

The Queen City Corvette Gazette



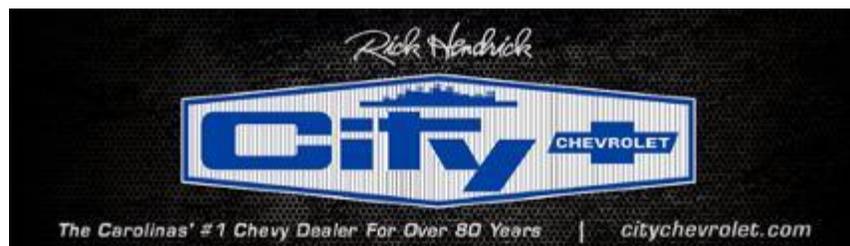
Official Newsletter of NC's Largest Corvette Club

June 2021



QCCC Business Meeting

Date: Saturday June 12, 2021
Location: Charlotte Motor Speedway
Time: Social at 4pm, Meeting starts at 5pm



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The **Queen City Corvette Gazette** is the official newsletter of the Queen City Corvette Club (QCCC), established in 1968, and is electronically published and distributed monthly by volunteers and members of QCCC.. Additional information regarding QCCC is available at our website: www.queencitycorvette.com . QCCC is a non-profit club (501(c)(7)) whose members all share a common appreciation and love of America's Sports Car – the Corvette. Dues and donations are not tax deductible. In addition to various social activities for members, QCCC raises money for and participates with various local charities. We strive to promote exciting, safe and fun ways to enjoy our Corvettes. We hold business meetings on the second Saturday of each month. Our monthly business meeting usually incorporates social time. After an initiation fee of \$10.00 per person, club dues are \$100 per year to be paid semiannually or annually. These dues go to cover the cost of programs, events, running the club, and subsidizing the cost of our meetings. Club officers and supporting staff serve as volunteers. To become a member of the QUEEN CITY CORVETTE CLUB, you must be at least 21 years of age, own a Corvette and attend at least three (3) monthly business meetings within a six-month period. Come check us out – we love to meet fellow Corvette Enthusiasts! For additional membership information, visit https://queencitycorvette.com/?page_id=330 or contact our Membership Director at membership@queencitycorvette.com . We would love to have you join us for a monthly business meeting. If you can't join us, please WAVE!

QCCC's mailing address is: Queen City Corvette Club, PO Box 574 Paw Creek, NC 28130

Please visit the [QCCC web site Archive page](#) for previous issues of the Gazette



Queen City

Corvette Conversations

~ Paul Mitchell, President

It's finally summer, and it sure feels nice. Add to that the normalcy of everything, and it feels even better. Like the first Cars 'n Coffee event at the Speedway since long ago. Lots of QCCC members joining about 400+ other car lovers for a nice day of looking and comradery. And a (almost) perfect day for the Shelton Vineyards event. Forty QCCC Corvettes joining over 100 more for a day that is one of our favorites. So now it's June, it's summer, and we got tons to do.

One favorite event that we missed last year is the Too Much Sylvia concert at the Kannapolis Village Park Concert. The concert is Saturday, June 19 at 7:00 at 700 West C Street. This has been a popular event for QCCC members. Bring your chairs and blankets and enjoy our favorite band playing in a beautiful setting. More details coming in a Blast.

Please consider taking a leadership (board or staff) position in QCCC. There are some spots open for 2022 that may interest you. Our 53 years of success is largely due to the involvement and dedication of the members serving the club over this period of time. Contact any current Board Member to get more information.

Our newsletter editor, Angela Brannick is moving to SC soon, so she will be passing the editor job to another member. While we have an interim solution, let us know if you have an interest in doing this job. Thanks to Angela for her great job with the newsletter the past couple of years.

Speedway Club, here we come! Our June meeting will be at one of our favorite meeting spots, and we are glad to return. So be sure to put this on your calendar – June 12. And don't forget we will be back here for our (postponed) banquet on August 21, as well as our November meeting. Yep, we are getting back to normal! :)

Thank you to all our new members that have joined us during the strange times, and for your participation. You took a leap of faith in joining when we were not able to be very active, but now buckle up, cause we gonna be mashing the throttle hard with things to do. And thank you to all our long term members for sticking with us as well. I am very proud of QCCC and the way that we stuck together and survived the pandemic stronger than ever. Again, QCCC makes me so proud.

