

Your Mustang

... AND CLUB MEMBERSHIP CAN BE THE KEY TO SURVIVING TOUGH TIMES

By John M. Clor

Man, there's just not a lot of good news out there about the economy these days—and all the shenanigans going on over at Wall Street have had a hugely negative impact on our nation's auto industry. Heck, the whole financial mess has already had a negative impact on us all, for that matter.

When gasoline prices had skyrocketed, most Americans were hit squarely in their pocketbook, and had to cut back spending on other things just to keep driving to work and back. And once home values started plummeting, cutting back on household spending became a matter of survival for millions of people. But since the banking, mortgage and insurance industry collapse—and Washington began handing out our money for a financial system bailout—consumer confidence has been sinking to lows not seen since the Great Depression.

That's really why housing starts and auto sales have pretty much crashed, while retail sales, air travel and dining out have declined steadily. As part of this vicious cycle, many good-paying jobs are disappearing while companies try to balance their books through slashing payroll via layoffs and benefits-cutting. Yup—it seems like things got real ugly, real fast last year.

I don't know about you, but I just couldn't stand seeing my 401K take a beating each month. It seemed that whenever I'd dare to look at my retirement account statement, it was half gone every time I checked! So I decided to DO something

about it: I took my money OUT of Wall Street and put it someplace where I think it will have a better chance of surviving—in Mustangs!

Yup, I cashed out and bought up some old Mustang project cars that I came across. Sounds crazy, I know, but I look at it this way: Unlike when I saw my 401K being half gone every time I looked at it—now, when I open up the garage door, my Mustangs are still 100-percent there!

At the same time, I admit I know some friends who are actually thinking of doing the opposite—of selling their beloved Mustangs to help make ends meet. (Say it isn't so, Joe!) Others have even decided not to renew their club memberships, or are thinking of cancelling their planned trip to a car show next summer just so that they might save a few bucks. But I must tell you, I think all of those reactions are bad ideas!

Why do you think that, even in today's depressed economy, interest in things like entertainment and movies, DVDs, music CDs and video games is actually higher? Well, I'm no Dr. Phil, but most experts agree that it's human nature for us to look for some sort of escape during dark times. It helps give us a mental diversion of sorts, or puts us in a place we like to be for our psyche's sake, until better times return. It's the same way that some people handle adversity or even grief. They immerse themselves into a hobby or their work to keep them occupied.

One thing you can do right off the top is to take a look at the 2010 Mustang. Whenever I get up-close-and-personal with a

newly redesigned Mustang, it puts me in a good mood. So get out to an auto show this winter and go see the new Mustang in the flesh. You'll either fall in love with it on the spot, or at least appreciate your own Mustang even more. Secondly, take a good, long look at your own car and see what needs doing—and then get it done. This is a good time for restoring, cleaning, polishing and repairing. Get out to the shop and spend some time making your Mustang better. If you're like me, you'll forget your troubles during those hours spent on your car, and getting some work done on the Mustang will give you a good sense of accomplishment. And whatever you do—DON'T go it alone and quit your club membership when it comes time to renew. In fact, I'd suggest that you do the exact opposite.

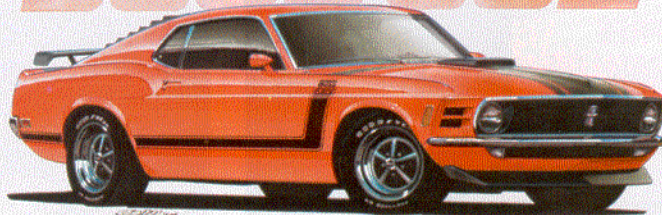
Get out to you local Mustang club meetings and make some new friends. Get involved with the club's leadership and volunteer to work on an activity or upcoming event. Write a story for your newsletter or web site, or spend some time visiting the web site that I do for Ford Racing, www.FordPerformance.com. No matter if it's getting out to attend an indoor swap meet or two, or just calling up an old friend to talk cars—you'll be surprised how the brotherhood (and sisterhood) of Mustang ownership and Mustang club membership can be food for your soul.

So cut out what you will—but don't sacrifice enjoying your Mustang. In no time winter will be over, and no matter what the bankers and politicians do, we'll all be heading down to Birmingham, Alabama, for the 45th Anniversary celebration. We plan to see great Mustangs and make great friendships. See you there!

Mustang Art

Full color, signed and numbered, limited edition art prints of Mustangs, Shelbys and other Ford subjects from original artwork by automotive designer/artist Jim Gerdom.

BOSS 302



DESIGN FACTORY

P.O. Box 14037
Lenexa, KS 66285-4037

1970 Boss 302 ©2002, 12"x24", limited edition of 2500 prints. DF-1009, \$40.00, plus \$5 shipping. See our website for additional images available.

888-268-9933, toll free 24 hrs

www.designfactoryart.com

John Clor



John M. Clor
Ford Racing

www.FordPerformance.com