

# The Queen City Corvette Gazette



**Official Newsletter of North Carolina's Largest Corvette Club**

**August 2022**



## **QCCC August Business Meeting & 54th Anniversary Celebration**

**Saturday, August 13, 2022**

**Hendricks Motorsports Team Center**

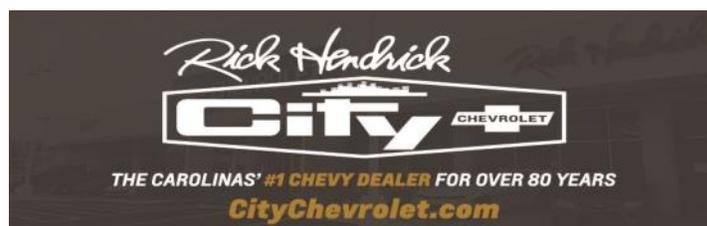
400 Papa Joe Hendrick Blvd.

Charlotte, NC 28262

**3:30 p.m. Social time with ice cream and club photos  
by Corvette generations**

**5:00 p.m. Business Meeting with Special Awards**

**\*\*\*Bring Silent Auction Items for Car Show**



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2022 Board of Directors and Staff

In This Issue

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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](http://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](https://queencitycorvette.com/?page_id=330) or contact our Membership Director at [membership@queencitycorvette.com](mailto: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 1621 400 Gilead Rd. Huntersville, NC 28078

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

## PRESIDENT'S PAGE



This year in August, we will celebrate our 54<sup>th</sup> anniversary! It seems like we just had our big 50th. We now have new logos set to go and will be taking orders for shirts with the new 55 logo on the sleeves at our August celebration.

We are also getting ready for our Car Show number 11 on October 1<sup>st</sup>. I hope by now, everyone has signed up to work at our show and are on one of our teams. If not, we will introduce the Team Leaders at our August meeting so you can get signed up with them.

This whole year has been so busy that my kids think I'm reliving my teenage years as I am always on the go. What a great club to belong to if you want to stay busy.

July started off with a bang with the Fourth of July parade in Troutman hosted by Tommy Loftin.

Then just before our meeting at Billy Boat Exhausts, our members were invited by deBotech, the OEM supplier of the carbon fiber products installed on our Corvettes to tour their factory showroom right here in Mooresville USA.

We just recently had a day trip (46 of us!) to the Richard Petty Museum hosted by Ron Berst.

The Up Yonder and Wednesday Night dinners have returned in full force, but most restaurants are limiting the number of guests, so when you see the BLAST get signed up early.

This year I find it more important than ever to wear our name badges with all the prospective and new members attending our meetings. At the last meeting there were 33 prospective members! If you're like me, it takes a few introductions to remember names. It's great, of course, to see our existing members and fun to meet the new ones coming into the club and hearing about their backgrounds.

Speaking of backgrounds, we will start having our newly elected members stand up at each meeting and tell us a little about themselves. Listen carefully when they speak, as you may find out they grew up next door to you or even went to the same high school.

Dick Gwilt, President  
[rgwilt@me.com](mailto:rgwilt@me.com)  
704-651-8613



Everyone is having fun at the Troutman Fourth of July Parade



deBotech Inc.



Richard Petty Museum honoree



Future Corvette Owner



Parking lot full of QCCC Corvettes at Richard Petty Museum



## *VP Stuff, Ron Berst*

Well, another month is here and this means we are about to enter the dog days of August. I don't know what that actually means or if it has any effect on Corvettes, but it is one of those old timey sayings so it must mean something???

Anyway, in my July newsletter article I covered some tidbits of info on the C1 - C4 Corvette. This month I will move on to the C5- C8.

The C5 (1997-2004) Corvette was a huge improvement over the C4 but total production of the 1997 model was only 9752 units. Will Cooksey, the Bowling Green plant manager, was so obsessed with building a quality car that he slowed the production line to a crawl and would stop the line for any issue.

The C6 (2005-2013) Corvette was the first Corvette since 1962 with fixed headlights instead of pop-up headlights.

The C7 (2014-2019) Corvette was the first Corvette since the 1960 model without round tail lights. This angered some Corvette purists but I have seen artists' renditions with round lights and they do not coordinate with the angular lines of the car very well, in my opinion.

