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Blows Our
Minds—
Again!**

The

Pebble Beach of Muscle Cars

During move-in day at the Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals (MCACN), *MCR* editor Drew Hardin was talking with Charley Lillard, one of the MCACN board members, and made this observation: "This show has become the Pebble Beach of muscle cars." With that statement, Hardin correctly summarized the enormous achievement of the first five years of the MCACN (pronounced *mik-KAK-en*).

Few will disagree that the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance is the most prestigious collector car event in the world. However, if you are a muscle car person who is not into swoopy French cars; or you can't tell the difference between a Duesenberg and a Lima Locomotive; or if, like me, you don't know how to pronounce *Concours d'Elegance*, head to Chicago next November. Five years of hard work from Bob Ashton and the MCACN board has made this event the destination show of the year. The MCACN has become both a gathering of the most astounding muscle car finds of our generation, as well as the target completion date for some of the most significant muscle car restorations in the world.

Most of the cars on the show floor are grouped into invitational showcases. Some featured a particular brand or model of muscle car, such as the Oldsmobile W-Machine, L88 Corvette, Camaro Z/28, and the Road Runner. Others celebrated anniversaries, including the Class of 1963 and Class of 1973. There were the Ford

Performance Display, the Shelby Snakepit, the Baldwin-Motion Madness cars, and the Mr. Norm display. Vintage Certification judged original, unrestored cars, while Corvettes could participate in the Triple Diamond Showcase. The Original Owners showcase was ripe with history, while the Barn Finds/Hidden Gems showcase kept the crowd buzzing. The Pure Stock Muscle Car Drag Display had a great collection of show-quality muscle cars that are competing against each other at the dragstrip.

Author and Shelby guy extraordinaire Colin Comer commented, "You know the car that shows up to the local car show and becomes the buzz of the night? We've got over 500 of those cars under one roof."

Our California buddy Joe Salvo commented, "We are not just talking about beautifully restored or preserved cars. We are talking about the largest single gathering of significant cars from the muscle car era, cars you rarely, if ever, get an opportunity to see individually, much less all in one convenient location."

In the past I have wondered how Ashton and crew can top this show. This year I stopped asking that question. Since each successive MCACN has gotten more and more astounding, I have no doubt that we are in for a long run of muscle car euphoria in the beautiful and always balmy city of Chicago. Plan for next year by visiting www.mcacn.com.



■ Our own *MCR* Cover Come to Life showcase featured the cars that appeared on the Nov. '13 issue. Jim and Sandy Pearse brought their Hugger Orange '69 Yenko Camaro and served as goodwill ambassadors for the magazine for a good part of the weekend. Ken and Becky Schoenthaler brought their Sunflower Yellow Yenko Deuce and were constantly talking to their Nova buddies. Stefano Bimbi presented the awesome '67 Yenko/Harrell/Gibb Camaro, with previous owner Dennis McCorkle on hand to answer questions about his old ride.



■ Among the Mopar standouts was the '70 Mod Top Hemi 'Cuda brought by Mopar über-collector Steve Juliano. The floral-pattern vinyl top was a groovy option offered back in the day, but rarely seen today on a Hemi car.



■ One of my favorite Fords at the show was this '71 Torino Brougham 429 Cobra Jet hard-top owned by Bill Kulenkamp. The Shaker-hood car has about 40,000 miles on it and still wears its original paint. In addition to the 429 Cobra Jet, which produces a factory rated 370 hp and 450 lb-ft of torque, this Torino is equipped with a four-speed Top Loader transmission and a 3.50-geared Traction-Lok 9-inch rear, making for a superb performance package.



■ Restorer and painter Charley Hutton was on hand to discuss the history—and details of his two-year restoration—of the '67 Cherokee Camaro (one of several cars at MCACN from the anonymous "Brothers Collection"). In 1967, a white 396 Camaro convertible was pulled off the assembly line and given to Bill Mitchell to create a show car that would promote the new-for-1967 Camaro. Mitchell ended up designing a number of unique features that would draw from the '67 Corvette as well as hint of the upcoming '68 Corvette. His work on the Cherokee Camaro included split front and rear bumpers, shortened rear quarters with Corvette-inspired quarter extensions, a custom hood, and a molded rear spoiler. The custom hood includes a hood tach and a Plexi-glas panel to show off the Weber carburetors. The original custom interior remains as installed by Bill Mitchell. (Those of you with long memories will recall our story, "They Crush Show Cars, Don't They?" Nov. '07.)



■ Mike Spangler owns this '71 AMX prototype, which was Richard Teague's attempt to talk AMC into keeping the AMX a true two-seater. The newly designed front fenders were grafted onto Teague's own '68 AMX with the hope that AMC would not turn the AMX into a four-seater. AMC liked the look of the fenders, but rejected the two-seat model.

