



Der Skooner

Great Plains Region / Porsche Club of America

September 2009

Volume 43 Issue 9

Lauritzen Gardens Car & Bike Show



LAURITZEN GARDENS
OMAHA'S BOTANICAL CENTER

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2009
NOON TO 4 P.M.

Enjoy beautiful European automobiles and motorcycles staged among stunning flowers and lush greenery. Imagine models of Jaguar • Porsche • Mercedes-Benz • Detomaso Ferrari Alfa Romeo • Austin Healey • Volkswagon • Mini Cooper • BMW • Ducati • Triumph Motto Guzzi and others surrounded by the beauty of the garden.

Admission to the European Car and Bike Expo is free with paid garden admission - \$7 for adults and \$3 for children age six to 12. Garden members and children under age six are admitted free of charge.

Exhibitor registration is from 9 a.m. to noon. A \$15 fee includes garden admission and T-shirt (while supplies last). For more information, contact Joe at (402) 212-6038.

Rain date: Sunday, September 20, 2009.

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From the Prez

By Jon Theobald



Last weekend, I experienced driving one of the most perfect automobiles designed for dealing with today's environmental issues and stress-challenged world. It was painted white, so it would reflect heat back into the atmosphere, thus reducing deadly ozone-eating chemicals required to cool the vehicle. It was extremely quiet and the only thing I could hear while cruising down Dodge Street was the wind gently buffeting around in the passenger area. I couldn't even hear my wife talking...because she was falling asleep as I drove because the car was THAT QUIET! It was solar heated, the canvas top neatly folded back into the compartment behind the rear seat, and it accelerated surprisingly briskly, nary a burble from the exhaust. The sun warmed my passenger and myself to a perfect 76 degrees. I dubbed the car "The Electric Bathtub on Wheels". Eerily quiet, a 360-degree line-of-sight, and shaped like a bathtub, this vehicle was also known as a 1976 Mercedes 450SL. I had borrowed it for the day from a friend, fellow GPR member Sandy Steckman. I've seen it over the years in his garage, and always thought it was just a very well-kept old car. It demonstrated to be not just an ordinary car, more like a tank. My wife and I fell in love with it almost immediately as we drove around running errands and enjoying the

weather. I later found out that it weighs 3800 (!) pounds and is essentially a two-seater. It stunned me that this car was 34 years old. They sure don't build them like that anymore. Not a Porsche, but a close relative.

Twenty or so enthusiastic members of the GPR met Saturday, August 22, for dinner at Ryan's Bistro. I met with Ryan the week before to narrow down our menu, and after 30 minutes of drinks and appetizers, we all ordered our entrees from the customized "Welcome GPR" menus they had prepared for us—nice touch! My filet was outstanding and the glass of cabernet complimented it perfectly. As I looked around, I saw lots of smiling GPR members enjoying their dinner and drinks and heard rave reviews of the meals. Thanks to Ryan for accommodating our group so graciously and thanks to those who made it to the fun event!

On to our September event line-up! Saturday, September 13, is a busy day for car shows with the Havelock Car show in Lincoln and the Lauritzen All-Euro Car Show on the same day. We apologize for the scheduling, but sometimes events get overlapped, with September being a desirable month for car shows and outdoor activities due to the cooler end-of-summer weather. Ken Kusik puts on an exceptional show down in Lincoln at the Havelock Show, so you

don't want to miss this one. They are honoring the 356 and are aiming to gather twelve 356's and line a city block with them. Special prizes will be awarded and the GPR will be defending the "best attendance" award for the twelfth consecutive year.

On September 19-20, Woodhouse is hosting their first Woodhouse Track Experience at MAM. This is a special event for all manufacturers that Woodhouse sells and should be a very unique and exciting event with Porsches, Vipers, Mustangs, Mazdas, Corvettes, and Nissans all sharing the same track in a Drivers Education event format. GPR has offered the services of all of our instructors, so top-notch instruction will be available. Check the advertisement within for more event details.

On October 24, MAM will be hosting their annual Boo-Bash, an all-day driving event in open-track format. This event is a no-novice event, so track experience is required, but those who attend will have all day to essentially drive their track tires down to the cords. Historically, this event has had a very high Porsche attendance, so let's continue the tradition.

Have a great September and welcome back football season!



