



The Criterion

NEWSLETTER of the NORTHEAST CHAPTER of the PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Happy New Year! 2006 marks the 30th Anniversary of the Professional Car Society, but this is not the only reason why I expect that this will be a wonderful year for the Northeast Chapter and its members. As you will see in the pages that follow, we have already scheduled a number of exciting events for the coming months, and I hope that you and your family will attend as many activities as you possibly can.

Even at this early stage, volunteers are being sought in anticipation of our Chapter's hosting of the 2008 PCS International Meet in Mount Laurel, N.J., and Leo Maren III will discuss the latest news concerning this project at our next business meeting at the Sparta Volunteer Ambulance Squad HQ in Sparta, N.J., which begins 1 pm Sunday, March 5th. Call our hosts Jeff and Mary Hookway at (973) 729-8083 if you need directions.

Over the weekend of March 18th-19th, we will be in the scenic upstate town of Norwich, N.Y. for a group tour of the "Red Lights and Sirens" exhibit at the Northeast Classic Car Museum. Aside from this special display of antique ambulances, police vehicles and fire apparatus, this facility's permanent exhibits features many other beautifully-restored automobiles from the 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s, an intriguing array of aircraft engines and period costumes, and the world's largest collection of air-cooled Franklin cars, which were produced in the nearby city of Syracuse from 1902 to 1934. With an eye towards touring the Museum on Sunday, plan on meeting between 1:30 and 3 pm on Saturday at the Howard Johnson's at 75 North Broad Street (N.Y. State highway 12) in the center of Norwich, where we have set aside a block of rooms at \$69.00 plus tax per night. **To secure this rate, you must make your reservation by February 18th, 2006 and mention the PCS when you phone the hotel directly at (607) 334-2200.** On Saturday night we will have dinner together, maybe right at the Museum itself, depending on the turnout. To permit a head count beforehand, please call me at (201) 342-4871 or e-mail bmarcy@optonline.net.

With regards to other spring activities we can look forward to, anyone who owns a vintage, car-based ambulance is encouraged to display it at the EMS Today 2006 Conference & Exposition taking place Friday & Saturday, March 24th-25th at the Baltimore Convention Center. This event is sponsored by JEMS magazine, whose editor A.J. Heightman is a PCS member and the proud owner of a 1974 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Criterion; if you're interested, call his San Diego office at 1-800-266-5367 x 6847 or e-mail a.j.heightman@elsevier.com. The PCS Northeast Chapter's Fifth Annual Charity Car & Truck Show at Peddler's Village in Lahaska, PA has also been scheduled for Sunday, June 4th, and we are also contemplating a group display at the June 23rd-25th Carlisle All-GM Nationals. Though it costs \$30 to register your car for this event, it's an outstanding opportunity to showcase the PCS to enthusiasts we might not otherwise get the chance to meet; it's also not inconvenient to members of the Mid-Atlantic, Tri-State, Ohio and Mid-Michigan Chapters. If the PCS manages to get 25 cars together, we can have an attention-getting club tent free-of-charge as opposed to the usual \$145 fee.

Given that we are still in the depths of winter and that most of the big events are still a few months off, now is the ideal time for you to prep your car for the upcoming show season or, if your garage is still empty against all odds, go out and shop for one. **In case you haven't made your \$12 payment yet, please note that 2006 Chapter dues and any updates to your contact information should be sent to our Treasurer Jeff Hookway by January 31st.** As always, if you have any ideas for activities or suggestions as to how we can make your PCS membership more enjoyable, please reach out to me or any of the Northeast Chapter officers on the contact list to the left. I look forward to hearing from you. -

Best Wishes, **BILL MARCY**

HAPPENINGS AT OUR NOVEMBER SPARTA MEETING

Held on November 6th at the Sparta Ambulance Corps HQ in upstate Sparta, N.J., the PCS Northeast Chapter's autumn business meeting offered one final opportunity to reflect on 2005 activities and consider plans for the future. Chapter President Bill Marcy and his wife Lucille took advantage of the summer-like weather to give the majority of attendees a first look at their deep black 1972 Cadillac Fleetwood Series Seventy-Five limousine, which was joined on impromptu display by Peter & Skeeter DiMattia's 1989 Dodge Caravan "first call" coach. Secretary Mary Hookway read a letter of thanks from Bucks County SPCA Executive Director Anne Irwin for the \$1,423 contributed after the 4th annual Lahaska meet last June, while her husband Jeff reported that the Chapter's member count stood at 57 pending the \$12-per-household 2006 renewals due on January 31st. The latest parties to join up are the Northeast Classic Car Museum in Norwich, N.Y. (which will host a group tour of its "Red Lights & Sirens" exhibit over the weekend of March 18th-19th) and PCS Southern California Chapter President Lou Farah, who paid an astounding five years' worth of dues in advance.

