



# NCKCC News

## Handcrafted Automobiles

November 2009

Volume 11



*This is the view of our tour group at the Jelly Belly Factory, which was a combination event that included Olive Oil tasting and Wine tasting.*

### ACTIVITY NOTICES

November 21, 2009 - We are invited to enter our cars in the E. Contra Costa Historical Society's automotive entry for the Brentwood Holiday parade (See page 2)

December 6, 2009 - Annual Christmas Brunch 10:300 a.m. at the Pleasanton Hotel.(See page 4)

## **FROM THE PREZ**

Fall is in full swing now and the last of our Club "car" events was the October Wine Tour. Chuck Maddox was the "champion" for this activity and he put together a really great tour. Those of our members who were unable to attend missed a good one. Most unusual for a wine tour was the inclusion of stops at the Jelly Belly factory, and two olive oil companies. This is a great idea for any future "wine tours". They don't have to be just stops at wineries. Check Chuck's tour write-up elsewhere in this newsletter for details.

Although there is no official club activity scheduled for November, we have been invited to enter our cars as part of the East Contra Costa Historical Society's 'automotive entry' in the Brentwood Holiday parade on November 21st. Then we have the Annual Club Brunch on December 6th. The location for this year's annual brunch is back at the Pleasanton Hotel, which has a new restaurant, "The Farmer", providing food service. Details for the Annual Club Brunch are also elsewhere in this newsletter.

As they say (whoever "they" are), the new year is just around the corner. January is the time when we usually plan and schedule the club activities for the entire year. We have requested use of a meeting room at the Walnut Creek Thurmond Casey Library for a Club Planning Meeting on January 16th but we haven't received confirmation yet. (More details in the December newsletter) and would like input from all of our club members on any activities, tours, car events, etc that they would like to see on the Club Calendar for 2010. Include events or activities that may or may not have a firm date at this time. The Planning Committee will then compile a year long list and choose the best suggestions from the list for a least one Club activity per month. Please pass on your suggestions to any of the club officers via e-mail or phone or at the Annual Brunch.

Take care and hope you can all make it to the Annual Brunch on 06 December.

Jim Wagner, NCKCC President

## **HOLIDAY PARADE - BRENTWOOD** **11/21/09**

Dave DeCato recently invited NCKCC members to enter the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce 27th Annual Parade as part of the 'Automotive Entry' of the East Contra Costa County Historical Society.

The parade forms up on 1st Street between Chestnut and Birch Streets and all entries should be present by 1:30 p.m. on Saturday November 21st.

Dave says the parade will last about one hour. Awards will be presented at 6 p.m. in the City Park Gazebo.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Dave DeCato at (925) 679-1024 or email [decato@juno.com](mailto:decato@juno.com)

## **SUISUN VALLEY 'WINE & MORE'** **TOUR**

By Chuck Maddux, Vern Hance & Allen Koch

It was a clear & beautiful sunny day (sounds like the beginning of a bad novel), our group began arriving at 10 AM at The Jelly Belly factory in Fairfield for the beginning of a really great day of discovery in the Suisun Valley. The Maddux's were the first to arrive in their 500K MB, Allen Koch was next in his Bugatti, then come Jim & Wendy Wagner in their ZR-2 (Fiero) followed by Bob Wagner in his pickup (Bugatti in for repairs), last to arrive at this location were Bob & Linda Kluber in their Sebring.

We proceeded into the Jelly Belly building for a very interesting tour of the facility. We were shown all the steps required to build a Jelly Belly jelly bean, from the mixing of the ingredients for the soft centers to the putting on of the hard cover of the bean (in a machine that looks like a cement mixer). Much time & effort is put into the development of the myriad of flavors they produce (the samples we tasted were unbelievably accurate in taste). The company is currently being managed by the 5th generation of the founding fathers. The tour took about 40 minutes, the only bad part is, it was a Saturday so there was no candy being produced or packed during our visit. An interesting side note is the a generation back they were one of the first companies to produce "Candy Corn" and they still do along with over 100 other confectionery delights today. We had a delightful time in their candy store buying way to much sweets.

