

NORTHLANDER

NORTH COUNTRY REGION PORSCHE CLUB OF AMERICA
volume XXXI number 5 May 2008





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NORTHLANDER

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Volume XXXI Number 5

Porsche Club of America
May 2008

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Cover photo
David Churcher

Porsche at
GP of Long
Beach

April 19, 2008

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MAY AT A GLANCE

Date	Event Information	Contact
May 4	Spring Rally,	rally@ncr-pca.org
May 10	Spring Thing	talauto@aol.com
May 16, 17, 18	Zone 1 Concours & Rally – Corning NY	
May 24	Autocross # 1, Devens, Ayer MA	autocross@ncr-pca.org
June 21	Autocross # 2, Devens, Ayer MA	autocross@ncr-pca.org
June 25 & 26	Kojote Motorsports at Watkins Glen	www.KojoteMotorsport.com
July 19	Autocross # 3, Devens, Ayer MA	autocross@ncr-pca.org
July 28 & 29	Kojote Motorsports at Watkins Glen	www.KojoteMotorsport.com
Aug 15, 16, 17	Driver Education 2, NHIS, Loudon NH	driver-ed@ncr-pca.org
Aug 10	Autocross # 4, Devens, Ayer MA	autocross@ncr-pca.org
Sept 14	Autocross # 5, Devens, Ayer MA	autocross@ncr-pca.org
October 1 & 2	Kojote Motorsports at Watkins Glen	www.KojoteMotorsport.com
Oct 11, 12	Oktoberfest, Gilford, NH, Gunstock Mountain Resort	
Oct 13, 14	Driver Education 3, NHIS, Loudon, NH	driver-ed@ncr-pca.org
Oct 18, 19	NCR Getaway Weekend ... The Balsams	social@ncr-pca.org
Nov 9	Annual Banquet (30 yr celebration), TBD	social@ncr-pca.org

Please note: calendar information is correct at the time of **Northlander** going to press but for the latest information you should check our web site: www.ncr-pca.org



Tracey Levasseur

I spent the better part of the winter (relatively speaking) looking for a new truck. Searching for a new vehicle is a necessary evil. I'd almost rather get a physical than have to find a suitable vehicle. I'm more finicky about picking the right car than picking clothing or food. After all, the car's got to last for a while, it's got to perform reliably and, to preserve my reputation, it's got to look good.

All this would seem straightforward wouldn't you think? Well, like panning for gold, you have to sift through a lot of silt before you get what you're after. The current truck I was driving still got me to work and back reliably, still hauled lumber from Home Depot, carried food home from the grocery store and performed its four-wheel-drive duties faithfully this past winter while getting relatively good gas mileage for a small truck. But it was a small truck with high miles and an inability to haul any kind of trailer. For those who don't know what I drove, I won't divulge the make and model just so I won't get responses that it was for that reason it wouldn't haul.

So the criteria was the truck I bought had to be able to haul a trailer, had to have an extended cab, preferably manual transmission and had to run on gas rather than diesel. Due to rising gas and diesel prices there were literally hundreds of full sized trucks for sale to choose from. But some were two-wheel drive which, where I live in rural Maine, is as pointless as decaffeinated coffee. Some were regular cab. Now, trying to take three medium-sized dogs and two people to the vet for annual check-ups, even in a big truck with a bench seat, is an uncomfortable, messy trip. Take my word for it. And what I discovered in my endless searching was that most full sized, four-wheel drive trucks today come with automatic transmissions. As a rule, the manuals come on two-wheel drive models.

My search took me from the local newspaper to the famous *Uncle Henry's* to the Internet and eventually evening prowls through car dealerships. Like a kid in a candy store these shiny machines all look so inviting until you look at the price or the mileage or the features (or lack thereof). I was resigned to the fact that I'd spend more time and money at the gas pump with a big truck so I wasn't even considering the fuel economy at this point.

And just as I thought I knew exactly what I could live with the "brand" issue cropped up. Since my little truck had been so reliable for five years I was inclined to stick with that make. But many people, including our mechanic friend, warned against it. Since I'd only driven that make and one other I was apprehensive about going with a strange, or dare I say, foreign make. After all, if I find out I don't like this other make then I'll have to start my search all over again.

After searching far and wide the strange irony is I found a truck for sale two miles from my house. I'd seen the "Arrest Me Red" beast parked at Ross Corner back in December but thought it was probably more money than I could afford, not to mention it had all these extra toolboxes and a spare fuel tank in the bed that I didn't want to pay more for. But when inspection time came for my little truck in February and the thought of being able to haul building materials in a trailer rather than carrying them precariously passed through the slider because the cap prevented them from being perched over the cab I was motivated to at least test drive the truck at the end of my street.

I test drove the monster and after some haggling got it down to a manageable price with the toolboxes and fuel tank thrown into the deal. It was a give and take situation as to what I wanted in a truck: it's got the extended cab with two

"suicide doors." Sweet. It's got a tow package and as a three-quarter ton rig I don't think we'll have a problem hauling the Porsche to events. It's ready for a plow, a bonus feature I hope I don't have to use. And its engine, the double-edge sword of the deal, is strong but consumes a bit more fuel than I'm used to. I've settled with an automatic transmission, which I'm hoping is also strong enough to tow for many thousands of trouble free miles. I'll miss not having a cap, in fact the first week I owned the truck a snowstorm left a couple inches of heavy white stuff in the bed. I've never had to shovel snow out of truck before but I guess I'll have to get used to that. The last little thing is the truck came with just a stock stereo. No cassette, no CD, no combination. For those of you who drive a lot you'll understand my frustration. But this is minor and was not a factor in my truck-buying search. Actually, it gives me the opportunity to get a new stereo of the sort that suits me.

Many of you may also be searching this spring for just the right vehicle, be it a truck to haul your track car, a new or first time track car or just a daily driver. Know you're not alone and even with all the factors that will influence your final choice it's best to do your homework, list your top needs (or wants) and do a thorough search. Because, as in my case, your next new ride may be closer than you think.

Tracey



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'05 Cayenne Turbo	Crystal Silver Metallic/Black	A81581	\$54,900
'05 Boxster S	Seal Grey/Beige	U37392	\$44,900
'05 Carrera 4S Coupe	Black/Black	U3778	\$74,900
'06 Carrera S Coupe	Black/Black	U3779	\$64,900
'06 Carrera S Cab	Midnight Blue/Beige	P80711	\$77,900
'06 Carrera Cab	Basalt Black/Natural	U3802	\$78,900
'06 Cayenne Turbo	Black/Grey	P80481	\$61,900

NEW

'08 Cayenne S	Black/Beige	P8091	\$72,820
'08 Cayman	Ruby Red Met/Beige	P8087	\$54,495
'08 Boxster S	Red/Black	P8105	\$43,390
'08 Cayenne	Black/Beige	P8041	\$58,350
'08 Carrera 4S Coupe	Speed Yellow/Black	P8101	\$109,910
'08 Cayman S	Macadamia/Beige	P8106	\$65,280



Lisa Roche

New Members:

Patrice Dumas
Line Ricard
Hooksett, NH – 2006 Cayman S

Steve Gallant
Joyce Gallant
Harrisville, NH – 2008 911

Christopher J. Miller
Ian C. Miller
Stoughton, MA – 2002 911

Alex Murphy
Jenifer Murphy
Kingston, MA – 1995 993

Stephen M. Pereira
Donna Pereira
Bedford, NH – 2007 Boxster

Leon A. Petruccio
Exeter, NH – 2000 911C2

Bruce R. Stocker
Janet Stocker
Barrington, NH – 2003 Boxster

Member Anniversaries:

1 Year:

Liz Berkner
Pearl River, NY - 1987 930

Vin Keiley
Salem, NH – 2002 Boxster

Dave Swenson
Loudon, NH – 1976 930T

Debra L. Zeras
Canterbury, NH – 2001 Boxster

5 Years:

Larry J. Gammon
Patricia Stovolone
Bedford, NH – 2004 911C4

Jon Sherrill
Nancy Sherrill
Rye, NH – 1986 911

15 Years:

Prabhakar K. Shetty MD
Shailendri Shetty
Laconia, NH – 1990 944S

40 Years:

Leigh Kelk
Linda Kelk
Sunapee, NH – 1979 911SC

2 Years:

Daniel P. Allen
Milford, NH – 1987 928

William T. Berriman
Heidi Magee
Fraconia, NH – 1987 928

Samuel F. Fragala
Charlene Fragala
Litchfield, NH – 1976 911

Andrew R. Schmidt
Carl Schmidt
Grantham, NH – 2005 Boxster

10 Years:

Charles F. Christ
Matthew Christ
Milford, NH – 1998 911

Dick Horan
Tom Minick
Manchester, NH – 1983 911

Brian K. Robinson
Christopher J. Robinson
Merrimack, NH – 1989 944

Eugene Kievit
Priscilla Sleeper
Manchester, NH – 1983 911

Please notify the membership chair: membership@ncr-pca.org if you have changed your address.

