

Cover Page

Monthly Newsletter

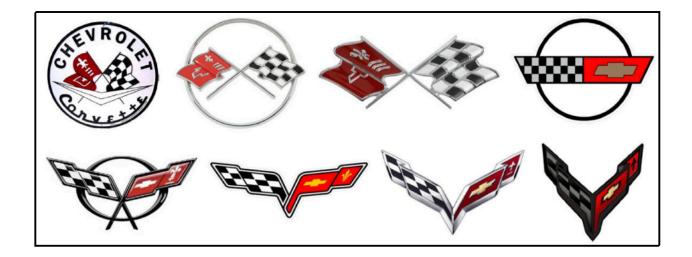
March 2025



The Club's February Run to the Parkfield Cafe

On a cold Saturday morning in early February, 20 Corvettes and 1 Lexus gathered in San Miguel for the 30 mile run into rural South Monterey County's Parkfield Valley. The 1 Lexus carried the Allen family, who drove in from Bakersfield in the rain to join their fellow club members, and as everyone knows, Corvettes do not, EVER, go out in the rain lest they shrink overnight and become Mazda Miatas. The weather was great, the food outstanding, and as always the welcome by the Parkfield Café's staff was warm and friendly. The only disappointment on the Run was that the Girl Scouts weren't ready to sell us cookies, as they have in the past. Next year, they'll be there.

Next SLO Vettes Meeting: Friday, March 14 Chevy of San Luis Obispo, 1423 Calle Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, CA Meet & Greet, 6:00 PM - Meeting begins at 6:30 PM



CLUB OFFICERS PRESIDENT - CRAIG BRICKER VICE-PRESIDENT -DOUG WILLIAMSON SECRETARY - DENISE SURBER TREASURER - JAN DALLONS EVENTS - BOB FURSTER NCM AMBASSADOR - DON ALLEN SUNSHINE/HISTORIAN -JEANNE ALLEN MERCHANDIZE - JAN DALLONS WEBMASTER - JON DALLONS NEWSLETTER - RUSS SURBER

President's Message	Page 3
Vice President's Message	Page 3-4
Minutes for November Meeting	Page 4-7
Events Chairs's Message	Page 8
NCM Ambassador's Report	Page 8-17
Sunshine Report	Page 18
Tech Talk - Unlock Your Corvette's Darkest Secrets	Page 19-28
The Final Word	Page 28-29
Flyer for April 19 Vintage Cowboy Run	Page30
2025 SLO Vettes Events Calendar	Page 31
SLO Vettes 2025 Membership Renewal Form	Page 32

TABLE OF CONTENTS



With spring right around the corner, I'm looking forward to some warmer weather where I can take the top off my C-7 and enjoy the sunshine. With the recent cold weather and the rains behind us, now is the time to get behind the wheel of our beautiful cars and take them for a ride – even if it's a drive to Costco.

Rhonda and I were not able to make it to our monthly meeting in February, but we are looking forward to our next meeting in March. I want to thank Doug Williamson for taking the lead at the meeting in my absence. Thank you, Doug!

In looking at the SLO Vette events calendar, the ride down to the Reagan Presidential Library/Nethercutt Museum is coming up soon on the weekend of March 7th & 8th. This should be a fun event that was scheduled for last year but had to be cancelled. As of this writing, there are ten confirmed cars that are going. If you are interested in attending this event, please contact Doug Williamson at 805-709-8253. It's never too late to RSVP. Come join in the fun with other SLO Vette members!

Our next monthly meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 14th.

Stay safe while driving. Hope to see everyone soon!

Craig Bricker President 805-471-2945



Hello club and welcome to March. This year is really flying by, it's hard to believe that the end of Q1 is just a few weeks away. The first line of business is to remind those that have not sent in their renewal applications and dues to do so ASAP. March 15th will be the date when I will start removing non-renewing members from the club Roster and mailing list. You can renew your club membership a couple different ways. The simplest is to Venmo Jan Dallons your dues at @Jan-Dallons the other option is the old fashion way, mail a check along with your renewal application (available on page 32) to the

SLO Vettes P.O. Box. Either way shoot me a quick Text and let me know your action. Now on to the good part, I am pleased to welcome 2 new members to SLO Vettes, please welcome Joel and Shelly Gust to the club, they live in Arroyo Grande and drive a White 2015 C7 Coupe. Next please welcome Randy Halliday to the club, Randy lives in Grover Beach and drives a 2024 Ceramic Gray C8 HTC. We are pleased to have all of you as part of SLO Vettes. Continue to watch out for other Corvette owners and invite them to join our club, also invite them to attend our next meeting or event. This is the best way to continue our club's growth.

As President Craig mentioned, our next event is the overnight run to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and then on to the Nethercutt Auto Museum and Collection. I am super excited about this run. We have set up a great group rate at the Courtyard by Marriott in Simi Valley along with a group dinner at a really cool Restaurant called the Junkyard Café in Simi Valley. Check out their website. We plan to leave the Pismo Beach Outlet parking lot at 8:30 AM on March 7th to caravan down to the Reagan Library arriving by 12:30 PM. At this time, I believe tickets are still available for the 12:30 and 2:00 tours. Our Nethercutt Tour will be the 10:00 AM tour on Saturday, you can buy your tickets online or at the Nethercutt when we arrive but I strongly suggest to buy online. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me via text or email. I hope you can join us on this great run.

Doug Williamson Vice-President/Membership williamsondoug53@gmail.com



SLO Vettes February 2025 Meeting

Date: February 14, 2025 Location: Chevy SLO

Call to Order: 6:30 pm

Club Attendees: 11, including 1 new member Board Members: Present, except President Craig Bricker & Events Chair Bob Furster Committee Chairs: Present, except NCM Ambassador Don Allen and Sunshine Jeanne Allen

Vice President, Doug Williamson for President Craig Bricker

Doug called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone present, and commented that

attendance was lower than usual because today is Valentine's Day.

VP/Membership Chair, Doug Williamson

The Club currently has 41 paid memberships. It should be more, but some members have not yet paid 2025 dues. Doug introduced new member Randy Halliday, originally from the local area, who served in the Navy for 10 years. Randy is the proud owner of a C8 convertible in Ceramic Gray that he purchased from Chevy SLO. Welcome Randy!

January Minutes by Secretary, Denise Surber

No comments or changes were noted regarding the Minutes as printed in the February newsletter. Russ Surber moved to approve the Minutes as written, Jan Dallons seconded the Motion, which carried unanimously.

