

P.O. Box 1175  
Canyon Country, CA  
91351



October  
2002  
Newsletter

## **Santa Clarita Valley Corvette Club**

Please note that if you received a hard copy this Newsletter, the Club's records show that you do not have e-mail – if you do have e-mail, please advise Ken Austin at [kenneth\\_austin@baxter.com](mailto:kenneth_austin@baxter.com) and we'll send the Newsletter electronically!

**CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY!!**

**Website: [santaclaritacorvetteclub.com](http://santaclaritacorvetteclub.com)**

Regular Meeting at Mulligan's on the First Wednesday of the Month  
Social Hour at 6:30 p.m.  
Meeting At 7:30 p.m.  
25848 Tournament Rd., Valencia, CA 661-255-3356  
*Next meeting November 6, 2002*

## **SCVCC Officers 2002/2003**

		<u>Telephone</u>	<u>e-mail address</u>
<u>President</u>	<u>Fred Seeley</u>	<u>661-250-0125</u> <u>Fax 250-1470</u>	<u>seeley_1@msn.com</u>
<u>Vice- President and Chairman</u>	<u>Dennis Booker</u>	<u>661-299-9462</u>	<u>dbooker@socal.rr.com</u>
<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Marshall Vernon</u>	<u>805-306-1313</u>	<u>horrido@earthlink.net</u>
<u>Treasurer</u>	<u>Jack Barber</u>	<u>661-255-9081</u>	<u>jackbarber84@cs.com</u>
<u>Activities Committee</u>	<u>Barrie Bennett</u> <u>Ron Mongeau</u> <u>Jim Bancroft</u>	<u>661-222-2252</u> <u>661-294-3956</u> <u>661-296-3517</u>	<u>barriebennett@mediaone.net</u> <u>Rvmongeau@juno.com</u> <u>jembancroft@cs.com</u>
<u>Membership</u>	<u>Gene Schmidt</u>	<u>661-255-6951</u>	<u>cyngene@earthlink.net</u>
<u>Newsletter</u>	<u>Ken Austin</u>	<u>661-263-1065</u>	<u>Kenneth_austin@baxter.com</u>
<u>Webmaster</u>	<u>Linda Austin</u>	<u>661-263-1065</u>	<u>lindam@ri-net.com</u>

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### **Augua Dulce Winery Run – Lucky Number 13**

**There was nothing unlucky about the 13<sup>th</sup> day of October this year, at least not for the 13 SCVCC cars that met at Denny’s for a truly Fun Run!**

**The 13-car turnout on a bright and beautiful fall day made for an imposing and colorful caravan as we took the long road to the recently opened Augua Dulce Winery. The direct route would have taken about 11 minutes so we cruised out to the East along Soledad Canyon, went up Arico Canyon to its intersection with Angeles Forest then North to Sierra Highway to our destination.**

**It really is interesting to watch passersby’s and pedestrians as that many beautiful Corvettes stream past. With out any exception, cars in front of us politely pulled over and waved as we went past. At one 4-way intersection, the opposing driver refused his turn to pull through the intersection and just kept waving our group through!**

**The folks at Aqua Dulce were happy to greet us and since our group was larger than we'd warned them for, they gave us half of the main tasting bar. Marilyn and her associates led the eager tasters through the Winery's current selections. After the tasting, the Winery provided us with a private tour and Q&A session, which we all enjoyed.**

**Several members had other commitments that afternoon after the tour, but the rest of us enjoyed socializing and picnicking on the shaded Winery terrace. It was a great chance to get to know several of our newer members, talk about Corvettes, and share ideas for future Club events.**

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### **Ever wonder the story behind the story?**

**This is a wonderful article that recently appeared in the Los Angeles Times.**

***By SCOTT DOGGETT, SPECIAL TO THE TIMES***

**We could thank Mr. and Mrs. Brooks for the Chevrolet Corvette. In 1949, Maj. Kenneth Brooks of Newport Beach wanted to give his wife, Dottie, a special sports car. The retired Army Air Corps officer hired boat builder Bill Tritt to craft a fiberglass roadster body that could be fitted to a Jeep chassis the Brookses owned.**