The C8 (2020-Present) Corvette was also criticized by some as not being a "true" Corvette because the engine was no longer in the front; it would be a mistake and would not sell well. That turned out to be so untrue, some buyers have waited for a year or even two and still have not gotten a car...the solution is to head to City Chevrolet, our most valued sponsor and place an order, you won't be disappointed.

Finally, the first few years of Corvette production did not meet Chevrolet's sales goals and the car was almost discontinued. Zora Arkus Duntov convinced Chevrolet management what the car needed was a powerful V8 engine, one was added in 1955 and the rest is history.

Thinking of what might have happened if the car was canceled...today there would be no Corvettes to buy, no QCCC and we would not have met the wonderful and cherished friends we now have and enjoy so very much! :)

That's if for now! Hope to see everyone at the August meeting at the Hendrick Motorsports complex for ice cream and goodies

Ron Berst VP

# Social



# Scene

**SOCIAL DIRECTOR**

**~Donna Berst~**

On Saturday July 23rd we had 21 Corvettes that participated in a caravan to Randleman NC where we toured the impressive Richard Petty Museum. Afterwards everyone enjoyed a BBQ lunch before heading home. As always it was a great time getting to know our newer members and catching up with those members we've known for years! Join in the QCCC fun by attending our meetings, Cars & Coffees, Wednesday night and Up Yonder dinners & other events scheduled each month!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Saturday August 6, 2022,** Two Charity Cruise-Thru / drop-offs, and lunch

\*9:30 am Meet at Alino's Pizzeria's side parking lot - 500 South Main St., Mooresville NC

9:45 am Depart for FeedNC (We are asking each car to donate a bag of non-perishable canned or boxed food for others that are less fortunate than we are)

9:50 am Arrive at Feed NC - 275 South Broad St., Mooresville NC 28115

\*\*10:20 am Depart for Plastic Cars Ltd. Corvettes donation location (they are collecting gift cards, checks, and toys for their annual charity drive for Mathew:25 Ministries)

11:00 am Arrive at Signal Hill Mall - 1685 East Broad St., Statesville NC 28625

11:30 am Depart for lunch

\*\*\*11:45 am Arrive at Twisted Oak Restaurant - 121 North Center St., Statesville, NC 28677

As usual, we need a headcount for the restaurant, so please RSVP for lunch by NOON on Monday,

August 1 to Jane Burt at [fab4fan@carolina.rr.com](mailto:fab4fan@carolina.rr.com) Come one, come all even if you can't make it to lunch.

**Saturday August 13, 2022,** QCCC Business Meeting & 54<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the

Hendricks Motorsports Team Center

400 Papa Joe Hendrick Blvd.

Charlotte, NC 28262

3:30pm – Social Time with ice cream and club photos by Corvette generations

5:00pm - Business Meeting with Special Awards. Hope to see you there!

**Saturday August 20, 2022,** A Cruise-In to Eleven Lakes Brewing Company, 10228 Bailey Rd.

#201, Cornelius, NC, Saturday, August 20th, 4:30 till ?. Food truck at 5 p.m. Live music by Rusty Knox at 7 p.m. Rain or shine. RSVP to [donnaberst@windstream.net](mailto:donnaberst@windstream.net) by Wednesday, August 17.

**Friday September 16 thru Sunday September 18, 2022** Contact Steve Bonino for information and sign-up to attend the Oktoberfest in Helen, Georgia. [vettegs17@gmail.com](mailto:vettegs17@gmail.com)

**Myrtle Beach Trip - Friday, October 21 - Sunday, October 23, 2022**

Dick Gwilt [rgwilt@me.com](mailto:rgwilt@me.com) and Jane Burt are the event leaders.

Contact me if you have any ideas for a cruise-in, day or overnight trip![donnaberst@windstream.net](mailto:donnaberst@windstream.net)

Donna Berst ~ 2022 QCCC Social Director

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# Queen City Corvette Club Discount Pricing

## Rick Hendrick City Chevrolet

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Having been with the Hendrick Automotive Group for over 18 years, my career started at City Chevrolet. As the flagship store, we strive to not only represent, but set the benchmark for the culture of the organization. We often say, "City people make City Chevrolet," and that's why I'm excited to not only come back to where I started (my "home") but also to rebuild the City pride in our teammates, customers, vendors, and partners alike.

