

## Memphis Mustangers Remember Carl Taber At Christmas Time!

When the members of Mustangs of Memphis hold their annual Christmas banquet, there is always good food, entertainment, fun and fellowship.

But there is also something extra special for the members of the club to look forward to — the presentation of the Carl Taber Award.

The honor is a tribute to a man who drew strength and hope from a special love of the Ford Mustang.

"The Mustang became a unique kind of therapy that helped Carl sustain a better quality of life for several years despite a body and spirit wounded by diabetes and it's complications," says his wife, Nola.

"That love led to the beginning of a Mustang club whose members, touched by Carl's indomitable spirit and optimistic outlook, rallied on his behalf to give him support and understanding — always in a manner of comraderie, expecting nothing in return."

Carl Taber thought he was happy with a classic Chevy in 1977 until he saw a light blue, 1966 Mustang coupe. He traded for it and was forever hooked on Mustangs.

"He enjoyed them so much that he had to find other people who felt the same way as he did about them. And, on June 4, 1979, Carl and I met with Harrell Doty and a small group of people and on that evening, the Mustangs of Memphis was formed," Mrs. Taber recalls.

"The fun really began that summer for Carl. We joined other club members at Mallard Point, AL to attend our very first Mustang show. Carl became more and more excited and began restoring Mustangs and was always recruiting members for the club."

Although these were good times for Carl, it was not long before he started having serious physical complications resulting from his diabetic condition.

The first was diabetic retinopathy. Laser and vitreous surgery on both eyes left him with limited vision and he was unable to drive.

"This slowed him down some, but he continued being active in the club and even with restricted eyesight he could clean and polish a Mustang until it was spotless and ready for show. He would spend hours at a time cleaning rust from parts, down to the smallest nuts and bolts. It was a labor of love for him," Mrs. Taber says.

Carl's health continued to deteriorate,



**Carl Taber's Love Of Mustangs Helped Him Battle Diabetes**

causing kidney failure in 1980. That resulted in 10 months of dialysis and a kidney transplant.

"The love and support given to us by the club members was tremendous during the times of surgery and convalescence."

On and on it went, but through it all, Carl's desire for the ultimate Mustang nourished his spirit and helped restore strength to his body. He was always looking forward to owning one more Mustang and attending one more show.

"It was not for him to be totally healed, though, and he died in his sleep on May 13, 1986 at the age of 49," Mrs. Tabor says.

The decision by the Mustangs of Memphis to present a trophy in honor of Carl's memory to the member who has contributed the most to the club for the year was initiated by Harrell Doty. The recipient is chosen by means of popular vote, by the membership, at the November meeting and the award is presented at the club's Christmas banquet.

"If Carl were here, he would say that he didn't deserve the honor of having an award named for him — that others deserved it more. But he would be so proud!

"Carl was a man who loved other people and loved a special kind of car, and if God should so decree, I can imagine him driving down a beautiful street in a white, 1966 Mustang convertible with red pony interior and styled steel wheels. It's the one he never owned before but always wanted!"

*(Editor's Note: Thanks to Nola Taber, Charles Young and Harrel Doty of the Mustangs of Memphis for providing the information for this story).*

## Baton Rouge Mustangers Show Results Corrected

Results of the Baton Rouge Mustangers seventh annual round-up, printed in the October issue of *The Mustang Times*, inadvertently omitted the winners of the 1967-70 Shelby class.

J.F. Ponder of Mendenhall, MS won the first place trophy in the 1969-70 Shelby class. John Jackson of Houma, LA was awarded the second place trophy at the Baton Rouge Show in that class.

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