Treasurer, Jan Dallons

Jan presented the Proposed 2025 Profit and Loss Budget, which was adjusted slightly from the version presented at the January Events meeting. The amount of membership dues going to the Christmas Party increased from \$15 to \$20 because costs for the dinner have increased. The Club will vote on the 2025 Proposed Budget at the March meeting. Jan also presented the final January-December 2024 Profit and Loss Financial Report. Voting on the year-end Mi2024 Report was also deferred until the March meeting.

Doug Williamson suggested that a dues increase for 2026 be considered at the next Board meeting. Dues have been unchanged at \$60 for many years. There was general verbal agreement with Doug's suggestion.

Finally, Jan presented the Treasurer's monthly Profit and Loss Report for the period January 1 through February 14. A motion was made by Scott Randall and seconded by Dave Naumann to approve the monthly Report. The motion carried unanimously.

Events by Doug Williamson for Events Chair Bob Furster

Doug spoke about the upcoming run to the Reagan Library and Museum in Simi Valley on Friday and Saturday, March 7-8. Hotel room rates, now at \$169/room (before tax and local fees), will increase one week from 2/14. The group will meet at the Pismo Beach Outlets at 8:30 a.m. Tours are probably still available at 12:30 and 2:30 p.m.; the 1:30 slot is sold out. Dinner will be at the Junkyard Café in Simi Valley. Members of the Simi Valley club have been invited and may join our group for dinner. The next day, the group will tour the Nethercutt Museum and Collection in Sylmar. The April event will be a run to the Vintage Cowboy Winery on Saturday April 19. A flyer with details will be coming soon, possibly in the March newsletter.

Jan Dallons spoke about the 2025 Christmas Party, which has been booked for Thursday, December 4, at the Embassy Suites in SLO. We will have the room from 6 to 10 p.m. The hotel will set aside a group of rooms, which Jan thought would be at a decent rate (still to be determined) for members wishing to spend the night. Our dinner event reservation includes a bartender. The Club must spend \$700 at the bar. Based on past years, she does not expect that requirement to be a problem. The restaurant has a corkage fee, so we can bring in our own bottles of wine, but they also have a good selection of wine available by the bottle at reasonable prices. The arrangement for the event is "turnkey" once the main decisions are made. More details will follow later.

Russ Surber mentioned that he had received an email from Barb at the Parkfield Café saying that they had enjoyed having our group on February 8. She also said she would try to have the Girls Scouts stationed outside the restaurant selling their cookies after our visit if we come again next year.

Sunshine, Denise Surber for Sunshine Chair Jeanne Allen

Denise read the list of the February birthdays from the list Jeanne had included in the Sunshine column of the February newsletter. There were no anniversaries. Jeanne had told her that the lists may not be completely accurate because we may have had new members join since the last Roster had been issued.

Museum, Russ Surber for Museum Ambassador Don Allen

Russ referred the group to Don's article in the last newsletter. He then spoke about some recent personnel changes at GM that may be a worrisome sign. Corvette Executive Chief Engineer Tadge Juechter retired after many years at GM, mostly in the Corvette division. He was replaced by Tony Roma who previously had been in the Cadillac division. Tadge had worked closely with Harlan Charles, who was the long-time Corvette Products Manager. For years, Charles traveled around the U.S. talking with and establishing rapport with Corvette owners. He then conveyed what he learned to Tadge and the engineering team. About three weeks ago, GM fired Charles Harland along with Exterior Design Manger Kirk Bennion, also with many years at Corvette. Tony Roma has now also been appointed as head of high performance cars at GM. The concern is that GM may be turning their focus from Corvette to Cadillac as their primary high performance brand. Don and Russ have both written letters to Mary Barra, CEO of GM, and Mark Reuss, President of GM, expressing concern that Corvette is endangered.

Corvette Racing, Russ Surber

The World Endurance Championship, an 18-hour race, will occur in Qatar on February 28. On the IMSA front, the Sebring 12-hour competition will be on March 12 to 15. Corvettes will be entered in both events.

Webmaster – Jon Dallons

The website is up to date. Jon has included fliers for upcoming events and photos of recent Club activities. He really needs photos of members with their cars.

Newsletter, Russ Surber -- Nothing to report.

Merchandise – Jan Dallons

Jan has some items on hand such as vests, sweatshirts, and tee shirts. If she does not have something on hand a member wants, she can always get it. Men's jackets are about \$80 now. The previous ladies jacket style was discontinued, so she needs to find a new one. Members are welcome to bring in their own jacket, sweatshirt, or any other item, and she can arrange to put the SLO Vettes logo on it.

<u>50/50 Drawing</u>: \$40 was donated. Lucky winner Scott Randall took home \$20. Good job, Scott!

Next Monthly Meeting:

Date: March 14, 2025 Location: Chevy SLO Meet & Greet: 6:00 p.m. Meeting Begins: 6:30 p.m. Sharp!

Meeting Adjourned: 6:25 p.m.

Submitted by Secretary Denise Surber rdsurber@charter.net





Hello! Bob wasn't able to write his column this month so I thought I'd take a bit of his space to get on one of my favorite hobby horses, responding to RSVP's. RSVP translates from the French *répondez s'il vous plaît* roughly as, "Please respond". Notice it isn't "Please respond if you plan to attend", or even "Please respond if you don't plan to attend". In short, it asks you to do your putative host the courtesy of telling them whether you plan to attend or not. You don't even have to explain why, only that you will or won't attend. As someone who has planned his fair share of runs and events, you can trust me that knowing who won't be there is just as important as knowing who will. So, might I implore you that whenever you get an invItation, regardless of from whom, respond to it. Tell the host if you'll be there or you won't. It's the thoughtful thing to do, and it really doesn't take more than a few minutes, if that, in this age of email and texting.

Thank you for listening to my rant, and thanks to Bob Furster for giving me the space.

Russ Surber, Editor & Etiquette Advisor



National Corvette Museum Update





Greetings SLO Vette members. I certainly hope you will take the time to read this entire article. I know it is long and detailed but it contains a lot of information regarding the future of Corvette. Considering I didn't make the February meeting and will miss the March meeting, this stuff stacks up and this is the only way I have to convey this information. Sorry for any inconvenience but I think you will appreciate it; especially the videos revealing the inner workings of GM and how the Corvette has evolved

into a world-respected sports car.

Museum News and Events

On April 24-26, 2025 the NCM will team with Michelin Tires to kick off the event season and present the 28th Annual NCM Michelin Bash. The Bash is often used by GM to introduce the public to new models, colors, and technical advances.

