

# A look at the past from the future

Story and photos by Randall Bohl



The inaugural Future Classics Car Show presented by ClassicCars.com, held January 25th on High Street in CityNorth, just east of Desert Ridge Marketplace in north Phoenix, was an immediate success, with its pre-determined 100-car limit fully pre-registered.

With a range defined as cars manufactured between 1975 and 2005, the variety of vehicles on hand provided a walk down what seems like recent memory lane—maybe not all so recent. Representing a timeframe passing back beyond 40 years, the show is a potent reminder that the future is not what it used to be—nor is the classic past.

As anticipated, there was a strong showing of Japanese cars among the later model years. Nissan had a notable presence, as did the Subaru WRX STI.

It was a pleasant surprise to come upon a beautiful Toyota Supra. We recall friends who bought the Supra when new, specifically planning on high resale value. From a time even earlier than the Supra (and before the domestic badge change to Nissan), there were several prime examples of the Datsun Z car.

The best parking spot and display of the evening award, in our own casual opinion, goes to the enthusiast who parked their yellow Datsun 280Z in front of the yellow MoJo Yogurt storefront—a nice touch.

From Europe, Porsche was well represented, along with a BMW or two and some Mercedes-Benzes as well. The European kick of the evening for us was a maroon Saab 900S, bringing back memories of traveling with a former employer in his maroon Saab 900 Turbo. We couldn't recall any visible difference in the styling of this 900S and the Turbo (under the hood, the 900S has a 16-valve naturally aspirated engine and the Turbo an 8-valve turbo), but the boss sure had been proud of his—even he called it his upside-down bathtub.

The show had a very relaxed, comfortable atmosphere, while High Street is well lined with restaurants including La Bocca Wine Bar & Urban Kitchen, Ocean Prime and the Blue Martini.

As we approached the Blue Martini we heard a live solo performance of a Lynyrd Skynyrd classic emanating from the open front. As we passed, there was a surprising "Hey Arizona Driver!" shoutout in the middle of *Gimme Three Steps*. The musician was Harry Luge, whom we've photographed at the PIR Speed Cantina during NASCAR races for the past four years. When he ended the song, we conversed through the open front of the Blue Martini for a moment, as he smartly took the opportunity to promote to everyone in the restaurant the fact that he would again be playing at Phoenix International Raceway in March.

The largest sedan we noted was a modified Chrysler 300, with ground effects, supersized wheels and supersized audio. Overall, there was not a lot of American Muscle on display—which makes sense, as there was not a lot in the way of muscle machinery during that time period, period. Representing were a Mustang 5.0 and, of course, some very nice Corvettes. It's not hard to see that in another 20 years, the current generations of Mustang, Camaro, Challenger and Corvette will be at home in this show.

Cars were judged by a panel led by *Classic Car News* East Coast editor Andy Reid, with a nice set of piston trophies heading home to the garage displays of this year's top choices.

The winners in each category were:

- Import class 1975-1983 .....1977 Toyota Celica GT
- Import class 1995-1999 .....1991 Acura NSX, Arnie Press
- European 1984-1994 .....1987 Saab 900S, Dave Karsten
- European 1995-1999 .....1996 Volkswagen Cabrio, Brian McCauley
- European 2000-2005 .....1999 BMW M Coupe, Lena Norberg
- Domestic 1984-1994 .....1988 Pontiac Fiero GT, Dave Karsten
- Domestic 1995-1999 .....1996 Ford Cobra, Tim Brudler
- Domestic 2000-2005 .....2004 Chevrolet Corvette Z06, Joe Martoccia
- Diamond in the Rough .....1985 Mitsubishi Starion
- Hagerty Youth Judging .....1977 Datsun 280Z, Mark Small ■

