

Pacific Grove Tour – 2026
By Jim and Linda McMahan

Since 2008 we have been leading a tour every other year to Pacific Grove; and this year the outing was another memorable experience. We began at the Southport Shopping Center in West Sacramento with a lively combination of veteran tourists as well as first timers. Homemade cinnamon muffins were enjoyed, releases were signed, and goodie bags and route instruction booklets handed out. As in previous years, we made it a point of bringing people together with our “ice breaker” activity. And as we awaited the arrival of folks, we asked people to trade lettered charms that would be arranged in creating a friendship bracelet or necklace that spelled “PORSCHÉ”. The parking lot was a happy frenzy of activity with people making exchanges as well as new acquaintances.

After our driver’s meeting the first group of 17 cars headed off, followed by the second group of 14 cars. We cruised along leisurely driving along the Delta and eventually reached Livermore. After a brief stop in Livermore, we continued onto Calaveras Road, a scenic, twisty stretch of the tour before our picnic lunch spot at Ed Levine Park. The route instructions appeared to be working and our tour groups seemed to be staying together. Then after lunch, the inevitable happened, Bay Area TRAFFIC! We did our best to stay together as we slowly trudged along Hwy 101. Finally, we exited the freeway traffic onto another scenic, twisty road, Hecker Pass. Our luck was holding as our tour approached Watsonville. Then unfortunately all bets were off for staying together and the group scattered. Thank goodness for Route Instructions and GPS directions. By the time we reached Hwy 1 near Moss Landing we had one car left behind us from our original group of 17 cars. The old curse of the “Lost” Pacific Grove Tour had struck again. Reaching our final destination in Pacific Grove we were confident that all 31 cars that had started the tour would eventually arrive at the destination. All we could do is patiently wait and have a glass of wine! One by one all of the cars appeared and everyone eagerly shared which routes they had taken.

That evening during the welcome pizza party, we explained to our first time tourists and guests that we always lose cars along the way and that we traditionally honor one tour participant by awarding a “Very Special Prize” titled The Scales of Injustice. It is a handmade, truly hideous ceramic sculpture, given in good fun, to someone who has done something “out of the ordinary” while on the tour. And throughout the day we had our spies covertly searching for possible recipients. Previous trophy winners include myself, Tom Kroetz, Ed Parra, Nick Majetich, Sally Boeck and Andy Leight, all knowable SVR members. This year the esteemed Andy Leight was honored again, after being selected for starting the day by showing up at the WRONG NUGGET SHOPPING CENTER. He accepted graciously as laughter and stories completed the evening. And so, our official tour had ended, but the activities and fun continued.

The next day folks were able to partake in many of the suggested optional activities that included exploring the area by driving the 17-Mile Drive,

attending the Good Ol Days Street Fair, taking a walking tour or just relaxing. Saturday afternoon the "Cocktails Around the World" gathering allowed for sharing the events of the day. The optional dinner at Taste Cafe and Bistro was also outstanding, earning high praise for delicious food and family friendly service.

As our weekend getaway came to a close, we reflected on how truly thankful we are for all of the people who assisted in organizing this event. And our deepest thanks go to all of the wonderful tour participants for their good humor, patience and enthusiasm. Their ability to relax and take things in stride is the reason the "Lost" Pacific Grove Tour remains a beloved tradition.