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A Warm Holiday Welcome from the Packard Proving Grounds

As the year draws to a close, we find ourselves reflecting on a season filled with history, community, and the shared joy of preserving a truly remarkable place. The Packard Proving Grounds has always been more than brick, steel, and classic automobiles — it's a story we are writing together. Each tour given, each event hosted, and each act of volunteerism has helped keep the legacy of Packard innovation alive and well.

This December, we celebrate the support and enthusiasm of everyone who walks through our gates, follows our journey, or lends a helping hand. You make all the difference. May the spirit of the holidays bring you warmth, wonder, and the excitement of new adventures ahead. We can't wait to continue this incredible journey with you in the new year.

From all of us at the Packard Proving Grounds, thank you — and happy holidays!



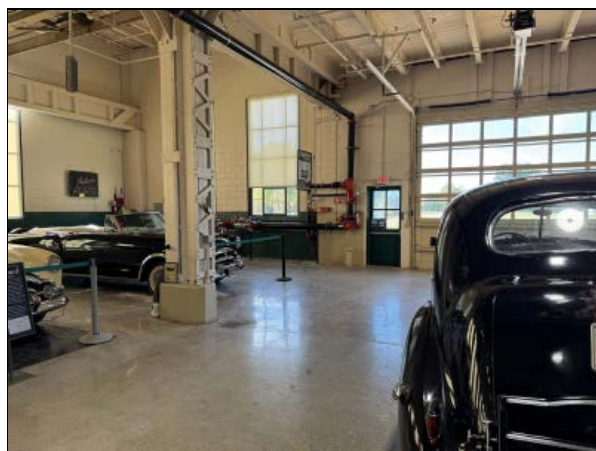
RESTORATION UPDATE

THE TANK TEST CENTER PROJECT

The water based fire suppression has been installed successfully. We are in the final stage of this project which involves installing HVAC units on the roof of the TTC building. It's very important to get these units installed and functioning before the weather gets much colder, yet there are so many important factors to consider.

We're SO close to reaching our goal and hope to do so by the end of the year.

Your generosity ensures that our historic artifacts will be preserved for generations to come. Together, we're closing in on the finish line — and we invite you to be part of making history by helping us reach 100%.



Donate Today

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun, Jan 11th	HSS: The Production Czar of the Arsenal of Democracy
Sun, Jan 25th	HSS: The Polio Vaccine Story
Sat, Feb 7th	The Wedding Collective
Sun, Feb 8th	HSS: Ocean to Ocean in a Model T
Sun, Mar 8	HSS: C Harold Wills & the Wills Sainte Claire Story
Sun, Mar 22	HSS: Diego Rivera - The Detroit Industry Murals at the DIA
Sat, Apr 25	Great Gatsby Gala Fundraiser

PACKARD ROSIES IN ROYAL OAK





In celebration of the new Michigan WWII Memorial in Royal Oak, Kim Parr (right) and Christina Dolby-Crigger(left) dressed as Rosies and held banners representing Packard Rosies.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Meet Donna Shiner.

When Donna Shiner stepped into the role of Volunteer Coordinator at the Packard Proving Grounds, she brought with her a genuine curiosity, a warm leadership style, and a deep appreciation for the people who make the site's work possible. Though she's new to the position, Donna has quickly immersed herself in the rhythm of the grounds—learning not only the tasks and routines but the stories, motivations, and personalities behind each volunteer who shows up to give their time.

Her background in leadership and her love of organization made the coordinator role a natural fit, but it's the people that drew her in. Donna has been energized by the chance to work closely with volunteers from every corner of the



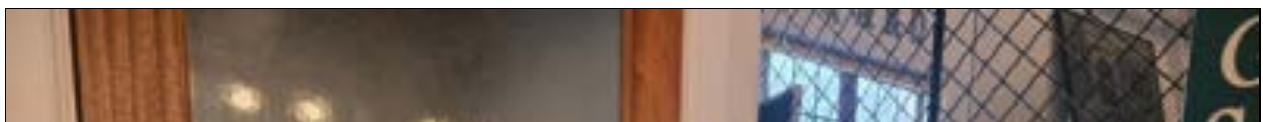
organization, discovering how their unique strengths support one another and how, together, they create the welcoming atmosphere visitors experience. She's also excited to volunteer alongside them, sharing in the hands-on work that keeps the historic site operating smoothly.

