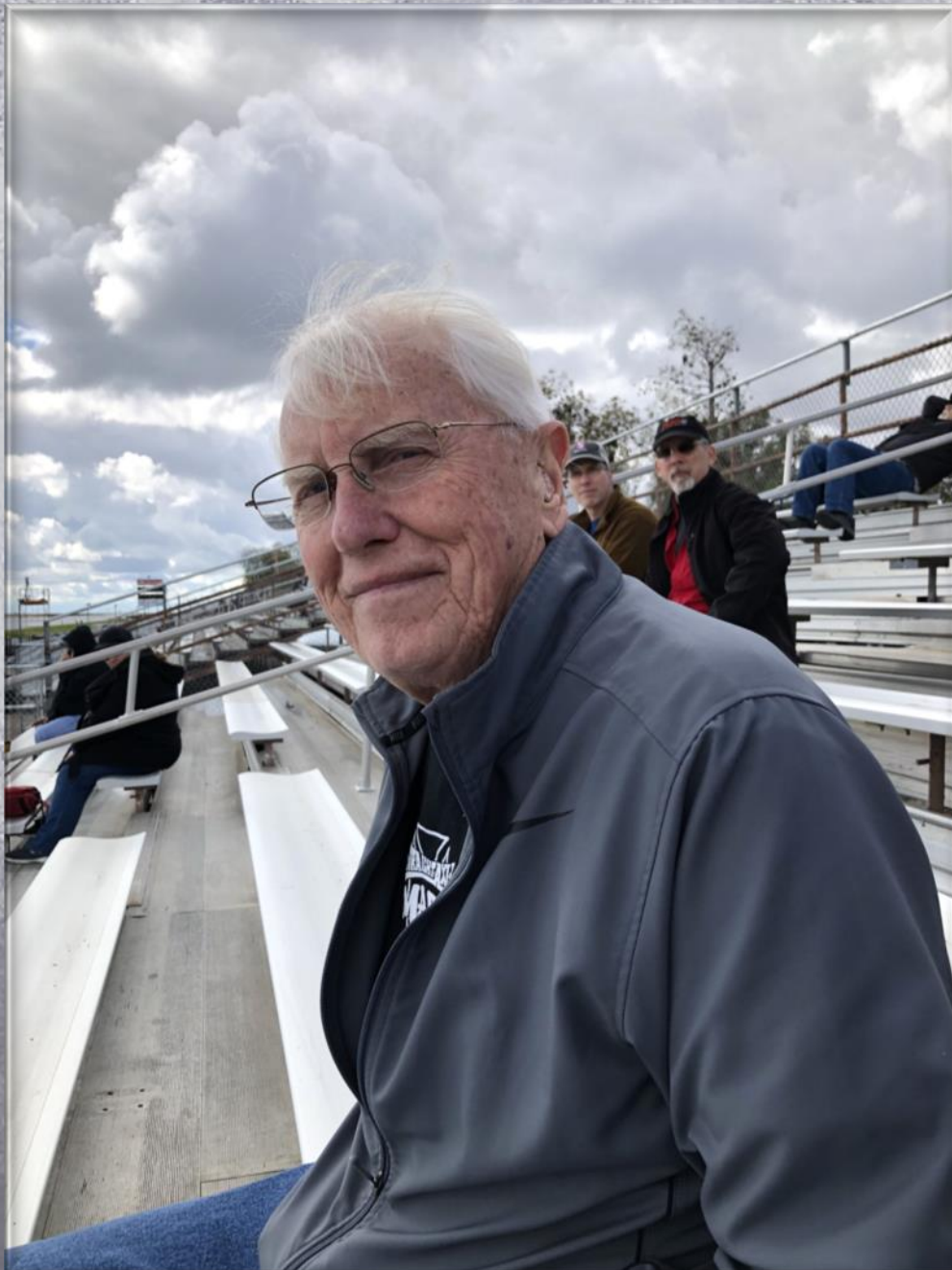
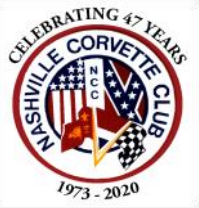


SEPTEMBER 2020



Tire Smoke



Visit us on the Web!
www.nashvillecorvetteclub.com

September 2020
Volume 21, Issue 09

**Club Officers
And Directors**

PRESIDENT

Chip Mezger
ncc.chip2018@gmail.com
(615) 351-6351

VICE PRESIDENT

Tim Thompson
TimT.NCC@mail.com
(270) 791-6421

SECRETARY

TREASURER

Jo Ann Chovan
joannchovan@sbcglobal.net
(615) 615-392-8119

NCCC GOVERNOR

Martin Workman
mwvette99@gmail.com
(615) 477-7705

MASTER MEMBERSHIP

Mike Anton
mv_anton@yahoo.com
(615) 461-7154

JOURNALIST

Amelia Workman
ameliaworkman5@gmail.com
(615) 832-9641

WEBMASTER

Tim Leneave
templar37221@gmail.com

MUSEUM AMBASSADOR

Dave Miller
davidmillerfaa@hotmail.com
(615) 513-4260

VP OF MEMBERSHIP

Craig Chovan
craigchovan@sbcglobal.net
(615) 392-8119

CHARITY DIRECTOR

Al Bennett
alstore@bellsouth.net
(615) 516-3234

COMPETITION DIRECTOR

Mike Venable
mrvetteman@gmail.com
(615) 414-5944

CAR SHOW DIRECTOR

Dave Logue
cdlogue@msn.com
(615) 948-8620

Tire Smoke

www.nashvillecorvetteclub.com

~ Member National Council of Corvette Clubs since 1975 ~

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FRONT COVER

In Loving Memory of Ken Starks—47 Year Member of NCC
1973—2020

See photos from all Nashville Corvette Club events on our website:
<http://www.nashvillecorvetteclub.com>.

Tiresmoke, the official newsletter of the Nashville Corvette Club is published monthly.

