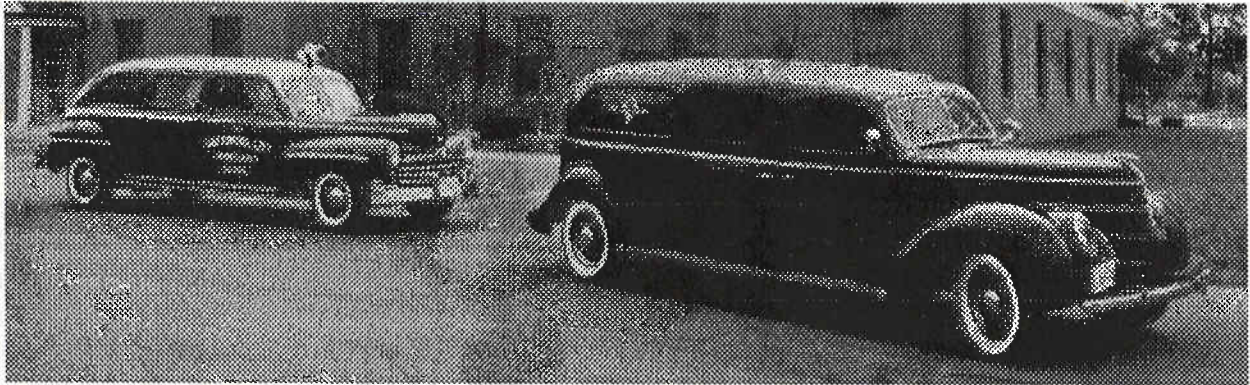




# The Criterion

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHEAST CHAPTER OF THE PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY  
FOURTH QUARTER 1999 GREGG D. MERKSAMER, EDITOR

## PCS LANCASTER '99: PEOPLE MADE IT MEMORABLE Northeast Chapter Shines In Its Biggest-Ever Show



Repeating its performance at the 1997 PCS International in Baltimore, Harry Foor's 1938 Siebert Ford Service Car won Best-of-Show at the 1999 PCS International Meet in Lancaster, PA. Turned onto Fords by a father who serviced them as a mechanic after fighting in World War II, Foor also displayed a 1948 vintage Siebert side-loading ambulance that appeared on screen in Barry Levinson's *Avalon*.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Winter Dinner Set For March 11th

Bill Marcy has announced that the PCS Northeast Chapter will hold a winter dinner to celebrate the success of the 1999 International Meet in Lancaster. Its start has been scheduled for 7 pm Saturday, March 11th at The Bonfire Restaurant, which is conveniently located off Interstate 80 at 999 Market Street in Paterson, NJ (attendees traveling westbound on I-80 should take exit 59 and move immediately to the right, while those on eastbound I-80 will find the Bonfire off exit 60 after following the signs for "Market Street Paterson" and driving two blocks after turning onto Market Street). Those interested in attending should RSVP to Bill Marcy at (201) 342-4871 no later than February 28th.

Having attracted 101 funeral cars, limousines and emergency vehicles to the Best Western Eden Inn Resort in Lancaster, PA from August 18th to 21st, the Professional Car Society's 23rd Annual International Meet is now a fond memory to its organizers. "Overall, I think we pulled it off," Northeast Chapter President Leo Maren III commented at the Chapter's November 14th meeting in Stirling, NJ. Citing the efforts of fellow Meet Committee members Mike Barruzza, Dottie Forvour, Fred & Tracy Goerlitz, Bill & Lucille Marcy (in charge of awards & trophies), Craig & Roseanne Stewart, Andy & Karen Toton (handling registration), Paul & Donna Vickery and Dan McCann, Maren added that "a lot of people did a lot of work above and beyond the call of duty. We had no major problems and we missed the highest car count at a PCS International Meet by only one car, even



Snagging the driving distance award, Jim Crabtree's 1971 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Lifeliner consumed 272 gallons of gasoline while covering the 3,362 miles from Hacienda Heights, California, achieving an impressive 12.36 mpg overall average.

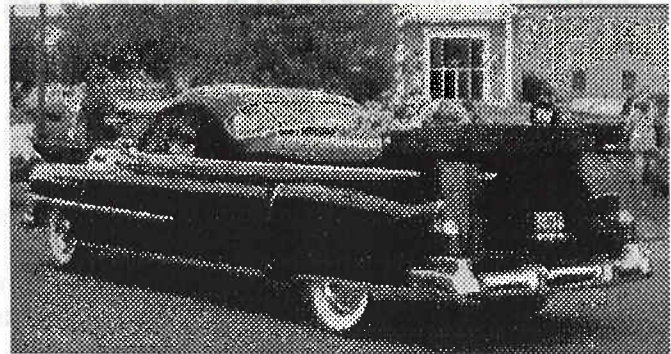
though we didn't go out begging and borrowing just to boost attendance. That wasn't our goal. We just wanted to have a good time."

