

# The Accelerator

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Volume 4, Number 4 – Winter 2010 –2011

## Messages From Our Co-Presidents

### Gary Paetsch –

Of the many club events that take place each year, the CNCC car show continues to be my favorite. I am already anticipating August 2011! It is always fun, it brings in new members, and I simply look forward to doing it.

The work that preceded the 2010 car show was easier this year because of the trial-and-error process. Barnett and I went through as we co-directed the 2009 show; it was the first time we worked together. We shared responsibilities and traded a few secrets along the way. Through time we became close friends and grew to know each other's thinking; that in itself helped the show to run smoothly. The only thing that killed us last year was the weather – torrents of rain, if you'll remember.

If there has been one surprise for me as co-president, it is that the position takes more responsibility and time than I originally thought. While I give it my all, it would benefit the club to have more members help out. Let's be honest, help tends to come from the same people most of the time.

On the positive side, more volunteers would bring fresh ideas to the club so that CNCC could expand to have more activities – and many different types of activities. There would be something for everyone. While there are wonderful people on the board of directors, we simply don't have all the answers. We would welcome your ideas. I am not asking for a lot, but if more people would devote a little time – and we understand that everyone is stretched – it would help. Further, some people complain when a project doesn't go smoothly; if these people are unhappy, I invite them to step up to the plate and give us a hand.

Some of you have asked about what CNCC will be doing in 2011. I'd like to answer by saying Tom Sherrick and Nick

Reed, our co-activities chairmen, have been wonderful in coming up with events for the group. They have kept everyone involved with the club in some way. Members don't have to attend all of the events, but they can select the ones they like.

Personally, I would like to have shorter cruises instead of the long runs up to Wisconsin because we might have more participants. Most Corvette owners don't want to



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drive the kind of distance we cover going up to Lake Geneva or Janesville.

I would also like to see the club members come up with ways to make more money. While we are not a non-profit group, we should have a variety of annual projects to raise money for worthy causes. It would also be nice to have our "pot" grow a little more so the club could pay for the Holiday Party, minus the cash bar.

It's been a fun year for me, but the best part about being co-president is that I'm more involved with all the club members. Before I knew just a few guys, but now I'm connected with everyone – people who share my interest in Corvettes. It's easy to go up to someone to say a quick hello and end up talking for an hour. That's the great thing about CNCC. ●

### Barnet Fagel –

Just as most of us have bed down our Corvettes for the 2010-2011 winter season, others are making sure their Corvettes are ready for the ravages of a winter's snow and slush. I am one of those who drives his Corvette year round in most times. This is not to say Corvettes are not suited for cold weather driving, but Corvette drivers must be on the lookout for slippery road symptoms before they turn into problems. Due to the increased horsepower at our disposal, a respect for it becomes critical. I am no expert, but after driving Corvettes for over 30 years in all kinds of inclement weather, I've learned to appreciate a few valuable lessons that I want to share. I also encourage other members to share theirs too.

Driving in cold climates in most cases is not too much of a challenge for the seasoned Corvette owner, but there are a few challenges for which even seasoned drivers must be ever vigilant. The first I call "tire personality." Downward temperature changes affect tire handling characteristics: the rubber becomes less pliable making the outcome of every-day maneuvers highly surprising. The way you took a familiar corner in the summertime will vary tremendously in the winter, especially if it is during the first low-speed miles of driving.

Tire pressure, which usually climbs predictably in the summer, is sluggish to change when it's cold enough to snow, thereby effecting tire personality. The Tire Pressure Sensing System (TPS) included on C4s, C5s, and C6s pays for itself in this regard. Be careful when you add air to your tires and verify that the gauge you use is accurate. I spent an obscene amount of money on a "racing tire gauge" only to find out the free one from my local tire shop was more truthful. *Continued on page 13*

# Frank Indrago —

## “It Began with a Show Stopper”

“It’s my passion. It’s my hobby. Cars are what I do,” says Frank Indrago. “I drive a 1999 Corvette coupe; it’s Torch Red with a black interior and 10 thousand miles on the odometer. I’ve put a lot of money into it, and now I’ve got my Corvette to where I like it.” Frank, now entering his second year as Sergeant At Arms of CNCC, gives the club a whole-hearted boost with his no-nonsense approach to everything and anything that has to do with Corvettes.



