



DAVE KURTZ

Spectators admire cars in a show staged by the Cats Classic Cougar Club in downtown Auburn Saturday.

'Cats' prowl in downtown Auburn

BY DAVE KURTZ

dkurtz@kpcmedia.com

AUBURN — The Cats Classic Cougar Club put on a show Saturday in downtown Auburn.

Owners from 14 states and Canada displayed 66 Mercury Cougars, ranging from 1967-2002.

Approximately 150 people came to Auburn for the meet, which ended Saturday evening with a dinner and judging awards presentation at the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum.

Friday, 35 of the cars took a cruise to Shippshewana, with a stop at the Mid-America Windmill Museum in Kendallville.

The gathering featured the 1969 models of the Cougar on their 50th anniversary. Club official Scott Zeller of Chicago owns a '69 XR7 version.

"There's something unique about owning a Cougar," Zeller said about the make's appeal. At most car shows, he enjoys being the only person with a Cougar.

"For me, it's nostalgia because of my father, who had three Cougars" when Zeller was growing up, he said.

Mark Kulwik of Wolverine Lake, Michigan, owns a 1968 Cougar XR7-G. For 28 years, he owned Shelby cars before switching to his Cougar.

"The Cougar has its own mystique



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A brightly painted Mercury Cougar attracts attention Saturday on the courthouse square in Auburn.

— powerful, luxury, big, comfortable," Kulwik said. "The ride and drive of the Cougar is just far superior to a Mustang of that age."

Both products of Ford, the Mustang and Cougar share many interchangeable parts, but the Cougar is 7 inches longer, Kulwik said.

"Because of the longer wheelbase

and the heavier vehicle, the ride is very different" in a Cougar, he said. He called it "just a pleasure to drive."

Mike Keast of Ionia, Michigan, came to the show with his 1969 Cougar XR7 convertible.

"I bought my Cougar as a retirement gift to myself," Keast said. "It's the car that I always wanted but never had."



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