

FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Summer time and the living is easy—and HOT! Why does hot weather always become the subject of discussion this time of year? In my case, the 100 degree days in eastern Georgia has really put a squash on doing anything but trying to stay cool. Cleaning cars is reserved for 6am to 8am because after that, you make a bigger mess dripping sweat on the car than the dirt you just washed off. It's easy to understand why Spring and Fall are everyone's favorite seasons of the year.

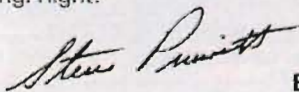
By the time you read this the sold out Midwest National Mustang Show, hosted by the Mustang Club of Central Iowa in Des Moines, will be done and we'll be headed to Waldorf, MD, for the National Capitol Region Mustang Club's Monuments and Mustangs Grand National. With our last two National Shows wrapping up, the Fall shows are not far off and preparations are in progress. Every MCA Regional club has traditional Fall events they attend en masse and my home club, the CSRA Mustang Club of Augusta, GA, is no different. In September, we participate in the Pony Run for Hospice presented by the Blue Ridge Mustang Club of Asheville, NC. There's just something about cruising the Blue Ridge Parkway in the Appalachian Mountains with 300-plus other Mustangs. This event seems to grow and get better every year. It has evolved into a car show on Saturday and cruise on the Blue Ridge Parkway on Sunday. In October, it's on to Savannah, GA, for the Savannah Mustang Club's Annual Mustang and Ford Show and Low Country Boil. The Club with the most cars in the show gets to be first in line to eat. My club and the Tara Mustang Club from the Atlanta area have had a friendly competition at this event for years. I don't know the exact numbers, but I think we are leading them by about 5 to 1 in being first. I'm sure to get some contradictory feedback from them on that.

As in last month's issue of *Mustang Times*, I'm going to reiterate the importance of returning your ballot for this year's election of National Board of Director members and answering that important question concerning the location each year for the Grand National. I realize that not all MCA members attend the National Shows each year but would ask that everyone weigh in on this. In long-range planning it is something that must be factored in to our decisions. One thing I didn't mention, that will also be on the ballot is a list of Charities. We ask that you select three from the list that you, as an MCA member, would like to see MCA support. This really makes your vote count, so mark and return that ballot without delay.

A couple of items that have been hot topics of discussion on the MCA web site forums have been Judging Sheets and the Certified Judges Testing program. Getting judging sheets to those that request them after a National Show has always been a subject of discussion, particularly if it takes an inordinate amount of time to receive it or it never shows up at all. We are in the process of developing a system of taking the sheets after an event and scanning them to produce a permanent record. With this in place, even if one is lost in the mail, we can retrieve and print out a new copy. Better yet, if you have Email capability we will be able to simply Email your judging sheet to you. Our first attempt after the NY show met with time-to-scan problems since it was necessary to scan in gray scale so everything was readable. Unfortunately, the time to scan in a document feeder was extremely slow compared to scanning in black and white. The problem with scanning in black and white was each page is has a faded background with the MCA logo. That logo, though faded, blocked any text or writing. Our commitment is to have this process perfected by the 2012 show season.

The problems encountered with creating and launching the Certified Judge testing system have been much more difficult to overcome than anticipated. Without discussing the issues involved in detail, I would ask once again that everyone be patient. We are about to begin beta testing of the system and hope (note, I said hope) to be able to launch the on-line Certified Judge Testing System by the end of the year. As I said, initially the process appeared to be simplistic in execution. It turns out it's a lot more complex than envisioned. The developers are working through the issues as quickly as possible but want to roll out a usable product that will meet the judging community's needs and not be full of errors and problems.

Well, it's about 7pm and the temperature has begun to cool a bit, so Beverly and I are going to put the top down and go get an ice cream at Sonic Drive in. Hey, it's all about enjoying life and having a little fun in a Mustang. Right?




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