**In a one-car garage in Costa Mesa, Tritt created a striking light-green two-seater reminiscent of the Jaguar XK120. Earl Ebers, a sales executive for U.S. Rubber, saw the car and in it the potential to make his fiberglass-producing company loads of money if Detroit's automakers could be swayed to make car bodies out of the glass-reinforced plastic.**

**Ebers commissioned Tritt to make a second vehicle using the Brooks mold, and in late 1951 Ebers had his car. A few months later, the salesman showed the vehicle to General Motors Corp. styling guru Harley Earl, who was so taken by what he saw that he arranged to have it kept at a GM auditorium for detailed study.**

**That was in the spring of '52, and a mere nine months later a sports car debuted at the GM Motorama in New York. At 150 yards, the fiberglass-bodied, two-seat Chevrolet Corvette could be mistaken for the car Tritt created.**

**It's been half a century since Maj. Brooks set things in motion, and during those years, GM's Chevrolet division has rolled out 1.2 million 'Vettes, ranging from gutless wonders to street-legal cars that are racing machines in disguise.**

**The debutantes--the 1953 models featured anemic motors with two-speed transmissions hidden beneath classy polo-white exteriors. Interiors were red vinyl and tops were black canvas and convertible.**

**Today, because they started it all and because only about 200 of them still are around (out of a class of 300), the '53s typically fetch \$125,000 to \$190,000 at auction.**

**Chevrolet had planned to put 10,000 'Vettes on the streets the next year, but only 3,640 were made for 1954 because of meager demand. The car's paltry six-cylinder engine, a carry-over from the year before, and its hefty price \$2,774 for the base roadster, or \$959 more than the annual per-capita income in the U.S. back then helped curb demand.**

**Chevy offered the Corvette with a three-speed manual transmission in 1955 and in most '55s replaced the six-banger with a V-8 engine. But third-year Corvettes otherwise varied little from their predecessors. Only 700 of the cars were built, due to fears they wouldn't sell. That low number makes them very expensive today.**

**Chevy stylists redesigned the Corvette in 1956, giving the car a lean, mean look befitting its made-over spirit: Under the hood lurked a 265-cubic-inch engine producing 210 horsepower (240 horsepower with performance options).**

**No longer did anyone look on the 'Vette as a cute little car. 1956 also was the first year the Corvette was offered with a removable hardtop.**

The '57 Corvette resembled its predecessor, but '57s are notable for being the first with optional fuel injection and an optional four-speed transmission. The engine now displaced 283 cubic inches, with the stronger of two available motors producing 283 horsepower.

Perhaps taking cues from Cadillac, the Corvettes of 1958 traveled down Gaudy Lane. The lithe, lean cars of '56 and '57 were followed by a '58 chromium colossus brandishing quad headlights, 18 ludicrous faux hood louvers and kitschy trunk spears. The '59s and '60s were less gaudy, but all three-model years packed excessive weight: 3,000-plus pounds with an empty tank.

The 'Vettes of 1960-61 marked the end of the so called classic Corvettes those with external trunks that permitted owners to lock stuff out of sight and solid rear axles instead of independent rear suspensions all later Corvettes carried. The '61 also was the last Corvette to feature exposed headlights.

Enthusiasts often speak of Corvettes in five groups: the C1s (1953-62), the C2s (1963-67), the C3s (1968-82), the C4s (1984-96) and the C5s (1997-present). The first year in each group was a year an extensive redesign was introduced. A 1983 Corvette doesn't exist; Chevy was so late with its '83 offering that it designated as '84s all Corvettes built that year.

Today, most C1s are collectibles commanding \$25,000 on up, and all but extensively modified C1s and C2s are horrible drivers. The cars also are geared so low that their motors tach up high, letting out a continuous, unwelcome moan starting at about 65 mph. "They're not comfortable cars due to their harsh ride, difficulty getting in and out of, lots of wind noise--and they aren't watertight," said Carlos Vivas, owner of C&S Corvette Restoration in Torrance. His personal stable contains eight early 'Vettes.

