



A Quarterly Publication of the Illinois Chapter NCRS

<http://www.ILNCRS.org>

Volume 39

September 2012

Thoughts from the Chairman!

The Dog Days of Summer are almost over and Autumn is fast approaching! But don't despair, there is still time to enjoy your favorite ride a few more times before the season turns.

Several members have just returned from Corvettes At Carlisle, and it's my understanding that you couldn't have asked for better weather at this year's show. There are a few upcoming events that I want to mention here. Once again, it's time for Beloit Autorama on Sunday, September 16th. After being rained out the last two years, I believe it's time for the sun to shine and provide us with good weather for a great day. We've sure got one coming! There is usually a good group from ILNCRS members who drive out to enjoy the day at this local "Happening". You could even swing by there on your way home from the Wisconsin Chapter Meet held in Delafield, Wis. on September 14th/15th, if you so choose. For those interested in having a Corvette judged locally before the end of the year, there are two other N.C.R.S. events close by as follows: the Heartland Chapter Meet in Des Moines, Iowa, on September 22nd, and the Queen City Chapter Meet in Cincinnati, Ohio, on October 6th.

Speaking of judging, I hope you enjoyed our ILNCRS Chapter Meet at Chestnut Mountain Resort on August 3rd, 4th and 5th. I want to thank everyone who put so much effort into making this event such a great success. The collaborative efforts of the many dedicated chapter members and friends of ILNCRS make for a very long thank you list. Several folks had a hand in the success of this Chapter Meet. Collectively, thanks to all of you!

There are a few people that I feel deserve acknowledgement for their efforts!

1st, Enormous thanks goes out to the ILNCRS Board of Directors for all their hard work. You all give at least 120% all the time.

2nd, A special thank you to Ed Wodniakowski for coming up with the "Surprise" stop at the winery on the road tour. Every year you continue to strive to make our road tour something special and unique for everyone to enjoy and this year was no exception.

3rd, Tom Walther and Tom Hincz – for once again providing the meat for our Friday evening cookout. It keeps our Tune Up Night a must attend get-together!

Thoughts from the Chairman (continued)

And last but not least, thanks to Kim Santaniello, with the help and support of her husband, Pat – for taking on all the work of running this event, getting the shirts made, dash plaques, handling the food arrangements, making the centerpieces for the banquet tables, tickets, door prizes, registration and a multitude of things I'm sure I probably don't even realize... transitioning into the role of Activities Director seamlessly. Kim, you rock!

Be sure to put October 14th on your calendar so that you won't forget – our "Fall Colors Drive-out and Charity Road Tour". Carol and Scott Lindee are planning another fun packed day – you will want to make plans to be there.

Our final event of the year will be the Christmas Brunch. Kim Santaniello is in the midst of planning this event. She has some NEW ideas to make our December gathering even more fun – so stay tuned.

In this Newsletter, you will find an interesting article by Randy Merzdorf, telling the story of his Corvette purchase and the history that he has been able to uncover about this vehicle. The story is fascinating! I truly hope that you enjoy what Randy has to share about his car, and how he has tracked down its history.

During our Chapter Meet, two of our members offered to contribute stories about their unique vehicles. Jim Anderson said he has a great story about one of his purchases that he will submit; and new member, Mike Murphy, said that he would send me the information about his 1965 Yellow Roadster that he found and purchased on Craig's list. I can hardly wait to read both of these articles!

Remember – if you have an interesting story to tell, put it down on paper and send it to me. If you want help putting it into words, call and tell me your story, or send me a rough draft of your information and I will be glad to help you with the format. Rest assured that if it's of interest to you, it will be of interest to other chapter members as well. You can email me @ JAY65L84NO3@AOL.COM.

Just a thought - Owning these cars has created many true friendships throughout the organization that have remained strong over several decades. It can be hard to remember that it's an all-volunteer operation that we are running and sometimes rules may start to wear on friendships. Stop for a second, remember that Corvetting is YOUR hobby for personal enjoyment, and don't let politics get in the way of what really matters.