Golf!

Scenic Drive!

Shop!

Dine!

Tennis!

Surprise activity!



2008 NCR Get-Away Weekend

The Balsams Resort Dixville Notch, NH October 18-19, 2008

www.thebalsams.com



Last year was a blast!

North Country Region is looking to establish an annual weekend resort trip to enjoy a beautiful New England drive and the amenities of the many fine resort areas. After experiencing last year's great fun...come join us again. Be watching for the itinerary!

For those of you who missed last year's event...this year is a must! You may even find yourself playing some volleyball, crossing the bridge on the playground. Maybe even watching the Red Sox! The restoration has begun and things are looking more beautiful than ever.

Due to popular demand the 2008 trip will be to the Balsams Resort again this year. The Balsams is one of the top 700 hotels/resorts in the world according to the 2007 Conde Nast Gold List - the only Gold List hotel in New Hampshire! The Balsams received a 100% score for dining.

Visit the Balsams website for full information on the amenities that we'll enjoy, but here are a few highlights:

- Golf – as part of this package, enjoy \$ 20 greens fees (normally \$ 70) at the award winning championship golf course.
- Additional activities at the waterfront include badminton, basketball, volleyball, horseshoes, croquette, bocce and shuffleboard.
- Lake Gloriette - a sparkling, 32-acre spring-fed lake that can be explored via rowboat, canoe, kayak or paddleboat, all of which are available on-site.
- Package INCLUDES dinner and breakfast (Note – jackets are required for “gentlemen” at dinner.)

Options – make the weekend what **YOU** want. For serious golfers and others that want to maximize the time to enjoy the resort amenities, you're free to set your own travel schedule. NCR will organize folks that want to drive up together. It's approximately four hours from Southern New Hampshire. We will coordinate detailed plans with the final list of folks that sign up based on your locations. The resort will also accommodate folks who would like to add an additional night to their stay.

Since we were such a fun group Gary has been so gracious to extend the same pricing package as last year. He may own a Morgan but loves Porsches!

\$129 per person, based on double occupancy – INCLUDES accommodations, dinner, breakfast, evening entertainment and facility usage (outdoor heated pool, tennis courts, hiking trails, etc) \$179 single rate is also available.

We have a block of rooms set aside, but we must firm up a number quite early. **Contact social@ncr-pca.org by June 1st, 2008 to receive the registration form.** You'll register directly with the Balsams, but you must get on our NCR list first.



Judy Hendrickson

LOOKING BACK

Ellen Beck's columns are always filled with humor and are a really good read. This one from the May 1998 Northlander, Vol 21, #3 is especially fun. It is from the period when she was region president, living in Exeter, NH amidst open fields and next door to a working farm. Enjoy!

Judy

Liebe zu Ihm (For the love of it...)

By Ellen Beck, President

Nearly a year ago I was taken in by one of those cute photos in the newspaper of the Pet of the Week. In this case a small gray waif-like creature with a "gotmilk?" moustache and winsome ways. She named herself Annie, although it may as well have been Diana, after the goddess of the hunt. Her true nature revealed itself gradually, as she performed ammetamorphosis before my very eyes. She grew and grew, not only larger but hair, lots of hair. I have no idea how a petite short hair cat could become a pseudo-Himalayan with a tail so wide and expansively skunk-like that it parts down the middle. Not only did she sharpen her claws (on my furniture) but her teeth as well, as she came into her own (not unlike your president...).

Annie has the best of everything, as one would expect from a Porsche owner, but that doesn't stop her from wanting more (soundfamiliar?). She

must be the mistress of all she sees, especially including the surrounding fields and neighboring cow barn. Daily she would make the rounds preying on the unsuspecting, and my doorstep would be blessed with sacrificial offerings. Like any other parent, I began to become proud of my Annie's accomplishments, grisly though they were.

This was all fine until I had the brilliant idea of installing a catdoor. Winter was coming. I am often gone, and I am (was) a kind-hearted woman. Now, at this point you might be saying, "What fool, you, Ellen!" Be that as it may, I offered a roast leg of lamb dinner to a friend with a Sawzall, and the deed was done. Annie immediately learned to love jumping in and out. All was well until the first dead mouse showed up on my bed, while I was in it. I won't describe the crunching but the story goes downhill from there.

I struggled to teach her to leave them outside but in they came, some not quite dead yet. Birds were the worst. How she got a live starling through that little door is a mystery to me. Starlings are awful birds bigger than a blue jay, not much smaller than a crow, and ugly! Picture me with upraised broom, large panicked bird trying to hide in various house plants and a whirlwind cat jumping from refrigerator top to curtain rods to said house plants, all at 2:30 am...

But this is actually a story about mice. Specifically the (variety of not quite

dead) mouse who lived behind the dishwasher, and yes, in my oven, brought in by that darn cat. Now, I was originally going to write this column about "using the right tool for the job." I try to teach this trait at school, you know, paint brushes, clay tools and such. I could see the clear connections to cars, Porsches particularly, and the compulsion to spend late evenings in the garage (right, Scott'?). I was further going to discuss the creative use of alternatives when the proper tool is not available, too expensive, broken, etc., a common enough occurrence at a public school. Examples of this are prevalent in a mechanic's world, amateur or otherwise (right, Scott'?). And also in my own little world, in my quest to "build a better mousetrap" since the silly cat would not oblige, drat the thing! So, you can see I got sidetracked on the mouse thing (hmm, I can't stop thinking about more mouse traps).

Now they say that necessity is the mother of invention, and before this mouse became a mother, I knew I had to take charge. The situation had deteriorated to the point where I could not use the oven any more, even with the windows open (imagine a mouse nest in the insulation of your oven and what turning up the heat would do to the ambient air quality in your house). I can assure you that even though I considered this problem an act of God, the insurance company did not see it that way.

I eventually solved the situation using

a four pronged approach. I now have a useless unattractive ex-cat door in the side of my house. I went to Sears and bought a new stove. I got my dad to help haul the old one to the dump (can you believe that bloody little mouse jumped out on the kitchen floor right in front of us?) and my mom to clean for me, uck (Thanks, mom and dad). And, I finally trapped that mouse the old fashioned way with cheese AND peanut butter!

Mice being much on my mind this winter, imagine my surprise at going to an NCR tech session and hearing more about mice! Apparently Porsche wiring is a tasty treat that can't be beat. Having my own story to tell really brings out the tall tales. If you ever want a catchy conversation opener, ask people about their experience with mice and cars.

Examining a 944 billed as a daily driver, one member discovered the meaning of "buyer beware" upon opening the hood and finding a beautifully preserved mouse skull perched on the valve covers. Another member tells about a "panicked

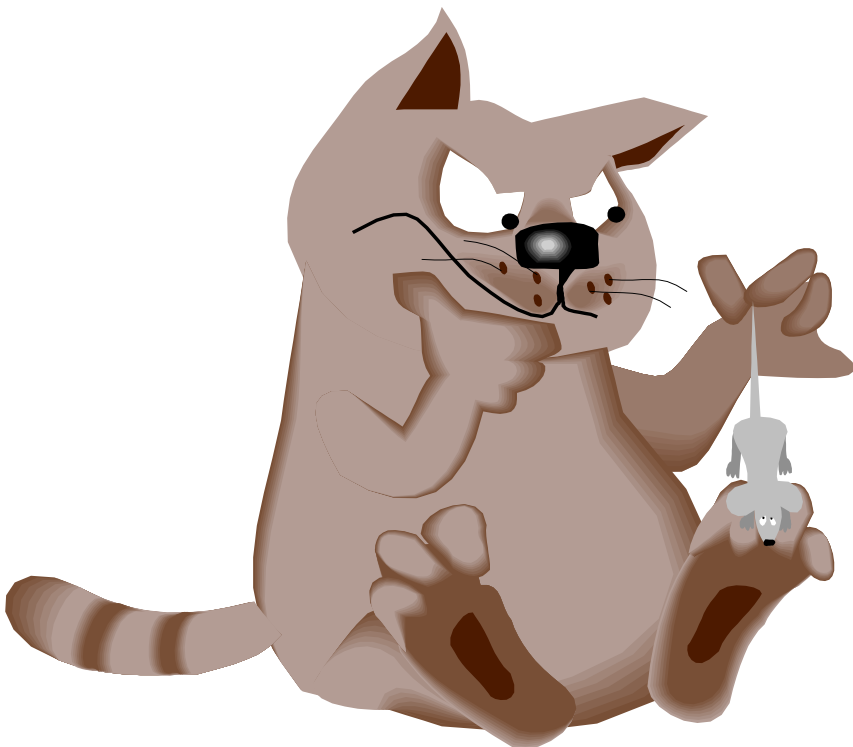
mouse in the footwell while driving" story. He calmly kept driving his 914 (that is not exactly how I handled it when this happened to me at high speed in an Opel GT). At a stoplight the mouse erupts on to the pavement and amuses all with a high speed autocross run through the traffic, where there is no set course and the obstacles may start moving at any moment!

