



One of the coolest factory cold-air scoops to ever find its way atop any muscle car hood is this one prominently perched on the AMC Scrambler. It's great to see that, occasionally, function does follow form.



If you are missing a few critical components needed to finish your latest project, chances are you might find them at the swap meet, where certain rusty bits might be worth their weight in gold to the right buyer.

# MCACN '22

THE BEST MUSCLE CAR SHOW ON THE PLANET KEEPS GETTING BETTER!

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**W**HEN IT COMES TO FINDING SUPERLATIVES THAT SUFFICIENTLY describe the Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals (MCACN), held annually just outside Chicago the weekend before Thanksgiving, even the best thesaurus comes up dismally short. Fourteen years past, Bob and Vicki Ashton launched MCACN with the hope that their dream of presenting the best muscle car show would become reality. It certainly has. In fact, after attending countless car shows over the years, we feel fairly qualified to proclaim it the best muscle car show... ever.

Our praise does not come lightly. Where else in the world can one encounter such unrivaled rarity, distinctive diversity, and exceptional quality of construction, except at the annual mecca of mechanical wonderment?

Bob says, "I really am living my dream. People thought the MCACN show would never last, but here we are 14 years later." It's not really surprising, however, when one considers the incredible focus on what it really takes to be the best. "Our hobby is alive, and the passion and enthusiasm has never been better," Bob continues, "Our show is the Great Equalizer, where you check your ego at the door, and we can all put everything else on hold, even if just for a few hours."

Putting it all on hold and losing oneself in the greatest gathering that represents the most astonishing automotive era ever is something thousands of participants, and tens of thousands of spectators, approach with an unparalleled ardor each year at MCACN. Not surprisingly, the event has even achieved international acclaim, as correspondents and video crews from around the world make their reports from the floor of the convention center, giving folks back home a glimpse of what good ol' American muscle is all about.

You'd expect an event of this magnitude would have something for everybody, and MCACN doesn't leave anyone wanting. There are special display groupings that concentrate on a particular make, model, or style, such as Concours Stock, Nostalgic Drag Racing, "Day 2" builds, 50-year anniversary groupings, and the ever-popular Barn Finds. The Vintage Certification process is a MCACN exclusive that provides unrestored cars with verification and provenance. Adding further to the mix, industry leaders conduct hobby-related seminars while celebrities sign autographs and pose for pictures. It seems no matter what your automotive appetite, you'll find something here that will satisfy your palate.

This year, one of the most remarkable groupings was the "Wings Over America" invitational display, which brought the largest assemblage of Dodge Charger Daytona and Plymouth Superbird models to ever gather in one place. Another special display commemorated the 50th anniversary of 1972 muscle cars, while yet another celebrated our Canadian cousins with a cluster of Maple Leaf Muscle. If you like livin' large, there was also a selection of cruisers that sported big bodies and big-blocks to match, while the so-called Malaise era (1973-'88) muscle finally had an opportunity to shine in another special display.

Some say that MCACN is so immense and diverse that taking it all in over the course of a weekend is near impossible. Despite the very real possibility of visceral overload, everyone gives it their best shot anyway.

If you'd like to find out what it's all about and lose yourself in the days where high octane and low gas prices were as much a part of the scene as bangin' gears and burnin' rubber, we can't think of a better place to be than MCACN the weekend before Thanksgiving. To learn more, check the event's website at [mcacn.com](http://mcacn.com).



Blue Oval fans were mesmerized by this brace of Boss Mustangs displayed by Texan Findley Ledbetter, including a '70 Boss 302 and Boss 429, a '71 Boss 351, and a 2013 Boss 302, all painted in Grabber Blue.



Does it get any better than a triple-black '70 Hemi, four-speed, fully loaded 'Cuda? It does if you're lucky enough to purchase it from the original owner, and all the paperwork from new is included. Owner Darryl Wischnewsky was that lucky guy!



A '70 4-4-2 convertible is a rare sight these days, and even more so in the seldom-seen hue of Aegean Aqua. This one was loaded too, with a numbers-matching 455, A/C, AM-FM radio, tilt wheel, 8-track, and Rally Pack gauges. Matt Yerkes holds the title to this cyan cruiser.



