



The Criterion

NEWSLETTER of the NORTHEAST CHAPTER of the PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY

Third Quarter 2004 - Ted Collins, Publisher - Gregg D. Merksamer, Editor

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello everybody! I hope you all had a great summer and lots of fun with your cars. I was glad to see so many of our Chapter members in Lahaska, Pennsylvania for our Third Annual Charity Car Show, down in Daytona Beach for this year's PCS International Meet, and at Paul and Donna Vickery's house in Millington, New Jersey for our Chapter picnic. A big THANK YOU goes out to Paul and Donna for opening their house to us, cooking us a great meal and showing us their cars. We had a great time as a result of their hard work.

I also want to express my thanks to the Northeast Chapter members who have given me the opportunity to serve as the Chapter President for the past three years. I have enjoyed every single minute, and I would be happy to continue on as your President. However, this is entirely up to the membership attending our November 7th, 2004 meeting in Sparta, New Jersey, where we will nominate and elect club officers. Please give some thought to the election and what it holds for the future direction of the Northeast Chapter. Perhaps you might consider running for an office yourself. I would also like to thank the other officers of the Chapter, for they have done a fine job and it has been a true pleasure to work with them.

We have several other important issues to discuss at the November 7th meeting. These include initial planning for our Fourth Annual Car Show in Lahaska, the prospect of the Northeast Chapter hosting the 2008 PCS International Meet, and our participation in the club's new database containing photos and information about the professional cars we own. Please plan to attend, as your input is very important. If you've never been to a Chapter meeting at the Sparta Volunteer Ambulance Squad HQ, you can get directions by contacting Jeff Hookway at (973) 729-8083 or hookjch@ptd.net.

Lastly, I hope that you will all do your part to keep the Northeast Chapter growing by encouraging new membership and sharing our cars and interesting stories about them with anyone you can. Even though we're entering that time of year when there are fewer shows and cruise nights, treat every event you attend as an ideal opportunity to explain to other old car hobbyists that funeral cars and ambulances are indeed collectible. - *See You Soon, Bill Marcy*



A privacy rear window accentuated the elegance of Harvey Schofield's 1967 Lehmann-Peterson Lincoln mini-stretch from Marlton, N.J.



Rocket-shaped roof beacons were a nifty detail on Rich Litton's 1965 Superior Pontiac high-top ambulance from Moorestown, N.J.

PEDDLER'S VILLAGE BECOMES A CITY

After a promising inaugural event that attracted 64 cars out of 79 pre-registrants and a second year where rain reduced the entrant count to 22 vehicles, the Third Time truly Proved the Charm when the Professional Car Society's Northeast Chapter sponsored its Third Annual Charity Car Show in Lahaska, PA on June 13th, 2004. Setting a new record as far as the beneficiary was concerned, the meet raised \$1,308 for the Bucks County SPCA and attracted an incredible 88 registrants (out of which only two vehicles were no-shows) and one last minute drive-up to Peddler's Village. "This is what happens when you have good weather and there's no competing car show in the area," Marlton, NJ PCS member Harvey Schofield commented as he displayed a stately and extremely-rare 1967 Lincoln mini-stretch limousine constructed by Lehmann-Peterson of Chicago.

Once he checked in the entrants, PCS Northeast Chapter President William Marcy was extremely pleased to note that the nineteen professional cars on display represented "a mini-meet in itself." PCS National President John Ehmer traveled all the way from Pittsburgh in his lovely gold 1985 Lincoln Allen Coachworks formal limousine, which was placed next to a 1976 Cadillac Fleetwood Seventy-Five that Jack Harrison of Clinton, NJ purchased earlier this year with only 23,000 miles on the odometer. Sellersville, PA PCS member Bob Behr, having sold his 1949 Flexible Buick ambulance to Bill Marcy (see article elsewhere in this issue), came to Peddler's Village with an incredibly well-preserved 1955 Ford F-600 fire truck built by the Morysville Body Works of Boyertown, PA and used for many years by the New Tripoli, PA Community Fire Company. Jack Cipriano of Southampton, PA showed a silver 1989 S&S Victoria with wire wheel covers that eventually made it to Daytona for the 2004 PCS International Meet (by that time sporting a "RESERVED FOR JEFF GORDON FANS" sign in a casket compartment window). Moorestown, NJ EMT Rich Litton's 1965 Superior Pontiac high-top ambulance was a particularly-sleek presence with its Coke bottle quarter panel contours and rocket-shaped roof beacons, while Ft. Washington, PA children's dentist David Bresler showed a 1965



