

# High Plains Shifter

Newsletter of the NCRS Rocky Mountain Chapter

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## Activities

**October 16:**  
**Judging Meet:**  
**Medved-Wheat Ridge**

**November 20:**  
**Tech Session-Corvette City:**  
**About Spark Plugs + Fuel**  
**Filter Info**

**December 18:**  
**Tech Session Or Tour/Trip**

**January 8:**  
**Annual Chapter Holiday**  
**Party — Maggianos;**  
**Centennial, CO**



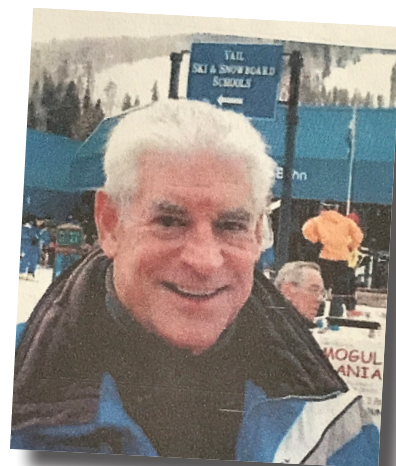
**Chairman's Report**  
**By Rick Reiff**

**The RMC Board of Directors have been having Zoom meetings to discuss the option of hosting a Regional in 2024,**

Happy Autumn RMC members:

The summer season is now behind us and hopefully as you reflect back you have good memories of getting your Corvette out on one of the three road tours your activity chair Jeff Roth put together, attended the 4<sup>th</sup> of July party at Glenn and Lynn Reiff's, and/or attended a rather warm National Convention in Palm Springs. Looking forward we have the Judging Meet in October, which there are more details on in John Marsico's article, followed by (hopefully in person) meetings/Tech Sessions in November and December (see Jeff Roth's article for more information about future events).

Also looking forward, the RMC Board of Directors have been having Zoom meetings to discuss the option of hosting a Regional in 2024, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the NCRS. As you know we had to forego hosting the 2020 Regional in Loveland due to the pandemic and are investigating potential sites and the economics of hosting one in 2024. Hopefully, the BoD will decide prior to our November meeting.



**Ted Smathers**

In closing I want to share some information about one of our RMC members and friend Ted Smathers. Ted unexpectedly passed away last May. Ted was raised in Pennsylvania and had a degree



in Engineering Mechanics from Penn State and a master's degree from the University of Colorado. Ted was a U.S. Navy aviator and had five years of active-duty service and twenty years in the reserves and retired as a Commander. He worked for IBM and was credited with several patents during his time with the company and was also on the adjunct faculty at Colorado School of Mines for more than 20 years. What I didn't know was that Ted was a ski instructor at Vail for 27 years and until he turned 80! What I did know was that Ted and his wife Shaunie loved to go on Corvette road trips and had an eventful trip in their '63 SWC while enroute to the National Convention at Lake Tahoe in 2009. Ted wrote a great article about the trip in the July/August 2009 edition of the High Plains Shifter. I encourage you to read the article, which can be found on the RMC website ([https://www.rmc.ncrs.org/news/4Q\\_2009.pdf](https://www.rmc.ncrs.org/news/4Q_2009.pdf)).

We miss you, Ted. Rest in peace my friend.

Rick Reiff  
Chairman



*Ted Smathers' "re imagined" 62 in front and Fred Koenig's restored 62 in the back. (Fred recently sold his 62. ED)*



**Membership Report  
by Steve Beatty**

## It's almost that time of the year to think about renewing your RMC membership.

We have added no new members since my last report. Our current membership is at 136 members.

It's almost that time of the year to think about renewing your RMC membership. Watch for the 2022 RMC membership dues notices to be emailed out November 1<sup>st</sup> to those members whose memberships are expiring at the end of this year. Renewal online via the National NCRS website is encouraged using this link:

<https://www.ncrs.org/forums/register/chapter-membership.php>

**REMINDER**, you must be a current member of National NCRS to be a member of RMC.

Chapter notices are generally sent out via email using the addresses contained on the National NCRS' member email database.

Accordingly, please make sure your National NCRS profile email address is always up to date to avoid missing Chapter news. Here is a link to your member profile:

<https://www.ncrs.org/forums/register/change-address.php>

Chapter Top Flight Award

Due to the corona virus and mandates by the CDC and State of Colorado that require social distancing, many of our meetings and activities have been postponed and/or cancelled. For this reason, the NCRS has cancelled the Chapter Top Flight Program for 2021.