It is available on-line at www.nashvillecorvetteclub.com.

Mail all correspondence to the Club President at 1117 General George Patton Road, Nashville, TN 37221.

Nashville Corvette Club Calendar of Events September 2020—November 2020

Events listed in Red are Monthly Scheduled Events

Events listed in Blue are NCCC Autocross Events

Events listed in Purple are Car Show Events

All other Events are listed in Black

SEPTEMBER 2020

9	NCC Board Meeting via ZOOM Video Conference @ 6:30 p.m.
14	Club Meeting via ZOOM Video Conference @ 6:30 p.m.
19	Cruise to Moss Wright Park, Goodlettsville, TN. Contact Tim Thompson for details.

OCTOBER 2020

7	NCC Board Meeting via ZOOM Video Conference @ 6:30 p.m.
12	Club Meeting via ZOOM Video Conference @ 6:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER 2020

4	NCC Board Meeting via ZOOM Video Conference @ 6:30 p.m.
9	Club Meeting via ZOOM Video Conference @ 6:30 p.m.

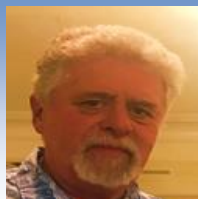
NCC September Meeting via Zoom Video Conference

Date & Time: September 14, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. (CST)

All NCC members should have received an invitation to join the meeting from Chip Mezger. If you did not receive the email invitation, contact Chip @ ncc.chip2018@gmail.com.

Vice President of Activities

Tim Thompson



It is time to get out and have some fun!

We have been able to do a cruise and the annual renewal picnic safely. In September, I have a cruise planned, leaving from the Shell Gas Station, 501 Hickory Hills Blvd., Whites Creek, TN, Interstate 24 West, Exit 40 (Old Hickory Blvd. exit). We will head north and end up at Moss Wright Park, 745 Caldwell Drive, Goodlettsville, TN. We have Pavilion 3 reserved for a picnic. Bring your own picnic lunch, drinks, and fold up chairs or blanket.

In October we are working on a cruise to Tompkinsville, KY, to visit a historic site. I am also working on an activity for November details to follow soon.

Stay tuned to the website and weekly updates for more details.

Tim Thompson
VP of Activities—NCC

**NASHVILLE CORVETTE CLUB (NCC) MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES
ZOOM MEETING—MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2020—6:30 P.M.**

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chip Mezger, President; Tim Thompson, VP of Activities; Craig Chovan, VP of Membership; JoAnn Chovan, Treasurer; David Miller, NCM Ambassador; Mike Venable, Competition; Dave Logue, Shiner/Touch of Gold Director

ABSENT OFFICER/CMTE CHAIRPERSONS:

Martin Workman, Governor; Amelia Workman, Journalist; Tim Leneave, Webmaster; Mike Anton, Master Membership; Al Bennett, Charity Director; Dale Johnson, NCC Shirt Sales Representative

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS IN ATTENDANCE:

Judy Logue, Annual Christmas Party Coordinator

NCC PRESIDENT, CHIP MEZGER:

Opened Meeting by welcoming Members and Committee Chairs.

Sad News – Ken Starks, Founding Member of NCC has passed away

His service will be Thursday, Aug 13, 11 a.m. - Austin & Bell Funeral Home, Greenbrier, TN

Visitation - Wednesday, Aug 12, 4-8 pm

NCC VICE PRESIDENT OF ACTIVITIES, TIM THOMPSON:

Barren River cruise a success - 13 cars in attendance

Possible cruises in the works for Sept, Oct & Nov

Looking for outside places to eat

Smoky Mountain trip postponed to possibly Apr/May 2021

Money non-refundable, venue holding in account for reschedule date

NCC VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBERSHIP, CRAIG CHOVAN:

Membership picnic will be August 22 at Long Hunter State Park

38 Members have signed up

186 Members to date

15 Member Renewals for 2021 to date

Chip to send another reminder about picnic to members

NCC TREASURER, JOANN CHOVAN:

Detailed Club's finances. Copy of Treasurer's Report given to President.

NCC GOVERNOR, MARTIN WORKMAN: (ABSENT)**NCC JOURNALIST, AMELIA WORKMAN: (ABSENT)****NCC MASTER MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR, MIKE ANTON: (ABSENT)****NCC CHARITY DIRECTOR, AL BENNETT: (ABSENT)****NCC TOUCH OF GOLD/SHINER DIRECTOR, DAVE LOGUE:**

Nothing to Report

NCC AMBASSADOR, DAVID MILLER:

Nothing to report

NCC WEBMASTER, TIM LENEAVE: (ABSENT)**NCC COMPETITION DIRECTOR, MIKE VENABLE:**

November Autocross Cancelled

*(August Monthly Meeting Minutes Cont'd)***NCC SECRETARY:**

Duane Loux –2021 Officer Nominations

- **President—Chip Mezger – nominated by Martha Gaines, 2ndd by Tim Thompson**
- VP of Activities (No nominations)
- Secretary (No nominations)
- **Treasurer—JoAnn Chovan – nominated by Tim Thompson – Declined nomination**
- **VP of Membership—Rob Hardin – nominated by Craig Chovan, 2ndd by JoAnn Chovan**
- Car Show/Shiner Director (No Nominations)
- Competition (No Nominations)
- **Charity—Craig Chovan – nominated by JoAnn Chovan, 2ndd by Mike Venable**
- Webmaster (No Nominations)
- Journalist (No Nominations)
- Governor (No Nominations)
- **NCM Ambassador—Bob Laflin – nominated by Jerome Bannister, 2ndd by JoAnn Chovan**

NCC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jerome Bannister
John Becvar
Bob Borgman
Martha & Billy Gaines
Rob Hardin
Ken Hoffman
Don Hoffmeister
Rick & Sally Jansen
Charles Laflin
Karlette & James Mayo
Ralph Montileone
Becky & Wayne Troope

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED: 7:30 p.m.

