



# news

A Chapter of POCA

[www.PanteraClubNorCal.com](http://www.PanteraClubNorCal.com)

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## *No Meeting Minutes...*

Due to the fact that there was no monthly PCNC meeting in May, there are no minutes to report, and thus (hopefully!) no corrections that will have to be made in next month's newsletter!

Although there was a brief hope that the June meeting could be held at the normal place and time, it turned out to be impossible. Mark visited the restaurant and found they were serving outdoors in a tent using social distance norms—not ideal. So we are kicking the can down the road again in the hopes we can have a normal meeting, indoors, with appropriate social distancing, in July.

Here's looking to a great 2020—eventually!

# Membership News

## New Members for June:

We have one new member this month, **Patrick Campesi**, who lives in White Castle, Louisiana. Multiple calls and e-mails have yielded no replies, so it's unclear if he meant to affiliate with PCNC or not. We will keep trying to find out.

## June Membership Anniversaries:

We congratulate the following people for the indicated years of continuous membership in the Pantera Club of Northern California:

**Brian Bernard and Estela Romo:** 28 years

**Rob McMullen:** 13 years

**Lysianne Doute:** 9 years

**Mark and Yasmine Charlton:** 3 years

**Greg Lazzerini:** 2 years

**Steve and Merry Dalcino:** 21 years

**Matthew Kelleher:** 10 years

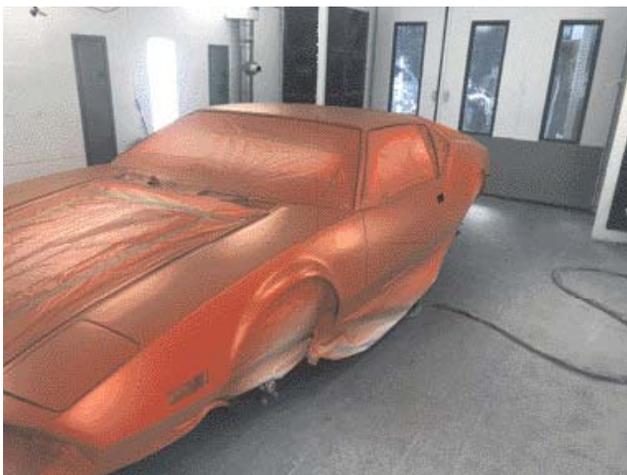
**Lou Brizzolara:** 7 years

**Jeff Gick:** 3 years



# *News, Clues and Rumors*

**Steve Dalcino's Pantera Gets A Makeover:** Just because Covid19 is keeping people locked up at home, that doesn't mean that nothing is going on. PCNC member Mike Dapper's body shop had a bit of a lull which Steve was quick to capitalize upon. He drove his Pantera down to Mike's Oakland shop, and the work began in earnest. The six photos below show the various iterations of stripping, blocking, sanding, priming, undercoating, and painting. The paintwork is now complete and the car is in the process of being reassembled. Nice job, Mike!



# Tanks A Lot!

*Story by Mike Drew*

*Photos by Mike Drew and Shawn Conway*

Shawn Conway, one of PCNC's newest members, had a problem. He had just purchased a beautiful white Pantera L from the east coast, where it had been in storage for some time. It started and ran, but ran badly. He took it to his local mechanic (he lives in Piedmont, near the Oakland hills) who diagnosed a badly plugged-up carburetor. He was able to fix it and get it running, but in a few short miles it was stumbling and staggering again. He fitted a fuel filter which promptly plugged up with debris.

He reached out to me for advice. While the conventional wisdom would have one remove the fuel tank and clean it out, I told him I had a better idea. I had run into a similar problem with my own car about a dozen years ago (eventually attributed to a misplaced bedspread that was lurking in the bottom of my fuel tank, slowly disintegrating—a long story for another time). Not wanting to go through the agony of pulling the engine and gearbox to get to the gas tank, at the time I came up with a solution that I still feel is brilliant, if I do say so myself.

