

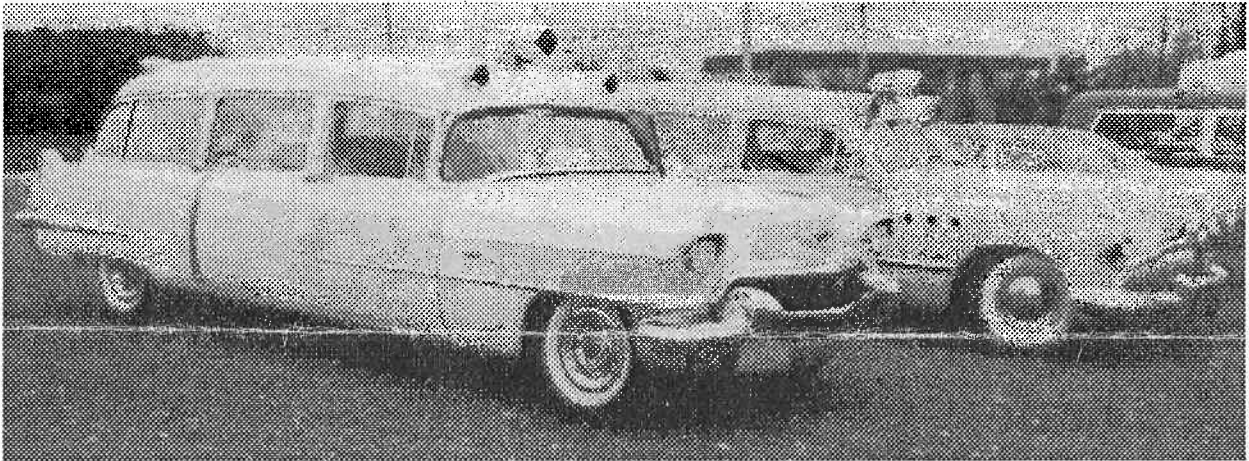


The Criterion

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHEAST CHAPTER OF THE PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY
FOURTH QUARTER 1996 GREGG D. MERKSAMER, EDITOR

“MEET-LIKE” MEETING:

New treasurer elected, 1999 International Meet discussed at Northeast Chapter's well-attended November pow-wow



Paul Vickery's 1956 Meteor Cadillac and Bob Behr's 1949 Flxible-Buick were among the ambulances driven to their final showing for the year at the PCS Northeast Chapter's November Meeting (*Andy Toton*)

With plans to host the 1999 PCS International Meet at the top of the agenda, nearly twenty people attended the Northeast Chapter's November 10th meeting at the Falls Township Rifle and Pistol Association in Morrisville, PA.

The atmosphere was almost meet-like as several people brought their "procars" with them for a final muster before the tarps go on and the jackstands go under for the winter. **Bob Behr** drove his 1949 Flxible Buick ambulance over from Sellersville, PA, while **Paul Vickery** crossed the Delaware at the wheel of his 1956 Meteor Cadillac ambulance, a very interesting rig whose thin roof pillars could have inspired those on GM's 1973-77 intermediate sedans. The front license plate on Philadelphia PCS member **Andy Toton's** 1970 Miller-Meteor Cadillac combination billed the car as a "20' 4" compact," while its window

plaques promised "1-way" airport shuttle service. **Jon & Tammy Ponulak** brought their elegant 1979 Cadillac Fleetwood limousine from Bridgewater, NJ, while **Ted Collins** came all the way from Wilkes-Barre in his latest acquisition, an early 1990's front-drive Cadillac 6-door from S&S.