As in past years, this event offers seminars and classroom sessions, guided road tours, special exhibit presentations, and a NCM-Judged car show. One of the feature displays at this year's Bash will be Zora Arkus-Duntov's personal 1978 Corvette. Review the tentative agenda and register for the event at: <u>https://www.corvettemuseum.org/bash/?mc_cid=39c9d90000&mc_eid=03813d0017#event-</u>



<u>agenda</u>

New Exhibits

Now on display is a famous 1961 Corvette loaned from Ted and Shannon Skokos. Painted white with blue racing stripes down the middle, this car is one of the historic racing Corvettes fielded by the Gulf Oil team.

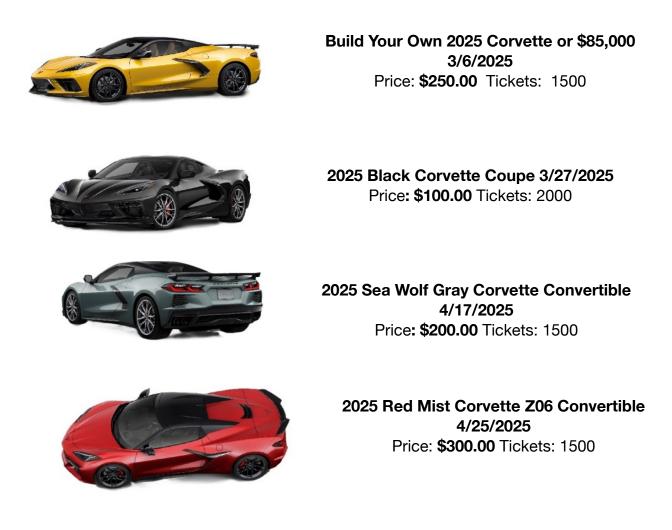
Also on exhibit is a black and white photograph from the Museum's archives of the same Corvette.

The photo captures a celebratory display created by Gulf honoring the car's 1961 championship season. Seated in the Corvette are two men who were instrumental in earning that championship, Dr. Dick Thompson and Don Yenko.

Yenko and Thompson were both experienced racers before joining forces with Gulf Oil. The Gulf Oil Corvette quickly became a dominant force in SCCA B-Production racing. Yenko finished third in his first start in the Corvette but won the next five races. He was disqualified from another victory when SCCA officials found the car had an aluminum flywheel. Yenko was suspended and Thompson took over driving duties for the Corvette, winning another five races and securing the B-Production championship. In the photograph of the championship display, Thompson sits behind the wheel of the Corvette with Yenko in the passenger seat. A large banner above the car declares it the "Production 'Sports Car of the Year.'" Next to the Corvette is a record of its nearperfect SCCA B-Production season and signage honoring the championship points accumulated by Thompson and Yenko. The Gulf Oil Corvette would win a second SCCA championship in 1962, cementing its legacy as one of the most dominant racing Corvettes of its era.

Raffles

Below are all the currently active raffles. For additional information and rules regarding National Corvette Museum raffles including how to order tickets and to view the number of tickets remaining available in real time, go to https://raffle.corvettemuseum.org. The cars will be raffled off on time regardless if all the tickets are sold. I wish you the best of luck and hope to see photos of you picking up your prize at the Museum.





2025 Arctic White Corvette Coupe 4/26/2025 Price: \$20.00 Unlimited Raffle

Assembly Plant Update



Corvette Scores First Place in J.D. Power 2025 Vehicle Dependability Study

We all think of Corvettes as being fast, powerful, and cool but they are also dependable. Corvette took first place in the Premium Sporty Car category of the 36th annual J.D. Power 2025 Vehicle Dependability Study that measured long-term vehicle reliability based on responses from 34,175 original owners of 2022 model-year vehicles after they had owned the car for three years. The study was fielded from August through November 2024. For more: <u>https://www.corvetteblogger.com/2025/02/14/</u> <u>chevrolet-corvette-scores-first-place-in-j-d-power-2025-vehicle-dependability-study/</u>

Scheduled Shutdowns at the Assembly Plant! Maybe a New Model?

GM has announced that the plant will be shut down one week in February, two weeks in March, and one week in May. Rick "Corvette" Conti, a high-volume Corvette salesman thinks this could be to reconfigure the line. He is hearing rumors that the line is being set up to possibly produce more of the wide-body models.

What's a wide-body model Corvette you ask. Well, right now that would describe the Z-06 and ZR1 models with the wider stance to allow for their larger tires and wheels.

Rick hears that the plant builds about one wide-body model for every seven or so Stingrays. Wide bodies slow the line's progress as do convertibles, and models with front end lift options. Maybe with the order of operations changed up these models and options would keep the line running smoothly. Any time the line runs faster is a benefit to both GM and their customers.

For a long time, I have suggested GM bring back the Grand Sport line for C8s. A Grand Sport is basically a wide-body Z06 with a base model engine. If past sales of Grand Sports are any indication of the model's popularity, a C8 Grand Sport would make total sense. The C6 and C7 Grand Sports sometimes outsold the base models. It appears that Conti agrees. Read about his reasoning at: <u>The Corvette Assembly</u> <u>Plant Will Be Closed During These Upcoming Weeks - Corvette: Sales, News & Lifestyle</u>

2026 Corvette Production Dates

According to sources familiar with the matter, the start of regular production for the 2026 Corvette Stingray, Z06, and E-Ray is scheduled for June 2nd, 2025. Chevrolet dealers will be able to submit customer orders starting April 13th, 2025. These dates remain tentative and may be subject to change. It is also currently unclear when production of the 2026 Corvette ZR1 will begin. No major announcements regarding improvements, added options, or other new models have been made. <u>Here's When 2026 Corvette Production Is Scheduled To Start</u>

Corvette Tidbits

Could the Zora have 1400 Horsepower?

A YouTuber called the Brink of Speed Channel claims to have some inside info on the upcoming Corvette Zora. In a video, he professes that the Zora will be more than just installing an E-Ray electric motor up front in a ZR1. Maybe a bigger motor or maybe two electric motors? Either way, this could be Hyper-Car. Brink of Speed has been pretty reliable regarding the latest Corvette insider info in the past. Watch it for yourself. Go to: <u>https://www.corvetteblogger.com/2025/02/15/video-more-c8-zora-info-leaked-1400-hp-monster/</u>

The Only Chevy Passenger Car Available in the US and Canada

Did you know that the C8 Corvette is now the only passenger car made by Chevy for sale in the US and Canada? That's right. Chevy dropped the Impala years ago. Then they stopped making the Malibu. And now, the Camaro is dead. So, if you want a passenger sedan, you are looking at a Corvette. Everything else is either an SUV or a truck.