**Frank with his son Giacomo, who often helps with CNCC events.**

He affectionately remembers falling in love with the first Indy 500 Corvette Pace Car that came out in 1978 and vowed to someday own one. In the meantime the first car he bought as an 18-year-old was a Fiat Spider, a vehicle he wishes he still had today because of the memories it holds. “When I turned 40 I bought a ’95 convertible that was one of 200 especially built cars and a real show stopper. It was Torch Red with a red interior and red dash.” Three years later Frank put the car on the market, and it sold in only three days.

Today, Frank’s ’99 is his second Corvette. He is the second owner and has had it for seven years. “Before we purchased the car from the D&M Corvette dealership in Downers Grove, I saw it at the original owner’s home; the people were elderly and couldn’t drive it anymore.

That was it: I saw the Vette, fell in love with it, and bought it.

### Personalizing a Vette

“I’ve added a lot to this Vette, including a new set of rims, 06 calipers, and rotors; all the brake lines are now stainless steel, and the exhaust is stainless steel from the front to the catalytic converters in the rear. The carpets and seat covers are new, and my engine compartment has been painted Torch Red. I’ve got a few chrome parts in the engine compartment. That’s about it.

“Maintenance wise, Tom, the mechanic over at D&M Corvette, takes care of my car. I trust only Tom; he has never let me down, and he has never done me wrong. Cleaning wise, I do all my own cleaning. Last week I spent two days detailing my Corvette to get it ready for storage, which is something I do annually at the end of October. It includes changing the oil, checking all the fluids, and going through the car from A to Z before it is ready to be put away for winter. In the spring, when I take it out for first the first time, it’s like I just left it.

### Clay Barring

“This year my son helped me wash it, and I clay barred it and waxed it. A clay bar takes out surface scratches, the kind you can’t see unless you are close up to the car. I was turned on to it by Adams Polishes and love it. I know Barnet and Gary use it, as do many CNCC members because it takes away a lot of dirt and grime off the paint.”

Frank uses only Adams products on his Corvette – shampoo, detailing spray, wax, leather care. “That’s all I use; I don’t trust

anyone else, and Adams has never let me down. Before a show I wash it (it’s already been waxed) and clean it up the best that I can. I don’t take the wheels off because I don’t have a lift.”

### Car Shows

Frank doesn’t believe in going after trophies. He bought the Corvette to drive and to have a good time. “I’m not one who will go to every possible car show every weekend and sit behind my car. My trophy is my car.

“I’m a cruiser. I bought the Corvette to drive. One of my favorite trips is CNCC’s cruise to the pancake house in Wisconsin. Last year’s trip became costly because on the way back to Illinois one of the rear bolts that held a shock unscrewed itself and was grinding on a rim; I thought I would lose the rim. It never happened before.

“I came back doing only 40 mph. It would grind if I was did 45 mph and under; 45 and over the bolt would slide in and out, in and out. I pulled over and looked but couldn’t find the problem. Once I was at home, my neighbor bought a jack to the garage and looked at it. He said one of the bolts came free.

“Actually what happens to the car was immaterial to me; safety is most important. I came home safely with my son that day, and that was most important.”

### Frank and ATVs

Some of Frank’s other favorite Corvette trips include going to Bloomington Gold and taking in cruise nights in St. Charles with CNCC co-president Gary Paetsch. He says he’s never been up to the big cruise night at Euclid and Route 53, although everyone raves about it. Frank likes to use his Corvette for special occasions, but when he once talked to his wife about taking it to a wedding, she said it would be better to leave it at home. If something happened she knew Frank would be mad all night long.

