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MARCH 2025

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### **TWO MORE CORVETTE ICONS LEAVE GM!**

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During the first week of February, the Corvette community was stunned to hear that Harlan Charles, long Corvette Program Manager would be retiring from GM. From reading his statement posted on the web, we can discern that this decision was not his choice and that it was a one made within GM. Shortly after the news came out Tadge Jeuchter, who retired last year as the leader of the Corvette engineering team posted a lengthy tribute to Harlan's work and many critical, direction setting contributions to the program over his 24-year tenure. Just as we were all recovering from Tadge's retirement and now the loss of Harlan, news broke that Kirk Bennion, Exterior Design Manager for Corvette was also let go by GM. Kirk, as many of you know, was key in the determination of the final external look of Corvettes for the last three generations and he contributed greatly to the aerodynamic function that has made Corvettes so successful and fuel stingy on the road. (Yes, I have registered over 30 MPG on the highway in my C6 many times.) Harlan was responsible among other things for many of the very popular Corvette Trim and appearance packages that would roll out during a generation including the ZR1, naming the Corvette Eray and inventing the concept for a performance data recorder as a part of the car. All you have to do is look around a Corvette car show at the variations within the C5-C8 models, and you can thank Tadge, Harlan and Kirk!

Besides their many contributions to Corvette, all were known as great resources for customers and the Corvette community at large. They were often at car shows, museum events, on podcasts and at the races. They sought out customer feedback and were always helpful if there was a problem or a complaint. You could tell how much they cared and how devoted they were to America's Sportscar. Most of us were wondering what in the world was happening with these "forced" departures. Sometimes there is a need for some fresh air and a new team can bring that. However, at this point, I am not sure it bodes well. That is a tremendous amount of knowledge, creativity and engineering ability to push put the door. Perhaps Corvette is headed in some new directions. That is not necessarily bad, but seriously, this could have been handled a little better. All I can say is, the Corvette community is watching closely, and GM better not mess this up. Ideas about a Corvette SUV or an EV-Corvette will probably be met with some difficulty.

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### **STINGRAY AUCTION AT HOLY COMFORTER!**

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Holy Comforter Episcopal School is a local private school located off Fleschman Blvd. This year, with the assistance of Hobson Chevrolet, they planned an auction of the brand-new Corvette Stingray (HTC, Z51, 3LT) to help raise funds for the school. To promote the event,

Cruisin Corvettes members were invited to a social afternoon kick-off for the event on Saturday, February 1st. As you might expect, members showed up with their cars all polished and Holy Comforter rolled out the red carpet with drinks and food. Everyone had a great time and really enjoyed the hospitality. We are told in the end; the Stingray went for over \$97,000. Sounds like the event was a success for all concerned and now there is a new Corvette owner on the road.



## **A NEW CEO FOR THE NATIONAL CORVETTE MUSEUM!**

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We finally have a new CEO for the National Corvette Museum! And he seems like he is a real car guy! What follows is the official announcement from the NCM. I expect he will be quite visible at the upcoming BASH at the end of April. We wish him well and look forward to meeting him and learning more about his plans for the future.

**BOWLING GREEN, KY, March 13, 2025** – The National Corvette Museum is pleased to announce David Hill as its new President and Chief Executive Officer. A lifelong Corvette enthusiast with extensive leadership experience, Hill brings the strategic vision needed to lead the Museum into its next chapter while staying true to its mission of preserving and celebrating the legacy of America’s Sports Car.

“The Museum’s Board of Directors conducted an in-depth search for a leader who could balance heritage and innovation, ensuring the Museum continues to thrive for future generations of Corvette and Corvette enthusiasts,” explained Kaye Wagner, National Corvette Museum Board Chair. “David’s combination of business acumen, deep-rooted passion for the Corvette legacy, and proven leadership experience made him the perfect choice. We are excited to welcome him to the National Corvette Museum and look forward to his leadership in the years ahead.”

Hill previously served in several CEO and leadership roles in education, energy, manufacturing, and technology, including Mar-k, Logic Energy, Petrosmith, and Kimray. Recognized as one of Oklahoma’s “Most Admired CEOs” by The Journal Record, Oklahoma’s leading business publication, he has led modernization efforts, product expansion, and market growth. Most of all, he is passionate about people and culture, two qualities he believes set an organization apart and that align with the Museum’s commitment to innovation and excellence.

A hands-on Corvette owner, Hill has restored multiple classics, including a 1971 Stingray. His personal favorite is the 1967 Corvette, which he calls, “A beautiful car in so many ways.”

“The National Corvette Museum represents the heart and soul of America’s Sports Car, and I am honored to step into this role as CEO,” remarked Hill. “As someone who has cherished Corvettes for decades, I deeply appreciate the history, innovation, and passion that define this iconic brand. I look forward to partnering with the dedicated team at the Museum to build on its incredible legacy, expand its reach, and foster a high-performance culture of service and innovation for our guests, members, donors, and Corvette enthusiasts.”