If you find that day-to-day life struggles continue to become too overwhelming and you just have nowhere to turn, there is just one philosophy that I suggest:

COOKIES ARE THE ANSWER!

Jay

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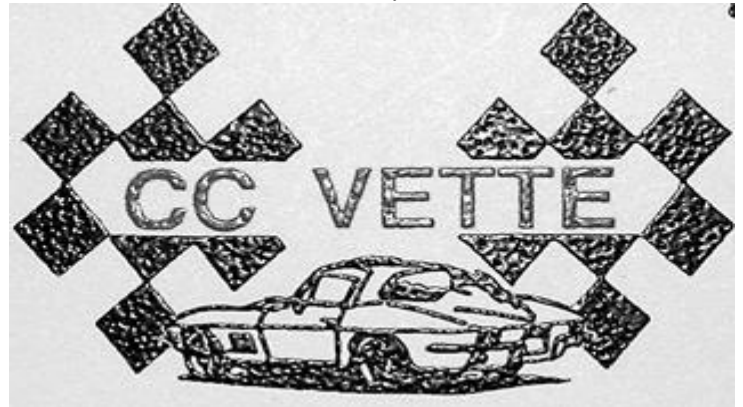
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What a Long Strange Trip It's Been....

submitted by Randy Merzdorf, Club Historian

Borrowing the title of a Grateful Dead tune, it seems an appropriate summary of the 30+ years I have owned my first and only Corvette.

Not that long ago, if someone had asked for an article about my car, I could have done the job with a couple of paragraphs – but lately I have more material than most folks would be interested in hearing – and yet, there are still parts of the story missing...

I have owned my '65 Corvette Coupe since 1984 – and from the start, the car has been surrounded by one coincidence after another – starting at the very beginning...

Once I had been bitten by the Corvette bug, and had the money to actually afford one, I did my homework on which one to pick. Although leaning toward a C1, I fell hard for the midyear coupe roofline styling, and so a '63-'67 it would be. The other advantage was that I wanted to drive the car, and those years had enough modern appliances to make that possible – power disc brakes, alternators, etc.

A friend found the car listed in the weekend Sun Times in McHenry, IL. – and cue up coincidence #1. I didn't get a chance to call until Monday, and the owner stated that the car was supposed to have already been sold Sunday – except after a late night Saturday, his wife took the phone off the hook and the purchaser was unable to call to arrange for pickup. As far as the owner was concerned, the first person that showed up at his door with some cash got the Corvette.

I was there on Tuesday morning to look over the car – and was happy with what I saw. Solid frame, decent paint, wrong driveline (so the price would be cheaper!) – but it drove nice and the price was right, so I was back on Thursday to finalize the purchase and take delivery. Purchaser #1 never reappeared....

Shortly after acquiring this Corvette, I joined the Illinois NCRS chapter with a goal of learning more about my car. One of the first questions I'd always hear... "What was the original motor"? Armed with assistance from fellow Illinois Chapter members, an NCRS judging manual and MF Dobbin's '63-'67 Fact Book, the hunt was on. Right from the start things got interesting. The dash contained a 6500 redline tach and an 80 lb. oil pressure gauge – which pointed to a solid lifter motor. Under the hood sat a correctly dated 396 radiator and core support. There was also a 7/8" front sway bar and while the rear sway bar was MIA, there was a bolt broken off in the frame from one of the mounting brackets for the rear sway bar. The fuel line, which appeared to be original, had a 90-degree bend. Things were pointing in a big block direction, but at this point it was still just a guess.

