

FOX VALLEY REGION PORSCHE CLUB OF AMERICA

WHALETALES

Parade Special Edition

August 2017

By Todd Benz

My son and I made our epic trek to the 2017 Porsche Parade in Spokane, Wash., in July. We started out Friday morning around 6:30 a.m. heading west with great anticipation. But before we left, I needed to pack the GT4 for an 11-day trip that included our luggage, car care products, cameras, snacks, beverages, iPads and two computer bags. I started thinking that this may not be possible. I started this process on Thursday but after several rearrangements and my uncanny ability to pack a vehicle, we were able to get everything in the car without looking like Clark W. Griswold in National Lampoon's Vacation on our way to Wally's World.

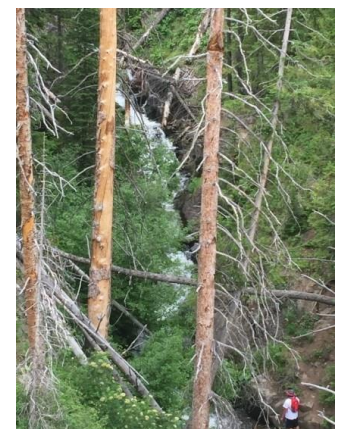
We set off Friday morning toward Rapid City, S.D., where we planned on staying the night. Our goal was to visit the Badlands before the end of the day. As you see in the picture below, we did just that. The structure and colors were incredible, like nothing we had ever seen before.



Photo by Justin Benz

We got to our hotel around 8:30 p.m. and after a quick stop at the car wash, the first day was complete. On a side note, it is really difficult to find a good car wash in Rapid City.

The next morning, we hit the road taking a detour through Yellowstone National Park. We had never been there so we were excited to see this great national park. We didn't really have a timeline on Saturday so we decided to drive through the mountain areas on the way to Yellowstone as opposed to the interstate; there was no shortage of amazing sites. As we drove these incredible roads, we found great vistas, tree-lined roads and views like Yellowstone Lake. We had the opportunity to meet one of the city of Manderson's finest, if you know what I mean. I knew it would take longer this way but I had no idea that it takes as long as it did. With slower speed limits, tourist and the occasional wildlife in the area we didn't make it out of Yellowstone until 7:30 p.m. at which time we stopped in West Yellowstone for dinner at Pete's Pizza, an Italian restaurant. *Photos below by Todd Benz*



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Photo by Todd Benz

While we were waiting to order and being served our food (it took about 2 hours in total), we were planning our next hotel stop. Mind you, I travel quite a bit and I usually have good success getting a hotel the same day or even that night. We decided to make a run to Butte, Mont., which is about 3 hours away. I checked online for the first hotel and it was booked so I tried a second and they were booked. After the third one being booked, I called and wanted to understand the issue. Sure enough, every hotel was booked for an event in town that week. Plan B, I guess we are going to Helena. It's not a bad town, but it added another 45 minutes to our drive that night and 30 more miles to the total drive. We got into Helena about 12:30 a.m. and went straight to the hotel with no shower for the car.

Early the next morning we started our day around 7 a.m. and I recalled seeing a car wash when we came into town. At 12:30 a.m., it looked really nice. We stopped and gassed up the car where the car wash was, and then proceeded to the car wash. What I didn't see the night before was that there was a depression where the drain was located. To say the least, my car was scraping the concrete at this point. I really wanted to wash the car so I didn't give up. We found a few 2x4s and placed them over the drain grates and boom, we can now proceed.

Our drive from here was only 4-1/2 hours and smooth sailing, or so we thought. About 10 miles from the Idaho border, we hit road construction and not just any type of road construction. Have you ever seen anyone "CHIP SEAL" an interstate? Are you KIDDING ME!!

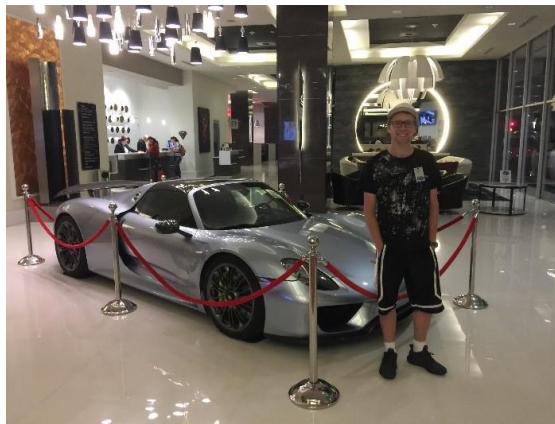
These stones were huge! I am now doing about 20 mph and the line behind me is growing. For eight long miles, we traveled at speeds between 20-30 mph. With sounds of rocks going all over the place, I can't even begin to think how bad this will turn out. My son and I are cringing every foot and just can't believe this. After a period of time, which felt like eternity, we fi-

nally reach smooth roads. Oh, my goodness it's over!



We rolled into Spokane and at our hotel, the Davenport Grand Hotel, around 11:30 a.m. Once we

entered, we were welcomed by no less that a dozen brand new Porsche cars brought in by PCNA.



After checking in, we proceeded to the Parade 101 to get a feel for what we could expect and to ask any questions. When that was completed, I went to National Board of Directors meeting while Justin relaxed. That night we had a wel-



Welcome Reception (Photo by Todd Benz)

come reception at the Spokane convention center where we met the new Porsche Cars North America President and CEO Klaus Zellmer. Justin had an opportunity to do a videoblog with him as well; more to come later this year on that subject.

