



My Way

Happy Valentines

NEWSLETTER OF THE PERSONALIZED CHEVROLET CHAPTER (PCC)

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY BABY!

As we celebrate the new year, it's also a good time to reflect on the progress the Personalized Chevrolet Chapter has made over the relatively short time we've been in existence. The chapter was chartered by the national VCCA in 2014.

Our first judging event was held at the Area 8 Meet in Carlisle PA in 2016. Since then we participated in 26 Area and Anniversary Meets and judged 83 PCC vehicles. These events have been featured in our bi-monthly newsletter - MY WAY.

Thanks to Webmaster Jim Karras, the PCC has its own website (<https://pccvcca.org>) which provides information on membership, judging (guidelines, forms & seminar) and PCC gear to order. It also provides the link to our latest PCC winners slideshow (<https://youtu.be/phyRaBuoTs4>).

We need everyone to show their support for the recognition of modified Chevys & GMCs in the VCCA.

AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

(Our First PCC Get-Together!)

Calling all cars!! The Personalized Chevrolet Chapter is heading for some changes and we are looking for our members to take part. A Zoom call will be scheduled for March 3, 2024 at 12 noon PT/3PM ET. To register just click on this link <https://pccvcca.org/meeting-rsvp/> so we know who plans to participate. Then you will receive more instructions. PLEASE DON'T LET US DOWN! We need your input to determine the best course for our Chapter! Registering only puts you on the distribution list for instructions - no commitment.

Personnel - wise, we are looking to distribute some functions currently handled by the director. These include an Awards Coordinator (who would handle the distribution of awards and certificates and keep track of which PCC members received which awards) and a newsletter editor. More details will be provided on the Zoom call.

Jim Karras is also a Zoommaster and will handle the technical details. This will be a fun event and a rare opportunity for us to get together.

2024

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2024
HAPPY NEW YEAR

CURRENT 2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS WELCOMING PCC PARTICIPATION



• **May 1 - 4**

All Cal Meet hosted by the Sacramento Valley Region and held in Sacramento. Tours available followed by a dinner banquet at Brewster’s Restaurant in Galt. For more info, contact Mario Briseno on 916-698-1175 or brisenom@att.net.

• **June 10 - 14**

46th Middle West Meet hosted by Areas 4 & 5 in Dubuque, Iowa. For more info: birdcam69@gmail.com.

• **June 12 - 16**

Annual Northwest Meet hosted by the Columbia River Region and held in The Dalles, OR. For more info: crr.northwestmeet.2024@gmail.com.

• **July 24 - 28**

Annual 61st VCCA Central Meet hosted by the Cuyahoga Valley Region and held at the Best Western Plus in Strongsville, OH. Details to follow.

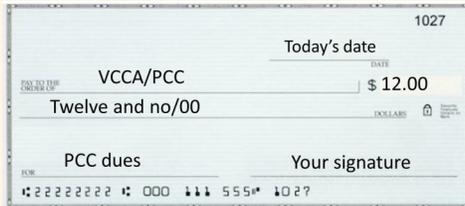
• **July 12 - 17, 2026**

2026 Anniversary Meet west of the Mississippi at Rapid City, SD. Judging will be held at the Central States Fairgrounds. Plenty of touring opportunities. Mark your calendars!

2024 PCC Dues Are Past Due

Twelve dollars is a small price to pay to keep our modified Chevys a growing part of the VCCA. This is the final MY WAY issue for non-renewers. Please write that check to VCCA/PCC and mail it to:

Gene Rogers
811 Ford Ave.
Snohomish, WA
98290



3 PCC Members Received Awards at the All Chevy/GMC Show

We closed out 2023 with 3 PCC members receiving senior awards at the Area 1 All Chevy/GMC Show in Burbank, CA on November 19th. Congrats to Al Giddens with his 1991 GMC Sonoma, Al Osterloh with his 1941 Stake Bed truck (5th win!), and Duane Diez with his 1951 '3100' Pickup (4th win!). Take a look at the above listing to see if there’s an upcoming meet near you!

Dude, Where's My VIN?!