While some disappointment was expressed about the lower-than-expected number of outside visitors at Saturday's Concours, Northeast Chapter V.P. Bill Marcy reported that "the message board on the PCS web site (at <http://www.professionalcar.org>) got a lot of positive comments about the way the show was run." With the traditionally-earsplitting siren demonstration moved to Saturday afternoon between the close of judging and the photo session, Marcy asserted that the post-banquet "lights-only show was very classy, certainly a fitting end to the meet when you consider the image we're trying to cultivate." Adding that "you couldn't say goodbye with all the sirens blasting" at previous meets, Maren expressed the common hope that the new arrangement would become standard operating procedure.

In spite of a rewardingly full itinerary that included trips to the Harley-Davidson motorcycle plant and the Quigley Motor Company on Wednesday, the AACA Library & Museum at Hershey on Thursday and the Strasburg Railroad on Friday -Your Editor extensively chronicled these events in the fourth quarter issue of the national PCS publication *The Professional Car* - it was the enthusiasm of the attendees that made Lancaster truly memorable. Tom Hoczyk, who

assumed PCS presidential duties from Gene Dybinski during meet week, hasn't missed an International since Decatur, Illinois in 1988, while Bob Parsons (displaying his perennially crowd-pleasing 1965 Superior Cadillac, which earned 2nd place honors in the low-top ambulance category) has been to every meet since Lima, Ohio back in 1981. These loyal regulars were joined by an impressively large number of first-timers that included 11 year PCS member Phil Occhipinti ("I'm dying to get a professional car," the Port Washington, NY resident declared at Friday's general membership

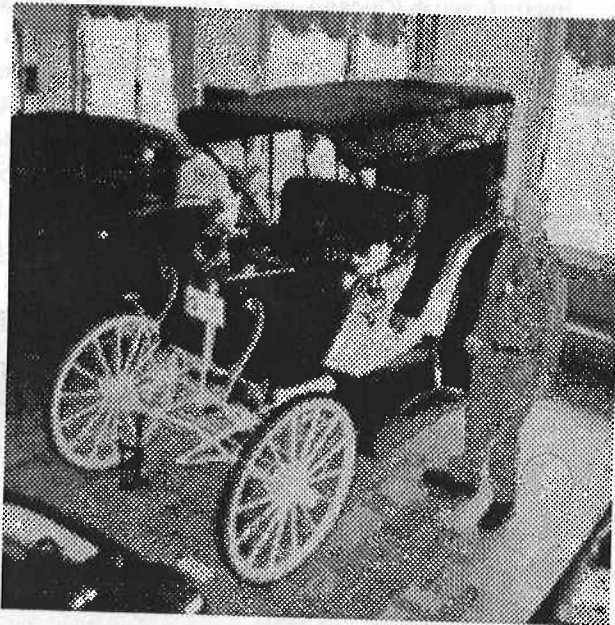
meeting) and Jensen Feather, who proved you need not spend a fortune to enjoy the hobby by displaying a 1975 S&S Cadillac Victoria hearse that he had purchased for just \$200 from an Altoona, PA cemetery. Noting that "I cut my vacation short to be here," Jeff McQuaid joined the PCS just three weeks before heading to Lancaster, where his 36,000 mile 1978 S&S Cadillac took 2nd place in the post-1970 funeral coach class, while Dan Shivolocke of Alliance, Ohio (displaying a 29,000 mile 1959 Cadillac 9-passenger sedan with factory air conditioning and the trunk-mounted scoops to prove it) formally joined the club during Friday's festivities. While it was their first PCS International as well, Easton, PA enthusiasts Joe & Mary Jane Pokojni won 1st place honors in the post-1970 hearse class with a 1972 Miller-Meteor Cadillac



Eddie Moore's 1952 S&S Cadillac Flower Car earned the first-ever Chairman's Choice Award from Leo Maren III as well as 2nd place honors in class FL.

that was finished in an extremely pretty shade called Normandy Blue.

Thanks to its successful bid to host the 2001 International in Los Angeles (it was also announced at Friday's general meeting that incoming PCS Vice-President Martin Schmeisser and his wife Barbara would host the 2002 meet in Tampa, Florida), the PCS Southern California Chapter was extremely well-represented, with Kevin O'Connell winning the outright distance award for flying 3,350 miles from LaMirada, CA. In terms of frequent-flier miles he was closely rivaled by PCS Webmaster Neil Parish, SoCal Chapter President Louis Farah and his son Louie, Jeff Ceurvorst, David Lee and Jim Crabtree, who snagged the driving distance award by covering the 3,362 miles from Hacienda Heights, CA in his 1971 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Lifeliner; joined on his cross-continental trek by Rita Delehanty, Crabtree consumed 272 gallons of gas in the process for an impressive (by PCS standards) 12.36 mpg average.



