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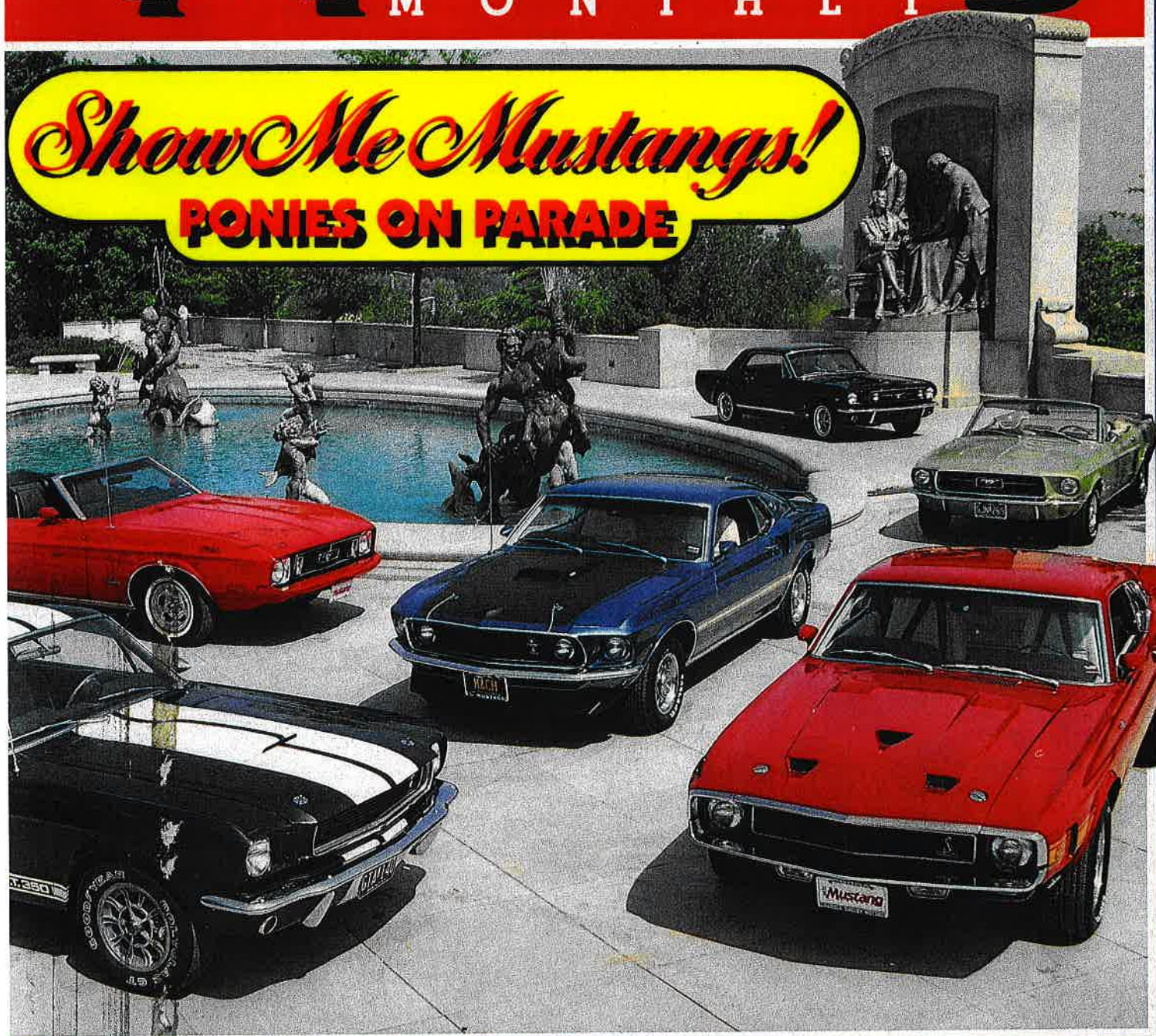


THE MAGAZINE FOR 1965-1973 MUSTANG OWNERS

Mustang

M O N T H L Y

Show Me Mustangs!
PONIES ON PARADE



FEATURES:
PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR MUSTANG • '65 CONVERTIBLE • '68 GT FASTBACK



photos by Jim Smart

Sentimental Journey

"I think everyone who's 42 years of age in 1985 wanted to buy a Mustang in 1965."

— Missouri Governor John Ashcroft —

by Jim Smart

Name a lifestyle and chances are good that a Mustang will fit in. Even if a particular individual has never owned a Mustang, more than likely, a neighbor or close friend has enjoyed the fever. Without a doubt, Mustangs find their way into just about any lifestyle. Take Missouri Governor John Ashcroft for instance. This youthful, high level executive likes Mustangs, especially those of the convertible variety.

