



My Way

NEWSLETTER OF THE PERSONALIZED CHEVROLET CHAPTER (PCC)

2020

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ANNIVERSARY MEET POSTPONED TO 2022

I'm sure I wasn't the only one disappointed to hear that our 2021 Anniversary Meet in Bowling Green, KY was postponed for one year until 7/31/2022 to 8/5/2022. Of course, this event would be including a number of indoor events and if there was any chance that the COVID-19 vaccine was not universally available then the decision to continue might be risky. The organizers decided to postpone the meet early enough so that potential attendees would have plenty of time to make alternate vacation plans.

If you wanted to hear the plans for our anniversary meet, I encourage you to listen to a podcast hosted by Jim Karras and featuring David Miner (meet chair) and David Cufu (assistant meet chair). The podcast is listed in our vcca.org website under Calendar/60th Anniversary Meet, or you can click here: https://youtu.be/wkYkn-SmJ_Q?t=60. Plans initially included a visit to the National Corvette Museum, possibly a tour of the assembly plant and the opportunity to take your ride on the 3.2 mile, 23 turn road course. There will be different driving groups depending on the comfort level of the participants. The heavy-footed group can follow the pace car at straightaway speeds up to 100mph! (PCC members should take note.) Members driving modern are also welcome to participate. (For those flying in I suggest you carefully read your auto rental agreement first.) Of course a plaque tour will be planned to a quaint town in Kentucky and there will be activities for the youngsters.

I know it stinks to have to wait for all the fun but let's all hang in there. The December G&D will certainly provide more information.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET YOUR 2021 PCC DUES

Our Personalized Chevy Chapter relies only on dues and our grille badge & pin fundraisers for revenue. We don't host car shows or flea markets. Please mail your check for \$12 (made out to VCCA PCC) and mail to Gene Rogers, 811 Ford Ave, Snohomish, WA 98290. Thanks!



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

3 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE ATTENDING A CAR SHOW

I don't know if local car shows in your area are run much differently from those here in the northeast. By local shows I am referring to those that do not judge by some national standards like the VCCA or AACA for example. Car shows out here are a seasonal thing and primarily run from April to October. Except for those listed as "Cars & Coffee", all these shows offer trophies and say so on their flyers. However there is a lot of info that may or may not be posted on the flyer or in the online description.

I personally enjoy car shows and attend them nearly every weekend unless more important events share the same date. After attending one such show in mid-October, I decided to write this article. The show was hosted by a social club which I won't name. Around mid-afternoon, the announcer said trophies will now be awarded. He then emerged from the club building with 4 trophies – for an entire parking lot of participants. And for this I drove 30 miles?

I understand that not everyone cares whether or not they win a trophy. However, after spending half my weekend in a parking lot, it's nice to take something home. That's just me. Anyway, I gave some thought to what questions you might ask the organizers if not mentioned on the flyer. This could save you from wasting a half tank of gas or simply help in selecting among shows scheduled on the same day.

1. WHAT ARE YOUR CLASSES & HOW MANY TROPHIES PER CLASS? IF NO CLASSES, HOW MANY TROPHIES WILL BE AWARDED?

One show this year had 26 classes and none of them was for modified cars. You have to ask yourself who picked these classes? Needless to say, I didn't go. If there are no classes (like awards for top 20) I think they should offer at least one trophy for each 10 vehicles.

Most shows no longer restrict the age of the vehicle. Just be hopeful that that 2018 Challenger festooned with LEDs doesn't win best of show.

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CURRENT 2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS WELCOMING PCC PARTICIPATION

There are currently no area meets planned for 2021. Hopefully we can report some events in our next issue.

Although there are no area meets currently scheduled for next year, we need to celebrate all those PCC members who have participated in prior meets (through 2020) and have had their rides judged.

Please join me and our other PCC members in viewing this updated slideshow.

Just click [HERE](#).

3 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE ATTENDING A CAR SHOW

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2. WHO IS JUDGING?

Either they are or you are. I prefer that the host does the judging or enlists a car club to do it. This however doesn't always work well. Some shows are hosted by an organization or votech school that caters to boys & girls. Guess who judges your car? All the new Mustangs & Corvettes are likely winners.