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On Track



By Steve Wilwerding

It seems like my column from last month struck a note with some people, as we have had quite a few volunteers step up in the last couple of months to help out with Board positions and other areas of the Club. As for my positions of newsletter and website editor, Steve Eckhart has graciously (and to my eternal thanks) volunteered to take over newsletter next year, and Eric Elliott has volunteered for the website. So, for those of you getting sick of my monthly column, you'll only have to bear with me for a few more months. I think both of these individuals will do a great job next year, and I'm interested to see their new designs.

In addition to Steve and Eric, Abe Schlott and Todd Phipps have volunteered their time, as well as a few other folks who have agreed to help out. Many of these volunteers are newer members, and it is great to see some new folks really step up for this Club.

Unfortunately, I have missed out on a lot of events this summer for various reasons, but one event I was lucky enough to attend was the dinner at Ryan's Bistro. Not only was the food great, but I got the best seat in the house, next to Jay Burr and Denny Strauss. Jay and Denny had just returned from Pebble Beach and the Monterey Historics, where Porsche was the featured marque this year, and it was great to hear all of their stories from the event. It is always great to sit next to Denny and hear his stories, not only of his travels, but also his time in the Club.

Talking to Denny about the history of the Club got me thinking about my time in the GPR. The first GPR event that I attended was the thirty-fifth anniversary party in 2002, and many of the people who were most active in the Club at that time no longer come to events, and in many cases, aren't even members of the GPR anymore. It's a little bit sad that we

only have a few people like Denny and Jay to link us to GPR's history from more than just seven years ago.

However, I decided that, for a Club like ours, it's probably best that the people who are in the Club, participate in events, and volunteer for Board positions are actually interested in being a part of the Club. While I don't mean to stereotype (many of our active members drive Cayennes), I'm not sure that the ideal Club member is someone who just bought a Cayenne off the lot at Woodhouse because they liked the color. It is better to have a core membership who really cares about the Club than it is to have hundreds of members who never attend events and never read the newsletter. While it is sad that we have lost some members because their interest in the Club faded, it is heartening that we seem to have so many new members who are enthusiastic about making this Club and its events a success.

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Installing Race Seats into a Boxster

Story and photos by Steve Wilwerding

Now that I'm getting somewhat proficient at track events, and am able to carry more speed around the corners, I get a little sick of being thrown around in the car on the racetrack, and the thought of putting race seats into my Boxster crept into my mind. So, last spring, I started to investigate the possibilities.

When I first broached the subject in some online bulletin boards, it was quickly pointed out that Porsche Club events, like DEs, don't allow the use of harnesses with stock seats – you have to have racing seats that properly locate the shoulder and lap belts. So, I had to get some kind of true race seats. For a time, I toyed with getting GT3 seats and keep them in the car permanently, but Jack Baker let me try out his, and I decided they were too uncomfortable for extended road use. Also, GT3 seats tend to be around \$1500 a piece, so that also weighed into the decision. In the end, I decided to get inexpensive Sparco seats and just swap them into the car for track events, and leave my regular leather seats in for street driving.

Then, things got complicated. First, I had to figure out how to mount the seats into the car. Since I'm a tall fellow, I wanted to mount the seats as



low and as far back as possible. I then had to figure out how to mount the harnesses into the car. Finally, I had to figure out how to fool the car into thinking that the seatbelt was still attached so that a warning light wouldn't show up on the dash when I had the race seats in.

The first task I started with was the car electronics. There is a long, thin plug that connects into the bottom of each seat – it provides power to the seat and also hooks up to the seatbelt receptacle so that the car knows when you have your

seatbelt plugged in. After looking at some wiring diagrams and asking questions online, I finally just yanked the stock seat out of the car and tested it with a multi-meter. I figured out that when the seatbelt was plugged in, there were 100 ohms of resistance across two plugs, so I just got a 100 ohm resistor (the bump in the picture above) and plugged it in. Voila – after turning the key on, the car thought that the seatbelt was plugged in – no warning lights, and no seatbelt light.

The next task was to figure out how to mount the harnesses. The Boxster is a somewhat easy car, because it has rollbars right behind the seats that you can mount the shoulder belts to – if you have a 911 or Cayman, you need to buy a harness bar that bolts in behind the seats. I figured out the best way to mount the outboard belt was to replace the lower seatbelt bolt with an eyebolt. I mounted the sub belts to the race seat brackets and ran them underneath the seat (pictured at left) – this is not ideal, as you want all harnesses to be tied to the chassis, but sub belts tend not to take too much stress, even in a collision, so figured it would be alright. As for the inboard belt, I had seen some people online drill into their center tunnel and install an





eyebolt, but my goal was not to drill any new holes, so that was out. I finally figured out a way, but not until I got the seat brackets fabricated.