One guy informed me that he had nuts in his manifold, due to mice. As the kids would say, I'm not even "going to go there" on this one. This same fellow then told me how mice burned down his house. Okay. (I guess there WAS a little problem with the wiring) Now in this true "Saab" story, a poor mechanic now has a few gray hairs from a dreaded mouse attack (reminiscent of Monty Python). Upon removing the air filter housing cover, a nest of babies was revealed. As he leaned in to look the unsuspecting victim was actually attacked by a mother mouse who leaped out squeaking wildly with fangs bared. (He is still in therapy).

There are many really difficult places to reach in a 911 motor, requiring contortions and delicate maneuvering to get to, so I am told. Imagine being in there and feeling something wriggling in your hair, and further feel something warm slide down between your shirt collar and neck. One might skin a few knuckles getting out of there quickly! Turns out five pink, hairless baby mice had fallen out of the sound insulation on the under-side of the hood. After he had combed them out of his hair, what did our intrepid mechanic do? Why, put them back where they came from of course, in their nest. And now for a bit of mouse trivia, did you know that the ancient Chinese applied glaze decoration to their finest porcelain pottery with a brush made from the whiskers of a mouse?

Well, you might now wonder what the moral of this story is, and I will share *this* gem with you. *If you are able, use the right tool for the job, necessity is the mother of invention and, cat doors are for the birds!*

See you at an event soon!
Ellen



Jack goes to Zone 1 Tech Tactics

Jack Saunders



Continued from the April edition of **Northlander**

Continuing with

The Basics of Turbo Charging by Chris White

Another feature of a turbo system design that the owner/driver might notice while the car is on a lift is that the air inlet pipe leading to the compressor inlet should be insulated to keep the air cool, and the exhaust pipe from the turbine exhaust should be bare like normal exhaust pipes and muffler.

Regarding turbo lag, it is minimized by modern engine management systems involving ignition timing, fuel air ratio tuning, cam timing and boost control.

Some examples of "bad" things that can happen as the price of the improved power of a turbo are 944 head gaskets fail, connecting rods that are cast fail more frequently than forged ones and pre-ignition (which is a mini-explosion rather than a fast, complete combustion of the gas, that damages cylinder heads and pistons and costs performance).

In short, due to the higher temperature and pressure of a turbo, it's vital to assure adequate safety margins.

Power Plus Power Enhancements by Farnbacher-Loles

The following input from Greg Loles is more applicable to his "deep pockets" customers and race teams but will be of interest to us ordinary mortals of modest means, because he identifies the areas of biggest payoffs which we can then attempt to improve with lower cost approaches.

The first prerequisite to any attempts to improve the performance, be it better fuel consumption, more torque or improved response/drivability is to give the car the best, most thorough tune-up and then put the car on a calibrated dyno to establish a base line performance from which to measure real, relative performance improvement.

An example of the price for improving the performance of a new 997S (365 HP + 295 ft lbs of torque) follows:

- Exhaust system redesigned to reduce back pressure on the engine while still meeting emissions and noise standards. New system is made up of custom stainless steel piping and uses aircraft quality clamps.
- Carbon fiber air box reduces pressure losses and increases air flow to the cylinders.
- Engine management system software modified to optimize performance and responsiveness, plus an overall tailored tune-up.

Performance-wise, this yields 15 extra HP and a 3 mpg gas consumption improvement. And most importantly -- a happy customer, who didn't mind paying about \$9000 for having his car "transformed" not just cosmetically but with real, enhanced performance and handling.

Loles also helps the Cayman S "improve its breathing" by optimizing (aerodynamically and pressure-loss wise) the side scoops, using one for engine bay cooling and the other for engine air intake.

An interesting side comment was that if you don't use the octane recommended by Porsche -- like 93 -- your engine management sensing system picks up the difference and automatically revises timing to be compatible, preignition-wise, with the actual fuel, but your performance will suffer.

Finally, Greg Loles confided that in new models, Porsche does not milk out every drop of performance from that engine/system, but "leaves a little on the table" for future model years and/or for immediate power increases for race cars. So, Farnbacher-Loles jumps the gun on Porsche and immediately begins to "sell" these improvements. In fact this approach is so attractive to well-heeled customers

continued on page 13 ...



Paul Frucci

It's the first week of April and there is a foot of snow on level ground outside of my house, and it is still snowing! My trailer is in the barn with 2 feet of frozen solid snow in front of the doors, so forget about bringing the car anywhere to have any work done. I just spoke to Bette French, who runs operations at NHMS, and she told me that they had to cancel the karting event this weekend and a COM event on Monday and Tuesday because you can't see the pavement. But she said "we are opening on Thursday for SCCA test and tune even if it means everyone has to get out there with a shovel"!!! Now that is depressing.

Lindsay and I just got back from South Carolina where we rented a house for a month (I'm lucky in that I can work from anywhere so long as I have an internet connection), hoping that when we got back the snow we left behind would be but a distant memory and the ice would be out. So much for that thought. Next year we're not coming back until May and I'm going to trailer the Boxster down there with me so we can do some proper touring!

OK , enough whining.

As you read this, we should have our "Season Opener" event under our belt. As of this date, it is looking like it will be very well attended with our never ever "Novice" group, Green and Yellow groups sold out a month before the event date. And I was worried about the event being too early to get a good draw!

The new registration system is working just fine in spite of a number of people having some difficulty adjusting to a new registration paradigm. It does appear that many of us can't follow directions very well. ☺

I'm very excited that we have new tech inspector right here in Wolfboro for those of us living in the lakes region. Kevin Berry at Trites (used to be Miller) Chevrolet was approved by Edgar as an NCR inspector and I no longer have to trailer my car to get inspected, as they are less than a half mile from my house. Don't turn up your nose 'cus it's a Chevy dealer. Kevin's dad worked on Porsches most of his life so he is pretty familiar with them. He has been a great help to me in getting my winter projects done on my car this year and is a great guy. I've made him my associate PCA member and he'll be driving my car at a few events this year.

One last thing, please register for our remaining events early if you intend to participate. Since we're sharing schedules with NER this year you may find that events will be selling out early. If our first event is any indication, all events will be well attended.

That's it for now. Not a lot to report till next month. As always, please feel free to send comments and suggestions to de@ncr-pca.org.

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DIRECTIONS: I-95 to Spaulding Turnpike, exit 8W (sign reads: Madbury);
RIGHT at lights onto Rte. 9/Littleworth Road; over bridge; 1st LEFT onto Industrial Park Drive;
after bend, #89 Industrial Park Drive on right. WELCOME.

.... continued from page 10

who want "immediate gratification," that some take advantage of a Loles plan to have the new Porsche shipped to a dealer in Danbury rather than to the owner's home dealer, to save time and transshipping costs.

Porsche Fuel and Motor Oil Developments by Alan Caldwell

Down with Ethanol. Porsche engines are detrimentally affected by the mandatory (EPA) addition of ethanol (currently 10% locally) because of its affinity for absorbing moisture which then passes through the engine filter and injectors fouling them while the engine is operating. The detrimental effects on the engine are even greater when the car is not driven much and sits in the garage for long periods during which the ethanol quickly absorbs and collects large quantities of moisture (1.5% of its volume) which can damage the injectors, plugs, etc., resulting in repair bills as much as several thousand dollars.

In addition to absorbing H₂O, ethanol evaporates easily, especially in warm climates, thereby polluting the air. Another enormous penalty we pay is that the energy per gallon of ethanol is only 2/3 that of gasoline, so we have to burn more of it for each HP the engine produces.

To top all of the above negative impacts of ethanol on our Porsches and pocketbooks, is the "dirty little secret" that Iowa farmers and George Bush want to keep hidden: the well-known scientific fact that ethanol *does not reduce pollution and/*

or global warming gases. Why? Because the process, starting with growing the corn, requires burning petroleum-based fuels, as does transporting it, and most definitely to convert the corn to ethanol. So why bother -- other than its good (or bad) politics?

Pending development of alternative, non-polluting sources of energy, I advocate for my family (including NCR/PCA) to conserve personally by consuming less, recycling and reusing products and to help offset the unavoidable additional pollution I create by my AX driving and attending NCR/PCA events -- by increased car pooling, etc.

