



The Chautauqua Lake Region A.A.C.A.
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Winter Vacation in Arizona

By Gary Swanson



Canadian 1956 Dodge used Plymouth body from cowl back

Club members Cindy and Gary Swanson and Beth and Fred Santucci spent the week of January 14 – 21 in the sunny state of Arizona. As might be expected, the main focus of the trip was to attend the Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction in Scottsdale.

After watching it on TV

for several years, we decided that it was time to see it in person. Making a purchase there wasn't considered, what with the \$500 for bidders credentials and an extra 10% tacked on to the purchase price for the bidders fee. Also to be figured in would be the cost of transportation across the country, which I'm sure would be \$1,000 at the minimum.

The auction ran Tuesday through Sunday, with the cars getting more valuable each day through Saturday. Sunday is kind of a wrap-up day where some bargains can be had with some of the "big hitters" from Saturday on their way home. The admission prices for us "lookers" went up as the week went on. We attended on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Friday's price was \$45 to get in, \$40 for us senior citizens over 55. There was special twilight pricing of \$25 if you arrived after 5pm. We parked every day at an off site lot, which was a 10 field soccer complex owned by the City of Scottsdale. Free transportation, a ten minute ride, to the auction was provided via modern motor coach, all that was asked is that you tip the driver. There was parking at the auction site, but the fee was \$20 per car.

As we entered the first building we encountered a large Ford exhibit, and as we progressed toward the auction action we passed through the vendor section. There was a mixture of automotive and non-automotive vendors, everything from custom car builders to artwork, to mattresses, to garage flooring and cabinets. At the far end Chevrolet had their exhibit set up, as did the National Corvette Museum and the Bob Bondurant Driving School, complete with a very realistic racetrack simulator. The food vendors were set up here too, and there were many, many more food vendors outside among the auxiliary tents.

From here we entered the huge auction building. The large main floor seating was reserved for those with bidders credentials, with the rest of us relegated to standing or using the aluminum bleachers on either side or in the back. We soon discovered however, that it wasn't difficult to slip past the ushers and take a seat, there were usually plenty to be had. On the opposite side of the auction hall from the vendors were the "high dollar" vehicles, most of which were scheduled to be sold Friday night and Saturday. There we found classic Packards, Pierce Arrows, a Duesenberg, and hundreds of perfect gems



1958 Dodge Sweptline Pick-up Truck

from Thunderbirds to Corvettes to street rods and everything in between. The outside tents contained many hundred more great cars of every description, there was even a Yellow Submarine! (Sold at \$53,000)

Wednesday morning action provided those wanting to get into the old car hobby a few opportunities for pretty reasonable money. A '76 Buick Electra 2 door with 16,000 miles sold for \$5,750; a nice '77 Lincoln Mark Coupe sold for \$7,000, and a '70 Coupe DeVille sold for \$10,000. A like new '02 red Camaro SS went for \$17,500, a solid number three '62 Olds Starfire Coupe, white with beautiful red interior, went for \$15,000. A gorgeous red '61 Studebaker Champ pickup with a V-8 and stick shift found a new home for \$15,000. There were a few "rat rods" there, a '27 T Coupe with a Corvette engine sold for \$6,000. There were other rat rods there that sold for much more, the latest fad seems to be having a "distressed" exterior with a beautiful interior and nicely engineered running gear and chassis. Of course as the day and the week moved on, there were the more expensive vehicles that most of you have seen on TV.

There was a ride and drive event outside, with cones set up in a small road course. There one could drive some of the newest offerings from Ford and Chevrolet, even a new Corvette convertible. There was also the opportunity to ride with a professional driver in race prepared Corvettes and Mustangs around the course, as fast as the conditions would allow. Due to the wide availability of alcoholic beverages on the premises, a breathalyzer test was required of anyone taking part. An interesting service was being offered to those who had imbibed too much. Evolution Enterprises would provide a designated driver upon your exit from the sale, who would drive you and your guests to your destinations in your own vehicle. The cost was a \$40 service charge plus a minimum \$40 tip for the driver. Much less costly than a DWI!

With approximately 2,500 vehicles on site, this is certainly an event worth taking in if you ever have the chance. In addition to the Barrett Jackson sale, there are another 5 or 6 smaller auctions going on in the area at the same time, including Russo & Steele and Silver Auctions. These are perfect venues for



1948 Packard Woodie with Lyman boat and Mercury Outboard

those interested in buying vehicles without all the hoopla and glitz, and I would imagine with more reasonable costs. There is also plenty more to do and see in this area that is not auction related, Stay tuned for next month's issue.



1955 Chevy powered by a P-51 Mustang airplane motor (Notice side mounted guns)