Most '70 AMC Rebel Machines were draped in an American red, white, and blue paint scheme, making Terry Weiner's Bittersweet Orange metallic example a rare and unusual version. Motivation is derived from a special 340-hp 390, backed by a four-speed and standard 3.54 gear out back.



Part of the Maple Leaf Muscle display included this very rare Cheetah, a specially modified '67 Beaumont built by Gordon Pontiac, a British Columbia dealer that emulated the efforts of Yenko, Nickey, Motion, et al. They churned out approximately 50 examples from 1966-1970.



The Pure Stock Muscle Car Drags Invitational display actively presented the show-and-go aspect of muscle car ownership and proved that the racers and their rides are winners both on and off the track.



**LEFT:** This '69 Nova was rumored to be a genuine Yenko 427 car. It drew plenty of lookers and conversation as it anchored the entry to the Barn Finds display. **ABOVE:** Another interesting point of discussion was this '69 Super Bee that was alleged to be a rare A12 car, and still sported the lift-off Six Pack hood.

## BARN FINDS

For those who appreciate rusty, crusty muscle dragged out of decades-old hiding places, the Barn Finds exhibit is a perennial favorite and one of the most popular MCACN displays. Automotive archaeologists, like organizer Ryan Brutt, love exploring the forlorn specimens revealed there and speculate on all the "whys" and "what ifs" that form the history of each one. Some are rare, others not so much, but they all have a patina, a story, and plenty of rust and crust.



The '70 Torino on the left was claimed to be a Super Cobra Jet car, while the '68 Olds next to it showed plenty of evidence that it was a first-year Hurst/Olds offering. A '65 Z16 Chevelle was parked right behind the pair.

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Hardly anybody considers a Rambler a rumbler, but John Becker's '66 Classic 770 convertible was powered by an AMC 327-cu.in. V-8 backed by a four-speed. Plus, it had buckets, console, and an OE dash-mounted tach. That's more than enough for us to consider its muscle car status.



Displayed prominently behind James Kryta's '72 W-30 Olds 4-4-2, we found this stash of rare factory experimental parts, including a jaw-dropping dual Quadrajets crossram intake, aluminum heads, and a Weber carb intake. Further inspection revealed aluminum valve covers intended for a hemi-headed Olds application.



We found this rare pair of '71 Hemi Charger R/Ts lurking in the Maple Leaf Muscle display. Both were ordered by Gardner Motors in Medicine Hat, Alberta, as part of a group of six and feature sequential VINs and matching-numbers drivetrains.



Part of the Mr. Norm Performance display included this famous Grand Spaulding '71 Challenger flopper. It replaced the previous string of Charger funny cars and has been faithfully restored right down to the nitro-burning Hemi, period-correct parts, and gorgeous blue metalflake paint.



Given the SUV world we all live in now, wagons may be even more popular than when the Griswold family took their infamous cross-country trip. The Performance Wagon invitational included everything from racecars to road machines and proves that long-roofs are cool and capable of hauling more than groceries.



Could this '69 Cougar convertible be one-of-one? Quite possibly, since it is powered by a CJ428 and painted in the Rocky Mountain purple hue, a special color commissioned by the Rocky Mountain Insurance Company as an incentive program for their salesmen. Oklahoman Phil Silva is the proud owner of this rarity.



LEFT: This '65 Pontiac Catalina, owned by Michael and Paul John Ferri, was certain to surprise other street prowlers with its powerful 421/four-speed combination. ABOVE: Arguably the largest of the displayed land-yachts was this Hurst Edition '70 Chrysler 300 that stretched the tape to nearly 19 feet and tipped the scales at more than 4,300 pounds. Powered by a 375-hp 440, it also featured an integral rear spoiler and a low production run of only 500 units.

## FULL-SIZED MUSCLE

Not all muscle cars followed the formula of a big-block in an intermediate body. For those who like their big-blocks nestled in a big, brawny body, there were plenty of examples to sate the appetite for livin' large. With plenty of room for the family and comfort to match, the big bruisers were available with powerful propulsion systems and four-speed sticks jutting from the floorboards, offering the best of all worlds.



Another impressive Pontiac to come out of the Ferri garage was this '67 Grand Prix that hid a top-dog 428 H.O. engine under the hood and a four-speed gearbox to back it up.

