



PCA Milwaukee  
Colorado tour

Steinlifters Special Edition  
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# Pikes Peak...An experience we lived to tell about

**By David Mathews and Jessica Williamson**

Bucket List (noun) "A list of things that one has not done before, but wants to do before dying." [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bucket list](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bucket%20list)

As is the case with many of us, my Bucket List seems to grow longer each year, an unfortunate juxtaposition with the time I have to complete said list. So when I heard that Al Wagner and Jim Lindenberg had planned a Fall road trip to Pikes Peak, Colorado, I saw, and seized, the opportunity to check three items off my list—spend extended time with my daughter, Jessica, drive my Porsche on a long road trip, and experience the majesty of Pikes Peak. All in, the Turbo consumed 127.2 gallons of premium gasoline over 3,158 miles. We experienced sun, rain, snow and sleet, while motoring up mountains, around switchbacks, and down long, straight stretches of highway.

First the facts: Calling The Pikes Peak International Hill Climb a 'hill climb' is like calling The Beatles a 'four-man garage band.' The Pikes Peak International Hill Climb, also known as The Race to the Clouds is approximately 12.5-miles long. It incorporates 156 turns. The ascent to the summit, from 9,390 feet above sea level to 14,115 feet above sea level, took Romain Dumas, driving a 2018 Volkswagen I.D. R electric prototype race car, seven minutes, 57.148 seconds. Dumas's time was somewhat quicker than ours; however, he didn't contend with snow. Or fear.

Al and Jim's tour was meticulously planned and beautifully scripted...down to mile; down to the minute. I saw Al near a rest area bathroom holding a stopwatch. Of course, delays befell us, and tragedy struck (some) of us. Cracked wheels, cracked windshields, flat tires, and gastric indigestion all played a part in our drama. But like good Porsche people, we squeezed lemonade from lemons.

The following are comments and images from some of our fearless traveling companions:

"The routes on this tour showcased our car's balance and handling – much more so than our normal roads in Wisconsin." Sheri and Nick Brannen

"We endured torrential rains of biblical proportions, inoperable windshield wipers, flat tires, damaged wheels,

and snow and fog. We came away, however, having made incredible friendships that should endure for years. I met a fellow grade school student who was two years younger than me, in the middle of Colorado, at a bar. We've become great friends. It is truly not the cars, but the people." Jim Del Balso

"On some of the mountain passes, I looked at the drop off of 1000 feet, and proceeded to lean to the left and not look anymore." Lannie and Glenn Eisenbrandt

"Our free day allowed us to hike up to the beauty and tranquility of Beaver Lake." Roger and Patty Franzel



*Tour leaders Jim Lindenberg, left, and Alan Wagner. Alan planned the route while Jim selected the dining spots and lodging.*

*Photo credit: Jeff Chang*

"My memory will always be the pure joy of driving, and the challenge of the ascents to Pikes Peak and Independence Pass, although there was little time to fully appreciate the breathtaking scenery. Each twist and turn required full concentration and focus. Most importantly I'll remember with much satisfaction that our thoughtfully equipped Macan and Panamera variants were able to keep pace with those sporty Porsches with relative ease!" Gene Guskowski

"Besides the camaraderie, the mountain roads and scenery were spectacular.

Colorado mountain roads are what our great cars were meant for. The drives up Pikes Peak, Independence Pass, and Rocky Mountain NP were incredibly fun. I really got to know what a PDK can do and what those paddles are for." Roberta and Richard Hegy

"What makes these trips spectacular is the joy and happiness expressed by the participants when we have the dinner get togethers. The laughter and hugs and thoughtful conversations are everywhere. Even the first-timers get into the swing of it after a day or two. By the end of the trip everyone interacts like they are long-time friends. What a great thing!" Jim Lindenberg

"I knew only that the tour would involve lots of cars and a lot of exciting driving. It turned out to be so much more. Each car was filled with interesting people. Learning about their backstories, and witnessing their

*Continued on next page*

# Pikes Peak continued

interest in hearing mine, left me with a feeling of inclusivity that I didn't expect." Ann Stevens

"The sights, the fantastic, twisty, roads, the rain, the fog, the snow, all great! However, for me, the highlight was meeting great people." Hope and Tom Werking

"As a teenager, I regularly rode copilot for my dad in various PCA events. Now, over 30 years later, it felt just like old times. My highlights of the tour included group dinners, ascending Pikes Peak and visiting Leadville, Colorado, a historic mountain town. The cherry on top was windshield time with Dad, who, to his credit let me drive and didn't blink when I tested out his turbo on I-80. It was my first tour and I hope it won't be my last." Jessica Williamson

"During our tour, we shared experiences and strengthened friendships while experiencing the deep bond between our cars and magnificent roads and mountain passes." Matt Klucha

"Driving up Pikes Peak through the clouds was awesome, but driving through the canyons truly gave us the sense of how beautiful nature really is." Jeff and Sandi Chang



