

FALCON FLYER

SPECIAL EDITION

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NORTHLAND CHAPTER OF THE FALCON CLUB OF AMERICA



MACHINE SHED IN WOODBURY, MN



LUNCH IN WAUSAU, WI

After months of preparation the trip was upon us . . . It all started on the morning of July 13th at 9am in the parking lot of the Machine

Shed Restaurant in Woodbury, MN. The Northland Falcons gathered as a flock to migrate to our destination—Dearborn, Michigan . . . Birthplace of the Ford Falcon and location of the 31st Annual FCA National Convention. Our trip was thought out carefully, we specified the route, traveling speed, fuel stops and munchie breaks along the way. All pertinent information to keep the flock on schedule to reach our overnight accommodations.

**Day 1, Tuesday, July 13th - 360 miles
Woodbury, MN to Gladstone, MI**

At 9am sharp we had 4 Falcons on the ground, 1 on a trailer and 2 chase vehicles as we departed the parking lot. We traveled east on I-94 just beyond Eau Claire to the small town of Cadott, where we hooked up with another trailered Falcon and another chase vehicle. This was to be our first fuel stop, but as luck would have it our group was split from the lead car and they got back on the freeway without us. Fortunately, we all regrouped a few miles down the road in the town of Boyd, WI for fuel. **Whew!** By now

we are traveling east on State 29 to Wausau, which is our next stop for lunch. From there our predetermined route will take us northeast on some rural country roads to connect with State 8 and eventually stop for fuel in Pembine, WI. But, there was much discussion at lunch in Wausau to modify

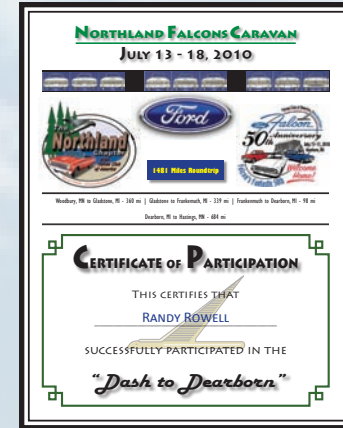


the route more eastward towards Shawano and then travel northeast until we connected with State 35 along Lake Michigan for a more scenic drive.

We expected to gain 2 hours going this route, but as we all know - there are two seasons here in the midwest, "Winter & Road Construction". Disappointment struck when we arrived in Menominee with alot of roadwork where we ended up losing some precious time and adding an additional 45 miles to the route. We arrived at the Gladstone Motel around 7pm, only three blocks from the shores of Lake Michigan. Our "Birds"



GLADSTONE MOTEL - GLADSTONE, MI



NCFCA PARTICIPATION AWARD

DEARBORN NATS



SCOT THAYER & ALLEN WEHR ON FORD TEST TRACK



attracted a lot of attention when we arrived in town and as we cruised down the highway. We took some time to walk around downtown and then down to the shores of Lake Michigan. We stumbled upon an old Marathon gas station that still stands today in the area, though no longer in service.

**Day 2, Wednesday, July 14th - 340 miles
Gladstone to Frankenmuth, MI**

After breakfast in town at Deb's Café, we hit the road at 8 am. We had beautiful weather in the Upper Peninsula, not a cloud in the sky. Picturesque views as we sped along State Hwy 2 along the shores of Lake Michigan. We pulled off in a rest area that was about 5 miles west of St Ignace, which is the gateway to the Mackinac Bridge. We had a mini car show for all the tourists that stopped in for a break too. Beautiful views of the north shore, Gros Cap and St Helena islands. Tops were dropping on the convertibles as we jumped

back on the highway towards the "Bridge". We traversed the suspension as slowly as possible, so that we could take in the views and snap as many pictures as possible of the mass expansion. The toll costs \$3.50 for a car to drive one-way on the tollway bridge. We stopped as soon as we reached the other side and fueled up. Our next stop was going to be an hour further south on I-75 for a lunch break. As we got ready to leave the

gas station, Mike Conmy had difficulty starting his convertible. It began with carb and fuel issues and eventually led to an electrical problem. With no auto parts stores located in Mackinaw City, we only had a few options. Either find a tow dolly or swap cars out on the trailered Falcons. Ralph, owner of the Rare Falcon Cayuse offered to drive his car so that Mike's Futura Convertible could be trailered until we reached a town for parts. I'm very proud to be a member of the Northland Falcons, today our chapter shined amongst us and proves that traveling in a group works best. Without each other's support and mechanical

savvy, we would not have made it to Frankenmuth. We stopped in Indian River, MI which was about 30 minutes south of Mackinaw City for lunch. While there, Randy found out there was a Napa and Carquest in this town. We needed a Holley 600cfm carb kit and a coil. *Is it even possible to find both these parts in a small town???* The caravan got back on

