

**Fiesta del Porsche 2006:
Porsches on Route 66**

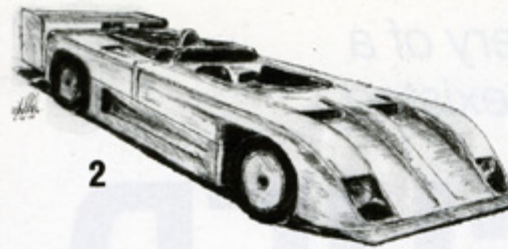
by Sean Cridland

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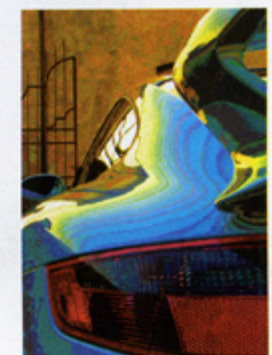
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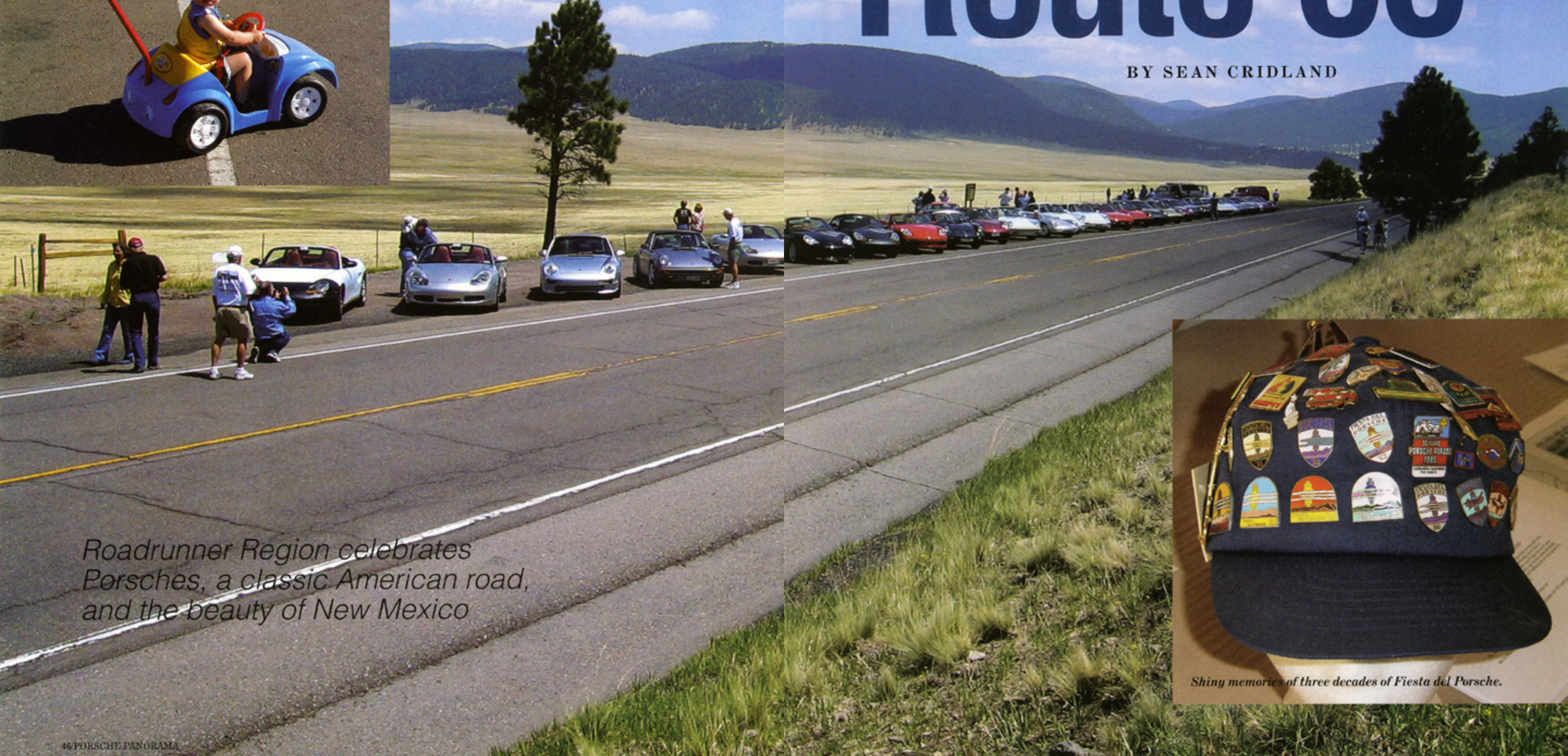
Photography as art—exploring the form of a contemporary 911. Photography and graphic interpretation by Leonard Turner.

