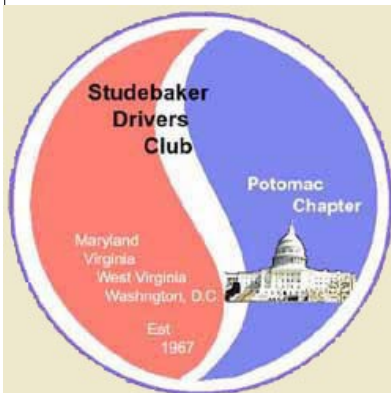




# ***The Commander***

## ***Potomac Chapter***

### ***Studebaker Drivers Club***



NOTE: We are on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1846254089018596/>

Vol. 58, Issue Number 5 — Oct-Nov 2026

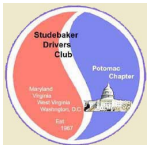


*Steve White: "Potomac Chapter Studebaker Hawks and an Avanti in the parking lot behind Hershey's Restaurant while we Studebaker folks dined after a hard morning of talking about our classic cars on Drive Your Studebaker Day."*

#### **Next Meeting**

**Holiday Party (see Activities Schedule; a flyer is coming)**

***The Commander - Potomac Chapter SDC Newsletter- Oct-Nov 2026***



## Steering Column



I hope that this finds everyone in great health, and our cars running just-as-well. I have been able to enjoy some great cruises this summer and am very pleased that both of my cars are [mostly] behaving. Whether it's for a run to get ice-cream, or a more serious drive, I've been doing my best to keep the vehicles moving. It's been nice to show up at local Cars & Coffee events where I typically have the only Studebaker present, but always more enjoyable when there are other Studes there. Studebaker drivers seem to be the nicest people!

There is great news to share... The South Bend Chapter has confirmed that they will host the International Meet next year. I'm planning to attend, and hope that we can get a convoy of cars together to represent our Chapter. If you are interested in attending, please let me know soon so that we can start making plans. One tip = ***make your hotel reservations early!*** The event is apparently at the same time as the Notre Dame Alumni reunion, so make sure to book your hotel now. There are AAA rates at some hotels, and more information available on the SDC website, in Turning Wheels, or at: [2027 Car Show/ Swap Meet](#)

I wanted to thank those who braved the threat of rain to come out and celebrate ***International Drive Your Studebaker Day*** on September 12<sup>th</sup>. I'm not sure if the Potomac Chapter has ever convened on the particular date before, but I'm hoping that we can keep it on our calendar in the coming years, too. We had a nice selection of Hawks, and a stunning Avanti II convertible that showed up at the event.





## Steering Column (cont'd)



Thanks, Dale, for bringing out such a flashy car!



After meeting up at the park, we went to Hershey's Restaurant for a very enjoyable lunch.

I'm open to suggestions on where we can meet up for International Drive Your Studebaker Day in the future. If you have ideas, please reach out to me.



## Steering Column (cont'd)



As for upcoming events, we can look forward to the **Rockville Antique & Classic Car Show** on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Let's hope for good weather, and a strong turnout. It's such an amazing event with the many marques being shown, and worth attending, even if you cannot arrive in your own classic vehicle.

Please don't forget that we have our Holiday Party coming up in Hagerstown on Saturday, December 12th, at Veva's On Potomac. This is a fun event and a great way to meet others in the Chapter. Please let Dave Farris know if you have any questions at [David.Farris@verizon.net](mailto:David.Farris@verizon.net)

*Chris*



## Potomac Chapter, Studebaker Drivers Club

The Potomac Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club, was chartered in April 1967. It encompasses the area of Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Current membership approaches one hundred. Our members hail from as far away, as New Zealand, the states of Hawaii, Florida, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Our mission is well defined in our [Chapter Bylaws](#).