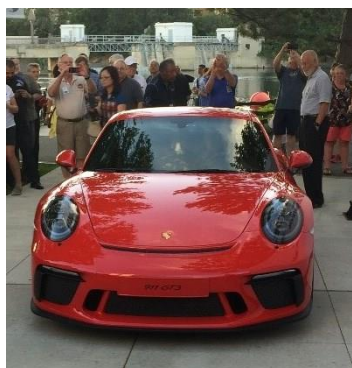


Klaus Zellmer, PCNA President and CEO, welcomes attendees. Todd Benz photo



2016 911 GT3 Club Blau concours class winner. Todd Benz photo

The next day featured an RC Car race for kids and adults on the 4th floor of the parking garage. My son practiced for several hours while I practiced for 15 minutes. Justin took 3rd in his class and I took 4th in mine. I guess I should have practiced more. They also had an ice cream social during the event which worked out great.



The new 991.2 911 GT3 (photo by Todd Benz).

Monday started with the Concours d' Elegance at the River Park just north of the convention center where more than 150 cars entered to be judged on the presentation of

exterior, exterior and interior or exterior, interior and complete under body. The cars were separated into different classes as well. They presented the trophies for 1st place winners at the concours that afternoon with the remainder of awards given out at Tuesday awards banquet.



Photo by Todd Benz



1965 356 concours class winner

That night featured the Concours d' Elegance banquet at the convention center where several of the award-winning vehicles were on display. PCNA also introduced Mark Harston, who succeeds Paul Gregor as the new liaison between PCNA and PCA.

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The concours banquet featured a sit down dinner and a display of cars that won top prizes in the concours competition.



The next day featured our driving tour up to Schweitzer Mountain just outside of Sandpoint, Idaho. We left at 8 a.m. from the fairgrounds parking lot with five groups of about 10-12 cars each. We left in 15-minute intervals to all arrive at Schweitzer Mountain where we enjoyed a scenic chairlift about an additional 1000' up to the very top of the mountain.

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gions newsletter an award-winning publication.

Thursday was our Gimmick Rally to Wallace, Idaho. For those of you who don't know, Wallace was famous for two things, silver mines and brothels. The latter was still in operation into the 1970s. We started again at the fairgrounds where we were given our instructions and lined up to depart. We were sent out about 1 minute apart. The Gimmick Rallye was based on a poker run with "brothel" ladies at each stop. We were given the names of seven women and a description of seven women and we had to

When we arrived at the top on the mountain, we enjoyed a group lunch while taking in the panoramic views.

That evening we had a buffet dinner at the Northern Quest Resort and Casino which showcased some of the National Event Winners from the different regions including Newsletter of the Year. Well to my surprise, our region took home 2nd place for our Whaletales newsletter, editor Beverly Jurkowski. I was extremely pleased to accept this award on behalf of our region and Bev Jurkowski. Congratulations to all who have help make our Re-



match them based on asking several questions at each of the five stops. We would also receive a card and would have to collect 5 cards in total to form our poker hand. The Rally was not a timed event although we needed to be complete by 4:30 p.m. This allowed us to enjoy the entire trip and also stop for lunch along the way.

The winner of the rally was based on mileage first, followed by your poker hand, then the correct answers of the seven women. Out of 205 participants, we finished a respectable 17th. The roads we drove on were the best curved roads that I have ever experienced. This was by far the funniest day for the both of us. Later that evening Justin was able to meet up with some of his new-found friends at a place called "Get Air" in North Spokane. This allowed me some time to work on cleaning the car after a long day of driving. This was a long day and we were on our own for dinner that night so afterwards we kept it low key.

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Starting point at the fairgrounds for the Gimmick Rallye (Photo by Todd Benz)

Friday was an open day where we had nothing planned. We went to eat a nice breakfast and stopped by the Tech Academy where they were talking about a wide range of topics from the technical aspect of the new GT3, the 918 Spyder to the new Panamera Hybrid car to the new Michelin Pilot Sport 4S tires to Cobb Tuning passports for Porsche cars. Afterward, we had another buffet style dinner at the hotel where they presented the awards for Autocross and the Gimmick Rallye. They also introduced the new PCA Juniors program that was kicked off at this year's Parade. Justin had such a good time that he is now signed up as a PCA Junior. Not sure if that is a good thing, at least on the wallet.



Additional winning cars of select classes (Photo by Todd Benz)



Todd Benz stands next to the overall winning car of the autocross. (Photo by Justin Benz)

Saturday was our final day for Parade activities which included the Parade of Porsches. With around 300 participating Porsches lined up at the fairgrounds, this was a sight to see. It took around two hours to compile all of the cars for a group picture and then when that was complete, we were ushered off with a police escort for approximately a 13-mile parade through the surrounding area of Spokane and downtown. In some areas, the streets

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Setup before we departed for the Parade of Porsches (Photo by Todd Benz)

were lined with people cheering and waving as we proceeded along our route. While en route a Porsche 914 lost its muffler right in front of us. Thank goodness, we were all making a slight right turn so the muffler veered to the left. That would have certainly left a mark on our GT4.

The parade finished in under an hour and we were back at the hotel having a cold age appropriate beverage.

That evening we met again at the convention center for our last banquet which showcased all of the national event winners from Family of the Year, Enthusiast of the Year and Member of the Year. They also recognized New Parade Attendees, Most Attended Parade Attendees, Longest Drive to Parade and other fun and memorable events of the week.

The long return trip home started Sunday morning around 6 a.m. and continued for two days with only one eventful stop. That was an introduction to an Albert Lee Policeman who wanted to get a better look at my car. It was all good!!



The final night of Parade 2017 in Spokane. Photo by Todd Benz

We arrived home about 7:30 p.m. Monday with many memories of our trip and new-found friends we met along the way. My son and I had a crazy good time!

We both enjoyed everything about Parade and we are already talking about going to next year's parade in the Ozarks.