

# RMSC News 2007 Issue 5-6

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## From your Club President

Welcome Fellow SAAB Enthusiasts,

It is an honor to have been selected by the Rocky Mountain Saab Club board of directors to fulfill the seat of president of this great organization. I'm still not quite sure how this all came about but I do recall that it followed the election of the Board which in turn followed the enjoyment of few of the Breckenridge Breweries fine beverages.

Joining me on the board are the following members:

Miles Bendixson as secretary and art director, Jerry Danner as treasurer, meeting organization co director and recycled parts supplier, Trevor Johnson as website updater and membership co-director, Dane Stephenson as membership co director and e-mail receptor, Bob Buck as 09 convention co committee chairman, meeting co organizer and president nominator and Charles Stoyer as newsletter editor and special projects warehouse.

Also assisting to help the club prosper this year a few other members have volunteered to help in non board positions, but of equal importance, and they are the following:

Paul Bottone as SOC09 committee chairman and email sender, Larry Beetham as history project organizer and curator of old stuff, Stan Beitscher as election coordinator and Bruce Harbison as special projects coordinator, junk protector and parts procurement expert.

So as you can see, it takes more than few of us to coordinate and co coordinate this fun. Thank you

## Editor's Note: This issue is a combined Sep-Oct and Nov-Dec Newsletter.

everybody for the time spent and great efforts that will be made over the next year or two as we continue to grow and prepare for the BIG convention. Speaking of growth, please feel free to ask other lovers of these strange Swedish machines to join us. The more the merrier, and who can argue about the price of admission. **We are still proud to not collect dues which is solely the result of so many members who work hard on projects that support us financially and even allow us to buy dinner once a year for the entire membership. That annual celebration and pig out will occur on December 11th at the Breckenridge Brewery and Barbeque. Be there or...stay slim. All you can eat ribs but the beverages are on you.** One of my goals for the club this year is to increase the fun, and the December meeting is a place to start. Hope to see you there,

Jim Beetham as president and car washing consultant.



# RMSC Minutes Aug 14 2007 by Miles Bendixson

The RMSC meeting was called to order by President Bruce Harbison at 7:10 P.M.

The first order of business was a brief discussion about who was planning to go to Troy Michigan for SOC07. It appeared that each of the about twelve members and spouses had their own plan to leave at a certain time during the week, which didn't coincide with each other enough to have a caravan. It was decided that they would all meet up some time in Troy.

The next order of business was the RMSC annual election, conducted by Stan Beitcher, Election Chairman.

The four offices up for election were President, (currently Bruce Harbison), Treasurer, (currently Jerry Danner), Secretary (currently Miles Bendixson), and Board Member Tom Nelson. These two-year positions were now up for election as terms had expired. Two board members, Tom Nelson and Bruce Harbison, had withdrawn from the election, surrendering their candidacy to new contenders, to get new blood on the board. Jerry Danner and Miles Bendixson said they would both run again.

Before a vote was taken, a brief discussion took place regarding the would-be candidates, discussing what the responsibilities of a board member entailed. Once those curiosities were satisfied, RMSC members Larry Beetham and Paul Bottone, both nominated by Jim Beetham, plus Trevor Johnson and Bob Buck all had their hats in the ring. All candidates gave speeches about what they felt they could contribute to the club.

A vote was cast for the six candidates running. Only four of the six candidates could be elected. The vote was counted by Rich Hruda, verified, and candidates Jerry Danner, Miles Bendixson, Trevor Johnson and Bob Buck were voted in.

The next order of business was a discussion of the possible site for SOC09. Bruce Harbison narrated a slide presentation and a movie that Tom Nelson took of the Copper Mountain area.

An improvisational meeting had taken place earlier that evening, among all who had a hand in choosing

the site for SOC09. The three locations discussed were Winter Park, Copper Mtn and Breckenridge. There was a show of hands for Copper Mountain and it was unanimous that Copper would be our choice for SOC09. This, of course, meant that we can work out a respectable contract with Copper, getting our needs met.

