



*Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild*

*Gilmore Car Museum Exhibition*

*Hickory Corners, Michigan*

*April 5 to October 1, 2019*

# Interesting Facts About The Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild



10 MILLION U.S. TEENAGERS ENROLLED DURING its 38 YEAR HISTORY

JUNIOR DIVISION: 12 TO 15 YEARS OLD

SENIOR DIVISION: 16-19 YEARS OLD (LATER RAISED TO 20)

1 MILLION INQUIREES ANNUALLY

500,000 TO 600,000 ENROLLEES ANNUALLY

ONLY ½% TO 1% OF ENROLLEES BUILT AND ENTERED A MODEL

OVER 39,000 COACHES & MODEL CARS WERE CONSTRUCTED FOR THE COMPETITION

## **COACH ERA 1930 TO 1948**

Approximately 7,000 AWARD WORTHY COACHES WERE MADE

## **MODEL CAR ERA 1937 TO 1940 - 1946 TO 1968**

1 MILLION INQUIREES

500,000 TO 600,000 ENROLLEES ANNUALLY

Approximately 26,000 TO 27,000 AWARD WORTHY MODELS WERE MADE

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE SAW THE MODELS AT MOTORAMAS, PARADE OF PROGRESS ETC.

387 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS WERE AWARDED

THOUSANDS WON STATE LEVEL CASH AWARDS

IN 1954 GM PROVIDED 4 RUBBER TIRES TO ALL ENROLLEES AT NO COST

## **GENERAL MOTORS DESIGN STAFF (STYLING)**

IN 1956, GM ESTIMATED THE GUILD WAS THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF ITS DESIGNERS

IN 1957, 35% OF GM DESIGNERS WERE GUILDSMEN

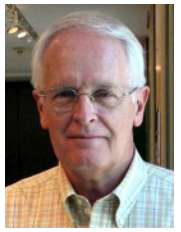
IN 1960, 47 GUILDSMEN WERE EMPLOYED AT GM STYLING (DESIGN STAFF)

IN 1980, 25 GUILDSMEN WERE STILL WORKING AT GM DESIGN STAFF

**Ron Will, Fountain Hills, Arizona**

**How FBCG participation impacted my life:**

*The Guild was the # 1 factor that guided the rest of my life and career for 40 years as a car designer. My father said that he would only pay for my college if I went to an engineering school. When I won the Guild design scholarship, I was able to pay my own way to the Institute of Design in Chicago and train as a designer. The fact that it was a Fisher Body-sponsored contest gave me a leg up when applying for and landing a car styling job for 10 years at the GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan. It was a dream job working in the Corvette /Camaro as well as Cadillac and Oldsmobile Toronado studios. After GM I designed my own 3-wheel dream car, the Turbo Phantom. After this I landed a job as the design and product planning manager for Subaru of America where I created the Outback model. I retired from Subaru after 25 years.*



**Education:**

*I enrolled in the Industrial Illustration Technology program at Purdue University for two years and then transferred to the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, IL .*

**Guild Model:**

**1960 Indiana: 1st State, Region**

*This was the second of three models I entered in the Guild. It is a sports coupe for two with room for kids in the back. The main theme of the car was a single sharp body line that flowed from the front to the back in side-view, but formed the headlight and tail light brows in the plan view. The glass and roof formed a smooth elliptical shape. The door handles formed part of the side design line. This model was carved from laminated smooth grain poplar with a little plastic wood to fill in mistakes. After wood sealing, it was finished with automotive primer and 1959 Chevrolet Metallic Harbor Blue Lacquer. I had planned to make window trim and bumpers from brass and chrome plated. Unfortunately, the chrome plater lost some of the small window trim pieces in the chroming vat and said they were too small to plate anyway. So I remade some of the window trim pieces in brass and the car ended up with an odd combination of chrome, brass and aluminum trim parts. This 1960 regional win gave me the chance to see the top national winning Guild models in Detroit and gave me the information I needed to build the 1961 model that would win the 1st Place Senior National award.*



**Ron Wise, Commerce Township, Michigan**

**How FBCG participation impacted my life:**

*I learned the value of completing a long-term project. Also, I was advised to get a degree in engineering as a fall-back position to a career in automotive design. I am grateful for the opportunity and encouragement that was provided to me and other young aspiring automotive designers to have their work evaluated and rewarded by professional designers through the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild national competition.*



**Education:**

*I attended Lansing Community College and Western Michigan University, leading to a career in powertrain engineering as an engine calibration engineer at Ford Motor Company.*