Roy & Kathy Lange, south of Mackinac Bridge



the highway and headed south while Randy searched out the parts in town. Lo and behold, here comes Randy flying down the highway to catch up with the group and gave us the good news!! Today was our lucky day . . . Napa had the correct carb kit and Carquest had the coil. Again, our chapter's support chase cars came though! The chase cars were the anchors of our caravan. **Life is Good!!** By now, we are skirting the suburbs of Saginaw and the traffic congestion is getting worse. So, we slowed down and stuck closer together. The drivers in Michigan were driving erratic and in excess of 80 mph, flying by us as if we were standing still. But, we finally made it to the Frankenmuth Motel safely at 6 pm for our second overnight stay. After we all got settled into our motel rooms, we started to work on Mike's convertible. Randy, Troy, Mike, Roger, Bill were all huddled on the trailer helping to install the coil and carburetor jets—and within the hour . . . his car was revving up. Soon after, the vehicles were swapped on and off the trailer - ready for the next day! As evening settled in, members split

off into groups and headed to downtown Frankenmuth for a bite to eat and some sightseeing. Did I happen to mention that the weather was starting to heat up!!! Even though we had pleasant 75 degree weather in the Upper Peninsula, that all changed when we crossed the bridge. Now the temperature was kicking up a notch, into the mid 90's with high humidity. Later that night, we all just relaxed and shot the breeze on the front porches of the motel. Troy and Randy had plans to leave at 7:30 am to arrive at the Nationals earlier so they could attend the Henry Ford Museum & Estate tours. The rest of the group hung around to tour Frankenmuth a little longer.



BRONNER'S
FRANKENMUTH, MI

**Day 3, Thursday, July 15th - 98 miles
Frankenmuth to Dearborn**

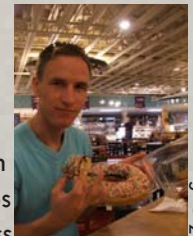
It's 12 noon . . . time to scoot! We decided or thought that the traffic would be better midday as opposed to early morning rush hour. This allowed us to walk around Frankenmuth, visit some shops and take some pictures on the covered bridge. After all, it was less than 100 miles to the south . . . we arrived at the Hyatt at 2:30 pm. Traffic was horrendous as we drove south on State 23 towards Brighton, east on I-96, then on the outer loop of I-275 until we arrived safe & sound.



FRANKENMUTH MOTEL, FRANKENMUTH, MI



ROY & KATHY LANGE, FRANKENMUTH, MI



ZACH SULLIVAN
HAVING A DONUT FOR BREAKFAST!



It was hot again! Somewhere around 97 degrees - pretty tough driving with no air and vinyl seats in a classic! According to the weather reports, we are in for a severe thunderstorm later in the afternoon. We got checked into the Hyatt, moved all our stuff up to the room and got our car to its resting spot on the show field . . . Class R, space #177. Then, we headed down to the show field to look around at the vendor area, parts swap and other show cars. It was beginning to get overcast and dark as I looked to the west . . . there is a storm approaching and it is **SEVERE!** It came quick and fierce . . . winds ripped through

the parking lot like a tornado was coming. Then buckets of rain started and then the FCA members scrambled for cover inside the hotel. It lasted for about 20 minutes, but when it stopped I ventured outside with camera in hand to snap some pictures off of the Falcon show field. There wasn't a lot of people standing around that could eventually block your view. It began to sprinkle a bit, so I headed back into the hotel for the rest of the evening.



Rousch Museum

Day 4, Friday, July 16th

We preregistered for the Test Track event and found out that we were in the 2nd wave, leaving around 1 pm. This allowed us time to squeeze in the Rousch Museum tour. We cruised to the museum through River Rouge Park which is a part of the Wayne County Park System. There were at least 50 Falcons in the caravan; and of course our part of the group made a wrong turn and lost the lead car. Typical "Follow the Leader" scenario. The guys in front of me missed an important turn and we headed into a residential neighborhood. Eventually, a Metro Detroit Lead Car scrambled back and got us back with the rest of the caravan. The Rousch Museum is located in a strip mall, but it is loaded with car history—**fantastic!** Jack Rousch had a Mustang from practically every year, racing cars, concept models, engine displays and other cars that were yet to be restored. It was a quick tour of the museum, maybe only an hour—we had to get back to the hotel for the Test Track line up. Other parts of the caravan were heading out to the Rousch Mustang Ford assembly plant, we didn't have time for that tour. As soon as we got back to the hotel we had to get our Falcon in line for the Test Track, the 2nd wave was going to have 75 Falcons

in the caravan. We got a Dearborn Police Escort all the way to the Dearborn Development Center (DDC). I don't know if the first group got this favor, but it certainly was a worth the cruise not having to stop at any traffic signals and be treated like first class as we drove to the track. **What an opportunity of a lifetime!**



