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Past Chairman's Comments

by Mike Aichele

Your past Chairman is still working for you while we continue to try to find a 2012 Chairman. By someone not stepping up to the plate to serve, I have this gut feeling that you guys and gals are really trying to trick me into continuing to serve as the Chairman. If I thought leaving the country would help get someone to step up to the plate, I might. With my luck you would make me serve in exile. Now where would I like to serve from while in exile? The Australian Chapter might accept me - I lived there once and have wanted to go back. This could be a good excuse. Or maybe, I should try the New Zealand Chapter - I visited there once too and sure would like to go back. Or better yet, maybe the United Kingdom Chapter would hide me - I have to go there later this year on business, so I'll try them!

My intentions were to have a board meeting after the January meeting, but Brett Driscoll, our Judging Chairman, had such a wonderful judging school that we ran out of time. If everything goes as planned at the February meeting, I'm hoping to get the Board together to discuss our Chapter plans for 2012. Anyone who is at the February meeting is welcome to join us.

There is no other Corvette organization on earth that can provide the vast amount of technical information about Corvettes. NCRS has Technical information that will let you restore your Corvette to the way it left the factory, or give you the information that you need to prepare your Corvette to be judged by some of the best Corvette judges on the planet. Technical knowledge gives you the information that you need to become a Corvette judge. Judging gives you the arena to gain practical experience you need to become one of the best Corvette judges on the planet. NCRS Chapter, Regional or National events give you the chance to participate, so when is the last time you attended an NCRS Chapter,

Regional or National event and participated? Attending events gives you a chance to add to your knowledge base, use the knowledge you have developed, hone your skills as a judge or share your knowledge with someone who is less knowledgeable than yourself. More importantly, NCRS gives you the opportunity to develop great long lasting friendships. I'm grateful for the knowledge I've gained and the interaction I've enjoyed over the past 20 something years I've been a member of NCRS. At my age I've learned one thing "use it or lose it." For me, I keep putting so much more Corvette information into my brain that it seems some of the Corvette information keeps seeping out and I have to relearn it. My new plan is to use my Corvette knowledge on a more frequent basis and try to keep it in my brain a little longer before I lose it all. With that said, Jim Elder and I are leaving for the Tucson Regional on March 8th by Southwest Airlines to Phoenix, AZ and then to Tucson by car. We would be glad to have you accompany us on this trip. Please come join us.

In the meantime, think about your own Corvette knowledge. Bring your answers to the February meeting.

1. In what year did sun visors become an option?
2. What year did the word "Stingray" appear as one word?
3. What year was the front steel bumper replaced with soft cover?
4. The 265 cubic inch engine was first introduced in what year?
5. What year did Corvette have a 24 gallon gas tank?
6. Buyers for the first time had a choice between a coupe or convertible in what year?
7. In what year were the hidden windshield wipers introduced?
8. The 1956 Corvette supported how many "Shark" teeth?

9. What was the date the first production Corvette rolled off the line in Flint, Michigan?
10. In what year were the last "wide whitewall" tires used?

I'm looking forward to serving you in some capacity and hope that you all will continue to be actively involved in making this Chapter successful. I hope to see you at the February 7th meeting.

February Breakfast Meeting

Our monthly breakfast will take place on Saturday, February 4. The location is Ollie's Station Restaurant in the Redfork area of West Tulsa. The address is 4070 Southwest Blvd. The phone number is (918)446-0524, in case you need it.

You can choose the buffet or you can order from the menu. The time to be there is 8:30 a.m., but people always start arriving by 8:00 - 8:15 a.m.

2012 Dues Notice

The New Year is already here, and it is time to renew your membership in the Oklahoma NCRS.

Annual dues of \$15 should be paid this month.

Bring your wallet or checkbook on Saturday, February 4, to renew your membership in the Oklahoma Chapter NCRS. Don Partridge will be glad to accept your money, or you can mail your 2012 dues payment to:

Don Partridge
18606 East 96th St.
Broken Arrow, OK 74012

A special note to any new member who may have joined since October, 2011. Your payment then will cover your 2012 dues also. If you have any questions, call Don Partridge at 918 / 455-6574(H).

Don't delay! Payment of dues is required to continue receiving chapter benefits.

Remember ---- You must be a National NCRS member in order to be an Oklahoma chapter member. Checks should be made payable to Oklahoma Chapter NCRS.

Attitude Adjustment Night

The gathering place for our February Attitude Adjustment Night on Tuesday evening, February 21, will be The Rib Crib Restaurant, 8040 South Yale. We have the use of a meeting room for our group.