On the short list of the earlier discussion that evening, was getting a business plan that covers all expenses and finding ways to promote the site through SCNA at SOC07.

Our RMSC was then treated to RMSC member Laura Karstans slide show presentation of Saabs in Alaska, her home state. We saw first hand what storing old 99's in the Alaska wilderness looks like. We thank Laura for doing this, and for those of us not originally from Colorado, it might have given us some ideas about taking pictures of Saabs in our home state.

Last item on the agenda for our RMSC was a Saab history movie from the seventies. It was a visual treat, showing all the stuff that is Saab. It had pretty much everything that Saab was involved with at the time, including jets, missiles, computers, Scania Trucks, cars and lots of Swedish factory workers. We all had a good time watching this unique movie from the seventies and thank Ryan Emge from the Saab history web site for making this possible.

Out-going President Bruce Harbison adjourned the RMSC meeting at 8:50 P.M.



# RMSC Minutes Oct 17 2007 by Miles Bendixson

The first order of business, was telling club members which offices or duties current board members now hold. Jim Beetham President, Jerry Danner Treasurer, Miles Bendixson Secretary, Charles Stoyer Newsletter, Trevor Johnson Website Manager along with Dane Stephanson, Larry Beetham and Bruce Harbison. RMSC History Project, Bob Buck and Jerry RMSC Meeting Coordinators and Bruce Harbison Special Projects Coordinator. Larry Beetham, Bruce Harbison, Charles Stoyer; Jerry Danner and Bob Buck were all assigned their new duties at our RMSC Oct. 17th meeting.

The next order of business was president Jim Beetham, speaking about the SOC07 convention in Troy Michigan. His comments were that the convention was fairly well organized and is home to GM. All attendees got the rare opportunity to attend GM'S Heritage Collection of cars. This is something that is ordinarily not shown to the public or much of any one else according to Jim. The Collection is composed of over 700 cars that GM has collected; which are showroom restored. Convention airmen were treated to seeing many of the facilities, C.A.S. restoration shops, services and concept cars. Some of the concept cars and restored cars fell into the priceless category and were quite remarkable, from the comments made by those RMSC members that attended this years SOC.

We were then treated to watching a video of SOC in Troy shot by Tom Nelson and Ryan from SaabHistory.com. We watched our own Jerry Danner, give a convention air a ride in his 66 Saab two stroke. The dialogue was especially interesting, as he explained the process of restoring that particular car. The video was enjoyed by all at our meeting and gave us a sense of what Troy was all about.

Then Dan Hinrichs, a salesman from Mike Shaw Saab, gave us a talk about the new 08 Saabs and actually brought a new 08 Saab 9<sup>s</sup> for all of us to drive that night. Dan has a history with Saab going back to 1977 and like many of us, was worried when GM. bought out Saab in 2000. He pointed out to us that both Jaguar and Volvo were both offered to GM. and were turned down. He also talked how Saab has influenced many GM. products from seats to ignition systems. He shared a point of interest to our RMSC; that being the new stage four Haldex four wheel drive system coming out on the 9<sup>s</sup> some time in 08. Some other tidbits of info were that the convertibles are the safest made and that last year the 9<sup>7</sup> outsold the 9<sup>s</sup>. He also spoke of the new 9<sup>s</sup> with the

Haldex system and 280 HP., will out do all competitors. Dan had some interesting things to say about GM, and Saab and those that got to drive the new 08 9<sup>s</sup> were very impressed.

Jim Beetham had a whole table full of Saab convention give-away's. RSMC members walked away with many nice things from this year's SOC. Thanks to all RSMC members who attended this convention, for bringing them back!

Convention Chairman Paul Bottone took the floor next. He tells our RSMC members that we are doing Copper Mountain as our 09 convention site and we will go after Saab USA and SCNA, to get their support in that endeavor. We have yet to iron a concrete contract with Copper Mountain and that will ensue and evolve over the next few months, until we come to an agreement.