A celebration for all ages: Longtime Roadrunner Region member Don Jansson came with his 911 Club Coupe, while Noah Masek pedaled his little blue coupe and dreamed.



Fiesta del Porsche 2006: **Porsches on Route 66**

BY SEAN CRIDLAND



Roadrunner Region celebrates Porsches, a classic American road, and the beauty of New Mexico



Shiny memories of three decades of Fiesta del Porsche.



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Two years ago, when Roadrunner Region decided to move its annual New Mexico Porsche happening, Fiesta del Porsche, to Albuquerque from Santa Fe, there were more than a few grumbles heard throughout Zone 9. Back in the '70s, Roadrunner along with Alpine Mountain and Rocky Mountain regions, and with help from some of the other regions in the zone, had picked Santa Fe as much for its artsy charm as for its central location in the zone. But after 29 years of doing the same-old, same-old it was decided that Fiesta was due for a change.

Most Fiesta-goers decided to go along for the ride and give it a chance, just to see what would happen when Fiesta moved south about 60 or so miles. It turned out that it was pretty good. In fact, it was great and it was agreed that Fiesta del Porsche had lost none of its charm and had found some new life in its new home. After all, it's the people and their love for the cars that form the base of the event. In addition, there are a number of untapped venues in the Southwest's fastest growing city, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For the 31st edition, the Roadrunners (aka Flying Tamales) decided to notch it up another step and go all out to show that the real reason that people get together is to have fun with friends and family and to celebrate the lure of a New Mexico icon—Route 66.



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The event T-shirts and pins were festooned with the Fiesta del Porsche logo done up just like one of those old Route 66 postcards with all the little pictures inside the letters. In addition, a special limited edition set of wine bottles with the Fiesta logo were created just for the event.

Festivities began on Thursday with registration and reconnecting with friends. Participants also took the time to peruse this year's goody store which featured a wide selection of Porsche items and even some southwestern hand-carved cars and jewelry. Later that evening, a tasting of New Mexico wines took place at the Saint Clair Winery and Bistro just one block from the Hotel Albuquerque so no one would have to drive.

Friday morning began early for those who still had to prep their cars for the concours. Roadrunner member Michael Galaviz volunteered two of his spray washer trucks to come over and spritz off several of the cars being prepped by out-of-towners before they made the short jaunt over to Route 66 and the Albuquerque BioPark (home of the aquarium, zoo, botanical gardens and butterfly pavilion) for the top-only concours that is a long Fiesta del Porsche tradition. Spectators and participants were in for a treat; there was everything from David Berardinelli's impeccably prepared 1958 Speedster to a gaggle of shiny

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John and Elaine Rheinschmidt, president and social coordinator of Roadrunner Region respectively, survey the autocross scene.

914s, 911s of all years and variations, a couple of Cayennes (including one brand-new Turbo S), front engined watercoolers, a Carrera GT and even three Club Coupes that all reside in the Roadrunner Region! And that's not even mentioning the race cars on hand. In total, the concours featured about 80 cars of great variety. In addition to enjoying the cars, most everyone took the time to go into the Sharkstooth Café at the Aquarium for lunch and do a little strolling around the grounds to enjoy the beauty of the day and the gardens. The evening brought social gatherings of 968s, Boxsters, and Newcomers, and participants rested up for a busy Fiesta Saturday.

Dawn always comes early for the autocrossers and the Fiesta autocross was no exception. This year the event was hosted in one of the large parking lots at Laguna Pueblo's Route 66 Casino, which was also hosting a classic car show the same day. The autocross course was tight and demanding, but tons of fun. And, as we all know, good drivers and good cars rise to the top under any circumstances. Several of the drivers agreed that it was nice to have an air-conditioned building only a few feet from the autocross where less-than-interested significant others could go to enjoy a nice meal, pull the wrist on that old one-armed bandit, and maybe even do some shopping while the true lead-foots blasted around in the parking lot. But everyone gave a standing ovation when event chair Sean Cridland skidded and skittered his way around the parking-lot course in an anonymous member's

Carrera GT. Who cares if it's an autobahn car; it's just fun to see and hear one of those things in person! Even the Route 66 Girls came around to have a photo of themselves draped all over it.

