



The Criterion

NEWSLETTER of the NORTHEAST CHAPTER of the PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Happy Summer to everyone! Looks like the season is off to a terrific start, judging from the great turnout that we saw on June 12th for our Fourth Annual Charity Car Show in Lahaska, PA. With about ten percent of the total being professional cars representing both the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Chapter, we had more than a hundred vintage autos, trucks and street rods at Peddler's Village and, as a result, we raised and donated a new record of \$1,423.00 for the Bucks County SPCA. With apologies to anyone I may have forgotten, I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to make this show a success, including my wife Lucille Marcy and Northeast Chapter members Dan McCann, Mary & Jeff Hookway, Victoria & Mike Barruzza, Jack Cipriano, Peter DeMattia, Gregg Merksamer and Harvey Schofield.

While I hope to see many of you at the 29th Annual PCS International Meet in Denver this coming August 2nd-6th, the coming weeks will see several other wonderful events take place closer to home. On Saturday, August 20th, the Northeast Chapter's Second Annual Summer Picnic will be held at the home of Paul and Donna Vickery in Millington, N.J. Plan to arrive around 3:30 pm, and bring a professional or other vintage car if you possibly can since there is plenty of space on the property to show it off. While the Vickery family is supplying the food and the Northeast Chapter will supply beverages, please bring a dessert to share. So that we might have an accurate headcount, also R.S.V.P. to me by Sunday, August 14th by phoning (201) 342-4871.

On September 17th and 18th, we can all look forward to a joint meet of the PCS Mid-Atlantic Chapter and the Northeast Chapter in Talleyville, Delaware, which is on Route 202 just north of Wilmington and the I-95 corridor. We'll start getting together around 4 p.m. Saturday, September 17th at the Courtyard by Marriott and the adjacent McIntosh Inn, which are both about 500 feet away from a mall full of restaurants. If we like, we can eat at one of these restaurants as a group before socializing in the hotel lobby or the parking lot. Rooms cost \$69 at the McIntosh (phone 302-479-7900), while the Marriott has reserved ten rooms for us at a \$79 special rate (phone 302-477-9500 and mention code PCSS). In either case, please make your reservations early.

At 9:30 am on Sunday, September 18th, we will head to the Tenth Annual Car Show at the Hagley Museum in nearby Wilmington, Delaware, which will be featuring Emergency Service Vehicles. This is a spectacular museum in a beautiful setting next to the Brandywine River, which you can learn more about it at www.hagley.org. It is a short drive from our hotels, but we must enter as a group of we wish to park as a group. You MUST pre-register for this event using the form on the enclosed flyer - there are no day-of-show registrations!

Please plan on attending these events. You will have a blast. - BILL MARCY

PCS PARADES THROUGH ALBANY

This is the third consecutive issue of The Criterion that Your Editor has raved about the special "Help is Here" exhibit of historic ambulances and emergency artifacts at the New York State Museum in Albany, N.Y. With its September 11th, 2005 closing date fast approaching, hopes remain high that a few more readers will head up Interstate 87 and take in the evocative, comprehensive displays.

To kick off National EMS Week in style and draw attention to a "Help Is Here" EMS Challenge held in a parking area beside the Museum, Professional Car Society members were invited to show their cars in Albany on Saturday, May 14th. Joining contemporary, truck-based ambulances like a Horton-bodied Ford F-350 from the Fire Department of the City of New York, a total of five PCS member vehicles made the trip but, impressively, they represented four different states and three different Regional Chapters. National PCS Treasurer Carlton Ham, who also heads up the New England Chapter, traveled 190 miles from Franklin, N.H. to display a 1967 Miller-Meteor Embassy Flower Car that was one only six constructed to special order at the company's Piqua, OH plant that year. Further distinguished by unusual, Inverness Green paintwork, Carlton's flower car was originally delivered with a matching hearse to the Alton W. Richards Funeral Home in Riverdale, N.J. (which paid \$13,800 after a \$4,900 trade-in credit was applied to their 1962 M-M Cadillac flower car) and was honored with the Best-of-Show Award at the 1985 PCS International Meet in Toronto. Miller-Meteor's final generation of "downsized" Cadillac ambulances, meanwhile, was represented by the white 1977 Lifeliner that Scott Crittenden brought from Manchester, CT, and spectators were much-amused when it was pointed out that his vanity license plate "3-VOM" says "MOVE" when it's seen in the rear view mirrors of preceding motorists.

