

# THEN <sup>and</sup> NOW!

## Car Maker Is Still Exciting Motorists At 75

(NAPSA)—Happy 75th birthday, Pontiac. For this car maker, the year 2001 will be one to remember. Here are a few highlights that trace its exciting 75-year history.

**THEN:** Even though Pontiac introduced its first car at the 1926 New York Auto Show, its history can be traced to 1883, when Edward M. Murphy opened the Pontiac Buggy Company in Pontiac, Michigan. He anticipated the auto boom and started Oakland Motor Car Company in 1907. In 1909, General Motors acquired half of Oakland, and when Murphy died, GM acquired the remaining shares.

In the 1920s, a committee led by then GM President Alfred Sloan, built a low-cost car to fill the price gap between Chevrolet and Oldsmobile. The result was Pontiac, a new car line created under Oakland. Pontiac's instant demand was evident as the nameplate sold 76,742 units in its first year.

Pontiac's famous design cue, the "silver streaks," first appeared on the 1935 model. These chrome ribbons, which swept down the hood, became the division's trademark. Several years later, during World War II, Pontiac ceased production and began manufacturing weapons and equipment for the U.S. armed forces.

In 1956, Semon "Bunkie"



**THE 1934 PONTIAC—was among the first mass-produced vehicles to be equipped with independent front suspension.**

Knudsen became general manager. He introduced Pontiac to motorsports, which helped shape a new performance image for the brand.

The Wide Track era began in 1959, when designers crafted an all-new Pontiac body so wide that engineers had to broaden the chassis by five inches. The new image was so successful that in 1961, for the first time, Pontiac earned *Motor Trend's* "Car of the Year."

In 1991, the division built its 30 millionth car.

**NOW—**With the recent introduction of the Pontiac Vibe and the flexibility of Aztek, Pontiac's product portfolio delivers strong performance and driving excitement. Pontiac's 2001 product lineup includes Sunfire, Grand Am, Grand Prix, Firebird, Bonneville, Montana, and the all-new Aztek, the world's first Sport