Jerry Danner and Paul Bottone, cap the night off for our RSMC meeting, by showing their own still photo show of the SOC07 convention. Lots of interesting shots of Saabs and convention sites. Once again hats off to those that attended this years convention and their shared stories, videos and still photos!

President Jim Beetham adjourned the RSMC meeting at 9:20 P.M.



## SOC 09 Convention Report by Paul Bottone

The SOC09 which our RMSC is hosting at Copper Mtn resort is nearing its final stages of negotiation. Two dates are under consideration . July 9-12 and Aug 12-15. Due to SAAB USA Commitments it will probably be in AUG. The tour of Colorado may follow the convention, which has its advantages, no

rush or deadlines to meet, more time to recapitulate the convention with friends, etc, etc. I will be asking for committee volunteers soon. the nice thing is registration will be handled on line, probably by the same company who did SOC07. We are on schedule and there are 21 months to go to SOC 09.

## NINES - A Unique SAAB Recycle Yard by Bruce Harbison

On November 12th I had the opportunity to visit, chauffeured by my good friend Don Wollum in his '80 99, a unique Saab Recycle Yard. It is called NINES and has been referred to a few times on some of the Saab chat group sites. It is located near the Raleigh-Durham, area, but definitely in rural North Carolina. Tim, the owner has amassed a large collection of mostly non-functioning Saabs, which, of course, contribute their parts to the delight of Saab owners around the country. I observed over a dozen Sonetts, many 95/96s, a few 99s, and a large number of C900s and 9000s, all resting in peace in the

partially cleared woods that make up the property. Don and I spent several hours poking and prodding the cars to both obtain a few 'goodies' and to locate any 'rare' Saabs that might be of interest. Don found most everything he needed, and I obtained a crank pulley for Project Redbull and a few small items I desired for my own cars. In the 'rare' department, we found a '67 96 that had the small V-4 emblem high up on its front fenders. The VIN number was in the low range for that year. Unfortunately the car was badly rusted (aren't they all) It was a nice way to spend a warm fall day; good friends and Saabs!

## SAABs At Work by Dave Murray



I rounded up the two other SAAB convertible drivers at my work the other day for a photo shoot. We have a 1991 non turbo, my 2001 Turbo and a 2004 Aero. They are all wonderful cars and every one of the drives considers themselves lucky to be able to “experience” driving them. A great tribute to Swedish engineering.

# SOC 07 Report by Bruce Harbison

The National Saab Owners' Convention for 2007 was held August 23-26 in Troy, Michigan, hosted by the Great Lakes Saab Club. Members attending included Tom & Avis Nelson, Steve & Lisa McCoy, Bruce Harbison & Gayle Myers-Harbison, Trevor Johnson, Paul Calahan, Jim Beetham, Paul Bottone, Jerry Danner, Larry Beetham and Don Wollum (North Carolina member). All drove out except Lisa, Gayle & Trevor who had to brave the wilds of the Detroit Airport, but that's another story.

Most of us arriving Thursday attended that night's Sponsor's Dinner, greeting old friends and making new ones. Earlier Steve & I checked out some of the parts vendor's tents and talked with some of the perennial convention-goers.

Friday dawned late for us with a great breakfast and lots of activities. For some of us it was new car test drives and a great tour of Custom Automotive Services (CAS) restoration facility. This is a firm dedicated to restoring automobiles almost exclusively for the GM Heritage Collection. They have helped GM expand their Saab classic fleet by taking 'good' cars and restoring them to museum quality. To paraphrase, their 'motto' is 'Cost is no object-perfection counts'.

Later that day I met with all the Concours judges and we spent the late afternoon judging some very fine, and well taken care of Saabs. Several of our members had cars in the

competition, and also helped judge (not their own cars, of course).

Saturday some of us attended the SCNA Annual meeting where Jim made his first announcement of our club agreeing to host the convention in 2009. A little later, Tom, Jerry and I put on a seminar titled "Saab 96s: Restoration, Refurbishment, or Just Drive It." Tom did his usual great job in organizing all the media for this presentation, including custom charts and photos. After we finished, we rushed to participate in the group photo held close by at the Delphi facility's parking lot. After that, lunch and on to see the other CAS facility which houses the 'overflow' group of GM's Heritage Collection. This is another amazing place where the general public is usually not allowed; not that the Saab community is the general public, of course.