NEXT ZOOM MEETING: Monday, Sept 14th

SIGNED BY NCC SECRETARY (PRO TEM), JUDY LOGUE

NCCC Governor

Martin Workman



Charity News

Al Bennett



Hello everyone,

Not much to report on NCCC this month. The September Governors' meeting was cancelled and the November meeting might be as well.

Membership renewals are starting this month for 2021. I am proud to say that our club is a 100% NCCC Club. When dues are paid for the coming year, a portion of that amount is for NCCC dues which our Treasurer pays directly to NCCC.

Membership numbers are down for the time period between the last Governors' meeting and September. This is an unfortunate result of so many clubs cancelling activities and not meeting because of virus restrictions.

The new 2021 membership card has been finalized. New members start receiving these cards now and all renewing members will receive one by mail in the first quarter of 2021.



If you have any questions about NCCC, please contact me at mwvette99@gmail.com or 615-477-7705.

Thanks!



Hello Corvetters,

Hope you are staying safe during these times!

At the present time, we are waiting to make any more distributions until we determine that our finances as they should be in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Until next time,

Al





Moss Wright Park

***** Read Covid19 Safety Info below*****

What	Enjoy a back road cruise to this amazing location Bring your own picnic lunch, drinks and fold up chairs or blanket
When	Saturday September 19th 2020 Meeting at 9:00 am depart at 9:30 am
Starting Location	Shell Gas Station 501 Hickory Hills Blvd, Whites Creek, Tn 37189 I-24 Exit 40
Ending Location	Moss Wright Park 745 Caldwell Dr, Goodlettsville, TN 37072 615-851-2241
Contact	Tim Thompson TimT.NCC@mail.com 270-791-6421

Covid 19 Safety Procedures

For the safety of all members, all NCC events will operated with the following Safety Procedures

We will follow CDC guidelines and best practices (i.e., No handshakes, or hugs) at all times

MASK will be required anytime you are out of your car, except while eating (but must be with you).

Social distancing of **6'** will be maintained at all times, even with mask on.

No potluck or buffet style food; no sharing of food except with a person who came in your car.

We may in fact ask members to bring their own food, drinks, chairs and or blankets.

Participation of an event is at the member's discretion and acknowledges the risk associated with the same.



NCCC's youth organization
sponsored in part by Mid America Motorworks



\$10 one-time
Membership Fee

FCOA Membership is limited to family members of
current NCCC members.
Applicants must be younger than 16 years old.

FCOA Membership Application



Applicant: (ONE MEMBER PER APPLICATION; PLEASE PRINT)

FCOA Member Name: _____ ☐ boy ☐ girl

Birthdate: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ 9-digit Zip: _____

Interests/Hobbies: _____

Sponsor Information:

Your relationship to child: ☐ Parent, ☐ Grandparent, ☐ Great-grandparent, ☐ Aunt, ☐ Uncle or ☐ Guardian

If you or the child's parent is a past FCOA member, please give name at the time _____

NCCC Member Name: _____

NCCC Membership #: _____ Club: NASHVILLE CORVETTE CLUB

What models & years of Corvettes do you now own? _____

E-mail address (in case of application questions): _____

Address: _____ Phone #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

IS THIS A GIFT? (Allow 30 days!) YES ☐ NO ☐ SPECIFY OCCASION: _____

QUESTIONS???? e-mail FCOAkids@aol.com

Make checks payable to NCCC-FCOA & send with form to:

FCOA

c/o National Council of Corvette Clubs

1945 Scottsville Rd, B2 #267

Bowling Green, KY 42104

Office Use Only:

Date Received:

Check #

Revised 11-2018

FCOA Number Assigned:

Date Packet Sent:

<http://www.corvettesnccc.org/fcoa1.html>

Museum Notes

David Miller



Hi to all

If you haven't visited the NCM lately, please consider a visit. The museum now has three new exhibits offered. When the Michelin NCM Bash took place May 28 and Friday, May 29 of this year two ribbon cutting ceremonies were held, including a walk thru of two galleries and one new exhibit.



As part of the ceremonies the newly renovated Performance Gallery was show cased. The Gallery now features digital projection, interactive touch screens paired with artifact display cases, 180-degree video footage, and an impressive line up of cars. Highlighted front and center in the exhibit is the E Pierce Marshall C7.R.

The E. Pierce Marshall Memorial Performance Gallery wasn't the only exhibit debut during the Bash. Around the corner, a new exhibit is waiting to be discovered and enjoyed by visitors. Many Corvette aficionados may remember hearing of a 1954 Corvette that was 'entombed' in a brick room in the basement of a grocery store for nearly 30 years. In 1986, the room was dismantled brick-by-brick, and the Corvette revealed. After changing hands a few times, the Corvette was donated to the Museum in 2019.



The new exhibit is designed to replicate in as much detail as possible the actual tomb that the Corvette was once housed in, including the two light bulbs in the ceiling, small hatch in the top, and tiny window on the side where the car was viewable. For museum display purposes one side of the tomb is open so that visitors can get a good view of the car, which remains unchanged from its storied history.

Finally, as a bookend to the new exhibits is 'The Vision Realized' – an exhibit highlighting the many prototypes which lead to the creation of the current generation mid-engine Corvette. The new exhibit is located in the Design and Engineering Gallery of the Museum and is planned to be displayed at least through April of 2021. This special exhibit will display the Cerv I, Cerv II and a few other cars and artifacts on loan from the GM Heritage Center. The exhibit tells the story of Zora Arkus-Duntov's dream of one day having a production mid-engine.