**Kneeling L-R:** Jeff Chang, Eve Estrada, Jim Del Balso, Sandi Chang, Roger Franzel. **Standing Middle Row L-R:** Nick Brannen, Sheri Brannen, Maris Hopkins, Ellyn Wagner, Alan Wagner, Pat Johansen, Dan Johansen, Susie Lindenberg, Jim Lindenberg, Patty Franzel Sue Brumm, Glenn Eisenbrandt. **Standing, Back Row L-R:** George Estrada, Gene Guskowski, Richard Hegy, Robert Hegy, Michael Hopkins, Matt Klucha. *Not in photograph:* Ann Stevens, Lannie Eisenbrandt, David Mathews, Jess Williamson, Tom Werking, Hope Werking  
*Photo credit:* A friendly stranger

**COVER PHOTO:** Sandi Chang took this photo as David Mathews and Jessica Williamson reached the summit of Pike's Peak.



## Heading to Pike's Peak

*Roger Franzel photo*



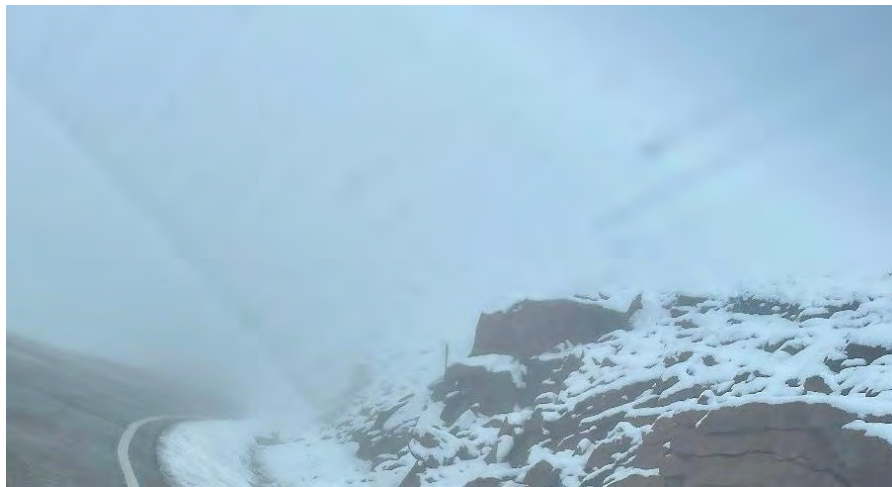
*Arriving at the Pike's Peak visitor center. Snow awaits the group's arrival at the top. Photo credit: Jessica Williamson*

Visiting Pike's Peak was one of many highlights for the tour group. They also visited Independence Pass and Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park.





*The group encountered all kinds of weather. But days like this were the best. Photo credit: Sandi Chang*



*Visibility at the Pike's Peak summit was hampered by snow.  
Photo credit: Sheri Brannen*



*Not all touring was done in Porsches. Matt Klucha, Chicago region member, found time to cycle on back roads during the trip.  
Photo credit: Matt Klucha*



*Some of the participants made a visit to Porsche Colorado Springs where they received excellent service. Photo credit: Roger Franzel*

# Poem captures the tour highlights

By **Sue Brumm**

(Read at the last evening's dinner)

Tomorrow we have to say our goodbyes  
To 14 gals and 15 guys  
Perfect traveling companions thru and thru  
It's sure been fun with each and everyone of you

Al our leader and mentor too  
Each day he told us what we will do  
He kept the schedule so we missed none  
He certainly is a smart one

We laughed and laughed many times  
We enjoyed some bourbon and some Colorado  
wine  
We did it all and didn't hesitate  
We are really sorry if we were ever late.

All of us gals and guys  
Came to Colorado for clear blue skies  
Rain and speed kept us awake  
White knuckles as our hearts did quake

Pikes Peak was made by some  
It would have been better if we had some sun  
Rain, fog and snow got in the way  
But we still had a great day

Broken wipers, three cracked windshields, one  
flat tire in just three days  
Makes one think, it is time to pray.  
We didn't pray enough for sure  
Pat and Dan had lots to endure

Miles of windmills and so much corn  
Small towns that looked well worn  
Iowa rest stops were top of the line  
Talus restaurant where we did dine

Eleven hundred miles in just two days  
Flying home might be the way  
Beaver Creek brought fun, sun and rest  
Dinner at the chophouse, fire outside, just the best

Independence Pass, oh so high  
Curves and hills so we couldn't fly  
Scenery took our breaths away  
Maybe a few more days we should stay.

Jim and Al's expert plan helped us each day  
And to the bathrooms you showed us the way  
You made us get up early and toe the line  
Your knowledge and kindness is mighty fine.

Cows and cowboys like a movie scene  
Dogs herding them as a team  
An elk sighting what a treat  
So many events that make this trip complete

Grand lake lodge that was rustic and quaint  
Porsche dealer that was a saint  
Blizzard conditions at the peak  
And down the mountain we did creek.

