



TAIL OF THE COUGAR

OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MERCURY STRAY CATS

JANUARY 2006

DENNIS PIERACHINI, EDITOR

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1

FROM THE LAIR OF THE PRESIDENT

JEFF GOLDMAN

First meeting over and done. For those of you who attended, thank you for not beating me up too much. I don't have the protocol down yet, but I'll get there. It was a lot of fun -- new members with wives and kids and some great to see Cats. Existing members coming back for more ☺. It was fun, but I ate too much pizza. Dennis picked up a '69 paint and interior color book on eBay and brought it with him. It shows every color combination available.

It was fun getting back on "car think". I've got my Cat sitting in the garage and I still haven't found the time to get much done. I finally do have a decent A/C box and learned how to use the fiberglass repair kit -- trial and error I might add. It's actually pretty good and very strong. Other than the brown color, it looks like I now have a couple of 'good' A/C boxes. I also found out, as I read the instructions that came w/the new heater core, that heater core failure can be due to a poor ground system. Apparently electrolysis due to grounding issues can cause the heater core to degrade and leak. Makes sense, but I hadn't thought of that problem. If you've been going through heater cores you might want to look at your ground system. Thought I'd pass that along, although I'm sure most of you knew this.

I'm now also going through wiring harnesses trying to find a good one to install. I've got 3 sets of underdash & underhood harnesses and they've all got something wrong w/them ☹. Oh well. Now that I have that battery operated soldering iron I think I can fix these ☺.

I'm also getting my radio back from Vintage Auto Radio w/new guts. Steve guts the stock AM/FM radio and installs a 180W updated system in the box. He also includes RCA plugs so the iPod can connect. Very cool -- stock look w/great tunes. Now that the iPod is here I guess I don't have to wonder where to put the CD deck ☺. If any of you are interested let me know.

BTW, I also got the Mercury Cougar message board to post a Stray Cats message board under the Regional Clubs. I can see that a few of you are already using this. The address is: <http://www.mercurycougar.net/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=37>. Check it out and add to it. It can be a great way to keep in touch. BTW, check out the rest of the forum as there's great techie info on that site.

I hope the weather is better for our next meeting which is in Pleasant Hill. See you ALL there. And remember:

No bad karma on my Car.

Jeff Goldman

NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW

STEVE SPATOLA

On my way to war I stopped for training in Warren, Michigan a suburb of Detroit and home to my employer the Army Tank & Automotive Command aka TACOM. Within a two mile radius of my hotel is the Ford plant in Utica, the Sterling Heights Chrysler plant and the GM Technical Center.

To make a poignant understatement, there is a lot of pride in these workers at these plants. I can tell by the enthusiasm shown by them at the car show! Why not! American cars are in the top ten consistently for quality and safety! I also visited the auto museum on the Ford Dearborn plant. It was nice but not as interesting as the NAICS!

Last Saturday, January 14, 2006, the 103rd North American International Auto Show was held at the Cobo Center in downtown Detroit. A week of buildup and anticipation was in the air as all the local media and much foreign press was on hand for this event covering nearly 700,000 square feet and nine days of exhibitions.

My first meandering was to the Ford displays. I watched a vivacious young lady touting the best of the Ford GT over the world competition for price, value and the speed of this car! I was so lucky to get her to take a photo of me sitting in the 2006 Mustang on display. Of course, I was wearing my RCMC Yellow shirt and told her of the fine accomplishments of the Huntsville club hosting the 2005 Mustang National show! She will be sending Ray Bryan, Bob Page (original owner of American Mustang in Rancho Cordova, CA and a longtime friend) and myself a brochure of the 2006 Shelby GT 500, compliments of Ford! I didn't spend much time at Volvo or Jaguar though the Jag is awesome. Both better since Ford acquired them!

Ford definitely has some winners in the stable. The Edge will be a crossover CUV that'll give the imports a battle for the market share, the F250 Super Chief truck if it is built will be a huge success and the concept car the Reflex. A beautiful 3 seater with gull wing doors and a sleek appearance. It is a hybrid that will deliver 65 mpg.

I visited the Lincoln-Mercury area and was impressed by the quality of luxury available at not much more than the average car price. The MKX (Mark 10) truck is a gent's truck that the lady will steal from him. I told the Lincoln-Mercury guys they need to produce a retro Cougar, it was really the best looking of all the Muscle Cars!

NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW

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I moved on to the Daimler/Chrysler exhibit and immediately took in the 1970 retro Challenger. A bold orange coat exuded statements of American Power and boldness. This car will have the Hemi powered 6.1 Liter 425 HP, 480 ft. lbs. torques paired to a six speed transmission. I got my picture taken in front of the car courtesy of Daimler/Chrysler and the same for the Jeep Rubicon and Compass. Dodge had a great display of their current muscle marketing of SRT pickups, the Chargers and the Super Bee. They also provided cutaway models of their big engines showing the working mechanisms. A real treat was a display that stood you before a big Hemi with a floorshift device and you could select the sound of a 426 Hemi or today's Hemi roar. I personally enjoyed the loping of the 1969 engine and it's burst of throttle but that is more the boy in me than the man of today! The Dodge Boys will score with the Challenger if it is built as long as the price is around \$32,500 out the door and the Caliber which will replace the venerable Neon but outclass it in style and quality at the same price as the Neon. It is an entry level CUV that should give the imports a headache. The concept Imperial is interesting from a designer standpoint but very ostentatious (ok rednecks that means flashy!) and too large for the average garage or parking spot. But it was cool with suicide doors with no center pillar. I thought that John Gotti could have used a car like this!

I went to the Rubicon and Compass displays that also featured some of Chryslers minivans and SUV's and huge Ram trucks. I did become highly impressed with the Crossfire Convertible/Roadster. Now that is cool! While at the Rubicon picture shot I dropped my glasses. I went back and they were gone! Luckily some car representative found them and turned them in to lost and found!

On the way to the GM displays I briefly visited the KIA, Mitsubishi, Hyundai platforms. Very functional and youth oriented. All three make a great car and lets you know why the anxiety in Detroit is high for the local boys! Honda while earning the Motor Trend Car of the Year award the Civic Si is strictly youthful as no 5 speed automatic is offered or adult conveniences. The Ridgeline is a novelty truck to me and not a serious competitor for Detroit steel.

The luxury cars, yes very subtly presented, no representatives like the Big Three and Honda, Subaru, KIA, Mitsubishi and that niche. To me they knew they were priced very high and were almost indifferent to the public.

I visited the Saturn area and was smitten by the newly introduced Saturn Sky. It is a two-seater Roadster with a 4 banger, a six is to follow with a turbo versioned four. A 6 speed transmission is standard and an available 5 speed auto is optional. Many luxury things like satellite radio, leather upholstery, cruise control and sound systems. All this and ABS 4-wheel disc brakes for about \$23,500!

I got to GM and struck a conversation with a presenter who worked for an Ohio GM plant. I thought that was good that GM had employees touting the merchandise rather than paid hawkers! He says that his factory will layoff 1/3 of the force this year. He hopes to be one because he has enough years for the pension. He was also a Muscle Car buff with several Cougars through the years, presently owning a 69 Cougar Eliminator that he got from Alabama, he didn't remember where!

Look out Mercedes 450SL! the Buick CUV Enclave will knock the Euros out of the park. At production a twin-cam V8 with a 6-

speed transmission will be offered. The interior, fit and finish are impeccable. Of course, Buick will display the famous port holes! Did I mention there was no price given but I could bet a lot less than the \$55,000 for Herr Daimler's Alabama built coach!

The big GM and Chevrolet model was the 21st Century, retro 1969 Camaro! While there are other retro concepts and production vehicles this one will sell like maybe no other Chevy has sold for many years. I believe the Detroit Free Press said that GM will go ahead with this car for 2008! If they can avoid the "Entry Level" cheapness and go for a first rate production car as displayed and keep the price under \$35,000 this car will be an immediate classic! This is where they should have taken the last production run of F Body cars instead of giving the car the exit doors. The consensus of the local media is that the Camaro was the show favorite and seemed to generate the largest crowd gatherings.

I liked the HHR displays. These retro looking multi-purpose and adaptable cars are quite good for the money. I saw one customized to a retro 1955 Chevy Nomad. I'd urge GM to offer this through an authorized fabricator, in a hurry! the Malibu now offers a model with an SS package but no punch! I asked, when is the Malibu going to be offered in a 2 door SS with some power? Again, a fellow from a Kansas City plant agreed with me, especially when I told him I own a real SS!

The show for me was wrapped up by going downstairs to the basement and taking in the aftermarket and customized cars. DUB was there with numerous SUV conversions and trucks and the DeLay Museum from Tacoma, WA brought a 1963 Sting Ray, a 1947 Chevrolet 3100 Woody Wagon and a 1964 GTO Convertible. The Chrysler guys had a full display of aftermarket engine and body add-ons for their current line up. They faithfully displayed the original Hemi engines. While viewing one of their displays I struck up a conversation with two of Detroit's finest that were working the show. They mentioned that they wanted to get a youth oriented DUI program off the ground. I gave them some good knowledge of the insurance industry and where they could get the statistics and outside support and assistance they needed. Too bad I couldn't keep that moment to cash in on my next speeding ticket!