Another welcome, long-distance PCS delegate at the "Help Is Here" EMS Challenge was Jeff Beyer of New Tripoli, PA, who showed his Pima and Sonora-colored 1955 Studebaker Ambulet en route to delivering it to Norwich, N.Y. for long-term display in the "Red Lights and Sirens" emergency vehicle exhibit that opened the following weekend at the Northeast Classic Car Museum (see the following story). Incredibly, Jeff purchased the

car, which originally served in Erwinna, PA near New Hope, when he was still a high school student in 1972. "It was advertised in The New York Times," he once recalled to Your Editor, "and I was the only guy who responded to the ad. I had to sell my Honda 350 motorcycle in order to afford it."

While he had a relatively short, half-hour trip from Chatham, N.Y., PCS Upstate Chapter Founder & President Daniel K. Herrick turned lots of heads with his red-and-white 1970 Superior Cadillac Rescuer 51-inch headroom ambulance. Aside from a long list of options that included an illuminated roof sign, downward-pointing "ditch" lamps, double lens Unity spotlights and oversized "West Coast" mirrors, this rig had deep roots in the region's emergency service history, having originally served with the Pine Plains, N.Y. Fire Department Rescue Squad before seeing additional action in the Hudson River Valley with the Beacon, N.Y. Fire Department. New Paltz, N.Y. PCS member Myron Gittell, who spent nearly fifteen years convincing the State Museum that an ambulance exhibit would be worthwhile (the sacrifices of New York City's EMTs during the World Trade Center attacks provided the final impetus), upped the total vintage pro-car count to five with a dramatically two-toned, and never-before seen, 1958 Superior Cadillac Model 604-C Beau Monde funeral coach/ambulance "Combination" owned by Joseph K. Kelley of Schenectady, N.Y.



Myron Gittell, piloting Joseph K. Kelley's 1958 Superior Cadillac Beau Monde Combination Coach, leads the Albany EMS Parade down Madison Avenue to its conclusion at the Empire State Plaza.

Initially escorted west on Park Avenue before turning north on Lark Street and east on Madison Avenue (U.S. 20) to return to the Museum on the south end of Empire State Plaza, the PCS member vehicles proved to be particularly popular additions to the 9 am parade led by a 1961 Corvette and an honor guard of paramedics taking part in the competitions. The half-hourly contests undertaken by the Bethlehem V.A.C. "Valleys," the Glendale "Graveyard Dogs" and the distance-award winning "Chili Chicks" from Rochester included an "equipment challenge" - essentially a timed scavenger hunt inside your squad's ambulance - timed splint and bandage-application trials, a relay race employing stretchers loaded with water balloons and a "trivia challenge" where participants had to answer 20 questions about the Museum's ambulance exhibit. PCS members got to test their classic rigs against a "Driver Challenge Obstacle Course" that included a diminishing clearance test and a reversing maneuver into a simulated alley, even though the traffic cones in the slalom had to be set further apart in deference to Dan Herrick's 1970 Superior Cadillac - its 156-inch wheelbase was a whopping 18 inches longer than the 138-inch wheelbases on the Ford Econoline Type II vans (bodied by First Response of Griffin, GA) that Mohawk Ambulance Service provided for other competitors! The City of New York F.D. nevertheless swept top the three places in this contest, with the best time being the flat three minutes posted by Paramedic Orin Bonzeley.



Dan Herrick's 1970 Superior Cadillac tackles the "Driver Challenge Obstacle Course" outside the N.Y. State Museum. As its 156-inch wheelbase was 18 inches longer than those of the Ford van ambulances used by other contestants, the pylons in the slalom were set further apart.

ANOTHER AMBULANCE EXHIBIT OPENS IN UPSTATE N.Y.

Given the uniformly-positive reception afforded Albany's ambulance exhibit since it opened last November, it should surprise few of our readers that "there's more where that came from." On May 21st, 2005, the Northeast Classic Car Museum (607-334-AUTO), located about an hour north of Binghamton in Norwich, N.Y., opened its own emergency vehicle exhibit entitled "Red Lights and Sirens." Joined by several decades' worth of police vehicles, fire engines and even tow trucks, the display features several ambulances belonging to PCS Northeast Chapter members including Paul & Donna Vickery's ex-World's Fair 1940 Flexible-Buick, Bill & Lucille Marcy's 1949 Flexible-Buick, Jeff & Cecilia Bayer's 1955 Studebaker Ambulet, and Mike & Victoria Baruzza's 1963 S&S Cadillac combination coach. An extremely-rare 1941 Lincoln ambulance from the AACA Museum in Hershey, PA further augments this special exhibit, which runs through May 15th, 2006.