Vice President of Membership

Craig Chovan



**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
AS OF 09/07/2020
188**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Chris, Laurie, and Dillion Starks
Greenbrier, TN
2015 Torch Red Coupe**

IT'S TIME TO RENEW NCC MEMBER- SHIP FOR 2021

If you didn't make it to the annual renewal picnic, please mail your check made payable to NCC for 2021 dues (\$75—couple, \$65—single) to me at the following address:

**Craig Chovan
5012 Keeley Drive
Spring Hill, TN 37174-3082**



Al Bennett	9/1
Craig Chovan	9/1
Becky Troope	9/1
Frank DePizzo	9/4
Dan Thompson	9/4
Brian Mabry	9/7
Preston Stark	9/12
Billy Gaines	9/17
Butch Geng	9/18
Andrew Earwood	9/18
Wanda Newton	9/22
Debbi Garner	9/27



IN MEMORY OF KEN STARKS**1945—2020****47 Year Member of NCC*****By Jimmy Gayle—NCC Charter Member—1973***

It was 1975 when a beautiful 1967 big block Corvette coupe came rolling into the Nashville Corvette Club meeting at Capital Chevrolet's service area with the factory side pipes counting off that beat from a 427 engine. It was music to everyone's ears that love and admire this vintage. Stepping out of this all original '67 coupe were three people arriving in this two passenger vehicle. It was Ken Starks, his lovely wife Ruth, and son, Chris. Little did I know, at that time, we were starting a 45 year relationship with one of the most admired families I have ever had the pleasure to know and love. Also little did I have any idea the impact this family would have on the Nashville Corvette Club and my family.

Have you ever met someone that you spent 45 years around and never had a cross word or a disagreement? Ken and his family have that degree of class and integrity to project this level of friendship. I have looked back on occasion to remember some of the members of the NCC and the special bond a large number of us had and have kept and enjoyed for decades. Yes, we did have a special bond for the love of the American sports car. We enjoyed the Corvettes as we auto crossed, did car shows, went drag racing, and took trips in these awesome sport cars. I recall one trip where Ken took his wife's new 1975 coupe and mounted a trailer hitch on it. He then hooked up his trailer to it with his 1960 Corvette drag car on the trailer and off we went to Chattanooga, Tennessee, to a car show. The story of the trip is worthy of a full article within itself. The race car won its class at the show. One time the club rented a hotel in Gatlinburg and the club decided to travel as a group so I had to break up the number of cars. Due to the fact of the staggering number, I put the Corvettes in allotments of 20 and we had 6 allotments. You can understand it was for safety reasons in case something happened. I got at the front and Ken pulled up the rear. We were stretched out on I-40 for miles and it was a beautiful sight. I could tell stories for hours about these incredible ventures by NCC.

It is difficult to describe the friendship that was developed through the years. With the loss three years ago of Ruth, Ken's wife, and now the loss of Ken, the hole in my heart is of the magnitude that is impossible to describe. The loss of these two friends will take time to heal. Remember if you pass through life and have friends like the Starks family along with some of the NCC members, you are truly blessed! Enjoy the true American sports car and cherish the friends you meet along the way!





Ken Starks competing with his Corvette “Mindbender” at a local drag strip sometime in the 1970’s or early 1980’s. Ken and Ruth were both successful drag racers for many years.



L to R—Chris Starks, Carson Starks, Dillion Starks, Jimmy Gayle, Ken Starks, Laurie Starks, and Mandie Hatchett (with Ken’s great-grandchildren).

Dillion Starks (Ken’s grandson) competes nationally with the pictured dragster.

NCC recently welcomed Chris, Laurie & Dillion Starks as new members of NCC—carrying on the Starks name in NCC.



Ken and I at the 2018 NCC Christmas Party where we were honored for membership levels—45 year and 40 year, respectively.

Ken and Ruth were like a mom and dad to me when I joined the club in 1978. I also have the 1972 Mako Shark that was owned (and painted) by Ken Starks.

Ken and Ruth both served as various officers and were active members of NCC for many years. Ruth passed a couple years ago and now Ken. They will be deeply missed by those who knew them and are appreciated for their contributions to NCC.

The Club made a donation to the Down Syndrome Association-Middle Tennessee—in memory of Ken.



NCCC President's Message September 2020

September is here and this year keeps bringing new challenges. In addition to dealing with a pandemic, we are reminded that Mother Nature does not mess around. August saw tropical storms, a hurricane, record heat waves, and uncontrolled forest fires. Weather always played a key role in my career [*Dale is a former air traffic controller*] and I thought I had heard most every meteorological term, but I learned a new one last month. We experienced a “Derecho.” A derecho is a widespread (over 240 miles), long-lived, straight-line wind storm that is associated with a fast-moving group of severe thunderstorms. Straight line winds can exceed hurricane or even tornado winds. In our case we saw winds around 100 mph. A small town near me was destroyed and you might have seen on the news that Cedar Rapids, Iowa sustained major damage. I was lucky – we lost one large tree. I hope all of you are staying safe through all of this and perhaps we will have a mild fall.

We continue to see events across the county either downsized or cancelled in response to the pandemic. The September NCCC Governors meetings were cancelled, the Mid America Fun Fest was cancelled, and the Black Hills Classic was cancelled. Many local events continue to be cancelled, although several clubs are now hosting some events with new looks and new safety protocols in place.

One bright spot – long time NCCC member Sioux City Corvette Club is hosting a fall color event September 17th through September 20th in South Dakota. Details are here: <https://www.siouxfallscorvetteclub.com/single-post/2020/08/04/BLACK-HILLS-CORVETTE-FALL-COLOR-EVENT>

Another bright spot – the National Corvette Museum’s 26th anniversary celebration will take place in Bowling Green, KY September 2nd through September 5th. They will be practicing all recommended safety procedures to minimize COVID risk. Registration is closed, but onsite registration will be available starting September 2nd. A virtual experience is also available – seen the NCM web site for details: <https://www.corvettemuseum.org/explore/events/>

Here’s a reminder that NCCC National officer elections will be here shortly. If you are interested in one of the five offices up for election, you need to get your application to a member of the nominating committee by 9/12/2020 at 12 PM Central Time. The nominating committee consists of Patsy Shearer, Steve Johnson, and Craig Kamradt. The offices up for election are: President, Parliamentarian, Director of Public Relations, Treasurer, and Vice President of Membership.