While I spent from 9:30 to 5:30 at the show, I could have gone and done another tour. However the parking lot closed at 6:00 so I had to go. It was a memorable event, not one us car enthusiasts can all say we've done but we all could state that we're going to go one day.

On Sunday I drove to Auburn Hills, MI, about 22 miles away to visit the Walter P. Chrysler Museum. This is a fairly new display that relied heavily on local folks to lend their cars for display. Some unique cars were there as the only Prowler with a V8 and extended tail with a trailer, an AMX that was on the TV show Banacek starring the late George Peppard, a Michigan native. The display begins with Walter Chrysler as a Buick employee quitting over a dispute with Wm. Durant, GM boss and his famous machinist tools. Some beautiful restorations were there including a 1915 Dodge Phaeton, 1936 Aero Sedan, initially a flop but paved the way for future designs, the war contributions of Chrysler, aircraft engines, a 1948 Woody convertible, a 1953 Ghia designed Chrysler (still beautiful). downstairs in Chrysler's Garage was a potpourri of Dodge race cars, Color Me Gone, and others. A nice Hudson Hornet was on display and numerous 50's cars, a impeccable 1956 Lancer Coronet Coupe in two tone rose and black. It

NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW

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had a 345 Hemi in it! A 1957 Plymouth Fury with a 345 ci engine that made 290 HP. A lot more than Ford or Chevy at the time. Others had loaned a 1970 AAR 'Cuda, 1972 Charger R/T with a 440 Magnum, a 1970 Challenger R/T, numerous old Dodge trucks to include the Lil' Red Wagon 1975 (one year model), a 1965 Dodge truck with a huge drag package and an old 1950 Dodge Job-Rated 1/2 ton like my Uncle Joe drove for twenty years. the 1957 Dodge truck had a swept-wing model available that grafted the fenders from a Coronet station wagon. This competed with the GMC and Chevy Cameo's. A highly under rated American Motors AMX was on display, it was all black and equipped with the AMC 390. Folks, if you subscribe and read (you should!) Hemmings Muscle Machines magazine you will know that the AMX was a truly hot car and under respected. They had a great performance package and did their own engineering not buying the 327 from GM or the 390 from Ford as rumored. After all, Mark Donahue won the 1969 Trans-Am circuit with the AMX.

The souvenir shop had one thing that I would have liked to buy. It was a four foot street sign that said Muscle Car Dr. It would not fit into my duffel going to Iraq. Maybe when I come back I'll return and buy that covet sign, placing it in it's rightful place, my gate to my Muscle Car Heaven!

CLASSIFIED ADS**CARS FOR SALE**

1967 Cougar GT, not stock, new 390 motor, less than 500 miles, runs great. New factory carpet, new dash, new window mechanisms & weather seals, Alpine sound system, custom chrome mag wheels. Painted (dark blue) about 15 years ago, could use new paint. Body is straight, no vinyl roof. Don't want to sell, but don't want wife to leave. Call: Rich at (408) 369-0601 and make offer.

PARTS FOR SALE

Set of 1967 Cougar wire wheel covers in decent condition for \$150. Six 1967 Cougar standard wheel covers, 4 are decent enough for daily driver for \$80. Call: Dennis at (415) 621-7648 or via email at: dsp1968@earthlink.net.

Stock 4V intake manifold for 351 Windsor, needs cleaning up, \$150.00, 8-inch rear end with 3.55 ratio, does have slight howl to it, \$150. Please call Chris evenings at (510) 632-3952.

Set of 4, Goodyear Eagle GTII tires, size 215-60R14, nearly new condition with less than 200 miles of use. \$250 for the set. Call Dennis at (510) 526-7987 or Email at Dens68Cat@aol.com

PARTS WANTED

Parts wanted for 1968 XR7: Clock/Radio Cover (black), dash vents (left and right), heater switch panel and cables, heater core, fan motor, emergency relay (in trunk), beauty rings for styled steel wheels. Also, have 1968 Tilt Column Steering Wheel for sale, price is negotiable. Call Mikey at (707) 425-9572 home or (707) 372-9096 cell.

WANTED: Drivers' fender for a '69 Cougar. Call: Mark Demieville at (415) 382-8755.