The time people start to arrive is 5:30 p.m. Most are there before 6:00 p.m. The food is quite good and Tuesday night is "Rib Night" - all the ribs and side orders that you can eat for \$10.99. There are specials on beer, too.

The Strangest Place To Meet Someone You Should Have Already Known

By Mike Smith
NCRS # 11604

Last October my wife Ruth and I traveled to China for a two-week tour that she had scheduled with Travcoa, a travel agency that prides itself as the world leader in luxury travel. This article is not about Travcoa travel or our two-week trip to China. The cities and sights we visited while on our trip would be an entire article by itself. What I do want to share with you is how I met this lady I'm going to introduce or, in some cases, re-introduce to our Oklahoma Chapter members.

We arrived in Beijing, China, the day before the tour was to start so we could recover from the long (I do mean LONG) flight from Chicago to Beijing. The evening before the official start of the trip our tour director had a Welcome to Legendary China reception and cocktail party followed by a traditional Chinese Peking duck dinner.

Now to the meat of the story. Typical reception—head straight over to the bar and get a beverage of your choice, a plate of finger foods, and walk around and introduce yourself to the other people. After several introductions and a couple of glasses of our favorite beverages, a couple that we hadn't met walked over.

"Hi, I'm Ben and this is my wife Judy. We are from Potomac, Maryland."

"Nice to meet you. I'm Mike and this is my wife Ruth and we're from Tulsa, Oklahoma."

Judy asked Ruth, "Is this your first tour with Travcoa?"

"No, this is our third," Ruth answered.

Ben asked, "What do you do at home?"

"I owned a NAPA Auto Parts store, and about five years ago I sold it to NAPA Corporate. I'm retired." I answered.

Ben said, "I'm also retired. I owned a new car dealership. Other than travel what do you do in your spare time?"

"I spend most of my time working on my old cars," I replied. (By this time I noticed that a lady standing a couple of feet away seemed to be taking an interest in our conversation.)

Ben asked, "What kind of old cars?"

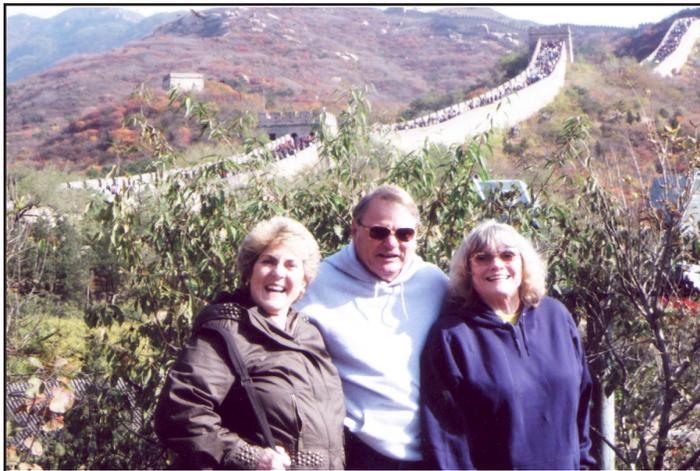
"Corvettes, Camaros, street rods, high performance," I answered.

"I also have two new Corvettes and a golf cart that has a Corvette look-a-like body on it," said Ben. (I noticed that the lady listening to Ben and me had moved closer.)

Ben asked me, "What kind of Vettes do you own?"

I answered, "a 2006 Z06 and a 1970 coupe."

Then the lady I have been talking about stepped up



and said, "My name is Maxine and I have 150 Corvettes!!!"

Nothing but a moment of silence from Ben and me. I thought to myself, "That'll work!!!"

I said, "Did I just hear you say '150 Corvettes'?"

Maxine said, "That's fairly accurate, plus we have other cars and lots of motorcycles. Mal, my husband, will need to confirm the exact number, but he's not on this trip."

I asked Maxine where she was from, and she said Calabasas, California. She heard me tell Ben that I

was from Oklahoma. That's where the story gets more interesting.

The first question Maxine asked me was did I know Howard Kirsh, Hans Norberg, Roy and Sheri Sinor? I couldn't believe it. Here we are in Beijing, China, and a person I just met asked me that question! I told Maxine that I sure did know all of them and that I'm also a long-time member of the Oklahoma Chapter.

I asked Maxine if she knew that Howard and Hans were no longer with us, and she did. Then I asked her how she and her husband knew these people from the Oklahoma NCRS Chapter. She told me that Mal and she brought a Corvette to the Joplin Regional Meet every year for judging. She said that the Kirsh family would always invite them to come a few days early to stay with them at their Grand Lake home to party and rest. After a few days of R and R, they would make their way to Joplin.