There is much more on ethanol in Alan Caldwell's article on page 34 in the Dec. 2007 *Panorama*, so I'll move on to the equally important section of Alan's presentation: *Motor Oil Developments*. Again, the new challenges confronting all those who strive to drive performance cars to their design limits, derives from EPA edicts to reduce toxic emissions, which I agree with. What unfolds from the decision to mandate catalytic converters in the exhaust systems of all newer cars is the unintended consequences of the important additives to engine lube oil containing phosphates and zinc (ZDP) causing severe corrosion of relatively expensive catalytic converters. The EPA's solution was to reduce the amount of ZDP which raised havoc on older 911's that relied on high levels (of about .12%) to reduce cam and lifter wear. In some cases expensive rebuilds of older 911 engines were required. It would have been cheaper to use higher ZDP oil and burn out a lower-cost converter.

Additional important details appear in Alan Caldwell's informative article "Porsche Motor Oil Update" on page 79 of the January 2008 issue of *Panorama*. As you can see, it pays to scan your *Pano* carefully for important technical articles and alerts, even if you're too busy to read more of the magazine. Also take advantage of the Tech Q&A section of PANO where you can find out how to obtain past Q&A's on your particular model as well as pose new questions.

Meanwhile, take the trouble to check with your Porsche dealer for the latest changes in the lube oil formulations recommended by Porsche for specific models, to protect both your engine and the environment.

Although the presenters conveyed much more technical information than I have cited here, I've exceeded the space the editors allotted to me. However, I encourage you to attend future annual Tech Tactics events so you can personally garner all the detailed information you're interested in. Another payoff is learning from and socializing with other Porschephiles you meet there. I enjoyed reconnecting with Charley Christ of NCR who also attended last year's session. We enjoyed our sumptuous banquet while exchanging "war stories" with others like Pete Tremper, the Chair of this event, and his wife Bettye, the hospitality hostess. I hope to see you there next year.

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A Father and Son's Barn Find

Jim Gratton

We have all heard and dreamt about finding the ultimate "barn find" - the unmolested early 911S or the 356 with a twin cam engine or the treasure that the owner does not know the value of. The reality of a true "barn find" is becoming less likely because of the demise of many old and beautiful barns, but people are more aware of the value of older cars. But we still continue to dream.

A recent trip to "Sports Car Workshop" in Kennebunk to have our 924S "teched" for the October event at NHIS is always a great opportunity to talk "Porsche" with Corey Jacques (owner) and Rich Albanese (chief mechanic). It's also fun to look at the Porsches in the shop for repair work. There was the usual assortment of 911's and 944's, one 356 and a 1973 914 1.7. The red paint on the 914 was well oxidized. The car had a gray pallor to the chrome, black bumper covers, top and the sail panels. The steel wheels with small hubcaps gave the car the look of nothing special. I was not in the market to buy another Porsche. Jay and I, along with our wives' blessings, had decided to "purge" our very modest car collection. Jay's 914-6 track car had been sold, along with our original 1971 Datsun 240-Z and many Porsche parts that we had accrued over 19 years in PCA. We did not need to be "gatherers" anymore. But, no harm in looking! I opened the door of the 914 and was pleasantly surprised to find the black interior and gray carpets in near-perfect condition. A look at the odometer showed 22,000 miles, but remember the odometer in the 914's only has 5 digits, so this could be 122,000 or 222,000 or more. A check with Corey confirmed the actual mileage to be

22,000 as shown. The car was in the shop for a tune-up and to fix a road vibration. "I am not in the market for another Porsche, two is enough!" I kept telling myself. That evening during, a telephone conversation with Jay, I was telling him about the 914. He had more questions than I had answers. "What condition was the battery box in? Did you check the longitudinals? Was there rust in either of the trunks?" The questions went on with me not having the answers. "Was it for sale?" "I don't know," was my standard answer. The next day I was back at Corey's shop with my questions. A discussion with Rich showed the 1.7 to be as strong and fit as a 1.7 can be. The road vibration had been caused by deterioration of the transmission mounts that Rich replaced. He gave it a very healthy report. A quick inspection of the car brought a greater appreciation of the oxidized 914. The battery box was solid. There was no rust in either of the trunks and the paint in both areas was in excellent shape along with the mats and the spare tire. The longitudinals and wheel wells still had the original paint on them. Now, was it for sale? A discussion with Corey revealed that it was and that the owner was looking for a BMW 2002. He had recently undergone hip surgery and was finding it difficult to get in and out of the 914.

I called Jay to discuss my findings. He also had been doing some research. He had called Judy Hendrickson and Matt Romanowski to discuss the 914 market value. Jay has a pretty good idea of its value, having sold two 914's in the last couple of years. But Matt and Judy are great resources. When I told Jay the asking price, he was very excited. My enthusiasm was modified

by the thought of my conversation with Deb about "purging" and not "gathering" any more Porsches. The game plan was for Jay and me to talk with our spouses and for Jay to call the owner to see if he would negotiate on his price. Fortunately, Jay and I are married to two wonderful women who gave their blessings to our inherent weakness for Porsches. Jay agreed to terms with the owner and the 914 made its debut at NHIS in October. It did not partake in the DE event, but it did provide transportation to and from the track.

Jay and Matt buffed and polished the oxidized paint until it was presentable. Judy assessed the 914 and called it a great candidate for the "preservation class" at a Parade. After reading Dennis Simanaitis' article in the December 2007 issue of *Road & Track* entitled "Preservation Class" I am looking at the 914 with a different perspective. The stone chips will stay, the gray patina on the lower bumper pans will remain. As the *R & T* article states, "Restoration changes every visible surface of a car. It removes any evidence of its history. You can always restore a car, but you can never *unrestore* one. That history is lost forever."

As of this writing Jay and Jaime are planning to take the 914 to the Charlotte Parade in '08, so stay tuned. Finding and purchasing the 914 wasn't the ultimate "barn find", but it helps keep the spirit alive. Now if I could only find that early 911S. Oh, I'm supposed to be purging, not gathering!

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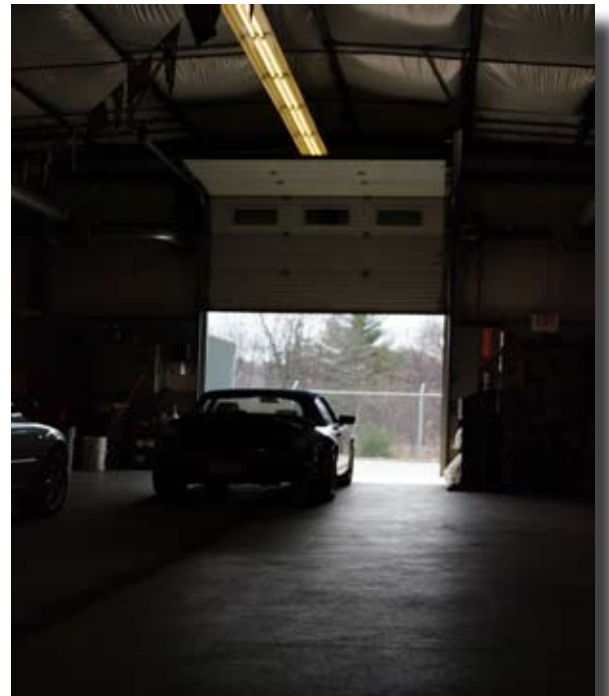


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PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MATT ROMANOWSKI

GRAND PRIX OF LONG BEACH 2008

IT'S NOT JUST THE CARS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DAVID CHURCHER







It's not just the cars.

It is the atmosphere. It is the hype. It is the anticipation. It is the high tech machines. It's America at play.

And what a unique formula we have. In Europe they imitate the USA. In the USA they imitate Europe. What a delightful concoction.

It's not just the cars. It's the lovely ladies with their wonderful way of advertising their sponsor. High shirts, low belts. Love it. It's the ethnic celebration ... Brazilian dancers. Love it.

It's not just the cars. It's the interviews. People doing their thing in high tech. Love it.



It's not just the cars. It's that global village of enthusiasts. A great many of us from the good old days of the 60's.

We understand. We know. We were there.

In those days I shot my pictures from a ditch beside the road. Or, in dangerous areas, behind a bale of hay. Today I shoot from behind two concrete barriers and two layers of wire fence. If I have a press pass ... only one layer. And then I can join those folks who stand side by side ... one with a Fisheye, and the other, with a Whopper. Henri Cartier- Bresson would die laughing. One day I will have an exhibition of pics: Motor Racing ... from behind the wire.



It's not the game it was. But I love it. Not just the cars. Those lovely ladies ... which we did not have in the old days.

Oh, yes. Lovely ladies. One Miss InCharge at the Porsche pits advanced on two Porsche engineers with some intent which they chose to totally ignore. Just as I snuck up to get a pic of the pits with a wide perspective. She failed to get the attention of the German engineers but saw me. Oh, dear. I am lunch. Damn, ich bin ein Paparazzo ... swatted by a witch's broom. Oh, damn. But I have a pic.