From her very first week, Donna was struck by how deeply connected the volunteer community already is. She quickly noticed how much they look out for one another—whether stepping in to help on a busy day, sharing knowledge on a tricky project, or simply catching up before an event begins. That sense of camaraderie became especially clear during the recent Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. *“It was wonderful to see everyone relaxing and actually getting to talk with one another,” she said. “Usually they’re busy running around in their roles, but that night they came in, hugged each other, caught up, and really enjoyed themselves. They know each other’s families and stories, and seeing that connection in such a relaxed setting was really lovely.”*

As she settles into her role, Donna is focused on strengthening communication, supporting volunteers in the areas where they shine, and making the experience fulfilling for both new and longtime helpers. She believes volunteering should feel meaningful—not only because of the work accomplished, but because of the relationships and shared passion behind it. Her approach centers on listening deeply, understanding each person’s interests, and making sure volunteers feel valued and included. *“I’m always looking at processes and how to make them more efficient. We have such a great group of volunteers, and I want our systems to be more user-friendly so they can focus on what they love doing. That includes getting more people involved, offering proper training, and bringing back volunteer orientations so everyone feels prepared and supported.”*

Donna may be new to the Packard Proving Grounds, but her commitment to fostering connection and celebrating the people behind the scenes is already shaping the months ahead. Guided by sincerity, enthusiasm, and a genuine admiration for the volunteer community, she’s ready to help nurture the next chapter of support that keeps the PPG thriving.

Get Involved - Explore Volunteer Opportunities at the PPG





2025 Model Train Show

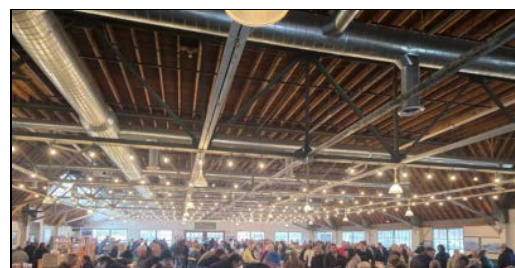
Thank you to everyone who joined us for this year's Model Train Show at the Packard Proving Grounds! Even on a chilly day, the Repair Garage was filled with smiling faces, curious kids, and train enthusiasts of all ages. Your support helps the Packard Motor Car Foundation continue preserving this special historic site.

We're already dreaming about next year, especially with the potential to expand into our (soon to be heated) TTC area. One of our big goals is to add a full "O" scale display so families can really experience the magic of model trains in motion.

If you love model trains—or have always wanted to learn more—we'd love to connect with you. We're hoping to form a small PPG Model Train Group to help design and build a display for future shows.

Interested in getting involved?

Please contact Donna Shiner at DonnaShiner.PPG@gmail.com to learn more.





FROM THE PACKARD BLOG

“Honoring Heart: Joe Simmer, 2025 Tolonen Award Recipient”

By Amanda Demo



Every year at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, the Packard Motor Car Foundation presents the Tolonen Award to a volunteer who exemplifies extraordinary dedication, service, and heart. Established in 2014 and named in honor of Dave and Sue Tolonen —the couple whose tireless stewardship helped save the Packard Proving Grounds —the award recognizes the individuals who continue that legacy of protection, restoration, and unwavering commitment.

This year, the Packard Proving Grounds is proud to honor **Joe Simmer** as the 2025 Tolonen Award recipient. [Read more](#)

GEMS FROM THE VAULT

“1911 Packard Survives Third Depression”

by P.H. Connell



The feature car this month is a 1911 Packard Touring owned by salesman Leo Bruening of Kansas City, Missouri. This car featured decals and signage for display.

The Packard is a 1911 Model 18 Chassis ID NC. The car appears to be in very good condition. This body is of the close-coupled design with front or fore - doors as shown and eyebrow

front fenders. It also featured a cape - cart top, a two piece adjustable windshield and a 112 inch wheelbase. One decal reads “I Am Only 22 Years Old and Have Good Lines and Am very Good Looking.”

The caption on the rear of the car reads “Cheer Up. This is My Third Depression And I am Still Going Strong.”

A good salesman will do anything to attract attention, draw a crowd and sell new Packard cars. The photo date is 1932.

