

Zone 8 Representative's Report

Q1 2013

By Tom Brown

What a crazy busy quarter this has been!

January, of course, was loaded with the holiday parties that regions couldn't fit into the prior December. I was able to attend three: in Las Vegas Region, San Diego Region & California Inland Region.

Of course, January is also the month that hosts the Zone 8 party as well, so I spent the first three weeks getting ready for that. I decided to mix it up a bit this year. Historically the Zone 8 banquet has been just that, a banquet. While it also always includes the first of our two annual President's meetings, it hasn't held much else for the average club member. This year, I attempted to make it a destination weekend, for all to enjoy. So for during the day on Saturday, I recruited a Tour chair to lead those interested on an afternoon drive, as well as a team to manage an afternoon Concours. The Concours would be indoors, at the banquet facility; both in case some "winter" weather occurred and so that the cars would remain afterwards to be our backdrop and ambiance for the evening's banquet. Later I also found out that a club member organized an impromptu drive on Sunday morning as well.

I would say that it was a smashing success. The presidents' meeting held my attention most of the day, but the team did a fantastic job of organizing and pulling off the events. Thank you everybody! Dining in the room full of 30 gorgeous cars was terrific and incredibly special. There were plenty of door prizes to go around and we had a special guest, Magnus Walker, of Urban Outlaw fame, to give a short talk to the audience. From the EC we had National Past-President Kurt Gibson and his delightful wife Angie in attendance. It was a very busy weekend, but it was also everything I could have hoped it would be. Even Pete Stout got in on the action by publishing a great photo spread in the March Panorama. Thank you Pete!

Additional activities that I participated in during January include: A San Diego Region board meeting, a San Diego Region swap meet, and a 2013 Escape planning meeting.

February started off with my attending a breakfast meeting of the Riverside Region. These are always fun to go to, both to see the cars in the parking lot and to socialize with the region members. At the end of the meal they had a quick trivia contest which I thought provided some great entertainment as well. The next day saw me at the San Diego Region Driver's Awards party and later that week at another region board meeting.

The next weekend was the national board meeting in Orlando, Florida, site of the 2014 Escape! It's always good to catch up with friends from around the country and it also proved to be very productive, full of business meetings (no time to play at Disney World....).

Next on my list was a San Diego Region autocross – got off to a sloppy start – way to aggressive, and the car paid me back with the death of my starter solenoid. Off to the shop for the 79 SC!

Finally, for February, Golden Empire Region arranged a tour to a SoCal suspension spring manufacturer that I was able to attend. Was a bit of luck actually, as they are one of the farthest regions from me, and the tour destination was about halfway, drastically reducing my travel time! I was able to squeeze in a Festival of Speed planning meeting on the same day.

March came in with a roar as the first weekend held a stop at the Irvine Cars & Coffee event, followed by an Orange Coast Region breakfast meeting, and then the trip up to LA for the annual Lit & Toy Meet hosted by Prescott Kelly and friends. Sunday I joined Grand Prix region in their annual Hospitality tent at the 356 Registry swap meet (it is always the day after the LA Lit & Toy meet). Orange Coast Region also had a hospitality tent there, so PCA had all the bases covered!

This was followed the next weekend by a breakfast meeting with San Gabriel Valley Region which included a driving tour to the USS Iowa battleship museum. The USS Iowa is the first in class of the four WWII era Iowa class battleships and was the last of the four to become a floating museum (it just opened in LA harbor last July).

Next on my agenda was a Gimmick Rally hosted by Orange Coast Region. This was a fabulous event which took us on some back roads that I'd always wanted to drive, but had never found the time. I'm so glad I went, don't you just love it when that happens?

Can you say "long distance?" California Central Coast Region, based in San Luis Obispo, CA, is the hardest region for me to reach, both in time and distance. They seem to be the most isolated area from the rest of Zone 8. Consequently I have to try a little harder to make sure they get their fair share of my time and attention. An opportunity availed itself, and I was off. Once you are north of LA and in the coastal mountains, there are some fantastic driving roads; so the trip there and back has some terrific opportunities for fun touring. Friday night I had a very pleasant evening getting to know Chuck Jennings, the region president. Saturday was, you guessed it, a driving tour! Small coastal towns, deserted back roads through the farmland, beautiful weather, friendly people and lunch at a brewery. What more could you ask for? Later that afternoon I was invited to an autocross planning meeting and then it was off to a happy hour event with another club member. All-in-all a very worthwhile weekend.

The last weekend March saw me at the Petersen Automotive Museum in LA, researching and discussing both a potential club Oktoberfest event to be held in conjunction with the museum, and well as a potential venue for a future banquet.

So that was my crazy busy Q1 2013. What isn't mentioned above is all the event planning, getting ready for the 2013 California Festival of Speed, Zone 8's annual Club Race. But that will be a story for my Q2 report. Stay Tuned.....