



## November SUV Drive

STORY BY HEINZ HOLZAPFEL | PHOTOS BY TOSH KANNO AND JEFF GASPARITSCH

A gray, chilly, and rainy Saturday morning. What better conditions for a fall Porsche SUV drive? Or maybe stay home and have a coffee in front of the warm fireplace and read? Nah, no true Porsche enthusiast would even think that! Jeff Gasparitsch, our enthusiastic SUV group lead, pulled all registers for today's tour: Meet at a wonderful coffee shop; winding and remote mountain roads; river crossing on a ferry, a stop at a monastery with an excellent chocolate shop, and a great restaurant for late lunch. Or early dinner? After all, this route with 125 miles was not a short Saturday cruise!

14 cars and about 26 members, including 4 new members, showed up at 9am at the AVA Roasteria on Progress Ridge in Beaverton. This is an excellent gathering spot in cold and rainy conditions: plenty of parking, lots of covered open space and a shop with great coffee, Danishes and enough warm space. I will for sure integrate this starting place into some of my future drives!

SUV drives are more leisurely, and it's always nice to see spouses that rarely drive with their partners on more spirited drives join these events. And some members bring their kids. It emphasizes that our club is a family of Porsche enthusiasts. It also was nice to see four new members join the party. Everyone was welcomed warmly and integrated into the group.



The route Jeff developed for this drive was very interesting. Starting at Progress Ridge, the route meandered through farmland and vineyards and then climbed up to Bald Peak, then down on lovely back roads to Carlton for a rest stop. From Carlton we headed west into the coastal mountains on the very scenic road to Willamina, a road that in long stretches is single lane and required us to slow down for oncoming traffic. The road climbs up to almost 3000 ft and has no winter service. Not an issue today, but the rain drops showed some structure up there. Once we reached Willamina, we turned east and headed to the Brigittine Monastery for a rest stop and to get some tasty chocolates in their shop. This is a great place to get unusual and very good candy for Valentines Day!

From there we headed over to the Wheatland Ferry to cross the Willamette in style. This ferry is included on several of our SUV drives throughout the year and it is always amazing to get the car on a boat and cross the river. Once on the other side, the last leg of the route took us northeast, passing St. Paul and in the final stretch winding along the Willamette on the south side to Wilsonville, where we arrived at the RAM Restaurant for a beer and great pub fare. After 125 miles and about 4 ½ hours, everyone had a healthy appetite. And yes, it was early dinner! ■



Gary and Ina Feldmann



Wendy Kanno and Valerie Menely