The highlight of the day and the SOC was the Awards Banquet held at the GM Heritage Center itself. We were treated to an open bar, hors d'oeuvres, and a fabulous meal set in the middle of a collection of perfectly restored automobiles, including all the Saabs that weren't on display at the hotel or at the reserve facility. At the end of the night, RMSC members had won nine awards and one of the door prizes, another great showing for our club. I have left out many things, here, but all in all, an excellent convention with one-of-kind attractions.



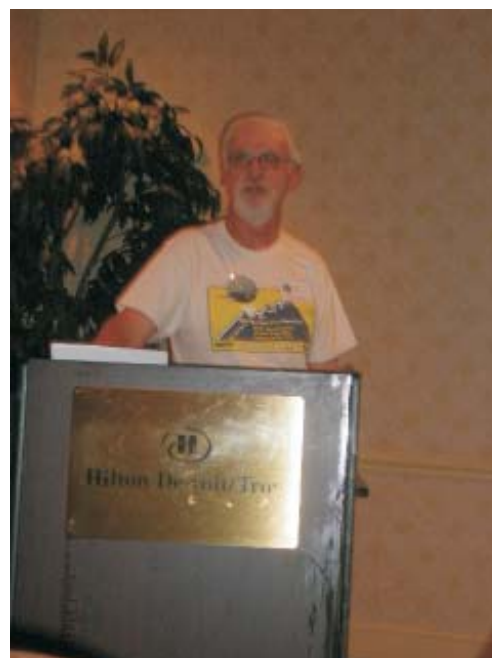


## SAAB 9-5 Tow Hook by Tom Nelson

If your 9<sup>s</sup> has a need to be towed and you suspect the towing company may have used a tow hook in front.... look for it before you go driving anywhere. There is a small rubber plug that's on a short lanyard next to the threaded hole near center of the subframe.

That plug, with a rubber pull ring, should be in place if the tow hook/eye has been properly removed and stowed with the tool kit next to the spare tire.

The tow eye hangs down a few inches below the front spoiler and can be easily hit by parking curbs, etc. The owners manual cautions against driving the car with the eye installed. We found out the hard way!



# SAAB European Delivery by Karl Anuta

A better deal is hard to find! Our (my) decision to buy a new Saab was based on the prior four Saabs we have owned. The European delivery idea came naturally: We had several friends we hadn't seen in years; I was wary of getting my wife and our luggage on and off public transit; rental cars are expensive; and many rental car companies won't rent to seniors over 72 years of age. The solution was to buy and drive our own.

The deal was made at Gerhardt in Boulder. After time on the internet, and a test drive, my choices were easy. A modest down payment sealed the order. I next heard from Saab USA in Atlanta asking for details on the date of our arrival, etc. After some attempts to obtain seats on United with Frequent Flyer miles, we gave up and reserved seats on Lufthansa from Denver direct to Frankfurt, with a "connecting" flight on RyanAir to Gothenburg. We chose Frankfurt because we could more conveniently end our trip there and turn in the car for a modest shipping charge.

We arrived in Frankfurt on Monday June 11 at 11:00 AM to learn that RyanAir flies out of Frankfurt-Hahn airport, more than 100km northwest of Frankfurt De. Intl. (Frankfurt Am Main)! The transfer bus cost E12, each, and took 1 ½ hrs. I worried about the connection but we had enough time to spare for coffee and restroom. The Hahn airport reminded me of Duluth or Billings. RyanAir charges for all food (Snickers E1.5 = \$2.00); they also sell lottery tickets. However the flight attendants were helpful and friendly and we enjoyed the flight.

We arrived in Gothenburg (another small town airport) and were met by a Saab representative who drove us to Trollhattan (1+ hr) where we checked in to the Scandic Hotel in downtown and had a nice supper (both paid for by Saab) on hotel patio overlooking the river.