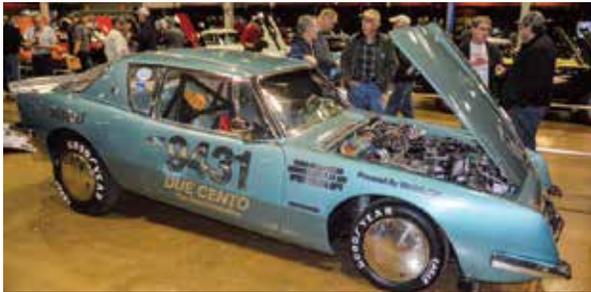
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## WINGED WARRIORS

Mopars were flying high on the banked NASCAR ovals after the debut of the purpose-built winged wonders. Though the aero-enhanced cars were designed specifically to dominate superspeedways, NASCAR required a minimum number of similar units to be offered for public consumption. Dodge was first with its sleek '69 Charger Daytona, followed the next year by the Plymouth Superbird. Savvy stock car enthusiasts of the time snapped up the available inventory and plied the boulevards in their outrageously styled machines. The Wings Over America exhibit drew an unprecedented number of these rare machines to MCAACN, to be celebrated by all, regardless of personal brand preferences.



Heading up the row of Daytonas was a pre-production example, referred to by *Mopar Collector's Guide* magazine as "the most significant street Daytona of all time!" Kept and maintained for years by Chrysler engineering, it is now in the hands of a private collector.



Not many people think of Studebakers as serious competition until they encounter one in person. Jim Lange has been toting the Studebaker performance banner for decades, and has the Bonneville records to prove the South Bend product is a genuine salt shaker.



Late-model muscle (and future collectibles) were not to be denied at MCAACN, with a full display of CMMG's Dick Harrell Edition Camaros. These were offered through Berger Chevrolet in Grand Rapids, Michigan, but only 30 were built and fitted with 630-hp engines, plus the accompanying hardware to withstand the anticipated punishment.



## VINTAGE CERTIFICATION

The mission statement of the Vintage Certification team is "to provide recognition, status, and provenance for unrestored vehicles." So, if your interests are more inclined towards preservation rather than restoration, this group of experts can objectively evaluate your vehicle and assign one of five different levels of originality to it. This undertaking is no small task: It requires judges who are intimately involved with the various aspects of particular makes and models, and can make authoritative judgments based on that knowledge.



This '69 L78 Camaro, owned by Doug Perry, has rolled up only 9,577 miles in its 53-year life. It earned the highest rating of Vintage Time Capsule, which means it was judged 95-plus percent original in all areas of inspection.



Arnie "The Farmer" Beswick helped put Pontiac on the drag racing map with his *Tameless Tiger* '64 GTO. This reincarnation of his famous racer continues the tradition today and proves that this is one tiger whose tail you don't want to grab.



For many of us, our first motorized transportation was a mini-bike that provided the perfect transition from innocent youth to brazen adolescent. Plenty of fond memories were rekindled with a walk past the Ruppis, Hondas, Yamahas, and Tacos on display this year.



This pair of '70 LT-1s certainly caught our attention; one was in roadster form, the other one in coupe. Both were stunning in their Cortez Silver presentation. The roadster is John Thayer's proud possession, while the coupe takes up residence in Richard Hoover's garage.

## FANTASTIC PLASTIC

There's always a great assortment of our favorite fiberglass at MCACN. It is, after all, touted as a Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals event. While they may have languished for a while as the mid-year cars found their glory, the C3 'Vettes have certainly secured a devout following in recent years. While all Corvettes hold an unquestionable allure, the assortment of C3s at MCACN this year seemed exceptional, and we found ourselves even more attracted than ever to the sleek third-gen styling. ■



**ABOVE:** It's difficult to deny the significance of Gen 2 Corvettes, especially when they have seen actual track time. The black '64 is a "tanker" car raced by Corvette Hall of Fame inductee Dave MacDonald, while the white '63 sports A.J. Foyt's name above the door as its former driver. Both are significant racecars owned by Mike Johnson.

**BELOW:** Although the vaunted LS6 big-block would finally make an appearance in the '71 Corvette, in our view, this Triple Diamond Award-winning '71 LS5 roadster belonging to Greg Geise is as near to perfection as possible in the human world. Its flawless Mulsanne Blue paint is offset beautifully by a removable black factory hardtop.

