

The Professional Car

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEW EDITOR

It was, looking back on the June 8, 2024 awards banquet that concluded the Professional Car Society's 2024 International Meet in York, Penn., a true pleasure and privilege to join our Publications Chair Brady Smith in presenting my predecessor Walter McCall with a plaque thanking him for the 47 years he dedicated to editing this multi-award-winning magazine. At my suggestion, Walt's well-deserved honor depicted side-by-side images of his first and last *TPC* covers, powerfully emphasizing how this publication has steadily progressed during his tenure from the black-and-white photos and typewriter-produced text of Issue 3 mailed out in the spring of 1977 to the glossy, full-color resplendency of our 2nd Quarter, 2024 Issue #201.

Having succeeded who is surely the old-car hobby's longest-serving magazine editor - I'm profoundly grateful Walt plans to stay on as a contributor! I can't help thinking of what my favorite president Harry Truman was told when he was summoned to the White House on April 12, 1945 and informed of Franklin Roosevelt's passing. After he asked Eleanor Roosevelt "Is there anything I can do for you?" she famously replied "Is there anything *we* can do for *you*? For you are the one in trouble now." The gravity of Truman's situation had certainly set in by the time he returned to the U.S. Capitol the next day to informally lunch with former Senate colleagues and told the assembled reporters "I don't know whether you fellows ever had a load of hay fall on you, but when they told me yesterday what had happened, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me."

Though my new responsibilities pale in comparison to Truman's, I can certainly identify with his sentiments despite my three decades of experience contributing stories and photos to *TPC* and all the expressions of confidence I've thankfully received from PCS friends I've long regarded as extended family. That said, it must be stressed THE ONLY WAY Brady and I will be able to fill 48 pages on average per issue is if you, Dear Readers, remember this is YOUR magazine more than mine! Please don't be deterred if you lack confidence as a writer or photographer - rest assured we'll thoroughly polish what you send us. If you don't own a professional car yourself - and I'm told something like a third of PCS members don't - emulate our steadfast New Jersey Correspondent Rich Litton by visiting your local rescue squad HQ or funeral home to see if you can shoot or make hi-res scans of any old photos they might have of their vehicles hanging on walls or archived in photo albums. I would also welcome stories about how you originally became interested in professional cars or discovered PCS, as this dovetails with my goal of focusing *TPC* as much on our members as their cars or general coach-builder history.

"The content of *THE PROFESSIONAL CAR* is entirely up to you," Walt McCall told readers of Issue 3 when he became editor in the spring of 1977. "So do keep your news and views coming in.... this is your publication." Forty-seven years later, I simply can't say it better and fervently look forward to your submissions in this spirit. As I'll be marking my 62nd birthday about the same time *TPC* #202 arrives in your mailboxes, it's also obvious my tenure won't last as long as Walt's, so I have high hopes this issue's "Changing of the Guard" will encourage our next generation of writers, photographers, and layout designers to step forward and introduce themselves.

– GREGG D. MERKSAMER