Finding That Tricky VIN Number on Your Car

- extracted from Hot Rod Newsletter, August 9, 2023

In addition to your car title and registration, on most modern cars the VIN is found on the driver-side of the dashboard under the windshield, where the two meet. It is also found on the driver-side door or doorjamb. In 1981, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) standardized the VIN location; most manufacturers, however, had made the change by 1968. On model year cars older than 1981, there was no official location for the VIN, and it could be found on the dashboard location, the driver-side door, the firewall inside the engine compartment, and sometimes in other hard-to-find locations, for instance the under-dash support brace on Corvettes. Vehicle identification numbers were not used prior to 1954 but manufacturer's sequential manufacturing numbers (model serial numbers and/or chassis serial numbers) were usually found on a plaque in an obvious place such as on the firewall.

Where Is the Serial Number on Vehicles Older Than 1954?

Before the requirement of VINs, there were vehicle serial numbers. For ease of identification, most manufacturers put a serial identification number unique to that brand on a plaque that is normally found on the firewall or the doorjamb. On a postwar International Harvester pickup truck, it's on a plaque on the firewall. This plaque shows both a serial number and a chassis serial number on the same plate!

What Is a Secondary VIN?

All manufacturers place the primary VIN number under the windshield on the driver side (post-1980), but there is always an official VIN number placed somewhere else on the car to help law enforcement and insurance companies verify the car's authenticity. This is often placed inside the driver-side doorjamb or in the door-latch area but is not always in an obvious location. Sometimes it is on the firewall, elsewhere inside the engine compartment, or somewhere else entirely. On this 2023 Dodge Challenger SRT Super Stock, it's been brinelled into the sheetmetal of the passenger-side shock tower prior to the application of paint.



What Is a Hidden or Confidential VIN?

A "confidential VIN," or CON VIN as it is called by law enforcement, contains the last six digits of the VIN—the serial sequence number portion of the VIN number—and can be discovered in a variety of places sprinkled throughout the car, engine, sheetmetal, and powertrain. These help law enforcement and insurance investigators determine if the vehicle and its parts are original and may aid in the investigation of missing or stolen vehicles of a similar year, make, and model where parts or bodies easily interchange. The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) keeps records of confidential VIN sequence number locations from all manufacturers going back as far as the 1920s. Law enforcement agencies and insurance companies have unfettered access to the NICB database via NICB's Investi-

Finding That Tricky VIN Number on Your Car (Cont'd)

gative Assistance Group, which also maintains a mirror-image database of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). NICB service access is not extended to private individuals, shops, archivists, or restorers—a service that otherwise would help consumers safeguard against fraud.

Photo: One of several CON VIN stampings in a 1960s Chrysler B-Body. This one is on the radiator core support and mirrors the last numerical digits of the VIN.



Where Can I Find the CON VINs On a Car?

Typical places to find CON VINs include: the radiator core support, frame, trunk floor under the spare tire, next to or inside the driver-side trunk drip-rail molding, inside one of the rear wheel well sheetmetal stampings, on the engine block, on the firewall stamped into sheetmetal (covered by the heater box on the passenger side), the transmission housing, and the rear axletube. The federal Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR Part 541) states that the VIN must appear on the 18 "major parts" of a motor vehicle that are subject to the parts-marking requirement. Manufacturers tend to use similar locations from model to model and year to year, but CON VIN locations can be different from manufacturer to manufacturer. You will want to do some internet research on the CON VIN locations for the particular year, make, and model you're interested in. Note that this information is often hard to obtain because it's supposed to be secret and shared only within a consortium of manufacturers, law enforcement, and the insurance industry. With the most popular muscle cars and other vintage machinery, CON VIN locations have leaked into the public domain and are generally discoverable with a little research.

Cowl CON VIN for First-Gen GM F-body

On 1967-1969 Chevy Camaros and Pontiac Firebirds, one easy-to-find confidential VIN is under the cowl grille



cover on the passenger side and it can be found with the removal of a few screws securing the exterior cowl stamping (the extension panel just in front of the windshield).

Finding That Tricky VIN Number on Your Car (Cont'd)

CON VIN for GM A-bodies and F-bodies



On General Motors A-body intermediates (Chevy Chevelle, Pontiac LeMans, Oldsmobile Cutlass, Buick Skylark) and F-body pony cars (Chevy Camaro, Pontiac Firebird) there is another firewall CON VIN, this one much harder to spot because it lies under the heater box cover and can only be seen once the heater box's housing is removed. On the F-body, this is found below the round hole stamped through the firewall and on A-bodies it's above the hole. Note that this location is flexible and isn't always in the same place at each build plant or model.