As an old-timer, that is a difficult idea to get my head around, but I guess that is progress. Or maybe is it something else? After all, Toyota, Honda, Hyundai, Nissan,

and Kia seem to be doing nicely by offering multiple models of passenger sedans to US and Canadian buyers. GM appears to have given our market to foreigners even while GM sells sedans (Cavalier, Malibu XL, Monza, Cobalt, etc.) in foreign countries. I wonder if GM's business plan of promoting electric cars and discarding passenger cars will change considering today's political/economic climate? <u>https://gmauthority.com/</u>blog/2025/02/c8-corvette-is-now-the-only-chevy-passenger-car-in-the-u-s/

Videos: 30 Years of Corvette History from the Inside

In a three-part video round-table discussion that just took place in January, you can hear all the ups and downs, successes and failures, and all the reasons why the Corvette has or lacks features from two of the most influential people in developing the C5, C6, C7, and today's C8 Corvette. Tadge Juechter who retired last year from his position as executive chief engineer of the Corvette from 2006 to 2024 and Harlan Charles, Corvette's marketing manager since 2001, sat down for a beyond-candid discussion of the brand. The importance of Tadge Juechter and Harlan Charles' contributions are definitely on the same level of those from Harley J. Earl and Zora Arkus-Duntov, both considered to be the father and godfather of Corvette.



Larry Webster, Hagerty Insurance's Media editor-in-chief, moderates the discussion, along with Corvette Hall of Fame member Jerry Burton, who also writes for Hagerty and was the founding editor of *Corvette Quarterly* magazine.

This is a gloves-off discussion of everything surrounding Corvette's development to the world-class car it is today. All the internal discussions.

politics, and personalities are included. The reasons why the designs went the way they did. How they managed to bring out the ZR1, the most powerful and most expensive Corvette ever, in 2009 when GM was still emerging from bankruptcy.

In part one, Juechter and Charles outline the path of the Corvette and its "evolution from America's sports car to the world-beating performance machine that we know today," as Webster characterized it, "including just how close the Corvette was to being axed during the 2008 financial crisis."

In part two, the pair describe how, after many customer conversations, they managed to convince GM to add a new model to the C5 series. Instead of lowering the options offered and reducing the price for a bargain car, they proposed a car that was more track oriented with more horsepower and less weight at a higher price level than the existing models. The 1999 Fixed Roof Coupe was born and then renamed as the Z06 in 2001.

In part three, the background on the development of the C7 and the birth of the midengine design C8 are revealed. GM went back and forth on the radical change to the mid-engine placement several times. Originally, the C7 was to be mid-engine but stuff just got in the way.



This is a great story and I highly recommend watching, if not for the history lesson, then just for the entertainment value. Maybe the interview was too frank, a conclusion you might draw after you read my next article about the personnel changes GM made in February.

Tadge Tells All: 30 Years of Stories from the Corvette's ChiefEngineer, Part One - Hagerty MediaTadge Tells All, Part Two: How the C5 Z06 Came to Be, and Almost Didn't - HagertyMediaTadge Tells All, Part Three: C7 Yields to a Mid-Engine Revolution - Hagerty Media

What is GM Planning for Corvette's Future?

GM is making some serious adjustments to their Corvette hierarchy that can only be described as baffling. Almost to the same level as their continued bewildering commitment to electric vehicles and the elimination of Chevrolet's passenger cars in the US. I find this interesting and as a Corvette owner and enthusiast, not at all comforting. I see a common thread running throughout the overall scheme. See if you agree.



It seems to have started with the retirement last year of Tadge Juechter, the Corvette Executive Chief Engineer after 31 years with Corvette and 47 years with GM. Juechter and his team developed the C5, C6, C7, and C8 Corvettes. GM brought in Tony Roma from Cadillac to replace Juechter. Roma has experience with performance cars and has

logged many laps at the Nurburgring in Germany.

In addition to Corvette, Roma's title includes leadership of the newly created Luxury and Performance Car Team.

Now we learn that Harlan Charles, Corvette's Product



Marketing Manager and a key player in the Corvette Team has been forced into retirement. Charles has been with GM for 37 years and with Corvette for 24 years. Among his major accomplishments, Charles was the conduit between customers and the Corvette team. Charles has been one of the key people at GM that Corvette enthusiasts could communicate with to express their ideas, concerns, and praise regarding the Corvette's design and features.

https://www.corvetteblogger.com/2025/02/03/harlan-charles-career-with-corvette-gmends-after-37-years/

Tadge Juechter described Charles as being an "Irreplaceable Force" in the Corvette Community.

TADGE: Harlan is an Irreplaceable Force in the Corvette Community - Corvette: Sales, News & Lifestyle

Charles was also on the Board of the National Corvette Museum. He has resigned from that position and has been replaced by Amy Masica, Chevrolet's Director of Marketing. While no announcements have been made by GM regarding Charles' replacement, maybe the position will be deleted and consolidated with Masica's unit. https://www.corvettemuseum.org/chevrolet-marketing-director-amy-masica-joins-national-corvette-museum-board-succeeding-harlan-charles/

While Harlan Charles' dismissal left the Corvette world stunned, the situation got even worse. Within a week or so, it was announced that Kirk Bennion, the long-time Exterior Design Manager for Corvette was forced into retirement after 41 years with Chevrolet; 39 of those with Corvette. Again, no reason for the dismissal was announced.



https://www.corvetteblogger.com/2025/02/04/ kirk-bennion-is-the-other-corvette-teammember-that-was-recently-fired-from-gm/

Now we learn that Bennion has been replaced by Bryan Nesbitt. Like Roma, Nesbitt's responsibilities have been expanded, and his title is now GM Global Design Director. Nesbitt's previous assignment was Executive Director, Global Cadillac Design at General Motors. https://www.midenginecorvetteforum.com/forum/

me-discussion-photos-videos/570741-why-is-gm-dumping-so-many-seasonedcorvette-execs

Remember I suggested there was a common theme. Please bear in mind that all of this reorganization has occurred at the same time as Cadillac seems to have shed its reputation of luxury and instead is taking center stage as GM's performance car.

Sports car competition in the US is sanctioned by IMSA, the International Motor Sports Association. Corvette Racing, GM's factory sponsored race team, has led its class for years and their yellow cars have a huge following of supporters. Corvette Racing has accomplished the same success on the world stage in WEC, the World Endurance Championship as well as the famed 24-hour race at Le Mans, France. GM has now ceased its direct sponsorship of Corvette Racing and instead just sells the C8.r race car to private party teams.

