

## 2008 Concours d'Elegance of the Eastern United States

By James Butler

I'll bet that most of our Chesapeake Region members don't know that the Club has several members who participate in car shows around the country that are by invitation only. These are not T-shirt and jeans type events and they tend to attract many true classic and exotic vehicles – but not always.

This year, on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Concours d'Elegance of the Eastern United States had four Chesapeake Region members who were invited to bring their cars. Ray Adler showed his 1972 Volvo P1800E coupe in the Sports Car class. Dave Benson also showed a car in the Sports Car class – his 1955 Jaguar XK140MC roadster. Jim Popp showed his 1940 Lincoln Continental Cabriolet in the Classic Era class. And Tom Young showed his 1960 Ford Thunderbird hardtop in the Anniversary class.

The only Club winner among the 130 plus vehicles on the show field in the

2008 Concours was Jim Popp's 1940 Lincoln Continental, which received a Bethlehem Star Award – awarded to cars worthy of recognition that weren't the winner in their class. In the 2007 Concours, Club members won two awards – Dave Benson's 1937 Cord 812 phaeton won the Arrow International Award for Excellence; and Henry Lewis' 1929 Alfa Romeo 1750 Sport Spyder won the Best Sports Car Award (1948 and earlier).

The theme for the 2008 Concours was "A Century of Automotive Innovation" – From the Ford Model T and the dawn of mass production, the automotive industry has provided a wealth of technology and innovation. These vehicles exhibit the pinnacles of engineering excellence, styling, and technology in the era they were produced.

The Concours is a three-day event with a road tour, museum open houses, upscale evening events, and a club day

featuring many car clubs from eastern Pennsylvania.

I've been on the Vehicle Selection Committee of the Concours d'Elegance of the Eastern United States for nineteen years. This event is held in Bethlehem, PA annually in early June at Northampton Community College. Owners can self-nominate a vehicle and we also scout various venues to identify possible participants. One of the interesting features of this Concours is that once a vehicle is shown, it is not eligible again for three years – so there is a 100 percent turnover each year in the Concours vehicles.

Proceeds from this event support the Burn Prevention Foundation in their educational programs and the Home Safe Home initiative. The program teaches parents through hospitals and fire companies how to safeguard infants and toddlers in their home. For more information about the Concours click on [www.concourseast.org](http://www.concourseast.org).



Shown clockwise from the top left: Ray Adler, 1972 Volvo P1800E; Dave Benson, 1955 Jaguar XK140 MC; Tom Young, 1960 Ford Thunderbird hardtop; and Jim Popp, 1940 Lincoln Continental Cabriolet.