“The floral-pattern vinyl top was a groovy option back in the day”

■ The debut of the '74 "Last Nickey" L88 Camaro was highlighted by Stefano Bimbi's description of the car's history. Mike Guarise had Bob Adams of Muscle Car Designs in Joliet, Illinois, restore the car that is believed to be the very last super car conversion performed at Nickey Chevrolet prior to closing its doors in late 1973. Fortunately, Bimbi has picked up the baton, and Nickey Chicago carries on the performance tradition.

■ Fords were well represented, as exemplified by this one-of-428 '66 Galaxie 500 7-Litre convertible with the rare Q Code 428ci/345hp engine and four-speed Toploader close-ratio transmission. The 7-Litre Sports Package adorned the car with cool emblems, while the factory "mufflerless" exhaust system kept the neighbors awake.

■ The Vintage Certification cars at MCACN are judged for the authenticity of their original, unrestored condition. Jeff Helm's '66 L78 Chevelle was a standout. Only 3,099 L78 396/375hp Chevelle SS396 cars were built for 1966. Helms found this original-paint car with only 81,000 miles still powered by the untouched, numbers-matching engine, M21 four-speed transmission, and 3.07 differential. He has a few more Chevelles at home, but this original car is one of the best in his collection.

■ The Shelby Snakepit was back this year, and among the collection of Ol' Shel's snakes was Roger Morrison's '67 G.T. 350, a car he just added to his fleet. The Shelby is an early car and is understood to be a public relations/show car. It is the 20th Shelby car built for 1967, so it has some unique features that the later cars did not. For example, it has a six-point roll bar instead of the production style four-point one, '66 seat upholstery, and a flat gas cap instead of a convex gas cap. The grille opening, headlight surrounds, and valence panel are all one piece of fiberglass instead of the multiple pieces of the later cars. Possibly the most obvious early car indicator is the C-pillar scoop that has a little marker light, which later became illegal.

■ Apex Autosports completed Tim Wellborn's '71 Lemon Twist 440 6 Pack GTX just in time for the show. Shop owner Andrew White was on hand to answer questions about the restoration. The '71 GTX looks great with its yellow body, optional black canopy top, and two-tone white and black interior. The car is a two-fender-tag car, loaded with options. Many N.O.S. parts were used in the restoration, making for a brilliant final product.

"This '69 Z/28 was a one-owner car with only 1,304 original miles"





■ George Young's impeccable '64 Comet Cyclone wowed the MCACN crowd. Though Young is widely known as a Mopar guy, his first car was a '64 Comet. When he found this one, he knew he needed to recreate his high school ride. He performed one of his signature over-the-top restorations on this Mercury, which is equipped with a 289 four-barrel motor and a four-speed transmission.



■ Yes, the yellow tail stripe is factory. One of the great thrills of buying a Mopar in 1970 was the ability to individualize your car with whatever color combination your heart desired. My heart would not have desired this combo in 1970, but somebody thought it would be cool; at MCACN, it was shocking cool. The Challenger convertible has only 11,200 miles and is equipped with a 340 engine and four-speed transmission. The car was purchased from the original owner in September 2005.



■ One of the most unusual cars at MCACN was this '63 Studebaker Avanti, owned by Ed George of South Holland, Illinois. The car is powered by an R3 304.5ci/335hp Paxton-supercharged engine. Built by well-known Studebaker guru George Krem in 1969, it has been freshened by Ed since then. The bright white exterior nicely complements the orange interior. Ed is a lifelong Studebaker enthusiast who also owns a '64 Commander that he is building for Pure Stock Muscle Car drag racing.

