

## **Parade for the Non-Competitor**

*by Wendy Shoffit*

So you say you have no interest in competing in anything Porsche related. Maybe competition is just not your bag, baby. That doesn't mean you have to avoid the Porsche Parade altogether. Really! Being a type-A competitor myself, I have a hard time imagining not feeling the pull to be the best. However, I know there are plenty of you who just enjoy the ride.

During the week, there is so much to see and do that will never involve a box of q-tips, a rally computer, race tires, or a sharpened #2 pencil. It all starts with the spectacle that IS the concours d'elegance. What better way to view some of the most spectacularly well kept cars, historical or current. Imagine... you didn't have to clean even ONE of them! You just get to stroll along for as long as you want, taking in the beauty that is Porsche.

Toss out the questions for the gimmick rally and just enjoy the journey. The rally master will take you through some of the most spectacular roads in the local area. How better to see the roads of Colorado than on a guided path, knowing you won't be lost? Take your time, stop for lunch, and enjoy what there is to offer along the way. Friends of mine went to Parade a few years ago and decided to have fun while being lost on the TSD rally. Rather than stress about maxing out that leg, they bought a birdhouse from a local wood carver. Made for one of the best rally stories I've heard!

Be a social butterfly, if you choose, at all the banquets. Enjoy the local cuisine that is featured. Spend time at the happy hour before the dinners, enjoying just being with the people who share your passion. You don't have to feel the need to flog them in the autocross. Dinners are always a "No Flogging" zone. Ooooh, and the ice cream social is always tons of fun. Enjoy your frozen treat while watching everyone else coming off the TSD rally telling their war stories, cursing that one missed sign, while you sit back and enjoy your stress free view.

Feeling like socializing even when it's NOT at a banquet? Well, then spend your afternoons in the Hospitality room. Casually check your email in a computer station, find out about the latest tire advancements from the event sponsors, or just sit back and enjoy the free drinks and snacks. Sit there long enough and you're sure to run into a friend or two or hundred. Sooner or later, everyone at Parade goes to Hospitality. Don't be shocked to find a margarita party or wine tasting is going on there. Those hospitality chairs are always full of surprises.

Everyone also seems to find himself or herself in the Goodie Store, looking for great deals. Current Parade merchandise is there, along with PCA and Porsche stuff, as well. The assortment is always best in the first few days, but the deals are always best the last few. Take your pick!

Add to all this, the local area tours that get set up each year. The Charlotte Parade had a tour bus to take you to the fabulous Biltmore House. Discount tickets AND available transportation... how can you beat it? Don't feel like leaving the hotel all the time? Well, check out the art show that is usually set up in the

host hotel. Our fellow PCA'ers are some amazing artists. Maybe you have a talent you'd like to display and don't care a whip about winning a ribbon. You can even choose to sell your work of art and contribute to a local charity. It's up to you.

The past few years' Parades have also held spectacular Porsche Historic Museum type displays. Brush up on your history, drool a little over the offerings, and simply enjoy being around some vehicles that you may never again get to stand next to. Take your time, it's usually open several days during the week. Amazing cars abound. Not only are there amazing cars around, but there have been some amazing guest speakers, complete with autograph sessions. Vic Elford, Norbert Singer, and Kevin Buckler... to name just a few. Have you always wanted to meet Peter Porsche? He's attended well over 20 Parades so far and has no plans to miss them in the future. He's always so nice and personable and not at all pretentious.

If all this sounds too structured for you, well... toss out the schedule (at times) and branch out on your own. Take in the local sites (even if there's not a tour offered there), shop in the local stores, and just enjoy the local flavor. Everywhere you look you can find it. Just don't too distracted and forget to attend the final Victory Banquet. That's when they draw for the trip to Germany. While everyone competes for it, all it takes is one little door prize slip with your name on it and that you get included with your meal.

So, come to Colorado. Relax with friends and enjoy ALL the spectacular views, Porsche and not.

Hope to see you there! I might just have to take a day off from competing to smell some of the roses along the way.