Oh, such fun. But I am glad I was here in the 60's. It was real in those days. Less hype and more about the cars.



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Don't forget to put RSVP for Spring Thing in the Subject line!



INTERVIEW WITH JOHN BOBBITT RACE ENGINEER PATRON HIGHCROFT RACING

The following paragraphs are an interview with John Bobbitt by David Churcher.

Jack Saunders recently commented on meeting John and mentioned he was a race engineer with Highcroft. My immediate reaction was: must meet John and talk cars and engineering. Kevin set up the introduction and John generously agreed to the interview. And this while travelling from St. Pete to Long Beach. Indeed, most of his text was written on his lap top at the airports.

I had my own plan to be at Long Beach and made a tentative plan to meet John there. His Highcroft pit colleague helped find John and we then had a conversation about the car. All this while they were getting ready to race. Come Saturday I wished them well but being a loyal Porsche person I wished them only

to second place. But they won LMP2 class anyway. A well deserved win. I am amazed at the team's enthusiastic help and I am very grateful too. Thank you, John. Thank you, Patron Highcroft.

When Jack Saunders reported on meeting you in Canada he described your title of "Race Engineer" as being "someone who is a qualified engineer and able to decipher drivers' comments and wishes in to engineering terms ..."

In the 1960s Mark Donahue was appreciated by the car builders because he was a qualified engineer and able to do this. So can we presume that today drivers are still more athletes than they are engineers and this role of "Race Engineer" has needed to be filled?

You ask about Race Engineers and drivers. It is true that most drivers are

not race engineers, just as most race engineers are not drivers, at least in the professional sense. However, I think drivers have evolved considerably from Mark Donahue's time. Mark was a rare driver in his day for his appreciation of the data coming from the car. Today, if you want to be successful as a driver, you must have an understanding of the data and trust it to help you go faster. At the same time, there is far more data coming from the cars, particularly at the top levels of racing. An ALMS P1 or P2 car can have well over 100 different channels of information being relayed to the pits in real time. After every session, the engineer and driver sit to review it. Not all of it is relevant to the driver, but there are key parameters that are covered. The parameters vary driver to driver, but the goal is always to make the car and driver combination faster.

The driver thinks he knows what inputs he



Photograph on page 22: John Bobbitt at Long Beach Grand prix April 19, 2008. This page: the Acura LMP2 which won its class and out ran the Porsches. Photographs on page 25: the final minutes of the race. Photographs by David Churcher.

gave the car, and the resulting response. The data helps to verify this, and hopefully helps to tell you why the car had the response that it had. For instance let's say the driver complains of understeer developing after he gets off the brakes. There can be many causes that could take a lot of testing to resolve. Some might be obvious setup issues like weight, incorrect springs, bars, or damping. There could be other less obvious causes however, like a bump that occurs right as he gets off the brakes, a differential problem, a front caliper is sticking, etc. The data helps to identify the cause. So the engineers need to be able to listen to what the driver is saying and listen to what the data is saying and try and make sense of it.

There is also another aspect of the race engineer and that is in planning. At an event track time is limited, so every lap has to have a purpose. Sometimes it can be long lists of test to help understand the car better. Sometimes it might just be turning laps to let the driver get comfortable with a new track. In any case,

there is a definite purpose to the laps. Just the wear and tear on a P2 car can cost well in excess of \$10,000 per hour, not to mention the logistics costs of the transporters and crew, so you even have to use private test time with a purpose.

How does an engineer become a "Race Engineer"? Is it a degree complimented by a love of the sport and knowledge gained by being in it? Are there accredited courses where one learns suspension design, roll centers, shock rates, anti-ackerman, etc.?

To become a race engineer, first you must become an engineer. There are some race engineers without an engineering degree, but they are becoming rarer. Then you need to get on with a team, typically as a data acquisition engineer. In this role, you are responsible for all of the sensors and wiring on the car. The job can become monotonous at times – there are checklists of sensors to inspect and calibrate, and when one goes down, all eyes are on you. But this is how you

learn about the sport. Depending on the series and class, you could either then move to a race engineer role, or become an assistant engineer on a bigger team. In addition, you could become a performance engineer. Their role focuses on the computer simulation work and to recommend changes to the car. The biggest obstacle is probably getting onto a team in the first place. The Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) sponsors an intercollegiate race competition called Formula SAE. College engineering students design, build and then compete with basically an A Mod SCCA autocross car. Participation in Formula SAE is not a guarantee you will get on a team, but it will certainly help.

Pressing one more question on this line: Colin Chapman, Gordon Murray, Ron Tourenac, Len Terry, and all the similar people seemed to have the same role plus do the design. So is it logical to think our new breed of engineers will become the

continued on page 23...



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... continued from page 21

new breed of designers? ie they have the best of both worlds and all the needed skills.

I think the combined race engineer/chief designer role is pretty rare. First, outside of F1, there are few places where race car manufacturers race their own product. In the ALMS, all of the "factory" teams – Audi, Porsche, Acura, and Corvette are run by private teams with factory support. To be able to serve both roles of race engineer and design requires two different skill sets. Being able to do both could be an advantage, but your focus would be divided so much that you would need to delegate responsibility to other people to do both jobs well.

And now some questions about your car and Highcroft. Maybe some of these questions are not what the Team can answer without giving away too much. But I will ask.

The car, I understand, started as a Courage chassis and was modified. The engine is a US designed and built engine from Honda. Do I have this right? And was there also another chassis evaluated? Can I ask you how the Courage was evaluated and changed? From what I know of the builder that chassis was/is top notch and developed in a very high tech shop.

What is the relationship, and exchange, now with Courage? And, how much independent development is being done by you and Highcroft?

I cannot comment too much on our Acura, but I will answer what I can. The Acura did start life as a Courage, but it has been extensively redesigned, to the point it is now homologated as an Acura. With regards to development of the car, it is continuing. HPD (Honda Performance Development) builds the engines in the USA.

The graphite fiber chassis is a high tech design and material. The graphite is not isotropic and does not like crashes... how do you maintain such a chassis? Is it monitored with strain gauges? What degree of crash damage can it sustain before it is rejected?

A carbon fiber tub is high tech, but fairly common these days. As you say, unlike metal, carbon fiber is non-isotropic, in other words, its behavior

changes based on the direction of the load applied. This characteristic of carbon is one of its advantages. A piece of aluminum can have ribs added to provide more strength in one direction than another, but it would be bigger and heavier. Carbon strands can easily be oriented in the mold so they provide strength in the directions that are needed. Carbon can be more brittle than metal, so it stands to reason that it does not fare well in a crash. That is dealt with in the chassis design. Suspensions and body work are designed to break off where it won't damage the carbon tub. At the same time, they absorb energy from the crash, which helps to lessen load into the tub, and more importantly, the driver.

We don't monitor the tub with strain gauges for crash damage. Careful inspection of the tub for damage after a crash is typically all that is done. The tub, like all critical parts on the car, has a life measured in track hours.

Suspensions. Roll centers. Negative camber. Anti squat. Anti dive. How much of this is tunable and is it changed for each course? There is a consulting company in Toronto who have a computer map of every significant course in the world ... do you use the services of such a consultant or have you developed your own maps, spring rates, etc.?

As far as adjustments on the car – all that you mentioned and much more are tunable. Every option is available to tune at a given track. We will look at previous tests and races on a particular track, as well computer simulations, to determine a starting setup. From there, driver and data feedback guide our subsequent changes. Track data in its most basic form can come from the data acquisition system. By knowing wheel speed and lateral g's, you can generate a pretty good track map. We do have other methods of generating more accurate data if needed.

Being an enthusiast as well as engineer you must need to drive the car yourself ... just to check of course. Yes? Can you describe the feeling of driving an LMP car?

I would love to drive the car. I need you to talk to my team owner. Other than the drivers, the only people who drive the car are the occasional crew member to move the car from pit road to the transporter and visa versa. *What do you think of the restrictions the ACO have placed on LMP2? Do you think LMP2 may over run LMP1 anyway? It seems on the tighter courses Porsche has shown Audi the way home. Perhaps Highcroft will add to that trend?*

With the new restrictions on the LMP2 cars it will be tough to beat the LMP1 cars. The added weight and smaller restrictor of the P2 cars is going to take away some of the advantage the more nimble P2s have had. I think this year will see more P1 overall victories.

John Bobbitt

Race Engineer

Patrón Highcroft Racing



New London Car Show, Sunday July 20, 2008

Judy Hendrickson

The Town Common of New London, NH again hosts the 2008 NCR Car Show sponsored by the Michael Bernier Insurance Agency and Porsche of Nashua. Net proceeds benefit the NH Food Bank and additional cash donations or non perishable food stuffs will also be accepted.