While Corvette has dominated its class, it does not compete for the overall win at these races. That honor is celebrated by the prototype/hypercar classes in both series. Cadillac is now the GM entry in that class and several teams compete under the Cadillac brand.

This year, Formula One has agreed to allow an eleventh team to enter their elite series with two cars in 2026. Andretti Global will team with GM and develop the entries. While initially using Ferrari power units, the cars will carry the Cadillac brand. Cadillac will develop their own engines for use in subsequent years.

In fact, GM is going all-in to make a big splash in F1. Cadillac has submitted plans to build a major production and development facility in Concord, North Carolina. The facility is expected to cover more than 20 acres and will become a hub for the development of Cadillac's F1 power unit. Construction costs alone are expected to be between \$65 million and \$70 million, with a similar amount earmarked for state-of-the-art machinery and equipment. In total, the estimated budget for the project is in the region of \$150 million and it may employ as many as 300 or more workers. Cadillac F1 'Giga Factory' in USA | thejudge13

Now, let's take this full circle. Earlier in this column, I told you that other than Corvettes, Chevy no longer makes passenger cars. For as long as I can recall, Chevy has always been a contender, if not overall series champion, in NASCAR. Rick Hendrick Motorsports Chevys have probably won more races, championships, and Daytona 500s than most everybody. Without a passenger car, what will Hendricks and other team owners aligned with Chevy use to continue in NASCAR? I see that the Daytona 500 pace car this year was a Chevy Blazer EV SS. An electric vehicle? Really?

Oh, did I mention that new GM Formula One engine plant will be built right next door to Hendrick Motorsports NASCAR complex in North Carolina? Maybe it's time for Cadillac to return to NASCAR?

Insiders suggest that GM is trimming costs and consolidating units to help make up for the financial investment in electric cars. I suppose that as in all things business, one should follow the money. <u>https://www.midenginecorvetteforum.com/forum/me-discussion-photos-videos/570741-why-is-gm-dumping-so-many-seasoned-corvette-execs</u>

How About Some Trivia?

When Did GM First Experiment with Supercharged Engines?

Jon and Jan own the first ever factory supercharged Corvette model that was made available to the public on Chevy showrooms. That was the 2009 ZR1. While it was a long time coming, I had no idea how long ago GM engineers had toyed with the idea of adding a supercharger.

In a GM workorder dated April 1957 under the disguise of "Piston Durability", Zora Arkus-Duntov covertly adapted a Detroit Diesel supercharger to a modified Rochester fuel injector. The assembly was installed on a Corvette 283 cu. In. engine and then tested in a GM dyno lab.



There are only two known remaining examples of the maybe as many as 20 original supercharged engines and both are in San Diego, CA. The complete units live today in two C1 Corvettes. Both owners say they drive much like a normal fuelie Corvette.

For a great history lesson including photos of the setup, the original work order, the original dyno charts, and a video explaining how the

system works, go to: <u>https://www.corvetteblogger.com/2025/02/12/video-was-zora-arkus-duntov-working-on-a-supercharged-fuelie-c1-corvette-engine/</u>

In Closing

To learn more about the Museum, it's mission and purpose, upcoming events, exhibits, membership, and to plan your next visit, please contact me directly or visit the NCM website at <u>www.corvettemuseum.org</u>. I look forward to chatting with you at our next meeting.

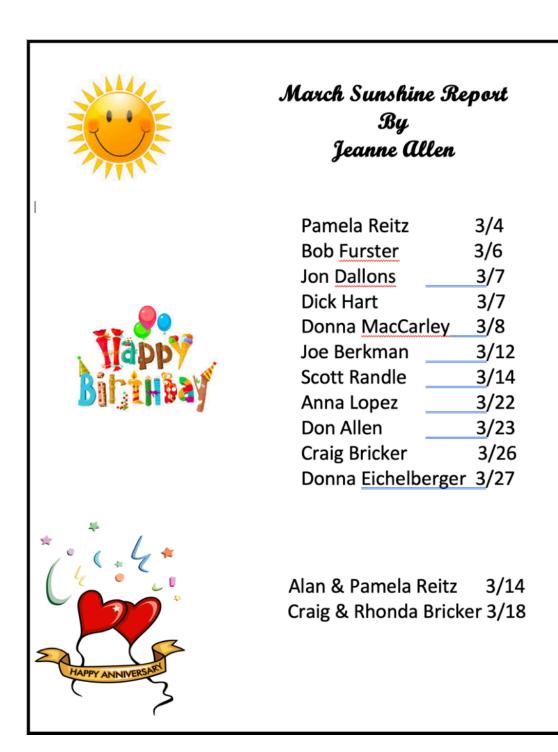
Don Allen National Corvette Museum Ambassador SLO Vettes



Sunshine Report

Jeanne Allen







Corvette Tech Talk

Art MacCarley and Don Allen

Season 3 Episode 1: Unlock Your Corvette's Deepest Secrets





If you have been following our Tech Talk articles, you are now well aware that your Corvette is really a system of complex computers. The system relies on information provided by sensors that report constantly on your car's condition as well it's operation.



Whenever any of the monitored systems has an issue, the car's computer registers a "Trouble Code" that shows up on your dash as the dreaded "Check Engine Light". Unfortunately, this warning light tells the driver nothing. Without your own scan tool, you don't know if the problem is the engine, transmission, accidentavoidance system, or just a loose gas cap.

As a practical example, you are on an extended run and the light pops up. Should you keep driving?

Should you pull over and call a tow truck? Will the light go off after the car sits for a bit? All good questions but the real answer is only found using a scan tool.

During last year's Corvette Caravan, one driver's check engine light triggered while driving along I-70 in Utah or Colorado. Fortunately, he had access to a scan tool and

the code reported his car was taking too long to get up to normal operating temperature and the computer thought something was wrong. Turns our that he had added more than the prescribed amount of coolant additive. The additive worked extra well and coupled with the cooler outside temps and a long downhill grade, the computer was unhappy. The scan tool was used to reset the light and the car ran flawlessly the rest of journey. The relief anxiety for the driver was a perfect reason to keep a scan tool handy.

OBD2 Diagnostics for Corvettes

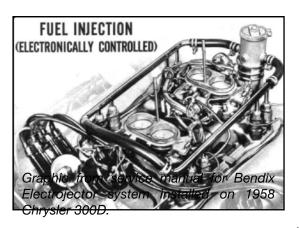
We can't really give our readers a complete picture of the modern-day vehicle diagnostic and why you should consider purchasing your own code reader without providing you with a little history.