Steve Beatty  
Membership Manager  
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**Activities  
by Jeff Roth**

## **I have learned a great deal about my corvettes and have met a lot of terrific people in the Rocky Mountain Chapter.**

It's the middle of September and the last few nights have been in the 30's, not hard to tell that fall is on its way. I am ready for the change in seasons. Looking back, we kicked off the summer with a terrific 4<sup>th</sup> of July party at Glenn and Lynn Reiff's house. About 50 people attended and enjoyed gobs of delicious food. I really appreciate the Reiff's hospitality and especially Lynn's ability to organize a party. What great hosts they have been the last few years.

In August we were able to complete a road trip that had been interrupted last year due to the mountain fires. We drove over Berthoud Pass and had a nice lunch in Winter Park. In September, we headed to Leadville to see some aspen colors and have lunch at the Tennessee Pass Café. We have a good, but small, core group who participate and enjoy the road trips. I just don't understand why more members don't participate in these activities. Road trips are an excellent way to get out, drive our cars, take in some scenery and enjoy the company of our fellow club members.

A judging meet is scheduled for October. In November and December, we will likely have tech sessions. It will be interesting to see if there is substantial participation in these events. I am concerned about the future of Rocky Mountain Chapter. Seems to me that the club is on the decline. There is a lack of involvement by members in attending activities as well as taking on leadership roles. If this apathy continues, it's hard to imagine the chapter surviving. Ten members can't do it all.

I have learned a great deal about my corvettes and have met a lot of terrific people in the Rocky Mountain Chapter. That is why I wanted to give back to the organization by serving on the board as activities chair. But after six years of doing the job, I'm ready for a break. I have tried to find my replacement with no success. I know a lot of you who have been members for many years have donated your time in the past and I thank you for your contributions. Hopefully someone will motivate for the greater good and step up to fill my shoes. I would be happy to coach a new activities chair and would look forward to their new ideas for events to enhance our club.

Thank you,  
Jeff Roth



**Judging Chair  
by John Marsico**

## **I was fortunate to attend the April Arizona Regional, the Iowa Regional in Cedar Rapids, and the National Convention in Palm Springs, California.**

The deadline for this issue occurred before our fall chapter judging meet so I can't report on that event for this article. I can, however, report on several other items.

I was fortunate to attend the April Arizona Regional, the Iowa Regional in Cedar Rapids, and the National Convention in Palm Springs, California. The Arizona Regional was held at the newly renovated We-Ko-PA resort and casino. The facility was top drawer. It was a treat to be out meeting NCRS friends and judging some beautiful Corvettes. It was quite warm in the Scottsdale area but the heat was not an issue.

The regional in Cedar Rapids was held in June. This was the first time I have spent any time in Iowa. The heat and humidity was a bit of challenge for me. I worked as an operations judge with four straight axles on the docket. Two of the cars came in the night before allowing me and my partner the luxury of judging these cars in the morning. The last two cars came in on trailers only thirty minutes before the afternoon deadline. Needless to say I drank a lot more water judging these final two cars.

The National Convention in Palm Springs was another high heat affair. Late afternoon temperatures ranged between 115 to 118 degrees. The comment most often heard was, "it's a dry heat." The hotel was quite nice and within walking distance to downtown and many restaurants. I think one of the best enchiladas anywhere can be found about 3 blocks from the hotel. Everything was held indoors with great air conditioning. Consequently, the high temperatures were never a factor. The walk from my room to the judging field was about .4 of a mile so, needless to say, I never needed to worry about getting in my daily walk. Again there was a very nice collection of Corvettes and working with my NCRS colleagues was another plus.

As you know, Martin Egan was elected to serve as Chapter Judging Chairman beginning January 1, 2022. I want to wish Martin great success and know the chapter will be in good hands. Finally I want to thank all of you for supporting me these past 2 years as your judging chairman.





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## 27TH Anniversary Celebration & '79 Vette Celebration

I enjoyed attending the 2021 NCM Anniversary Celebration over Labor Day weekend. Especially welcome this year were in-person seminars and presentations, rather than virtual as in the past two years. A special highlight for me was meeting and talking with the Museum's new President/CEO Sharon Brawner. Included here are some significant features from seminars.