The NCCC executive board will be meeting virtually on Sept 12th to review how we have dealt with these unusual times thus far, and to also look at how we will deal with the remainder of 2020 as it relates to NCCC. I will keep you posted. Also, see the report from Bill Docherty, Vice President of Competition.

This has certainly been quite a year and I, for one, am looking forward to getting back to normal – whatever that might look like.

That’s all for now and stay safe.

*Save the Wave,
Dale Samuelson
NCCC President*





NCCC 1st V.P. - Competition

September Update

I recently visited autocross events held in Grissom, IN, to present National Awards to those attending. Dave and Wanda Buck can now show off their Championship Rings. While pictures may show us close together, social distancing and masks were the rule for most part. Hand sanitizer was available where needed and a COVID questionnaire was required for workers and visitors. It gives us hope that with precautions, we can resume National competition next year.

So how do we move on?

The realization that COVID is not going away is here and we must manage our risk. Hopefully, medical treatment will evolve to make it less life threatening, and a vaccine will be available. Until then, social distancing, hygiene and masks are a required measure at events. One advantage of NCCC's older age membership is that we understand this virus attacks the elderly and those with existing health issues, so we take it very seriously. This can allow us to open with a bit more confidence.

What will Competition be like in 2021?

COVID will have an impact, no doubt. Limiting the number of entrants may be necessary. Preregistration will help. A major effort needed to reduce hand contact and transfer, indoor areas, and congested areas at our events. If state restrictions are in place, rallies or small car shows may be the events best suited to hold. Holding one-day events nearby will reduce the need for motel stays. We can do this, be creative, and keep the spirit of competition going. Clubs must be responsible when holding events to ensure everyone attending is safe.

Opening competition in 2021 is my greatest hope and that the pandemic has been stabilized to allow careful resumption of our lives.

Members will have the choice on what is best for them.

The Competition Committee will teleconference in September to discuss several rulebook changes and the status of each region.

Do your part to keep us all healthy and safe,

Bill Docherty
NCCC 1st Vice President - Competition
competition@corvettesnccc.org

2020 CORVETTE EXPO

By Rob Hardin

With the 2020 pandemic causing cancellation of the majority of the events this year, I wanted to share my experience at the 2020 Corvette Expo in Pigeon Forge, TN.

After purchasing my Corvette in October of 2019, the first thing I did was join the club. For those that don't know me, my wife and I moved from Bellevue, KY to Gallatin in February of 2020. I felt it was a good way to meet new people with common interests. I was so looking forward to 2020 for the cruises, car shows, etc. As everyone is already aware, most of the events planned for this year have been cancelled or postponed.

The same holds true with the Corvette Expo originally planned for March that was rescheduled for Aug 6-7. With a portion of the show outdoors, I decided to attend with the idea of limiting my time indoors. Masks were required indoors and "social distancing" was required outdoors. Along with the Expo, there was going to be a Corvette caravan to the Trail of the Dragon later on Friday.

Rolling into Pigeon Forge Thursday, I started to wonder if they were aware that a pandemic was going on as there was a lot of traffic on Rt. 441 and people were everywhere. Of course after arriving it began to rain which meant a trip to the car wash at some point before the show on Friday. The rain didn't last long, so I waited until most of the streets were dry before finding a car wash to clean my car. At the car wash, I met Rick and Chrissy (from Harts-ville, TN) who had the same idea that I did. Luckily it didn't rain overnight and I was able to wipe off the morning dew and do some final cleaning before heading to the LeConte Center for the day. After arriving I saw that everyone was parking in every other parking space for the "social distancing." After parking and getting to know my neighbors for the day and setting up, I was able to walk around and see the cars already there. As the day progressed, more cars began to fill up the outdoor parking area for Corvettes. It was rather hot, so I picked a time to go inside to see the cars on display and cool off before returning outside. As I walked around the parking lot several times and spoke with many car owners about their Corvettes, everyone had a story to share about their cars. Whether it was how they bought it/acquired it, or how many they have had and their modifications.

After the awards were given out, everyone that was going on the Tail of the Dragon cruise lined up. We were given a police escort out of the lot and down Teaster Drive to cross over Rt. 441 onto Rt. 321 heading to the Dragon. I got a chuckle when the announcer was telling 225 Corvettes to "hurry" because the police could only block the roads for so long. People were lined up along the streets to watch the drag race out of town. The drive along the Foothills Parkway had many scenic overlooks with pull offs, although at times it was very difficult to maintain the 25 and 35 MPH. If you haven't driven the Dragon, you should put it on your bucket list to do so. Whether you want to push your car through the 318 turns in 11 miles or cruise them, this is a drive definitely worth taking as I thoroughly enjoyed it. And, of course, you get to drive it a second time if you're staying in Pigeon Forge on your way back.

I look forward to attending the Expo again next year.





This year NCCC has acquired three tire certificates to be shared with the general membership. You do not have to be at convention to have an opportunity to receive a tire certificate. You can send a check payable to St. Jude for a minimum amount of \$25.00 and your name will be put in a bucket for one drawing of tires. If you send a check for \$100, your name will be entered 4 times. There will be three separate raffles and the drawings will be at the Governor

Meetings in St. Louis. You can enter all three separate raffles. Listed below are the cut off dates to receive your entry.

The first drawing date is Saturday, May 2nd, 2020. The cut off to enter the May 2nd drawing is April 18th, 2020.

The second drawing will be Saturday, September 12th, 2020. The cut off to enter the September 12th drawing is August 22th, 2020.

The third drawing will be Saturday, November 7th, 2020. The cut off to enter the November 7th drawing is October 19th, 2020.

ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL

FREE SET OF TIRES

FOR NCCC MEMBERS ONLY

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

DONATION AMOUNT: _____

Please check off which drawing you are entering:

☐ May 2, 2020

☐ September 12, 2020

☐ November 7, 2020

Make check payable to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Mail check and form

to: NCCC Director of Charity
1945 Scottsville Road
B2#267
Bowling Green, KY. 42104

8/26/2020

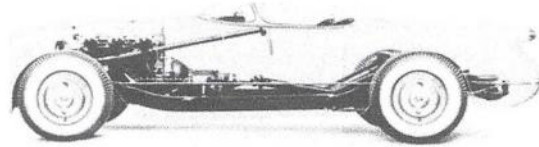
How the Corvette's chassis evolved over more than 60 years | Hemmings

SPECIAL SECTION

How the Corvette's chassis evolved over more than 60 years

All the right moves

By Mike McNessor from September 2020 issue of Hemmings Motor News



Yes, the Corvette is about style and horsepower. But the car's handling is what set the stage for all of those 'Vette versus Porsche 911 magazine covers over the years. No matter what vintage, the Corvette was built with an eye toward being the best-driving sports car for the buck that it could possibly be. So, let's put aside the fiberglass, the engines, and everything else for just a moment and look at how the Corvette's underpinnings have evolved over the years.

C1 Chassis

1953-'62 If you're a traditionalist you'll find plenty to like under the first-generation Corvette. The chassis is an adaptation of Chevrolet's 1949-'54 cars but it soldiered on until the '63 redesign—even after all other Chevrolet automobile front ends were updated in '55. The earliest Corvettes bounced on front coil springs with upper and lower control arms bolstered by a stabilizer bar. While that was fairly cutting edge by prewar or immediate-postwar standards it still used kingpins to mount the spindles. Limiting the range of motion and also making accurate front end alignment tricky.

Steering was accomplished by a worm-and-sector style box with a pitman arm attached to a drag link that connected to a third arm. The third arm then in turn moved the tie rods that turned the spindles. While the setup wasn't complicated it wasn't as precise or smooth as you might expect from a sports car even by 1950s standards. The first Corvettes also had the distinction of being the only ones equipped with a solid rear axle. The Corvette rear used a removable third member like Chevrolet passenger cars through 1964 and the housing was hung from longitudinal leaf springs with direct double-acting hydraulic shock absorbers. While not as exotic as an independent axle it was a simple, durable, and infinitely rebuildable setup. The foundation for the original Corvette chassis was a sturdy perimeter frame with boxed rails and a massive X-member tying the two sides together. This was a common approach to eliminating chassis flex in an open-top car but it added weight.

Generation 1: 1953-'62

If you're a traditionalist, you'll find plenty to like under the first-generation Corvette. The chassis is an adaptation of Chevrolet's 1949-'54 cars, but it soldiered on until the '63 redesign—even after all other Chevrolet automobile front ends were updated in '55. The earliest Corvettes bounced on front coil springs with upper and lower control arms bolstered by a stabilizer bar. While that was fairly cutting edge by prewar or immediate-postwar standards, it still used kingpins to mount the spindles, limiting the range of motion and also making accurate front end alignment tricky. Steering was accomplished by a worm-and-sector style box with a pitman arm attached to a drag link that connected to a third arm. The third arm then, in turn, moved the tie rods that turned the spindles. While the setup wasn't complicated, it wasn't as precise or smooth as you might expect from a sports car, even by 1950s standards. The first Corvettes also had the distinction of being the only ones equipped with a solid rear axle. The Corvette rear used a removable third member like Chevrolet passenger cars through 1964, and the housing was hung from longitudinal leaf springs with direct double-acting hydraulic shock absorbers. While not as exotic as an independent axle, it was a simple, durable, and infinitely rebuildable setup. The foundation for the original Corvette chassis was a sturdy perimeter frame with boxed rails and a massive X-member tying the two sides together. This was a common approach to eliminating chassis flex in an open-top car, but it added weight.

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C3 Chassis

Generation 2/3: 1963-'82

The Corvette chassis took a technological Leap forward for 1963, and the design would endure until all-new underpinnings arrived two decades Later. It wasn't mid-engine, as Zora Arkus Duntov would've Liked, but it incorporated a Lot of what he'd learned in racing. The C2/C3 Corvette still used a boxed full frame, but that's where the similarity with the previous car ended. The big X-member was eliminated in favor of welded steel rails connected by five Ladder-type crossmembers that helped make the chassis 90 percent stiffer. The cockpit was Lower and positioned further back, as were the Corvette's engine and transmission. This helped bring the car closer to a 50/50 front-to- rear weight balance and lower the center of gravity. With equal spring rates, the '63 chassis had a more balanced feel and would roll 18 percent Less in a turn than the '62. The front end was modernized with spherical ball joints and shared some parts with the production passenger Line. A recirculating-ball steering box turned the front wheels via relay-type Linkage (mounted behind the front wheel center lines) and a steering damper was incorporated on cars with manual steering. Power assist was also available for the first time. The big news was the Corvette's independent rear suspension that was innovative and elegantly simple. The differential carrier was mounted to the frame, helping keep the car Lower, reducing rear unsprung weight, and keeping the driveshaft angle constant. It was a three-link design where the half shafts doubled as the upper links, simple strut rods bolted below the differential housing extending to each wheel were the Lower Links while control arms on each side served as longitudinal links. A Leaf spring mounted parallel to the rear axle and bolted below the differential housing served as a no-fuss stand-in for more elaborate and expensive coilover units. The 1963-'82 Corvette chassis isn't perfect, but it was ingenious in its use of conventional parts to achieve an exotic result and it put far more expensive sports cars from Europe on notice.