Another strong incentive for visiting the Northeast Classic Car Museum, which is situated about a block east of Norwich's N.Y.S. highway 12/North Broad Street corridor at 24 Rexford Street (N.Y. 23), includes the world's largest permanent collection of air-cooled Franklin automobiles, which were manufactured in nearby Syracuse from 1902 to 1934. Hours are 9 am - 5 pm daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day, while admission is \$8 for adults, \$4 for students up to 18 years, and free for children 6-and-under. "As the Museum offers special group rates," says PCS Northeast Chapter President Bill Marcy, "we do plan to make a visit and an overnight stay to the area, either in late fall this year, or in the late winter or early spring of 2006." In her capacity as the Museum's curator, Kay Wells Zaia stresses "we're part of a 200-mile Tourism Trail that takes in seven unique, year-round destinations in the scenic countryside of upstate New York, including the Museum of the Earth in Ithaca, the Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta and the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. From the Rockwell Museum of Western Art and the Corning Museum of Glass in the west, to Howe Caverns in the east, the Trail offers something new and different for visitors of any age."

LAHASKA HITS NEW HEIGHTS

Attracting a new record of 108 cars to Peddler's Village in Lahaska, PA, the PCS Northeast Chapter's June 12th Charity Car Show raised \$1,423 for the Bucks County S.P.C.A. During the awards presentation at the 4th Annual event, Chapter President Bill Marcy was particularly pleased to note that the vehicle displays represented "three car clubs that I'm aware of, including a Corvette Club, the Lincoln & Continental Owners Club and the Cadillac Club of North Jersey, which is a one-and-a-half-hour trip from here."

As was the case in 2002 and 2004, a pickup received the Best-of-Show award at the conclusion of the people's choice vote. George Porter's beautifully-restored 1946 Chevrolet half-ton also earned a Class First in the Truck All Years category, though the Maple Glen, PA resident reported "it was in rough condition when I got it eight years ago." He was still compelled to buy the vehicle, which was originally used in Oklahoma, because "I learned to drive on one of these. My father had a similar truck when he worked as a distributor of Corning glass pipe that was used in all the chemical plants." Now officially recognized by a special award, Paul Petrilla's 1926 Ford Model T Fordor from Warrington, PA was confirmed to be the event's oldest car for the second year in a row, while White House, N.J. PCS member Jon Ponulak's 1963 Buick Electra 225 convertible was judged the Most Original entrant and Ron Ross' supremely elegant 1957 Continental Mark II earned the new Show Committee's Choice Award. The 1953 Henney-Packard ambulance that George Hamlin has owned since 1969 (see the following feature story) earned top honors in the Professional Car Class and nearly garnered enough votes to win the Best-of-Show, on top of which PCS National President John Ehmer and his wife Sue snagged the distance award after driving their 1968 Superior Cadillac flower car 360 miles from Pittsburgh.

Wherever one wandered on the show field at Peddler's Village, there were plenty of interesting stories to go along with the interesting cars. One of the first entrants given extra-close scrutiny was a dramatically chopped-and-sectioned 1948 Chevy Fleetline finished in a deep PPG Indy Green subtly-accented by slightly-lighter green "ghost flames." Having also worn gold and plum-colored paintwork since it was originally customized in



Mahlon Thompson chats with fellow PCS members Victoria & Mike Barruzza as Jack & Debbie Sablich's 1964 Pontiac Bonneville convertible heads to its display space at Peddler's Village.

California by Bill Cushenberry about thirty years ago, this car was originally built for a fellow named Harold Olsen, whose glass eye was set into the steering wheel boss after he passed away. "With customs, green is thought to be a bad luck color," stated the Chevy's current owner, Renata DeJames of Warwick, PA, "but I don't believe it so I ignored it to be different." Pat Caruso of Green Brook, N.J., who serves as the PCS Northeast Chapter's semi-official liaison to the Raritan River Region of the Cadillac-LaSalle Club, displayed a childhood fantasy-evoking 1979 Coupe DeVille with 36,000 original miles and a dark blue, factory-fitted Phaeton roof. "It belonged to another club member who showed up at a local PTA car show in southern New Jersey," he said. "I didn't know him at the time, but I had to have it just as soon as the 'FOR SALE' sign went onto the dashboard."