Beyond his corporate career, Hill is dedicated to nonprofit leadership, co-founding the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon to support the National Memorial and Museum. He and his wife also founded a Classical School and are involved in many other philanthropic efforts.

While no relation to the 2006 Corvette Hall of Fame inductee and retired Corvette Chief Engineer of the same name, Hill brings a strong track record of leadership, strategic vision, and a commitment to excellence. He will assume his role on March 17 and relocate to Bowling Green with his wife of 32 years, Shannon. They have six adult children spread across the country and love spending time with them doing just about anything.

With Hill joining the team, 2025 is set to be an exciting year at the National Corvette Museum. Guests can explore our newest exhibition, *Speed Captured: The Photographic Works of Richard Prince*, a tribute to one of motorsport's most legendary photographers. Alongside this special showcase, other exhibitions continue to chronicle Corvette's rich history and legacy as America's Sports Car. Beyond the Museum galleries, visitors can shop for exclusive Corvette merchandise at the Museum's Corvette Store, witness new Corvette deliveries on Corvette Boulevard, enjoy lunch at the Stingray Grill, or take on the track at NCM Motorsports Park for an adrenaline-pumping driving experience.



## **THE LEGENDARY, ANNUAL CHILI COOKOFF!**

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When March comes around its once again time for a lot of pollen and the annual CCOT Chili Cookoff. The much-coveted apron that goes to the winner was once again on display on Saturday, March 15th at Mike and Greg Wallenfelsz' Warehouse for the gathering of chili chefs and eager tasters. This year we had 55 attendees, 25 Corvettes and 13 pots of chili in the mix. The weather cooperated with a beautiful day, and it is always a fun time exploring the warehouse to see what new items might have shown up since last year. My grandson, Caiden, was particularly attracted to the Harley Davidson Golf Carts off to the side and, of course, the die cast cars. After the chili was tasted and the votes were counted, this year's apron was awarded to none other than Chris Keena's entry. This was a major comeback for Chris who finished dead last previously with an entry despite using carefully curated fresh and natural ingredients. This year's winning entry was constructed of "canned" ingredients which likely says something about the cultured palates of the judges..... In any case, congratulations to Chris on his victory among stiff competition! And for those that want to get a great view of the event, link on over to the club website and look at the fun video Mike Napoli made using his drone. Thanks to all the competitors, judges and attendees. Special thanks to Mike and Greg for opening the warehouse up and hosting again this year and to Mike Napoli for the great video!



## **A CORVETTE DRIVE BY!**

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Recently, Jan Neilson who is one of our long-time members has been on sick call and recovering. With the spring weather and the pull to drive that Corvette, we were sure that Jan and Bonnie might be missing the fun. So, the Cruisin Corvettes decided to organize a slightly noisy drive by. On Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, a group of about 17 cars met at the CMX Theatres for a cruise by Jan and Bonnie's house. The weather was great, and we certainly attracted some attention on the way over with some neighbors actively filming the informal parade. We did a drive by and then circled back to stop and wish Jan well, take a few pictures and then head off to Smitty's for an after-action quick bite to eat. A fun ride and we wish Jan a speedy recovery.



## **PINEWOOD DERBY MEMORIES!**

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On Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, several members brought their cars to the Killlearn Methodist Church to attend the Cub Scouts Pinewood Derby and let the attendees explore some Corvettes. For those of you that may not know what this event is, the Pinewood Derby is a racing competition for cub scout pack members where the cars are hand built within certain specifications. The cars begin their racing lives as blocky wooden car shapes with parts as a kit. Each cub scout will begin with the same kit and from there the only limit is their imagination. Cars must weigh in at no more than 5 ounces and must fit inside a wooden frame to make sure they conform to certain measurements. Other than that, scouts can go for it. Obviously, the intent is to race and win. The cars race on a downhill length of track that is a lot like a hot wheel's track but larger. There were 4 lanes with timers at the end of the track that estimated elapsed time, scale MPH among the contenders. There were several competition heats as the day

progressed with winners moving to next round. We saw some very creative designs including a C8 concept and a Tesla truck. Some were minimal designs going for a slimmed down aerodynamic effect, while others seemed more works of artistic expression. When I was about seven years old, I built a pinewood derby car with my dad, and it was a lot of fun. Sadly, the car looked great but was not particularly fast due to some wheel alignment problems. Based upon my experience, I think the cars I saw on Saturday were nicely designed and technically better than my very old one. I guess mine would be a classic now. A fun event that brought back some great memories and a great chance to let some interested competitors see the Corvettes.