C4 Chassis

Generation 4: 1984-'96

The newest Corvette in over a decade used fiberglass for more than just the body. At the heart of the C4 chassis were reinforced-fiberglass or "filament wound glass epoxy composite" monoleaf springs-front and rear. (The rear monoleaf made its debut under Corvettes for 1981.) The new springs were not only simple, but very Lightweight: the front monoleaf weighed one-third what coils weighed while the rear was 33 pounds lighter than the multileaf steel spring it replaced. The reinforced fiberglass springs were also exceptionally strong, and performed in two ways: When the car bounced, the springs flexed and flattened out; when the vehicle rolled in a turn, the springs bent into an S shape, which added roll stiffness, allowing designers to minimize the size, and weight, of the stabilizer bars. The weight savings continued with the liberal use of aluminum throughout the chassis: The steering knuckles and A-arms up front, the torque arm, the driveshaft, the halfshafts, the differential housing, the rear crossmember, and the brake calipers all were aluminum. The C4's independent rear axle used a five-link design-replacing the old three-link setup-with aluminum trailing arms, as well as adjustable rods for toe and camber. The new Corvette also did away with the ladder frame in lieu of a "uniframe," or backbone chassis, made of galvanized steel sections welded together. A cage was incorporated into the chassis that included the windshield frame, door jambs, rockers, and a targa bar on coupes. The final improvement over the C3 was the substitution of the conventional steering box with a rack-and-pinion unit that offered a 15.5:1 ratio and could go Lock to lock in 23/4 turns (13:1 and 21/4 turns with Z51). The C4 set the stage for Corvette chassis design to come, but it had some drawbacks. The open roof (without T wtops) necessitated high sills, which made ingress and egress difficult. The suspension was bone-jarring stiff, particularly in the earliest C4s, and Led to a lot of squeaks and rattles.

C6 Z06 Chassis

Generation 5 and 6: 2005-'13 The CS chassis was based around the design of the C4, but vastly improved in ways that translated into a more refined driving experience. The C5's uniframe was lighter and more than four times stiffer than the C4's, largely due to its hydroformed rails. The C4's frame rails were each made of more than a dozen separate components welded together, whereas the C5 used a pair of 13- foot-long continuous rails hydroformed in a die using fluid pressure. Another big change was the use of a rear transaxle in the C5. By moving the gearbox to the rear, the weight distribution nearly hit the 50/50 sweet spot at 51 front/ 49 rear, and freed up space in the cabin. An enclosed stamped-steel driveshaft tunnel (a torque tube) between the engine and the transaxle made the chassis even stiffer. The suspension hard parts were made out of aluminum, as in the C4, and transverse mounted leafs handled the bumps. The front suspension used revised components, while the rear was an entirely new design with upper and Lower A-arms and constant-velocity joints replacing the old five-Link setup with universal joints. Also introduced on the C5 (in 2003) was Magnetic Selective Ride Control. The system used shock absorbers filled with magnetorheological fluid (i.e., the fluid is magnetic because it's filled with iron particles) and pistons that incorporated electromagnets. When the electromagnets were activated, the magnetic force acting on the iron particles in the fluid stiffened the shocks. Without a doubt, the C5 chassis transformed the Corvette. The car was easier to enter and exit, and more comfortable to drive, plus the ride was less punishing-even the track-ready Z06. For the 2005 redesign, the Corvette chassis was shortened by about 5 inches and strengthened, while its wheelbase was lengthened by about 1 inch.

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The C6's suspension design echoes the C5's, though the components were redesigned and no parts carried over. The biggest news was in the arrival of the 206 and 2R1 C6s, which utilized aluminum chassis with a magnesium roof structure and engine cradle. The alloy chassis weighed a feathery 278 pounds compared to 414 pounds for the steel C6 structure.

C7 Chassis

Generation 7: 2014-'19

Since its inception, the Corvette's engine had been in the front and it rode either partially or totally on leaf springs. The C7 would be the last of that breed and, in terms of chassis design, the most sophisticated. All C7 Corvettes were based on an aluminum uniframe, though it was markedly different than the foundation of the used hydroformed rails with a uniform wall thickness. The new uniframe was more customized as each main rail was made from five aluminum segments. The gauge of the material varied from 2 mm to 11 mm, putting strength in places needed most and making other areas lighter. The segments were then joined together using a mix of spot welds, fasteners, adhesive, and laser welds. At the front and rear, hollow cast aluminum cradles for the chassis components were used for additional weight savings and rigidity. The result was a nearly perfect 50/50 weight distribution, a lighter, stiffer chassis than the previous generation, and a structure so solid that no additional bracing was needed for the convertible. Also new was an electronic power steering system with variable ratios and effort to suit the driver, while an electronic limited-slip differential was also part of the 251 package. The computer controlled diff could instantly vary the amount of lock needed, depending on the conditions. The suspension front and rear mirrored the design of the previous series, with cast aluminum upper and lower control arms and traverse-mounted leafs fore and aft. If the traditional Corvette front-engine layout had to end, at least it did so on a high note.

C8 Chassis

Generation 8: C8 2020

Duntov's vision of a mid-engine Corvette finally materialized with the arrival of the C8 for 2020. There's no room for debate here: Placing the engine nearer to the center of the chassis in a rear-wheel-drive car makes for a more balanced package and improves traction for acceleration and braking. To make the C8's chassis both lightweight and strong, designers turned again to extensive use of aluminum for its construction. In order to keep the side sills low for easier access to the cockpit, the center tunnel was made the backbone of the chassis and was constructed out of extruded aluminum, as were the rocker supports, windshield posts, and more. Die-cast aluminum was used for the rear engine cradle and rear suspension mounts, as well as the front suspension supports—in fact, there were 20 cast aluminum components used throughout the chassis. Aluminum stampings were used for brackets, floor supports, the windshield header, and more. To join all of these alloy chassis parts, GM made extensive use of adhesive and fasteners, as well as rivets, with less reliance on welding than in previous aluminum chassis. The suspension, front and rear, was designed with forged upper and cast lower control arms with coilovers providing the bounce, thus relegating the Corvette's signature leaf springs to history. A stabilizer bar was made standard issue in the rear while the front could be equipped with a power lift to give the nose more clearance over speed bumps or when negotiating low driveway entrances.

There's no question that the C8 represents the pinnacle of Corvette development and technology. Can it live up to the Legend created by its predecessors? Only time will tell.