**The C2s were better-built cars. Of the 21,513 made in 1963, just less than half were coupes. Not only did 1963 mark the first year the 'Vette was available with a fixed roof, but that model year also is famous for its rear window two panels of glass separated by a divider. The '63 were the only models to feature the split window. Though generally regarded as a cool-looking feature a split window 'Vette can fetch up to 50% more than the single window 1964 model that is almost identical in other respects the divider created a blind spot that Chevy rectified the next year by replacing the window panels with a single large piece of glass.**

**A '63 in fair condition can be found for \$20,000; an award-winning restored model can cost 10 times as much.**

**The 1965-67 Corvettes are among the most desirable, and those with 327-cubic-inch "small-block" engines actually make decent daily drivers. That's because they get acceptable gas mileage and their seats provide lumbar support (sorely lacking in earlier models). Many '65-'67s pack optional power brakes, power windows, power steering and air conditioning as well all welcome conveniences for Southern California commuters.**

**Optional large-block engines included a 396-cubic-inch, 425-horsepower motor in 1965 and a monstrous 427, rated at 435 horsepower, in 1967. A mint small-block '65-'67 will set you back about \$45,000 for a coupe and \$48,000 for a ragtop.**

**Although the C3s ('68s through '82s) share a body shape, these model years vary considerably in desirability. The '68s came under fire from auto writers for various quality issues that always have influenced their resale value.**

**The '69 'Vette packing the optional 427-cubic-inch ZL1 engine was factory rated at 430 horsepower but actually puts out more than 500 horses. Corvettes from the 1970 and '71 model years, featuring 350 plus and 330 plus horsepower engines, respectively, are highly desirable (expect to pay \$25,000 or more for a healthy specimen). These cars sold new for \$5,192 and \$5,496 in the base model, and if you had an extra \$1,221 to burn back then, you could have bought a '71 'Vette with 425 horsepower under the hood.**

**The '72-'80 Corvettes are primarily daily drivers few owners put big bucks into restoring them and are among the least sought after 'Vettes. These cars make up the second batch of gutless wonders, eviscerated by emissions regulations, bearing the Corvette nameplate. Not one of the base engines during these eight years produced more than 200 horsepower; the '75 'Vette harnessed a mere 165 ponies.**

**Oddly, though, as the 1970s-era Corvettes steadily lost power, they gained popularity. By 1979, Chevy was selling every Corvette it could make--53,807 of them that year, more than in any year before or since. And not a single one of them was a convertible; ragtops had been sent into exile in 1975 and weren't readmitted to the lineup until 1985. The 1980, '81 and '82 models also were produced in big numbers despite a dearth of performance options; '82 Corvettes weren't even available with a stick shift or an engine generating more than 190 horsepower. Chevy introduced a fairly good computer-controlled fuel-injection system called "cross fire" on the '82 Corvette, but the system disappeared after one year, and parts for it are tough to come by.**

**Ask 10 Chevy mechanics to comment on the Corvettes of the 1980s and most will encourage prospective buyers to avoid the '84s. That was the first year of a redesign, and '84 models contained many bugs, including a horridly stiff suspension and, in those equipped with a four-speed manual transmission, a troublesome powertrain computer. It was meant to improve fuel economy but hampers acceleration, and there's no way drivers can override the device.**

**The annoying gearbox-computer combo haunts the 'Vette from '84 through '88, but prices for these cars are tempting; one in good condition can be had for as little as \$5,000. The reputation of the C4s (1984-96) improves with the 1989 models, thanks to the retirement of the troublesome gearbox in favor of a German-supplied six-speed stick shift (most of the '89s were, however, supplied with an automatic transmission).**

**The next year saw the Corvette offered with a much-anticipated LT5 engine option that produced 375 horsepower, and for the 1993 model year 'Vettes again entered the 400 club, with the LT5 upgraded to 405 horsepower.**

Many 'Vette experts, such as Michael Bensaid, owner of Corvette Specialty of California in Riverside, view the late C4s as offering the best value. "You can buy a '92 to '96 for less than \$20,000," Bensaid said. "It's a lot of car for the money. They are reliable, they are comfortable and the fuel economy on them [about 22 miles per gallon] is very good for a sports car with a [base] 300-horsepower engine."