Maxine and Mal also attended other regional and national meets around the country and some of their fondest memories were of traveling to some of them in Howard Kirsh's motor home, which would always generate a little excitement in itself.

How is it possible over all of those years of Joplin Regionals, national conventions, and let's not forget all of those Bloomington Gold events that I never met Maxine or Mal? Well, the truth of it is that I just wasn't very active in our local chapter events, i.e., regional meets, and for that matter, I'm still not. Now you can see why I titled this article "The strangest place to meet someone you should have already known!!!"

My wife and I are looking forward to seeing Maxine and meeting Mal very soon. Hopefully that will happen at a Corvette function, i.e., local, regional, national event, Carlisle, Bloomington Gold, and many more Travcoa tours.

For members of the Oklahoma NCRS Chapter that know Mal and Maxine Winer, I'm sorry if I didn't mention your name, but this article puts the name of an old friend back in our minds. And for those chapter members who don't know Mal or Maxine, I hope you get the opportunity some day to meet them.

I asked Maxine to have Mal put together a short list of some of their Corvette collection, so it could be shared with our chapter members. It would be interesting to know what was left off of the list.

If you would like to say Hi to an old friend or meet a new friend, Mal and Maxine Winer can be reached by email at < mkwiner6@webtv.net >.

A list of Mal and Maxine's Corvettes

1. 1955 Red V8 powerglide. Ground up restoration.
While I was not looking, Mal sold all of his '53's and '54's.
2. 1956 Red V8 3 speed Ground up restoration.
3. 1958 Red 250 FI, both tops, soft top power. #003 4 speed.
4. 1961 270 4 speed, Original
5. 1963 conv. FI Daytona Blue/Red, 4 speed.
6. 1963 Blue split window coupe, FI 4 speed.
7. 1963 Saddle tan Z06 4 speed Ground up.
8. 1963 Split Window Z06 White/Black Ground up.
9. 1965 conv. Milano Maroon/Maroon, FI Ground up
10. 1965 coupe, Yellow/Black FI Original
11. 1965 conv. 396/425 HP Glen Green/green. Ground up
12. 1966 conv. Mossport green/green, 427/390 HP Air Cond. Older ground up.
13. 1966 coupe, Black/blue&white, 427/425 HP Ground up.
14. 1967 coupe, 427/435 HP Blue
15. 1967 coupe, 427/435 HP Maroon, Big Brakes.
16. 1967 conv, 427/400 HP Blue, Powerglide, air cond. and smog.
17. 1967 coupe, 427/400 HP Yellow, Powerglide, air.
18. 1967 coupe Red, Powerglide, 427/400 HP.
19. 1969 coupe, Silver/black, 427/400 HP Turbo Hydro Automatic.
20. 1972 coupe Red LT1 all original, 5000 miles.
21. 1972 conv. Red 454 4 speed.
22. 1975 conv. Silver/black L-82 4 speed.
23. 1978 Silver Anniversary L-82 4 speed, New
24. 1980 coupe, Black/Black L-82 4 speed.
25. 1987 conv. Red Callaway 4+3 Transmission, New

26. 1988 35th anniversary White Callaway Turbo Hydra, Overdrive, New. This is the only one of its kind left.
27. 1990 Cconv Red Callaway, 6 speed, New.
28. 1990 coupe, Callaway, Black/Black 6 speed, New.
29. 1990 coupe, ZR-1 Red/Saddle New.
30. 1996 conv. Silver/Black LT-4 6 speed New.
31. 1996 conv. Black/White stripe LT-4 6 speed Rare.
32. 2003 coupe, Yellow Z06 Supercharged.
33. 2004 coupe, Blue and silver Z06 Supercharged.
34. 2005 conv, yellow/black New
35. 2006 coupe. Yellow/ Black Z06 New
36. 2010 coupe. Cyber grey/black ZR-1 New

Loss Of Corvette A Turning Point For St. Louis Manufacturing

by Steve Giegerich
314-340-8172

In his Vette City office, the Cardinals' memorabilia on the walls gives the only hint of Eldon Renaud's former life in St. Louis. Renaud, the longtime head of the United Auto Workers here, is a proud Kentuckian now.

Things might have gone another way, both for him and the former Corvette plant at the corner of Union Boulevard and Natural Bridge Avenue, which churned out the iconic American sports car for the first quarter-century of its history.