Every picture tells a story. History is wonderful. These photos and 14,000 more are on file in the Vault at the Packard Proving Grounds.



HISTORICAL SPEAKER SERIES

Click on the flyer images, then right click and select ‘save image as’ to save a .jpg file that you can share with your friends & family and help us spread the word!



THE PACKARD PROVING GROUNDS GIFT SHOP

SHOP PACKARD. SUPPORT PRESERVATION.
CELEBRATE THE SEASON.



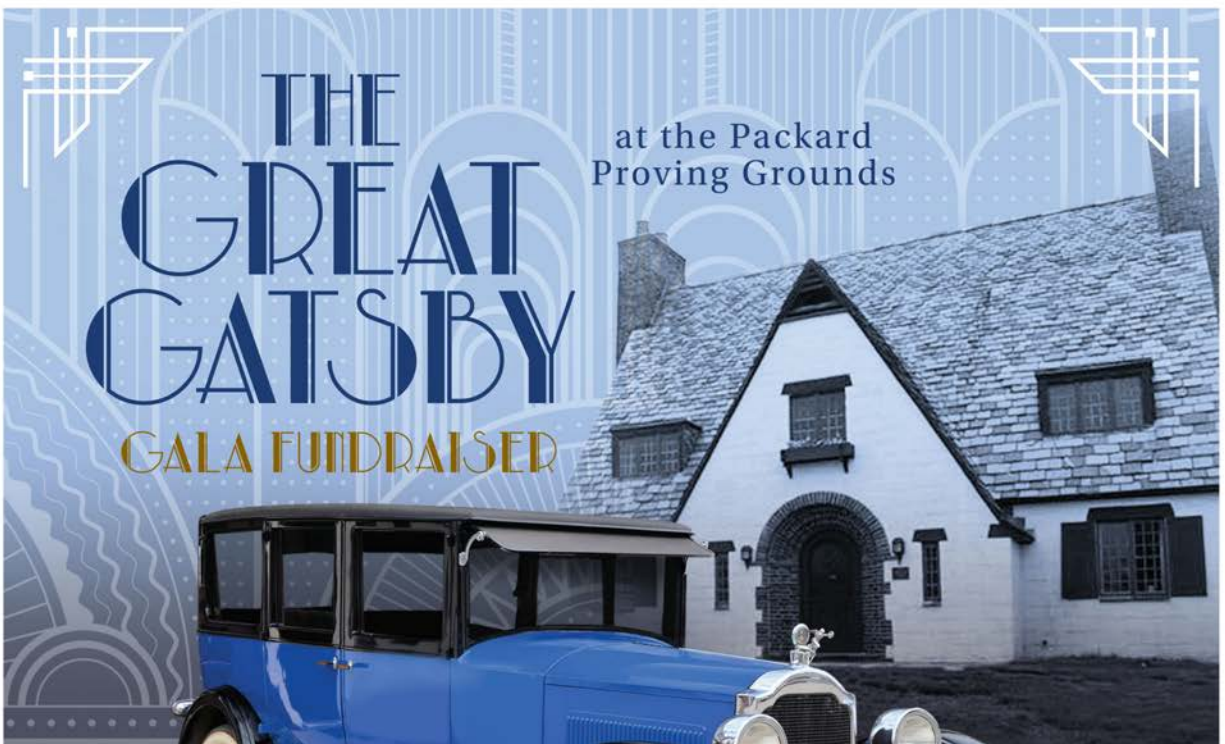
Gift Shop purchases directly support the Packard Motor Car Foundation.

Shop Now

THE GREAT GATSBY

GALA FUNDRAISER

at the Packard
Proving Grounds





Saturday
April 25, 2026
6-11 PM

Tickets
\$100 Per Person

Dinner, drinks, live music,
and a roaring night hosted by

Roop Raj
from Fox 2 News



More info @ PackardProvingGrounds.org/GreatGatsby
49965 Van Dyke Ave., Shelby Twp., MI 48317 | Call or Text (586) 739-4800



CHRISTMAS
GIFT IDEA

Give the gift of a fun night out!

PackardProvingGrounds.org/all-events/Gatsby



Preserve the past.

Preserve the future.



Donate Today



586-739-4800 Call or text us
We're happy to help!





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