What if they hand you a judging sheet at registration for you to judge? My first reaction is that I didn't pay \$20 to do your job. However, this isn't too bad as long as there are no classes randomly parked throughout the show field. That's bad. Fortunately, it's more typical when you have to pick your top 10 cars. You can do a decent job with one or two trips around the field. You know everyone will pick their own car as one of the top 10 and you have to follow suit for an even playing field. Of course there's always the danger that a car club is well represented at a show and their top 10 rarely goes beyond their in-crowd.

As bad as that may be, just hope the spectators don't pick all the winners. Some may have a smattering of knowledge about classic cars but most don't and will pick cars for God-only knows what reasons. Spectators are OK to select one trophy like peoples' choice. Other than that they will likely go about their day at the show parading their dogs or watching their kids feel your paint job.

3. ARE CLUB MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR TROPHIES?

Most car clubs are sophisticated enough to either rule their members ineligible or have separate trophies for them. The same does not seem to apply to social clubs at least in my experience. One club last year awarded up to 4 trophies to the same "participant".

I don't know if many of us would bother to ask these questions particularly when attending a show we've been to in prior years. However, asking the questions raises the awareness level of the host organization in understanding issues that most participants care about. And maybe they will create a better flyer next time.

How long do carmakers have to provide replacement parts for older cars?

Perhaps you've heard it from a parts counter guy. Or from your local mechanic. Or maybe from your neighbor. "I dunno why you can't find that part. The car companies, they gotta make the parts available for 10 years, or maybe it's six years. Either way, it's the law."

Except, as it appears, it's not. Or, at least, it's not a law in the United States, nor is it formally codified as a regulation. But that's not to say that automakers or their suppliers are totally off the hook when it comes to providing replacement parts. "I'm not aware there is a standard or regulation," said Wade Newton, the vice president of communications for the Alliance of Automotive Innovation. "The exception might be in safety recalls, but there's very likely not a standard for parts in general." However, as long as a carmaker offers a warranty covering certain systems (like, for instance, a drivetrain warranty), it must provide the parts necessary to fix those systems.

It's usually not up to the carmakers themselves to provide the replacement parts; rather, it's up to the suppliers, and as many have noted, the contracts between the automakers and the suppliers often specify that the parts the supplier is manufacturing need to either be on hand or be readily available for a certain amount of time. While there may be industry timespan norms for those contracts, by no means does that mean every carmaker must supply every part to build a car for any amount of time after the car was produced.

- credit to Daniel Strohl, *Hemmings Motor News*, Aug. 3, 2020

IS YOUR FUEL STABILIZER ACTUALLY HURTING YOUR CAR?

Putting your beloved ride away for the season and enduring months of watching it sit in place, wishing you could just go for a drive, is an unfortunate reality of winter vehicle storage. Worse is the notion that your careful storage prep routine includes a common misstep that will set you up for a bad experience come spring-time.

These fuel stabilizers typically have bold claims printed on the label, designed to appeal to the type of person who cares more about protecting his engine than buying the right pet food. I know I am more particular about the fuel I feed my internal combustion companions than the food I feed my fluffy cat friends, but one group has a lot less side effects from corn content.

The ethanol in modern fuel is hygroscopic, meaning it attracts water. That H₂O content can reach a point where it will separate from the fuel, especially in long term storage. That water sitting at the bottom of the tank is the first thing to be picked up by the fuel pickup. To address this, the stabilizer concoctions work to lower fuel's ability to pick up that moisture. They might also add some type of alcohol so that the heavier mixture will burn—however poorly—when drawn into the fuel system and dispersed in the combustion chamber.

Yes, almost all of these mixtures help in some fashion, but a few caused damage in other ways compared to the test's control sample. A few of the products tested led to greater corrosion, due to a lack of additive preventing the growth of rust and allowing a greater ingress of moisture. That moisture will—at best—make for a hard starting car in the spring and a rusty mess of a fuel system if left alone too long. Our vintage cars often have steel fuel lines and tanks, so any moisture just sitting around is bound to cause trouble.