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.

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#### **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.

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#### **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.

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#### **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 a 10% service discount.

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#### **COLLISION CENTER**

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

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#### **QCCC MEMBER PURCHASE CONCIERGE**

Rick Accurso

Inventory Manager & Corvette Specialist

704-566-7447

[Rick.Accurso@hendrickauto.com](mailto:Rick.Accurso@hendrickauto.com)

---

#### **QCCC MEMBER SERVICE CONCIERGE**

Saverio Longobardo

Service Advisor

704-566-7407

[Saverio.Longobardo@hendrickauto.com](mailto:Saverio.Longobardo@hendrickauto.com)

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The image shows a dark background with a white outline of a building. In the center is the Rick Hendrick City Chevrolet logo. The name 'Rick Hendrick' is written in a white script font at the top. Below it is a white outline of a building with a Chevrolet bowtie logo on the right side. Underneath the building outline, the word 'City' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, followed by 'CHEVROLET' in a smaller, white sans-serif font. Below the logo, the text 'THE CAROLINAS' #1 CHEVY DEALER FOR OVER 80 YEARS' is written in a white sans-serif font. At the bottom, the website 'CityChevrolet.com' is written in a bold, orange sans-serif font.

**CLUB PATRONS**

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The image shows a white background with a blue and black wave at the bottom. On the left is a shield-shaped logo containing a stylized wheel. To the right of the logo, the words 'WHEEL CRAFT' are written in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. Below this, 'ADVANCED WHEEL FINISHES' is written in a smaller, black sans-serif font. Underneath that, the phrase 'Arrive in Style' is written in a blue script font. At the bottom, the website 'WWW.WHEELCRAFT.COM' is written in a bold, black sans-serif font.

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## MEMBERSHIP

### August

#### MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS:

Total Membership	355
Total Families	196
Prospective Members	56
New Members Year to Date	28

#### NEW MEMBERS:



**Jim Kelley**

Rock Hill, SC

CORVETTE: 2008 Indy Pace Car Edition



**Melvin & Connie Dainty**

Davidson, NC

CORVETTE: 2022 Red Convertible

**NEW MEMBERS:**



**Alan & Andrea Fuller**

Burlington, NC

**CORVETTE: 2022 Accelerate Yellow C8**



**Allen Gould**

Salisbury, NC

**CORVETTE: 2018 Long Beach Red Convertible Z51**



**Bert & Laura Nagy**

Matthews, NC

**CORVETTE: 2022 Red Mist C8 Convertible**



**Sarah Lyda**

Cleveland, NC

**CORVETTE: 1999 Sebring Silver C5 Coupe**

## **NEW MEMBERS:**



**Chris Farrell & Sandra Csanyi**

**Salisbury, NC**

**CORVETTE: 2003 Red Convertible**

*Justin Cross*

*QCCC Membership Director*



**Bill Cruthis-**

Bill Cruthis has returned home soon. Please continue to pray for Judy and Bill, that he has a speedy recovery. He would appreciate your cards and will wishes.

**Bill and Judy's Home Address is:**

4575 Rustling Woods Drive

Denver, NC. 28037

[bill\\_cruthis@bellsouth.net](mailto:bill_cruthis@bellsouth.net)

**Norm Jungmann-**

Please continue to pray for Norm Jungmann who lost his wife and put her to rest on Monday, July 11th. Norm will need your prayers to help him through this difficult time. Cards and email are accepted at this time.

**Norm's Address is:**

19931 Walter Henderson Road

Cornelius, NC. 28031

[Norm6263@hotmail.com](mailto:Norm6263@hotmail.com)



**NOTE:** Care & Compassion will continue for 2022. If you would like to be placed on the list, please send me an email on your concerns. We all need Care, Compassion & Prayers when we are sick (with COVID) or when we lose a loved one. Please keep all the Members in your prayers.

Thank You.

Paul Schmitt- QCCC Care and Compassion

[paulandchristineschmitt@gmail.com](mailto:paulandchristineschmitt@gmail.com)



## **The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual QCCC All Corvette Car Show October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

The car show is going well. We need you to register your Corvette. We are planning on having 700 Corvettes on site and we must have 120 QCCC cars.