We moved on to the Sepay Groves Premium Olive Oil Tasting Room a short distance away for tasting of about 20 different combinations of olive oils and vinegars, since we were the only ones for a while we received a comprehensive education on olive oil (most enlightening). It was here that Vern & Carol Hance joined us for the rest of the day in their MB 500K. After purchases of some olive oil and a fuel pressure adjustment by Vern (his car wouldn't start) we proceeded thru the beautiful countryside to our 1st wine tasting at the Suisun Valley Wine Cooperative Tasting Room. Everyone enjoyed the various and numerous wines from 5 of the valley's wineries. Some purchases of wine were made and we proceeded up to Wooden Valley Winery, home of the tasty Mario Lanza Champagne we share at the afternoon party on Saturday at our show. We again had tastings of some wonderful wines (the most popular was a White Gamay, which some of us bought and drank during our lunch in their lovely picnic area shown below.

Our last stop for the day was Il Fiorello owned by Mark & Ann Sievers. (Photo below) The company name is derived from Ann's maiden name. They gave us a very comprehensive talk and tour of their facilities. This year they purchased a new complete processing plant from Italy and will begin processing Olive Oil as soon as they receive an OK from all health agencies. We were given a quick tour of some recently planted olive trees (the area was still



quite wet from the recent rain storm) with an explanation of the many varieties of trees that produce Olive Oil. They have plans for very conscientious program to promote Olive Oil, if you have an interest for more info go to [www.ilfiorello.com](http://www.ilfiorello.com).

All and all it was a very good outing and all participants were very impressed by the quality of the wines and their new knowledge of Olive Oil.

And, of course Vern insisted on a photo of our cars below. And we gave Mark & Ann Sievers all the details of how our cars were designed and assembled.

This winery, similar to Jelly Belly, is still in the Lanza family. After an impromptu meeting, which included discussion of the show and the annual banquet (we didn't want to leave, because the weather was sooo nice) we reluctantly moved on to our last wine tasting.

At Mankas Corners is the Vesper Family Wine Tasting Room, some of us had the pleasure of again tasting some very interesting wines (the most interesting was a Verdelho wine, which originated in Portugal). Some of the group checked out an antique/junk shop near-by but came away empty handed.



## **ANNUAL BRUNCH AT PLEASANTON HOTEL**

By Vern Hance

We owe Marshall Bradley thanks for the tip I got from him at the Halloween event at E. Contra County Museum on October 31st. Seems Marshall found out that the Pleasanton Hotel found another restaurant to replace the one that had operated there for years.

The new restaurant is called "The Farmer" and announced that they were bringing back the 'Sunday brunch' by popular demand. The first brunch was November 1st and Carol gives her commentary in next article.

So we have a reservation for 25 people on Sunday December 6, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. The cost will be \$29.95 + tax & tip which is about \$38.50. The club will reward paid-up members with price of \$28 per person. Guests are welcome but we must charge them the full cost. (A reduced cost price for children 4-12 is \$16.50 but we will offer the \$10 club member discount)

We need to have your payments by November 30th so we can give them a firm count on attendees. We will have two or three adjacent round tables in the dining room (like last year) so they will be opportunities to visit and interact with members at adjacent tables.

The Pleasanton Hotel is at 855 Main Street, Pleasanton, CA. You can get a map and 'home to hotel' directions at [www.pleasantonhotel.com](http://www.pleasantonhotel.com)

## **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BANQUET**

By Carol Hance

Each year we are challenged to find a suitable place for the NCKCC Christmas Banquet. Three times we have met at restaurants which seemed just right for us only to have them close. I was particularly fond of the San Francisco location because it seemed central to the spread of our members, easy to get to on public transportation if we couldn't drive our cars, scenery was great near the Ferry Building and there was a great variety of food. The only draw back to that location was that we had to meet in November in order to get a private corner of a room. That restaurant is no longer open to the public.