David Bresler D.D.S., a children's dentist from Fort Washington, PA, drives this 1965 Miller-Meteor Cadillac "Cavity Buster" when he performs magic shows at area schools. The giant tooth on the roof was originally a waiting room stool.

Miller-Meteor Cadillac funeral coach he converted into a "Cavity Buster" with Canary Yellow/Lime Green two-tone paintwork and giant toothbrushes where the landau bars used to be. Henney's bodybuilding prowess on the Packard chassis, meanwhile, was fondly recalled by Mahlon Thompson's 1953 Clipper Junior "first call" car and Mike Satterthwaite's ultimately class-winning 1953 limousine, which was one of six originally ordered by the U.S. government as a Secret Service escort vehicle; aside from the retrofitted wire wheels and wide whitewalls it was accordingly a "stripper," with no radio, no power assist for the steering, brakes or windows and a column-mounted three-speed manual gearbox in place of the more commonly-fitted Ultramatic transmission.



Paul Petrilla's 1926 Ford Model T Fordor from Warrington, PA was displayed at Lahaska with a complete tool kit and a period picnic hamper. He paid \$600 for the car in 1983, or just \$55 more than the \$545 it cost new.

Aside from a show field set amidst antique dealers, specialty shops and restaurants promising much-needed diversion for spouses and children, one of the most appealing aspects of the PCS Lahaska meet is that all awards are determined by people's choice voting. Setting up the classes by body style instead of year has also proved popular, ensuring that a well-preserved sedan doesn't end up competing with a flashier convertible or sports car. Dan Bush's 1962 Cadillac Coupe DeVille was voted the event's Best Two-Door, while Galen & Pam Gerhart of Trumbauersville, PA earned Best Four-Door honors with a 1932 Chevrolet Confederate that was, following an eight-year restoration, resplendently-finished with a Dove Gray lower body, Ravenwood Brown top, Omaha Orange wire wheels and black fenders. "The hardest part was tracking down accessories like the trunk, which took six years to find," Galen said. "I bought it in 1991 because I had the idea I would be taking the grandkids for rides, but they haven't been in it yet. The best part of owning it is the stares you get, though some people think the hand signals you make during turns are something else."

Fending off such worthy challengers as Donald Marsh's 1963 Ford Thunderbird (sporting a factory fiberglass tonneau to turn it into a two-seater), Jon Ponulak's "Fury Us" 1960 Plymouth and a Chestnut Brown 1967 Cadillac displayed by 1995-97 PCS President Mike Barruzza (original down to its triple-band whitewall tires), the Best Convertible award went to Bill & Jackie Marotta of Totowa, NJ for a



Turning heads with its Dove Gray body, Ravenwood Brown roof and Omaha Orange wire wheels, this 1932 Chevrolet Confederate owned by Galen & Pam Gerhart of Trumbauersville, PA earned Best Four-Door honors at the Peddler's Village meet

Fiesta Red 1956 Ford Sunliner touting an extremely rare, dealer-installed Paxton supercharger. The Blue Oval also swept the Sports and Muscle Car awards, respectively given to Alan Sandler's 1966 Ford GT 40 and John Greenwich's 1966 Ford Mustang GT. Vibrant blue paintwork gave Ed &