The next step was a title search to track down previous owners (another 10 year ordeal). As it turned out, there were ten! Owner # 3 only owned the car for 3 weeks! I only heard back from two previous owners, but in another coincidence, these two gentlemen had some of the most important pieces of the puzzle. I heard back from owner #7 first, who "restored" the car in the mid-70's by removing the big block hood and replacing it with a small block version to match the small block motor in the car. He also removed the rear sway bar because he got tired of the squeaks and rattles. The roll-over headlights had been previously glassed over, and the headlights were down in the grill (a common 'custom' touch). He replaced this modification with the factory hidden headlight set-up, using currently available GM fiberglass and front-end parts, then repainted the car Nassau Blue. The interior was also changed to black, and a bunch of parts from various other Corvettes ('64 glove box door, '66 gas lid, etc.) were added.

What a Long Strange Trip It's Been....(continued)

Owner #2 took the longest to find, as the Secretary of State's office kept telling me all of the titles older than 1975 had been tossed, (which made no sense to me after I received an original 69 title for my Impala). A couple of calls to Springfield and we found titles back to 1966. The clerk swore that this was the end of the line, as titles are filed not by VIN but by previous title number – and the '66 title had no previous title number recorded.

Owner #2 was a treasure trove of information, as he claims to have owned over 50+ Corvettes over his lifetime, and remembered this one as the one he wished he had never sold. The Corvette was most definitely a 396. This car was extensively raced for money, both on the street and at US30 Drag Strip (Where the great ones run, run, run!) – and seldom (if ever) lost. The apparent secret to his success was to bury the tach before shifting – most people he raced seemed to shift sooner than 1,000 RPM over red line. If even half of the crazy stuff this guy told me was true, it is amazing that the motor lasted until 1969 before impersonating a hand grenade – and the car has no business even being left on the planet in one piece. The hairiest moment was apparently a tire blow-out at over 100 MPH – he lost control of the car, went down into a ditch, and then went airborne – his friends claimed the car was high enough to see the frame and he was very lucky it landed shiny side up. He sold the '65 for a '67 435HP Corvette, but claims the 396 was always faster than the 427. He kept an eye on the '65 hoping someday to buy it back, but lost interest after the original motor was blown, and the front-end was damaged after owner #3 ran under the back of a semi-trailer.

An extra bonus on the 1966 title was a listing for taxable horsepower. I noticed every title since 1966 listed the taxable horsepower as 53.6. Illinois calculates this number based on engine displacement – bore squared times the number of cylinders divided by 2.5 (who knows where this came from!). Using the factory 396 bore of 4.094" yielded a taxable horsepower of 53.6 – exactly what was on the title! So I am pretty sure this was a 396 coupe. I was also surprised that the car was an original side pipe car, although that option had been replaced with an undercar exhaust at some point.

At this juncture, it was time to do something with the paint and body. I had been driving the Corvette for about 11 years, and it was in need of some restoration work. The decision was made that the original Glen Green paint was going to be returned to the car – but what about the motor? It could take years to round up all the parts for something so rare – and financially I would never get the money back - but I felt the car was rare enough to merit returning an original type motor back under the hood.

Here is where more coincidences made their appearance. After mentioning my engine plans for the car, I got not one but two phone calls from two different NCRS members, who found a period correct 962 block dated E 30 5 in California. The seller knew someone from her hometown that would be attending Chevy Vettefest and staying at the home of an Illinois NCRS chapter member 3 miles from my house – so the problem of transportation solved itself. Then, after speaking with a couple of Vettefest parts vendors, I found someone that had just finished a 396 restoration looking to unload a bunch of extra parts, including heads, intake and exhaust manifolds, balancer, radiator, TI amplifier – and an NOS hood! Another vendor was able to come up with a TI distributor, NOS valve covers, and the all-important production numbered 3124 carb. Stuff that should have taken years to acquire almost fell in my lap – very strange...

Fast forward – the car got painted, put back together, and the glitches with the transistor ignition and brakes were ironed out. As of now, interior parts are slowly being collected to restore the original green interior and another 17 years of driving fun (yikes!); but yet one mystery remains – what of the original owner?