Others attending the November meeting included Northeast Chapter president **Leo Maren III**, vice-president and activities director **Bill Marcy** and his wife **Lucille**, PCS President **Mike Barruzza**, **Dottie Forvour** and PCS Publicity Chairman and *Criterion* editor **Gregg D. Merksamer**, who took the scenic route from Briarcliff Manor, NY and heartily recommends the stop for flapjacks and fresh-squeezed orange juice at P.J.'s Pancake House in Princeton. The Garden State was well represented by **Craig Stewart** from Wood Ridge, **Jeff & Dale Hedges** from Dayton,

Jeff & Mary Hookway from Sparta, Dave Csimbok & Jennifer Nagy from Carteret, Fred Goerlitz from Hackettstown and Rich Litton from Moorestown.

Leo Maren began the business portion of the meeting by asserting that "those of you who didn't make (the 1996 PCS International in St. Paul) Minnesota missed a very good meet. Our chapter put in a bid to host the 1999 International Meet and it was accepted, so we've got to start the ball rolling." Accepting the nomination of meet chairman, Maren added that "there's going to be a lot of legwork involved and it's not going to be easy, but after seeing the job that four people could do in Minnesota I know that we can pull it off here. Not that four people are all I want, because everyone's job will get easier with every extra person that volunteers to help."

Bill Marcy added that "if everyone gives a little bit or gets one other person involved, we'll really be able to put on a 1st-rate show." To get "Team 1999"

started in the right direction, 1996 International Meet Chairman Tony Karsnia is sending a report on what things cost the PCS Northland Chapter and how many hats and t-shirts were left at meet's end, while George Hamlin of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter - which hosted the PCS at York, PA in 1980, Gettysburg in 1982 and Gaithersburg, MD in 1989 - has actually written a book entitled "Conducting An International Meet."

Job One for the 1999 PCS International Meet involves a series of phone calls and field trips to locate a suitably equipped and priced headquarters hotel (someone wisely suggested husband-and-wife teams in case these "recons" become overnight trips). Among the nominated meet sites Lancaster, PA seemed especially promising since the Dutch Country has only state sales taxes to contend with (many competing municipalities levy local hotel taxes) and the tourist infrastructure is extremely well-developed. The Reading area and the Lehigh Valley (Allentown, Bethlehem or Easton, PA) were also discussed as

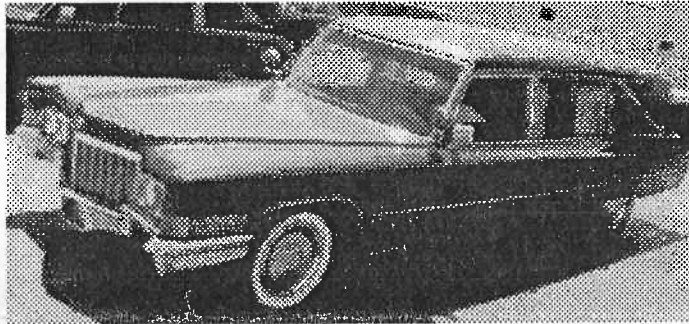
possibilities. Dottie Forvour and Bill Marcy added that the hotel itself needs to have meeting rooms and secured parking for at least 75 to 100 cars, be located near an airport for the convenience of long-distance registrants and come with a swimming pool and other diversions for spouses, children and significant others. An on-site dining room and restaurant would be another plus, as would nearby stores and businesses with their own off-street parking.

Andy Toton, the new Northeast Chapter treasurer, had plenty of good advice to offer from his experiences planning the Cadillac-LaSalle Club's 1993 Grand National Meet in Lancaster, PA (his wife

Karen also served as registrar for this event, which attracted a record 375 vehicles). "We ran it like a business," he said, stressing that the 1999 PCS volunteers should "come up with departments from the get go and meet at least once a month, to make sure they're taking care of the phone calls and other things you have to

do to make a meet like this successful." Since the host hotel is the meet's most expensive component and will require commitments and deposits up front, Toton also said "you have to get as many people as you can to fill that hotel up." To gather the necessary working capital for hotel and bus tour contracts, attendees at the November meeting also brainstormed on the various ways that funds could be raised until registration money begins to arrive in the first months of 1999.