Test Track

This is something that was truly unique and we will remember for a very long time. I grew up in Trenton and I remember when we were able to tour the automobile assembly lines, visiting the Henry Ford museum and Greenfield Village back in the 60s. But we always drove by the proving grounds (DDC), never able to see beyond the fence that hid the test track. One Falcon after another cruised through the gates of the Dearborn Development Center (DDC), up the ramp, over

the track and down to the entrance ramp to the proving grounds. We watched as two GT40's sped by, only to find out that these were our "pace cars". There were two GT40s that were going to be scrapped, but the DDC rescued them and they will now be lifetime cars on the track only. Toni was driving our 63 2 door Sedan, Zach was in the back seat and I was the photographer. Scot Thayer and Allen Wehr were parked right in front of us on the track and we were situated five cars back from the lead Falcon in the pack. From our spot, we could see all the Falcons entering the track area—**what a sight!** Our first lap was on the inner track which consisted of curvy roads and rolling hills, of course we weren't allowed to exceed 45 mph. Ford didn't want to find any classic parts that may have fallen off these old Falcons if they drove any faster. I took as many pictures as I could as we passed by the Ford Emblem that was stamped into the hillside around the northwest side of the track. Our first lap ended at the DDC Project Center which is located in the middle of the proving grounds. Inside, we were greeted by Wally Peterson of the Metro Detroit Chapter. Wally, is retired from Ford and worked at the DDC throughout most of his career. We had a special guest appearance from Edsel Ford III, who graciously welcomed the Falcon home! He gave us a brief history of the area and thanked us all for our long term support of the greatest automobile company—**FORD!** We also saw some other prototype cars driving around, some say it was the Mondeo, Ford's European car. We jumped back into our cars and awaited our next lap . . . the outer banked curve track. Darn it, they told us to stay on the bottom side of the track for safety purposes. As our tour came to a close, we were escorted by the Wind Tunnel building up the ramp, over the track and back out through the gate. Back to the hotel for relaxation.

Entering the DDC Seminar Center



Day 5, Saturday, July 17th

Scot Thayer left this morning around 10 am to get back to Muskegon to catch his Ferry ride. Meanwhile, we had our chapter canopy set up on the far side of the show field to relax and keep out of the sun. It was around 11 am I think, when my wife said that she received a call from Scot. He had a car accident about an hour west of Dearborn—another tire blowout! He was safe and unhurt, but his car was another story. The tread came apart on the left rear tire as he was traveling 65 mph on I-96. He was able to keep the car under control, slow it down and get off onto the shoulder. But the car kept rolling . . . down a ravine and into a pond. The water rushed into the car's cab and Scot had to climb out the passenger window. He was waiting for a tow truck by the time we received the phone call. News traveled fast amongst our Falcon friends and we were offered a personal vehicle from Cliff McKay to go rescue Scot. Me and Troy Witt hit the road quickly to retrieve him and his belongings. It took us about an hour to reach him, as he traveled with the tow truck driver to the impound yard located in Fowlerville, Michigan. The impound lot was a bit further west and south from where the accident occurred. It was there that we were able to get an up close with his 1961 2dr, aptly named "Sleeper". It was amazing, absolutely no body damage whatsoever—BUT, the water damage was excessive. There was mud, muck and algae in the engine compartment, interior area, on the seats and over the dash. You could see the algae water line on his windshield. His incident is a story in itself and will probably be a featured story in a future Falcon Flyer. We got him back with our group and checked back into the hotel. He was able to hook a ride with others in our group for the trip back home. We had other plans for dinner, but attended the banquet award ceremony. We were quietly sitting in the back of the room when all of a sudden our name was announced for the Daily Driver 1st Class Winner! **How can that be?? This must be a mistake??** We graciously accepted the award from the FCA and the hosts—the Metro Detroit Chapter. After the banquet we went back out to the parking lot to get Ralph's Cayuse loaded back onto his trailer. We are scheduled to leave bright and early in the morning at 7am need to leave promptly.



Day 6, Sunday, July 18th – 767 miles
Dearborn, Michigan to Hastings, Minnesota

This morning we begin our departure from Michigan. When I got out down to the parking lot at 6am, the rest of our gang was ready to go. Troy Witt and his family are driving to

Lansing, Michigan to visit relatives and will drive back to MN on Monday. We all pulled our cars closer together in the parking lot and did our packing and vehicle checks.

