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PACKARD MOTOR CAR FOUNDATION PRESENTS

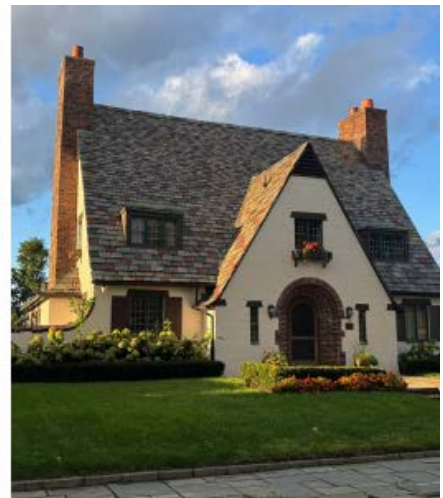
THE

SEPTEMBER 2025

PACKARD PULSE

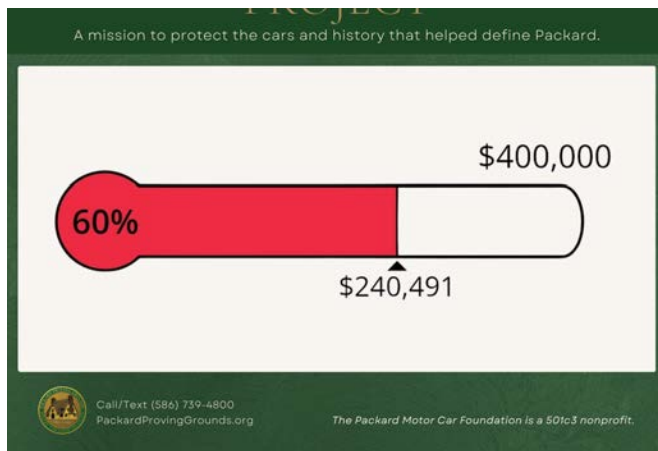
HONORING HISTORY, EMBRACING THE FUTURE

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE PACKARD PROVING GROUNDS



THE
TANK TEST CENTER
PROJECT

As you can see by the thermometer



we are making great progress towards our goal in funding the alarm system, fire protection and HVAC for the Tank Test Center. Raising funds for any purpose is not an easy process, but when you have people who believe in that purpose and they are assisted by others who believe, then failing is not an option. The foundation is privileged to have believers like John MacArthur and his article on how the foundation came about in obtaining the PPG and

Bruce Blevins who reminded us of Alvan Macauley's call to America to work together climb ourselves out of the depression of the nineteen thirties and David Kane who answered the PPG's call in the past and has stepped up again to ensure we meet our goal. Along with these three there are others who believe in the PMCF, like Georgia and Carl Hummel and Don Ghareeb who have offered to match donations towards this end. Not to forget the vast number of other donors who are helping our thermometer level reach the top.

If you believe in what the PMCF is doing, we ask that you send in your donation and be a part of the believers.

Donate to the Packard Motor Car Foundation





2025 PPG UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturdays	Shelby Farmers Market
Fri, Sept 12th	Simply Unique Fall Night Market
Sun, Sept 14th	Cars 'R' Stars Car Show
Sun, Oct 12th	Simply Unique Fall Market
Mon, Oct 13th	Blood Drive
Sun, Oct 19th	PPG Annual Open House
Sun, Oct 26th	HSS: Rough Seas - Edmund Fitzgerald
Sun, Nov 2nd	Harvest Holiday Market

Cars 'R' Stars - Sunday, Sept 14th



Jaguars are the featured car this year at the Cars 'R' Stars. Thanks to Gary Cunningham and Co for this handy layout.

Volunteer Spotlight



Meet the Shirmachers.

This month's Volunteer Spotlight shines brightly on JoAnn and Walter Shirmacher — a couple whose passion and dedication have been part of the Packard Proving Grounds story since 1999. Over the last 25 years, they've given countless hours to supporting events, building community, and preserving the rich history of the site.

Their connection began serendipitously at a PPG open house, where they decided on the spot to become volunteers. From those early days — long summer weddings without air conditioning — to today's bustling schedule of car shows and community gatherings, they've remained steadfast supporters.

Walter, a “car buff” through and through, spent his career with Xerox before bringing his know-how and people skills to PPG. He has found joy in welcoming classic cars and their drivers at Southgate and has even helped organize wood carving shows on site. His talents as a wood carver are well known in the community, and he lights up when talking about automobiles and the friendships they've brought.

JoAnn, a retired nurse, has always been drawn to caring for people — and that spirit extends into her volunteer work. With a love for history and a heart for community, she recalls the early days when volunteers kept the grounds alive and takes pride in carrying that tradition forward. From weddings to car shows to special projects, she's been deeply involved in ensuring the Packard legacy thrives.

For JoAnn and Walter, what keeps them coming back goes beyond history, cars, and friendships — it's the way PPG values its volunteers. From appreciation dinners to T-shirts, hats, and genuine recognition, they've felt consistently respected and supported. “Well, they treat the volunteers nice,” JoAnn says. “I mean, they do.” That sense of being valued has made PPG a truly special place to give their time and

energy.

Outside of PPG, Walter can usually be found working on wood carvings or talking cars, while JoAnn enjoys history, community, and family time. Their advice to new volunteers? Start by talking with others, learn the many ways to get involved, and embrace the experience fully.