Although I have never owned a swimming pool, I have occasionally admired them from afar. One thing that always fascinated me was the automatic pool sweep, which acts like a vacuum cleaner, slowly traversing the bottom of the pool. A pump sucks water from the floor of the pool, and with it, any debris that might be found there, into the hose, where it travels through a filter, then the pump, and then is returned to the pool.

I figured this same principle could be used to solve my fuel tank debris problem. I happened to have a spare VW Scirocco electric fuel pump lying around, so I bought some hose, a glass filter, some alligator clips, and a small length of aluminum tube, and kluged together a remarkably effective device, which I was able to use to resolve my problem in just a few minutes. I promised Shawn I could supply him with my apparatus and he'd be back in business in no time.

Well, the passage of time was not kind to my components. The spare fuel pump I had was now junk, frozen solid, so I had to buy a new one. The filter

was leaking desperately, so I had to buy a new one of those too. My new fuel pump had different-size inlet and outlet fittings from the old one, so I had to buy a variety of adapters and fittings to get it to attach to my filter, and of course I bought new hose as well. In the end, the only thing I wound up using from my original device was the short length of aluminum tube!

I decided to spiff it up a bit, and mounted the whole thing to a wooden board, backed with foam to protect the car's paint. I even splurged on an inline fuse and an on/off switch, although I drew the line at incorporating a relay, because I knew the pump would only be run for a few minutes and would have virtually no load since there is no real resistance to fluid flow, unlike when it is used with a fuel injection system.

After many more hours than I would care to admit (but hey, we were on lockdown so I was taking advantage of the "tinker in place" order), I had a fully functional tool. Here is how it works. First, the left quarter window above the fuel tank needs to be carefully removed to allow access. The fuel



*Thanks to Covid19 lockdown I had the time to build a rather elegant, self-contained fuel tank sweeping tool*

level sender and fuel filler need to be removed from the top of the tank (and it's best to go ahead and remove the fuel vent as well, which affords three separate openings to access the tank). The device is placed atop the roof, the alligator clips are connected to the battery for power, and the outlet hose from the pump is placed into the tank. The inlet hose and tube are then placed into the tank, with illumination provided by a flashlight through an adjacent hole (or a borescope).

When the switch is activated, the pump runs and begins drawing fuel up from the tank, where it passes through the filter, the pump, and then returns into the tank, following the pool sweep model. The operator can move the aluminum wand along the floor of the tank, sucking up any debris that is then trapped by the filter. Depending on how much debris is present, the tank can be cleaned in a matter of minutes.

Satisfied that I had created a working solution to Shawn's problem, there was then the challenge of getting it to him in the height of the stay-at-home crisis. I drained it as best I could, then left it to sit outside in the sun for a few days so the remaining fuel would evaporate. I then triple-bagged it and boxed it up and mailed it to him.

Upon receipt, Shawn immediately put it to work, but was disappointed to discover that the included fuel filter plugged up solid almost immediately. He had a *lot* of gick inside his tank! Eventually he bought a glass filter with replacement elements, and used up quite a few of them. It took him much longer



***The tool in action on Shawn's car. The coiled wire is a very long flexible borescope camera***

to clean out his tank than I had to spend. We are guessing that a prior owner made the mistake of having the inside of the

tank coated with a sealer, which couldn't withstand the toxic witches' brew that passes for gasoline these days.

Eventually though, he was able to run the device from one end of his tank to the other without picking up anything. He then set it in the sun to dry out, put his car back together, and glory be, it ran—and kept running! Success!

This proved to be a fantastic solution to a vexing problem, one that conventionally would have required an enormous amount of work to resolve. The device is now nestled under my workbench, waiting for the next time somebody has a need. If you are finding yourself with fuel filter clogging problems, you are welcome to borrow it as well!



***The fuel filter was completely clogged after only three minutes! It required multiple iterations of sweeping and filter cleaning before he was done***

# A Visit To Panteras by Wilkinson

*Story and Photos by Mike Drew*

The screws that have held us all locked in our homes are finally starting to loosen, and we are collectively taking the first few steps in the direction of normalcy (at least with respect to the virus). Two weeks ago, I had occasion to fly down to southern California where I picked up Lori (who had been babysitting our grandson in Riverside) and together we drove home.

