

SEE YOU IN 2020

CATOOSA, OKLAHOMA

Home of the Blue Whale on Historic Route 66

July 7-11, 2020

2020 Convention

Preview #10 by Larry Crider

POCI Welcome Night Promises Unique, Free Entertainment

The Indian Nations Chapter is excited to offer you a no-cost evening of family fun on Wednesday, July 8 from 6-10pm.

All registered participants are invited to join us that evening in a private room at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino from 6:00-10:00pm for an official POCI Welcome Night event highlighted by a captivating, entertaining program that showcases a bit of Oklahoma history.

During brief segments throughout the evening we will welcome Indian dancers from the Pawnee Tribe accompanied by a singer and drum. This group will be led by John Knifechief, who will explain each dance in depth and what it means to the heritage of the Pawnee Nation. These authentic dances are sacred and not meant as a side show.

John performs around the country teaching the otherwise lost art and history surrounding these dances. The dancers will be dressed in their native regalia; photos will be permitted.

As yet another treat for our members, John — who is one of about only ten remaining full-blooded Pawnee Indians — will be constructing 100 items, ranging from arrows to necklaces with certificates, to be presented to individuals at this special Welcome Night gathering and throughout our convention.

The dancing doesn't stop there! We all know the importance of *Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys* to Tulsa and Oklahoma. Well, when Bob Wills died, his music certainly didn't. The Texas Playboys continued their music in honor of him by forming two groups. Some of the older original members, now living in Texas, perform as a group known as the *Texas Playboys Tribute to Bob Wills*, while the original members living in the Tulsa area formed the *Tulsa Playboys Tribute to Bob Wills*.

For the majority of the evening, you will experience a rare treat, hearing and dancing to the music that made Bob Wills famous with the Tulsa Playboys. This professional group has performed and recorded records with the likes of Roy Clark, Vince Gill and other big-name country artists.

With all this remarkable entertainment on tap, it should



prove to be an exciting night for all POCI guests. Comfort in a new air-conditioned addition to the Hard Rock Casino makes it a great start to the POCI Convention. Wet bars will be available all evening.

So, bring those cowboy hats and dancing boots for a memorable evening courtesy of POCI, the Indian Nations Chapter and longtime sponsor Ames Performance Engineering.



Drag Racing Legend Arnie Beswick Coming to Tulsa!

For the 2020 POCI Convention, the Indian Nations Chapter is proud to offer you the opportunity to visit with world renown Pontiac drag racer Arnie Beswick.

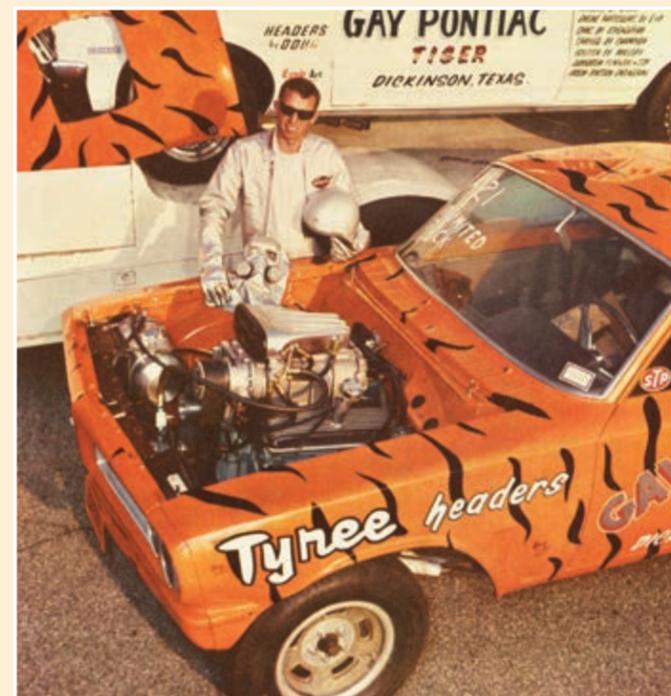
Arnies, along with his car, the Tameless Tiger, will be on hand during the week of our convention for photos, autographs and to just talk *Pontiac Excitement!* Arnie was recently inducted into another racing Hall of Fame and proudly continues to support the Pontiac banner.

And, be sure to join us on Friday, July 10th as the Tameless Tiger makes an exhibition pass during a thrilling evening of Pontiac drag action at Tulsa Raceway Park!

A brief look at the racing career of Arnie Beswick by Dean Fait

Arnie "The Farmer" Beswick's drag racing career is one of the most amazing of any person to ever strap themselves into a race car. His career has spanned just shy of 70 years, beginning in 1953 with the dawn of organized racing in the Midwest.

Although he actively farmed much of his early career, he was able to be a formidable force in the stock, super stock (S/S), factory experimental (AF/X) and funny car ranks of the '50s, '60s and early 1970s. Even more amazing is that he accomplished this without any major sponsorship. Oldsmobile was his car of choice in the early 1950's, switching camp to Dodge with some very rare and very special hemi-powered cars for '56 and '57.





He made the switch to Pontiac in 1958, and for the most part, has stayed loyal to that brand ever since. He gained national fame from the very start as an outstanding mechanic, driver and showman, no matter what brand of car that he drove.

His dominance in a stock car was proven by the fact that he won his class at the very first World Series of Drag Racing and continued to do so for the next nine years. This 10-year record still stands.

He took a class win at the very first NHRA Nationals in 1955 as well as winner of the overall stock eliminator title at the very first NHRA/NASCAR Winter Nationals held in Daytona Beach, Florida in 1960. He won 'mechanic of the year' honors at the 1961 US Nationals as well as driving wins there, not to mention wins at the California-held Winternationals in the mid '60s.