In the end, the best solution with a vintage engine is to start with non-ethanol fuel. Fuel blends contain a lot of additives already and if there was one miracle cure that could be added to fuel to prevent all such problems, it would likely already be in the gas from the pump. Ethanol is what causes most of the problems associated with long-term fuel storage in an old car or bike. Barring the option of getting pure gas (also known as recreation gas), K100 and STA-BIL came out on top as recommended from the products sampled because STA-BIL and K100 both reduced the absorption of moisture and reduced corrosion.

Personally, this puts my mind at ease because as I have been a STA-BIL fan for years. Of course, I've never had more than my own anecdotal evidence to back up a recommendation, and I am often adding it to ethanol-free fuels from the outset. Now go forth and store with confidence! Hopefully spring arrives sooner than later.

For an interesting video of the tests the author ran on many competing products, click here: <https://youtu.be/chsGBhB5g7o>



BEL AIR OR NOT? A FORENSIC INVESTIGATION

Back in 2007 I started the process of purchasing a project '57 Chevy to build my restomod. I found a candidate in Queens, NY which I purchased and had towed to my builder in upstate NY. There was very little remaining on the car to identify its model. According to the VIN tag, the car was a V8 1957 Bel Air Sport Coupe (2 door hardtop). The "A" indicated the car was assembled in the Atlanta, GA Chevrolet plant. The final VIN numbers suggested the car



was completed in June 1957. That was fine with me as I planned to restore the Bel Air trim when the time came. Several months into the restoration, my builder gave me the cowl tag that he removed from the firewall since that would have no place in the custom engine bay. As I looked over the numbers, something just didn't add up. The cowl tag data numbers were:

STYLE No: 57 – 1037

BODY No: M 2025

TRIM No: 654

PAINT No: 819



The interpretation of the style number is a 1957 Model 210 Sport Coupe. This is at odds with the VIN tag which identifies the car as a Bel Air. A Bel Air style number on the cowl tag would be 1037 followed by a "D". Also, the "M" in the body number indicates the body was stamped and assembled in the Baltimore, MD Fisher Body plant. At all Fisher body plants except for Lansing, MI and Cleveland, OH, there was a corresponding Chevrolet assembly plant right next door. However, the VIN tag did not include a "B" for the companion Baltimore final assembly plant. The trim number on the cowl tag corresponds to a charcoal/ivory interior (not a Bel Air option), and the paint number relates to an India Ivory roof with a matador red body.

Early in the build, it wasn't clear whether the VIN tag or the cowl tag was correct. However, it became obvious when the tail fin upper moldings were installed. The model 210 has a shorter molding which requires only 3 clips per fin. The Bel Air molding is much longer and requires 11 clips per fin. The '57 only had 3 holes per fin which pegged it as a model 210. (Additional holes had to be drilled to accept the Bel Air moldings.) One can only speculate on why the VIN tag was replaced. Perhaps a previous owner planned a restoration on a more desirable Bel Air body.

BEL AIR OR NOT? A FORENSIC INVESTIGATION

An effort was made to determine the VIN from the original frame (topside of the driver's side frame rail) but the numbers were difficult to read at best. The original frame was cast aside in the rear of the building once the Art Morrison chassis was installed. The initial letters of the VIN are not generally stamped on the frame so it would not have confirmed the model anyway. The VIN would begin with "57" (the "7" is fairly clear). The next letter appears to be a "B". (The other Fisher body plant options are A, F, J, K, L, N, O, S & T but those are clearly not the letter.) Thus, the car was completed at the Baltimore, MD Chevrolet plant in agreement with the cowl tag Fisher plant. The last six numbers might be "240751". (The first number could only be a "1" or a "2".) Thus the car completed final assembly in July, 1957.



5 7 B 2 4 0 7 5 1

I guess I did all this as a matter of curiosity since I would have built the '57 as a Bel Air no matter what. Of course, I had no choice except to register it with the VIN tag that came with the car. Without the cowl tag or original frame, there is no remaining evidence that the '57 was not a Bel Air. So please don't tell anybody.