What a Long Strange Trip It's Been....(continued)

According to owner #2 the car was purchased from Sal's Auto Sales on North Milwaukee Avenue on July 12, 1966. Sal seemed to specialize in high performance and muscle cars – but how did this car go from brand new to a used car lot in about a year's time? One clue may be the condition it was in when purchased – no wheels and tires, parts missing from the engine, and vandalized seats. Was this a theft recovery that the owner surrendered to the insurance company? Normally a car this new would most likely end up as a dealer trade-in for something newer rather than a cast-off in a used car lot. The only reason the car was purchased by owner #2 was that he had a friend with a wrecked '65 that could be used as a parts donor, so missing parts were not an issue.

As far as finding owner #1, the story that owner #2 heard was that the car was originally purchased by an undercover Chicago police officer who had retired, moved to South America and did not want to be found...another dead end.

Yet the story still isn't over...after the shipping data became available through NCRS, I mailed in my check and was surprised to find that the car was delivered new to Gates Chevrolet – in South Bend Indiana! That certainly explains why there was no 1965 Illinois title...The dealer is still around; and I have spoken to a couple of long-time employees at the dealership who unfortunately have no recollection of the car. I did get an interesting response to my posting on the NCRS message board though, from someone who thinks he may have seen my car at the dealership! This man's father was fortunate enough to get a new company car each summer, and while accompanying Dad to the dealership to pick up a new Impala in the summer of 1965, he remembers seeing a Glen Green 396 coupe sitting in a side lot at Gates. It was not in the showroom or on the 'For Sale' lot, but someplace you would park a car awaiting delivery. He remembers this as being the first 396 Corvette he had ever seen; and the possibility of two identical green big block coupes being delivered at the same dealership during the summer of 1965 seems a little far-fetched. So close, but yet so far...

It is hard to believe I have owned this car for over 30 years! It is still just as much fun to drive as the day I bought it. Like Zora said, "the darn things are made be driven"! No matter how bad of a day you are having, a quick turn of the key and the ensuing bark of the side exhaust can put a smile on your face in an instant!

Classified Ads

FOR SALE; 1972 LT-1 Corvette Coupe. 1Z37L2S523760 White/Black Leather. Numbers match, original paint. M21 with 3.70 Axle. Power Steering, Brakes, U79 Stereo Radio, Deluxe Leather Interior, Rally wheels. 70,500 miles, unrestored. Tank sticker, NCRS Dealer Delivery Documentation. Possible survivor or benchmark candidate. \$30,000. Scott. E-mail inquiries to: sal70lt1@yahoo.com

2012 ILNCRS "Shutdown" Judging Meet, Galena, IL

FRIDAY ROAD TOUR

submitted by Ed Wodniakowski

On Friday August 3, 2012, we had our annual road tour to our chapter meet at Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena, Illinois. Our meeting place was at Alexander's Restaurant in Elgin on Route 31. The morning was sunny as we started out with 15 Corvettes.



Our trip took us through the farmlands on 2-lane state and county roads. Our first stop was at Freeport Visitors Center. At this point 2 more Corvettes joined the road tour.

We continued west on US 20. We turned off onto Derinda Road to our second rest stop at the Rocky Waters Winery just east of Hanover. A truly beautiful place. Everyone enjoyed the view of the valley, as well as a wine tasting, beer, and snacks.



The final leg of our trip took us through the town of Hanover to Blackjack Road and then, on to Chestnut Mountain Resort.

CHAPTER MEET

submitted by Santo Scafide

Friday evening we enjoyed picnicking in the Chestnut Mountain parking lot where we were treated to Italian sausage, hot dogs, chicken and sweet corn, cooked and supplied by several members from Wisconsin and Illinois. Many other members brought side dishes and desserts for all to enjoy as well.



Saturday morning, we met at the Judges'/Owners' breakfast where judging co-chairman, Pat Santaniello, and I passed out the Judging assignments, discussed the judging rules, and answered any questions from the participants. The Judging was completed just in time before we had a brief rain shower.