### 24 at 20

This seminar honored Dale Earnhardt Sr., Corvette, and the overall win in the Rolex 24 hours at Daytona. Taking Corvette race fans down memory lane were driver Andy Pilgrim, Doug Fehan, head of Corvette racing, and Gary Claudio, who, in late 2000, brought Dale Earnhardt Sr. and Dale Earnhardt Jr. into the program. The afternoon was spent with the three NCM Hall of Famers talking about the Daytona race and their memories of Dale Earnhardt Sr. who was killed just a couple weeks later in a last lap crash in the 2001 Daytona 500.



Dale Earnhardt Sr. ,  
internet photo-ED

### Corvette assembly plant update

Kai Spande, Assembly Plant Manager, (who started at GM 30 years ago to the day) and Chuck Valentini, Plant Body and Paint Manager, hosted the seminar called "World Class Paint Job". Note: Kai reiterated that tours will re-open to the public when Chevrolet decides it is safe.

Both Kai and Chuck took the audience through the painting operation using a process flow chart supported by many photos. While not discussing proprietary information and processes, the flow chart, photos, and narrative did show how the Corvette panels are painted prior to assembly. Currently there are 12 colors available including the 3 new colors introduced at the April Michelin Bash - Hypersonic Gray Metallic, Amplify Orange Tintcoat, and Caffeine Metallic. Of particular interest in the presentation were *Crater Testing* and *Blackout Process*. Cosmetics and other contaminants on a person's body can cause "craters" in the paint applied to the Corvette panels. Before entering, authorized personnel must go through *Crater Testing*. Personnel must dress in special lint free

garments preventing the transmission of contaminants to the paint. The final sequence consists of personnel stepping on special mats while passing through an enclosed walkway where air blows on their garments, removing residual contaminants.

The *Blackout Process* is labor intensive as most operations are done manually! Previously painted parts are removed from their carriers, masked with tape to prevent overspray, and placed on carriers. Special fasteners attached by workers hold the parts on the carriers. Black paint is robotically applied to the underside of painted parts such as hatch and trunk lids and engine hoods in spray paint and curing ovens. Exiting the ovens, the masking tape and fasteners are removed before the parts are placed on carriers entering the assembly process.

### Corvette Team update

Representing the Corvette Design/Engineering Team was Corvette Product Marketing Manager Harlan Charles. He recapped all the great news surrounding the Corvette and awards before delving into the latest production and sales statistics. Harlan said 26,216 Corvettes will be produced for the 2021 model year and offered the breakdown on the most popular options by percentages. The top chassis is the Z51 with Magnetic Selective Ride Control (FE4) at 46%, NPP Exhaust was ordered on 87% of the C8s and the E60 Front Lift was ordered on 61%. Inside the car, the GT2 seats accounted for 60% while the Competition seats were 7% of the orders. Top wheel choices were the Carbon Flash Open-Spoke wheel (Q8Q) at 39% while the Silver version (Q8P) at 38%.



Corvette Product Marketing Manager  
Harlan Charles, internet photo-ED

Harlan also presented the 2021 colors choices ranging from the most popular to those "rare" combinations that were selected the least. Torch Red was the top color for the model year at 19.7% (5,171) followed by Arctic White at 14.3% (3,769) and Red Mist at 13.3% (3,476). Not surprising, Zeus Bronze was last at 1.9% (509), Accelerate Yellow at 3.2% (890), and Shadow Gray at 4.2% (1,111).

Harlan then turned to what's new for the '22 model year as well as some big news coming for a certain car that has "one letter and two numbers." He shared two video teasers that have been previously released: "Crank It Up" featured just the sound of the car with the words "The street will never sound the same." The second teaser "Save the Date" showed the Z06 driving from the Nurburgring to Le Mans where it parked next to a Corvette Racing's C8.R. The Z06's reveal date of 10/26/2021 was displayed, but the location was not. Harlan concluded by saying Corvette is very excited about the next chapter of the 8th generation Corvette. Corvette has been working hard and testing is continuing, not only in Europe but all over America.