Mounting the seats turned out to be the biggest problem of the project. I ordered the race seats with their mounting brackets, but I still needed a way to mount those brackets into the car, again, without drilling any new holes. The stock Boxster seat mounts are flat from the back towards the front, but curve to accept the front two bolts. So, I pulled the seats out and sketched the curve that I needed. I then went to a machine shop and had them fabricate mounts out of cold rolled steel that had the correct curve. I test fitted them, and they worked great, so I drilled four holes in the stock bolt locations.

Since I wanted the seats to be as low as possible, I decided against using sliders – the seats wouldn't be movable once they were mounted into the car. So, I went through the arduous process of installing my custom mounts, putting the seats in the car, sitting in the seats, and trying to mark where I would install bolts to mount the seat to the bolted-in mounts – trust me, it's difficult to accurately mark something that you're sitting in and trying to get in

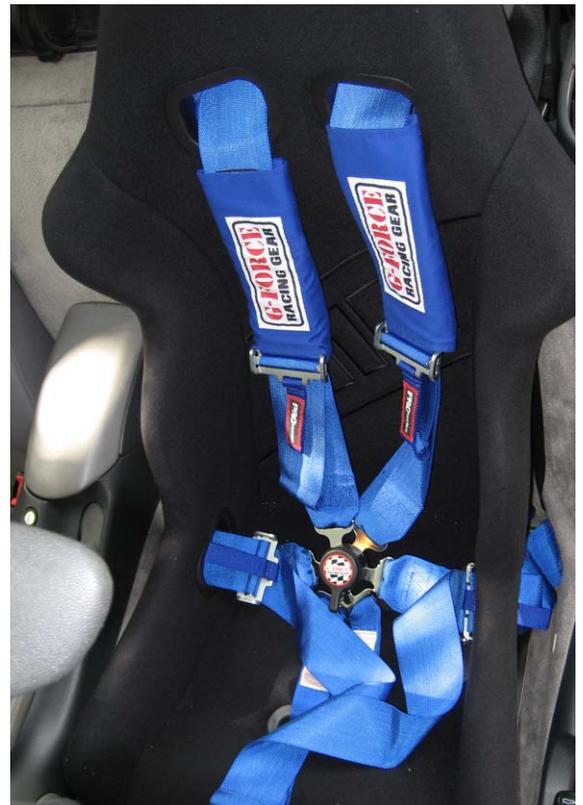
just the right spot. However, a problem quickly arose – the seat needed to be in a place that overlapped one of the bolts holding my custom mount in, so that bolt would not only have to go through the mount in the car, it would also have to go through the seat mount. This was good, however, because it allowed me to fabricate an L-bracket for the inboard belt that could be mounted to the seat bolt, thereby making the lap belts and shoulder belts mounted to the chassis.

After a lot of trial and error, I finally got everything to work, and then went about the task of doing the same for the passenger side – I bought two racing seats, since Porsche Club rules state that passengers have to have equal restraints as drivers, and I planned to take passengers along for rides in my car.

If the whole process sounds overwhelming, it is. It took me the better part of a month, working on and off, to get everything to work. A few things worked in my favor – as I mentioned above, the Boxster has rollbars, so I didn't

have to worry about upper mounts. The Boxster is also a convertible, and I did most of the test fitting with the top down – it would have been much more difficult to try to crouch into a fixed roof car. Finally, I had access to my father's machine shop, which includes a power hacksaw, milling machine, drill press, and metal files, all of which were invaluable in completing the project.

I've kind of skimmed over the details for the sake of brevity, so if you are interested in doing something like this, you can email me for more details. I bought all of the bolts and nuts off of the shelf at Lowe's, with the exception of the outboard eyebolts – they are a very rare size (M11) and I had to custom order them from a race shop in Chicago. All in all, it was a lot of work, but being able to sit in proper race seats makes a world of difference on the racetrack, and now that all of the fabrication work is done, I can have both race seats swapped into the car in less than half an hour.



