

Revisiting the Chesapeake Challenge

PCA's Longest-running Multi-event Weekend

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The Chesapeake Region's "*Chesapeake Challenge*" was initiated way back in 1967 about a year after I joined PCA. As the new Chesapeake Region President, I thought the Region needed some "revitalization" and the idea of a multi-Region weekend was generated after I had read about the Monterey Bay Region's "*West Coast Weekend*". I also learned that Metro New York, Northern New Jersey and Connecticut Valley had just done their 6th annual *Tri-State Porscherama*, which was apparently a success, and suggested that the Chesapeake Region might also try to sponsor one of these weekend events that drew entrants from neighboring states and Regions. It would be only the 3rd of such Multi-Region events in PCA.

The first Chesapeake Challenge was held August 2-4, 1968, with me, Dennis Kline, twins Steve & Frank Shap, Ab Tiedemann, Don Riggs and Stan Bailey doing the organizing. The event was held at the Holiday Inn on Loch Raven Blvd in Towson, with the Concours d'Elegance on the front lawn of Goucher College, the Autocross at Eudowood plaza and the Friday night cocktail party scheduled for the Holiday Inn pool. Of course, so was the rain so we moved indoors. A total of 34 competitive entries and 10 social entries showed up and all had a great time.

For the trivia freaks among you, PCA membership was at 4,668 members, there were 62 Regions, Valley Core would sell you a fully-rebuilt 911 engine for \$1,500 green ones, and 911/912 full front suspensions complete with disc brakes for \$150. To make you even more nostalgic, rooms at the host hotel were \$15.00 per night, for TWO people---INCLUDING tax! Our Saturday evening Banquet featured Roast Top Round steak with all the trimmings for four dollars and twenty-five cents per person - - including tax and gratuity! Entry fee was a paltry \$10 per person - - - - ah those were the days!

The two Porsche dealers in the area – Knowlton “Pappy” Long’s Stuttgart Imports, and Charles Gillet’s 40 West Motors, donated the trophies. Pappy departed this worldly environment for the great Nurburgring in the Sky right after the 3rd Challenge, and the 1st Overall Award was designated in his honor thereafter. The 1st overall winners were Dan and Sandy Rowzie of Potomac Region, who also had won the 1967 Parade door prize of a red 911 Targa the prior year – a car that Dan owned for many years thereafter. Porsche of America Corp (POAC), which is the predecessor of PCNA, sent Joe and Elke Wiedemann as representatives. Joe was POAC National Training Manager and was most enlightening in his talk to the group as he brought information on the 1969 Porsches (prompting me to order one, which I own to this day). We also had a special surprise guest in the person of David E. Davis, former Editor of Car & Driver through 1966, who showed up in a huge grosser Mercedes 600 as he was freelancing at the time and said he was doing a story on us for Sports Illustrated.

Oh—the Chesapeake Challenge was named in a contest the Region held, and a fine gentleman named Earl Harter submitted the winning entry.

The event was so much fun it was continued the following year, although headquarters moved to another hotel and the pool party was held at my folk’s home in Lutherville, where it continued for many years following. The Challenge continues on to this day, with the exception of one or two years where the Region

took a little hiatus to recuperate. Attendance grew into well over a hundred and it is now the longest-running Multi-Region Weekend in PCA. If you'd like to join the fun, the 38th Annual Chesapeake Challenge will be held September 12-14, 2007 at the beautiful Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Maryland. This year's Challenge honors the 'Gone but Not Forgotten'- with special recognition to owners of and Registries for 914, 924, 944, 968, and 928 models. The events will follow the traditional format include a Friday evening welcome party, a Saturday morning top-only Concours, a Saturday afternoon gimmick rallye through the delightful rolling green hills of rural Maryland, and a Sunday Autocross at Ripkin Stadium. Contact Manny Alban (yes, the PCA National Secretary) at carrerados@aol.com (or 410-515-4470) for registration information, OR visit <http://pcachs.org/index.html>