Kai Spande and his  
66 Corvette, internet  
photo-ED



## EXXON/MOBIL Seminar

Cam Bower, Global Strategic Account Manager, hosted this seminar on Mobil 1 ESP Formula 0W40 oil. Together, Corvette partnering with Mobil, have more than 100 racing victories. 0W40 oil will have a name change at the end of the year clearly identifying it for use in Corvette. Most of the seminar consisted of a Q&A session. One of the questions was about storage. Cam said to drive the car vigorously to remove moisture in the spent oil and then change the oil. Changing the filter is most important! He recommended Mobil 1 or AC Delco filters. Although Chevrolet specifies that the new oils must be “back compatible”, older Corvettes should use the oil specified in the owner’s manual. Changing to synthetic oil may cause leaks, due to formulations.

## The Corvette that started the BG Assembly Plant

### THE STORY OF THE 1979 CORVETTE

Corvettes have been assembled in three locations – Flint, Michigan (1953), St. Louis, Missouri (1954-1981), and Bowling Green, Kentucky (1981-present). The move from St. Louis to Bowling Green allowed General Motors to start new experimental technologies in assembly. GM built the Bowling Green Assembly Plant (BGAP) as they wanted it! There was an unusual amount of attention to details as the test for quality was built into the plant. For example, in St. Louis, inspectors were stationed at different areas along the line, away from the workers. BGAP inspection and repair cycles were built into the assembly process in every area where the original work was performed. Workers were aware of how their area was doing in terms of quality.

When a new model or generation is introduced, workers often assemble test mules to learn the most efficient way to complete their tasks. But before testing, how did the new BGAP know the assembly line would function as designed?

The answer: a 1979 Corvette, after ending its life as an *engineering development car* for changes coming in 1980-81, was shipped to BGAP. The chassis was modified by A. O. Smith Corporation to accept different body mount locations and lighten the 1980 model with a new aluminum rear differential housing and carrier (see photos). The interior was unique with several experimental components including a power driver’s seat that became available in Corvette in 1981, and an experimental center console gauge cluster. The 1979 Corvette Yellow coupe, photographed as it was lowered to the assembly line floor, was featured on the cover of the June-July 1981 issue of *Corvette News* (see photo). The Corvette made the initial run down the assembly line.



1981 *Corvette News* cover and 1979 Corvette in NCM's preservation department



Restoration of 79 coupe used to test AP line before opening.



Unassembled 79 in preservation



A.O. Smith original modified chassis and nameplate.



above and to the right-79 Corvette reassembled



## Preserved 1979 Corvette revealed

Acquired by the Museum in 2018, the 1979 Corvette, although disassembled (see photos), remained mostly in original condition. The collections team set out to preserve the 1979 Corvette and not necessarily restore it. To protect it from further degradation, the preservation team performed conservative treatments, including stabilizing corrosion issues and applying coatings to the vehicle’s surface.

While the body and frame were separated, the cracked front fender was repaired. Tasks included mating the body to the chassis, fully installing all interior components, touching up the paint, wet sanding, and polishing the entire car. Most importantly, a new engine was installed. The engine used was as close as possible to the original, and many original parts were used that were periodically appropriate.

At the September 2021 National Corvette Museum’s 27th Anniversary Event, September 2 - 4, Derek E. Moore, Director of Collections and Curator, discussed “Rebuilding the 1979

Engineering Development Corvette.” I’ve included several photos of the preserved car as it was revealed, ready for display in the Museum.





Merchandise  
By Eckhard Pobuda

We now have most sizes of the heather gray ring spun t-shirts, blue silk touch polo shirts, royal blue sweatshirts, gray sweatshirts with embroidered logos. This includes: Heather Charcoal Ring Spun Short Sleeve T-Shirts (Pic 1); Black Heather Silk Touch Long Sleeve T-Shirts (Pic 2); Blue Silk Touch Short Sleeve Polo Shirts (Pic 3); Royal Blue Long Sleeve Sweatshirts (Pic 4). All of this merchandise is available in all sizes. Also, we have replenished the inventory of several of our popular items such as the Chambray Shirts with embroidered pockets and Black Short Sleeve T-Shirts with embroidered pockets. Prices are shown in the attached Merchandise Inventory.