The discussion also focused on the sort of activities that could be put together for the 1999 Meet. Paul Vickery, who had a hand in organizing the 1987 PCS International in Lambertville, NJ, recalled that meet's links to the big New Hope, PA auto show and how he encouraged area emergency squads to attend with their in-service vehicles. Bill Marcy stressed that attendees needed "whatever we want" days since "they're on vacation," while Leo Maren discussed the possibilities of bus trips to the Statue of Liberty, Ellis



Newly-elected NE Chapter Treasurer Andy Toton drove his 1970 M-M combination to the meeting at Morrisville.

Island, the Liberty Science Center and the casinos in Atlantic City.

Craig Stewart stressed, however, that "we want to avoid the competition factor where each year's meet gets bigger and has more activities, the idea that we have to have 130 cars because Chicago attracts 125 cars." Bill Marcy added that "the most anyone should give going into this is their time, talent and enthusiasm. The Minnesota meet was a little smaller than most PCS Internationals but it was still well attended and enjoyed. We should have ample facilities for a big show, but we don't have to be the biggest to be the best."

DOES ANYONE HAVE A MATCH?

Visiting the local library recently, your editor came across a book by Michael Olmert called "Milton's Teeth and Ovid's Umbrella: Curiouser & Curiouser Adventures in History" (Touchstone Books, 1996). Page 34 states that today's funeral processions descended from the nighttime torchlight parades of the Romans. This custom was retained for the handful of V.I.P.s who warranted a daytime funeral. Once the procession arrived at its destination the torches were used to light the funeral pyre. The book adds that the word "funeral" itself is derived from the Latin *funes*, which are the waxed cords that were used as wicks in these torches.

NEW CHAPTER TREASURER

November's meeting also saw all of the chapter's current officers re-elected with the exception that husband and wife team **Andy & Karen Toton** have assumed Peter Grave's responsibilities as chapter treasurers. A Philadelphia resident and a Conrail locomotive engineer for twenty years, Andy became interested in professional cars through family connections to the medical profession. He's owned a total of 24 different Cadillacs over the years and has been a member of the Cadillac-LaSalle Club for more than thirteen years. At various times Andy has served

as club treasurer, publication editor and membership secretary, and was recently elected to the National Board of Directors after more than a decade on his regional board.

A member and certified national judge of the AACA, Andy is also active in the National Railway and Anthracite Railroad Historical Societies, Division 45 of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Felton Fire Company in Chester, PA. Karen Toton has herself held numerous positions of responsibility in the Cadillac-LaSalle Club including co-editor, treasurer, secretary, regional board member and registrar for the 1993 Grand National meet in Lancaster, PA.

Since chapter dues should be submitted to Andy's address between January 1st and 31st, 1997 (to serve, partly, as a reminder that national PCS dues should also be paid at the same time), it's very important that chapter members stop circulating any old membership applications in their possession in favor of the updated version attached to this newsletter.

YOUR CAR CAN BE A STAR

PCS National President Mike Barruzza has announced that the East Coast Transportation Coordinator for Warner Brothers is looking for a dark-colored (preferably black) 1971-3 Cadillac limousine to use in a Jodie Foster movie that will soon begin shooting in Washington, D.C.

While anyone with a suitable car can contact Mike at (215) 788-8105 if they're interested, he stresses that "you must really use your discretion when loaning your car to a movie studio. You must make sure that the contract specifies what you want and don't want done with your car, and that the studio has insurance coverage where you're not held liable for any injuries caused by their use of your car while the movie is being filmed."

Despite these *caveats* several cars belonging to PCS members have appeared on film, including Harold Berthy's 1941 S&S Cadillac ambulance in *The Shawshank Redemption* and New Jersey PCS member Herb Gellings' 1951 Siebert Ford ambulance in *I.Q.* with Walther Matthau.