A notable newcomer to the extensive display put on by the Lincoln & Continental Owners Club (Your Editor, who owns of a 1997 Livery Package Town Car, recently joined) was Bill Breitwiezer's deep blue 1948 Lincoln V-12 convertible, which differed from the Continental Cabriolet in its use of roll-down quarter windows and was part of the Zephyr series through the World War II-abridged 1942 model year. "This car was originally purchased in Florida by a Philadelphia-area family, and it came without a heater," the Mt. Holly, N.J. resident added it was "basically rusty trash after long-term storage in a dirt floor garage" by the time he bought it in September, 1998. "The nose was so badly rusted that I had to cut it off and replace it entirely, and the engine block had five cracks in it. But it was all worth the effort because the convertible is such

a rare body style, with only 1,241 built from 1946-48." Being a retired body shop owner, Breitwiezer handled all of the restoration work himself except for the chrome and upholstery, finally dispatching it to the trim shop in January, 2004 for completion by the following Thanksgiving. "This was number 1,109 of 1,350 bodies," he also recalled, elaborating that "the difference between the number of cars and the number of bodies is due to 'misprints,' or misaligned bodies, that were scrapped at the factory along with the body number. Most of the 100-or-so bodies discarded were made in 1946 - all of the old Lincoln employees had gone to war, and some never came back, so the plant was on a learning curve."



Bill Breitwiezer recalled that his 1948 Lincoln V-12 convertible, marketed as a Zephyr through the 1942 model year, was "just a pile of rust" when he purchased it in 1998. The restoration wasn't finished until Thanksgiving, 2004, but it was well worthwhile as only 1,241 were made from 1946-48.

Your Editor normally pays scant attention to Corvettes as they are simply not eccentric enough, but the "War Bonnet Gold" paintwork on Kevin Goodman's 1971 T-top coupe made it difficult to ignore. "They did come out with some good names back then," Goodman agreed before adding that his car, which also touted a "big block" 454 V-8 and an M-21 Muncie close-ratio four-speed gearbox, had covered only 17,000 miles under four owners. "The second owners started trailering it to shows when it was just two years old," he explained, "and the next owner, who got it in 1985, did the same thing. It has such low miles I could still drive it every day for two years without hurting its value." With Goodyear F70-15 Wide Oval tires still filling the wheel wells, Goodman further noted that his car "was judged 97.1% original by the National Corvette Restorers

Society, and it also has all of its documentation from new. An earlier owner even arranged for the original Michigan title to be invalidated and returned when he had it re-registered in Pennsylvania."

Given that it would have spent a much longer time than a Corvette being seen as a plain, old used car, spectators were even more amazed by the 1955 Dodge Coronet two-door sedan that appeared at Lahaska with just 2,777 miles on the odometer. Mating a 270 CID "polyspheric" head V-8 to a column-shifted three-speed manual transmission with overdrive, the car was shipped new to Hooper Plymouth-Dodge-Chrysler in Plainview, Texas, where the dealership owner placed it into storage instead of selling it. According to the window sticker, the car's \$2,099 base price was boosted to a then-not-inconsiderable \$2,762.52 by such extras as \$69 front and back carpeting, an \$8.95 air-foam rear seat for and a map light costing \$4.00; at these prices, the lovely Heather Rose & Sapphire White two-tone paint job was a relative steal at \$14.00, while the costliest option was an AM Autoseek radio priced at \$118.40. By the time the Texas dealer's collection resurfaced in the late 1980s, it totaled more than 70 cars, and the '55 went to a California hobbyist who kept it until 2001; a subsequent purchaser from Long Island put another 75 miles on the odometer before Bill & Becky Smoot of Chalfont, PA became the current owners in March, 2005. "This was the first thing that came up after we Googled '1955 Coronet' on the Internet at 2 am," Bill said. "The paint, interior and running gear are all-original, but we freshened the engine bay and had the brake system rebuilt. We decided it was time for it to be enjoyed as it was meant to be."



Pat Caruso of Green Brook, N.J., who serves as the PCS Northeast Chapter's semi-official liaison to the Cadillac-LaSalle Club's Raritan River Region, showed a 1979 Coupe DeVille with 36,000 original miles and a factory-fitted Phaeton roof.