Sun's out, warm weather, let's do it!!!

Love 'em, drive 'em, cherish 'em. It'll make you and your car smile.

Social Scene



SOCIAL DIRECTOR

~ Donna Berst ~

Thank you to everyone who could make it to our May meeting. It was a bittersweet time for remembering our dear QCCC friends, who we lost to Covid. They will be “Forever in Our Hearts!”

Being able to “see” your smiles again has been wonderful! Matching names and entire faces to our newest members has been especially fun. 😊

Check out our upcoming meetings & events and join us, as you feel safe!

Saturday June 12, 2021 QCCC BUSINESS MEETING at the Charlotte Motor Speedway
5555 Concord Pkwy, Concord, NC 28027 **4pm Social – 5pm Meeting.** QCCC Apparel will be available during the social hour, to try on & purchase.

Saturday June 19, 2021 CARAVAN TO LUNCH at **Little Switzerland Inn** in the NC mountains
AND/OR Enjoy the band **Too Much Sylvia** in **concert at the** Village Park Amphitheater - 700 West C Street Kannapolis, NC 28081 from 7-10pm. Look for BLASTS.

Saturday July 3, 2021 TROUTMAN FOURTH OF JULY PARADE. Look for upcoming email Blasts!

Saturday July 10, 2021 QCCC BUSINESS MEETING at Billy Boat Exhaust
4pm Social – 5pm Meeting 125 Infield Court, Mooresville 28117

Saturday July 17, 2021 CARS & COFFEE at the Charlotte Motor Speedway & 6pm THE EMBERS
at Concerts on the Deck in North Wilksboro. Look for email Blasts.

Saturday August 14, 2021 QCCC ANNIVERSARY & BUSINESS MEETING

Saturday August 21, 2021 QCCC BANQUET **Mark your calendars** to join us for an Elegant Luau at the Charlotte Motor Speedway Club. There you will enjoy an outstanding dinner followed by a fun filled night of entertainment by the renowned band TOO MUCH SYLVIA! A self-pay bar will be open throughout the evening. More details to follow in upcoming BLASTS.

Friday, August 27 through Sunday, August 29 MAGGIE VALLEY OVERNIGHTER

Coordinators: Tom & Terri Pennoni t_pennoni@hotmail.com We will once again be staying at the Maggie Valley Creekside Lodge. To reserve a room please call 828-926-1301 **Maggie Valley Creekside Lodge** 2716 Soco Rd., Maggie Valley, NC 28751. Tell Them you are with QCCC. **Once you have made your motel reservations send an email to t_pennoni@hotmail.com** so that he can keep you updated on any changes or details.

Friday September 17 – Sunday September 19, 2021 OKTOBERFEST TRIP TO HELEN, GA.

This is a fun filled weekend trip! Make your reservations at the **Baymont Hotel** (706) 878-2111. The price is \$139.00 per night for 2 queen beds plus tax. *Be sure to tell them that you are with the Queen City Corvette Club to get the special rate.* **Email Steve Bonino once you have made your room reservations.**

vettegs17@gmail.com to be put on the list of those attending. Steve will then email you more details and things to do in the area around Helen for Saturday when you will be on your own to sightsee.

Saturday October 2, 2021 QCCC CHARITY CAR SHOW at Hendrick Motorsports

Thursday/Friday October 21 or 22 to Sunday October 24, 2021 NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

TRIP **Contact Dick Gwilt** rgwilt@me.com for more information. Make your reservations (mention QCCC for special rooms/rate) **Ocean Drive Beach and Golf Resort** 98 N. Ocean Blvd. North Myrtle Beach SC 29582 www.oceandrivesort.com 843-249-1436 800-438-9590

Please let Ron or me know if you have any ideas, for future QCCC trips or cruise-ins!

See You all SOON!!!!!!!

Donna Berst ~ 2021 QCCC Social Director

It's not where you go... but who you travel with that makes the journey special!



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Rick Hendrick City Chevrolet

Effective February 1, 2020

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I'm dedicated to rebuilding the relationship between the Queen City Corvette Club and Rick Hendrick City Chevrolet. Our team is looking forward to further fostering the connection through the mutual support of our organizations. You have my commitment.