WANTED: 1969 XR-7 Instrument cluster, complete woodgrain. Call: Darren Aquino at (707) 557-3618.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please keep us up to date on your ads! We will keep ads running as space permits. To update your ads, or place an ad, drop us a note at the club P.O. box or at dsp1968@earthlink.net. Thanks.

TREASURER'S REPORT

MILLIE SWAFFORD

AS OF AUGUST 2005

Beginning Balance \$1,094.34

General Expenses:

Bank service fees	\$ 16.40
Secretary's supplies	34.13

Total General Expenses (50.53)

General Income:

Hat sale/mailling	14.00
Memberships	80.00

Total General Income 94.00

CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE \$ 1,137.81
637.18

Club Merchandise \$808.34

TOTAL CLUB ASSETS
\$1,946.15**NEW MEMBERS**

The Stray Cats Welcome:

Ken and Ernestine McColm of Crockett, with a '69 XR-7 convertible.**Tony Minuti** of Sacramento, who owns a '71 standard hardtop.**Howard Linsley** of Sacramento, with a '68 XR7-G.**Thomas Lane** of Lodi, with a '70 standard hardtop.**Mark Demieville** of Novato, with a '69 standard hardtop.

CALENDAR OF CLUB EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

March 11, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 3336 N. Texas Street, Fairfield. 11:00 AM.	April 9, 2006	Fabulous Fords Forever. All-Ford Show, Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park.
April 8, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 1938 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill. 11:00 AM.	September 2006	Fun Ford Sunday. Date TBD.
May 13, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 3336 N. Texas Street, Fairfield. 11:00 AM.		
June 10, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 1938 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill. 11:00 AM.		
July 8, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 3336 N. Texas Street, Fairfield. 11:00 AM.		
August 12, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 1938 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill. 11:00 AM.		
September 9, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 3336 N. Texas Street, Fairfield. 11:00 AM.		
October 14, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 1938 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill. 11:00 AM.		
October 2006	Catistoga. Exact date and location to be determined.		
November 11, 2006	Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 3336 N. Texas Street, Fairfield. 11:00 AM.		
December 9, 2006	Board of Directors meeting. <i>There will be no regular membership meeting in December.</i>		

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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<http://www.classiccougar.com>

CLUB E-MAIL ADDRESS:

info@classiccougar.com

WHO ARE THE STRAY CATS?

The Mercury Stray Cats Classic Cougar Car Club is a non-profit organization founded in 1993.

The club is made up of Cougar enthusiasts dedicated to the restoration, preservation and enjoyment of classic Mercury Cougars (1967-73).

The club produces a monthly newsletter and organizes shows, events and outings throughout the year.

Monthly meetings are also held for members and interested parties to exchange ideas, ask questions, plan events, and socialize with other Cougar enthusiasts.

NEW MEETING PLACE!

Round Table Pizza, 3336 North Texas Street, Fairfield. On Highway 80 North, use the last Fairfield exit, after Air Base Parkway.

EARN STRAY CASH!

Stray Cash is club money. Club members who are responsible for joining received one (1) Stray Cash Dollar for each member referred. Stray Cash Dollars are redeemable for all club products, outings, events and dues.

Get out there and sign up a few new members so that you too can earn Stray Cash Dollars!

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

CUSTOM AUTO BODY

1150 Erickson Road, Concord, CA 94520 Specializes in framework as well as paint and bodywork. (925) 676-4521 10% OFF
Ask for Lou.

TRED SHED

50 Bliss Avenue, Pittsburg, CA 94565 (925) 432-3422 Full Service auto repair (excluding smog and A/C). Specializing in suspension, alignment, and tires. 10% discount on parts and labors (excluding tires). Ask for Craig Schoenthaler.

Remember to ALWAYS present your current STRAY CATS MEMBERSHIP CARD before ordering or having services performed.

CLUB MERCHANDISE

Show your Stray Cats Pride by wearing our merchandise! We've just restocked our inventory and have plenty of shirts and hats.

Shirts: \$30 each plus \$4 shipping
Hat: \$10 each plus \$4 shipping
Hat & Shirt Combo: \$40 plus \$6 shipping

Contact Millie Swafford, Club Treasurer, to order yours today!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 11, 2006: Regular membership meeting. Round Table Pizza, 3336 N. Texas, Fairfield, CA. New time: 11:00 AM.

It's time to renew your membership! See the enclosed renewal application for details.



P.O. Box 41
Fairfield, CA 94533-0004

First Class Mail

"TAIL OF THE COUGAR", THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MERCURY STRAY CATS.