On Tuesday June 12 a taxi delivered us, and another couple from Minneapolis, to the dealer where our new car is delivered. The other couple was there for a new convertible. Ours is a "Laser" red, Sport

Sedan 9<sup>3</sup>, 2 liter, manual transmission. We get a full instruction on our car; everything they, and we, can think of. I ask to look under the hood and he points out battery cover, oil dip stick, locations for adding windscreen washer fluid and coolant: "Don't touch anything else!"

We drive back to hotel. Car has 6 speeds. Reverse is where 1st is on my '97 Talladega. It takes some getting used to. Then drive to the Saab factory for a tour: They make all Saab models and some Cadillacs on the same production line with a "Just in time" system, where parts arrive at the proper place for installation just as needed. Steel body panels are cut, stamped, and stacked in advance. When an order is received the proper panels are selected, by a computer-run robotic system, and welded, all by robots. After the paint shop each body shell travels the line with a printout of what needs to be installed. Interiors arrive about 10 min. before the proper body. Amazingly all comes together and a car comes out the end as planned. No cameras, including cell phones with cameras, are allowed!

Next is the Saab Museum at the other end of town. Bruce Harbison tells me the museum has been updated. It is very informative with models beginning in 1947 (of course) and coming to date with several concept cars. I took several photos including Saab #1 (1947).

Back at the hotel we learn that they don't have us booked for the 2nd night After several phone calls they direct us to Ronnum Manor, which is where we thought we should have stayed the first night It is much nicer; with a good dinning room. We meet other persons buying Saabs including a 2nd couple from Minneapolis. It turns out that there are 5 couples picking up cars the same week from the same Minneapolis dealer.

We had friends to visit in Arhus, Denmark, Strasbourg, France, Munich, and St. Gilgen, Austria. Over the following 2 weeks we traveled 2145 miles (3451 km); used about 78 gal and averaged 27.6 mpg. at an average speed of 42 mph (68 kph). Fuel

cost an average of 1.412 Euros/liter which figures out to \$7.16 per gallon!

Driving the Autobahn at 90 to 95 MPH (140 to 155 kph) with occasional opportunities to go to 120 MPH (190+ kph) was indeed fun. The Owners Manual says not to exceed 5000 RPM in the first 1200 miles. At 120 MPH in 6th gear the engine turns about 4500 RPM. However, the higher speeds didn't last long, as at my age and slower reaction times I didn't feel comfortable at 120 MPH. The road surface was smooooth! I don't think it would be possible to sustain such speeds on any US highway unless on a newly laid section (like the Eisenhower tunnel approaches). The Autobahn has no potholes. Seams and patches are blended so well as to be unnoticeable. Even the joints at bridges are not apparent. There are no tire-worn grooves to collect rain (and we drove at high speeds in driving rain storms). I understand that the Europeans do not let highway construction contracts to the lowest bidder, but negotiate with established firms, and that the contractors are required to maintain the surface for several years, thus giving them an incentive to install higher quality road base and use high penetration rate asphalt, saving maintenance costs.

The Germans use the roads for transportation of commodities (people ride trains). The right lane was always full of trucks, nose to tail, a constant line, traveling about 90 kph (about 56 mph). Traffic was heavy at all times. Much like I 25 or US 36, but moving at 60 mph or more! I don't think I will complain about the trucks on I 80 ever again.

Almost all our travel was on divided highways (although I did enjoy the secondary roads more) in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France and Austria. Both the "A" highways and the "B" roads were in far better condition than the Colorado roads. Weather is not the reason our roads are bad!

Traffic control signs are pictorial as they need to be understood by drivers from 5 or more

different language groups. We could improve our highways with such signage. The directional and informational signs, however, are not nearly as informative as ours. The exit numbers on the Autobahn are hard to find, appear only once on an overhead sign, and once more on the warning marker showing the exit is 300 meters ahead. The signs to towns seem to have no consistency as to whether the nearest or farthest town is listed on top. There are no confirmation signs after you exit. There are no "North" or "South" signs, probably because few roads follow a north/south grid system. At one point in Frankfurt an overhead sign shows two arrows to the right marked 23/24 and two arrows to the left marked 23/24. No indication as to which go north and which send you back south! The street signs in town are small, located on the corners of the buildings (not on the street corners), and seem to vary in height from 5 to 10 feet off the ground. The fact that the street names change every few blocks adds to the difficulty of finding your way.

