

# Nutz Letter

Fordnutz Cougar club is dedicated to the preservation of all Cougars and "Orphan" Ford and Mercury Vehicles

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Editor - Scott Ferguson

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**Mailing address:**

P.O. Box 24015 Airport R.P.O.  
Richmond, BC Canada  
V7B 1Y2

**E-mail :** fordnutz@shaw.ca **On the Web:** http://www.fordnutz.org/

**Pres.** Scott Ferguson (604) 786-3673  
**VP** Alex Bronevitch (604) 540-8531  
**Events** Heather Whitaker (604) 524-9849  
**Sec.** Lorne & Betty Pirson (604) 594-0665  
**Treasurer** Kim & Cindy Friesen  
(604) 853-5102  
**Membership** Grant & Maurice Hadland  
(604) 531-9373  
**Editor** Scott Ferguson (604) 786-3673

Fordnutz is affiliated with the Cougar Club of America and the Ford Car Club Council of BC.



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Please send your articles for the Nutz Letter C/O the club address.  
**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS: Dec 15th, 2003**



Ray's Rocky Mountain Special in Cadboro Bay, on Vancouver Island, BC, with 10 Mile Point as a backdrop.

## Rocky Mountain Special Ray Harwood's 1969 Cougar XR-7 RMS Story and photos by Ray Harwood

**A**fter 14 years of wondering, the question "How many Purrple Rocky Mountain Specials were produced for the same-named Alberta insurance company in 1969" has been answered: 98. Aside from the 6 which were ordered without deluxe seat belts, the option sheet was the same for all Rocky Mountain Specials. Each 69 XR-7 RMS was ordered with tinted glass, white vinyl roof, FA white leather interior, tilt steering, PS, PDB, console, immersion heater, heavy duty battery, E78x14 white sidewall bias ply tires with deluxe wire caps, AM 8-track stereo, bumperettes and door edge guards. My attention was first drawn to this Cat about 1989/90 when a friend who was racing Cougars

showed me what looked like pretty decent fenders about to be demolished from a 69 Cougar that was clearly Purrple beneath the current paint. When I asked about the condition of the rest of the car, I was told it was in similar condition to the fenders. I went for a look and dragged this carnation around for the better part of ten years before she again saw paint in her original hue. On a short trip up-island to where the cat lay exposed and near certain death, I saw clearly that the body was painted Purrple from the factory. I thought to myself, "Cars were painted Purrple in the 60's but when was last time I saw one?" I could not recall if I had ever seen one but felt I was onto something in this hulk which was ready to be crushed. I arrived on the scene to find no doors, seats, dash pad (the gauges were face down in a pool of water), interior/exterior sus-

pension, brakes, steering or differential (including housing). All the original parts had been stripped and sold off the shell long before. In fact only half the floor, roof, hood, front valance and filler panels remain of the original today. The entire wreck, which ironically had been rescued from an auto wrecker by its previous owner, was now on its way to my home at the time where I had been stockpiling 69 Cougars and parts. I bought 3 1/2 Cougars that weekend and had enough parts to assemble the shell with driveline, body parts, etc. which I did. Then the Cat sat while I attended to my driver Cat and business relationships etc. About 7 years after I assembled this Cat, I painted it in PPG and a custom blend as, at the time, I did not know about the correct colour. The first I heard on this was from Marvin Hillyer, who had worked at Universal Lincoln Mercury in Calgary, Alberta, Canada at the time the cars were

(Feature Feline continued on page 2)



The brilliance of the white seats



The 351 Windsor V8 that powers the cat.

*(Feline continued from page 1)*

new. Marvin owns a 69 RMS today which is repainted Competition Orange/Vermillion/Calypso Coral. Most RMS Catz were repainted to another colour when the fleet was returned to ULM in 1970/1 and resold. Ironically I was on a service call at my local parts store to help unlock a 68 Mustang, when the gentleman started telling me about the Mary Kay car I owned. When I corrected him on its origin he stated he was the head attorney who shut RMI down in 1970/1 for selling insurance on the wrong side of the laws. This was all very interesting as I was enroute to Vancouver with PC to write a Canadian Classics magazine article. At the local Mustang club show, where I showed my 67 Fairlane 390 4-speed Ranchero, I met Lawrence Woytowich who was soon to have his mind blown as was I. He passed me a copy of the recent Canadian Classics magazine which fell open to an article on one of the 1971 Pink 340 Dusters DSO'd to Edmonton in response, I think, to the 98 Purple Cougars running around throughout Alberta the prior year. I mentioned to Lawrence that I had a Purrple Cougar then watched his eyes glaze as he began to recall his life in Alberta and the 69 PurrpleCat he'd had in his

driveway in 1969/70. When he came to he asked if I would be interested in an article and could he come by and look. We agreed to both and a friendship was born (To read Ray's Cougar article from Canadian Classics Dec/00 issue go to <http://pages.cthome.net/cougar/crazy.htm> ).

Rocky Mountain Cats were issued to salesmen who purrformed at a certain level of sales. After they were returned and repainted, the cats were redistributed throughout the western provinces (BC, Alberta and I believe Saskatchewan). Today few of the 98 remain. The CCOA registry project reflects 7 remaining but I know or have heard of 3 more for a total of 10, or about 10%, which is the expected survival rate for cars of the era. Today the Cat has sat another 3 years since I drove it last. The engine has been replaced with a correct 69 351 4V FMX completely rebuilt in 2000 and has zero miles logged on it. In 2001 correct wire wheel caps were added and 2002 saw new leather front seats and new vinyl rear seats installed. Eventual plans include a front end alignment, since the donor 81,000 mile 1970 parts I installed 12 years ago have never been set well enough to replace one broken rear leaf at the same time. Modifications/deviations from stock are 1971 IMCO emissions and FORD electric choke, but I have tried to return this cat to its correct former colour known as Purrple. While this is not the finest Cat in existence it is the only one restored back to its former Purrple glory.



Ray with his RMS soon after purchasing it and before the restoration began