DON'T GIVE ME ANY SAAB STORIES



This six-wheeled Saab 9000 ambulance, whose photo came courtesy of Publications Manager Dan Prescott at Saab Cars USA, may present the only hope for compromise between the fans of car-chassied and modular ambulances.

According to the December 1996 issue of *Saab Soundings*, the "90000" (named for the Swedish version of 911) was the inspiration of paramedics at the Helsingborg, Sweden Fire Department, who wanted a vehicle that combined the low loading height, superior braking and easy handling of a car-chassied ambulance with the headroom and equipment space of a truck-based unit. A chassis conversion company called Solstad Bil AB stretched a turbocharged Saab 9000 CSE Automatic into a six-wheeler, after which the Anders Wiman company added one of its modular ambulance bodies. To date, four Saab ambulances have been delivered to the Swedish cities of Helsingborg, Hoganas, Norrkoping and Ange.

PCS WOWS CROWD AT BUCKS COUNTY AUTO SHOW

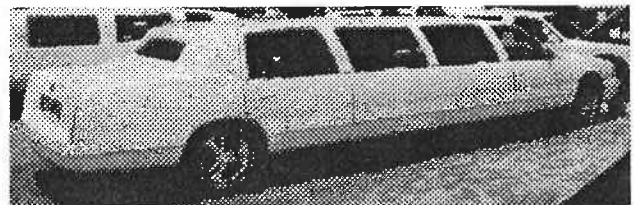
The professional car class set aside at the 4th Annual Bucks County Auto Show attracted seven entries to Core Creek Park in Newtown on Sunday, September 1st. **Bill & Lucille Marcy's** 1978 McClain Cadillac flower car took home the class's 3rd Place prize, while **Craig & Roseanne Stewart** came in 2nd with their 1976 Miller-Meteor Lifeliner Cadillac ambulance. First-in-class went **Harvey Schofield's** 1967 Lincoln Continental, with its discreet 6" center stretch by Lehmann-Peterson of Chicago. Other PCS

people in attendance included **Bob Behr** with his 1949 Flexible Buick ambulance and **Mike Barruzza** with his 1973 S&S Cadillac Victoria hearse.

LIMOS ON THE BOARDWALK

Front-drive Cadillac professional cars were the center of attention at the Limousine & Chauffeur Show staged at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, NJ from November 11-13. No funeral coaches were displayed, but several companies catering to funeral customers displayed prototype DeVille stretch and 24-hour limousines that should be in production by this coming February. Federal Coach of Fort Smith, Arkansas (which inherited many of its employees from Armbruster-Stageway) unveiled its 1997 Cadillac "Eagle" VIP stretch limousine (oddly enough, the name of a rival coachbuilder from Amelia, Ohio that inherited many of Hess & Eisenhardt's people). Superior Coaches displayed a prototype of its 1997 front-wheel drive Cadillac 24-hour limousine, equipped with a 65" center extension and a swiveling television in the center door, as well as showing off its new line of VIP Executive stretch limousines; the Lincoln version, interestingly, had tastefully unique laser-cut aluminum coach lamps shaped like a Lincoln star. Krystal Koch of Brea, California, a recent entrant to the funeral car field, put one of its 1997 Lincolns on a lift to show off the quality of its chassis extensions.

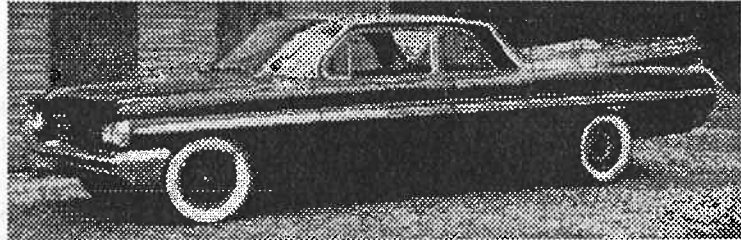
Cadillac has set a 7,000 pound Gross Vehicle Weight Rating for its 1997 front-drive B9Q Funeral Coach and V4U Limousine Conversion packages, only 200 pounds less than last year's rear-drive Fleetwood but still enough that most coachbuilders will limit center stretches to the 65-inch range. Classic Limousine of Fountain Valley, CA, however, displayed a 90-inch 1997 Cadillac (*below*) just to prove they could build one under the weight rating; it was a special "Splash" model whose radical interior styling featured S-shaped seat cushions and colorful wave patterns on the carpets and partition stitching.