For the past few years, we have been having our Christmas gathering at the Pleasanton Hotel Restaurant. It's restaurant closed last December so we were looking for a place again.

Members were polled and wanted to continue having a buffet brunch. We had a few candidates but the locations were not as central. Past experiences have taught us that some restaurants will not provide a private room unless the group can guarantee and pay for a minimum number, have hidden costs, such as limiting the number of bottles of champagne served but continue to ask if people want refills and add to the group bill, charge extra for each cup of coffee served etc.

On Sunday, November 1, Farmer's Restaurant which refurbished and moved into the Pleasanton Hotel started serving a Sunday brunch. They are a small operation with only the one restaurant. They were "The Elegant Farmer" in Jack London's square for 20 years.

Vern and I went to check them out and found the food to be high quality. They had a variety of carved to order meats, egg dishes, seafood (baked salmon was excellent), cheese blintzes were outstanding. The variety of salads, breads, and desserts was not as showy and extensive as some buffets but all I sampled appeared to be home made and very good. There is enough variety that most people (even vegetarians or those with allergies) can make a good meal.

I talked to the catering manager and she will provide us with round tables in a secluded area of the main dining area overlooking the outdoor patio. (about the same area we had last year). They provide champagne and coffee without additional charge. There is a reduced charge for children over 3.

Self parking is available behind the building as well as street parking,

## **HALLOWEEN AT KNIGHTSEN**

On Saturday I drove out to Knightsen to attend a Halloween car show and costume party at the Historical Museum. I had planned to wear all black clothing with a cape (with a racetrack checkered





pattern) simulating a vampire. Well, the weather was so warm that I couldn't stand to wear a costume and wished I picked light colored clothing.

Anyway, there were some others with costumes, including Dave DeCato who had a Ronald MacDonald clown suit with a big red nose. Joyce DeCato was wearing one of her historic costumes. Another person was dressed as a WW-I infantry soldier, but the heat soon forced him to remove his steel helmet.

Al & Pat Bello were on duty but without any dramatic costumes.

Lots of Museum volunteers offered hotdogs and sodas for sale and I enjoyed several new museum displays that I hadn't seen before.

And, of course there was a display of cars, several of which were from the Bello and DeCato collections.

## **REFLECTING ON OUR ANNUAL CAR SHOW**

By Vern Hance

Last issue we barely had space to show some of the car show pictures and a brief commentary. I will attempt here to report on the some of the background details.

First of all, we did nominally cover our expenses, but actually spent about \$22 more than we took in. The total car count was 50, but we let one 'late-Sunday-guy' to display his Berlina for a couple hours at no charge. Anyway, with no charge for spectator admission, this was a commendable achievement, due mostly to the show committee's holding the expenses to our planed guidelines.

We did a spectator vote for the first time in many years and the response was very good. We handed

out ballots to 200 spectators Saturday and 60 on Sunday and 51% of those ballots were returned as spectators left the show. We also asked spectators to mark their ballots to indicate how they learned about the show, and to my surprise 38% of all those handed out contained that info. We also requested spectators to provide an address or email if they waned to be notified about future shows. That provided 13 interested parties and was 5% of all ballots.

Here's the breakdown of how spectators learned about our show:

Newspaper event listings	35
Internet	14
Kit Car Builder Magazine	11
From a friend	11
Postcard Announcement	6
CYC	4
Hilton guests	3
Weekender magazine	1
Fairfield Breeze	1
Info at other car shows	1
Misc other sources	12

I was surprised at the impact of newspaper event listings, but with a new location and better response from the CC Times and Concordian, maybe it makes sense. I thought the mailed postcards would have more influence, but maybe the location change caused some of these folks to stay home.

Certainly newspapers, internet and Kit Car Builder magazine are important ways to communicate. I will be encouraging us to continue the spectator ballot (along with the questions) in future shows because I think it helps better understand how to reach our spectators. Maybe we need to ask these same questions on the Exhibitor ballot too.