PCS Northeast Chapter V.P. Bill Marcy checks out an 1895 Benton Harbor during Thursday's tour of the AACA Museum in Hershey. The headlights on this early horseless carriage are no more than enclosed candle holders!



Bob Behr exits the Hershey Farm in his 1949 Flexible Buick after sampling such "barn raising cuisine" as baked ham, home-canned corn and Shoo-Fly Pie.

Wherever there were interesting cars on display there were usually interesting stories behind them, with first-time attendee Bill Deegan Jr. noting that his 1966 Superior Consort standard-wheelbase combination (one of only 4 or 5 survivors out of 15 hearses, 33 ambulances and 102 combinations built that year) was just one of five '66 Pontiacs in a collection that also comprises a Bonneville convertible, a Catalina in both 2-door hardtop and 4-door sedan forms and an Executive 4-door hardtop that he'd paid \$350 for. John Rabold, a TV news cameraman for the CBS affiliate in South Bend, Indiana, brought a red-and-white 1968 S&S Cadillac Park Row with pure period metallic-thread upholstery that he'd purchased "from this person whose teenage daughter wanted a hearse for attention, but she soon found out she couldn't go anywhere or do anything without being noticed" (while the car had been repainted from its original Sable Black, the glove box still contained the original two-year body warranty card dated July 3rd, 1968). Nanticoke, PA funeral director Jon Stegura took home 1st place honors in the pre-1970 funeral coach class for a 1961 S&S Cadillac Victoria that he'd bought four years earlier from a funeral home that had just been acquired by the SCI chain ("They wanted to junk it," Stegura recalled, "and I've used it for four funerals so far"). The longest shadow on the show field was cast by Leslie Frost's Fisher-bodied 1963 Chevrolet Biscayne limousine, which accommodated 11 passengers in four rows of seats accessed through two



Connecticut EMS instructor Dawson Blackmore purchased this 1957 Memphis DeSoto high-top ambulance from Gene Lichtman during PCS Baltimore '97. "In a half hour my brother-in-law had it running, and it was ready for its first fire muster the following weekend," he recalled.

doors on the driver's side and four on the passenger side (powered by a 409 V-8, the car had been built by Chevrolet for the New York State Mental Health Department). Gene Lichtman set some kind of record for the number of ambulances he *formerly* owned that were on display in Lancaster, with Dawson Blackmore of Connecticut deriving obvious enjoyment from the Memphis-bodied 1957 DeSoto hi-top that Lichtman sold him after PCS Baltimore '97. Meanwhile, Harry Foor showed off the 1948 Siebert Ford side-loading sedan ambulance that appeared in the Barry Levinson movie *Avalon* during its 16 years in Lichtman's stable. Including the 1957 DeSoto rescue wagon that brought them to Lancaster, Gene and his son Steve still own eight ambulances between them ranging from a 1947 Fxible Buick to a 1970 International.

While most of the PCS Northeast Chapter members were distracted by administrative details during meet week, several of their cars earned special recognition from George Hamlin's judging team. Featuring a raised hoodline to complement its custom coachwork, Paul Vickery's 1940 Fxible Buick took 1st place honors in the low top ambulance category, while Andy & Karen Toton's 1970 Miller-Meteor Cadillac was judged

to be the best combination coach and Harvey Schofield's 1967 Lehmann-Peterson Lincoln 8" mini-stretch limousine led the livery class. After meet chairman Leo Maren's 1974 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Criterion walk-through ambulance received the Medic's Choice Award, Ted Collins' 1966 Superior-Cadillac flower car emerged as the most-honored vehicle at PCS Lancaster '99, earning Funeral Director's Choice as well as a Class FC 1st and a special award from Cadillac-LaSalle Club president Richard Sills as the meet's best Cadillac-chassied professional car.

Sills' speech at Saturday's closing banquet was certainly one of the week's major highlights, with the Bethesda-based attorney praising the Society's "goodwill ambassadors, who promote PCS awareness by participating in the shows of other car clubs." He also conveyed the good news that the Cadillac-LaSalle Club had voted to present its PCS award, an idea originally conceived by Andy Toton for the 1998 International in Chicago, on an annual basis. Sills also recalled, in the days before the PCS existed, how he saw a lot of hearses run into the ground by rock bands as well as a 1949 or 1950 Pontiac flower car that languished in a junkyard even though he's "never seen one like it" since. "Thanks to your efforts," Sills concluded, "the hobby's recognition of the quality and rarity of these cars is growing by leaps and bounds and I salute you for it."



One of the most cleverly-modified vehicles on display was this 1977 S&S Cadillac hearse that Bill Wright converted into a service car by adding solenoid releases and metal window covers to the #2 doors and shortening the vinyl roof with painted quarter panels .