Contact  
Eckhard @ [epobuda@aol.com](mailto:epobuda@aol.com).

| Item  | Value   | Color       |
|---|---------|-------------|
| 2015 National Cooler                                | \$10.00 | Blue        |
| Aprons  | \$15.00 |             |
| Challenger Jacket (SM - XL)                         | \$82.50 | Red/Navy    |
| Challenger Jacket (SM - XL)                         | \$82.50 | Black/Black |
| Challenger Jacket (SM - XL)                         | \$82.50 | Blue/Navy   |
| Challenger Jacket (XXL - XXXL)                      | \$85.00 | Red/Navy    |
| Challenger Jacket (XXL - XXXL)                      | \$85.00 | Black/Black |
| Challenger Jacket (XXL - XXXL)                      | \$85.00 | Blue/Navy   |
| Fleece Vests  | \$35.00 | Red         |
| Fleece Vests  | \$35.00 | Blue        |
| Fleece Vests  | \$35.00 | Black       |
| Hats  | \$15.00 | Black       |
| Hats  | \$15.00 | Black/Red   |
| Hats  | \$15.00 | Brown       |
| Hats  | \$15.00 | Beige       |
| Hats  | \$15.00 | Beige/Green |
| Hats  | \$15.00 | Beige/Black |
| Hat Pins  | \$3.00  |             |
| Pocket Knife  | \$5.00  |             |
| Polo Shirt - Short Sleeve                           | \$30.00 | Red         |
| Polo Shirt - Short Sleeve                           | \$30.00 | Blue        |
| Polo Shirt - Short Sleeve                           | \$30.00 | White       |
| Polo Shirt - Short Sleeve - Silk Touch (SM - XL)    | \$25.00 | Blue        |
| Polo Shirt - Short Sleeve - Silk touch (XXL - XXXL) | \$30.00 | Blue        |
| Subtotal Polo Shirts                                |         |             |
| RMC Window Sticker                                  | \$2.00  |             |

|   |         |                  |
|---|---------|------------------|
| Chambray Shirt (SM - XL)                          | \$35.00 | Denim            |
| Chambray Shirt (XXL - XXXL)                       | \$40.00 | Denim            |
| Chambray Shirt -Short Sleeve                      | \$30.00 | Denim            |
| Shopcoats - 38R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Shopcoats - 40R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Shopcoats - 42R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Shopcoats - 52R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Shopcoats - 54R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Shopcoats - 56R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Shopcoats - 58R                                   | \$35.00 |                  |
| Sweatshirt (SM - XL)                              | \$25.00 | Gray             |
| Sweatshirt (XXL - XXXL)                           | \$25.00 | Gray             |
| Sweatshirt (SM - XL)                              | \$25.00 | Royal Blue       |
| Sweatshirt (XXL - XXXL)                           | \$25.00 | Royal Blue       |
| T-Shirts - SS - Embroidered w/Pocket (SM - XL)    | \$15.00 | Black            |
| T-Shirts - SS - Embroidered w/Pocket (XXL - XXXL) | \$20.00 | Black            |
| T-Shirts - Short Sleeve -Stenciled                | \$10.00 | Gray             |
| T-Shirts -Ring Spun SS -Stenciled (SM - XL)       | \$10.00 | Heather Charcoal |
| T-Shirts - Ring Spun SS -Stenciled (XXL - XXXL)   | \$15.00 | Heather Charcoal |
| T-Shirts - Silk Touch LS -Stenciled (SM - XL)     | \$15.00 | Black Heather    |
| T-Shirts - Silk Touch LS -Stenciled (XXL - XXXL)  | \$18.00 | Black Heather    |



Pic. 3



Pic. 1



Pic. 4



Pic. 2

Membership in the NCRS is open to persons interested in the restoration, preservation and history of the Corvette produced by the Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors Corporation from 1953 through 1996. NCRS is not affiliated with Chevrolet or General Motors.

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the NCRS is open to all members of the NCRS National organization. Membership dues are \$20.00 annually, first year dues entitle the new member to a discounted Chapter ball cap and free membership nametag.

Advertising in the Rocky Mountain Chapter Newsletter is free to all active members, for all Corvette related items or Corvettes for sale. Commercial advertising rates for the Newsletter are \$15.00 for a business card, \$25.00 for a ¼ page, \$40.00 for a ½ page and \$60.00 for a full page. All rates are quoted for 4 issues or one-year printing. Contact the editor for further information. All editorial material can be sent to the editor.

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