

15th Annual Indian Uprising

chicagoland's Finest

Anyone who has run a car event will tell you that during the week leading up to the show, your TV set is permanently tuned to The Weather Channel. Rain? Hot and humid? 75 degrees and sunny with a pleasant breeze? Or the dreaded "possible showers." That's the one you hate to see: possible showers. Pouring rain you can deal with, provided you have a rain date. Hot and humid won't be fun, but you will still have a good turnout. Sunny and pleasant is a no-brainer. But possible showers means you probably can't postpone 'til next week but many potential entrants just won't come out, especially if the "possible" in their neighborhood is more like "definitely."

"Possible showers" was the forecast for the 15th Annual Indian Uprising. So I didn't know what to expect when I arrived Saturday afternoon as the guest of The Cruisin' Tigers GTO Club, host club for the event. Club member Denny Vodvarka picked me up at the airport to chauffeur me to the show site, and we drove through a few showers on the way, more or less what was predicted for the show on Sunday. After a pleasant dinner with the CTGTO show committee, I retired to my hotel room to wait for the big day and, naturally, watch The Weather Channel.

Well, Sunday turned out pretty much as predicted, with the showers "possible," but not at the show site. Early on, people were calling in from all over, checking conditions at the Kane County Fairgrounds, the excellent venue for the event. Great-looking Pontiacs arrived at a steady pace and despite the overcast skies, over 300 cars were on the show field by noon, a new record. After 15 years, the Uprising obviously has a great reputation, and the Cruisin' Tigers, planning, preparation, and promotion

really paid off with a smooth-running, well-attended show.

Part of the attraction was certainly a roster of special celebrity guests, including Godfather of the GTO Jim Wangers, noted engine builder Ken Crocie, everybody's favorite Arnie Beswick, and Linda "Miss Hurst Shifter" Vaughn. You always expect to see a line of people waiting to talk to Arnie, or to get performance advice from Ken, or an autograph from Jim. All of which was true at the Uprising. There were always a couple folks gathered around those three gentlemen.

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On the other hand, the line to meet Linda Vaughn went on and on and on all day. Which, I guess, proves that Pontiac Excitement is fine, but it's a distant second to a great smile and – well, you can see Linda's picture on the inside back cover. Any questions? Linda was celebrating a milestone birthday at the Uprising, and I can tell you that she not only looks fabulous for a gal half her age, but her outgoing personality and friendly manner made everyone's day. When the all the people at the show got together to

sing "Happy Birthday," it was a special moment for a special lady. And I didn't even get her autograph. Maybe next time.

There were plenty of vendors, plenty of food, and plenty of cool Pontiacs to see. I would guesstimate that of the 300 Pontiacs there, 200 were probably GTOs, many of which we had seen in July at the GTOAA Nationals in St. Louis. In fact, Dave Foglton's Best Restored and Rick Last's Best Modified were both in attendance.

A really nice touch was having a live rendition of the National Anthem at 12:00 noon, coupled with a simultaneous flyover by a vintage B-17 bomber from World War II. Patriotic, inspiring, and well done. Another unique idea was having each of the celebrities present a special, personalized award to a car of their choice.

The rest of the trophies were awarded based on Popular Vote balloting, with a real fill-in-the-little-circles ballot that was tabulated by a real government-issue voting machine. Now that's a cool way to count the votes. 40 choices per ballot, 300 ballots – that's 12,000 votes to tally; not something you want to do by hand!

I took about 175 photos until I filled up the memory on my digital camera. A few of them appear in color on the inside back cover this month. More can be found on the Cruisin' Tigers website, www.cruisintigersgto.com. I urge you to take a look and get a feel for just how great this show turned out. Hopefully it will inspire you to attend next year's festivities. Proceeds from the show are donated to the Marklund Children's Charity, so your participation goes toward a good cause.

A very big THANKS to the Cruisin' Tigers for inviting me.