This year's twist will be a Mystery Judged Area. Bring your car cleaning supplies. At the start of People's Choice Balloting period, the Mystery Area will be announced and 30 minutes will be allowed for each entrant to clean that area. Judging will be done by a selected

team of fellow entrants in a different class. Ranking will be in order of cleanest/best condition.

Bring a picnic lunch or grab a bite at one of the many eateries nearby. See www.ncr-pca.org for more details.

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Class Awards (People's Choice and Mystery Area Judged), Honorary Judges Choice, Best Overall People's Choice and Best of Show Mystery Area Judged. Classes dependent upon entries. Race car class requires roll cage.

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Car placement begins at 10AM Judging Begins at 11:00 AM

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Questions:

Judy Hendrickson, 603-881-7576, concours@ncr-pca.org

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____ PCA Region _____ PCA Membership# _____

Model Year _____ Porsche Model _____ Color _____ Body Style _____

Hemmings Motor News will be holding its second New England Concours d'Elegance on July 20 at the Stratton Mountain Resort in Vermont, and one of the featured cars will be the 1973 and earlier Porsche 911. For this invitation-only event, we have set aside a space for the display of 12 cars in this class. We would like to invite members of the PCA's Zone 1 to submit their cars for consideration.

Each car owner, and his or her guest, will receive free admission to the Concours. Minor children will receive free admission as well. At least one photograph of each car selected for the display will be featured in Hemmings Motor News; in addition, we may select certain cars for full feature treatment in our monthly magazine Hemmings Sports & Exotic Car.

The New England Concours d'Elegance will be held on the golf course at Stratton Mountain Resort in the Vermont's beautiful Green Mountains. The Concours caps a weekend of events that begins with a tour from our headquarters in Bennington to Stratton on Friday, July 18, and an open-to-all car show on Saturday, July 19. More information about the Concours is available at <http://www.hemmings.com/events/concours.html>; details about Stratton Mountain are at www.stratton.com.



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Part 2: Hooked!

Many things became apparent during my first DE, but none was more obvious than the shame it would be to subject our pristine 2003 C4S to the rigors of what I now knew would be a very extensive track schedule. If I was lathered up on an icy, early spring day, it was not hard to imagine what the situation would be like in August. "Hey, that's a hot car." For sure, it's a saunamobile. Supple leather seats, *adios*. A couple of sharp, serious-looking, dedicated track cars were for sale at the March DE and I had gone so far as to get their owners to take me for a few laps in them. So, with Sue's cardiac arrest inducing, gung-ho approval I did what any unhinged, impetuous, smitten-with-love, this-is-the-real-thing novice driver in their right mind would do...I bought one of them!

April 13-14: NNJR at Lime Rock

We had given up on the idea of staying closer to the track. Maybe it was a premonition of large expenses to come, but it seemed wasteful to spend the money on a room when we could sleep comfortably in our own house. The downside to this was our need to get up before breakfast, as my Uncle Bernie used to say. On a roll in the premonition department we decided that Sue should drive our daily-driver along behind me. Gas prices being what they are, that decision effectively dumped any savings we might have realized by staying the night at home.

It was dark and chilly as we loaded two bottles of water, a box of Band-Aids, a quart of oil, a roll of paper towels, some glass cleaner, a small pouch of wrenches, and my helmet into the quickly maxed-out trunk of our gleaming, 1978, Guards Red 911SC. Blaming it on the lack of light it took me quite a while to get strapped in and get going. Mysterious things these 5 point harnesses. Further complicated by the roll bar, the car's set up was not exactly conducive to great visibility on the street. Ever since selling my Volkswagen Corrado, a vehicle designed with a great black hole of non-visibility, I had not felt that making a lane change on a deserted, small-town road at 5:30 in the morning was an act

worthy of the Flying Bandini Family. In an attempt to reclaim use of my windows I reenacted the good old days, undid the shoulder straps, and rode with only the lap belts fastened, all the while trying to get the image of crash test dummies' torsos snapping forward out of my mind's eye. Would slipping my helmet on attract too much unwanted attention?

On the way to our new home-away-from-home, Lime Rock, a feeling of nostalgia settled in. There were things that were mighty nice about the newly-spurned, street-worthy 996, like a heating system, visibility, seating like a custom-fitted Barcalounger, Bose, and xenonfreakin' headlights! All these were notably absent in our current ride, a ride that was teaching me from the bottom up what a track suspension meant for comfort on the street. Yow! I would swear in court that when I ran over a gum wrapper the car did a foot long, sideways shimmy. Because nothing thicker had been dropped onto the roadway I missed out on the opportunity of piloting the first 911SC into space. Okay Charles, wave to the Verizon satellite.

As we got to the track the routine of signing the track waiver, parking, and check-in felt familiar, even with the changes implemented by a different PCA region, the Northern New Jersey Region. But, say New Jersey to me and memories of a year from hell spent supervising the installation of store fixtures in Northern New Jersey start flashing back. In a calm, soft voice Sue assured me that we were at Lime Rock, not in Paramus. After the Drivers' Meeting I walked around the paddock until finding my instructor, Brian Carr. Introducing myself, I saw that behind his pickup truck there was an enclosed trailer with graphics on its side announcing the Carr Family Dentistry. This thrilled me. What luck. Finally, I could get a dentist into MY chair!

The first run started off okay and it turned out that Brian, like Dave Bassett my original CVR instructor, was a great guy, and like Dave he possessed a large reservoir of patience. Even though I now had two days (in reality less than 160 minutes) driving experience at Lime Rock, it was all still very new and confusing.

Plus, I was in a different car (hmmm, you could get a lot of mileage out of that one). As before, there were lots of inputs and distractions, too much looking nearer rather than far ahead, and my tendency to try and go fast before having the skills to do so was still quite evident. I had been a passenger in this car before buying it and knew that it was a quick car. Everyone I met had been calling her a *momentum* car because the engine was stock at 180 horsepower – the car had been built with G Class Club Racing (uh-oh, the "R" word; "Sue, quick, cover your ears") in mind – but in the hands of a skilled driver she could move. Once on the track the stiffened suspension was no longer a bottom-breaker, it was an ally. Visibility ceased to be a cause of concern; I could see ahead and behind just fine. The belts and seat combination felt good and secure, particularly now that I had buckled the shoulder straps as well as the lap straps. The sun was out and I was thankful the weight of a heating system would not be a negative factor, only serving to defeat my quest for a record-smashing lap time. Isn't it amazing how cold and hot temperature conditions can disappear when out on the track? I love that!

Mid-way through the second run session Brian told me that we had just been black-flagged and we should get in to the pits. I asked him nervously what it was that I had done wrong. There had been no metal-to-metal contact, my passing signals were not the kind you are likely to get on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, and I had removed the fuzzy dice from the mirror before going through tech. Was Brian able to signal for a self-imposed black flag through his microphone without me hearing him? Like some kind of dogs-only ultrasonic SOS? Or was his frantic waving and putting his hands at his throat as if choking as we passed Pete Watson at the start-finish line a secret, instructors-only, signal for help? No, that's just being paranoid. Still, there was that disconcerting grinding sound that had been coming through the headset, finally becoming distinguishable (remember the radio contest, *The Secret Sound?*) as the continual grinding of teeth. "Hey Brian. Buddy. You better stop that, or you'll end

up as a patient in your brother's chair." Does an instructor grinding their teeth count as metal-to-metal contact?

Brian said to give the pit-in signal, which helped take the mystery out of where the entrance was to the pits. As we slowed we moved over to the right and stopped next to the steward, who asked me to pop the engine compartment lid and very quickly determined there was an oil leak coming from the chain tensioner. "A common malady among these cars," and he added, "Better take her in and see if you can fix the problem." Thus started a very frustrating but educational couple of hours.

Of course I had no idea what anyone was talking about, but could see where the oil was coming from and that it had been landing on the exhaust system, sending up smoke signals to the tribe. What do you do in these situations? Brian said that he had updated these problematical parts on his own 911, but was not packing any spares. Someone walking by said I should ask a person they knew who was around the paddock, whose name I really should have written down afterward, because he was really helpful. He might have the right part. I found him and asked, but he unfortunately did not have the right hand one, the one I needed, but he did have the left. Deciding to call the Mounties I called Dan Jacobs, worried about interrupting him from one of the thousand more important things he would be working on. I didn't know Dan all that well, but now that I know him better it comes as no surprise that he was very calm and sympathetic, saying that he had the part and we should take a ride to his shop, about an hour away. This was do-able. We had a second car with us.