Are there motorcycles or ATVs in Frank’s life? “No,” says. “The Corvette is my only toy. Basically I like to get out and go.” ●

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# What Did I Do, Officer?

By **Barnet Fagel**

In the minds of most people Corvette drivers always speed or want to. Although this is not true, it is a perception we live with, and at one time or another most of us have been pulled over by a police officer. In most cases the driver answers a few questions and then the officer issues a citation.

One of the most common reasons for a traffic stop is speeding. If you are pulled over, it is vital to listen carefully to what the officer asks and think about what you say. Your responses are important. Even though you may be nervous, this is not the time to react emotionally or to worry that your insurance premium may go up.

The one question every officer asks is, “Do you know how fast you were going?” If those aren’t his exact words, you may hear a variant, “Do you know the speed limit here?” The officer will record your answer as evidence because a part of his questioning is geared to make drivers admit to speeding by stating a specific number. The law says you cannot be forced to incriminate yourself. Further, the officer is not forcing you to say a thing, he is just asking a question.

How would you answer the officer? “75.” “85.” “95.” “About your I.Q.” “Who knows? The sign blurred out when I passed 100.” These are all wrong answers. Here are some other wrong answers: “No. I was keeping up with traffic.” “I was just passing another car.” “I sneezed.” “My accelerator stuck for a second.”

Here’s the classic response: “I thought I was going [fill in your own speed here] miles an hour.” These answers may give an officer enough information to cite you for speeding, and in truth most people respond with them. I’ve played a game with my friends by asking the officer’s question, “Do you know how fast you were going?” Only a few gave the correct answer.

When an officer asks the speed of your Corvette, your answer should be a very

confident, “Yes.” If he asks you a question, the answer to which would imply guilt, such as, “Do you know why I stopped you?” your response should be, “Because you can?” Try and be funny, not a wise guy; humor breaks the ice. If the officer laughs you may have just beat your ticket. Try to suppress the impulse to reply, “Gee, no, officer; I thought you would know why you stopped me.” Every question an officer asks has a purpose; he is collecting evidence, and the information you give may make the difference



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between receiving a citation, a warning, or possibly getting a pass.

I suggest you avoid an argument if an officer relates the speed he thought you were going or what he thought you did. A noncommittal, brief answer, such as “I see” or no answer at all, is best — no more, no less. Silence is not an admission of guilt and cannot be used against you in court. Silence is not against the law.

If you want an officer to think you are a lawyer, you could tell him, “Yes. I was going a safe and reasonable speed for conditions in accordance with the basic speed law.” If an officer asks if you know why he stopped you, your perception and the officer’s may be entirely different.

The question, “Do you know how fast you are going?” is not the same as, “How fast were you going?” The basic differ-

ence is simple, but important. The officer did not ask your speed; he asked if you knew your speed.

Under state law, each driver is responsible for the safe operation of his motor vehicle, and this includes knowing the speed at which he operates the vehicle.

By answering anything else but “yes” to the question, “Do you know how fast you were going?” you concede that you may have been speeding. Most drivers in this situation are ordered to take

driving school and be done with it. Those who can’t attend driving school face the option of points against their driving record and bigger insurance premiums.

If the officer states you broke a law but does not immediately start to write a ticket, ask for a warning. Officers seldom ask if you want one (this is your job), but a safe and courteous traffic stop on your part will vastly improve your odds of receiving only a warning. Here is an example: “Well Officer, I fully understand what you are saying. I haven’t had a ticket in years

and always try to drive safely” (only if the statement about your record is accurate). “Would you please give me a warning as a reminder?”

For other types of violations you may say, “With the number of lousy drivers on the road, it makes being a safe driver much tougher.” Remember, just because we drive fast cars doesn’t necessarily mean we drive fast. Driving a Corvette is not proof of anything except good taste and an appreciation of driving as a pleasure and not just a necessity. ●

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*Barnet Fagel has been stopped in traffic and is familiar with radar technology and traffic court procedures. He is not a lawyer and does not claim to give legal advice. He is co-president of Chicagoland North Corvette Club.*

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# CNCC's Vette Talk

## Catching Up With George

Just over a year ago, on December 3, 2009, George Sianis went through six-and-a-half hours of major surgery to repair a damaged mitral valve in his heart. Known as mitral valve prolapse, the condition was something new to George — in fact, he had never heard of it. Fortunately his doctor realized the problem during a routine physical.

