

## BOB AHRENDTS

RMOC "SPOTLIGHT," AUGUST 2021

Bob grew up in Hyattsville, Maryland. After high school, he got a job machining compressor pistons for nuclear reactors. He did that for about a year then entered the University of Maryland at College Park in 1974. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1979.

Bob's first job out of college was with Bell Aircraft in Fort Worth as a propulsion/air frame mechanic. A year or so later he got a job as a mechanical engineer with Lockheed Martin in Baltimore, then transferred to New Orleans. In 1984, he transferred to Lockheed's Denver facility. His career with Lockheed spanned 36 years – 1980 to 2016.

Bob and his wife, Judy, have been together since 1990. They have five children and two grandchildren. Judy hails from Redding, California. They say they both started out on opposite ends of the country and "met in the middle" in Denver and have lived happily ever since.

Bob's first car was a red 1963 Chevy II 300 station wagon. The car had custom curtains which made it perfect for drive-in movies. Bob has owned over 40 cars, all makes and models, and still has half that many, some in various stages of restoration, at his 10-acre place high above Deer Creek Canyon.

His favorite makes are Oldsmobile and Pontiac. His interest in Oldsmobiles came from his father who had a 1959 88 4-door hardtop. Bob's Oldsmobiles include: (1) 1966 "Hurst Hairy" Olds with a Chevrolet LT1 350 engine. This is the car we have seen at RMOC shows and other events, (2) a 1949 88 coupe, (3) a 1949 98 convertible, and (4) a 1971 Cutlass convertible, which belongs to Judy.

Along with his Oldsmobiles and many other cars (and some trucks), Bob has a couple "blasts from the past" in his garage – a 1966 Mustang and a 1956 Thunderbird. These were the original cars he had back in high school and college, respectively. They are a delight to see. He says he likes all his cars equally but admitted that his favorite is a 1947 Pontiac Streamliner station wagon which is an unrestored original.

Bob has been a RMOC member since 2016. He was driving up I-25 and spotted the cars gathered for the Show and Shine at Shepler's. He pulled in to see the cars and was so impressed he joined the club. The following year, Bob entered his "Hurst Hairy" Olds in the Show and Shine.

Bob appreciates the RMOC activities. He and Judy have attended the Spiro wine tasting events, Compound gatherings and other activities such as the slot car competition, which Judy won in 2019. He enjoyed seeing her win. He has also been very involved in restoring the club's clinic car, "Babe." He estimates that he has put in over 200 hours of welding, grinding and bodywork on Babe. His quality work has been noted and appreciated by the entire club. When asked why he has done so much, Bob replied that he just wanted to "do something for somebody else."

Bob is not big on the organizational aspects of car clubs or judging. But he feels RMOC is different. In RMOC you can “drive and bring what you got, help others with their cars, and make them smile.” He enjoys talking to and learning from other people in the club. Members care more about people than cars, he said.

Bob built his house and garages ... himself! It is a fabulous place with great views and an amazing assortment of memorabilia, antiques and vehicles in various stages of restoration. It was a delightful visit. Bob, Judy and the family dog were wonderful.

### **Postscript**

I noticed an American flag and a POW-MIA flag hanging together over an area in the garage. I saluted, took a picture and commented. Bob said the flags are a tribute to all families that lost loved ones in past conflicts and hadn't returned. He said his “car projects somehow connect to them in remembrance. RIP, Fast Eddie.”