Chris Boone, General Manager

NEW VEHICLES

Members pay "Employee Pricing" on all NEW, in-stock Chevrolet vehicles (C8 Corvette, select new models, and specialty vehicles excluded). Rebates and/or incentives will be applied. Extra costs may apply for locates, transportation or specialty vehicles.

PRE-OWNED VEHICLES

Retail in-stock vehicles may be purchased for \$500 over inventory amount. Extra costs may apply for transportation or specialty vehicles. Vehicle must pass NCSI through our service department. Over 8000 pre-owned vehicles available through our Hendrick network. Shipping costs may apply.

PARTS & SERVICE

15% discount off posted customer-pay rate for GM original equipment parts and service labor. May not be combined with other coupons or specials.

REFERRAL BONUS

We'll thank you with a \$100 gift card when you refer a non-QCCC member who purchases a vehicle. Friends and Family of QCCC Members will receive a 10% service discount.

COLLISION CENTER

10% discount off customer-pay rates. Not applicable on insurance claims or rates.

QCCC MEMBER PURCHASE CONCIERGE

Rick Accurso

Inventory Manager & Corvette Specialist

704-566-7447

Rick.Accurso@hendrickauto.com

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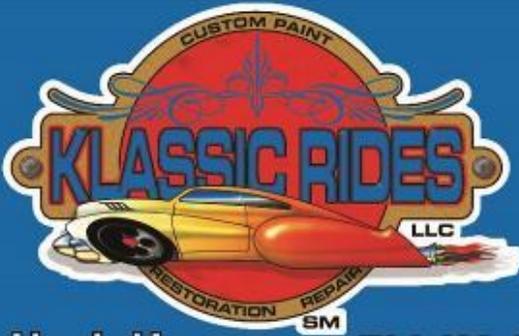
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Happy Summer!

It's finally here - the first days of 90 degree temperatures. A great time to head to the beaches or to the mountains. Last month we had a great showing at the VFW meeting to pay tribute to John Jensen, Paul Mariano, Bob McCall, and Iris Binder. Thank you to all that attended. Please remember to touch base with their spouses during their tough times and keep them in your prayers.

In other news, our newsletter publisher Angela Brannick has informed us she will have to step down as she and Bill are relocating to South Carolina. Please thank Angela for her great work in taking all our various articles and making us all look good.

Now lets' thank Paige Mitchell for stepping up to the plate and taking over the newsletter. Especially since she works full-time and still offered to do this.

QCCC always has and always will need volunteers to keep this awesome club the best car club around. Please, if you have just a little bit of time, and a call to help this club continue, you don't need any special training, just a willingness to be part of a great team. You can contact any Board member if you have any questions.

One more thing . . .

We just had what Roger said is maybe one of the best car events of the season at Shelton Vineyards. If you were not part of the 45+ cars QCCC came in with, you missed a great day. Please thank Roger and Dee Dee for coordinating this fun event and holding off the big semi-trucks at the rest stop where we gathered beforehand.

Now for future events, we are excited to return to one of our favorite spots to have our monthly member meeting - The Speedway Club at Charlotte Motor Speedway!

Upcoming QCCC Meeting schedule:

June 12 - Speedway Club at Charlotte Motor Speedway - 4:00

July 10 – Billy Boat Exhaust in Mooresville - 4:00

August 14 - Hendrick Motor Sports - time TBD

Look for future BLASTS for schedules and details.

This is what its' all about!

Lets' have some fun in 2021!

Dick Gwilt, VP

704-651-8613





MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

June

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS:

Total Membership	341
Total Families	187
Prospective Members	44
New Members Year to Date	19
Avg. Monthly Attendance	84

NEW MEMBERS:

David & Debby Nowlan
 Indian Trail, NC
 Corvette: 2016 Long Beach Red Convertible

Micah Patterson
 Charlotte, NC
 Corvette: 1993 Black Coupe



Richard Panuski

Davidson, NC

Corvette: 1962 White Convertible



Bill & Cheryl Bitters

Mooresville, NC

Corvette: 2021 Red Mist Metallic Coupe



Dale Ledbetter

Indian Trail, NC

Corvette: 2021 C8



Justin Cross

QCCC Membership Director



Barbara Mariano- We received a Thank You note from Barbara and for those of you that didn't read it in the C&C Blast I'll post it now:

QCCC Members- Thank you so much for the cards, e-mails, texts, and thoughts and prayers. Also thank you to those that sent donations to the National Corvette Museum in Paul's name. His loves were Family, QCCC, NCM and all things Corvette. Also, thank you for respecting our privacy with no phone calls. However, feel free to call now, I would love to hear from you.