Oh so much car talk, what's a person to do?  
Talk about what's old and new  
The ins and outs of everyone of these cars  
And how they are able to go this far

Trying to stay together, a big job indeed  
I'm afraid it required a lot of speed  
Silent prayers became the norm  
Praying that we will see the next morn

We came together strangers were we  
And now we are friends, I hope you agree  
We are bidding a fond farewell to you  
It's been perfect, thank you Jim and Sue.



*Left to right: Dan Johansen, Pat Johansen, Al Wagner and Jim Lindenberg. The Johansens had to abandon part of the tour when they hit a pot hole, damaging a rim and tire. This picture was taken by Roger Franzel when the Johansens rejoined the group.*



*Jim Del Balso and Sue Brumm. Photo credit: David Mathews*



Rich and Roberta Hegy found an interesting restaurant that included the cockpit and exterior of an airplane. Besides being Porsche drivers, the Hegys are also pilots. Photo credit: Roberta Hegy



Jeff and Sandi Chang. Photo credit: Jim Lindenberg



Susie and Jim Lindenberg in the snow.



Roberta and Rich Hegy at Independence Pass.



Nick and Sheri Brannen



Gene Guskowski and Ann Stevens





David Mathews and his daughter Jessica Williamson  
Photo credit: A friendly stranger



Hope and Tom Werking. Photo credit: Glenn Eisenbrandt



Hiking to Beaver Lake rewarded Patty and Roger Franzel with this view.  
Photo credit: Roger Franzel



Roger and Patty Franzel hiked the Beaver Lake Trail.  
Photo credit: A friendly stranger



*While driving to Grand Lake, region members encountered a cattle drive, forcing them to stop on the highway. The cowboys and herding dogs made the stop relatively short. Surely a unique sight and one that made this tour memorable. Photo credits above and left: Susie Lindenberg*



*Waiting for the cattle to clear the road.  
Photo credit: Roberta Hegy*



*Maris Hopkins, daughter of Michael Hopkins, was prepared for the cold and snow at Pike's Peak. Photo credit: Michael Hopkins*



*Sunny skies were welcome after the visit to Pike's Peak. Photo credit: Jeff Chang*



*After a day of driving, a good meal was most welcome.*

*Clockwise from left: Al Wagner, George Estrada, Eve Estrada, David Mathews, Jessica Williamson, Sandi Chang and Ellyn Wagner.*

*Photo credit: Jeff Chang*



**DINING AFTER DRIVING**  
 Jim Lindenberg planned the dining spots for the group enabling the participants to share the day's driving experience. These photos are at the Chophouse in Beaver Creek.

*Clockwise, starting at lower left: Sue Brumm, Susie Lindenberg, Sandi Chang, Jess Williamson, Sheri Brannen, Roberta Hegy, Rich Hegy, Nick Brannen, Dave Mathews, Jeff Chang, Jim Lindenberg, Eve Estrada, George Estrada, Jim Del Balso.  
 Photo credit: That friendly stranger*



*Clockwise from left: Hope Werking, Tom Werking, Glenn Eisenbrandt, Ann Stevens, Gene Guskowski, Maris Hopkins, Michael Hopkins, Matt Klucha, Alan Wagner, Ellyn Wagner, Lannie Eisenbrandt, Roger Franzel, Patty Franzel Photo credit: Jeff Chang*



Leaving Pike's Peak. The group was happy to reach the summit and head back to warmer weather. Photo credit: Roger Franzel



Kissing camels rock formation  
Photo credit: Roberta Hegy



Rich and Roberta Hegy shared driving duties.  
Photo credit: Roberta Hegy



*FINGER POINTING FUN — Nick Brannen, David Mathews and Jeff Chang point to Dave's tempting dessert.  
Photo credit: Jessica Williamson.*



*"Jim said a bear may try to get into your car," said Roger Franzel. "He was right." Patty Franzel, left, and Roger, point out their fuzzy passenger. Photo credit: Jeff Chang*



*On the road surrounded by scenic views.  
Photo credit: Sandi Chang*



*Funks are open and ready to be filled on departure day.  
Photo credit: Alan Wagner*



*The view from Grand Lake Lodge. Photo credit: Tom Werking*



Photo credit: Jim Lindenberg



Photo credit: Roger Franzel



Elk spotted near the group's motel in Estes Park. Photo credit: Tom Werking

Editor's note: Thanks to the Colorado tour participants for sending me dozens of photos. Some arrived via text, others by email. Some came while the tour was under way. Others came later. All were appreciated.

At times it was difficult to keep everything straight. I wanted to ensure I gave proper credit to those who took photos. In some instances, the photographer was a "friendly stranger" who used one of the member's phones to capture the image.

Above all, thanks to Jim Lindenberg and Al Wagner for the time they put into planning this event. And thanks to Dave Mathews and Jessica Williamson for their recap which captured the highlights of the event perfectly. [See more photos here.](#)

—Bev Jurkowski, Editor, Steinlifters  
PCA Milwaukee



On the road again.....photo credit: Sandi Chang