Electronics crept into automotive engines with the *Bendix Electrojector* system available as an expensive option on the 1958 Chrysler 300D Sedan and a few American Motors cars. Fewer than 300 of these systems were built, and only one example still exists. Too far ahead of its time. In 1966 Robert Bosch GmbH purchased Bendix's entire EFI patent portfolio, and in 1967 launched EFI into the mass market on the 1967 Volkswagen Type 3 (Squareback), followed in 1968 by the Porsche 911E, and in 1970 by the Volvo P1800E.

The first US car to adopt EFI as standard was the 1979 Cadillac Seville, that used (oh, the irony) a system manufactured by Bendix under license from Bosch. Its MAP^[1]-based port injection system was pretty much a Bosch D-Jetronic system, years after Bosch had moved on to the superior MAF^[2]-based L-Jetronic system. GM had its usual first-year learning curve, and the Seville was known to develop fuel leaks from its injector hoses, that were replaced by steel lines under a mass recall in the early 1980s. The first Corvette to get EFI was the C3 in 1982, its last model year, replacing the Rochester *Ramjet* mechanical injection option that had been discontinued in 1965. GM learned their lesson with Seville, and opted for a cheaper/simpler version of EFI, throttle body injection (TBI), in which the carburetor was simply replaced by a throttle body that contained two electronic fuel injectors. Better than a carburetor, but a step backwards since this arrangement did nothing for the problem of uneven cylinder-to-cylinder fuel distribution. EFI in some configuration has been standard on Corvettes since 1982.

The advertised advantages of EFI in the 60's, prior to serious emission regulations, were improved performance and fuel economy, the latter hardly worth mentioning when gasoline cost \$0.27 per gallon. But the technology transition was profound; automotive engineering would never be the same.

In 1976, Bosch introduced the first oxygen-sensing feedback fuel control system that enabled the use of the US Englehart-developed *three-way catalytic converter* (TWC), that had the ability to oxidize HC and CO into water and CO₂, while also reducing NOx into nitrogen and oxygen. The TWC could only pull off this miracle if the air-fuel ratio



(AFR) was precisely maintained within +/- 5% of stoichiometric (14.7 mass air/fuel ratio for The Bosch Lambda Sond® system aasoline). used feedback of exhaust oxygen content to continuously correct the fuel delivery as It debuted (in California conditions changed. only) on the 1976 Volvo 240, and in the rest if the USA in 1979. The result was a reliable ten-fold reduction in HC, CO and NOx. Despite this epiphany. US auto manufacturers and labor unions were united in delaying adoption of this technology as long as possible, citing its increased manufacturing cost over carburetors,

and the inevitable workforce changes. At a cost to the manufacturers possibly greater than the incremental cost of building the systems, they preferred instead to lobby to weaken the requirements of the 1980 EPA Clean Air Act that simply incorporated pollution standards that had already been adopted in Europe and Japan. A side trip with *feedback carburetors* (a profoundly dumb idea) placated the EPA for a few years, but this charade ended in 1991 when carburetors became functionally illegal in the USA due to their fundamental inability to maintain the consistent air-fuel ratio (AFR) that was critical for the proper operation of the 3-way catalytic converter. With only one exception^[3], there have been no gasoline cars sold in the USA since then that did not use EFI. People born since 1991 have probably never even seen a carburetor on a car. The early engine electronics of the 1960's and 70's were greeted by a cacophony of complaints from mechanics and the performance aftermarket. Electronic engine control was about as far from their experience as autonomous driving controls are now. (Damn electrical crap!) The fomenting rebellion did not go unnoticed by Bosch. In 1969, they forced VW dealers to purchase the EFAW 228^[4] computer diagnostic system that allowed (dealer-only) mechanics to plug a cable into the ECU (electronic control unit), and any problems would self-report to a diagnostic cart about the size of a small mainframe computer.





21

At the time, this diagnostic system was probably more of an advertising tactic than a technical advance. It really didn't reveal anything that a skilled mechanic couldn't intuit using only hearing, sight and smell. But the idea of *on-board diagnostics* (OBD) was born. Like it or not, automotive electronics rapidly evolved in complexity, and by the mid-1980s, OBD systems became indispensable for servicing. Unfortunately, every manufacturer had their own proprietary system with unique connectors, communications protocols, and dissimilar collections of diagnostic codes for whatever the manufacturer decided they would or would not share with the service technicians, who as often as not, would just screw up the system even worse.^[5] These early diagnostic systems fell within the not-yet-formally-named class of OBD-1 systems, and their utility was impeded by being kept behind the Ozian^[6] curtain of dealer-only service.

The need for standardization became obvious. As usual for that generation, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) took the lead in this effort, motivated to standardize and simplify the annual or biennial vehicle inspections by revealing problems that could affect vehicle emissions, or illegal engine modifications. A common set of diagnostic commands and responses, signaling protocols, and most important, a standardized 16-pin under-dash connector were specified. The resulting SAE J1962 *On Board Diagnostic OBD-2* standard remains in place today, although the amount of information monitored and the corresponding DTCs have increased exponentially over the years. Most manufacturers stuck with their proprietary OBD-1 systems until the 1996 model year when all cars and trucks sold in the USA were required by Federal law to be compliant.

Below is a comparison of the OBD-1 connector on a 1995 SL500 Mercedes (left), and an OBD-2 connector on a similar 1996 car (right).





The under-dash OBD-2 port originally served as a standardized interface to the ECU (aka ECM, DCM) that would provide access to most critical engine and driveline data in real time (RPM, manifold vacuum, coolant temperature, etc.) as well as a collection of Diagnostic Trouble Codes (DTCs) that would identify problems as diverse as cylinder misfire or oxygen sensor failure. But soon OBD-2 evolved into a universal data conduit used to monitor and diagnose issues in all automotive electronics systems – even automatic braking systems, collision avoidance systems, and Supplemental Restraint Systems (SRSs) e.g., seat belts, air bags and pyrotechnic seat belt tensioners, and climate control.

Use Your Own OBD Scan Tool and Your Corvette Will Talk to You

OBD-2 fundamentally changed automotive service. Anyone can purchase an inexpensive OBD scanner or code reader that, with no training, will give them a good idea of what ails their ride. Even if not doing repairs themselves, an owner can improve their communications with service personnel and confirm if their car really does need those new \$1000 muffler bearings. Instead of reporting a "funny engine noise", you can refer to diagnostic code P0304 or the accompanying text "Intermittent misfire, cylinder 4". Consumer access to this information is correlated with a reduction in the profit-maximizing practice of replacing parts (running up the bill) until the problem goes away, if it actually does. Considering the complexity of recent automobiles, it is hard to imagine servicing a car for anything other than a flat tire or visible damage without OBD-2. This is particularly true for luxury and/or high-performance cars such as the Corvette.