After giving another enthusiastic endorsement to the "just phenomenal" September 18th Hagley Museum show jointly-attended by the PCS Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Chapters - "they had 600 cars there," he elaborated, "and it was as well-run as any show I've ever been to" - Bill passed out a sampling of PCS regional newsletters that had been sent to him in his capacity as the National Vice-President. "Some of them are extremely well-written, and I believe that every chapter should be required to put one out," he declared as the meeting attendees perused the latest issue of *The California Collector* and the *Dixie Lifeline* published by the Tennessee-based Volunteer Chapter. He also recalled, for the benefit of those who couldn't make the trip last August, that the 2005 PCS International Meet in Denver "went well" despite its taking place the same week as the Cadillac-LaSalle Club's Grand National in Iowa. "We had as many Northeast Chapter people there as local Denver people," he reported, and pre-event concerns about modified vehicles outnumbering or overshadowing authentically-restored entries were effectively diffused by how well the "two types of collectors got along - several Denver Hearse



The Northeast Chapter's November 6th business meeting in Sparta, N.J. gave many of us our first look at Bill & Lucille Marcy's 1972 Cadillac Fleetwood Seventy-Five Formal Limousine.

Association people joined the PCS during meet week. While it came about gradually, a Modified Class (within PCS) is now a reality and I don't see as a negative. A lot of cars are saved from the crusher in this fashion."

Asserting that the event has been "a great joy to me and a big plus for the Chapter in a lot of ways," Bill was pleased to see the meeting attendees pass a motion to return to Lahaska, PA and hold a Charity Car & Truck Show for a fifth time; this year's edition will take place Sunday, June 4th, a week earlier than its 2005 counterpart in order to take advantage of the crowds anticipated for the art show that Peddler's Village is staging on the same day. Aside from a proposal to erect a Bucks County SPCA exhibit on the show field, suggestions as to how the event could be further improved chiefly centered on the judging classes, even though the winners would still be decided by a popular vote. "I'm shooting to make a 20-minute awards presentation into a five-minute presentation," Bill said. "Maybe we should have first, second and third place people's choice awards with no class divisions. We could also have more special awards like a 'Chairman's Discretionary,' 'Most Original' or the 'Best Car for a Saturday Evening Cruise.'" Jeff Hookway agreed that "having only three trophies means less counting, and (less confusion over whether a car should be in) this class or that class," while Paul Vickery asserted that "judging can make things crazy" and that "we should



Jeff Hookway (left) and Bill Marcy unfurl the PCS Northeast Chapter's new banner, which will be used to publicize our presence at car shows.

keep it light. Dash plaques are more than adequate." It was also suggested that gift certificates for the shops and restaurants at Peddler's Village would be of interest to entrants, and Bill also put out a general call for potential sponsors that might be approached.

Leo Maren III, respectively the former and current President of the PCS' Northeast and Miller-Meteor Chapters, reported subsequently on initial plans for the Northeast Chapter's hosting of the 2008 PCS International Meet in Mount Laurel, N.J. While the dates are not completely-finalized, and a host hotel selection between the Doubletree and the Wyndham is still pending (both were toured by Meet Committee members on December 17th), the event will most likely be scheduled for the week preceding or following the 50th Anniversary Cadillac-LaSalle Club Grand National Meet taking place in the area from August 11th- 16th. The synergistic potential of the two events should be fully-realized by the fact that PCS President Mike Barruzza is now head of the Valley Forge Region hosting the CLC event, while the Valley Forge CLC web page is maintained by PCS Northeast Chapter member Pat Caruso. Though Mahlon Thompson is already evaluating different funeral homes for early bird tours and Rich Litton is doing the same with regards to ambulance squads in central New Jersey - other events being considered include a bus trip to Atlantic City's casinos and an amphibious "Duck" tour of Philadelphia - Leo said that help was still needed with registration, planning and logistics. "The more people there are," he emphasized, "the less work each has to do. I'm hoping that for more volunteers to work on the meet will attend our next Chapter meeting in Sparta on March 5th." He also wants to see the registration forms printed up a year in advance like David Petke (praised