Saturday evening, we had a great meal — food choices were excellent this year. Door prizes were awarded to those holding winning tickets. And what special prizes they were, too. Some of the lucky winners received kindles; others won 83-piece tool sets! Our thanks to Kim Santaniello for all her hard work in coming up with such great prizes.

Sunday morning after a great breakfast, the awards were given to the car owners. We had a total of seven cars to be judged. All but one received the coveted Top Flight Award. There were also three (3) Corvettes that received Sportsman Awards. Recipients are as follows:

Top Flight Awards

Frank Ness	1958 Roadster
Stacy Walters Rossi	1963 Coupe
Ernest Mogensen	1965 Roadster
Mike Murphy	1965 Roadster
Paul Palmer	1966 Coupe
Dom Presty	1967 Roadster

Second Flight Award

Dave Miller	1982 Coupe
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Sportsman Awards

John Studts	2006 Z06 Coupe
Scott Lindee	2000 Roadster
George Williams	2013 60th Anniversary Roadster

We would like to thank everyone who came out and hope all had a good time. If you couldn't make this year's event we hope to see you next year.

NOTE

We took pictures of all the cars and participants at the meet. (At least, we think we got them all.) Far too many to publish in this newsletter. If you would like a copy of your picture from the meet, please email me at ILNCRSnewsletter@comcast.net, and I will be happy to email your picture to you.

Please be sure to send me your email address along with your name and year, model and color of your vehicle.

ILNCRS TECHNICAL CORNER

Technical Article #7 in Series

Submitted by Bob Lojewski, Technical Chairman

If you notice a drop in the efficiency of your vehicle's air-conditioning (AC) system, it is time for a check-up. At the heart of the AC lies the compressor, which is responsible for compressing and transferring refrigerant gas. As the compressor pumps the refrigerant through the closed-loop system, the refrigerant moves heat from inside the vehicle to the outside. To do this, the compressor accepts low-pressure gas from the evaporator, compresses it into a high-pressure hot gas, and sends it to the condenser. Obviously, this ongoing heating and cooling process with refrigerant under pressure may at some point be susceptible to leaks, which will compromise efficiency. These must be pinpointed to restore the AC to proper working order. Sometimes leaks in the system can cause a reduction in the effectiveness of your air-conditioner.

HINT: Failure of the compressor in an older R-12 refrigerant system may be seen as an opportunity to convert to the newer R-134a system.

Technical Article #8 in Series

Submitted by Bob Lojewski, Technical Chairman

Summer is no time for your vehicle's cooling fan (or any part of the cooling system) to fail. This can result in an engine-overheating situation that can leave you stranded. In front-wheel-drive cars, the fans are usually driven by electricity, since the engine is mounted transversely, which points the engine toward the side. In rear-wheel-drive vehicles, with longitudinally placed engines, the fan is usually driven by a belt. In either case, failure of the fan to work places the car in jeopardy of overheating. This is the first place to look in the event that the engine temperature gauge goes into the red zone. Give it a look, and arrange for a technician to make the repair.

If your engine overheats while driving, pull over and call for help.

HINT: The radiator cooling fan should come on within a minute or so of the air-conditioning being turned on.

NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

Welcome to our ILNCRS Chapter!

Scott Bremner **Lake Barrington, IL** **Currently owns a 1958 & a 1963**

Dominic/Stacy Rossi **Elgin, IL** **Currently owns a 1963 & a 1970**

2012 Calendar of Events

February 19	2012 Kick-Off Party, Moretti's on Lake Street, Bartlett, IL
April 22	2012 Tech Session, Roscoe Restorations, Roscoe, IL
May 20	2012 Judging School, Corvette Mike's, Burr Ridge, IL
August 3, 4, & 5	2012 Chapter Meet, Chestnut Mountain Resort, Galena, IL
October 14	2012 Fall Charity Drive out
December 2	2012 ILNCRS Christmas Brunch, Villa Olivia, Bartlett, IL

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