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The Gents Auto Club

Spokane, Washington



Meet Our New President, Ben Curtis

Early Years

Born in Ephrata, Washington, Ben was raised primarily in the area now called the City of Spokane Valley. When it was time for High School he attended West Valley High School. During those years his two greatest hobbies were discovered, Drumming and Cars.

"I was a part of an infamous group of delinquents that eventually started the *Gents Auto Club*," stated Ben. He also added that, "The meetings were in the basement of my home initially and later moved to a construction office, at 8th and Park Road, loaned to us by my uncle." He and his neighbor, Mike O'Brien drove to school in either Ben's 1955 Oldsmobile or Mike's 1939 Ford Coupe. His drumming buddy, Dennis McIntyre, also an original Gents member, was a bit of a 'gear head' and they often terrorized the Valley in his Dodge.

Ben is amazed that the gathering of *ne'er do wells* from West Valley could have gotten together to start a club that has stayed in place as long as the Gents. What is even more amazing is that several of the original guys are still members. Three or four of the originals are no longer with us, but they often come up in discussions about the 'old days'.

Air Force

Dennis and Ben were both original members of a drum corps known as the Percussion-Nauts. That group went on to become well known not only Nationwide but Worldwide as well. His love of drums and drumming served him well as he was honored to become a member of the United States Air Force Band stationed in Washington DC. Ben joined that group in 1966 and was discharged in mid-1969. The

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Membership Meeting

January 7, 6:00

Social hour at 5:00

G-Board Meeting

January 29, 6:00

Officers of The Gents 2026

Elected Officers

- Ben Curtis, President
- Ken Warren, Vice President
- Darlene Inman, Secretary
- John Scofield, Treasurer
- Jim EarlsCourt, Sgt. At Arms

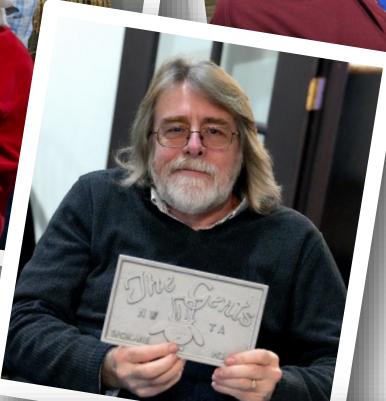
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Annual Christmas Party

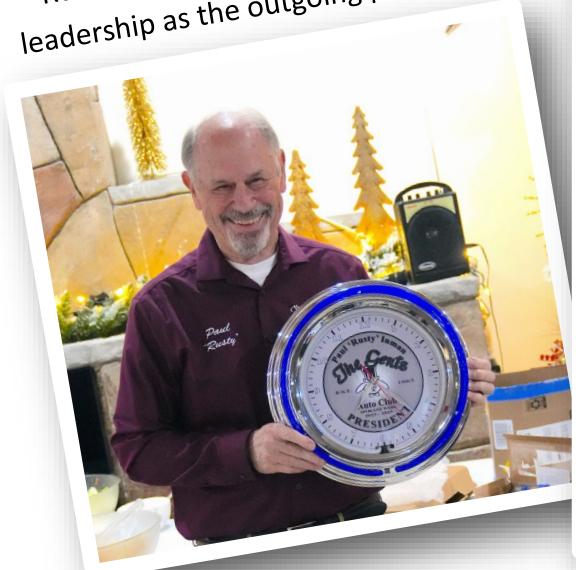


Photo By
Dean Cariveau

Gents Christmas Banquet December 13, 2023



Rusty Inman was honored for his leadership as the outgoing president.



On Friday, December 13 Darcy's was filled with smiling faces as the club gathered to once again enjoy their annual Christmas Party. Dressed in their festive wear many showed up to enjoy fellowship with each other as well as a wonderful meal. The decorations added to the enjoyment and helped to put everyone in a holiday mood.

Several of the original members of The Gents were present.