OBD-2 scanners vary from simple (\$25) to semi-pro (\$400) instruments that provide direct control of actuators for testing purposes, and access to the parameters and historical data retained by the ABS and SRS systems. Even the cheapest can access real time data, all SAE J1962 diagnostic codes and freeze frame data. Expensive models can probe the deepest darkest thoughts of your Corvette (that has never forgiven you for not changing its oil *when it told you to do it*). Anyone that is interested in the health of their Corvette, or just if that check engine light demands urgent attention, needs one of these.

At right is a mid-range handheld scanner that includes manufacturer-specific codes called *Enhanced DTCs*. The Corvette has quite a few. The first thing it does after a connection is established is to determine exactly what make and model car it is talking to. High-end models that can wirelessly connect to a central database could theoretically tell you the color of the upholstery from the VIN.



For those that prefer not to be accused of being motorheads like us, on the right is a basic model that will reveal almost anything you'll need to know. Only \$25 on Amazon.

Too lazy to plug in a cable under the dash? You can plug in a Bluetooth wireless dongle like the one below just once, and with an appropriate app from the



Apple App Store or Google Play Store, use your IOS or Android phone as either a diagnostic tool or as the ultimate a race computer, that will display virtual instruments, including even G-forces using the phone's internal accelerometer.



https:/<u>www.ebay.com/</u> itm/225643027134? var=0&toolid=10044&c ustomid=63f7986e5b51 e21cc27ffcec40c4664

Some phone apps can even integrate forward acceleration over a random distance and tell you your 0-60 mph (0-100 kpm) time, or your quarter mile times or lap times (GPS return to starting point automatically increments the lap number). If you track your car, it can record and analyze your entire lap performance to explain why the kid in his mom's Ford Focus passed you.

Most DTCs are set only if a condition has been observed some minimum number of times. If the condition goes away on its own, the code will eventually go away after some minimum number of key cycles. A persistent check engine light means something is wrong and it is not self-resolving.

One of the most useful features of all OBD scanners is *freeze frame* data. Whenever a trouble code is set, the OBD system retains the exact state of the engine and vehicle – RPM, speed, load, temperature, ignition advance, exhaust oxygen, brake mean effective pressure, etc. The aforementioned example "Intermittent misfire, cylinder 4" could mean an ignition system problem. But it could also be a clogged or stuck fuel injector leading to an AFR (air fuel ratio) that is too lean (clogged injector) or too rich (stuck injector). The freeze frame data will help sort out the most likely cause.

Not well known is that in biennial smog testing of cars newer than 1996, no actual emissions measurement is done. The technician simply plugs the OBD cable of their DMV-connected analyzer into the OBD port, and it is the diagnostic software in the OBD module or ECU that estimates the high and low idle emissions and reports whether the vehicle can reasonably be assumed to be emission-compliant. Beware that if you have recently cleared codes with your OBD scanner, hoping they will not reappear, the car will still fail the smog test because it thinks you or your Corvette is cheating by trying to cover up recent DTCs that just haven't reappeared yet. About a decade ago, it was possible to clear DTCs by disconnecting the battery for a minute or so. But no longer, since non-volatile memory is used. If you are the innocent victim of thoughtless code clearing or a dead battery, the worst you may have to do is drive around a day or two and come back for a retest.

A word about data privacy

The diagnostic system in your Corvette knows *a lot* about you. Probably more than you know about it. This is both good and bad. Ever wonder why auto insurance companies offer discounted rates if you agree to have a monitoring device like a "Progressive Insurance Snapshot" dongle always plugged into the OBD port? It has access to everything your car does, including speed, acceleration, braking, radical maneuvers, going airborne, etc. Some of these devices are GPS-enabled and can record your location history. (Progressive Insurance assures users that Snapshot does not record location data, although it is technically capable of doing so.) The data belongs to the insurance company and is not even secure.^[2] Your bad driving habits are telemetered via the cellular network back to Flo. And yes, the data can be subpoenaed in a civil or criminal action. (Glad our irresponsible years predated this technology.)

This begs an obvious question: OBD-2 has been around since 1994, 30 years ago. So where is OBD-3? It was supposed to be required starting in 2002. Wireless monitoring of cars – a convenience that could replace the need for biennial smog inspections and assure 100% compliance. Remember that wireless communication with your car is already ubiquitous: Remote starting or air conditioning systems, wireless key fobs, toll transponders, GM OnStar® crash detection with automatic dispatch of emergency Would remote monitoring of every function in your car without your services. knowledge be a benefit or liability? Cellular networks and Internet-everywhere now possible with satellite communications networks such as SpaceX Starlink leave no place to hide your secret performance tune or occasional need to push your Corvette a bit. In 2002, it was too much too soon, but the idea is still around. While consumers have accepted without guestion the ultra-intrusive monitoring and control systems in most EVs starting with the Tesla Model S in 2012. Cars are well under way to becoming nodes in massive databases, with surprisingly little pushback by privacy advocates. OBD-3 in some form is inevitable.

And what about the 5-second pre-crash data that is automatically recorded by the SRS module in a collision? It's all accessible via the OBD port using a specialized instrument made by Bosch/Vetronix. Even the millisecond airbag actuation delays are recorded. Your dear Corvette will rat you out in a heartbeat. Up until recently, forensic accident analysis was almost entirely about measuring skid marks and metal deformation. Not any more. The information retained in your Corvette's electronics carries much more weight in court proceedings.^[8]

Back to DIY OBD scanning... Here's a sequence of photos showing the process for checking codes on a C5-C8 Corvette.

The OBD connector on a C6 is located in the middle of the underside of the dash.



The OBD-2 scanner is plugged in. The scanner can be powered directly from the OBD connector, but most scanners also have batteries for use when disconnected. As soon as the scanner is connected to the OBD port, it will attempt to determine the type of mobile network that the car uses. There are five typcs of automotive networks that have been used. For all Corvettes, it is a CAN-II network.

BTW, C4's spanned 1984 to 1996 (1995 year of manufacture), just barely avoiding the OBD-2 mandate of 1996.

It figured out that it's talking to a 2005 Corvette Z51 with a manual transmission. It found no powertrain DTCs or freeze frame data for these DTCs. It doesn't care that the car is running on methanol. Yay!

No enhanced (manufacturer-specific) DTCs. Beloved Corvette is healthy. But it could still rat me out at a biennial smog inspection.