I am keeping the Z06 and Mike, Karin and I will return to the Club in time. The children and two grandsons are taking good care of me.

On March 15, Paul and I celebrated our 64th Anniversary. I have 64 years of wonderful memories of a life well lived. He will be with me forever.

Again, thanks to all

Barb Vettld@aol.com

Al Kessel- Continuing his fight with treatments to fight pancreatic cancer. Please continue to keep Al & Gerri in your prayers as they go through this difficult time. They both attended our meeting at the VFW Post and it was great to see them both. Continue to give them your support with cards and emails.

alkessel42@gmail.com



Norm Lontz- Norm is continuing his fight with Cancer and is also still taking his Immunotherapy. He has 2 more months to go and they will evaluate him. The dermatologist watches him closely every 4 weeks. Every 8 weeks he sees his surgeon. He may have another surgery after the treatment, but the surgeon has not made that decision yet. His lab-work each month has very good results and so far his COVID tests are negative. Please continue with your prayers for Joyce & Norm.

nllontz@aol.com

Pat Motta- Pat is suffering from Metastatic Breast cancer. Prayers are requested for Bob and Pat. Cards, emails, and notes are welcome.

Email: ramrace@aol.com Address: 12725 Green Ashe Drive Huntersville 28078.

COVID 19 and Cancer- Prayers for QCCC Members, Family and Friends-

Special prayers for all our QCCC Members, Family and close friends that have COVID. Praying that God keeps them safe and heals them. This has been a terrible pandemic and it has affected our Corvette Club in many ways. We also pray for the underlining illnesses such as respiratory and other diseases that affect this Virus and make it more lethal. Praying that Our Lord keeps us all safe in our Club.

There are also people in the Club that are suffering with Cancer. Their names are not mentioned here because they want to keep it private. If you know of any of these individuals continue to keep them in your thoughts and prayer, and by all means send them a card- "I am thinking of you" or drop them an email. They need all the positive thoughts, prayers and "lifting up" that you can give them. It only takes a few minutes and can make a great difference.

NOTE: I will be continuing with Care & Compassion for 2021. If you would like to be placed on the list send me an email. We all need care, compassion & prayers when we are sick. Please do not hesitate to place your name on the list.

Paul Schmitt- paulandchristineschmitt@gmail.com



AUTOMOTIVE INSIDER

June still looks a little quiet on the automotive front. I will send a blast with details if any June events get scheduled. The normal June Dale Earnhardt Chevrolet Car Show has been canceled. Have a couple of events in mind, stay tuned. Cars & Coffee events are listed below.

Miscellaneous Pictures from various local Cars & Coffee events



JUNE AUTOMOTIVE SCHEDULE

- June 12th – Waterbean Cars & Coffee Cornelius, NC
- June 19th – Charlotte Motor Speedway Cars & Coffee Concord, NC
- June 26th – LNK Cars & Coffee Mooresville, NC

Roger Winge
Automotive Events Director

QCCC Car Show Update



We have only 4 more months till our 10 Annual Corvette Show at Hendrick Motorsport Complex. This is a club event and we expect all QCCC member to participate. If you have a legitimate reason for not being able to attend you need to contact me as soon as possible. We need you to sign up your Corvette, register to work and bring a donated item. Donna Berst is collecting items for the silent auction and I am collecting door prize items and goody bag items. Please get involved and make this the biggest club event ever. We are again expecting over 500 Corvettes at the show. We are in need of help in all areas, especially parking and judging. See our team leaders and volunteer your services.

I know this sounds like a broken record, and it is. We need you!!!

Tommy Loftin, QCCC Car Show Coordinator

QCCC Charity

Wings of Eagles Ranch



Our 2022 Charity Committee has been approved by the Board of Directors and consist of the following people: Brenda Loftin, Chairperson, Tommy Loftin, Reggie and Suze Black, John and Wendy Callahan, Ken and Louis Watts, Jane Burt, Dick Gwilt, Ron Berst and Michael Bullard.

QCCC's 2021 Charity Committee has been very active promoting Wings of Eagles Ranch this year. We have had 2 workdays at The Ranch this year and the club has attended their Blue-Ribbon Horse Show on May 15th with over 20 Corvettes for the kids to see and some of our members let the kids sit in their Corvettes for photos. This is truly a special place for challenged kids of all ages and it is a blessing for QCCC to be able to participate in this.

