

THE SMUGGLER'S BOX

opened by Randy Stolz



The Eighties: Rise of the Racer

The Eighties, much like the Sixties, found Oregon Region fired by racing enthusiasm. Despite inflation through '82 and interest rates hovering at double digits, the more influential members found a way to participate in local club racing. Parade of course brought many more members looking for their own interests, be they Rallye, Tours, Autocross (AX), Technical or Social. In the wake of Parade, a new event dubbed Rainbonnet was formed and traditional events continued. Women took a more active role in the leadership of the club as we saw the first female president and interest continued in all activities. As always, it was the members that made things happen.

PARADE '80

Oregon Region's first Porsche Parade in 1980, like the eruption of Mount St. Helens, burst onto the PCA national scene. It was a spectacular event with lasting effects. Locally, Parade '80 stands as a tribute to what the region can do in the face of adversity.

Due to the eruption coverage of near-Pompeii proportions by the national media, hundreds of people cancelled their entries in a matter of days and put the club treasury into the red. This forced

National to bail us out to the tune of thousands of dollars. Additionally, some conflicts of interest emerged, giving a black eye to the Parade Chair. The result was that from that point on National took over financial management of all future Parades.

Despite the volcano scare, those who attended saw the region go the extra mile. Imagine laying out plastic sheeting over ash-laden grass for the concours or sweeping down an entire track in time for the driving event. These tasks accomplished by enthusiasm and a will to succeed, put

the focus on fun with cars, not the mountain. Long overdue, credit must be given to President Bill Shores, VP John Joyce, Treasurer Jerry Caplan, and Past President Bob Caspell





for maintaining the region's leadership and enthusiasm before, and importantly after, Parade. There are too many stories of Parade '80 to cover here but know that despite the financial troubles, it was considered a success by all who attended. You can read Panorama's glowing full account [here](#). To the surprise of some, Oregon Region won the chance to do it again in 1995.

ANZEIGER

Our newsletter continued in the familiar 8 ½ by 11 format. Depending on the advertising- driven budget, it was largely heavy newsprint paper; sometimes with a glossy cover but always black and white with an occasional color banner. "Anzeiger nights" continued as volunteers typed and created the layout, by hand, to be "camera ready".

Event reports, technical information, racing and member profiles were supplemented by articles from esteemed NWR tech guru Alan Caldwell to five-time IMSA Champ and President of PCNA, Al Holbert. Local Porsche dealers Riviera, Roth, Continental, Gateway, and Larry Meyers served as sponsors along with Motor Sports International, Active Autobody, Art Stearns Tires and German Formula.

RALLYE

During the 80's rallying carried on for those devotees of problem-solving and adventure. Now an institution, The Past President's Rallye continued as well and there was always the challenge of doing well for the region at Parade. The lure of discovery followed by mild panic seemed to never fade but mostly the post-rally get-togethers bonded everyone. Carrying over from the successful Parade '80 Rallye, our Rallymaster John Joyce, continued with a reprise of the Oregon GAS'EM Rallye and other short treks through the decade.

One of the most important things John did was conduct rallye schools. Teaching new members the ins and out of the TSD rallye was more than a class; it was imparting enthusiasm for the sport that John dedicated his car life to.

As a compliment to these road rallies, the Eighties saw the beginning of the local SCCA Pro Rallye in the form of the Oregon Trail Rally and up north,

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the Olympus Rally. Starting at the Greenwood Inn (now Pepper Tree Inn), names such as Rod Millen (RX-7) and John Buffum (Audi Quattro) would find their way to the forests of Estacada where the author would watch the dancing headlights on forest roads and feel the dirt roostertails kicked out by tires at the stage start. In 1984, local club member R. Dale Kraushaar was a co-driver for Rod Millen finishing 2nd overall in the event.

