

Boise or Bust

The last year hasn't allowed us to get in our cars and road trip so nine of our ponies decided it was time to get out of their corrals and go for it on a long ride. We later would be joined by five other ponies from our club at the show. A total of 14 cars is a good turnout for a destination 500 miles away. Where were we headed? The International Mustang Meet in Boise, Idaho was our destination. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, our friends from Canada were unable to attend (they had 250 cars signed up) so it was more like a National Mustang Meet.

For those of you who have concerns about travelling any distance for a destination show let me say this: Our mantra is NO CARS LEFT BEHIND. One of our participants was concerned that if she broke down that she would be left stranded on the side of the road. I assured her, no, we are a family and we don't leave anyone behind.

On Wednesday September 1st our caravan met at the Triple X in Issaquah to begin the journey to Prosser for our overnight stay, a distance of about 200 miles. Ponies in the group belonged to Bill George, Nancy Atkinson, Rob Ogden, Drema Cooper, Saresa Naekel, Lois Robinson, Scott Robinson, Wendell Malmberg, and Aimee Malmberg. Accompanying us was Jay Atkinson and Tom and Josh Cooper. We made a stop in Ellensburg for gas and lunch and then had an uneventful trip to Prosser. All was well; the ponies were behaving and appeared to be satisfied that they finally were no longer cooped up. Little did we know what they were planning.

On Thursday morning we departed for Boise on what we expected would be another uneventful day on the road, travelling about 300 miles. We were wrong, as the horses had other plans. We made an unscheduled rest stop break about 20 miles west of Pendelton, Oregon that turned out to be very fortunate. As we were preparing to get back on the road, I walked up to my '68 fastback and the ground was covered with antifreeze and continuing to pour out of the radiator. We determined that there was a hole in the bottom of the radiator tank. This is where the miracles and good fortune come into play. Bill George had originally planned to drive his car to the show, but because of circumstances he had to trailer it. Tom had needed to use the restroom and so we had stopped. If we hadn't the radiator would have gone out while climbing the hill into Pendelton and that would not have been good.

Bill unloaded his Super Snake out of the trailer (Lois would get to drive it) and put my '68 into the trailer. Wendell called ahead to Pendelton to find a radiator shop and after rejecting the first one, convinced the second one to let us bring the car to the shop. We arrived to an old fashioned radiator shop that looked like it was out of the sixties and we felt confident because the operator was a true old school technician. It was a family run shop and had been in operation for 45 years. While the rest of the group had lunch, the owner, Tye, and I removed the radiator, he pressure tested it in the dunk tank, and located the leak exactly where Wendell had said it was. He then soldered the hole, helped me re-

install it and we were on our way. We then completed our trip to Boise without further problems.

Other club members joining us in Boise at the show included Shannon and Kai Wolk, Steve Hermans, Mike and Adrienne Koehnen, Tony and Chris Laffranchi, and Brian and Maria Card.

After we arrived in Boise on Thursday, Wendell indicated that his pony's left rear leg had an issue. Upon removing the brake drum, we discovered that the round keepers on the rear brake shoe hold down spring had disintegrated.

We made a quick trip to NAPA on Friday morning for parts and then the brake parts were installed by Drema and Saresa. They attracted a bit of a crowd, watching the two women doing the repairs and eliminating the problem.

The rest of Friday was spent cleaning up the cars and getting ready for the show on Saturday. Friday night was a meet and greet for all participants, which was fun, but was a little lacking without the Canadians present.

Saturday was the participant's choice car show of 400+ cars at the park and the venue was very nice with the majority of the cars parked on grass. It was well organized, and there were several vendors, food trucks, and sponsors on site as well as a DJ playing vintage "car type" music.

After the show we attended the barbecue back at the hotel and relaxed for the remainder of the evening.

Sunday was a day to kick back and relax, or go on one of the planned cruises, either to wineries or a car museum, during the day. They posted the show results in the afternoon and winners were able to pick up their trophies. There was not a formal presentation of the awards and most people were happy not to have a long, drawn out ceremony.

Sunday evening was the banquet and sponsor awards were presented and we enjoyed a talk by John Clor from Ford Performance.

Many of the ponies were rewarded for their trip as 11 of the 14 cars received trophies. Aimee Malmberg received a 1st place trophy and Saresa Naekel a 2nd place trophy in '66 coupe stock, Wendell Malmberg and Nancy Atkinson received honorable mentions in '67/8 stock, Rob Ogden a 1st in '79-86 stock, Steve Hermans a 1st in '79-86 modified, Lois Robinson a 1st in SVO stock, Brian and Maria Card a 2nd in '87-93 stock, Mike Koehnen a 1st in '87-93 modified and also Sponsor's choice award from Restoration Rods, Bill George 1st in 2010-2014 Shelby stock, and Shannon Wolk 1st in Steeda or other tuners.

After a goodbye breakfast Monday morning, it was time to saddle up and head back to Prosser for the return leg home with hopes of smooth riding. The ponies again conspired

to have other ideas. Just as we pulled on to the off ramp for our stop in Prosser, Aimee's pony trashed its water pump/alternator belt. No big deal, we were close to O'Reilly's, picked up a new belt and Wendell and I installed it in our hotel parking lot. All was well. We had dinner in the Wine Village, a short distance from the hotel and retired for the evening.

Tuesday morning it was time to saddle up and get the ponies back to their home stables. Again, we didn't know what adventures were ahead of us. Our next scheduled stop was Ellensburg for gas. On the hill east of Ellensburg, Aimee's car again decided it didn't like its fan belt and discarded it again. Arriving in Ellensburg, looking more like a steam powered car or a pony snorting through its nostrils on a cold day, it was fix it time.

Wendell bought 2 belts this time and we determined that the alternator was very hot and probably was seizing up. No problem, I pulled the spare alternator out of my trunk, we installed it in about 15 minutes, added antifreeze and headed home without any further drama. All of us arrived safely at our destinations and reflected on the great trip and experience we had.

If you have not road tripped, it is a great experience and you should try it. Some of us have already signed up for next year's International in Saskatoon, Canada over Labor Day weekend and you can join us if you would like to have a fun time.