### Chapter Officers (2024-2025)

|                                                                                            |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>President</u><br>Chris Thomas                                                           | <u>Vice President</u><br>Steve White                                                                    | <u>Treasurer</u><br>Dave Farris<br>852 Baltimore Pike<br>Gardners, PA 17324<br>240-461-7676                                                                                            |
| <u>Secretary</u><br><b>STILL VACANT</b>                                                    | <u>Activities Director</u><br>Chris Thomas                                                              | <u>Membership</u><br>Stephen Walter<br>14916 Chestnut Ridge Court<br>Gaithersburg, MD 20878                                                                                            |
| <u>Historian</u><br>Ed Lemanski<br>7875 Red Jacket Way<br>Jessup, MD 20794<br>301-776-9893 | <u>Web Master</u><br>Bob Johnstone<br>12161 Holly Knoll Circle<br>Great Falls, VA 22066<br>703-450-0754 | <u>Newsletter Editor</u><br>Pete Rutledge<br>5102 Cannon Bluff Dr.<br>Woodbridge, VA 22192<br>703-853-8209 (C)<br><a href="mailto:pjrutledge3@verizon.net">pjrutledge3@verizon.net</a> |

## Potomac Chapter Membership Renewal Reminder

Membership drive for 2026 is over, thank you so much for continuing to support your local chapter. Information for new members: Our annual dues remain at a modest \$15 for an emailed newsletter or \$30 for a mailed newsletter. Please remember to make out your check to **Potomac Chapter, Studebaker Driver's Club** and not to me. As usual you will find an application form on the last page of this issue of The Commander. Your car/truck is our best advertisement; I cannot drive anywhere these days without getting positive comments and questions. So, carry an application form in your vehicle and you will be prepared to recruit new members. Please contact Membership Director Stephen Walter at [stephen.walter1@verizon.net](mailto:stephen.walter1@verizon.net) if you have any questions.

## POTOMAC CHAPTER, SDC 2026 Planned Activities

| Event (location)                                                                                                                         | Date                                         | Details                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rockville Antique &amp; Classic Car Show</b><br>Glenview Mansion at Rockville Civic Center Park<br>603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville, MD | Saturday, October 17th<br><br>11:00 to 15:30 | <i>Chapter event in Maryland</i><br><b>Registration sold out on Sep 13</b>                                                                      |
| <b>2026 Chapter Holiday Party</b><br>Veva's on Potomac<br>38 S Potomac St #1, Hagerstown, MD<br>(Flyer coming by email soon.)            | Saturday, December 12th<br>13:00 to 16:00    | Chapter annual meeting and holiday party!<br><br>contact: Dave Farris<br><a href="mailto:david.farris@verizon.net">david.farris@verizon.net</a> |

**NOTES:** \*Members will be notified of any future updates separately by email and/or in the next newsletter.

**\*\*If you would be willing to organize a cruise or other activity for the chapter, please advise Chris Thomas.**

## Digital Turning Wheels Magazine

All issues of *Turning Wheels* from January 2024 to the present are available online. The latest digital edition of *Turning Wheels* becomes available on the 25th of every month. Members can access them by going to the SDC web site at: <https://studebakerdriversclub.com/>. On that page, click on "Member Area" at top right. On the next page, log in (or create a log-in account). On the next page, which shows your membership details, see the blue box on the right side; click on "View Digital Magazine." On the next page, there is a list of available digital issues of *Turning Wheels*. Click on any one of them to read it.

The Commander is the bi-monthly publication of the Potomac Chapter, Studebaker Drivers Club. Subscription is by membership to the Potomac Chapter at \$15.00 yearly (with emailed newsletter) or \$30.00 yearly (with mailed hard-copy newsletter). Canada/Mexico \$20.00 (with emailed newsletter), all other countries \$25.00. (with emailed newsletter). Direct all membership correspondence to the Membership Director. Direct all correspondence relating to The Commander to the Editor, who retains the right to edit or modify any contribution. Deadline date is the 15th of the month for the following month's issue. The Commander is also an internet publication.