At the last Hendrick meeting we received the news that we will have C-8 ZO6's on display. GM will have a presence at the show. Our next meeting with them is August 2nd.

We need you to bring your Silent Auction items ASAP. We still need judges, parking, tour guide help, help with our charity water distribution and much more. I will send out a list of workers. You will have the same job as last year. If you are new to the club, you can contact a team leader and volunteer. You can also contact me and I will help you find the spot that works.

This year will be the biggest Corvette show ever. You should be proud to be part of this extraordinary event. Let's get excited about the show and make it happen.

Thank you.

Tommy Loftin

# Queen City Corvette Club Charity

## Wings of Eagles Ranch

Wings of Eagles will have its annual “Dancing in the Dirt” on October 22nd. QCCC will host this event. If you can help let me know. We need you to drive your Corvette to the event and have your car on display.

Thank you so much.

Tommy and Brenda Loftin, QCCC Charity Committee





# Happy Birthday

## AUGUST

- 8/1 Merle Elko
- 8/3 Susan Kurt
- 8/4 Connie Dainty
- 8/7 Boyd Kurt
- 8/7 Larry Tucker
- 8/8 Jim Graham
- 8/9 Polly McKee
- 8/9 Ralph Snow
- 8/10 Virginia Nibarger
- 8/10 Bill Robbins
- 8/11 Ron Berst
- 8/11 Mike Watts
- 8/11 David Faircloth
- 8/12 Ben Hinson
- 8/12 Jim Kelley
- 8/12 Floyd Schwartz
- 8/12 Michelle Leonard
- 8/15 Brenda Melodovitch
- 8/15 Jim Campbell
- 8/15 Judy Jacob
- 8/16 Richard Taddonio
- 8/16 Michelle Wiswall
- 8/18 Alan Fuller
- 8/18 Chuck Solland
- 8/18 Dawn Faircloth
- 8/19 Donna Berst
- 8/19 Jane Fawcett
- 8/18 Nick Kendall
- 8/19 Andy Melodovitch
- 8/22 Phil Smith
- 8/24 Gary Cunningham
- 8/25 Jim Leonard
- 8/26 EO Oakley
- 8/29 Theresa James
- 8/29 Bob Bartlett
- 8/30 John Walton
- 8/31 Chad Wood

# QCCC HISTORY

For this month's history lesson, you'll have to attend the up-coming birthday celebration/ business meeting at Hendrick Motorsports on August 13<sup>th</sup>. At that event we will have a video presentation running while you socialize showing QCCC events from the seventies made from old 8mm home movies. You can see how the Sandkhana came about, high speed events at Charlotte Motor Speedway, parking lot events, parties and much more all captured on video without the benefit of sound, more reminders of how far we have come in 50 years. We will also have some artifacts from years past including the one and only professional newsletter from 1972, old tags and homemade awards. Come early, ask questions, and learn about the club's history as we celebrate our 54<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

We hope to expand our research to include the club's history during the early eighties thru the mid-nineties, which is a period where we don't have a lot of first-hand knowledge. Be looking for more articles on this period in the future.

Also, while our resident author and producer of over eleven years of "Vintage Gang" articles, Bill Cruthis, is recovering from a nasty fall, we will re-run some of his past articles for you to enjoy.

Your questions and input are appreciated. QCCC has an interesting history and we want to preserve and document years past for all to enjoy.

Travis Meredith, *historian*

# Vintage QCCC

With the Vintage Gang:

*Bill Cruthis, Darrell Kirkley, Bill Ingram & Travis Meredith*

*More "Adventures" from QCCC of Decades Past*



This month we will continue to give you our top 10 vintage stories of yesteryear with this being #8. I'll call it All in a Days Work at Greer Dragway in S.C. If you missed it before, here's your chance to read it.