Renaud still remembers the last-ditch trip to City Hall when he and other UAW officials begged St. Louis officials to match Kentucky's offer of tax breaks to General Motors. City officials listened politely before brushing the entreaty aside. Back then, losing one auto plant with 1,000 workers didn't seem such a big deal for a manufacturing hub then surpassed only by Detroit in production of cars.

"They just let us walk away," Renaud recalled. "Today, they'd give away the store for those jobs.

Thirty years have passed since the Corvette jobs migrated east in June 1981.

For the St. Louis workers who chose to move with the plant, the transition would prove difficult. Hundreds of well-paid unionized workers, particularly the African-Americans among them, weren't exactly welcomed to a smaller Southern city where locals felt entitled to the jobs.

For the city of St. Louis, the departure marked a disturbing turn in the local economy, though no one seemed to realize it at the time. The casual writing off of the Corvette plant — which would put Bowling Green on the map — seemed to kick open the door to a mass migration of manufacturing jobs, automotive and otherwise.

In the years since, a cornerstone of the regional economy has slowly crumbled, shedding middle-class jobs to largely nonunion, right-to-work states and, more recently, emerging economies overseas.

The St. Louis automobile industry once supported the families of more than 35,000 workers in and around the region. The 175-acre site in north St. Louis, where General Motors manufactured the Chevrolet Caprice, Impala station wagon and pickup truck in addition to the Corvette, alone had payroll of 13,000 through at least the 1970s. A business park now occupies the property.

From 1954 to 1981, Chevrolet manufactured 700,000 Corvettes on that tract of land, including every model of the iconic Sting Ray.

Today — five years after Ford closed its assembly plant in Hazelwood and two years after Chrysler shut down operations in Fenton — vehicle production in the St. Louis region has dwindled to a single shift at the GM utility van plant in Wentzville.

Meanwhile in Bowling Green, Renaud and hundreds of other St. Louis expatriates have bolted together 'Vettes in a city that has become synonymous with the crown jewel of American muscle cars.

Today, about 430 hourly employees churn out 69 Corvettes a day.

The car has spawned tourism too, with the construction of the National Corvette Museum and events year-round that draw nearly 150,000 of the faithful each year. Corvette, says museum director Wendell Strode, is "one of the finest industries we have in Bowling Green."

Moving on

The arrival of hundreds of St. Louis workers in Kentucky, which surprised both GM and the residents of Bowling Green, was bound to cause friction. But the company, in a series of botched calculations, made things worse.

By the end of the summer of 1981, 950 St. Louis GM workers had joined the exodus to a place where the 50,000 residents informed the newcomers in countless ways that they weren't welcome. The company had never figured so many St. Louis workers would take it up on the offer to leave their homes.

Strode, then a bank executive with ties to the Bowling Green Chamber of Commerce, traces the backlash to a decision by GM to train 750 Warren County, Ky., residents with the promise of jobs at the new plant, a retooled Chrysler operation at the edge of town.

Were it not for the promised jobs, Strode said, the arrival of the St. Louis workers might not have caused such a stir.

Nathaniel "Nate" Moseley, who made the move and works at the plant to this day, recalls the difficult decision and the slights from Kentuckians that accompanied his arrival.

Down to his final severance checks after a 1979 layoff, the last-minute option General Motors offered — a job in Kentucky — caught Moseley and other workers by surprise. The choice: Try to scrape by until a job materialized at the opening of a GM plant under construction in Wentzville, or move south for a paycheck now. Given just a week to decide, Moseley took the paycheck.

Now in his 43rd year as a GM employee, Moseley had then never even heard of Bowling Green. "I knew nothing about it," he said.

The St. Louis plant had to close. It would die of old age. Workers had been making cars there since the onset of mass automotive production in the 1920s.

Facing a costly upgrade to meet emissions standards imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency, GM chose the less costly alternative of building a new factory in Wentzville to assemble its mainstream vehicles, but not the more costly Corvette production line.

The company had figured most St. Louis workers would opt to take jobs at the Wentzville plant. But

delays in the plant's opening put the squeeze on laid-off workers. The clock was ticking on unemployment benefits paid to the St. Louis production employees sidelined by the 1978-79 downturn in domestic car sales.

It marked the end of a sad decade in the history of American car companies, who had responded meekly to the 1970s energy crisis with a stream of slow, unremarkable, unreliable cars that allowed Japanese imports to gain a foothold in the market they would never relinquish. Even Corvettes of the day were fitted with anemic engines making less than 200 horsepower — less than half the power of many 1960s 'Vettes.