The Potomac Chapter is an officially chartered chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club, Inc.; its by-laws were approved, and charter granted by SDC in June 1967. Membership is recruited from the states of Maryland, West Virginia, (northern) Virginia, and Washington, DC. Those from other areas wishing to join the chapter are welcome.

## Stude Starting Problems

You say that your car won't start. Do you mean it won't start or it won't crank? If it won't crank, it sure won't start. It might crank but still will not start. Before you start checking things, you need to decide what the problem is. If you turn at the key to start and don't hear the engine cranking, you have a cranking problem. If you turn the key to the start position and you hear the engine cranking but it won't start, you have a starting problem. Let's tackle the cranking problem. Turning on the headlights to see if they work is typically a waste of time. It takes very little to make the headlights work. It takes lots of amps to crank the engine. More electrical problems are caused by loose or dirty connections at the battery than any other cause. Check to see if they are tight. If they seem tight, they probably still need to be removed and cleaned. Remove the ground cable first. The ground cable used on 12-volt Studebakers, it is connected to the negative side of the battery. Next, remove the positive cable. Never disconnect the positive cable first unless you are working on a 6-volt Studebaker with positive ground. Clean the posts with a wire brush or with an inexpensive battery post cleaning tool. Clean the inside of the battery post cables with the same tool. Coat the battery posts with Vaseline or grease and re-install the cables. Make sure that you install the positive cable first. Still won't crank? Maybe the battery is dead. Loose or dirty connections at the battery or elsewhere will have kept the charging system from being able to charge the battery. Remove the caps from the top of the battery and look into it. There should be enough acid to cover the tops of the lead plates in each cell. If you can see the top plates in any of the cells, that cell is probably bad. Add enough distilled water to each cell to ensure that the lead plates are covered. Don't use tap water. There are contaminants in tap water which will shorten the battery's life. A gallon lot distilled water costs a little over a dollar. Next, hook up the battery charger, connect the positive lead first and then the negative lead. If the charger shows a high charging rate, the battery is probably low. Hopefully, the engine will crank after the battery has been re-charged. The charger will show a low charge or no charge after it has successfully re-charged the battery. If the charger fails to initially show a charge or if it continues to show a high charge, the battery is probably no good. An inexpensive hydrometer battery tester can be picked up at auto parts stores. These testers measure the specific gravity of the acid solution. They give you an idea of the battery condition by how many balls float when the hydrometer is filled with acid. If you can't get the battery to take a charge, take it to an auto parts store where you can get it tested at no charge. If you have eliminated the battery and its' connections as a problem and still can't get the engine to crank, you need to do some more troubleshooting. The positive battery cable runs to one side of the starter solenoid. Check to see that

the connection at the solenoid is tight. Check to see if the connection on the other side of the solenoid is tight. The cable on the other side of the solenoid

goes to the starter. While you are checking the connection to the starter, check to see that the two bolts holding the starter to the engine are tight. . . Hopefully you can get it to crank now.

*Thanks to "The Wrench" and the Washington Dictator, Tacoma Area Chapter Newsletter.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### Master cylinder for brakes

It would seem that not all master cylinders that fit the mounting holes on Studebaker are the same. While they may fit, they can have different reactions. A case in point is when a person installs a new master cylinder on their Studebaker, bleed all of the wheel cylinders and then takes it for a drive to see how the braking system works. At first, everything seems fine. He drives for mile or so and then notices a drag on the brakes of the rear wheels. He wonders, what is wrong, everything was put back the way it was before the new master cylinder was installed.

As the car is driven more, the drag on the brakes seems to increase to a point where it is a near lock-up. In a sense, the braking system is relatively simple but why is it not working properly?

Since there is a drastic drag problem on the braking system, the car is left sitting for a while. In time, the braking system seems to re-set itself and the car can be driven again. Bewilderment sets in, - - -how, why?