As hateful as it is to miss any track time, there would be no track time at all and no way to get the track car home if we did not get the part and fix the car. Sue and I headed to *Hairy Dog Grrrage* and decided to get lunch on the way back. We had nothing against the Lime Rock snack bar, but after experiencing one of their pulled-pork sandwiches I would suggest that if you want barbecue, go to a state where they say "Nahs," when they are really saying nice. Once at *Hairy Dog*, Dan handed me a sealed plastic bag that had a fresh replacement for the broken part and said to scram, get back and fix the car, we could settle up later. Now that's a man who understands track time! Knowing that the Green Run Group was not heading out again soon we stopped for lunch. In this relaxed atmosphere I am positive that I told Sue to hurry up no

more than twelve times. You know. No rush. Take your time. Finish your coffee. What is taking you so long?

Back at the track I started to get apprehensive about changing the part. Even though in a past life I had owned a woodworking shop, anything I got involved in that was machine repair or metalwork-related was a danger zone. Simple tasks in my hands could, and usually did, get out of control, sometimes with spectacular results. Still, the repair looked manageable, so while planning a pre-repair period of meditation I found my not very extensive wrench selection and set about confronting the repair. As always, Murphy dictated the size wrench needed was not with the ones I brought. Probably, during a motorcycle repair back in the sixties, it did a one and a half gainer into the gas tank. Then, I likely forgot where it was and never retrieved it, just adding to the collection of strange, untraceable sounds generated by a vintage Triumph Bonneville. Needing the missing wrench taught me one of the best lessons that I have learned from PCA DEs: the people are generous with their time, advice, and gear. Walking over to the nearest enclosed trailer I asked someone who was just starting to suit up for his run whether he had any wrenches. He pointed towards the tool chest in his trailer, saying, "Take what you want and when you're done, just put it back." He finished putting on his helmet, fired up his car and headed off to staging. "Wow," I thought, "That's really nice of him. Now I can, after all these years, replace my missing wrench."

Okay, here goes. Full Lotus position. Ohhhhhmmmmmm. This shouldn't be that complicated. I can see the connections at both ends. I can do this. First let's carefully undo the nut at this end. **WHAAAT! IT'S ALREADY LOOSE! ALMOST FALLING OFF! YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING! I MISSED TRACK TIME AND DROVE ALL THE WAY TO OXFORD AND BACK AND NEVER THOUGHT TO PUT A WRENCH ON WHAT WAS A LOOSE NUT, NOT A BROKEN PART. AAAARRRRRRGGGGHHHHH.** Man-oh-man. Now that I have cleaned the part it looks like it was a new one. What a blunder. And as much as I say that this will never happen again there is no question that some variant of this misadventure will lurk and pounce on me sometime in the future. On the bright side: nothing was broken and I could drive again when the time came. This is good. Worse things could have happened than losing 1½ sessions. Blah, blah, blah.

Idiot!

"Hey Brian. Good news. Car's fixed. We can get back at it! Brian? No, it's sunny. No, I didn't feel a rain drop. No, I don't recall reports of a category 8 hurricane heading this way. Stop! Brian! Come Back!

The last session of the day and the entire following day were great. The car is a lot of fun to drive and Brian continually gave me good advice and positive encouragement. The most memorable thing he taught me over the two days was through his repetition of a single phrase. Each time I headed towards the apex of a turn he would say, "Look where you want to come out." All the way through the rest of the season, no matter what track I was on or what the driving conditions were, as long as I remembered to follow these words my driving was smoother and more balanced. I will always be very grateful for his efficiently worded, effective coaching.

April 21: HCP at Lime Rock

"Baaaaack ihhhn thuh saaaddle agin."

Just after the Drivers' Meeting and I'm standing next to my car when the sun is blocked out from the sky. What the heck? Eclipse? Walking towards me is a man whose helmet in his hand looks to be the scale of an old style, white tennis ball. This guy is Ohio-State-tackle-and-a-half big. No way. He can't be my instructor. Remember, my car has 180 hp. If he gets in I'm guessing we're bang-zoom down to 120. Well, his concerns were different than mine, but related. After he looked at the car's number he asked if this was my car. I answered in the affirmative. He nodded and took a look inside and saw the Sparco seats. Now I saw where his thinking was headed. He asked if I minded him trying to fit into the passenger's seat. The attempt was over quickly. His left cheek – no need to specify north or south – didn't clear the doorway. We were both equally relieved. Maybe he saw some crazed, want-to-go-fast gleam in my eye that disturbed him. I, on the other hand, saw the possibility of lap times so slow a search party would be sent to look for us. "Control. This is 8. Have you seen 633 lately?" He said he'd find me another instructor and trade places with him. "Okay, as long as you're sure, that's fine with me," I said with reckless good will. Five minutes to checker had been called

for my group and I was without a coach, so I anxiously walked alongside him to try and nudge things along. Great! We got one! This time he was about 5'-9" tall and maybe 135 pounds, easily within keeper limit. Excellent. Paul Newman 55 second lap times, no problem!

Regretfully, my driving made him very nervous. Imagine that. Some people want to live. He didn't sign me off. Instead, he bailed after one session, saying he would find me yet another instructor and took off like Mark Spitz going after the gold. Strike two. Ultimately, the third time was a charm. A young guy – strange to say things like that, but time is indeed disappearing like both of these instructors – approached and told me he is my new instructor and that he is a Racer. The "R" word again. Very cool. Naturally, this sounds fine to me and physiologically he splits the difference between #1 and #2, so off we go.

A word of advice: if you get an instructor who says they are a racer, make sure they have their own ride that day. I didn't and paid for the oversight. Quite naturally he wanted to see how the car handled and got in the driver's seat, carbon fiber helmet and all. Then he proceeded to drive for almost the entire session. "Hello? Hellooooo? Is this thing on?" When my senses returned I asked whether I might have a go at driving and he pulled in to the pits at the next opportunity. We switched places and I got to drive a half lap until the checker was thrown. In his defense I freely acknowledge he had the 911SC momentum-bomb zipping along smoothly and quickly. I enjoyed experiencing the car's capabilities and since speed feels good to me it was all just fine. In fact, maybe if while he drove and I sat out the next session he could shave another second or two off his best lap time without my 150 lbs. of ballast. I could stand on the balcony of the Tower and cheer him on. Maybe have some T-shirts printed up. Kidding aside, I learned a lot from this man. He introduced me to some alternative lines and like Dave Bassett and Brian Carr before him, he helped me start to understand some of the basic principles of performance driving, taught with admirable reserves of patience and kindness.

During the third run I got black-flagged again. A clamp holding the exhaust system in place had worked loose and a flagger spotted the almost-dragging pipes. With the wire and pliers that had been added to my now growing tool kit a temporary fix was fast and easy. We were back on the track for every minute

of the last run.

May 7-8: NNJR at Summit Point

Sue continually amazes me. When I suggested a DE adventure to West Virginia she was all for it. With her unique blend of carbonated enthusiasm and clear-minded logic she asked whether we would drive two cars down, like we had done at Lime Rock after getting the track car. "Okay Sue, glad you asked me that. I think if we are going to far away events we should not count on driving the track car. It's uncomfortable for a long drive and you never know what might happen during an event. The car could break down, or worse." Sue pondered this for a moment and asked, "Are you talking trailer here and can we tow a trailer with our station wagon?" "Umm," I answered. "Okay," she said. "Just tell me." "Ummm," I answered, my vocabulary nothing, if not consistent. "It does mean a tow vehicle AND a trailer." "And I'll bet you've already done a little research," she ventured, having had some prior experience in this kind of discussion with me. "Ummm...yes," I answered. The next day, further depleting the money we had been setting aside for our toothless years, we bought a pickup truck, followed a few days later by a steel trailer. The track car was in Oxford, CT, having some things done, and when we went to pick her up Dan Jacobs showed us how to load and secure her and said, "Now you know why we all drive around in pickup trucks." We were ready to head south to Summit Point Motorsports Park. YeeeeHa!

At Dan's suggestion for this, our maiden voyage, we headed to West Virginia through Scranton, PA, rather than take the more harrowing George Washington Bridge route. Having made the trip south far too many times on route 195 I agreed with him. The inland route is not that bad and I had some experience driving it, as well. The ride to S. P. ended up taking a little more than 8 hours and as we got closer to the track the roads between the little towns and farms got narrower and narrower. Not being used to driving "big rigs" it took a lot of concentration and in a few instances some luck to make it there without incident. Ah, the relaxing sounds of Sue's terrified screams. No, I was not yet ready for an enclosed trailer.

West Virginia. The only state to secede from a Confederate state when it split from Virginia in 1863. Even though I have no first-hand recollection of that

event, I do remember the *West Virginia Mountaineers* when Jerry West –*Zeke from Cabin Creek*– played guard, as well as another great guard, Hal Greer, from Huntington's *Marshall University*. Now I go once a year, on business in January, to Charleston, Morgantown, and Huntington, and have more than once become seriously delayed because of ice storms in this mountainous state. Although there might not be very much clean water in the Kanawha River, where it bisects the state capital, Charleston, jet-assisted fish deliveries come to the rescue – flying fish – and as a result, Charleston has a very good seafood market with a restaurant. Mmmmm. Blackened snapper. Unfortunately, the racetrack is not very close to Charleston. Anyway, we got in to our hotel on the late side and had dinner that evening at a place whose name I forget, wouldn't recommend if I remembered it, or just can't recall due to lingering effects from the chemical content in the food.