By 1981, many St. Louis GM workers could no longer wait. As spring drifted toward summer, the UAW reminded the displaced workers that they contractually had the right to claim jobs that materialized at other GM plants.

Ron Barton, then an 11-year GM veteran, decided to exercise his prerogative. He had to choose among three sites. "Went to Janesville (*Wisconsin*). Too cold. Went to Shreveport (*Louisiana*). Didn't like it," Barton said.

He packed his bags for Bowling Green.

Unwelcome neighbors

Today, now retired from the plant, Barton has remained in Bowling Green. He works as a "delivery specialist" with a program that presents customers with their Vette keys in a ceremony that ends with the drivers' exiting the Corvette Museum to a rousing ovation.

It's a contrast to the reception Bowling Green afforded Barton and his fellow St. Louisans three decades ago.

Many of them arrived in Kentucky without their families, which seemed like a slap in the face to Bowling Green residents, who assumed the St. Louisans would bolt when opportunities materialized elsewhere.

In fact, most wives and children were left behind because the UAW demanded quick decisions, which left no time to market and sell their houses in St. Louis. In lieu of putting down permanent roots, plant workers bunked three to four in a mobile home or apartment, commuting to St. Louis at the end of the Friday shift before making the return trip to Bowling Green on Sunday night.

The exact number of employees living in two cities

became evident the winter Monday in 1982 when Corvette operations in Bowling Green were suspended because a paralyzing weekend snowstorm stranded hundreds of UAW workers in St. Louis. (*In 1983, GM called off Corvette production entirely, making the strategic decision to retool for a redesigned and much improved 1984 Corvette.*)

The contempt shown the interloping St. Louisans was meted out by officials and citizens alike. J.D. Davis, who started making Corvettes in 1966 and makes them to this day, was pulled over and ticketed for not having a Kentucky license tag as he drove to the Bowling Green plant for his first day of work.

Barton recalls salespeople arbitrarily raising the prices of furniture or real estate upon learning a customer was a GM employee. The wives of plant workers were denied employment by hiring managers who informed them a second job was superfluous in households where the primary breadwinner earned a union salary.

And when former St. Louis plant worker Bob Thomas went to court in an attempt to recoup the cost of funeral services from the driver of a car that fatally injured his daughter, the first question asked by presiding judge was: "Are you a member of the UAW?"

Nor did the resentment focus solely on envy over union salaries doled out to carpetbaggers in a right-to-work state. In 1981, only about 6 percent of the 71,000 people living in Warren County were African-American.

"Before GM came here, I think I knew every black that lived in Bowling Green and Warren County," said current Bowling Green Mayor Joe Denning, the first African-American to hold that post. "Maybe not by name, but I might have known someone was Mrs. so-and-so's grandson."

Corvette altered the social fabric of Warren County in two consequential ways. It added 133 black workers and, in many cases, their families to the population. And their paychecks on the Corvette line exceeded the take-home pay of almost every white worker in Warren County.

"For the first time, (*Bowling Green*) saw black people with good-paying jobs, driving nice cars and buying nice homes," Renaud said. "And what was already happening in the rest of the country — the establishment of the black middle class — caused some people in this community to believe, 'These guys are getting our jobs.'"

Happy marriage

In what Dunning describes as “a work in progress,” even today, the antipathy Bowling Green directed at big-city outsiders has dissipated over time. The grudge began to ease, he said, as the families of the GM workers joined husbands and fathers in Warren County.

Soon, Bowling Green natives worshipped side-by-side with UAW members on Sunday mornings as their children befriended one another at school and became teammates on Little League fields.

Perhaps the most potent signal of Bowling Green’s willingness to let bygones be bygones was the 1996 election. The one that installed Renaud — the president of the UAW Local 2164 — as mayor of Bowling Green.

The home of Western Kentucky University, the state’s third-largest city (population 58,000) in 2011 sprawls outward from historic Fountain Square Park downtown to the ubiquitous strip shopping centers and fast food franchises found on the fringes of urban cores across America.

The near unanimous verdict in Bowling Green today, Dunning says, would name Corvette “the best new company our community has ever had.”

Davis — more than 44 years after GM hired him on the spot and 30 years after his rocky welcome to Bowling Green — continues to play an integral role in the production of every Corvette: He orchestrates the “marriage” that weds the Corvette’s fiberglass body to the chassis bearing the car’s 430-horsepower engine.