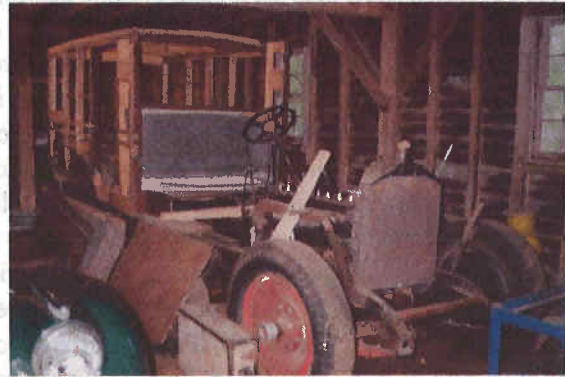
Amy Laird's 1951 Chevrolet Pickup a solid lock on the Best Truck trophy, while a deep purple exterior and beautifully detailed engine bay earned Chris Remmet's 1934 Chevy Street Rod equivalent honors in the Modified/Custom Class and Gary Conklin's 2001 PT Cruiser Sedan Delivery Conversion was voted the Best Wagon. Repeating its triumph at the inaugural 2002 event, the Best-of-Show award went to a 1952 GMC one-ton pickup that Robert Monetti of Stockton, NJ restored to resemble the truck that his late father Louis used in his building business for 15 years. "This is quite rare," Monetti told us, explaining that "the ratio of one-tons to three-quarter and half-ton models is something like a hundred-to-one and it's very hard to find parts."



Many years before Raymond Koziol purchased this Bentley S3, he was photographed with it as a 14-year-old during the 1964 International Auto Show at the New York Coliseum. Ensuring that Teddy travels in style, Radford fitted the car with rear seat cigar and tissue holders, a bottle storage compartment in the driver's door, and stools that can be placed on the rear bumper guards while a picnic table is folded out of the trunk



The Best Convertible award at PCS Lahaska went to Bill & Jackie Marotta's 1956 Ford Sunliner, which featured wire wheel covers and a dealer-installed Paxton supercharger.



Paul Vickery's "To Do" list includes this 1928 Packard ambulance bodied by the Hoover Wagon Company of York, PA.

PICNIC AT THE VICKERYS

Judging from the fine time we all had when the PCS Northeast Chapter convened at Paul and Donna Vickery's house in Millington, NJ for its August 21st, 2004 Summer Gathering, Your Editor is convinced that we should seriously consider more events held at members' homes instead of fire halls or restaurants. Aside from offering wonderful food and hospitality on a pleasant Saturday evening, Paul and Donna (not to mention their eight-year-old son Ian, three-year-old daughter Clare, and a friendly menagerie comprising at least two cats and one dog by my count) offered the added inducement of a truly interesting residence that proved relatively easy to find thanks to the ambulance-shaped mailbox by the roadside.

Vickery, a leading northeast U.S. ambulance dealer by occupation, and his family moved into the charming front porch colonial on Long Hill Road on July 21st, 2000. Originally one of several Cooper family parcels in the Great Swamp area of central New Jersey, the property appears on a 1760 survey map, but the stone-walled basement with its earthen floor are likely the only parts of the structure surviving from that time period. Based on architectural details, the house's living room, porch and dining areas were dated to 1840 by the local historical society, while the pantry and rear bedrooms were added around 1900 and the kitchen dates from the 1940s or 50s. Even with the entire history of electricity chronicled by the four different types of outlets found in various rooms and five additions on the back of the house destined for future demolition, the Vickerys have focused most of their restoration

efforts to date on the historic front portion of the structure. During the winter of 2002-3 they did exhaustive research concerning what materials should be used to restore to the porch, ultimately settling on maintenance-free, aluminum-framed PVC for the railings and pillars while the walnut flooring (selected to compliment the trees on the property) is so dense and hard that it can't even float. By the time they were finally done with the porch, construction debris filled an entire 40 cubic yard dumpster! The floor of the oldest building on the property, a small backyard barn dating from 1810, sagged so badly, Paul recalled, that it "was literally pulling the walls in" and had to be jacked up and retro-fitted with a laminated structural beam so the sides of the structure would be perpendicular again.