JoAnn and Walter's story is one of passion, resilience, and community spirit. Thank you both for your decades of service — the Packard Proving Grounds is stronger, warmer, and more vibrant because of you.

[Explore Volunteer Opportunities](#)

From The Packard Blog

Packard's Guardians: John MacArthur and the Legacy of Three Generations



John MacArthur believed the Packard Proving Grounds was worth saving — and he dedicated years of leadership to make sure it would be.

In the newest *Guardians of Packard* blog post, Chuck Ryntz and Amanda Demo take dive into John's role in preserving the site and the family connection that made it so meaningful to him. [<<Click here to read more>>](#)

Gems From The Vault



Comedian Morey Amsterdam Goes to Flight School at Packard

By P.H. Connell

Morey Amsterdam was an American actor, comedian, writer and producer. He was active between 1922 and 1996. Between 1948 and 1950 he hosted his own TV sitcom The Morey Amsterdam Show.

Between 1961 and 1966 he appeared on the Dick Van Dyke Show along with Mary Tyler Moore. Amsterdam appeared as Dick Van Dyke's buddy on the show.

On March 23, 1966 Morey Amsterdam paid a visit to the Packard Motor Car Company. The first photo in this series shows Amsterdam perched on the hood of a 1956 Packard Patrician. He tries to imitate the 1956 hood ornament with wings outstretched. It looks like he has been to Packard Flight School.

The next photo shows how much Morey appreciated the Patrician's massive trunk. Morey hams it up for the camera and the Packard Photo Department. The photo location is the Packard Executive Garage at the plant.

The 1956 Packard Patrician Four Door Sedan was Chassis 5680 Body Type 5682. It was equipped with a 374 CID V8 engine at 290 horsepower. Was the lowest priced and the most popular of all senior models, with a base cost of \$4,160 and a production run of 3,775 units.

Morey Amsterdam was born in 1908 and died in 1996 at age 87. He died in Los Angeles, California.

**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.



Flyers For Upcoming Events



Click on the flyer images to save a .jpg file to share with your friends & family!

Historic Speaker Series - Fall 2025

HISTORICAL SPEAKER SERIES

Rough Seas: The Edmund Fitzgerald

"The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" is not just a song written by Gordon Lightfoot. The SS Edmund Fitzgerald, with a Great Lakes freighter that sank in Lake Superior in November 1975. What caused the sinking of this mighty ship? We'll explore this Great Lakes tragedy together.

 Presented by
Charlie Shelton

**Sunday
October 26th
1-2pm**

\$5 for not yet members
(FREE for members)

  Purchase Tickets @
PackardProvingGrounds.org/
Oct26-HSS-PPG

49903 Van Dyke Ave., Shelby Twp, MI 48317
Call or text us @ (508) 739-4800



HISTORICAL SPEAKER SERIES

Henry B. Joy and the Selfridge Connection

Much is known about the mastermind behind the Packard Motor Car Company, Henry Bourne Joy, but during his tenure as president of the company, he had become immersed in aviation, especially developing aircraft engines. In 1915 he began acquiring tracts of land along Lake St. Clair in Harrison Township eventually he amassed more than 600 acres. He called the location the Joy Aviation Field, a place where the company could test and develop Liberty aircraft engines. It was this property which was leased and developed by the government in 1917, that later became Selfridge Field, an Army aviation installation which still operates today. This presentation will explore the background of the Joy Aviation Field and it's association with Selfridge.

**Sunday
November 9th
1-2pm**

\$5 for not yet members
(FREE for members)

 Presented by
Steve Mrozek

  Purchase Tickets @
PackardProvingGrounds.org/
Nov9-HSS-PPG

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HISTORICAL SPEAKER SERIES

How The Packard Proving Grounds Was Saved

Hear the story of how John MacArthur and his committee negotiated for 2 1/2 years to successfully reach an agreement to save the historic Packard Proving Grounds.

Attendees will receive the Fall issue of the Packard Club's magazine "The Packard Comment" which contains a lengthy article by John on how the agreement with Ford Motor Land Development Corporation was finally reached. John is featured in the cover photo behind the wheel of his former 1930 Packard Model 745 Convertible Sedan by Brewster, one of two survivors.

 Presented by
John MacArthur

**Sunday
November 23rd
1-2pm**

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PackardProvingGrounds.org/
Nov23-PPG-HSS

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Gift Shop

THE PACKARD PROVING GROUNDS GIFT SHOP

NEW MERCH DROP

Just in time for the fall season!



Henley Long
Sleeve



Sport Zip





*Beach Washed
Long Sleeve*

Gift Shop purchases directly support the Packard Motor Car Foundation.

Visit Our Gift Shop

Golf Carts Wanted



The PMCF is on the lookout for a golf cart donation. Just in case you might have a spare golf cart that you're not using?

We can give it a happy home at the PPG!

It comes in very handy for getting around the 17 acre site for car shows and big events, plus it can be very helpful to shuttle visitors to and from the parking areas.



Preserve the past.

Fuel the future.



[Donate to the Packard Motor Car Foundation](#)



586-739-4800

Call or text us - we're happy to help!



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Our mailing address is:
Packard Proving Grounds Historic Site
49965 Van Dyke Ave. Shelby Twp, MI 48317

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