Moseley, also hired in 1966, can literally be found at the end of the line, giving each vehicle a final inspection, along with a pat on the taillights for good luck. Base prices for today’s Corvette range from \$49,045 to \$110,300. Domestic Corvette sales in 2010 totaled 12,624.

The price of a base model 1981 Corvette started at \$16,258 and, with various options, could run to approximately \$20,000. Chevrolet manufactured 39,230 ‘Vettes in the only year the car was produced in two cities, 31,590 in St. Louis.

The pristine factory to which the men report each morning is far removed from the “inhumane” conditions in St. Louis, Moseley says.

“The temperatures were over 100 in the summer, and you’d freeze to death in the winter,” he recalls. Workers departed each night marred by scratches

inflicted from raw fiberglass.

Marking its 30th year in Bowling Green, GM publicly recommitted to a relationship that will keep Corvette in southwestern Kentucky into the next decade.

Spurred by \$7.5 million in state tax incentives, GM announced in May that it would invest \$131 million to refurbish the plant for the launch of the seventh-generation Corvette, tentatively scheduled for 2013.

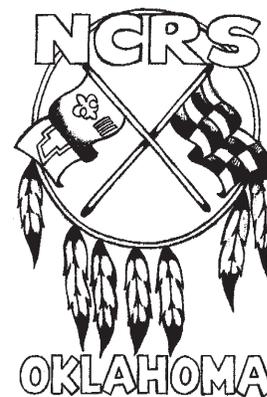
The launch will add an estimated 250 jobs to the 430 hourly UAW hourly employees currently working in the plant. Only five workers remain from the 950 that came to Bowling Green 30 years ago.

Now a Kentuckian through and through, Renaud still can’t help wondering what might have been had St. Louis officials reacted differently when the UAW came calling in 1981.

“When you think about it, St. Louis was once synonymous with the Cardinals, with Anheuser-Busch and so many other companies that we were all proud of. Corvette was part of that scene, and I thought it always would be,” said Renaud.

“But,” the former mayor hastened to add, “we’re glad to be here.”

(Posted: Sunday, July 10, 2011 12:05 am
BOWLING GREEN, KY. and
brought to our attention by Mike Aichele)



Corvette Classified

For Sale: '08 Coupe — white with striping ; 3LT ; see 60 pictures and all inf. at traderjks.com
3300 (little less) miles ; \$39,995.

Contact Brad Williams at 918 / 641-1224
or 918 / 232-0238

Upcoming Events

- Feb 4 Oklahoma Chapter Breakfast Meeting - Ollie's Station Restaurant - 4070 Southwest Blvd - Tulsa, OK
Feb 21 Attitude Adjustment Night - Rib Crib Restaurant - 8040 South Yale Ave. - Tulsa, OK
Mar 3 Oklahoma Chapter Breakfast Meeting - Ollie's Station Restaurant - 4070 Southwest Blvd - Tulsa, OK
Mar 8-10 NCRS Arizona Chapter Regional - Tucson, Arizona - See current *Driveline* for info
May 3-5 Northwest-NCRS Regional - Seaside, Oregon - See current *Driveline* for info
Jun 7-9 North central NCRS Regional - Rochester, Minnesota - See current *Driveline* for info
Jun 30-Jul 4 NCRS National Convention - San Diego, California - See current *Driveline* for info
Sept 6-9 Pennsylvania NCRS Regional - Altoona, Pennsylvania
Oct 11-13 Texas NCRS Regional - Frisco, Texas



Thanks to Brad Williams and Mazzio's for continuing to support the Oklahoma Chapter NCRS. We appreciate your help.

NCRS Communication

To keep up to date with the latest news from your Oklahoma Chapter NCRS and your Region VII Director, be sure to advise Bob Clark or Don Partridge of any e-mail address changes. This also applies to phone numbers and new mailing addresses.

If your address is not current, then you will not receive the latest news and information.

Editor's Corner



Help!!!

Thanks to Mike Smith & Mike Aichele for their contributions to this issue.

Thanks also go to Jim Elder, Neal Kennedy and Verle Randolph for their continuing help in folding and mailing.

*** **Please** think about writing an article or contributing an item of interest for the newsletter. This can be a tech tip you've found, an article to reprint from another publication that would be of interest, a personal experience that would interest other members, or an item of news about the chapter or its members. Remember, include pictures if you can. Your Corvette classified ads are welcome, too. You can mail, e-mail, FAX, or loan me a diskette or flash drive (Windows or Macintosh). **Remember!!** Your help is needed to make this newsletter a voice of our chapter!

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