The C4s are notorious, though, for two features: a high door sill that makes climbing in difficult for some, and narrow foot wells that can make the cabin feel cramped, especially on a long drive.

Chevy came out with an all-new Corvette in 1997, powered by an aluminum 5.7-liter V-8 producing 345 horsepower and connected to either a six-speed manual or a four-speed automatic transmission. A coupe with a one-piece lift-off top was the only body style offered that year, but from '98 onward the 'Vette was available as a coupe or a convertible.

The fifth-generation 'Vettes also reduced the side sill step-over by 4 inches and widened the foot wells. At the same time, Chevy engineers pushed the wheels toward the corners of the car and moved the transmission to the rear, improving ride and handling. Of the C5s, the best value for the money is to be found in the '97 and '98 Corvettes.

A good specimen can be had for less than \$30,000 (versus \$53,000-plus for a new 'Vette). Unfortunately, they aren't holding resale value well because they are so new: C5s are depreciating at 10% to 13% a year. That makes them a good buy for shoppers but not so nice for those with one to sell.

## **SANTA CLARITA VALLEY CORVETTE CLUB ACTIVITIES**

### **October**

**19** Corvette Supersports San Diego Autocrosses -- Individual and 5 car teams. Stephen & Jean 909-394-1953

**25,26&27** Highway 99 Cruise and Show-- City of Bakersfield. Two classes for Corvettes 8 hotels involved. 661-326-3000. Sounds like a BIG party.

### **November**

**3** West Coast Corvette Challenge drag racing at LA County  
[www.corvettechallenge.com](http://www.corvettechallenge.com)

- 6** General Meeting  
**10<sup>th</sup> or** First annual ACVCC “Loose -your-lunch” Brunch. Very twisty roads  
**17th** ending at a semi-secret brunch restaurant.
- December**
- 4** **General Meeting**  
**7** **Christmas Party at Mulligan’s**

## **PLAN AHEAD:**

**Super Bowl Party**

**Gambler’s Classic Laughlin -- March 21,22, 23, 2003**

**Kernville Run - Whispering Pines June 13, 14, 15 or 20, 21, 22, 2003. Lodge should be ready to start taking reservations the first week in Sept. Phone: 760-376-3733**

***DATE October 2, 2002***

- 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**  
*7:35 P.M.*
- 2. READING OF THE MINUTES**
- 3. TREASURER’S REPORT**
  - **Treasurer’s Report for October 2, 2002:**  
*Please See Jack Barber for information.*
- 4. MEMBERSHIP**
  - *Gene introduced prospective new members James and June Leeds, 2001 silver coupe, and Cindy Johnson, 2002 Maroon Coupe.*
- 5. ACTIVITIES/EVENTS**
  - *Jim Bancroft reminded club members of Aqua Dulce Winery run for October 13th.*
  - *December 7<sup>th</sup> Christmas party volunteers: Carol, Annetta, Judy, Sara, Cindy and Linda.*
  - *Dinner paid for member. Member pays for non-members attending party.*

- *Discussed gift exchange scheme: club member draws number for gift with corresponding number. Price of gift will be \$25.00.*
- *Fred volunteered to host Super Bowl party at his house.*
- *November run was discussed. Tentative November 17<sup>th</sup>.*
- *January 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> run was discussed: Pismo Beach or Cambria. Overnighter.*
- *Discussed toys for tots.*
- *Laughlin Run in March 2003 was discussed.*
- *Kern River Run for May 16/17, 2003 was discussed and firmed up.*

## **6. 50/50 RAFFLE**

- ***Dave Schaffert won \$50.00***

## **7. BADGE IT OR LOSE IT**

- *Rick Piedalue won but was not present.*

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

- *Dave Schaffert passed out to club members new club business cards and placards for vehicles.*

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

- *Bill Thomas displayed new club polo shirt and hat. Black was favored by majority of club. Forty-eight hats would be initially ordered.*

## **10. CAR TALK**

- *Bill Sr. advised club members that November 3<sup>rd</sup> was set for Los Angeles County Raceway drags.*

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

- *8:40 p.m.*

Club Secretary  
Marshall Vernon

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