## Wide-Eyed Excitement

I arrived in Charlotte from Central Illinois in December of 1974. This was a few years before Danny Shaver-stein anointed me as Brillo Pad, thanks to my wicked Afro hairdo. Being from a small town of 7,000 and belonging to Central Illinois Corvette Club, I had no expectations upon my arrival. At first it seemed like two different worlds. From the cornfields of the Midwest to the hotbed of Nascar, only the automobiles seemed familiar. I had not been here long when I spent my first weekend at Charlotte Motor Speedway, "racing". I signed up as a corner worker so QCCC let me be the first car on the track. You raced in the direction of down pit road backward, then a 180 around a barrel, down the front straight, left onto the road course, around the road course then back down the front straight backwards. I had my '63 split window coupe on my heavy old trailer. The car at the time had a 4:11 rear and was pushing more than the advertised 340 hp. So I lit the tires up smoked it around the barrel showing off for my new Corvette Family. As I got to the road course entrance, the rear end let loose, gears grinding and after a complete 360 perilously close to the bank of tires holding back the concrete wall, there I sat clogging the race course. QCCC had to shut down everything, bring my rig and trailer, push the car on the trailer and clean the track. Now you would think that would strain a new friendship, but instead Billy Coats told me to bring the car to his shop and he had a 3:70 gear he would install for me. So two things happened. First, I was welcomed into the need for speed at QCCC and the Family, and second, I could not imagine that I was driving my car on a major racetrack. You do not have that opportunity in the Midwest. I remember telling the Corvette brothers back home about the experience and it got there attention. In December of '75 I returned for the annual Christmas Party at CIC and took with me rolls of footage of QCCC racing at CMS. During the band breaks I would show my films on the wall, but no one seemed to care.

A few must have been looking out of the corner of their eye, as in '76 I informed CIC that QCCC would be having the Corvette/Porsche Challenge in March. There were 7 Corvettes that traveled the 860 miles to participate, only one came on a trailer. I had a 3-bedroom house on Will Hill Road in Mint Hill at the time. I got Army cots from QCCC member George McLeod who had an Army/Navy Surplus Store on Central Avenue. I remember two of the guys took their cots and slept down by the stream in the woods, saying it was too crowded in the house. Jud Jamison was in charge of cooking breakfast when Tom Downing said he liked his eggs over easy, he was told he would eat scrambled just like everyone else. The day before the racing they all got to tuning their motors. At the time, Wilson Woods subdivision had two entrances, was shaped like a U with the long leg of the U being on Will Hill Dr. where I lived. This was the era of the c-b radio and we put it to good use. Once the cars were tuned we stationed one Corvette at each entrance of the subdivision. Then the guys would back down to the dead end past my house and let 'em fly, getting a couple of gears before shutdown. After several "runs" the guys at the front got on the c-b radios and said here come the cops. Some will remember the baby poop yellow county cars. I know Larry Miller will. Of course, by the

time they got to my house all of us were sitting on the porch and all the cars were in the drive. Round two: It did not last as long before “shut ‘em down, here they come”. Same result. Round Three: The final round. We barely got back to the driveway. The Policeman was a nice fellow, but his patience was wearing a little thin. We decided at that time the cars were ready for Charlotte Motor Speedway. This group came down again in ‘77 for the event and in ‘78 for the convention. It was good to mix members of the two clubs each learning from the other. I imagine they went back to the cornfields with the same wide-eyed excitement that I had from an opportunity to “race” at Charlotte Motor Speedway. One thing was consistent - both groups, CIC and QCCC, could drink a lot of beer. As our historian always says, “most of what we used to do would be a felony today.”

The good ol’ days of QCCC. Wish you could all have been there.

Submitted by Bill Cruthis

To All QCCC Members:



WANTED/NEEDED anyone who takes pictures or videos with their phone or camera!!!

If you go to an event and take pictures/videos – please upload them to the QCCC photo library. That way they can be shared by all members!

We could also use members to volunteer to take pictures during the events. If you are interested and want to do that, please contact me via email : [cb8613vette@gmail.com](mailto:cb8613vette@gmail.com).

Here are the instructions on how to upload your pictures/videos:

Do you have club Photographs or Videos you would like to share?

To upload to the “QCCC Photo Gallery”, copy the web link below into your web browser and follow the screen prompts.

<https://qcccphoto.smugmug.com/upload/rZ6vZk/QCCCMemberGallery>

Please send an email to [photo@queencitycorvette.com](mailto:photo@queencitycorvette.com) or [cb8613vette@gmail.com](mailto:cb8613vette@gmail.com) with a notation of the Date and Event for which the Pictures/Videos were taken.