Upcoming Events

GPR & Other Regional Events



- Fatburger Porsche Pride Night September 3
- Havelock Car Show September 13
- Lauritzen All-Euro Car Show September 13
- Woodhouse Track Experience September 19-20
- GPR Club Dinner October 10
- MAM Boo Bash October 24

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MANDATORY MEETING

8:00 AM

TRACK SESSION BEGINS

9:30 AM

Register online at clubregistration.net. Once you have created an account, go to "Dashboard" and click on "Event Sign-up". Our event is Woodhouse - Porsche of Omaha - Drivers Ed. The cost is \$50 for one day or \$75 for both. Lunch will be provided for registered drivers.

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Contact Briana Nakai or Lisa Bristol at 402-592-1000 with questions.

Upcoming Events

Regional Driving Events

Nord Stern Fast Fling @ BIR September 18-20

Kansas City Autocross September 20

Nord Stern Fall Color Tour September 25-27

Regional Websites

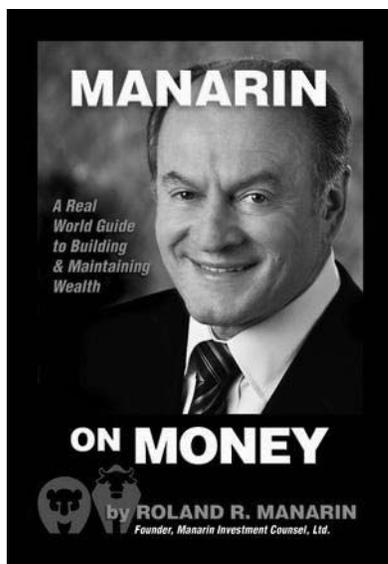
Nord Stern Region: www.nordstern.org

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Havelock Car Show

Story by Ken Kusik



The Great Plains Region will once again celebrate the pride and passion for Porsche as we return to the rustic brick streets of historic Havelock in Lincoln, Sunday, September 13, for the “On the Avenue” Car Show. This marks our twelfth consecutive appearance in the finest open car show in the state, courtesy of our friends at the Capitol City Ford and Mustang Club. Now in its 28th year, the 2008 show drew over 250 cars.

This year, we are honoring the 356 with an extraordinary event. We are attempting to gather a dozen 356s and line an entire city block with them. Photos will be taken of this special occasion, along with an article submitted to both the *356 Registry* and *Panorama*. For the first time at the show, there will be a 356-only class. There will also be 356 collectibles for all 356 participants, as well as a drawing for a 1/18th scale model last made in 1989.

The three other classes are: 1966-1979, 1980-1994, and 1995-current. Awards will be given to the top three in each class. There will be 23 door prizes, as well as collectibles for the first twelve Porsches entered. With the early \$20 registration, you also receive a free T-shirt.

We will again be defending our “best attendance” award that we have held for 11 consecutive years – we need to get out and show the pride in our rides. For more information about the event, call Ken Kusik at 402-420-1523.

Great fall weather, food, fun, friends, and a lot of exceptional automobiles – plan to be a part of this year’s special event.

Member Spotlight



This is a continuation of JR Sanders's bio from last month:

My five personal mentors in the Porsche Club:

