved in the process. Many attendees were not aware of the intricacies of the process. Some clarity was achieved.

The room was full. The questions and ideas offered by the group were great. **Thank you** all who participated. See you next year.

I would like to thank **all the seminar presenters, Jan Young, Bruce Anderson, Don Shelton, Jim Schwartz, Sandy Schwartz, and Dan Reidel**. You all gave more than you promised. A special thanks to Dan Reidel. Dan is an insurance expert well versed on the unique nuances around insuring collector vehicles. His only Studebaker connection is he is a friend of mine and I used to work with his father. Dan drove up from Milwaukee to do this for us. It was well received and he enjoyed experiencing a little of our Meet.

Buzz and Fran Beckman started the donated item sales benefitting the Studebaker National Museum at the South Bend swap meet many years ago. Cindy and I have carried on that tradition. The only time we have had that sale during an International Meet was when it coincided with the spring South Bend swap meet. With the Meet being in Manitowoc it was decided to conduct a sale benefitting the Museum during the meet. Terry and Marcia Frye manned the tables with help from Pete and Gary Wendt. I want to thank our members who donated items and who purchased items. We raised an additional \$1204 for the Museum in 2023. Thank you to all who helped out.

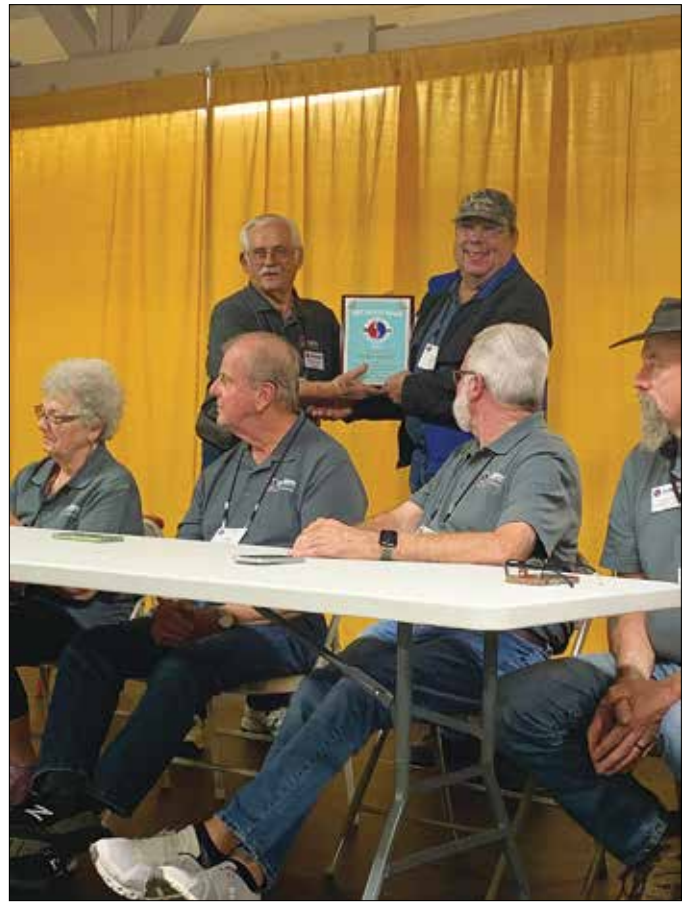


Terry and Marcia Frye manning the table at the Swap Meet, selling donated items to benefit the Studebaker National Museum.



One of the jigsaw puzzles on the tables in the hospitality area.

I was the auctioneer at the SDC club auction that was held on Thursday night. I am not, nor will I ever be, a professional auctioneer. The only experience I have had is that I was the auctioneer for our church fundraising auction for a number of years. I had a good time and we sold about 60 items. The auction generated about \$2200. Thanks to all who donated items and all who participated in the auction.



Denny Foust, left, is presenting Peter Wendt an award for being election coordinator for 25 years.



Co-Operator Seminar, left to right: Mike Baker, Jim Pepper, Carl Thoms, Dwain Grindinger, Herman Thoms. Mike Baker was a guest panelist fielding Avanti questions. He has an Avanti restoration business and is a past president of AOAI.

My wife Cindy suggested we put some Studebaker related jigsaw puzzles on the tables in the hospitality area. It was neat to see so many people putting the puzzles together. They were each completed several times during the course of the week.

Cindy helped out at registration, hospitality, seminars, the auction and other areas as needed throughout the Meet. Her biggest job was keeping me on track. I can't thank her enough.

Our meet committee was a small dedicated group. We laid the plans, got approval from SDC, fine-tuned them as time went on, and just executed the plan when the time came. If your group is considering hosting an International Meet, it is very doable without overwhelming anyone. Organization is the key. Don't let it intimidate you.



photo by John Cosby



photo by John Cosby



photo by John Cosby



photo by Duane Miller

photo by Jim Pepper

Speaking at the SDC Membership Meeting, Andy Beckman, Archivist, and Pat Slebonick, Executive Director of the Studebaker National Museum.