As far as acceptance of the new location, I heard no strong comments indicating disappointment. A couple people said the setting in San Leandro, next to the Bay was more scenic. Both San Leandro and Concord have potential weather hazards; wind for San Leandro and high temperatures for Concord. I am ignoring the very unusual thunder, lightning and rain which got our show off to a slow start this year. That probably cost us a number of exhibitors and spectators, but I'm wondering what the weather was in San Leandro that same Saturday morning.

Keep your calendars open for our January 16 planning meeting and your ideas for events and annual show plans.

## **HOW TO BE PREPARED FOR THE UNEXPECTED**

You drive the speed limit, you use your blinkers and you follow the three-second rule. You're a safe and cautious driver, but unfortunately collisions do happen. Though being in a crash is never an enjoyable experience, there are ways to make sure the process goes as smoothly as possible. Below are three steps to help guide you through.

**Step One:** Be Prepared - There are several items you should keep in your car at all times in case you are involved in a collision:

- ☒ **A Camera** - Whether disposable, digital or on your cell phone, it is important to have a camera in your vehicle. Be sure to take pictures of the damage to your car, your license plate, the damage to the other vehicle and the license plate of the other car. Having these photos will help with any dispute that may arise later.
- ☒ **Pen & Notebook** - You will need to write down and exchange personal information with the other driver, such as driver license information, insurance information, as well as crash details.
- ☒ **Flashlight** - In the event the crash takes place at night, it is important to keep a flashlight in your car both as a safety precaution and to use while observing any damages.
- ☒ **Blanket** - There may be harsh weather conditions at the time of your crash. If you are unable to remain in the car or the heater has been compromised, a blanket will be vital for staying warm and avoiding any further harm to your body, while you wait for law enforcement and/or medical personnel to arrive.

**Step Two:** At the Crash Site - If the event is serious, the first thing to do is to call 911. Below are actions to take if it is a non-injury collision:

- ☒ If the crash occurs on the freeway and your car is still in operating condition, move your vehicle to the right side shoulder as far out of the traffic lane as possible and turn on your emergency hazard lights. If the collision occurs on city streets, try to pull over into a shopping center, a gas station or somewhere else that is safe and out of traffic's way.
- ☒ Exchange the following information with the other driver:
  - Name
  - Insurance Provider & Policy Number

Current Address  
Driver License Number  
Vehicle Make, Model, Year and License Plate Number

Any additional details of the accident that you might later forget

- ☒ If any witnesses come forward, take down their contact information and a statement. Sometimes the other driver involved will alter their story after the fact, so it can be crucial to have a third party witness.

**Step Three:** The Aftermath - After the crash occurs, there are still a few items to take care of:

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(Continued from page 8)

- ☒ Contact your insurance agent - You must contact your insurance company as soon as possible. Most companies offer a 24-hour collision claim service. Your agent will then get in contact with the other driver's agent and will submit any necessary reports to the DMV and the CHP.
- ☒ If you feel any unusual neck or body pain, visit your doctor or ER immediately. Sometimes the adrenaline rush of a crash will mask any injuries you may have sustained and the pain will surface soon after.

By following these steps and being prepared when a collision takes place, you can avoid the extra headache that comes with not having essential items handy or not obtaining the proper information. For more information on avoiding collisions, reporting a crash, or overall driver safety, visit [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov). Save time. Go online!

## **FISKER BUYS DELAWARE GM PLANT WITH \$529 MILLION FED LOAN**

Excerpted from a MarketWatch article by [Steve Gelsi](#)

*Editor's Note: Since Bill Landers did an article on the Fisker Karma in the August 2009 newsletter, I thought this update would be of interest, especially since we taxpayers are standing behind this half-billion loan.*

Electric-car start-up Fisker Automotive said Tuesday it'll invest nearly \$200 million to buy and retool a former General Motors plant in Wilmington, Del., facing off against other big manufacturers in the

nascent market for electric vehicles. At an appearance by Vice President Joe Biden at the plant in Delaware, Fisker said it hopes to support 2,000 factory jobs and more than 3,000 vendor and supplier jobs by 2014 at the site, with a production target of 75,000 to 100,000 vehicles per year. The Irvine, Calif.-based company will spend about \$18 million to buy the plant from Motors Liquidation Co. and then spend an additional \$175 million to retool the plant to begin production in 2012.

