

# What the Benner's have meant to SCCNH

by Drew Young

Giving thought as to what Perl Benner meant to the Sports Car Club of New Hampshire is impossible without including his wife Shirley as they were a real team. I first met Perl and Shirley in 1970 when I accompanied my brother to a time trial event at Bryar Motorsport Park. My brother was an entrant and as I was too young to enter but I found out I could work at a corner station if I attended a worker meeting. Shirley was in charge of the meeting and Perl made sure we paid attention in between getting his Mustang ready to race. I learned a lot about flagging but I learned more about work ethic and the love of a sport/hobby from Perl and Shirley.

For many years Perl and Shirley were proud members of the Pony Pilots as well as the Granite State Corvette Club. First the Pony Pilots dissolved followed a few years later by GSCC. It was at that time that an agreement was made between SCCNH and GSCC that the remaining members of GSCC would become life members of SCCNH in trade for some of the equipment owned by GSCC. That was a huge deal for our club as we gained much more than the equipment, we gained Perl and Shirley Benner! Their devotion to our sport and club was simply amazing. I can't count how many times they would help our club in ways that were invisible to most people.

For decades Perl was the guru of our communication equipment which he had created from WWII and Korean War surplus field boxes, which by the way are still in use today! Perl found ways to make things work and came up with ideas to make the events run smoother and more efficiently to the benefit of the drivers and more-so the workers. By the way, one of those workers was always Shirley. While Perl would be tending to equipment needs Shirley was working a corner and making sure her station was running like clockwork. Both of them were consummate professionals in an amateur/volunteer sport. They made sure that what ever they were doing was done to the best of their ability and followed through to completion, all the while never asking for recognition or celebration of their efforts.

When Shirley was unable to work on the corner stations Perl didn't miss a beat making sure our equipment was up to the task and made sure all stations at Ascutney were ready to go. He and Shirley would monitor the events progress from their campsite using Perl's truck communication radio to listen to many of the workers they had helped to groom over the years as their eyes and ears of the event. When it came time to break down the hill at the end of the day Perl was at the ready and made sure all was in order.

After Shirley's passing a few years ago Perl still was on duty making sure things were up to speed. He made sure that we began a transition phase in regards to tending to the equipment and their needs/repairs. As time went on and he was unable to drive to our meetings his son would give him a ride so Perl could attend our meetings and keep up to speed on the club's activities and lend a hand when possible. I recall the last meeting he attended I spoke to him briefly and he made sure I knew he was still available to help if needed.

Perl and Shirley Benner were/are good people and the consummate club members who will truly be missed by our sport, our club and most of all by all their friends and family. God Speed to you.