Frame CON VINS for GM Muscle Cars

Finding the frame CON VIN on a vintage General Motors chassis can be difficult because not only were they placed in areas that make them deliberately hard to find, often they are in different places depending on the year, make, model, and even the manufacturing plant where they were made. For instance, 1970 Chevelles built in the Kansas City, Missouri, plant rarely have any CON VINs on the frame at all but can be prolific on the same model built at other plants. Different from the CON VIN is the manufacturer's ID and date code, which can be stamped on the outside of the driver-side rear framerail. This can help restorers establish a correct, numbers-matching, date-coded frame even in the absence of a CON VIN.



Tri-Five Chevy Car & Truck CON VIN

Most CON VINs stamped into vehicle frames are placed intentionally in very difficult-to-find locations. For this illustration, we could not locate the CON VIN on this Tri-Five Chevy pickup truck due to decades of use and surface corrosion—even with a lift, a dental mirror, and flashlight—but it's there on top of the frame on the driver side in the vicinity of the brake booster. We found what the Tri-Five Chevy truck CON VIN looks like on another cut-up salvaged Tri-Five Chevy truck frame in the same shop, and it still took a degree of cleaning just to see it.



Finding That Tricky VIN Number on Your Car (Cont'd)

VIN Plate Rivets and Other Gotchas

When it comes to high-value classic muscle cars, it might pay to take a closer look at some aspects of the car's authenticity before you buy or bid. With today's buyers and restorers more knowledgeable than ever, some cars no longer pass scrutiny upon expert inspection. At stake is the huge number of investment dollars pouring into the hobby and some less scrupulous restorers and sellers have no problem going to great lengths to represent an ordinary car as a rare one. Take for instance VIN plaques; these can be salvaged from rare, totaled cars and grafted onto lesser models,



sometimes in coordination with other CON VIN and secondary VINs from the same totaled vehicle. With primary public VIN plates, special rivets are used to fasten the VIN plate to the body, like these star-shaped rivets in the Plymouth Duster VIN plate shown.

Important Facts About VINs and Confidential (CON) VINs

- In cars built after 1980, the VIN is found on the driver side of the dashboard under the windshield, where the two meet. A secondary VIN is also found on the driver-side door or doorjamb.
- All cars built after 1953 have a VIN, but its location was not standardized until 1981.
- Most cars built before 1954 have a manufacturer's serial number or chassis serial number that can typically be found in a prominent place on the firewall, but it was not a federal requirement.
- All cars with a VIN also have a secondary VIN, usually in the doorjamb or engine compartment. This allows law enforcement and insurance companies to easily cross-verify the car's identity.
- Every car has several confidential or hidden VIN sequence numbers, taken from the final digits (the manufacturing sequence) of the VIN, that are placed in hard-to-find locations on the sheetmetal, chassis, and powertrain. These are called confidential (CON) VINs and their locations are generally different for every car make and model.
- The Federal Theft Prevention Standard requires manufacturers to mark the 18 major components of a car with an identifying number (CON VIN).
- CON VIN locations are a closely held secret by law enforcement and the insurance industry and are stored in a database held by the Investigative Assistance Group within the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). The NICB's CON VIN location database cannot generally be accessed by car owners, enthusiasts, collectors, rebuilders, archivists, repair shops, or non-insurance-industry appraisers.
- The NICB, an agency owned and operated collectively and solely by the insurance industry is, in the case of auto insurance, ostensibly a tool to fight fraud in the collision repair and restoration industry. Nevertheless, its primary effect, deliberate or otherwise, is to lessen the amount of insurance claims being paid out—over \$33 million in 2022 according to the nonprofit's home page.
- The NICB does not share CON VIN location data with the public as this would allow potential insurance customers to independently authenticate a classic vehicle prior to purchase rather than at claim payout, after the fact. This structural conflict of interest is geared towards protecting the insurance industry and less so the consumer, as it promulgates higher insurance premiums while mitigating claim payouts.