Back in 1964, John Ashcroft was busy laying the foundation for a political career that would eventually lead him to the highest office in the Show Me State. The time and expense of law school

sealed his attention to the situation at hand — becoming an attorney. There wasn't much time to be thinking about cars, much less a new Mustang.



Governor Ashcroft speaks of those times. "I didn't have a car until my last year of law school. I just didn't have enough money to go to school and own a car."

So how did this mode of living fuel the desire to own and drive a Mustang? Governor Ashcroft didn't begin an active search for a Mustang until 1985, some 20 years after law school. There was, of course, a marriage and the raising of three children over the two decade period that followed law school. A growing family and a maturing career don't always mix well with a sporty, four-place, Mustang convertible.

When John's first born, Martha (who prefers "Marty" was reaching Missouri's legal driving age of 16, John saw it as a chance for Dad to relive those busy youth years with an added pinch of Mustang, plus the opportunity for Marty to celebrate her 16th birthday with the breeze blowing through her hair.

He told us, "I think maybe that seeing my own ambitions fulfilled in my daughter is part of it. I rode in Mustang convertibles in a lot of parades. When I was reinaugurated earlier this year, they wanted me to ride in a brand new Cadillac convertible. I told them that although new Cadillac convertibles are nice, I'd rather ride in one of those Mustangs. Mustangs are just a bit more my style than a Cadillac."

St. Louis Mustanger Mickey Neusteadter heard about the Governor's interest in a Mustang convertible through Charles McFarland, a Mustang enthusiast living in California, Missouri. So Mickey began checking various sources around the country in his travels — one of the distinct advantages of being an airline pilot for Ozark Airlines. Last spring, Governor Ashcroft was aboard an Ozark flight, and here's what he had to say about it, "Mickey comes walking back from the cockpit and says, 'Well, hello Governor.' I said, 'Hello, who's flying the plane?' Then he hands me a bunch of magazines about Mustangs!" He continued, "I talked with my wife about it and she agreed that it would be nice to find a Mustang. So, I figured we ought to enlist Mickey to help us find a Mustang convertible. Mickey noticed an ad for a 1973 convertible in the local Shelby newsletter and went to check it out. He told me, 'It looks like a nice car, but I'm not sure if the owner will sell to you or not.'"

The owner was Florence Nolte, original owner of the convertible.

There had been countless offers, all in the amount desired, but none with future plans that made Florence comfortable, so she rejected them all. Mickey Neusteadter visited with Florence and looked at the Mustang, finding a beautiful '73 with an odometer mileage well under 50,000. But with other prospective buyers, Mickey had to prove himself worthy of a sale — without leaking word of the Governor's intent to buy. This would soon be viewed as a mammoth task, especially in view of both Mickey and Governor Ashcroft's busy schedules. So Mickey shot a number of photographs of the car and forwarded them to the Governor. John Ashcroft and his daughter were ecstatic and ready to buy.

Several days later, Mickey called Florence and asked if he could bring the



parade photos courtesy Charles McFarland



Governor Ashcroft's inspiration (top) came from fulfilling his dream during those occasional parade cruises in the back of a Mustang convertible. Now he, his daughter, Marty, and lovely wife, Janet have one they can call their own. Florence's late husband, Dick Abbott, would be proud of her. Here she presents his 1973 Mustang convertible keys (bottom) to Governor Ashcroft while her husband, John Nolte, looks on.

prospective buyer to see the car. Florence tells us, "Mickey told me that this was the only time his friend could see it. Finally, Mickey told me that it was the Governor, and I said, 'I'll be home.' " The sale was made a short time later.

The drive home to Jefferson City, Missouri was one of emotion for the Governor, "My wife had just gotten a permanent, so she refused to have the top down — not exactly to my liking. I was ready to take it for all it was worth. The car is a spectacular piece of equipment. I was very impressed by the way the car tracks on the road without even holding the wheel. The color reminds me of Kraft Butterscotch topping — I'm big into ice cream!"

Is the Mustang experience short lived for Missouri's top executive? Ashcroft

explained, "I like old cars. The beauty of this one is that it's a very good automobile — I'd like to own it for a while. My daughter can drive the Mustang to school three or four times a week. It's less than a mile each way, so we won't rack up a lot of miles. I take people over the mansion and show them my Mustang! You have to have some claim to fame in this world."

We also asked Governor Ashcroft how his family is reacting to Dad's sudden burst of youth fever; "If I had been buying this car for myself alone, my wife would have looked at it as an extravagant indulgence. Simply because there's the pretext of my daughter in the picture, it's somehow acceptable. I think that everyone who's 42 years of age in 1985 wanted to buy a Mustang in 1965."