CRITERION CLASSIFIEDS:

1940 Henney-Packard Series 1801 Hearse/Ambulance. Restoration started, body sandblasted and primed. Covered dual sidemounts, 3-way entry. \$3,500. Joe Napoli, (201) 251-9746.

1962 Pontiac Flower Car Prototype by Armbruster Stageway. Losing storage for hand-built one-off stretched from a 2-door Catalina body by the famous factory in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Complete and running but needs restoration. Seats five. Hi-compression 389 2-barrel police/taxi motor. Best offer. Dave Csimbok, (908) 541-2794.



1974 Superior Cadillac High Top Ambulance. Complete equipment and emergency lighting, 93,000 miles, some rust on hood and rear quarter panels. \$1,000. Jim Spahr, (610) 527-0223.

Repair or Service Manual Wanted for 1970s Superior Flower Car rear deck. Mike Barruzza, (215) 788-8105.

CRITERION CALENDAR:

Craig Stewart (201-438-1757) wants to hear from vintage ambulance owners who might be interested in attending next year's convention of the Society for the Preservation and Advancement of Antique Motorized Fire Apparatus of America (SPAAMFA), which will convene in **Lakehurst, New Jersey** from Thursday to Saturday, **June 12-14, 1997**. Craig will furnish more information on the meet as it becomes available.

The Greater Glenside, PA Chamber of Commerce has invited PCS members to participate in the SI-17 Special Interest Class of their **4th annual car show** on Sunday, **August 3rd, 1997**. Approximately one mile of Easton Road between the Glenside train station and the Beaver College Campus is closed to traffic for this mall-style event, which attracted 300 vehicles and over 10,000 spectators last year. Entrants that pre-register by July 26, 1997 save \$5 (show day registration costs \$20 per car) and receive a special metal and walnut commemorative plaque. For further information contact registration coordinator Jack Ripley at 346 Monroe Ave., Glenside, PA 19038 or (215) 887-9084.

The Professional Car Society's 21st Annual International Meet will be hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter in **Baltimore, Maryland** from **August 19-24, 1997**. The headquarters hotel will be the Marriott Hunt Valley Inn in the northern suburb of Timonium. Already scheduled activities include motorcades to the B&O Railroad Museum on Thursday, August 21st and the Fire Museum of Maryland on Saturday, August 23rd, where regional EMS squads will display their rigs alongside those of the PCS and the Association for the Preservation of Historic Ambulances (founded by 1997 PCS meet chairman Steve Lichtman). In an interesting departure from previous practice, Concours judging will take place on Friday, August 22nd at the Ladew Topiary Gardens, to be followed by a delicious catered lunch at the gardens' fox hunters lodge. Non-automotive activities include a visit to historic Fort McHenry on Tuesday, August 19 and a tour of Washington D.C. on Wednesday, August 20th. **Registration materials** can be obtained by writing to **PCS 1997 International Meet, P.O. Box 2023, York, PA 17405**, faxing (301) 649-1069 or by telephoning Mid-Atlantic Chapter President Gene Lichtman at (301) 649-1321. Individuals and businesses that want to sponsor a class trophy (\$25 including a mention in the meet program) or advertise in the program (a full page costs \$100, a half page \$60, a quarter page \$30 and a business card just \$10) can submit ads and checks to the PCS Mid-Atlantic Chapter at P.O. Box 4785, Colesville, MD 20914-4785.