by Leo as "a very organized person") did for the 30th Anniversary International Meet taking place in Tennessee this coming August 1st-5th. "I want to get things rolling before we go to Kingsport," Leo added, "because it's a monumental job and the time will go fast." Despite the challenges, he expressed confidence that the 2008 event will be well-attended since "the 1999 PCS International that we hosted in Lancaster, PA set a record, without soliciting. If every Chapter member brings one car, that's 40 or 50 cars right there." To further boost the turnout, PCS Northeast Chapter Vice-President Dan McCann noted that "we (also) plan to revisit an idea from the 1987 meet in New Hope, where regional rescue squads were invited to exhibit free-of-charge on show day. An ad in The Gold Cross, and some face-to-face contact, will help secure us some of those nice New Jersey cars no one sees. The Belmar and Hamilton have already said that they're up for it." New technology also promises to make the awards presented at the meet more interesting. "At last summer's SPAAMFA show," Leo added, "they had this company that took a digital picture of every car in attendance, which allowed the trophies to be personalized in time for the awards ceremony."

Before the meeting concluded with the re-election of all current Northeast Chapter officers - anticipating more of the same in 2006, Bill Marcy said afterwards that "working with Dan, Mary & Jeff has been nothing but a pleasure" - New Business looked into the issue of area pro-cars needing a rescue and a restoration. Fred Goerlitz showed some photos that he and Steve Lichtman had taken at Pete Grave's salvage yard in Ottsville, PA, which included such rarities as a final year 1975 Superior Pontiac ambulance (knocked down from \$1,900 at Lahaska to \$1,000 now), a pair of downsized 1977-79 vintage Cadillac ambulances, and a gigantic Superior 54XL. "Steve Lichtman made a list," Fred added, which even includes "some cars we couldn't physically get to." Leo Maren III also reported that a number of regional rescue squads could use help with the vintage car-based ambulances in their possession, elaborating that Somerville and Chester, N.J. are both working on 1972 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Lifeliners and Washington, N.J. is restoring an extremely-rare 1972 S&S Medic Mark I. "I move that we form a technical assistance committee," he said, "to get these squads excited and get them going. The CLC made these squads honorary, non-voting members, and maybe the PCS should do the same.

DELIGHTS AMID THE HERSHEY DELUGE

For most of us in the Northeast, the old car show season ends in a big way with the Antique Automobile Club of America's annual Fall Meet in Hershey, Pennsylvania. While hopes were high that Mother Nature would curtail her wrath in deference to the event's 50th Anniversary - back in 1955, improbable as it seems today, both the car show and flea market were held within the confines of Hershey stadium! - Friday's hard-and-heavy rain ensured that only the most moisture-inured mud wrestlers were still on the field by Saturday. The indoor auction at the Hershey Convention Center proved itself a welcome port in the storm, especially after your Editor encountered fellow PCS Northeast Chapter Member Jeff Beyer in the bleachers. Mixing work with pleasure, this New Tripoli, PA Studebaker fan was in the area to deliver a transformer to the Fort Indiantown Gap military reservation, and we could not have found ourselves a better post-auction dinner than the homemade chicken pot pie at Funck's Family Restaurant on U.S. 422 in nearby Palmyra. When I dropped Jeff off at his massive Navistar cab-over semi at evening's end, he graciously offered me a grand tour of the driver's compartment; the odometer showed more than 700,000 miles, and it was also extremely neat how a set of steps swung out from the side of the body when the door was opened.

Being fully-paved, the giant Car Corral in front of the Convention Center also offered incentive to keep braving the elements. One big novelty was a Russet-colored 1954 Cadillac Series Seventy-Five Nine-Passenger Sedan originally used in Brooklyn, which also touted 32,552 original miles and an under-hood trouble light on a cable. As it was one of only 889



\$25,000 was asked in the Fall Hershey 2005 Car Corral for this unusual, Russet-colored 1954 Cadillac Nine-Passenger Sedan with 32,552 original miles.