We enjoyed the Summer Solstice celebration in Austria, with bonfires on all the mountain tops and many back yards (and much drink), then returned to Frankfurt to deliver the car to the shipping agent. The charge from Frankfurt is 210 Euros (About \$282) which certainly must cover only the paperwork. The shipping agent for Saab in Frankfurt is E.H. Harms GmbH & Co. They are located southeast of the Frankfurt airport. Open from 8:30 to 4, but no appointments after 3 PM. It takes about 30 minutes to drive there from central Frankfurt, or about 15 minutes from Exit 21 on the A-3 Autobahn. They will call a cab to take you to the airport (which took about 15 minutes and cost 20 Euros). Paper work takes about ½ hour. They want the car empty and clean, but we didn't vacuum ours, just shook out the mats. There is a car wash at an Exxon station in Waldorf on the road to the Harms' office. The cost was 5 Euros. Be sure to have a copy of your invoice/purchase order (they need the price for Customs) and of your Certificate of Origin, as well as the other documents delivered with the car in Trollhattan, and of course your passport.

Frankfurt hasn't much to offer tourists. It was badly bombed in 1943-44. It is the business/finance center of Europe. We prefer smaller towns and if we did it again would stay outside at a place like Wurzburg and deliver the car 3 or 4 hours before plane departure. We had figured a full day to send off the car, but handled it in a few hours. It is best to carefully plan both ends of your trip.

The procedures in the Frankfurt airport are even worse than in DIA. At the first check-in they x-rayed our checked luggage and, at random, our carry-on. They asked to inspect mine by hand (I think the export license plate which I had removed from the Saab and placed in my suitcase created a problem). We then went to the B concourse for gates B22 thru B28. There was a 20+ minute line for personal inspection and carry-on x-ray where they want ALL metallic items out of your pockets: watches, belt buckles, wallets and credit cards (the magnetic strips), passports, boarding passes, etc. Then on to the gates for another 10 minute line and another full inspection and x-ray. Be sure to allow 2 full hours before scheduled departure.

We delivered the car on June 27. It was shipped from Europe on July 3. It arrived in Part Hueneme, California on August 1 and cleared customs (Homeland Security) on August 15. On August 27 I called Gebhardt about another matter and they advised that the car had arrived. It has the "Tour" and the "Winter" packages. I do enjoy the automatic wipers, the Xenon

headlights, and the backup alarm. Some of the gizmos are not what I would have purchased separately, but as a friend said, it's nice to be coddled at my age! The 2 liter 210hp engine and 6 speed manual transmission are superb in the Colorado mountains. I will miss the hatchback convenience of my '97 Talladega (a twin to Bruce and Gayle's --- and it is for sale) but the four doors on the same wheelbase make up for it. With the \$2000 "Travel Assistance" and the \$500 "Loyalty Bonus" (I had to argue with Gebhardt about that), the price for the car and the vacation was only a little more than we would have spent for the car alone. Stated another way, the purchase paid for more than half of our vacation. If the dollar was stronger the package would have covered all. It really is an excellent package!

Saab USA was very helpful and answered all questions we had. My only disappointment was Gebhardt. They argued about the Loyalty Bonus and were not at all helpful in getting the car titled in Boulder. It took about 1 ½ hours at the Motor Vehicle Department\* (again, bring all the documents, including info on the MSRP), but I'm now enjoying a great machine. (And I find that even our terrible highways here are a lot smoother in the 9<sup>3</sup> than I had remembered.)

*\*Bruce's Note: Back in 1997, the Boulder County Clerks Office didn't know how to register our European Delivery Saab-I spent a considerable time there as well.*