

Publisher's Corner by Tony Garcia

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope all of you had a safe and enjoyable holiday season. It's hard to believe that 1998 is here. There are a lot of exciting things going on with the Mustang Club of America and *Mustang Times*.

This year we have five National shows and a Grand National scheduled which means plenty of opportunities to get out your pony and show it off. We have the southwest, northeast, central, and southeast portions of the U. S. offering a National or Grand National event this year. MCA is growing and spreading out and we're looking forward to seeing and meeting you this year.

As you continue to read through this issue of *Mustang Times*, you will notice several changes that we are very excited about. There are three big changes that will be most obvious. First, you may have noticed that the cover of the magazine is now the same thickness as the rest of the book. Now that we are using poly bags for mailing purposes, there is no need to print the covers with heavier paper. The cost savings for us to eliminate this heavier front cover has afforded us two additional surprises.

For basically the same cost per issue, we are now increasing the magazine from 56 interior pages to 60. Additionally, you will now see something that has never been seen before inside *Mustang Times* color! We now are featuring six inside pages of color. Two have been assigned as full page color ads and four will be used for cover cars, feature cars, or whatever else we may dream up. We are very pleased with the new look and direction of this magazine and hope you are too.

Throughout last year we tried to include more pages on technical, "how-to", and new products, as well as the new Third Generation News column, regional group news, classifieds, human interest, and calendar of events. Beginning this year we are positioning ourselves to give you the most complete and best looking *Mustang Times* that has ever been available. Teresa will continue to offer detailed and highly informative articles on the cover cars, feature cars, and items of interest. We are very pleased and honored to have her editing *Mustang Times* as we enter

into 1998 and beyond.

Speaking of 1998 and beyond, I have some thoughts on the future and its relationship to the Mustang. Some of you may have read in national magazines within the last few months that Ford is slated to offer a completely revamped Mustang for 1999. Remember, that also coincides with the 35th anniversary of the Mustang. Not bad timing if you ask me. Most of you should be aware of the 35th anniversary show that MCA will be hosting in Charlotte in April 1999. Ford will have already debuted the 1999 Mustang, but how will it look and what will be available under the hood? Appearance-wise, from the spy photos that have surfaced recently and from all indications out of Dearborn, it will very much resemble what was called the Rambo prototype. More muscular, more aggressive styling cues, and more performance. But how much more performance? The 1998 GT is now available with 10 more horsepower than in previous years, but is that enough?

In my everyday job I have to put up with a Chevy-head named Gene. Even though Gene drives a 1997 Camaro SS rated at 320 horsepower, I try not to hold it against him. Working around him does keep the conversation about cars fresh, since we are constantly discussing what is better from each manufacturer and why. The bottom line is always performance. In the base Mustang and Camaro, performance is not a big decision maker for most buyers. They want a car that looks good, drives good, and gives acceptable performance with good economy. The 150 horsepower V6 Mustang does just that (see our review from July 1997). That's not bad, but the Camaro offers a base coupe with a 200 horsepower V6. Before you start to pen your mail to me, let me tell you that I agree with most of you that the difference in horsepower probably does not make too much difference for many V6 buyers. It does start to open the eyes of some GT buyers, however, when we see only 25 horses separating the base Camaro from the GT Mustang. Factor in the 305 horsepower 5.7 liter Z28 and you are now at Cobra numbers in a Z28. Yes, I know this is a 5.7 liter, 350 cid comparison to a 4.6 liter, 281 cid, but the

numbers speak for themselves.

My question is this: How important is regular production horsepower to you? Would you like to see the GT available with two engine choices? How about a standard 4.6 engine in the base GT and an optional four-valve, dual-overhead cam, 305 horsepower Cobra mill in a GT? Then SVT could offer a specially tuned version of their current Cobra engine with, say, 330-350 ponies to crush the competition. I think the modular 5.4 liter engine, properly massaged by SVT engineers, could spit out 350-370 horsepower for the ultimate Cobra engine option. Rumor has it that there will be more space between the shock towers on the 1999 Mustang to accommodate a bigger engine. What are your thoughts? Drop me a line and let me know.

Based on the feedback received from members across the country, the majority seems pleased with the direction of *Mustang Times*. We are proud of our club and magazine and we want everyone to feel the same way. Next time you are at a show and see a Mustang without an MCA decal, tell the owner about the MCA and show them (or give them) your copy of *Mustang Times*, or tear out one of the MCA applications and hand it to them. We need you to help spread the word about the Mustang Club of America.

Also, please consider submitting any original articles, information, or suggestions to us for publication. We welcome your comments and suggestions. I would like to get a photo to print of every Mustang owned by MCA members. We would have in excess of 20,000 photos. I'm sure Teresa and Marilyn Newcombe are cringing at this suggestion when you consider the increased mail, but why not? We are your club magazine, so why not let us run photos of your Mustangs? Be sure to include your MCA number and any pertinent information about your car.

As always I love to hear your suggestions. You can E-mail me directly at mustangs@america.net or write to me via the headquarters address. Many recommendations that have been submitted have been adopted into the magazine.

Thanks for being a member and thanks for getting involved.