George, the founding President of CNCC who led the club for four years, never knew his health was at risk. "I felt fine, and was working out four times a week," he says. "If my doctor hadn't spotted the problem, I would have had a massive heart attack.

"I had some pain after the surgery, but it wasn't as bad as I anticipated. Surgeons cut my breast bone in half and attached my heart to a machine to keep it beating." After surgery George couldn't lay down

for three weeks and had to be careful not to cough.

Remarkably, he was back at work one month later, January 4, 2010. George says his life is basically back to normal. He feels good and takes only Lipitor to manage cholesterol and Lopressor for his heart. Commenting on his health, George simply says, "I'm the luckiest person in the world."

## GM Plans New C7

Now out of bankruptcy court, General Motors has announced two-year product plans for Cadillac, Buick, GMC, and Chevrolet, including a new C7 Corvette. The C7 is scheduled to be introduced in April of 2012 as a 2013 model; a previous plan designated a new Corvette for 2014. At this time GM has said little specific about plans for the new Vette.



**The Stingray Concept Corvette, as seen at the 2009 Chicago Auto Show**

Like all Corvettes the C7 will feature an engine up front driving the wheels out back. Some anticipate the C7 will be smaller and lighter than the current C6; it will have more advanced materials like carbon fiber, aluminum, and magnesium as well as a smaller engine. Its design may be based on the Stingray Concept as seen in the 2009 Chicago Auto Show.



**CHICAGOLAND NORTH CORVETTE CLUB**



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## Peter Max Corvette Collection Lost, Then Found in N.Y.

It's like a VH1 documentary: The music TV channel gave away 36 Corvettes (one from every model year from 1953-'89) in a contest back in 1989. What happened to them all? The winner of the contest sold the lot of vehicles to psychedelic-art legend Peter Max, who stored them in a dusty basement in Brooklyn without benefit of so much as car covers. All these years later, the cars have made the news again.

*The New York Times* reported that the pop artist bought the lot for \$250,000 in cash, \$250,000 in artwork and a percentage of proceeds from any future sale of the cars with the cap set at \$1 million. Max was quoted in the story as saying he was originally interested in painting the cars in his trademark wildly colored style and taking them out on tour. So far, he just never got around to it.

The next bit of news from the *Times* was that the Vettes had been moved from their longtime storage site, an apartment



**Max's Corvettes gathering dust**

building that previously had been a printing plant for the *New York Daily News*. And just where did the collection go?

The answer was not long in coming, thanks to an alert *CorvetteBlogger* correspondent, who happened to be in the right place at the right time and spotted the collection in full. They're now stored in a garage in upper Manhattan

while the artist decides how to decorate them or otherwise do something with the riches he has ignored for so long.

The 36 Vettes appear a bit the worse for wear, but a few have endured significantly more damage than just a thick coat of dust and flat tires. Both the 1974 and '75 Corvettes have some rear panel damage that appears to be from the movers pushing on the brittle fiberglass panels just a little too hard.

Max told the *Times* that he intends to "paint them so it's respectful" and even add 14 additional vehicles to the group to bring it up to date through 2003. Also stay tuned for a possible documentary about the cars.

Let's hope Max comes through and saves these poor Corvettes from another 20 years of neglect.