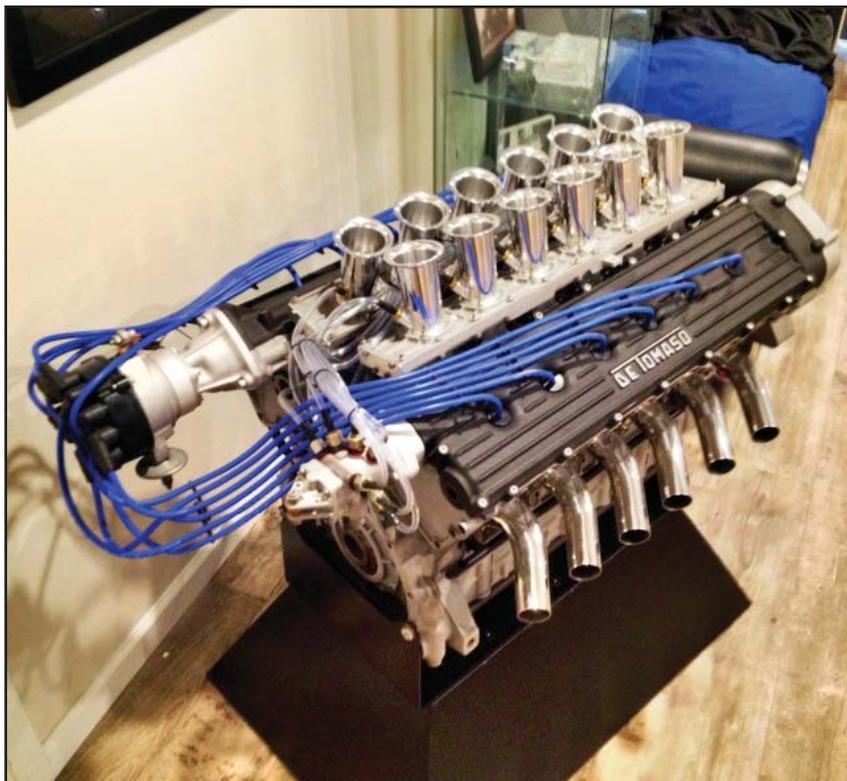
My drive from LAX to Riverside in the rental car would take me within just a few blocks of Panteras by Wilkinson, so it would seem almost rude to not swing by and say hello.

I hadn't seen Steve Wilkinson in some time, and I forgot that he had grown an impressive beard! Of greater interest was the fact that he had completely remodeled the front of his business since my last visit. It now has a much more professional and welcoming appearance.

Prominently on display in the foyer is a real marvel—a genuine De Tomaso V-12 engine! Few people know that De Tomaso's vision for the Deauville was that it would be powered not by the plebian Ford 351 Cleveland as found in the Pantera, but rather by a supremely exotic all-aluminum fuel-injected double-overhead-cam V-12! In fact, the cutaway drawing of the initial Deauville concept clearly shows this V-12 nestled in between the fenders.

The engine was easily as exotic as anything coming out of Marenello or Sant'Agata at the time; in fact it would have been quite at home on a contemporary F-1 grid. De Tomaso claimed that it produced upwards of 500 horsepower, which was a rather believable figure.

Only two examples of this engine were ever built; the other one resides in the De Tomaso collection in Modena. Despite the grandiose claims, neither engine was completely finished and ap-



***One glance at the almost achingly exotic all-aluminum fuel-injected double-overhead-cam De Tomaso V-12 shows why the automotive press was so enamored of Alejandro de Tomaso during the late 1960s and early 1970s***

parently neither one ever actually ran! When Wilkinson got his hands on this one, it was missing the camshafts and a few other internal bits. A well-known fellow of extremely ill repute had managed to get his hands on (i.e. steal) the original blueprints and design drawings for the engine and offered them up for sale for an absolutely obscene amount of money. Steve told him to go pound sand, and instead reverse-engineered the parts, turning the engine into a runner on his own.