- > Chad Lea & Randy Dotson. These two guys are responsible for me getting involved with the GPR Board the first time around. I was an inexperienced P-car rookie at my first autocross and thought I'd be helpful and offered to help pick up the pylons. I should have known something was up when Chad and Randy were having a serious looking discussion at the back of their truck. After I got done picking up all of the pylons, these two joined me for a seat on the curb, and with the help of their cooler of beer, I had been recruited. The rest is history. Another alcohol related incident.
- > Harvey Pohling. Harvey had already been doing track events before GPR really got started. He also drove a wicked 930 turbo. Harvey was kind enough to take me under his wing and introduce me to all the other track junkies in the club. After Harvey started racing with the SCCA, it really helped push me towards competition.
- > Jim Palmquist. Jim and JoAnn have been a great support for all things driving and GPR. For my first Club Race with my 911, Jim decided that I really should run with wider wheels in the rear. Knowing that I didn't have the budget for that, he actually dismounted the tires off the back wheels of his own new 911 and we put them on my car. His chrome wheels beautifully accented the faded black ones I had on the front, but hey, in the quest for speed, aesthetics don't really matter do they. Did it work? I have no idea, but how many people would do something like this for someone else? A few years later, while switching transmissions in the old Z car way too late in the evening, we discovered that the flywheel needed to be shaved a little. One phone call and we were on our way to Jim's machine shop. After telling me all the virtues of having a much lighter flywheel and me telling Jim all the rules and why I couldn't lighten the flywheel, Jim sent me upstairs to find a beer. This was odd, because I'd never seen Jim drink a beer. By the time I had returned, there were metal shavings everywhere, and the lightest Z car flywheel you could find.
- > Leonard Theiss. Leonard is always fast in anything he drives and I always liked to keep an eye on what he was doing. Leonard loves the driving events, but could care less about the politics - he was always where the fun was. While preparing for that first Club Race, the last thing I needed that I really hadn't budgeted for was a driver's suit. Somehow, Leonard found out about it and he told me not to get one just yet. He had an old one he would loan me. Great! When it got into my hands, though, he had decided to just give it to me claiming he needed a different size. Even better. This suit did not look like an old one to me. Oddly enough, the new suit was the same brand, style, and size - only the color had changed. I got a couple of years out of that suit before Mari took it over.
- > Jeff Conkel. I had the great fortune of being Jeff's first instructor. I knew he had a great time, but I didn't know how much until a week later when he showed up in my garage with a 12-pack. He told me how he wanted to know what it was like to drive a real racecar, but since no one was likely to let him drive theirs, he wanted to build his own. All this after one DE. His racing started out in the old stock E class, through several years of professional SCCA racing in the World Challenge, and on to a ride at the Rolex 24 two years in a row. For some reason, he kept me involved with every endeavor. When I blew up my 911, Jeff graciously started sharing his with me. When he started the World Challenge series, he made me his crew chief. When he was asked to go to the Rolex at Daytona, he said I had to go, and at his request, I was the refueler and put in charge of the inexperienced pit crew. I think Jeff accomplished everything he wanted to and he set his sights on other things. Over the ten plus years we were racing together, Jeff entrusted me with everything. His car, shop, truck & trailer, even the credit card. Best of all, after some recent discussion, he is still trusting me to get his son Kurt started off with the Club.

GPR Board and Minutes

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Web Master: Steve Wilwerding

The GPR/PCA Board met Tuesday, August 4, at Parkers Smokehouse in Ashland. Members present: Jon Theobald, Sean Cahill, Jim Avilla, JR Sanders, Heather Wester, Sally Knapp, Steve Wilwerding, Tom Cooper, Todd Phipps, Eric Elliott, and Abe Schlott.

Secretary: Minutes from the July Board meeting were approved.

President: Thanks to all who were involved in the successful DE event at MAM. We had 58 drivers. Discussion was held regarding security and waivers being signed at events.

Registrar: Discussion was held about future events and registration.

Club Race Chair: A Club Race meeting is planned for August 25 in Lincoln.

Treasurer: The DE event was profitable. All books are balanced and in order.

Membership: Final preparations are being made for the printed directory. The Board will review membership one more time before the directory is printed. Heather and Steve will work together on the final member list.

Social: Sally is still working on a golf event for the fall. Upcoming events: Boo Bash October 24, Woodhouse DE September 19-20, and Fatburger event September 3.

Safety: Discussion was held about a one day driving event, but was voted down. The Board will work on a mentor program for new novice drivers. The Safety Chair will coordinate security at future driving events.

Newsletter/Website: Discussion was held about getting articles to Steve in a timely manner.

Past President: Nothing to report.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, September 1, at 6:00 p.m. at the offices of Investors Realty, 11301 Davenport.

Respectfully submitted, Sean Cahill.



Editorial Policy: *Der Skooner* is the official publication of the Great Plains Region/Porsche Club of America. Statements and opinions appearing in *Der Skooner* are those of the author and not necessarily those of the GPR, PCA, the Board or the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit all material and to publish only material that is felt to be in the best interest of GPR/PCA. Other regions are welcome to reprint *Der Skooner* articles provided that the source and author are credited. Address changes must be sent to both Heather Wester, 31454 HWY 77 South, Beatrice, NE 68310 and PCA P.O. Box 5900, Springfield, VA 22150.

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The new GT3 RS, with a 3.8 liter, 450 HP engine and "attention-getting" graphics, should be for sale in the U.S. early next year.

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Ryan's Bistro Dinner Pics



Pictures courtesy of Carmen Burr