We decided to leave Dearborn to beat some morning traffic and find a place that we could stop for fuel and breakfast. We stopped just west of Ann Arbor around 8 am, which is home to the U of M Wolverines on I-94. It was a beautiful morning, in the 70s – but we knew the temperature and humidity would go higher as the day progressed. Our goal was to drive as far as possible today. Driving through western Michigan was uneventful, but traffic was beginning to get more congested as we skirted the city of LaPorte, Indiana. So, we decided to pull into a Rest Area, stretch a bit and discuss our strategy for **"Chicago"**. By now it's 11:30am, let's have our lunch break now! Our original intent was to drive west on I-80 to LaSalle, then north on I-39 towards Madison. It's about 85 miles out of our way, but less hassle of driving through Chicago and possibly have to pay some tolls. *But we started to analyze the route again . . . and we should have stopped right then!* The benefits of driving through the city on an early Sunday morning . . . how much traffic could there possibly be? *This is when our trip became very eventful.*



LaPorte, Indiana Rest Area

It was unanimous, we would drive west towards Chicago, catch the northbound exit on I-90 and cut through the city without having to pay any tolls. You'll never guess what happened

I missed the exit, which put the entire caravan in jeopardy and not knowing what our next move would be. I continued west on I-80 and then exited on Hwy 912 north which I thought was a good alternative, but proved to be an even worse mistake. The highway was under construction and all traffic was being forced to exit!!! Imagine all these classic cars driving in circles like a wagon train, trying to figure what to do next. Lots of **"loud"** talking was going on amongst everyone on what and where we should go to get back on track. Meanwhile, the weather was not cooperating at all – a storm front was approaching. I let another member take the lead and we drove in the wrong direction again, heading east and got off track even more. Everyone's GPS device was giving out different directions – *what's up with that?* The storm hit us full force in a torrential downpour that lasted about a half hour. Fortunately, we all stuck together, got our bearings back and finally after nearly two hours we were headed north through the city on I-94. After all the trouble we had getting lost, guess what we ran into . . . a typical **CHICAGO TRAFFIC JAM!!!** Inch by inch, I rode the clutch as the outside temperature rose to 95 degrees. The engine temp guage was needling towards 220 which is too **HOT** for this little car, so there was only one thing to do . . . turn on the heater and make it even hotter inside



TEST TRACK

LaCrescent, Minnesota Rest Area



the car! Slowly we go up and over the interchange as we approach downtown to hook up with the west bound I-90 to

Rockford. After all this crawling along through Chicago on "our shortcut", another hour has slipped by. Eventually traffic has let up and our speed is increasing – just in time, as I was at wit's end!

Finally, we made it! It's now 4pm, we wasted a half tank of gas and nearly lost our minds. We are going to stop in a small town called Hampshire, which is just west of Schaumburg, Illinois for a break, fuel our cars and gather our senses. We were very thankful at this point in our trip – we all managed to hang together and watch out for each other as we claimed **SUCCESS on conquering Chicago!** It was still early in the day so Randy Rowell decided to bug out on his own and get back to Rockland, WI where he resides. Myself and the remaining five members in the caravan stuck together driving north on I-39 towards Madison as we neared the 6 o'clock hour. Bob & Patti Cajune are stopping for dinner in Madison, so we said our goodbyes. The evening is still young, so we're going to drive all the way home too! We were coming up on the I-94/I-90 split near Tomah, when Bill Bell broke away towards his home in Mondovi, WI. The rest of us continued west towards Minnesota. We made another rest stop in LaCrescent, MN which is just across the Mississippi River on I-90. By now, the sun has set, one final good-bye, last minute photo opps and back on the road. Roy & Kathy Lange along with Mike Conmy continue west on I-90 towards Chatfield, MN and the closest hotel possible, respectively. Mike lives in Bismark, ND so his intention is to get some sleep tonight and then hit the road again on Monday to drive another 260 miles. All that remains now is Ralph & Amy Marquardt, Scot Thayer, Roger & Marva Rae Parks

and my family, the Sullivans driving back to the Twin Cities to complete our roadtrip. When we stopped in Winona for fuel at 9:40pm, Ralph decided to keep going and get back home to Cottage Grove. By 11:30pm we were pulling into our garage back in Hastings, MN.

All in all it was a memorable trip that will be forever reminisced in the Northland Falcon's chapter history!

ARTICLE BY MIKE SULLIVAN



MANY THANKS TO ALL THE NORTHLAND FALCON MEMBERS THAT PARTICIPATED!

BACK ROW: ROY & KATHY LANGE, CAROL & BILL BELL, RALPH & AMY MARQUARDT, MIKE CONMY, TONI & ZACH SULLIVAN, MARVA RAE & ROGER PARKS, MIKE SULLIVAN, PATTI & BOB CAJUNE

FRONT ROW: RANDY & SIGNEY ROWELL, TROY, BARB & COREY WITT

Bill & Carol Bell	First Class Winner
Ralph & Amy Marquardt	Masters Class Winner & \$100 Raffle Prize
Mike Conmy	Class Winner & Raffle Prize of Electric Cut-Outs
Bill & Laura Karker	First Class Winner
Mike & Toni Sullivan	First Class Winner