Brenda Loftin, QCCC Charity Committee Chairperson



Happy June Birthdays!!!!

Hi QCCC Members!

June – what a great month to visit the beach, spend a day at the pool, and of course, drive our Corvettes. Wishing for bright sunny days and lots of fun times for all. Time to celebrate our June Member Birthdays!!!

Please join us in celebrating our member birthdays here in the QCCC Newsletter every month – as well as during our in-person Club Meetings.

The **June** QCCC Birthdays are listed below. Please join me in wishing everyone on the list...

A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

As we announced at the April Club Meeting, we are returning to our previous process of drawing and presenting the Darden Restaurant Birthday Gift Card during the monthly Club Meeting. So please plan to attend the **June Club Meeting** at the [Speedway Club in Concord](#) to see who our lucky Gift Card winner will be!!!! Check out the QCCC Website Calendar for details.

Hope to see you all there!!!

And Happy Father's Day to all you Dads!!!

Carolyn Zimmer

QCCC Secretary

CarolynZ77@yahoo.com



QCCC BIRTHDAYS*



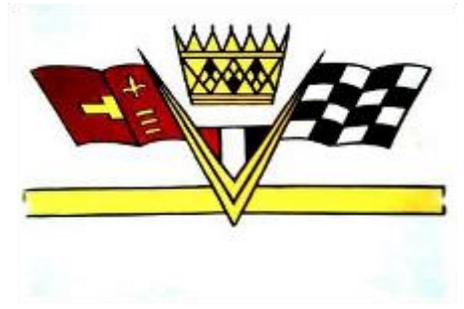
June

- 6/1 Craig Perry**
- 6/1 Karin Mariano**
- 6/1 Dora McKenna**
- 6/3 Kim Kadel**
- 6/5 Donn Kegel**
- 6/8 Teresa Boger**
- 6/9 Sopheap Bayne**
- 6/10 Margo Gross**
- 6/16 Paul Mitchell**
- 6/16 Cindy Peoples**
- 6/17 Brenda Smith**
- 6/19 Tim Roche**
- 6/20 Martha Short**
- 6/21 Nelson Sprague**
- 6/22 Jerry Fitzgerald**
- 6/22 George Ganzhorn**
- 6/24 Mona Roselle**
- 6/25 Misty Fisher**
- 6/25 Ken Brown**
- 6/27 Kelly Cross**
- 6/27 Jim Echols**
- 6/27 Patricia Vettorino**
- 6/30 Corvette's birthday**

*QCCC Members: If you would like your Birthday added or deleted from our Birthday List, please send an email to QCCC Secretary Carolyn Zimmer, carolynz77@yahoo.com.

Vintage QCCC

***With the Vintage Gang: Bill Cruthis 1974,
Bill Ingram 1973, Darrell Kirkley 1973,
and Travis Meredith 1970***



How did we get here?

Our four vintage members are closing in on 50 years from first meeting thru QCCC. I was curious to understand what was the glue that kept these friendships going. Life brings gaps due to jobs, family, relocation, and so much more. How did we manage to maintain the desire to pursue more Corvettes? I decided I would canvass them and share the answers to the following questions:

- 1. When did you first develop automotive interests?*
- 2. Did anyone in your family influence you, if not who did?*
- 3. Where did you learn your first automotive repair skills?*
- 4. What was your first car and how did you maintain it?*
- 5. Did your father influence you, did he have tools to learn?*
- 6. When did you decide Corvette was your car?*
- 7. How did you manage to keep a Corvette since about 1964?*
- 8. What was your 1st Corvette and about how many have u owned?*

DOLLAR BILL INGRAM: A graduate of USC and certified accountant. Started selling Corvettes out of his basement on Summerhill Dr. - it held 5 cars. Next, he moved to a small building just off 74 south. Once he outgrew that he oved on to a building out by the airport. Then back to rt. 74. Then owned Southern Imports on 74, selling many brands especially used Mercedes. An encyclopedia of facts about all cars, he finally owned a Hummer dealership on Rt.74. Question is where did he get all that knowledge and ability? For a CPA he knows a lot about cars and how they function!

When he was 9, he saw a new 57 Chevy at his church and thought it was really stunning and he has been interested in all types of cars ever since.