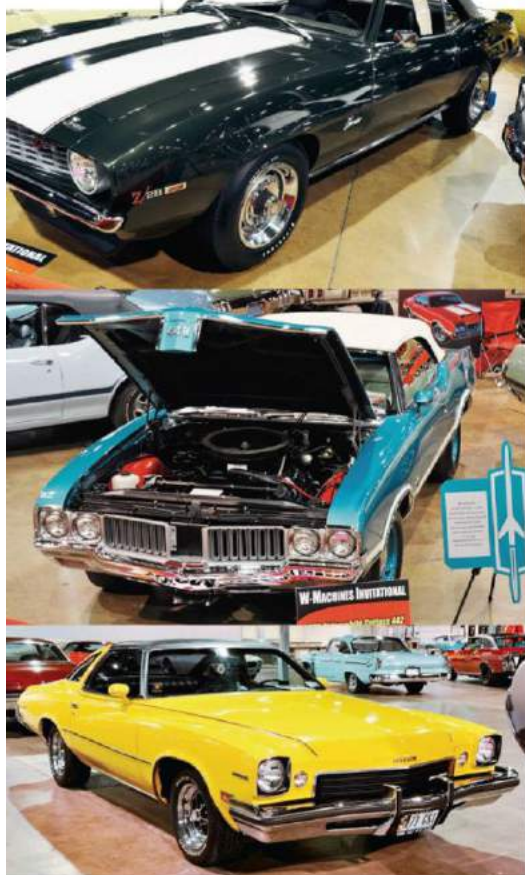


■ The two-tone Canyon Copper/Cameo White '71 Pontiac T-37 has 71.0 street miles on it and is owned by Dan Jensen of Portland, Michigan. The one-of-four Pontiac is equipped with a 455 H.O. motor, Turbo 400 transmission, and a 3.55 posi rear. Active in the Pure Stock drags, the car has run a best of 12.87 at 106.76 mph. The other Canyon Copper '71 Pontiac is a GT-37 owned by Mike Sparks. This car is also equipped with a 455 H.O. motor but has an M22 four-speed. The GT-37 was sold new through GM of Canada, and is a one-of-54 car. Dan Jensen performed the restoration on Sparks' car, and the two together make for a great pair representing the Pontiac contingent.



■ Late in 1971, this '72 Road Runner was given to a teenager as a graduation present from his father. The young man was permitted to choose any option he desired, and his wish list included the 440 four-barrel engine, four-speed transmission with pistol grip shifter, and high impact Tor Red paint. Within a year, the young man then added big rims and tires, as well as a paint job by well-known custom painter Butch Brinza. The car was well cared for by the original owner until 1977, when it was sold to Bill Waara, who has wisely preserved the modified Plymouth. Mechanical improvements and enhancements were made along the way, including the upgrade to a 426 Hemi engine. But amazingly, the paint is still the same as was sprayed by Brinza in 1972. Nice preservation work! **MCA**

“Yes, the yellow tail stripe is factory”



■ The Z28 Invitational included cars that were outstanding in every way. This Fathom Green '69 Z/28 was a one-owner car with only 1,304 original miles as of October 2000, when it was purchased by Eddie and Kimberly Montini of Gilbert, Arizona. In early 2013, with only 1,658 original miles, the car was disassembled, cleaned, and repainted with a stunning "factory look" lacquer repaint. All panels, glass, chrome, drivetrain, vinyl top, and interior are original to the car. Equipment includes a 3.73 Positraction rear, four-speed M21 close-ratio transmission, and a Dark Green vinyl top.

■ This '70 4-4-2 W-30 convertible, part of the Oldsmobile W-Machines Invitational, is owned by Mark and Dawn Bednar. The car is a special order Aegean Aqua color with an M21 four-speed transmission, Rocket Rally Pack, power windows, console, and tilt wheel. This 4-4-2 is one of two known convertible W-30s with Canadian documentation. Being a Canadian car, it is no surprise that the car also boasts the KO5 engine block heater.

■ Widely overlooked by enthusiasts, this '73 Buick Gran Sport Stage 1 is impressive. Phil Roitman found the car on eBay a few years back, and only needed to do some engine compartment and undercarriage detailing. The numbers-matching Stage 1 455 motor is one of 728 Stage 1 cars built in '73. This car happens to be one of the 45 GS Stage 1 Sun Coupe cars created by ASC with a sunroof. Of the 45 Sun Coupe cars, Roitman's is 1 of 23 that featured electric operation for the sunroof. His car is fully documented by the Sloan Museum and maintains its original interior. These cars deserve more attention!

BARN FINDS/HIDDEN GEMS

One of the busiest areas of the MCACN show floor was the corner devoted to barn finds and other lost-and-found treasure. *MCR* contributor (and "automotive archeologist") Ryan Brutt put together an outstanding collection of diamonds in the rough; here are just a few of the highlights.



■ Prominent in the barn find display was this filthy '70 Hemi Road Runner pilot car, which, when it was new, was used for promotional pictures. Though rough and sick-looking, this car was grabbing a bunch of attention from MCACN fans. Great find. I want it!

■ The current owners of this real '69 Hurst/Olds had searched for three years for the right car and finally discovered this gem. Though the car has received some custom paint work, including the name "Golden Web" painted on the side, the engine compartment has remained mostly original and complete. The new owners plan to restore the car to original condition. Good decision, as not every barn find should stay in barn find condition ad infinitum.

■ Station wagon fans were drooling over this one-of-one '67 Ford Country Squire with a factory documented Q Code 428ci/345hp motor and factory four-speed transmission. The original owner, Vincent Bolling, needed a station wagon for his family, but he wanted the biggest motor Ford made, and it had to have a four-speed. Working off a lead, he made connections with a young Ford executive named Lee Iacocca to gain permission to build the car. Iacocca made it happen. It even has dual facing rear seats! Adrian Clements runs the 1967 Ford Full Size registry and is the owner of this incredible automobile.