AUTOCROSS

The eighties saw the club still participating in WOW events and eventually putting on our own under the watchful eye of Will Swope and later John Stanton. These events ran other venues beyond PIR. From the Salem Armory and the parking lot at Larry Meyer's P/A (now Porsche Beaverton), to Mount Hood Community College. The club got so it could figure out how to have an Autocross almost anywhere, as long as you could park the new club trailer now full of cones, flags and timing equipment.

RACING

The Eighties were also marked by the success of the International Motorsports Association's (IMSA) series at Portland International Raceway (PIR) and the unforgettable Porsche 935 and 962. In addition to Championship Auto Racing Teams (now IndyCar); the most anticipated weekend, excluding the Rose Cup Races, was IMSA. Professional sports car racing was enjoying its best days with classes for prototypes and GT cars.

From the enthusiasm generated by these professional racing series; the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) and the International Conference of Sports Car Clubs (ICSCC) or "Conference" saw an increase in attendance with good fields of cars. Among them were ORPCA members Monte Shelton, Karl Durkheimer, Dave Schroeder, Win Casey, Rick Eppinger, Paul Aragon, Ted Anderson, Mike Green, Park Duff, Lane Sawyer, Steve Harsch, Dave Battin, Rick Tiplady, Wes Andrews, Bob Ames, Stu Bender, Don Smethers, Bill Hanel, Will Swope, Kerry Peterson, Jeff Gamroth, and probably a dozen more I missed.

Deep in the salad days of Porsche's front-engine transaxle cars like the 924, 928 and 944, local members found racing success in other front engine cars such as VW Rabbits, Corvettes and Datsuns. It seemed the club was becoming more track-focused. We conducted track days with and without our Alfa and BMW partners.

TRACK DAYS

Known as Driver Education (DE) days, these events ballooned in this decade as the available cars and more importantly, qualified instructors (see above) were onboard to the idea as a way of lending their talents to the club. Along with instructors, the club saw many new entrants with unknown driving skills. Because of this, the club spent considerable time developing and instituting new requirements and tech inspections for safety. Beyond those were "rules of the road" to be obeyed during each track session along with driver classifications for specific run groups.

“SHE’S IN THE DRIVER’S SEAT”

The emphasis on racing rose to a high in 1984-85 when the majority of the Board of Directors was involved in racing. Voices in the club called for change; some for fewer social events. Others pointed to more non-racing events such as AX, Rallye, and Tours. Through these conflicts, the ladies brought more influence in club leadership. While Donna Battin had become Vice President in '85; then Anzeiger editor and 'Gear of the Year' recipient, Tracee Harsch became President in 1986.

Her column, in quotes above, and enthusiastic attitude encouraged people to give more than lip service to the events they wanted and participation increased.

RAINBONNET

One of the events that soared during the Eighties and beyond was the club's multi-regional tech event, Rainbonnet. Like answering the question, what's next after Parade '80; Originally a Zone 6 event put on by NW Region, Steve Harsch, Ric Tiplady and Chuck Hervey saw an opportunity to fulfill the member's curiosity about all things Porsche. Additionally, it's late fall timing gave members another event to look forward to during the off season.

With the help of Porsche/Audi Northwest which supplied the facility, and attendance of over 125 people from five regions, the inaugural Oregon event held in 1982 couldn't

be considered any less than a major success. From a single day it grew to a weekend event that included tech sessions led by experts from the national and local level and other regions too. In ongoing years, an indoor Concours was added as well as a Track Day and even a Banquet with speakers such as Denise McCluggage and Pete Brock.

TRADITIONS

Other events such as Otter Rock, the Past Presidents Rallye, BBQs, Progressive Dinners, and a Concours here and there kept going

through the Eighties and beyond. While these may have fallen to memories for older members there's no reason some of these can't continue. Like those days gone by, nothing has changed. It was and still is, the members that make it happen.

What did you do back then? Send your story to me at historian@oregonpca.org. I'll see you all at the 65th Anniversary celebration at Stoller Estates August 17th.



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