

Grand Valley Lanthorn

Auto lovers cruise campus

Weekend car show in Allendale rolls out more than 200 cars, showcasing area's best



GVL / Nicole Bernier

Art on wheels: The GVSU Car Club held its third annual Car Show Saturday on GVSU's Allendale Campus. The College Boy Special, built by Michael Ritsema, was one of the cars featured at the outdoor show.

Amy Sawade
GVL Staff Writer
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The aroma of rubber transforming into smoke and sounds of loud music and screeching tires drew viewers to the Grand Valley State University Car Show Saturday.

“You expect a little bit of that,” said Sgt. Craig Zoulek, officer with the GVSU Department of Public Safety. “We just try to keep it to a minimum for safety.”

Several DPS vehicles gathered around Lot H as the show cars dispersed from the event, but there were no accidents, he added.

The third annual car show, hosted by GVSU's Car Club, showcased more than 200 automobiles and brought in about 175 spectators, said Car Club President Joel DeVriendt.

Awards were given for best import, domestic, truck and sport utility vehicle and best beater. All registered participants voted for their favorite in each category.

Patrick DeHaan won best import for his custom Mazda Protégé MP3. Brent Eyer's Pontiac Grand Prix GTX won best domestic. Best truck and sport utility vehicle went to Ed Jeffery's Ford F-150.

Michael Ritsema, a freshman majoring in mechanical engineering, showcased a 1923 Model T that he began building three years ago.

Ritsema is a new member of the GVSU Car Club attending his first car show at the university.

“It’s neat to share the hobby with others,” Ritsema said. “I wanted to come out to meet other people with the same interests.”

Rand Morrison, a Grand Rapids resident, said he learned about the event on an online car forum and brought his 1999 Pontiac Grand Am GT.

“I’ll always take my car to a show whenever I can,” Morrison said.

GVSU students and area residents were not the only ones to showcase automobiles. Cat Olmeda drove his 2005 Scion XB from Detroit.

“I came last year and had a good time,” Olmeda said. “I wasn’t doing anything else, so I decided to come back. It’s even bigger than last year.”

Sophomore Brian Tate showcased his 2004 Mitsubishi Eclipse for the first time Saturday.

“It’s been fully restored for only a week,” Tate said. “I’ve always wanted to do this to a car, but I had to save up.”

To pay for the restoration of his Eclipse, which cost him more than \$45,000, Tate said he plays poker as a form of income.

Grand Rapids resident Amy Kuegel showcased her 1995 Chevrolet Camaro that she received as a Valentine’s Day gift two years ago.

Although her Camaro is not customized as many others at the show were, she brings it to other competitions in the area because she grew up with cars, she said. The GVSU Car Show was the first of many she plans to attend this year, she added.

“I’m booked every weekend here to September,” Kuegel said.

The annual show is the Car Club’s main event, which has grown since it began three years ago.

“Each year it grows because of word of mouth,” DeVriendt said.

There were about 40 cars shown in the first show. The event then swelled to more than 140 automobiles last year, DeVriendt said.

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