He also assumed the prestigious number 1 spot on the Drag News "Mr. Stock Eliminator" list in late 1963, taking it from "Dyno" Don Nicholson.

The 1963 and '64 seasons were his most successful. He campaigned three cars including a lightweight "Swiss cheese" Catalina, a LeMans coupe, and a Tempest Wagon. All were equipped with factory dual quad, S/D 421 engines. Throughout the '63 season especially, these cars put down everything from the Z-11 Chevies to the 427-powered Fords and lightened MOPARs and, at the '64 Daytona Winter Nationals, were victorious over an armada of Ford Thunderbolts.

In 1964, after GM had left racing by a year, Arnie used his innovative talents to continue his dominance in a Pontiac. He did so by supercharging and injecting a 421 S/D motor on a stock-bodied GTO. As MoPar altered wheelbase cars started showing up, the dawn of the funny car was born. Even Arnie's



car was given that label as the "Mystery Tornado" took many wins, racing from coast to coast. In 1965, Arnie was the first to break into the 9's and later the 8-second barrier with a completely stock-bodied car.

Arnie, with his amazing win record, became a highly desirable driver in the eyes of track promoters and factory race teams like Mercury. They convinced Arnie to become part of their factory racing team in 1965. Although Arnie had some success with this very special Comet, the fans wanted to see his Pontiacs run. After little more than four months, Arnie gave up his sponsored ride to once again race Pontiacs as an independent.



As funny cars became lighter and more competitive, Arnie independently rebuilt his '63 LeMans coupe to maintain his edge by drastically altering the wheelbase. The car was painted in orange and black tiger stripes to identify with the GTO theme. The name "Tameless Tiger" definitely fit. It was without a doubt the most recognized nitro-burning funny car from 1966-1968. Arnie's huge wheel stands along with the squirrely habits of the car, electrified fans from coast to coast. It took the #1 position of exhibition blown stockers in a national drag racing poll.

Arnie's popularity with the GTOs grew with the fans in the '60s and continued as he switched to a Firebird body in the '70s. He, with help from his crew, maintained an unbelievable schedule as he campaigned his Pontiac funny cars, making anywhere from 75 to 100 events a year.

In 1971, the "Boss Bird" funny car was left more to eighth-mile tracks where the low-end torque of the Pontiac engines helped with wins. Quarter mile track wins came thanks to the use of a hemi-powered Dodge Challenger. Arnie worked his magic on a poorly running car and soon the year-old machine set numerous speed and ET track records until it was wrecked on the 4th of July. The hemi motor was installed into the Firebird for the remainder of that year.

It was April of 1972, when a newly built structure on the Beswick farm housing his entire racing operation and much of his farm equipment, caught fire and burned to the ground, destroying or badly damaging everything inside.

Being the independent that he always was and is, this appeared to be the end of a highly successful racing career. However his passion for the sport and the support of many loyal fans brought him back to the track when Bill Blair towed his 1963 Tempest to Cordova in July of 1986 for Arnie to drive. That was followed by a drag

race reunion, held at Moroso Motorsports Park in West Palm Beach, FL in November. Again Arnie drove Bill Blair's Tempest.

Thanks to the help of a good friend, Jake Howard, Arnie returned to the track on a regular basis in a white '63 LeMans that quickly received the patented Tiger-striped treatment.

Wanting to run quicker, he built his own pro-mod version. This car got Arnie down to the low 7-second range and had the power to do his 3/4 track burnouts with quick back-ups that have since become a trademark. Arnie listened to his fans in 1994 and started work on his current ride, the 1964 GTO.

Starting in 1988, Arnie has received plenty of recognition for his achievements. Charlotte Motor Speedway was the location for this first Hall of Fame ceremony. In 1995, he was the first driver to be inducted into the Super Stock & Drag Illustrated hall of fame. While there have been many, many other local and national honors bestowed, one of his favorites happened in March of 2006. A huge entourage of friends, family and crew traveled to Florida to be part of the ceremonies as he was one of the elite few to be inducted into the "International Drag Racing" Hall of Fame. Never has anyone had such a large group of fans present to show their support. While the ladies sported bracelets and tiger pins, even the MC for the night couldn't

help but notice, making mention of the tiger-striped ties that all the men and boys wore.

Another favorite is the Lifetime Achievement Award bestowed by NHRA in Bowling Green, Kentucky in 2008.

Arnie's life almost came to a tragic end on August 3, 2003 at Wentzville's Mid American Raceway, as a fire fueled by nitrous oxide ripped through the interior of the car after the parachutes were deployed at the end of a run. It was told that the heat experienced could only be compared to a blast furnace, yet miraculously, while the car was destroyed and his face and hands were disfigured, Arnie not only survived but prevailed, making Pontiac and drag racing history in August of 2005, as he once again piloted a race car down the track at Norwalk, Ohio. Everyone attending ran to the stands to witness Arnie's return to the strip in the stock looking re-creation of Beswick's original Tempest wagon, then owned by Wally Abella.

In late August of 2006, the hearts of us all soared as he returned to his home track of Cordova, Illinois — three years after that tragic fire and again made history as he drove his own beloved and trusted GTO, the "Tameless Tiger II" down the strip.

It is Arnie's dedication to the mental and physical challenge to conquer that still drives him and others like him. His sheer determination and love for the

sport and fans has seen him in this latest version of "Tameless Tigers." He will always remain a friend of the fans. Now passing the driving torch to a younger driver, Anthony Layne, the next generation can experience the thrill of seeing Arnie's car make blistering passes.

Arnie's name will always be known in the drag racing world as his achievements personify the efforts of all those people that fueled the sport, making it what it is today. In or out of a car, we know he'll still be delighting, thrilling and even just conversing with fans from coast to coast. *JIN*



The always personable Arnie Beswick shown here signing an autograph for a fan.

