

Although the cover date on this issue of *Mustang Times* is February 1997, I'm actually writing this column on December 19, 1996. Christmas is just around the corner and an unbelievable sight is outside my office window -- snow! That's right folks, we have snow in Atlanta, Georgia. So much for the hot and sunny South!

But spring is just around the corner and with it comes a new season for showing off our cars. Plans must soon be made as to which shows will be attended and the necessary hotel and travel arrangements handled. As we draw up our itinerary for the next few months, this is also a good time to include in those plans a conscious effort to register our Mustangs for those shows as early as possible.

Many of us procrastinate and put off sending in that registration form until the very last minute. Oh sure, we call the hotels, find out who is traveling when to which shows, and hurry up the finishing touches on that restoration, but we still do not send in that all-important slip of paper to the host club.

These clubs use early registration as a gauge of what's to come. Some check with the hotels to see how many reservations have been made, but even large numbers there do not guarantee a large number of cars. When registrations are received early, these hard-working groups can be adequately prepared and make any changes in classes or show site layout that may be needed. If it appears that the turnout will be larger than originally anticipated, officials can secure more judges, arrange for an additional quantity of "goodies" at concessions stands, or increase the number of trophies ordered. If we wait until the last minute to let them know that we will be in attendance, everyone's

job becomes much more difficult.

Let's all do our best to get those forms in early. The show hosts will thank you.

On another note -- your editor has been snooping through newsletters again.

Approximately 90% of those newsletters received make mention of project Mustang Museum. And all those who mention this endeavor also mention the desire to become a sponsor. Some clubs have already made their donations ranging from \$5,000 to \$500. But many groups are working out details on how to raise the money. "Passing the hat" is one approach that can be taken as well as earmarking monies received from a show.

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Let's face it, raising a substantial amount of money on relatively short notice is not an easy thing to do particularly this time of year when activities have slowed down and commitments have already been made to charitable organizations. But Mustangers are a resourceful bunch, and no doubt that by the time this issue is in the mail, most groups will have attained their goal.

It isn't often that a group of hobbyists has the opportunity to help shape history for future generations. Creating a museum where a very important part of automotive history can be housed, displayed, studied, and appreciated requires the backing and encouragement of all Mustang

enthusiasts. The only other time, that quickly comes to mind, when our voices and input were needed in such numbers was when Ford considered changing the Mustang to front-wheel drive.

This is a golden opportunity for *everyone* to become involved whether young or old, club member or no, Mustang owner or secret admirer. There are no boundaries. A great effort has been made by Museum officials to attract the attention of Mustang clubs large and small. Mustang publications have been carrying updates and information on the project in an effort to keep non club members informed. Purchasing an "I Support Mustang Museum" decal is a way for individuals to be a part of the action, but again, most of the advertising for the decals has been via magazines and clubs.

There is a distinct possibility that an untapped market could be found in the casual Mustang owner. You know, those folks who are not interested in clubs or shows, but who truly love their Mustangs. If the information were made available to them, a completely new group of supporters could surface.

As members of the world's largest Mustang club it is our responsibility to help get the word out. With so many people going "online" these days, the home computer is one of the fastest ways to get the word out. If you are a dinosaur, such as myself, and prefer a little more old fashioned approach, consider photocopying an article that includes all pertinent information on the project from one of your magazines and post it on the bulletin board at your local market, community center, church, etc.

The Museum Board of Directors is making great strides in arranging funding, but it will take all of us working together to pull this off. Isn't our favorite car worth it?