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adventures experienced during that time could fill a book and were unforgettable to say the least. Immediately upon discharge from the USAF Ben moved to Southern California where their Sand & Gravel Company opened a quarry.

Road Kings

While in So Cal Ben was heavily involved with The Road Kings of Burbank. The club was formed in 1952 and has some members that are synonymous with hot rod cars and Drag Racing. Ben shared, "I was an active member of the Road Kings for almost 18 years, spending three years as Club President. I remain an 'Associate Member'". During those years Ben became friends with many of the original members of the club and spent time with lots of them. Some of those are TV Tommy Ivo, Bob Muravez (aka Floyd Lippencot Jr.), Don "The Snake" Prudhomme, "Fast" Eddie Salvatore, Spider Razon, Jimmy Miles, Al White and Joel Embick among others. Except for a few months in Spokane in 1970 Ben stayed in Southern California until September of 2020.

California Life

During his time in California Ben engaged in a couple of other activities. He and his son Jason raced in offshore powerboat racing for several years. They campaigned a 35' MOTION catamaran. The boat had two Big Block Chevy engines, and they would run just under 120 in the rough Pacific Seas. Amazingly, they culminated their boat racing by finishing as 1993 National Champion in the "Modified" class of the APBA. Following that adventure Ben and his wife along with Jason ran an AMA Motorcycle Road Racing team. They employed up to three riders in several classes and raced all over the nation. Thanks

to sponsorship from Yamaha, Honda and Suzuki they had a modicum of success and had 8 GREAT years travelling and racing.

Returning Home

Finally, after over 51 years in Southern California, Ben was able to retire 'back home'. When he returned to Spokane he attended a Gents meeting with one of the original members, Dale Gibson. "Dale and I became friends when we started High school. I am a lucky guy to have so many long-time friends like Dale, Mike O'Brien, Lon Hansen, Scotty Messmer and Rusty Inman (you all call him Paul). Whenever we get together it is a HUGE contest to see who can tell the best lie (story)," Ben commented. Rusty and Steve Williams approached Ben about joining the board of the club and he was honored to be able to do that. He has a 1931 Ford Model A Tudor Sedan that was mostly built in Dick Megugorac's (Magoo's) shop in Canoga Park, CA. Most of the body work and final assembly was done by a great car guy, Roy Hamblin. Roy worked for Ben as a mechanic for 8 years and recently retired from Kendig-it design in Salt Lake City, working for Dave Kendig. The car was finished in 1993, but Ben would say, I have some alterations scheduled for this winter so that the car will be on the road in the spring." His other car is a Red-on-Red 1961 Chevrolet Bel-Air 'bubble top'. The car was a race car for most of its life but has been restored to mostly original specs. With a smile Ben said, "I hope to be an active member of the club, and I look forward to helping wherever possible." The club is excited to have him back, and not just as a member, but also as the newly elected president. What a great circle from beginning the club to helping lead the club.



INCCC Meeting Notes

Submitted by Dean Carriveau

INCCC SHOW-NO-SHINE BANQUET

February 21, \$5.00, Mirabeau Park Hotel

Tickets are \$65

Special Room Rate for Members \$121

Annual Toy Drive

As part of the Christmas celebration members were asked to bring an unwrapped toy to be donated to the Sacred Heart Children's Hospital. The club was very generous in their giving as many toys and gift cards were donated.

On Friday the 19th the toys were delivered to a grateful staff at the hospital. A good number of club members were there to help load the gifts and get them ready to be delivered. Esther Collin commented, "It just made me feel so good inside to see the number of toys that would be distributed to the children. No child wants to be in the hospital during Christmas, but those who had to be there were blessed with a special surprise." The hospital staff were so delighted to see the donated items and thanked everyone who gave. A special thank you to all of those who donated something to the children at Sacred Heart.



2026 Officers

Jim Earlscourt—Sergeant At Arms

John Scofield—Treasurer

Ben Curtis—President

Darlene Inman—Secretary

Ken Warren—Vice President