A formal roofline was the defining feature of this 1938 Cadillac V-8 Custom Fleetwood Touring Sedan offered for sale in the White Field.

produced and its stage presence was indisputable, the \$25,000 asking price seemed reasonable enough. A second, 1964 vintage Series Seventy-Five with similarly-interesting Spruce Blue paintwork, Offered at \$18,500 by West Chester, PA resident Stuart Levin (whose contact info appears in our Classifieds), also stood out as a slightly-cheaper but still-compelling alternative, though Jeff quickly noticed that its tires were a couple of sizes too small and would have to be replaced for safety's sake. A lovely "first call" vehicle could have been made out of a champagne-colored 1965 Chrysler Town & Country station wagon that appeared to have every conceivable accessory aside from wood exterior paneling, while a New Jersey hobbyist with a space in the White Field asked around \$50,000, if memory serves, for a well-kept and truly-stately 1938 Cadillac V-8 Custom Fleetwood Touring Sedan with blind rear roof panels.

BRING BACK THE FACTORY FORMAL!

That limousines are supposed to be about timeless dignity and restrained good taste is something evidently forgotten by the operators of today's block-long super-stretches, judging from the mishaps chronicled by a Jennifer Saranow-authored printed article in the October 8th-9th, 2005 Weekend Edition of The Wall Street Journal. It seems that more and more coach-built limousines are getting stuck on hills or being forced to make passenger-frightening, multi-point turns on crowded city streets, a phenomenon attributed to a dramatic increase in the average center stretch from around 36-48 inches in the late 1980s to more than 100 inches today. By omitting the front passenger seat, among other tactics, the Lincoln



With good reason, Jeff Beyer was attracted this heavily-accessorized 1965 Chrysler Town & Country in the Hershey Car Corral.

Town Car and Cadillac DTS and can now be respectively extended by 120 and 130 inches without exceeding the gross vehicle weight ratings specified by the Cadillac Master Coachbuilder and Ford Qualified Vehicle Modifier programs, while truck-based SUVs (now used by six percent of the respondents to the latest Limousine & Chauffeured Transportation magazine operator survey, more than triple the 1.6% figure reported in 2003) are routinely being stretched 200 inches or more.

As a result, the garage manager of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City observes that other cars and columns in her facility are being hit more often, while a wedding planner in Winter Park, FL has begun measuring reception sites after one of her newlywed couples, unable to get their limousine up a country club's circular driveway, had to be dropped off 40 yards from the door in a driving rain. The oddest anecdote of all came from a 27-year-old Glendale, California resident named Rachel Chen, who had to scuttle most of her bachelorette party after the 12-passenger Town Car that her friends booked for a night of martinis and manicures got hung up on a crest in front of her apartment building. "It looked like a giant black teeter-totter," recalled Ms. Chen's younger sister Miranda Watson, and it was two hours before a tow truck could arrive and yank the leviathan off its urban sandbar. In the meantime, Rachel's husband-to-be even busted his own tire jack in a gallant attempt to get the limo back onto pavement.

Acutely-aware that more serious issues are involved than the dignity of the bride and groom, the U.S.

Government's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is thinking of re-defining super-stretch limousines as busses under its design regulations, which would require them to have opening side windows or rooftop escape hatches. The state of Connecticut, which already prohibits limos stretched beyond OEM recommendations, has even had undercover agents stake out high school proms and book phony weddings as way of identifying non-complying vehicles and their operators; state DOT spokesman Dennis King observes that the stretched Hummers fined and towed away "this year have by far surpassed the ones that we pulled away last - they are bigger vehicles by at least two to three feet." Even Great Britain, reports The Telegraph of London, has had to put its Parliament to work on an updated traffic law that takes into account the increasing numbers of American-style stretches (now 11,000 in total, versus 3,000 in 2003) found in the country's relatively-narrow streets.

As a "live and let live" sort of person, Your Editor is not prone to pronouncements advocating a return to traditional values, but he has firmly concluded that it's time to bring back the discreet "factory formal" limousine as an alternative to the crass and fundamentally-unwieldy super-stretch. While a new generation Fleetwood Seventy-Five Series would do nicely enough, especially finished in a dignified shade of dark blue, gray or black, why not go all the way in the other direction with one of those tall and regally-styled British limousines? Nothing beats a Rolls-Royce Phantom VI, or one of those Daimler DS-420 limousines built by Jaguar from 1968 to 1993, when you need a conveyance that's tall enough to wear a hat - or a crown - in.



THE WAY A LIMO OUGHT TO LOOK! The regally-tall Daimler DS-420 was produced by Jaguar Cars of Great Britain from 1968 to 1993.