"This is a major step toward establishing America as a leader of advanced vehicle technology," said Henrik Fisker, the firm's chief executive.

Fisker Automotive received \$529 million in government-loan guarantees in September to develop plug-in vehicles, after breaking into the business as the maker of a luxurious, \$80,000 electric car with a range of up to 300 miles. That car, called the Karma, is expected to go on sale in 2010.

Looking to build a car for the under-\$40,000 market, Fisker Automotive now hopes to bring is entrepreneurial skills to bear on a mass-market vehicle, even as others in the auto business take aim at the same sector.

Besides the Japanese car giants Honda and Toyota, fellow American start-up Tesla Motors also plans to compete in the category, along with expected entries from the remaining domestic manufacturers.

Fisker said plug-in hybrid cars will help lower the country's dependence on foreign energy by eliminating the need for 42 million barrels of oil by 2016. They also will offset 8 million tons of carbon-dioxide emissions.

The chief executive previously worked as design director for Aston Martin and president and chief executive of BMW's DesignworksUSA.

Built by General Motors in 1947, the Wilmington plant now occupies 3.2 million square feet on 142 acres of land. More than 8.5 million cars have been manufactured there, including the Pontiac Streamliner, the original Chevrolet Impala, the Saturn L-Series and the Pontiac Solstice/Saturn SkyT roadsters.

## **FOR SALE**

COBRA Ford power, Jag rear-end. Silver w/ black interior. \$21,500 Call Bob Elster 707-938-3254 (1/02)

FERRARI - TESTAROSSA Spyder. Based on 1989 Corvette with 350 V-8 engine and automatic tranny. Reduced to \$12,000. Contact Anthony Ramsinh (408) 268-6554 or e-mail [aramsinh@aol.com](mailto:aramsinh@aol.com) (11/05)

FERRARI-Look-a-like - From Fiero Factory in the U.K. 1988 Fiero based car with 3.8 liter Bonneville engine transplant and upgrade wheels. Make offer to Doug Izuno (925) 254-1789. See Photo in October issue. (10/09)

FINO – Built on 1987 Fiero with Cadillac Northstar V-8 & auto trans. Regular trophy winner. Custom suspension, brakes and interior. Special Purple BASF Extreme paint. \$25,000. (Photo page 6) Call Al Bohr (503-632-8372) or e-mail [albohr@bctonline.com](mailto:albohr@bctonline.com). (10/09)

MANX SR-2 - 1678 cc VW engine with 4-speed stick. New interior in 2002. Built in 1977 by present owner who has all receipts, etc. Includes a spare 1600 VW engine and extra parts. \$5,500. Call Don Wicks (707) 998-9383 or e-mail at [dkwicks@mchsi.com](mailto:dkwicks@mchsi.com) (11/05)

MERCEDES SSK (Gazelle) Parts: 4 fenders (brown), windshield, radiator shell, bumpers, interior leather and top (tan), tail lights, supercharger pipes, doors (yellow), latches, hinges, etc. Tim 510-278-3085 (04/05)

PANTERA Factory built, only one known to exist. Red w/ beige interior, Chev engine \$35,000 Call Bob Elster 707-938-3254. (1/02)

NEED YOUR KIT CAR PUT TOGETHER, customized or finished?  
Have a car that needs body work?  
We can help!  
Contact: Car Concepts by Merlin Cofano  
415-320-0678 (10/09)

"Cars for Sale" ads in the NCKCC News are for members only. Rate is \$10 for 12 issues.