Once past the foyer, the remainder of the business appears as it always has, with several service bays, and a mezzanine absolutely jammed with new and used parts for all types of De Tomaso cars, not just Panteras.

Thanks to the very mild climate,

almost all body and paint work is actually done outside, in large tents. Among the cars undergoing restoration was a former basket case 1972 Pantera L that Steve bought from Wally Baldyga in Connecticut some years ago. This car had been involved in a comprehensive smash, and the entire right side was completely gone. Fortunately Steve had all the bits needed to return it to its former glory. It has just completed the paint process and assembly will be starting soon.

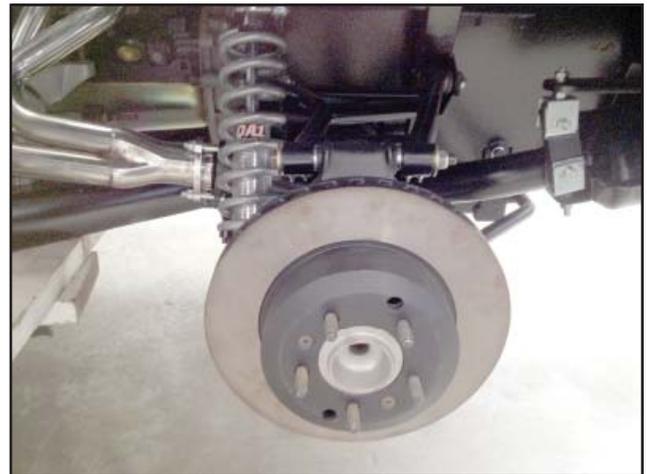
Another refugee from Wally Baldyga's farm is the very first Pantera GT5. This car lived most of its life on the east coast where it was absolutely ravaged by the salted roads, and the entire chassis was rusted to the point of translucency. There was literally noth-

ing useable between the fenders. While most would view this car as a donor for things like glass and body panels and various other bits, Steve had other ideas.

De Tomaso only completed 41 Pantera Si cars, but had built several more chassis before the project petered out. Steve was able to buy a complete Si chassis (which is substantially different from a regular Pantera) and graft it to the GT5 body. Numerous components including rear suspension A-arms needed to be fabricated, which was a daunting task, but the



*This Pantera #4525 was definitely crashed beyond any hope of salvation. Now it's perfect!*



*The first GT5, #9104, was straight but rusted beyond belief. Now it rides on Pantera Si chassis and suspension*

car is now nearing completion.

Steve's automotive interests are rather broad. His latest project is a tiny 1959 Berkeley roadster, originally powered by a 750cc flat twin. He cut the whole car in half lengthwise and widened it four inches, converted it from front-wheel-drive to rear-wheel-drive, and equipped it with a Subaru WRX turbocharged flat-four engine!

Parked nearby was a 1966 Ford Mustang fastback, done up as a clone of a Shelby GT350H Hertz rent-a-racer. This one is powered by a 580-horsepower

fuel-injected 408-inch stroker 351 Windsor, but the real party trick is out back. The stock live axle rear suspension has been replaced by the complete rear end from a De Tomaso Deauville! The Deauville/Longchamp rear suspension was a direct copy of that used in a variety of Jaguar sports cars and sedans (parts directly



*The 408 Windsor features cross-ram fuel injection*

interchange), and the Jag rear end has been used as the underpinnings of many a street rod, but it's unusual to see it used on a car like this. Steve said he did it just because he had three complete Deauville rear ends lying around, and no Deauville owners ever wanted to buy one!

He also has a Ford Model A pickup truck that he converted to mid-engine, with a Ford V-8 and ZF gearbox in the rear, and nothing at all under the hood. This one has a neat trick too—the entire body is hinged at the front and a pair of giant hydraulic rams lifts it from the rear to show off the drivetrain.



*Custom-fabricated oval exhaust system, stainless steel mufflers, fuel cell, Tremec gearbox, and De Tomaso Deauville independent rear suspension—this is no ordinary Shelby GT350 clone!*

Also on display was a rather ordinary-looking early Pantera converted to GT5 configuration back in the 1980s. The Pantera, and the pickup truck are

both for sale, as Steve has a huge shipment of parts enroute from Italy and no place to store them, so the cars have got to make way.