The mail message will notify the Club’s “QCCC Photo Gallery” administrator that new Pictures/Videos were recently posted so they can be added to the public viewing web site.

Thanks!

Carl Bartlett

Cell : 704-281-8673

email : [CB8613Vette@gmail.com](mailto:CB8613Vette@gmail.com)



## Join Queen City Corvette Club on Facebook

### **Queen City Corvette Club has two Facebook Pages**

**QCCC Members** is a 'closed' group for paid QCCC Members

[www.facebook.com/groups/409674005715403/](http://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.

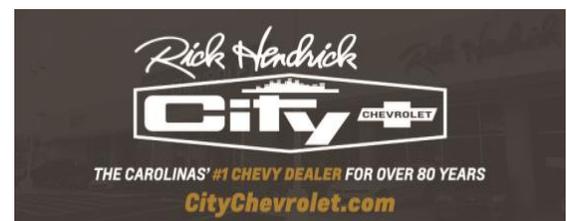
**Queen City Corvette Club** is an 'open' page for anyone on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/QueenCityCorvette/](http://www.facebook.com/QueenCityCorvette/)

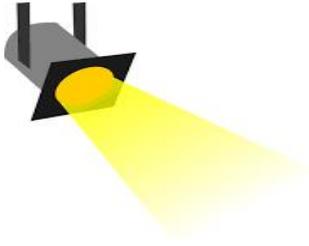
- Anyone on Facebook can "like" and "follow" our events
- Only our Facebook Administrators can post on this page [just ask and we will post for you].



Sponsored by:



**Catch the latest QCCC news by joining us on Facebook!**



## Member Spotlight

### **Corvette: The Best Retirement Gift Ever**

In the late 1960s, as an early teenager, I started attending drag races all over the country. Both of my older brothers were also drag racing fans and my next oldest brother, Jon, even built a drag car and raced it on weekends. Sports cars, muscle cars and classic street rods were therefore always a fascination to me. They were not a realistic dream for me, but I had a sincere passion for cars, particularly 1963 – 1967 Corvettes. Every time I see one on the highway or at a race, it catches my attention and I tell my wife, Jane, how much I love the look and sound of those cars.

As newlyweds in 1982, my wife got a job in Charlotte and so we settled down in the area. We had 3 children, including a set of twins. We enjoyed a good life with lots of friends and family around and all the normal, middle-class sorts of things like cookouts, little league and swim team activities. During that time, I owned – one at a time - mini vans, SUVs, 4 door sedans and pickup trucks, all for practical purposes. I was employed by Wix Filters in Gastonia for over 33 years so I've always had an interest in the automotive world.

Then in 2020, in the middle of the pandemic, came the time to consider retirement. Just after I had seen a beautiful 1967 Corvette cruising down the highway and, again, commenting on how cool those cars are, my wife – out of the clear blue – says “since you like those cars so much, after you retire, you should get one!” I was flabbergasted! “What? Are you serious?” I shouted with excitement. When she confirmed she meant what she said, the hunt was on and I set my retirement date for September 30, 2021.

As with most car searches these days, I began looking on the Internet. I wanted to find out everything I could about 1963 to 1967 Corvettes (which I later learned were categorized as C2 Corvettes). I looked at various body styles (coupes and convertibles), various engine and transmission combinations, body color and all the options that were available to order during that time period. I read numerous articles about the pros and cons of each aspect of the C2 Corvette. I also researched sources for where I might buy the car and who could help me find the perfect Vette. So, I thought, why not contact one of the large Corvette Clubs in the area and join the club? That's when I reached out to Paul Mitchell, president of the Queen City Corvette Club at the time. Paul was quick to respond with an incredibly nice note with the news confirming that in order to join the QCCC I had to already OWN a Corvette. But he also suggested that I contact the National Corvette Restorers Society (NCRS) because you didn't have to own a Vette to join that group and they had a wealth of Corvette information and lots of members who are willing to help someone in my situation.

