



Christmas in July Car Show

By Chris Winslow



Mark Melrose reached out a few months ago about a charity car show event at Dents Express in Ballwin. The show was called Christmas in July. The goal of the car show was to gather toys for children with cancer.

It was a pretty hot day, but despite that Paula and I along with Bill Marcus and John Grissom and his family attended the event. We were the only car club there with more than one car. Mark Melrose had also planned to attend, but unexpectedly had to cancel.

During the event, the sponsors explained that the toys collected at the show are used at the children's cancer centers around the area. Each time that a child has to come to one of the centers for treatments, they get to go to a toy closet and pick out a toy at the end. This gives them something to look forward to and makes it a bit easier on the parents when they are preparing the children to go to the treatments.

The car show was a huge success. The parking lot for Dents Express was packed with show cars and in fact there ended up being some overflow into the lot behind the building. There were also lots of folks who stopped by in their daily drivers just to drop off toys. In the end, their haul of toys was huge and there were also at least 20 bikes that were donated.

During the show, they were offering dent removal and car detailing with the donation of toys. I was able to watch some of the dent removals while they were in progress. I have seen the dent removals before where they use a series of tools to tap on the dent from the rear to raise the dent out of the body panel, and they did do some of that. What I had not seen before is a technique that they use now that allows them to pull out a dent from the outside. It uses a hot glue gun with pullers and a slide hammer. They use a hot glue gun loaded with a special glue and a puller which is a flat disk with a threaded rod on it. They use the hot glue to attached the puller to the body panel and then use a slide hammer to pull out the dent. They pull the dent out a little at a time with this technique and then use a few other tools to tap on the panel once the dent is pulled out to fine tune the repair. I saw it applied both to an SUV with a dent right at a body line around a wheel well and also on the leading edge of a hood on a late model Miata. In both cases once they were done you could

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not tell they had been repaired. They were also applying ceramic coatings and performing other detailing work if you donated more toys.

During the show they had raffles and some other giveaways. I was lucky enough to win an \$100 gift certificate for dent removal services. It will make a great raffle item for the



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Wheels in Motion car show in a few weeks. Dents Express also donated a \$50 certificate for us to use at that show.

As the show started to wind down, firefighters from the fire department building next store to Dents Express came over and picked out their favorites for the event. John Grissom's 1967 Plum Mist GTO won Best Interior.

All of us had a great time at the event and based on the haul of toys and bikes, it was a total success. We will be on the lookout for a repeat of this event in 2023.



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