When I applied to this event I had also e-mailed Brian Carr, my NNJR instructor from Lime Rock, asking him whether he would be at S. P., whether he knew the track, and if the answer to both was yes, whether he would consider being my instructor again. To my surprise and delight the answer was yes to all three questions. We were hooked up and ready to go. At the track we decided on where to meet for my run sessions, a very uncomplicated matter, considering we were parked next to each other in the paddock.

At *Summit Point* when you leave the pits you are about 2/3 of the way down the main straight, accelerating towards a tight, increasing-radius, right-hand corner. Braking hard to make it through this turn you then sweep through constant-radius turn 2 and exit to a short straight where you can get on the gas hard and then the brakes hard as you set up for turn 3, a slippery, flat, but feeling off-camber left-hander. Well, after some timid and clumsy warm-up/orientation laps I was ready to show poor Brian what I could do and went charging towards turn 3, not fully understanding that I was AT THE LIMIT. OhhhhhBaby! Somehow we made it through the turn without spinning. How? That's not exactly clear, but we did. Brian was quiet for a while and I backed off the pace, which had surely been well over my head. He took a deep breath and said, "Well Charles...that's about as fast as I ever want to take turn 3 with someone else driving! I thought we were going to go around that time. Take it down a

couple of notches next time, huh?" I did, and even at slower speeds that section of the track is sssslippery.

The weather that day was ideal, about 70 degrees and sunny and we were having a good time. There were no incidents in the morning and only one delay in the early afternoon, when Russ Struck lived up to his name and nailed a track-crossing deer, an animal who missed the Drivers' Meeting and didn't understand the ideal relationship between wandering wildlife and high-performance cars driven at speed. Are F-1 deer whistles made from carbon fiber? After a 15-20 minute delay things got going again. I forget whether Russ was towed in, or whether his car was still drivable. His Boxster had suffered a broken headlight and needed some body repair, but I'm fairly sure he was able to continue driving, after applying a thick poultice of racer's tape to the damaged area. When the track was clear again and the last run of the day was called for the Green Run Group I had a decent understanding of the line and what levels of speed and braking were required to safely and somewhat smoothly navigate the course. As we got settled in our seats for this run Brian told me that I was ready to be signed off into the Yellow Run Group. COOOOL. Thoughts of sponsorship and how to word my victory speech whirred like electrons in my head. Maybe some painted graphics on the dragster? Permanent numbers? Pit Crew? Risking a dented helmet I pointed Sue in the direction of the lug wrench.

Entering the track Brian said he wanted me to drive smoothly, not worry about speed, and show him that I really was ready to advance. Okay, here we go, stay calm. The fate of Western civilization is not hanging on a few Green Run Group laps at Summit Point. Or is it? Then it happened. About halfway through the session the car didn't feel right. It was losing power and seemed to be choking. Very reluctantly, I mean very very reluctantly, like going to the phone to cancel a date with Scarlett Johanssen, I told Brian that we had best get off the track and luckily made it back to my parking spot in the paddock before conking out. He hopped out, unfazed, and suggested I check as many of the wire connections as I could get at. I got out slowly, seriously bummed. So far luck had been on my side and the mechanical problems previously encountered were easily remedied. One was fixed by a few turns of a wrench—a wrench I DID return—and the other by a few twists of wire. This was different. It had the feel of a more serious ailment.

Remembering the long line of fuses in the trunk I looked them over and turned them back and forth in their holders. Nothing. I checked the gas gauge and topped off. *Nada*. Twisted the battery connections. Nope, they were tight. Very very very reluctantly, like when canceling a date with Natalie Portman, I opened the engine compartment, cautiously, sure that an undernourished family of vampires lived inside. I started poking around, knowing that by my touching something the chances increased exponentially for the car to go up in flames. Did you see live, or on television, the fireworks display in London, on the Thames, marking the year 2000? Impressive! "STAND BACK while I open this engine lid. It automatically lights a fuse."

Possessed with self-knowledge about my lack of mechanical talents, I started combing the paddock for one of those saints. You know them. Honest-to-goodness, real mechanics who, even in the middle of a DE event in which they are driving, are willing to take a look at and even work on your car's problems. They are easy to spot. There is always a line leading to them. And when you get close you never can see their faces, or sometimes even their bodies. Why? They are upside-down and inside an engine compartment, or bone-crunchingly squeezed under a dashboard, or with some frequency they eventually turn up in a puddle of gunk under a teetering, precariously jacked-up car. I took a number. Not bad, 7. Just then the last checker of the day was thrown and when all the cars had left the track one of the more spirited Happy Hours began.

When he got over to my car the sainted man was looking frazzled, but being a real trooper he asked questions, he studied stuff, asked more questions, wiggled stuff, unplugged stuff, replaced the unplugged stuff and really got into it. Finally he told me to ask around the paddock for a 6 pin CDI unit, where I found, as much as I could not believe it, two people had them. I bought one. Wrong time to negotiate. 500 bucks! Rebuilt? Okay, breathe. Slow deep breathes. Repeat after me. Tracktime. Tracktime. Tracktime. It plugged right in and a miracle occurred. The car reincarnated. I spontaneously started free form dancing like at a Grateful Dead concert. I threw flowers to everyone in the paddock – Sue is ready for any occasion. What a great moment in my life. LIFE IS GOOD. We buttoned everything up for the night and against his protests I handed the talented, brilliant man who got the car going some cash for

his and his father's dinner. "\$8 each ought to do it, right? You don't drink a lot, do you?" Afloat in a sea of optimism, Sue and I headed back to the hotel to clean up, change clothes, and try to find a less than life threatening dinner option. How good IS life?

The next morning was another clear, perfect day. We headed towards the track and after one small, scenic miscue, found it. #633 started up after a small clearing of its throat and I was primed to graduate from Green. Uh oh. On the way to the tech line she stuttered, but kept talking. Okay. Where's the DE bible? Page 13. The short prayer entitled: "I'm-already-in-the-tech-line-grant-me-just-a-few-minutes-of-trouble-free-performance-I'll-be-good." Pheeww! Made it through. But this can't be a winner. And it wasn't. Accelerating hard out of the pits on my first run the car started to die and I had to take the conveniently located access road on the right to get off the track. *&^%&*(#@#. Guess it wasn't the CDI unit. In fact, when we got back to Connecticut I looked at the list of things that had been recently replaced on the car and its CDI unit was one of them.

What is ethical behavior when it comes to returning a part purchased from someone at a track event? I didn't know and wanted to do the right thing. On the one hand, someone had a part that I needed and they sold it to me at a fair price. The seller, by the way, told me he had just bought his fourth Porsche and said he really needed the money. Now if you are new at this and someone tells you they have four Porsches you can interpret this information in different ways. Four Porsches? This guy's loaded and has a lot more money – and cars – than me! Four Porsches? This guy's nuts! Four Porsches? This guy is totally nuts, but very lucky, smart, and undoubtedly in need of lots of money! On the other hand, I had just bought a part that was unnecessary, not inexpensive, and I didn't know what the real repair of the car would ultimately cost. Needing some advice, I asked a few people who looked wise and experienced, including a friend of the seller, what they would do. All of them, after brief pauses, felt that since we were all PCA members, asking the seller to take it back was acceptable behavior. That having been said, everyone, including myself, was a little edgy because it was an electronic component. "Oh, Sue...got a minute? Do

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The driver education event will consist of nearly two hours per day at speed for each entrant on Saturday and Sunday. Friday is our annual Zone 1 Instructor Day, including PCA National Instructor Certification. This year, the entry fee will include a Saturday evening reception at the Glen Club at the foot of the "esses." The cost of the event is \$250 per entrant. Online registration will be handled by <http://clubregistration.net> and Paypal remittances. Registration opens on April 15 and closes May 15. It is sure to be a sell-out again this year! More details can be found beginning April 1 at <http://zone1.pca.org>.



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you think you can find the man who sold us the part? He proved to be a gentleman and quickly, but unhappily I am sure, returned our check.

The purchase of a pickup truck and trailer had been a good idea after all and again it was proven that PCA folks are great. One announcement yielded more than enough people, all of them coming immediately over to the car to help push her up on the

trailer's deck. Straps tightened down, we said some goodbyes and thank-yous, and then we headed north.

A broken wire in the alternator had done us in. A few days later Dan fixed it. Happy and in good automotive health, we were ready for the NCR sponsored DE in Loudon, May 21-22.

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