From the turn-of-the-Century until the 1950s, the Vickery house fronted a 100-care dairy farm owned



Local historians have dated Paul & Donna Vickery's house in Millington, NJ to 1840. The ambulance mailbox confirms that this is the home of an enthusiastic PCS member!

by the Cornish family. Even though the property is down to three acres today, its three-level, circa 1880 barn (put together entirely with wooden pegs) beckoned as an irresistibly ideal storage place for some of Paul's vintage ambulances and the old milking stalls on the lowest level will eventually become his workshop. Parked on a 2.5-inch thick, tongue-and-groove maple floor impregnated with animal urine to deter rot, the vehicles contained in this structure include a currently-dismantled 1928 Hoover Packard ambulance purchased when Paul was still an apartment dweller in 1983, a 1918 Ford Model T with a replica World War I ambulance body, and a fully-restored 1940 Flxible-Buick limousine-style ambulance (last seen by most of the picnic guests at the 1999 PCS International Meet in Lancaster, PA) which was originally used at the New York World's Fair before being sold to a Bethel, CT fire company that kept it in service until 1955. Subsequently seeing about two weeks' use each year at the Danbury Fairgrounds racetrack until the early 1970s, it was mostly dismantled by the time Vickery acquired it in 1976.

During their tour, Northeast Chapter members also took a fresh look at Vickery's 1956 A.J. Miller Cadillac ambulance, constructed during the last model year before that venerable Bellefontaine, Ohio coachbuilder (founded 1853) combined its operations with those of the Meteor Motor Car company in neighboring Piqua. The Canyon Gray giant, whose distinctive, thin pillar roofline gracefully bridged the generation gap between Bill Mitchell's 1938 Fleetwood Sixty Special and Kojak's 1973 Buick Century, shared a 1950s vintage garage outbuilding with Donna Vickery's 1978 Porsche 911 (the family fleet also includes a 1967 Land Rover station wagon and a 1996 Chevrolet Impala SS Paul uses as his daily driver), occupying the only one of three bays where pipes leading to the garage apartment above didn't cut into the length of the space. While the Miller needed paint and metalwork after serving at Exxon's Bayonne, NJ transfer facility its entire life, it had traveled only 3,100 miles by the time Vickery purchased it in 1987; significantly, it has also appeared in five movies including *Malcolm X* and *Bronx Tale*.

With most people using modern cars to reach the Vickery picnic, Staten Island residents Larry & Shirley Farrell really turned heads by showing up with the bright red, commercial glass 1966 Cotner-



Bill Marcy, Leo Maren and Craig Stewart pose with Paul Vickery's 1940 Flxible Buick ambulance, which saw service at the New York World's Fair before being sold to a Bethel, CT fire company.

Bevington Oldsmobile limousine they purchased recently from Huntington Valley, PA PCS member Michael Satterthwaite; the vehicle was originally operated as part of a matched fleet by Kirk & Nice of Germantown, PA, which claims to be America's oldest funeral home with roots dating back to 1761. Joined by his wife Tracy, Fred Goerlitz beefed up the Rocket contingent with a virtually-flawless 1976 Oldsmobile 88 sedan, inherited from his uncle Don Kegel when he passed away in April, that touted the big 455 V-8 engine and just 56,000 original miles. Mike and Vicky Barruzza, having tied the knot less than a month before at the beginning of the PCS International Meet in Daytona Beach, came to Millington in a baby blue 1987 Cadillac Fleetwood Brougham with only 30,000 miles on the odometer. "This was Vicky's wedding present to me," Mike



Staten Island enthusiasts Larry & Shirley Farrell came to the Northeast Chapter picnic with this commercial glass 1966 Cotner-Bevington Oldsmobile limousine that was previously owned by Mike Satterthwaite.