An uncle had an MG TD and a 59 Corvette which Bill could sit in and shift the gears when he was young. Another uncle had a turquoise 59 Ford Galaxie 500 with the retractable hardtop, which was the coolest thing he had seen at the time.

He bought a \$200 55 base Chevy six cylinder with 3 on the tree. He swapped a 327 v8 and Borg Warner 4 speed into it in his parent's carport while home from school because of snow. (I have seen that carport with his 67 Corvette big block in it getting cleaned for the Washington D.C. car show)

Vintage QCCC



With the Vintage Gang: Bill Cruthis 1974, Bill Ingram 1973, Darrell Kirkley 1973, and Travis Meredith 1970

First car: 55 Chevy 6 cylinder three speed on the column. Worked on it in the carport with a set of craftsman tools bought with earnings from summer jobs.

His father viewed cars as a way to get from point A to B. He owned no tools to aid in car repairs.

Sold on Corvettes sitting in his uncles 59 and later when a guy in junior high drove a 62 with the top down to school and right then he would have one someday.

Bought first Corvette in 1971. Then after 84 only ones he had were in his dealer inventory until he bought his 2016 Z06.

Favorite Corvette: 1967 Marina Blue convertible 327/350 hp air, pw. It had been auto-crossed and had Koni shocks. It handled well, previous owner did not mention it had been hit in the front. He put a crate motor LT-1 in and added factory side pipes for \$200 at QCCC sponsor Lapointe Chevrolet.

For being self-taught I believe it is astonishing all that Bill has accomplished. Seems like he did it all on his own. What a great story. Owning car dealerships kept him around cars and Corvette only brought him back with the C-7 Z06. He has enjoyed that car more than any other brand, and trust me, he has driven most world class cars over the years. Join me in saluting Dollar Bill for a job well done.

Little known facts: he was QCCC treasurer in 1975. It was his idea to incorporate QCCC in 1976.

TRAVLIN TRAV MEREDITH: *About a zillion years working in auto body shops learning everything automotive. Trav was born in 47 with a grandfather being a model T mechanic, while the other grandfather liked cars keeping his Packard even though there was no gas or tires due to WWII. His dad was selling Lincolns and Mercurys when his unit was called up again to go to Korea, but he died after a botched tonsillectomy. Trav was 4. In 56 age 9, he got exposed to Nascar and became a fan of Billy Myers in his number 14 Mercury. Another uncle visited from California. An engineer who was into building models, making Trav a 56 Cadillac convertible. He started building model cars and interest in anything with 4 wheels grew. Trav took Hot Rod magazine in 1957 and still has every copy. His mom had a 51 Mercury which he tried to remove the hood bird and ornament to customize it by filling the holes with plastic wood. How did that work, "not too good" but here we see the start of the auto body future. At 18 along came his first car, 65 Comet Caliente coupe, 289 4spd which tortured the streets as a North Charlotte kid. His friends acquired big block cars, 442's, a 3 deuce GTO etc. So to keep up the Comet went and a 68 396 Chevelle arrived. Headers, a Hurst shifter, tricked up distributor, and carburetor, yielded a bad ride often seen at Shuffletown Dragstrip. He was headed for a serious dragstrip future but saving him that fate: Late in 69 he landed a corporate job at Burroughs Corp and his boss Jim Whitley (QCCC President '73) and he became friends. Jim had a tired 66 Mustang. Jim next shows up with a new 69 Corvette while another friend acquires a 67 350 Corvette convertible. This was the 1st one he ever drove and he was hooked. A dealer friend in York, S.C. was willing to order him a new 70 when the insurance man informed him of the premiums. He was 23 with several moving violations. O.K. off to find a used one. Griffin Chevrolet in Monroe had 4 on the*

Vintage QCCC



With the Vintage Gang: Bill Cruthis 1974, Bill Ingram 1973, Darrell Kirkley 1973, and Travis Meredith 1970

showroom floor. The red 64 coupe 327, 365 hp, 4 spd, was the cheapest, and even then he needed his 396 Chevelle plus \$500. Cashing in his travel allotment at Burroughs, and scraping his coins together he made it. That was May 1970. Then he and Jim Whitley were exposed to QCCC. (sounds like a virus doesn't it), thru a mutual friend. They then joined later that year. Trav has owned 63 coupe, 68 roadster, 72 coupe, 79 coupe, and 03 Z06. His 64 has always been "my car" having done a body off restoration where he had to touch every nut, bolt, screw, clip, fastener etc.