Article submitted by Cotton Newton

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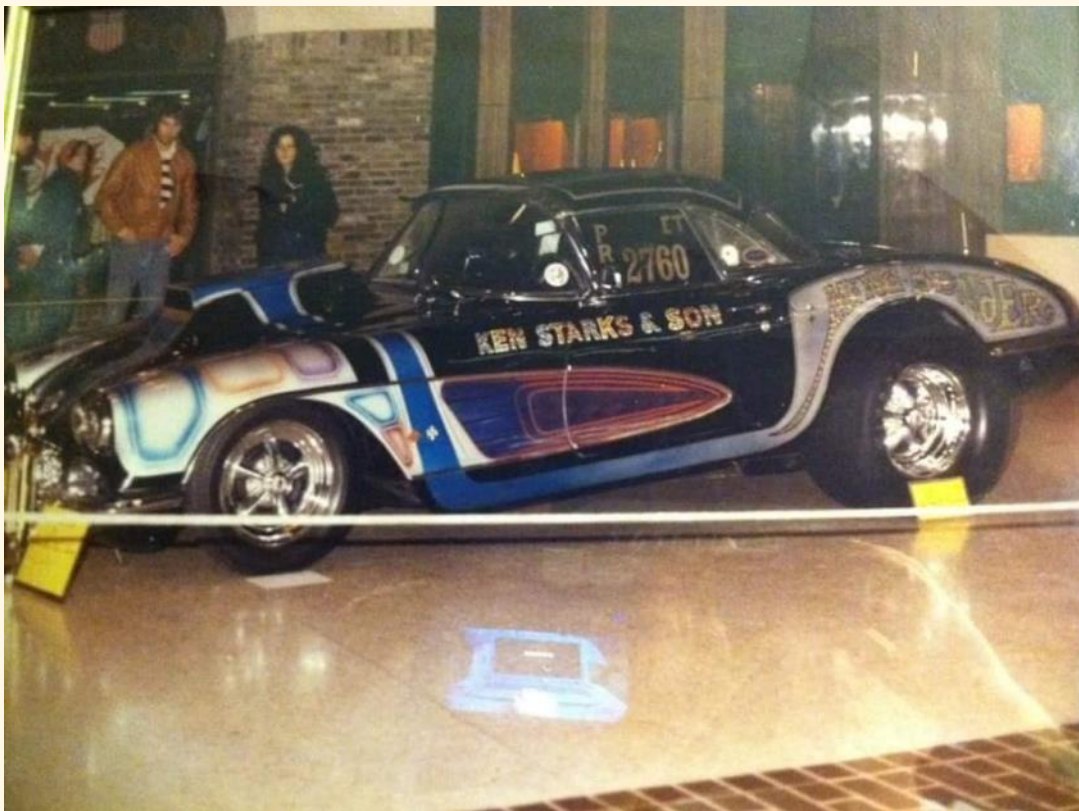
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1963 CORVETTE

From Eckler's Chevy Classics Club

Submitted by Ken Miller



The Corvette was really different for 1963. This marked the first time a closed version had been offered and it was officially dubbed the Sting Ray Sport Coupe. The fastback roofline and sloping front end with hidden headlights (also a first for the Corvette) provided a sleek profile. Its body design was inspired by two concept cars, the 1959 XP-87 and the 1959 XP-720 Stingray that was also a racecar. As most enthusiasts are aware, the fastback body had one controversial feature – the divided backlight. This feature was included at the insistence of styling chief, Bill Mitchell, who believed it was an important part of the car's appearance. Others disagreed, but the split window was left in place for the 1963 model year and was subsequently replaced with a one-piece backlight. The Corvette convertible was retained, and as had been the practice since 1956, both a bolt-on hardtop and a soft top could be purchased. Production was nearly evenly divided between the two body styles with the convertible edging out its companion fastback by a mere 325 units; in all, a total of 10,594 Corvette Sting Ray Sport Coupes were assembled for the 1963 model year. For 1964-1967, by the way, the convertible outsold the coupe by roughly 2:1.

The Sebring Silver split window coupe shown here is owned by Jim Presley of Longview, Texas. His car was sold new at Cherokee Motors in Kingsport, Tennessee in the latter part of the 1963 model year. The buyer gave the car to his wife who kept it just six weeks before trading it in on another car. Why is lost to history. Regardless of the reason or reasons, the result was that our feature car has stayed with one family since then.

Family ownership began because the current owner's wife, Theresa, had an uncle, Charles Whitaker, who worked for Cherokee Motors, which at the time was owned by Whitaker's father-in-law. Uncle "Whit" called his sister, Shirley, who was looking for a car for her daughter who was just months away from graduating high school. As best as anyone can recall, the feature car was purchased by Shirley for her daughter in the fall of 1963 and the lucky daughter got to drive it for the remainder of her senior year. However, she did not get to keep her Corvette much longer because of a family disagreement; she decided to get married after graduation, so her mother and father took the Corvette away from her and sold it to Shirley's sister, Gaynell and brother-in-law, Louis, to give to their son, Tony. As a result of the sale, the car came to Texas. Tony had the car repainted white and used the car on his wedding day. Unfortunately, tragedy struck in September 1972; Tony was killed in an auto accident while driving another car. Tony's father, Louis, drove the Corvette to work where he was head of construction at a major chemical plant in East Texas.

In April of 1974, Louis gave the Corvette to their daughter, Theresa, and son-in-law, Jim (the current owner). Theresa and Jim Presley garaged their car for 19 years – cranking it periodically to maintain it. In 1993, they had it restored to original condition by a local restoration shop, R&R Restoration.

Options on our featured split window coupe include the 300-hp 327, Powerglide transmission, power steering, power windows, power brakes, and Sebring Silver paint which was an extra-cost color in 1963. The knock-off wheels were added during the restoration.

This family heirloom is shown at local car shows from time to time and will remain in the Presley family for many more years to come.



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A photograph of the interior of a large garage. On the left, a black classic car is parked. In the center, a red classic car is on a lift. The background shows various automotive equipment, including another lift and shelves with parts. The floor is polished and reflects the overhead lights.



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