

I'm very concerned about the Mustang Club of America. In many ways it's just like every other car club that's ever been. Unfortunately, some of those ways aren't very good ones. But the best part about the whole thing is that we've got some very good models: The Early V-8 Ford Club of America, Antique Automobile Club of America, Model A Ford Club of America, Hudson Essex Terraplane Club, Classic Car Club of America, Shelby American Automobile Club, both Model T Ford Clubs, the list can go on for the rest of this page. But it really isn't necessary. We all know that the car club concept can work.

What concerns me most is the seeming groundswell of unhappiness I have been seeing concerning the Mustang Club of America. One regional group sent three articles, which a member had written, to a commercial magazine. Regardless of the provocation, that's just not the way to support one's club. In the last issue, I asked for suggestions from the members concerning ways to improve the *Mustang Times*. From the entire Mustang Club of America membership, over 4,000 individuals, I have had but four replies, though a few people did write to say they liked the changes they had seen. That's not a very good response.

The sad part about it is that the MCA membership constitutes the greatest known repository of Mustang knowledge and lore (except, perhaps, when Lee Iacocca has a party). You people out there, collectively speaking, know virtually every design defect the car has

(and every car has design defects, not just Mustangs). You know the cheapest way of doing this, the best way of doing that, and the fastest way, period. You know which parts to buy and which to avoid. But unless you are ready and willing to share all of this vast quantity of information and hard-earned learning, the growth of the Mustang Club of America is surely to be retarded compared to what it could be. The essential character of a really good car club is this attitude of sharing, of sharing the knowledge and of sharing the load. You aren't buying a magazine; you're joining a club, as a member, as a participant. MCA wants you, but more importantly, MCA needs you if it is going to continue to grow and to continue to make an ever-increasing contribution to Mustang history and preservation. And surely that is the ultimate goal of every MCA member.

If you now want to say, "Why, then, is the magazine late?" I will humbly say "Touché." You don't want any long list of excuses, but we are typesetting the magazine (thanks to Jackie Carmical and Linda Noll of Custom Composition) which adds approximately a week to the magazine's production time. Add to that the confusion of switching editors and, well . . . enough said. It would help immensely if you would get your regional group news, classified, letters, etc., in a little sooner over the next few months. This will keep us from having to pad the magazine with reprints or ads as we attempt to catch up. Which brings up the related point that now our lead time is longer. Don't send

that meet or show announcement to us four weeks before the show and expect to have anyone come because they read it in *Mustang Times*! We need time — dated material like that at absolute least two months in advance; three or four months would be much better and would allow us to get your event more publicity.

Another important topic is the "In Search of Mustangs" Project. Many members are not aware that this project has The Mustang Club of America's endorsement, the "MCA Good Garagekeeping Seal of Approval," if you will. For those of you who are afraid of participating in this project, please read Jim Smart's column this month. Instead of making your vehicle more liable to theft, listings like these tend to document the cars and make them much more difficult to sell. No thief is going to steal something he can't fence. We are going to be expanding the search soon by notifying virtually all of the collector car clubs and requesting their help in the project. This hopefully will result in a greater sample and allow us to see Mustang production traits in greater detail. Why not send Jim your car's warranty plate information right now?

You'll be seeing a few more changes in the pages following this one, as we've brought a new page format to the *Mustang Times*. We've also introduced a few new columns as well as reorganizing an old one or two. Next month we'll have a brand new cover and who knows what all! Let me hear from you!!