So now we have another self-taught, up by the boot straps great story of a diehard Corvette enthusiast. The good news, Sharon was able to see thru all the growing pains to a great future.

Some lesser known facts: He was QCCC President 72 & 76, VP 75, newsletter editor most of the decade of 70's. Signed original QCCC incorporation papers, QCCC historian since 2014. 2015 QCCC Lifetime Service Achievement Award

We salute Travis for a job well done. The skills and intellect were there and he certainly applied himself. So with our first two vintage members we see how the Corvette Culture kept them around for 52 years.

Darrell Kirkley aka: Turkey, Turkley. Nickname came from Trav's young daughter trying to say Kirkley, came out Turkley which QCCC gladly changed to Turkey.

Darrell started with cars when he was 3 years old (literally). Back in June of '51 when folks left their keys in the car, he figured that by sitting on his knees he could steer and when you are racing who needs brakes. He proceeded thru his folk's shrubs and several neighbor's gardens and yards until finally hitting a swing set anchored in concrete. He was in the Observer early on. Then in January '64 he took drivers ed. The teacher noticed his name and asked if he used to live on Kingsbury and he said yes at which time teacher Bernard Roper noted that Darrell was the 3 year old that drove thru his yard. Small world. Darrell's first car was a 60 silver Impala Convertible with red and white innards. Price \$1050 which he struggled to come up with. Seems we all had a cash flow problem. After high school he went east for Uncle Sam to fly airplanes for the Army. His two interests were driving a race car and flying planes. He really does well with the need for speed. In '73 he stopped by a tire store looking for recaps, the owner had a box truck that he would toss the used rubber in. For \$80 would he drive the tires to the tire dump plus get 4 retread tires. He agreed and planned a route thru town where he would pass LaPointe Chevrolet, which as he did a red 74 convertible caught his eye. Coming in from a nasty truck full of tires caught the salesman's eye (Steve Estep), so assistance was slow to come. September '73 and the price for the Corvette was \$6600. Darrell asked if they would take \$6000 and they did. Knowing a banker he was able to secure the funds. He auto crossed the car in QCCC in 74 and 75 but found it too slow so he sold in after 2 years for \$7000. (you guessed it, to the man who owned the tire shop.) This is when he got his SCCA license and bought the 66 roadster that he raced at places like Road Atlanta. Darrell was always more of a driver than the wrench man but he is so precise and could detail a car to make it look new. He like the others was pretty much

Vintage QCCC

With the Vintage Gang:

Bill Cruthis, Darrell Kirkley, Bill Ingram & Travis Meredith

More "Adventures" from QCCC of Decades Past



self-taught and he has a multitude of talents. I always said he was like an alley cat. Just when things looked bleak he would find a mouse and move on. I am not sure anyone knows more folks in the Charlotte auto hobby arena; he always uses that to an advantage by trading out his expertise for something he was not an expert in. The barter system is alive and well. I have seen his work on detailing cars and it is top notch. It would be great if he could come back some day as a race driver as that was always his hope. He has now owned 42 Corvettes in his lifetime. Many he flipped back when that was doable. His favorite would be any black over red, or the next black over red he gets to buy. So we now see a trend with these first three vintage members. Deep interest in Corvettes, no money, self-taught but all interested in the mechanical as well as the style side of automobiles. All three also had a real need for speed.

Little known, QCCC social director in '75, V.P. in '82, Membership Chairman '15, Best Male driver many times in the 70,s and 80,s.

BRILLO PAD, BILL CRUTHIS:

1. First automotive interests came building model cars in the formative years. Corvettes soon became the favorite. Started reading car magazines where like Playboy the photos did me more good than the text as I did not understand most of it.

2. A close high school friend (Larry West) got a 50 Chevy and he was always working on it, but I was into sports and working on college so I had little time for learning. There was no money in the family for car things and most of my money from working in the drugstore for 25 cents per hour went to a college fund. I still have my passbook savings showing \$5 to \$8 deposits.

