

The Heart of Ohio Chapter beginnings

Westerville Ohio, September 2001, two guys meet each other in a bar, start talking and realize they like Corvettes and don't like driving to Cleveland and by the end of the evening form the Heart of Ohio Chapter of NCRS...well not really, but close.

Steve Steffensen and Terry Hawk were members of the Lake Erie Chapter in the late 90's and had become dissatisfied with the direction and activities that were going on within the Lake Erie Chapter. It was their desire for a different level of fellowship and knowledge of Corvette's that drove them to reach for more. They both felt that it was best to begin a new chapter, one in which matched up to their vision as well as future members. I should point out that the Lake Erie chapter eventually ended up closing and in a twist of fate ended up merging with the Heart of Ohio Chapter in the years to follow. Both Steven and Terry both lived in Columbus, Ohio. They realized there was a core group of 11 members in the Lake Erie Chapter that were from the Columbus Ohio area and set forth investigating what it took to start a chapter from scratch. We have them to thank for their leadership and the creation of our chapter! Terry Hawk left the NCRS a while back, and now with Steve Steffensen's announcement of his departure, we felt it was appropriate to recognize these two men and what they did creating the Heart of Ohio NCRS Chapter and its early beginnings.


Steve Steffensen has always been very active in the Heart of Ohio Chapter and the national NCRS organization. Steve besides being the founder of the Heart of Ohio Chapter has been... a multiple-term judging chairman, a long-time resource of NCRS judging guidelines and paint types, processes and standards providing our chapter with many seminars on paint and NCRS judging guidelines. Steve had been employed by Ashland Chemicals in Dublin, OH in the paint division, therefore, a great resource for paint types, processes and standards. Steve always liked to point out how my restorations paint were too deep, the door jambs too shiny and the lack of at least some orange peel.... but he did appreciate a perfect body gap and panel fit...! One of these days I am going to restore one in lacquer and get that 45 points!

Steve set out in the beginning to learn more about starting a chapter and went right to the resource, the National NCRS office. He inquired on the requirements for creating a new chapter. In order to pull this off he had to have at least 25 members, establish bylaws, establish non-profit status, elect officers and a few other administrative tasks. He requested from National to obtain a list of members surrounding Columbus Ohio. He received a list of 254 national members and working with Terry Hawk, they made a mailing and asked national members who were interested in forming a new club to show up at Steve's home for an exploratory meeting. I was one of the folks who showed up that evening. This meeting was the winter of 2002. Our first sanctioned club meeting was at Dave Borrer's office in Dublin, and our first judging meet was at Bob McDorman's on September 12, 2003. Many early meetings were done at Bob Patrella's garage near Schrock and Worthington Galena Rd. in Columbus.

We owe a lot to Steve.... he began his affiliation in the Corvette hobby 30 years ago with the Lake Erie Chapter and created the Heart of Ohio Chapter in early 2002. Over the years Steve started out with a white 1963 Corvette Split Window Coupe. As time went on Steve's interest lead him to purchase a beautiful example of a 1957 Chevrolet two door hard top. Then Steve moved on to a C6 Corvette for more comfort. Now at this juncture Steve has gained more interest in his love of motorcycles. Steve recently announced his departure from our club to pursue his interests in motorcycles....

Looking back on the early days of our Chapter, the following are a few tidbits of what went on as we formed our chapter....

Here is a copy of the of the advertisement that was run in the Driveline magazine recruiting members as well as personal emails sent to the 254 individuals.



HEART OF OHIO CHAPTER
Come and learn at our new chapter
located in Central Ohio.

- Monthly meetings
- Chapter newsletter
- Judging School
- Summer Picnic
- Road Tours
- Annual Chapter Meet
- Meet a great group of
people who love corvettes

For more information, contact:
J. Terry Hawk – Membership Chairman
2710 Dellworth Street
Columbus, Ohio 43232
614-866-3151
ithawk@core.com

As I interviewed Steve for this article, we had a great time reminiscing, but our memories are not what they use to be.... we both had a hard time identifying all 25 original members, and we disagreed on some early events.... for example:

Referencing the recruitment advertisement pictured above, this was the first time our Chapter Logo appeared. In talking with Steve he remembered it was his idea for the name and logo, unfortunately, I had to respectfully disagree with him because I had actually come up with the name and the logo, I believe we were all asked to submit names for the club. I got the idea from passing the antique mall on I 70 West in Springfield Ohio, and remember submitting it along with some shirts I had made up and actually wore one at the McDorman meet, (see the picture below)...the logo did go through many changes with Terry Hawk and Lou Zuniga, but the name stuck.....

You can see below the many changes that the logo has gone through....



That first exploratory meeting at Steve's house led to our first Chapter meeting at David Borrer's in Dublin on February 22, 2003 and the agenda for that meeting was:

AGENDA

2-22-03

Heart of Ohio Chapter of NCRS general membership meeting

- A. *Welcome – Steffensen*
 - 1. *Sign in sheets*
- B. *Sec./Treasurer's report – Mike Gorman*
Checking/savings account discussion - Steffensen
- C. *OLD Business*
 - 1. *By Laws – Steffensen*
Final Draft for approval
 - 2. *Chapter approval paperwork – Steffensen*
Status report
 - 3. *Newsletter, and contests – Terry Hawk*
Feed back, ideas etc.
- D. *New Business*
 - 1. *Judging School*
4-12-03 9:00-12:00, lunch provided
 - 2. *Chapter Meet – Mike Matejovic*
Where do we have it?
When do we have it?
 - 2. *Ads, shirts, jackets and hats – Steffensen*
Do we want to do about these?
 - 3. *Calendar and events – Bob Patrella*
Present current calendar and seek further input and idea
Assign leaders for events (i.e. Mullins – Spring Tour, Philips – Fall Tour)
- E. *Other business/adjourn*

Then of course we had our first chapter judging meet at Bob McDorman's Chevrolet.... I had my 1964 flight judged at that meet and was awarded a topflight after years of restoration work. Here are a few pictures of that meet from Saturday September 13, 2003.



Going back to the beginning there were a few founding members who stepped up to leading the chapter. The first officers of the club back to 2002 were:

Chairman/Founder – Steve Steffensen

Vice Chair – Bob Patrella

Treasurer – Mike Gorman

Judging Chair - Randy Mullins

Membership Chair/Co-Founder – Terry Hawk

The following individuals were the original club members. The 7 members with the "*" next to their name are still active members.

Dino Lanno*

Jerry Moeslin*

Perry Yasher*

Barry Dowdy*

Randy Early*

Lou Zuniga*

Randy Rink*

David Borrer

Lisa Phillips

Jim Salvino (deceased)

Herb Harlton

Stew VanKirk

Loyal Cochran (deceased)

Mike Matejovich (deceased)

Jay Benedict

Garry Brown

Todd Compton

Milt Coninx

Gary Coolidge

Mike Falk

Rick Fox

David Heitzman

Harry Lambert

Scott Sinclair

Looking back over 17 years we have had 5 Chairman's of our club. They put in countless hours of volunteer time to make the club what it is today! Over the years our Chairman's were:

Steve Steffensen, 2003

Randy Mullins, 2003 - 2004

Lou Zuniga, 2005 – 2008

Perry Yasher, 2009 – 2016

Lou Zuniga, 2017 – 2019

Wes Wells, Current Chairperson

So, in closing, we have a great chapter that we belong to and we would not be here together without the vision and hard work of Steve Steffensen. We appreciate him! For the rest of our membership who are reading this article, please consider giving back to this great club by participating in any way you can and considering serving on the board in the future. Our future depends on it.

Save the wave!

Dino