So, in early 2021, I joined the NCRS and the Carolinas Chapter of NCRS and began attending local meetings whenever possible. So much of the information provided at these meetings was

over my head but I was able to pick up bits and pieces of useful information and met some great people in that group while I was learning. Meanwhile, I was narrowing down the exact type of car I wanted to target: a 1967 Marina Blue Coupe with a L79 (327 ci / 350 HP) engine, 4 speed transmission and air conditioning, if at all possible. I would find cars online that met MOST of the criteria but they were still not close enough to what I was looking for, so I continued my research as I waited for that retirement date and the ideal Corvette.

Then, in December of 2021, the Carolinas Chapter of NCRS had their annual Christmas dinner party at one of the member's homes. Jane and I decided to attend and we were seated, among others, with Don Lowe and his wife Roberta; Don is a long-time NCRS member, multiple Corvette owner and Corvette expert who had recently re-located to North Carolina. After dinner, as we stood in the driveway discussing cars, Don asked me what kind of Corvette I owned. I told him I didn't own one yet but was looking for a '67 Marina Blue Coupe and his response was "I think we can find one for you!" And so, with Don in my corner, my Corvette search ratcheted up quite a few notches.

In the next 48 hours Don sent me online ads for a couple of really nice cars that were viable candidates for purchase, each a 1965 Nassau Blue Coupe with a small block. One of the cars was located in Southeast Michigan, near the area from which Don had recently moved. He knew a guy – Tom Dingman, a NCRS judge in fact, and President of the Michigan Chapter of NCRS – who lived in the area and was willing to drive to the dealership to inspect the car to determine if it was worthy enough to purchase. What an unbelievably nice thing to do for someone who didn't even know me! As it turned out, Tom found too many problems with the car and recommended against buying it. What could I do to repay Tom for his travels and time? All he asked was that I join the Michigan Chapter of the NCRS. Done! The other potential '65 Vette I was pursuing was owned by another member of the Michigan NCRS but the owner eventually decided not to sell the car.

And then, in late December, 2021, after drilling deep in my Google search for '67 Marina Blue Coupes, I ran across an ad for a 1966 Nassau Blue Coupe, 327/350, 4 speed, underbody exhaust, beautiful knock off wheels and blue-striped tires! Absolutely stunning. This car was a former NCRS National Top Flight car, Bloomington Gold and Triple Crown award winner. Also, the car was formerly owned by baseball hall of fame great and car collector, Reggie Jackson. From the photos online and the description, I couldn't find anything wrong with the car. So I sent the link to Don to get his input and he said the same thing – a beautiful car and he couldn't find anything wrong with it either. I then called the seller (on consignment at a custom car shop outside of Chicago) and asked the selling price (which was not advertised) and it was listed well below what I had estimated it would cost. Then, after consulting with Don and my brother Jon about this particular car, I asked the seller if he would hold the car with a deposit until I could fly up there to see it in person. He agreed and I immediately got on the phone with Don asking him if he would go with me to Chicago to inspect this Corvette. He said yes and we planned our trip in mid-January. The car turned out to be all that was claimed, documentation included, and I bought the car!

So where to keep the car? Jane and I were still in the process of building a new home in Nebo, NC and it wasn't completed yet. At the time we lived in an apartment in downtown Gastonia so keeping a classic Corvette in an outdoor, unsecured parking area was not an option. Don Lowe to the rescue again. Don has a beautiful 3 car garage with a lift(!) and he offered to keep my car in

his garage as long as I needed until my house was completed. No charge. No rental fee. What a guy! Not only that but Don agreed to help me get the car up to NCRS standards for flight judging at the upcoming Greenville Regional event in May. I know very little about mechanical things but do understand most of the basics of how things work. However, Don is on a level many times above me. Thankfully, he enjoys doing this kind of work and says he doesn't mind doing these things "with the other person's money!" I am the beneficiary.

In May of this year, I took the car to Greenville, SC for the judging event hoping Don and I had done enough to my '66 Coupe to earn the Top Flight award again. And, fortunately, again the car attained Top Flight status and I couldn't be happier! Today the car is in the garage at my completed home and Jane and I have joined the Queen City Corvette Club as owners. We also thoroughly enjoy being members of NCRS and the Carolinas Chapter and the Michigan Chapter as well as the QCCC. We plan to show the car at various local car shows and enjoy driving it in the Lake James area as weather permits.

Jeff Fawcett

NCRS #67617