Then it was a quick packing up of the tires, cars and wrenches and a little spritz for the drivers too so everyone could make it over to the Unser Racing Museum for the Saturday night gala affair. Not to be outdone by the (gorgeously restored) roundy-rounder cars and the Unser family memorabilia in the museum, the Fiesta organizers brought in a few of their own decorations for the dining room. In various corners were a spanking new Carrera GT (provided by Porsche of Albuquerque), David Berardinelli's '58 Speedster, Bruce Phillips' GT3 racecar and Nathan Masek's 550 Spyder (replicar, yes, we wish we had a real one too...who doesn't). What better decorations to whet the appetite of a bunch of crazy Porschephiles! Attendees were treated to a video presentation by David Baker, Porsche of Albuquerque general manager, which highlighted the new 997 Turbo. As if that weren't enough, Al and Susan Unser presented the whole group with individually signed Porsche mousepads with calculators embedded in them! All in all, the evening was a major highlight for many participants.

If people weren't already gasping for air from all the great activities, Sunday morning was an early rise for both the rally and the driving tour groups. Roadrunner Jim Edison led a group of about 40 Porsches up I-25 toward Santa Fe (paralleling Old Route 66) before cut-

ting off to go up west toward Los Alamos, White Rock, past Bandelier National Monument and then up and over the Valles Grande Caldera and winding down into Jemez Springs. The driving tour gained an elevation of about 3500 feet from Albuquerque to the top of the Caldera before dropping back down into the canyons of Jemez Springs for a great southwestern lunch at the Canon del Rio Inn. The canyons of Jemez Springs are one of the most beautiful settings in all of New Mexico with river greenery and towering red-wall canyons rising up some 1000 feet. Organizers were smart enough to run the rally through some really beautiful scenery on the other side of the mountains and also end up for lunch at the Canon del Rio Inn. The lunchtime gathering gave families time to stretch their legs with their children down by the Jemez River; both old and new friends were able to reconnect and had an opportunity to swap stories about their various adventures and catch up on the Fiesta gossip-of-the-day, and participants were also able to watch the Indy 500 on the large screen television.

Then it was a quick ride back into Albuquerque for the farewell awards banquet where the competitors were presented with their trophies and darned near everyone received some kind of door prize, thanks to great sponsors, including one from GAHH worth \$2500! The traditional overall award for excellence (for the person who is most consistently excellent in the concours, autocross, and rally) is named for the late Ashley Carroll, who was one of the great early supporters of Fiesta del Porsche and was a Santa Fe regu-

lar back in the late '70s and mid-80s. For those of you who didn't know Ashley, he was one of the very first life members of PCA and a many time national officer back in the day. This year's recipient of the Ashley Carroll award was Bill Guyre, who drove his beautiful silver Boxster in all the Fiesta del Porsche 2006 events. This year's Spirit of Fiesta award went to Coloradoans King and Carol Clemons who have been to nearly all of the 31 Fiestas (somewhere there's a story about King attending a rainy concours wearing a Speedo....) and who have over 730,000 miles on their 356. Unfortunately, their classic Porsche threw a rod this past year but they came anyway and brought their ubiquitous big beautiful husky-dog Kit-Kan with them.

All in all, it was a fantastic weekend during which both old and new friends and families were able to come together and celebrate an event featuring Porsches, Route 66, and the beauty of New Mexico. Many participants are already anticipating and looking forward to the next Fiesta del Porsche. Event organizers have picked the dates: May 24-27, 2007, and have given it a cowboy theme. So get out yer spurs and your ten-gallon hats next spring and get on down to Albuquerque for Roadrunner Region's Fiesta del Porsche 2007: Cowhands on the Rio Grande. Y'all come. Hear? Make sure to go to www.fiestadelporsche.com for photos and results from this year's event and for all the details necessary for attending the 2007 event. ☺

Photos by Sandra One Feather, Nathan Masek, Mac Sandford and Sean Cridland.



Jacob Hausner figures it out. Let's see, first get through tech inspection, make sure the car is clean and gear up!