I wanted to display real time data while the engine is idling. This menu allows selection of 44 different options. I chose manifold absolute pressure (MAP), engine RPM, vehicle speed, spark advance, intake atmospheric temperature (IAT), manifold air flow (MAF), throttle position (TPS). The last line prompted for which of the four exhaust oxygen sensors (before and after the catalytic converters, on each of the two exhaust runners) I wanted to monitor.

Below is a tiny sample of the DTCs for a 2005 Corvette. Complete lists for all C5-C8 Corvettes can be found at <u>https://www.corvetteactioncenter.com/tech/knowledgebase/</u> article/2005-corvette-diagnostic-trouble-codes-221.html



Codes prefixed with P pertain to the powertrain. Codes prefixed with B are related to the body. U codes indicate faults in the onboard network communications.

For further info, a well-written general tutorial on OBD-2 diagnostics can be found at <u>https://www.csselectronics.com/pages/obd2-explained-simple-intro</u>.

The future: AI-integrated OBD diagnostics.



Art MacCarley & Don Allen Your Friendly Neighborhood "Wrenches"

Foot Notes

^[1] MAP = Manifold Absolute Pressure, the basis of a *Speed-Density* EFI system.

^[2] MAF = Manifold Air Flow, the basis of an improved *Speed-Flow* EFI system.

^[3] The exception was the Subaru Justy in 1992 and 93 that was given a break because it was smallest car sold in the USA.

^[4] EFAW is a long German acronym that even Bosch does not translate in legacy service manuals.

^[5] Example: In 1981 it was known within Ford corporate that 90% of the ECUs returned by dealers to Ford as defective had nothing wrong with them. And of the remaining 10%, most simply had connector pins that had been damaged when the 100+ pin connectors were removed. Source: Former Ford senior engineer that I worked with at American Bosch.

^[6] Reference to MGM's 1939 production of Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,* when Dorothy (Judy Garland) became suspicious, and the Wiz exclaimed "Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain!"

^[7] Holes in Progressive Dongle Could Lead to Car Hacks <u>https://threatpost.com/holes-in-progressive-dongle-could-lead-to-car-hacks/110511/</u> Accessed 3 February 2025.

^[8] A sad example: In the 1990's a local man was involved in an accident while DUI. He had his wife change places with him before the police arrived so that she, not intoxicated and with a perfect driving record, would take the rap. But, unknown to him the car electronics retained recent driver's seat positions. Said wife was considerably smaller in stature than him. A check of the last several seat positions revealed that she had never driven the car.



First, a huge thank you to everyone who joined Denise and me for the run to Parkfield Café on the second Saturday of February. After the somewhat oversold Atmospheric River that visited the county earlier in the week, skies cleared up and we had beautiful day to strut our stuff with our beloved Corvettes. Denise and I are planning another run in mid-April, Saturday the 19th to be exact, that not only includes a lovely drive on Corvette roads to Pozo and the Vintage Cowboy Winery, but also gives everyone a chance to take their cowboy boots and hats out of the closet and dress the part for a visit to what started out as a cattle ranch. You can take a look at the flyer I've put at the back of the newsletter for more information (Page 30). As the date grows closer, I'll also send out an email reminding you of the run.

Did you notice that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has decided that its rule to outlaw diesel trucks from California roads in the next few years is not doable? Well, dah! The many monuments to magical thinking the Governor's (non-elected) minions have come up with since he came into office are finally being exposed for what they are, foolishness dressed up as science whose only real impact is to reduce the quality of life for most Californians, especially the poor, while giving them the privilege of paying for it with their taxes. The Pacific Palisades fires in January seem to have triggered a realization in Sacramento, not that refusing to clear forests and grasslands of dead wood, or outlawing natural gas, or forbidding the sale of ICE-powered cars was stupid, but rather that voters were finally fed up and that their comfortable, wellpaying political careers might be in jeopardy if they continue the silliness of the past. We'll see.

As a side note, as we gathered in San Miguel f o r the Parkfield Run, a local north c o u n t y businessman saw all of the



Corvettes and stopped to tell us of the service his company, Cen-Cal Auto Paint provides. He can restore those minor chips and scratches in your beautiful Corvette's paint that are so annoying (or in the paint of your "other" car) as well as restore alloy painted wheels. His name is J.D. Meredith, he provides his mobile serve to Sunset Honda, San Luis Bay Kia, and Mullahey Jeep & Chrysler among other dealer, and best of all he comes to your home to work on your car. This is his business card if you have need of his services.

Don Allen makes reference in his *National Corvette Museum Update* column to a series of personnel decisions at GM made in the last month or so that seem to cast a shadow over the future of Corvette. If you haven't looked at Don's column let me strongly recommend that you do so. When you consider how tone-deaf GM CEO Mary Barra has been to critics of her love affair with EV's, our great, great grandchildren may not know what a Corvette is beyond that funny car Great Grandpa used to have.

And on that happy note I'll end this month's ramble. March is a tricky month, hard to predict from day to day, so take advantage of the good days to stretch your legs and put some miles on your Corvette, you and your Vette deserve it!

Russ Surber, Editor *Keepin' Track* Russ Surber, Editor *Keepin' Track,* Official newsletter of SLO Vettes

THE VINTAGE COWBOY RUN

Saturday, April 19, 2024 - A drive through North County to Pozo's Very Own Winery



The Vintage Cowboy Run has been a popular part of the SLO Vettes Calendar for a number of years. It's a chance to put on your boots and cowboy or cowgirl hat and head out to cattle country. By tradition, every car brings a heavy appetizer to share with others, while the Vintage Cowboy let's us test their excellent wines without a tasting fee. If this is your first visit to the Vintage Cowboy or if your an old hand, please remember that the Winery sets aside a place for us to gather and provides a free tasting for the Club. If you are so disposed, it would be nice if you purchased a bottle or two of their wine, or joined some of your SLO Vettes friends and signed up for the Vintage Cowboy wine club, We can promise you that the Pickup Parties at the Vintage Cowboy are wonderful.

What: The Vintage Cowboy Run
When: Saturday, April 19, 2025
Where: The Santa Margarita Park & Ride
What to Do: Email or Text Russ or Denise
Surber at <u>rdsurber@charter.net</u> or 805-610-0931

Surber at <u>rdsurber@charter.net</u> or 805-610-0931 whether you plan to attend or not by Wednesday, April 16.

Directions to Santa Margarita Park & Ride From the South take 101 North, from the North, take 101 South, in both cases Exit 211 leads you to the Santa Margarita off ramp. The Park & Ride will be on your right.



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