Speaking of parts, Steve was proud to show the latest additions to the parts catalog. For many years, stock sunvisors have been impossible to come by, so



*Steve Wilkinson stands with several pallets of brand new reproduction Pantera tool kits*

he recently tooled up to have them reproduced. The only way to get anything made these days is to get it done in quantity, and as a result he had to buy many hundreds, if not thousands of sunvisors in order to get the manufacturer to produce them. They were piled up on pallets, waiting to be sold.

Another unobtainium part for the past many years is the rocker-style washer and wiper switches used on the later Pre-L and all L-model dashboards. Once again, he had to have a zillion of them produced in order to

get them produced.

Recently, stock tool kits have been in high demand, with complete kits selling for as much as \$1500! Steve went back to the original manufacturer of the tool kit in Italy (all Italian car companies relied on subcontractors for things like that) and had some 400 Pantera tool kits made. They are almost exact copies of the originals, right down to the tool bag, including the Battani jack, wood-

handled screwdrivers and everything else. The only deviation from stock is the pliers, which now have rubber-covered handles (although the rubber could be removed for a more authentic look). Also, the ratchet for the jack has an end which is angled slightly differently from the original.

It was an enjoyable and entertaining visit, and as a prospective buyer came in to check out the GT5, I bid my *adieu* and

continued my journey. It was heartening to see that even though he is well into his 70s, Steve Wilkinson continues to innovate and grow his business, and by the looks of it, our collective fortunes are in fine shape as more and more parts are being reproduced, or original parts unearthed from hiding places in Italy. Thanks to Steve and the other Pantera parts vendors, we will be able to enjoy driving our Panteras indefinitely!

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## Funnel of Love

*Story and Photos by Mike Drew*

As we all labor under the ‘tinker-in-place’ order resulting from the Coronavirus, we are all afforded the opportunity to get caught up with untold numbers of long-overdue projects, including performing maintenance on our cars. Recently Lori and I treated her Pantera to an oil change (which turned into a much greater project, more on that next month). We wound up having to

fill and drain the oil three times before we were done.

Just before we started the project, I suddenly remembered a tech tip I had seen almost 20 years ago, while visiting a Pantera owner named



*Simply cut away three sides of a plastic jug to make a no-cost Pantera oil drain funnel*



*As clearly shown here, this funnel transforms the Pantera oil change experience, making it almost laughably easy*

Steve Burke in Dublin, Ireland. He had his GT5-S up on a rack and was performing an oil change. I spotted something unusual, which turned out to be a one-liter plastic milk jug that had been inverted and hacked apart to neatly fit between the oil pan and the chassis.

Steve explained what I already knew—thanks to the oil pan drain plug’s

location on the side of the pan, upon removing the plug, oil normally sprays all over the chassis and then the lift, and makes what he so eloquently described as “a fookin’ mess!” He had figured out that by hacking the sides out of a clear plastic container, it could neatly contain the oil and vector it into the waiting drain pan below.

Armed with this sudden recollection, I rooted around our recycling bin and came up with a plastic orange juice bottle. I cut away three sides but left the entire bottom intact. Lori was then able to jam it up between the oil pan and chassis, where it hooked on the lip of the oil pan. It allowed enough clearance for her wrench to get through to loosen the plug, and her hand could then unthread it and remove it. The oil splashed onto the inside of the bottle and drained neatly into the pan. Brilliant!

This no-cost tool is now a permanent part of my tool collection. You should take the time to make one for yourself before your next oil change too!



Lori Drew  
136 Lighthouse Way  
Vacaville, CA 95688



## NEXT CLUB MEETING

**Your Guess Is As Good As Mine, 2020**  
**7:30 P.M.**

**HOLDER'S COUNTRY INN**  
**998 S. De Anza Blvd, San Jose**

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## UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

All Upcoming Events Postponed Indefinitely....

**REMINDER — NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE BY 15th OF EACH MONTH**