The answer may be relatively simple, the new master cylinder may need to have a bit more "free travel" on the pedal so all of the brake fluid that was pushed into the wheel cylinders can return to the reservoir when the brakes are not applied.

Even though the braking system is not really complicated, I only have an idea as to what happens when the brake fluid cannot fully return to the reservoir after the brake pedal is released and the following braking drag/lock-up.

My thoughts are that the brake fluid in the wheel cylinders got locked in, the brake shoes drag on the drums and the heat resulting from this causes heat expansion of the fluid in the wheel cylinders. This has the same effect as applying the brakes and it only takes a simple adjustment to give the brake pedal more free play.

Comment from **Brian Curtis**:

Pete, Regarding the master cylinder brake issues, I have had two that I recall were doing the dragging brakes and seizing when warm/hot. It was a badly adjusted push rod into the master cylinder. Adjusting the rod was the cure for those two instances.



# ROCKVILLE ANTIQUE AND CLASSIC CAR SHOW\*

\*Sponsored by the Potomac Chapter, SDC, among numerous other car clubs and/or their chapters.



SATURDAY, OCT. 17, 2026



11 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.



ROCKVILLE CIVIC  
CENTER PARK

**Show Registration: Sold out on Sep 13.**

| Time                   | Event                                                                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7:15 a.m.              | Check-in gate opens to flea market and car sale vendors. No day-of registration. |
| 8:30 a.m.              | Check-in gate opens to show cars. No day-of registration.                        |
| 11 a.m.                | Check-in closes. Event opens to the public (free admission).                     |
| 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. | Live music.                                                                      |
| 2:45 p.m.              | Mayor and Council Award presentation.                                            |
| 3:30 p.m.              | Event closes.                                                                    |

## What Did You Do to Your Studebaker?

### Pete Rutledge—1954 Commander Starlight

I have now finished the interior of the car, including:

- New black vinyl headliner
- New foil-covered butyl rubber sound insulation on the floors
- New black carpet on the floors
- New black/red "Racing" floor mats in the front foot wells
- Adjusted front seat height for more clearance under the steering wheel



## ***Birthdays\****

***HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!!!!***

Tom Powers — Oct 1  
Marty Long — Oct 4  
Diane Greenlee — Oct 5  
Craig Comontofski — Oct 11  
Murray Welsh — Oct 22  
Anne Bradel — Oct 25  
Frank Philippi — Oct 29

John Sartorius — Nov 2  
Edward Coffin — Nov 17  
Larry Koenig — Nov 18  
Chris Thomas — Nov 19  
Jenny Long — Nov 27

**\*Please Note:** If we fail to list your birthday, it may be because we don't have your birth date in our membership database. If you would like to see your birthday listed in the future, please let Stephen Walter know just the month and day of your birth date.

***FOR SALE, FREE, and WANTED***

NOTHING THIS MONTH

# 2026

## Potomac Chapter SDC

### Membership Application or Renewal

Please complete this form and mail a check, payable to **POTOMAC CHAPTER SDC**.

☐ \$15.00 Electronic email copy of Commander newsletter

☐ \$30.00 Mailed hardcopy of Commander newsletter

Send the completed form and check to:

Stephen Walter (For questions email: [stephen.walter1@verizon.net](mailto:stephen.walter1@verizon.net))

14916 Chestnut Ridge Court

Gaithersburg, MD 20878

**Yearly dues apply from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec 31<sup>st</sup> of each year**

☐ I am a member of SDC International.

National Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I am joining SDC International at this time.

*Upon receipt of your national Membership #,  
please send the membership # to the  
address above.*

This is a ☐ NEW Application ☐ Renewal/Update

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (primary): \_\_\_\_\_

City/ST/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (secondary): \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Day

Spouse: \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Day

**I own the following Studebakers (including Rockne, Erskine, EMF, Avanti)**

| Year  | Make  | Model | Body Style |
|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____      |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____      |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____      |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____      |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____      |