3. What skills I have were learned thru Central Illinois Corvette friends, and QCCC members over the years.

4. I always claim my 62 Catalina Pontiac convertible as my first car but we were a two car family and that was mom's car (she shared it with me and my sister). When she graduated college in two years she bought a Gremlin or Pacer (u know what I am thinking). I fibbed and said there were no buses running to carry me across St. Louis in time to get to work at Knight Drug after classes let out, so I got the Catalina at age 21.

5. Dad had secretly always wanted to own a service station, but like the next Corvette, things always got in the way. He worked two jobs and was not around enough to take on the project of fixing an old car with me. It was just understood I would get a car when I got out of school. He had a mechanical mind and was quite capable of guiding me, we just never had the time. He and Mom were incredibly hard workers but neither had come from financial wealth. I remember Dad selling his mother's chickens to buy his first used bicycle.

6. The exciting C-2 1963 came out and that did it for me. I was a junior in high school and was ready to buy, but had no funds for such a thing. Each year after that increased my desires. I went

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to a sorority dance at Illinois State U. and picked my date up in my 65 Impala SS, two 65 marina blue convertibles came blowing in, tops down, side pipes roaring and that really fueled the fire. In 67 a fellow in my home town lost his parents in a car accident, then he used part of the insurance to buy a 67 silver big block, black stinger, with side pipes. Now I am really ready. So here I am working at Medical South Pharmacy in St. Louis, when they hired one of my fraternity graduates; you guessed it, he drove a new 66 marina blue convertible with side pipes. I am all in for sure.

7. My 69 order for a new Corvette was canceled by the strike. Used ones were drying up in a hurry. Now I was graduating with no car and the one I wanted was not available anywhere. At my graduation I found one, a 68 convertible green over black in Collinsville, Ill. We stopped our two car caravan full of my little bit of furniture to check it out. Bought with excitement, Dad had to co-sign as I had no paycheck yet. We drove to Jacksonville, Ill to my new apartment. In two months I found one speeding ticket, the upper door hinge broke on the driver side, the wiper tray lost a bolt under the left side and would not open, impossible to get to, the rod for the plunger to open that tray broke in half, the driver side door handle broke off, the clutch went out, it overheated instantly, and leaked like a hair net. Enter Central Illinois Corvettes. They saved me, told me to sell the junk and buy a 70. I have been deeply indebted to them and QCCC for all the assistance over the years.

8. Corvettes, 68r, 70c, 63c, 65r, 74c, 85c, 87r, 06r, 09z, 15z, 71c, 17c.

All were my favorite at the time.

As you can see, I came from a different direction. I devoted too many years to sports and school and not finding time to pursue automotive passions. I cannot blame the lack of funds as you see the others found a way to make a little money go a long way. I wish I had had some guidance in all things mechanical but it just did not happen. Once in college the same pattern developed, playing varsity sports and studying. Once out of school, I was glad I had spent that time as I was taking on a serious responsibility where every day at the job you really were given zero chance of an error. I am not mechanically inclined so I break it once, then see how it should go. I have been blessed with these three vintage folks who took me under their wing and allowed me to try to learn some of the tech talk and ask some pretty dumb questions. I marvel at their knowledge and abilities. Why would anyone not stick around QCCC? It has been a blast.

Notables: '75 clubhouse chairman, rookie oty '75, '76 treasure, '14 vp, '15 '16 President, '18 Lifetime Service Achievement Award, '14 '16 member oty, '76 signed original QCCC Incorporation papers as treasure.

So two Charlottean's, another from Virginia, and one from Illinois, meet at the QCCC clubhouse with a single thread of the Corvette that would bind them together for 50 years and counting. Only in America do such stories happen.

I wish to dedicate this month's article to three of the best friends anyone could ever be blessed with! Their patience with me and helping me along my Corvette path has been a priceless experience.

Thank you Bill, Trav, and Darrell

Love

Bill

On **facebook** ?

ICYMI – we have TWO Facebook pages?

QCCC Members is a 'closed' group for only paid QCCC members
www.facebook.com/groups/409674005715403/

- Members have to ask to join
- Once approved, any member can freely post your photos, car events, videos and share/post Corvette-related news.

Queen City Corvette Club is an 'open' page for anyone on FB
www.facebook.com/QueenCityCorvette/

- Anyone on FB can "like" and "follow" our events
- Only our FB administrators can post on this page
 - Just ask and we'll post for you
- Anyone on FB can like or reply to our posts.



Groups



Pages



QCCC Members

88 members



Queen City Corvette Club



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