

PORSCHE PARADE 2008 CHARLOTTE, NC

BY MICHELE HODGES, MUSIK-STADT MEMBER

Our first parade has come and gone, and I have a feeling it won't be our last. Over the course of 7 days, Frank and I enjoyed wonderful hospitality from the Carolinas Region, which hosted the event, met new friends, participated in our first national-level concours, rally, and auto-cross, and even met a Porsche (Hans Peter, that is).

Friday, June 27

After a pleasant and un-eventful drive over to Charlotte, we checked into the Westin (our host hotel) and met up with old friends from previous Porsche events. Knowing we had little time to prep for Concours, we headed out to find the Parade's car wash headquarters and got busy. Once we arrived at the Concours prep area, we knew we were in for a spectacular showing – every vintage and mint of Porsche, plus a racecar.

Saturday, June 28

Saturday was primarily dedicated to more Concours prep and the opening of the Goodie Shop. It's a lot of fun – especially for the men – to walk into a store that sells nothing but Porsche goodies! After loading up on far more merchandise than was reasonable, we headed out to dinner with the Musik-Stadt crew at the Capital Grille. Following a fantastic meal, we headed back to the hotel knowing Sunday started bright and early.



Back row: Robert Collins, Donna Martin, Dan Martin, Frank Hodges, Michele Hodges. Front row: Christian Cahill, Bill Wright, Mike Moody, Shirley Moody, Valerie Gillespie, Mike Gillespie

Sunday, June 29

Concours day! Cars began lining the streets of Charlotte's downtown at 6:00 AM, with judging



to begin at 9:00. The sight of all of those cars was staggering. The main judging was taking place on Tryon with paddock running on perpendicular streets for the entire length. Everywhere you looked, there were rows upon rows of Porsches. Our

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S placed 3rd in our class (unfortunately, there were only a total of 5 showing in our class).



The welcome party that evening featured introductions of special guests from Porsche, including Hans Peter Porsche, the president of Porsche NA, and several other members of the Porsche NA team.

Monday, June 30

The day's events included the Gimmick Rally and Tech quizzes. The Moody's and Gillespie's participated in the Gimmick Rally and said it was a challenging, but fun event. Frank served as Hospitality chair for Parade this year, so Monday

was primarily a work day for both of us. Hospitality provides refreshments, an Internet café, vendor displays, and results from all of the various events. It's a bustling room and was run very successfully this year, in my non-biased opinion. As a result, we missed out on several events, but were able to attend a couple of seminars, including one with Norbert Singer, former Porsche engineer. That evening, the Concours banquet was held in the Convention Center and we received our trophy for 3rd place.

Most of the Musik-Stadt crew headed back to Nashville and work, while Bill Wright and the Hodges remained to carry on for more events.

Tuesday, July 1

Several events were scheduled for Tuesday, including the TSD Rally. Having fared well in our past rallies, we felt certain we could hold our own in this event. We were

wrong. We started off well, making decent time on our first leg, even though we entered the finish backwards. For the second leg, we missed a turn and gave up trying to find our way back on course after 45 minutes of aimless driving. A volunteer van found us sitting on the side of a two-lane country road and led us back to our hotel. The evening's Margarita party gave us consolation for our poor performance earlier in the day.

Wednesday, July 2

Wednesday started with an early morning walk of the autocross track which was held at Lowe's Superspeedway. The course offered some exciting challenges; a couple of tight horseshoe turns, some banked curves, and a couple of weaving straights. The best time of the day was 69.125. Frank turned in a very respectable 77 – I'm not revealing my time. It was a long day at the track, but a very fun one. We're now hooked on autocrossing and look forward to more. We were able to visit the



Heritage and Historic Display, which featured approximately 50 cars, including several racecars.

That evening we attended a reception hosted by the PCA president, Prescott Kelly, at Bentley's. In attendance was Mr. Porsche,

whom we were able to meet and talk cars. He carries a photo of his favorite Porsche with him – a 904 that he bought after seeing during a past Parade on

the Concours. He is a very personable and friendly man, and we were quite honored to have the opportunity to meet and talk with him.

Thursday, July 3

Last day of Parade! The week ended with a wonderful volunteer brunch to thank everyone for their efforts. Seeing

the number of people in the room made it clear that this is an event that requires tremendous support, manpower, and coordination. Following the brunch, we worked our last shift in Hospitality and then prepared for the final Victory Banquet.

One of the most exciting, and entertaining, portions of the banquet was meeting the chairs for 2009 and watching a video about what's planned for next year. Parade 2009 will be held in Keystone, Colorado. Start making your plans now for a fun-filled, Porsche-filled event.

