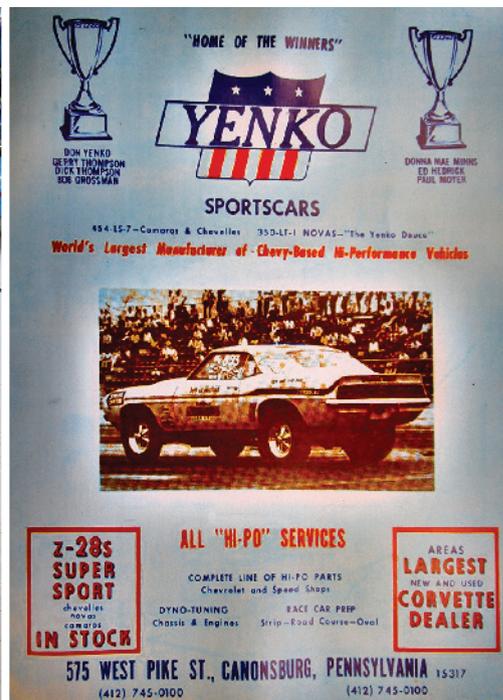




Lake Barrington Motorsports owner, Peter Gerling, and his 1969 Yenko.



## The Yenko Super Car

MENTION THE WORD YENKO to any muscle car aficionado and watch their eyes light up. A Yenko is a special type of Chevrolet Camaro. Available in limited quantities, there were only 198 Yenko cars produced in 1969, endearing it to a very loyal fan base.

What makes a Yenko so special?

Don Yenko, a Chevrolet dealer in Pennsylvania, began customizing Camaros in 1967. His modifications included the installation of a 427 engine, a 140-mph speedometer (standard was 120-mph), custom striping, and the famed YSC monogram. Fans refer to the Yenko as a “race car with license plates”.

In 1969, Yenko discovered a way to have the 427 engines installed in the Camaros at the manufacturing plant. He would no longer have to remove the 396 big block engine to install his legendary 427 engine. Among other benefits, the high-performance Yenko 427 engines would now come with a standard manufacturer’s warranty. Yenko was able to place the orders as a COPO, a central office production order, the same way that taxicabs were custom-produced. Although the

initial order was for 201 Yenkos in 1969, only 198 were delivered.

Peter Gerling, co-owner of Lake Barrington Motorsports, happens to be one of the lucky few to own an original 1969 Yenko. Gerling’s Yenko is all original, completely unrestored, and still sporting its Fathom Green paint and YSC monogram. Yenko Camaros were branded with the YSC



monogram distinguishing the vehicle as a “Yenko Super Car”. Keeping it in the family, Yenko’s daughter Lynn and her friends often applied the custom-striping decals to the cars as a part-time job while they were still in school.

Gerling purchased his classic Yenko in the late 1990s and has been racing it ever since. He attends the Yenko Sportscar Club Supercar Reunion held

every Labor Day weekend in Kentucky. For years, a fan-favorite highlight of the annual reunion was the grudge match between Gerling and fellow Yenko racer, Dru Diesner. Both Yenkos run in the 10-second range, which means that these cars can do a 1/4-mile sprint from a standing start on a drag strip in under 11 seconds. One of Gerling’s best performances was a 1/4-mile in 10:32 seconds at 135 miles-per-hour in his Yenko.

Wondering how much one of these vintage beauties costs? In 2017, a 1968 Yenko sold for \$600,000 at Mecum’s Las Vegas auction making it the most expensive Yenko ever sold at auction. The 1969 Yenkos currently range from about \$75,000 on up to over \$275,000, depending on condition. Gerling keeps his Yenko at his automotive repair business in Lake Barrington and welcomes visitors who want to stop in and check it out. If he’s not too busy, Gerling may even start it up and let you listen to the roar of the Yenko’s engine. It truly is one-of-a-kind.

Gerling’s Yenko is all original. Key pieces are removed to allow the car to be raced, but none of the changes are irreversible. When asked why he was never tempted to restore his 1969 Yenko, Gerling replied, “A car is only original once.”

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