## **ICE CREAM RUN!**

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On Saturday, January 25th, a determined group of CCOT members intent on some fresh ice cream made a run up to Thomasville to visit Nina's Creamery. Reports from the field indicate the CCOT successfully took over the creamery to the delight of the owners and enjoyed some first-class ice cream while supporting a local business. A great reason to get out and drive on a nice day!

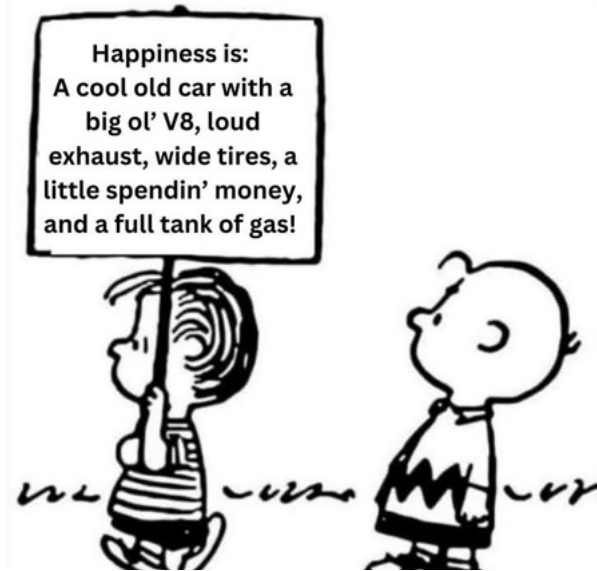


## APPRECIATING THE FINER THINGS

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"The best way to go down the road of enlightenment, is by Corvette."



## NATIONAL CORVETTE MUSEUM UPDATE!

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**Speed Captured – Photography of Richard Prince** - The National Corvette Museum proudly presents *Speed Captured: The Photographic Works of Richard Prince*, a stunning visual journey through Corvette's dominance on the track. Richard Prince, a Corvette Hall of Fame inductee, has spent over 30 years documenting the speed, power, and passion of America's Sports Car. This exclusive exhibit showcases his most breathtaking photographs, alongside five legendary vehicles that define Corvette's performance legacy.

**New NCM Board Member-** The National Corvette Museum proudly announces that Ken Lingenfelter, a legendary name in Corvette performance and a dedicated Museum supporter, has joined the Museum's Board of Directors as an At-Large Member. With a lifetime dedicated to high-performance automobiles and the Corvette community, Ken's expertise, leadership, and enthusiasm will be invaluable as the Museum continues to innovate and expand its mission. Ken's love for speed and performance runs deep. The son of a General Motors executive who served as a manager at the Fisher Body Assembly Plant in Euclid, OH, developed an early appreciation for stylish, high-performance cars and purchased his first Corvette in 1977. Over the decades, his passion grew into a world-renowned collection of muscle cars, Corvettes, and exotics. In 2008, Ken acquired Lingenfelter Performance Engineering, founded by his distant cousin John Lingenfelter. Under his leadership, Lingenfelter Performance Engineering has continued to push the boundaries of automotive performance, earning a reputation for innovation and excellence. Ken's involvement with the Museum spans many years as a member, donor, and exhibitor, with numerous significant Corvettes from his collection on display throughout the Museum's history. Most recently, his 1954 Chevrolet Corvette EX-87 Duntov Mule, an iconic piece of Corvette history, was showcased at the Museum for more than a year.

**28<sup>th</sup> Annual Michelin National Corvette Museum BASH!** - The 28th Annual National Corvette Museum Michelin Bash is the ultimate way to celebrate America's Sports Car and connect with fellow enthusiasts. Enjoy guided road tours through scenic routes, explore rare and unique artifacts from the Museum's collection, and take a behind-the-scenes look at the latest

exhibit in the Limited Engagement Gallery. Participate in expert-led seminars and tech sessions with GM-certified Corvette specialists, and don't miss the Museum-judged car show, where you can showcase your Corvette or admire others on display. Registration is now open for the April 23-26 event.



**2025 Michelin Bash**  
April 24-26, 2025

[Register Now](#)



**MiM Le Mans Tour**  
June 7-17, 2025

[Register Now](#)



**MiM Colorado Springs**  
July 13-17, 2025

[Join the Wait List](#)

View a complete list of events with more information and links to register on the [website here](#).

**Corvette Raffles!** - Currently raffle tickets are only available through the mail, by filling out an order form, or through purchase at the museum or in the State of Kentucky. There are a range of vehicles and raffle types underway, so I encourage you to take a look at the website for a complete listing. I have not won yet, but I remain hopeful. You can't win if you don't play as they say. You can find the latest raffles here - <https://raffle.corvettemuseum.org>

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**Check the Events Calendar on the **UPDATED** website for more upcoming activities**

**Join us for our next meeting on April 3rd at Casa Grande!**

If you have any questions or suggestions about the newsletter, please contact:

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*Celebrating my **20<sup>th</sup>** year  
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