**Guild Model:**

**1963 Michigan: 3rd State**

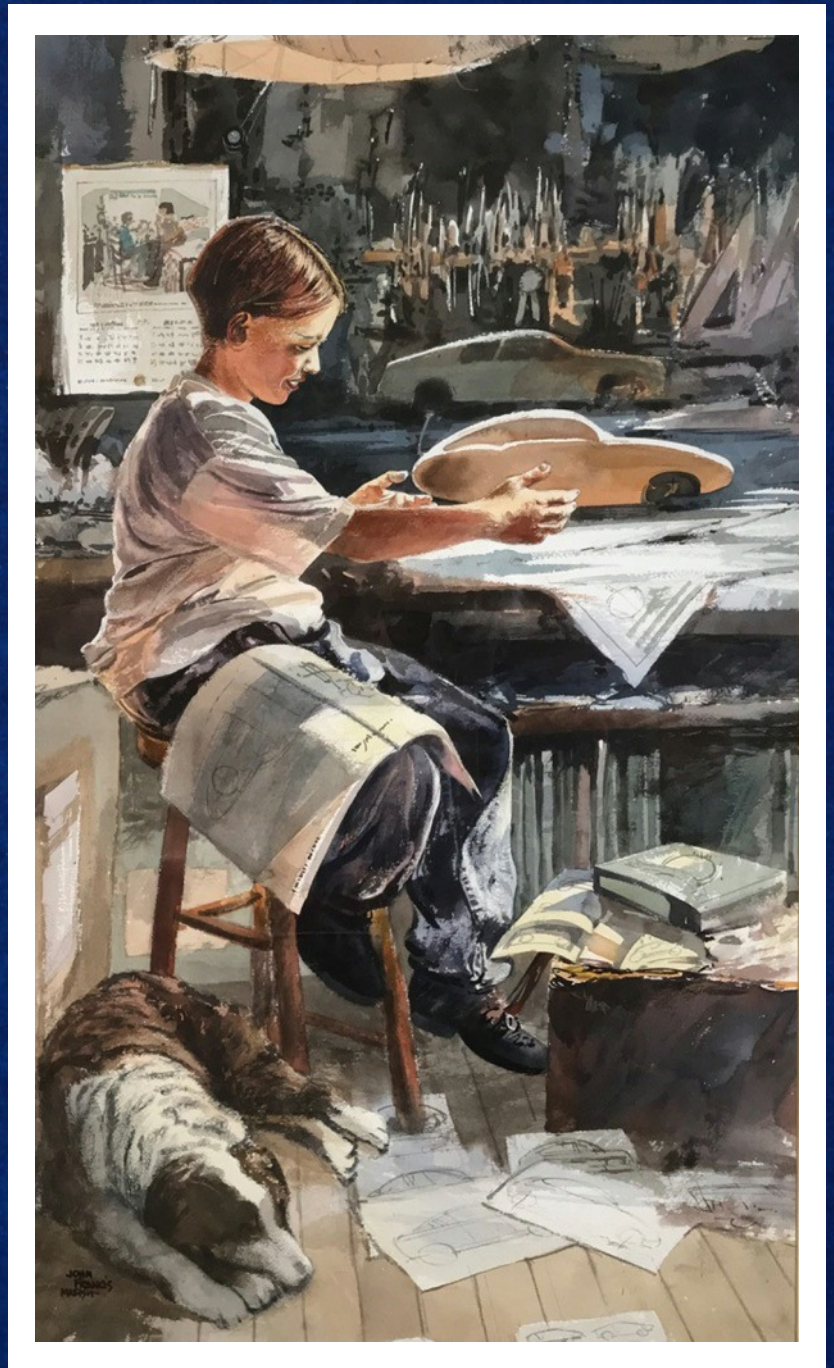
*This 2-seat sports coupe was the third of three models I entered in the Guild. It was made from carved wood.*





## *“The Final Shape”*

*In the 1990's, Guildsman John Marsh painted this portrait of young Guildsman Bob Blosser working on one of his two Craftsman's Guild models. In a style reminiscent of Norman Rockwell, Marsh's 18 x 30 inch watercolor captures a scene repeated by thousands of young American boys over the life of the Guild. Bob Blosser won a First State and then an Honorable Mention in Indiana.*



## *A Brief History of the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild*

*In 1930, brothers Charles and William Fisher, managers of the Fisher Body Division of General Motors Corporation, inaugurated a national scholarship program for American teenagers called the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild, which continued to 1968. Its original purpose was to award college scholarships to teens who demonstrated excellence in constructing a 1/18 scale model of the Fisher Body trademark Napoleonic coach and a way for GM to identify young talent. Scholarships of up to \$5000 were awarded each year to competitors in two divisions, senior (ages 16-19) and junior (12-15). In 1937, the Guild permitted competitors to build a 1/12 scale model automobile of their own design using any material they desired, mostly wood. In 1948, the coach competition gave way entirely to the model cars. Over the years, more than ten million young Americans joined the Guild and each year over a thousand models were submitted for a total of 39,000 entries in its 38-year history. During this time, close to 400 scholarships were awarded. In late 1968, the competition was ended for various reasons, but many of the models produced still exist.*