

## **Fairbanks Cruise-In expects 150-plus vintage car turnout**

*June 18, 2010 – Glenn BurnSilver – Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*

FAIRBANKS - “We’re right in the middle of a 1910 Stanley Steamer as we speak,” said Willie Vinton, Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum manager and chief mechanic.

Vinton is getting the vintage car ready for the inaugural Alaska Midnight Sun Cruise-In car show taking place outside the museum at the Wedgewood Resort. At the event Vinton will demonstrate how to “fire up” the vehicle to create enough steam power to make it go. He’ll then take it for a short drive. It is one of three such vehicles in the museum’s collection, which boasts more than 70 cars (and a few motorcycles) dating from 1898 to 1938.

Though nothing in the museum was manufactured after 1938, Cruise-in vehicles — including hot-rods, tractors and motorcycles — can date as recently as 1981.

Vinton said he’s guessing somewhere between 150 to 250 vintage autos will be at the weekend event but, “this is Alaska and ideally if everyone would pre-register we’d know.”

The Saturday event also features a cruise around Fairbanks, assorted demonstrations and museum activities. Vinton noted there will also be a cruise Friday evening at 6 p.m.

for show-registered vehicles only, but the 4 p.m. Saturday cruise is open to anyone with a vehicle from 1981 or older. Both cruises follow the same route: Out the Steese Highway, onto Goldstream Road, down Ballaine Road and through the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus before swinging through downtown and completing the drive at the resort. Stops will be made at the pipeline viewing area off the Steese Highway and near the UA Museum of the North.

Vinton said cars will come from across Alaska.

The Anchorage Ford Model A club will participate, as will entrants from Palmer, Wasilla and Kenai.

“There’s people coming from all over the country, so it will be interesting to see who actually shows up,” Vinton said.

Weather could be a factor. Car collectors can be a picky bunch and Vinton said some won’t take their cars out if the weather is threatening. He laughed at the thought.

“They’ve (the cars) been wet before in their life.

They clean up well,” he said.

There will also be a visit from Dennis Gage of the Speed Channel, which broadcasts his “My Classic Car” show series. Gage will be looking for interesting cars — and their owners — to film for upcoming editions of the show.

The museum will be open during the event.

Inside, car enthusiasts can see vehicles in many shapes and dimensions, informative displays, actual working engines and a working “repair center.” There is also an Alaska-specific section stocked with oversized photos and vehicles that served in Alaska, including a custom 1917 Ford Model T Snow Flyer — an early predecessor of the snowmachine with skis in the front and quad-rear wheel metal track-drive that could be converted back to tires in spring.

A number of the cars in the museum are the only known examples left in existence. The 1920 Argonne Model D Roadster, with its sweeping lines, orange and yellow paint and over-sized grille, is the second-to-last manufactured and the only one surviving of the 24 produced.

The 1921 Heine-Velox V-12 Victoria Touring car is one of only four in existence and is the sole Victoria model. The 1898 Hay Hotchkiss Stanhope Phaeton is the earliest known American four-cylinder car still in existence, a prototype that never went into production.

There are also informative displays, actual working engines — including an early steam engine operating on compressed air — and a working “repair center” where cars and engines will be taken apart, displayed and rebuilt to explain visually how it all comes together. There also is vintage clothing showcased throughout the museum and displayed in an era-appropriate manner in cases or with the vehicles.

Vinton is excited for the event and the potential vintage automobiles that could show up.

“We hope to see a lot of them here,” he said. “You never know what’s going to come out. You could have a Yugo.”

Contact features editor Glenn BurnSilver at 459-7510.

## **IF YOU GO**

What: Alaska Midnight Sun Cruise-In car show

When: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday

Where: Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum, 212 Wedgewood Dr.

Tickets: Free for spectators, \$20 to register a vehicle

Information: [www.fountainheadhotels.com/auto/cruisein.pdf](http://www.fountainheadhotels.com/auto/cruisein.pdf) or 450-2100

Read more: [Fairbanks Daily News-Miner - Fairbanks Cruise In expects 150 plus vintage car turnout](#)