— Mike Lysaght, Correspondent  
Contributed by Molly Heyen

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# CNCC: Memories of 2010

**George Barris and a youthful  
Bat Man cruise to Rolling  
Meadows, right.**

**Setting up for the CNCC 2010  
club photo at Cubby Bear  
North, below.**



*Photo courtesy Mary Brockhoff*



**George Bush (aka Joe Petykowski)  
stopped by the 2010 Halloween  
Party (below), as did Karen Makris,  
who won first prize for the clown  
costumes she created for herself  
and hubby John.**



**Cruise night in Rolling Meadows**

*Above photos courtesy Sharlene Wayman*



**Always looking presidential —  
Barnet and Gary, right.**

**The gang cruises to Docker's  
in Fox Lake, below.**

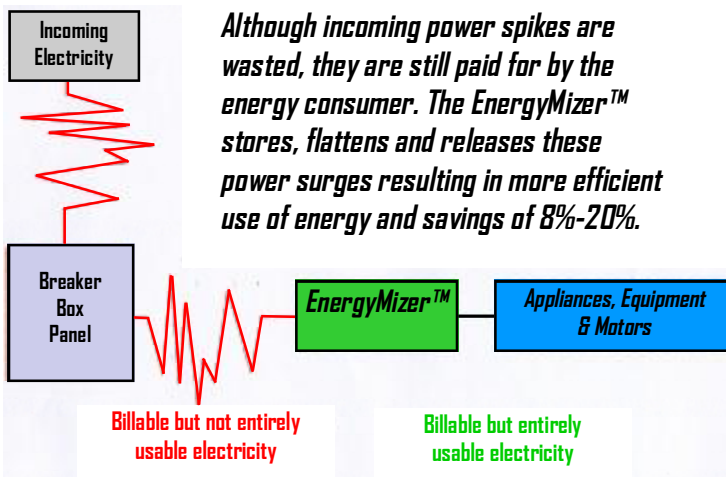
Photo courtesy Barnet Fagel



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“Your Meter is Running”

# 6,500 Miles in 21 Days —

A Report by the Heyen's 1999 Pewter C5, #G11 7692

September 4, 2010, my owners fill my trunk and ask if I'm ready to go. My engine roars to life at 6:54 a.m., and we drive off. At precisely 7:00 a.m. we turn west onto Adams St. from Michigan Ave., the sign to the left reads *Begin Historic 66 Route*.

Stopping first at my old garage, I sat for over an hour wondering if we really were taking a road trip or if my owners were just having breakfast before running errands. Even though they had never been to Lou Mitchell's, a quintessential mother road stop, I wanted to get going and hit the road. Finally, they returned and we hummed along to Wilmington, Illinois where we met the *Gemini Giant*.

Driving back roads through Illinois, stopping here and there, confirmed my understanding that this indeed was going to be an adventure. Whether *adventure* is a good or bad term was yet to be determined. I was shaking in my tires when my owners tricked me into thinking they were actually going to give me gas from that antique pump.

Following that, our race through Illinois was confusing. We did it all to arrive in St. Louis at 4:00 p.m. and drive around Forest Park for about an hour. What a miserable experience for the other surrounding cars and me, packed together like sardines. Finally we left to arrive at the house of their friend whom we always visit in St. Louis. Our total mileage for day one was 346.6. With 20 more days to go and basing our average mileage on the first day, I was sure we would be traveling 800 miles more than we actually did over entire trip!

We hung around St. Louis for a long time the next day, even venturing back into Forest Park. There were fewer cars this time, so my owners left me in a parking lot for awhile. I really don't understand the attraction. Back on the road we found some great hilly curves with narrow streets, unlike anything near Chicagoland. I think we spent far too much time in St. Louis, we didn't even make it as far as Springfield, Missouri, and we only covered 186.8 miles that day. At that rate I didn't think we



**The Gemini Giant in Wilmington, Illinois, left.**

**Tim Heyen gases up at an antique gas pump, below.**



would cross the last 1,000 miles of the trip in time.

Day three was a bit more interesting. The roads were completely new to me, not particularly memorable, but I love a change of scenery. To this day I don't understand what my owners were up to when we backtracked through Kansas just so they could park me behind a rusty 'ol tow truck and take pictures. I have a sneaking suspicion that they were teasing me yet again. We drove 291.2 miles that day, still not as far as I had expected.

By day four I was starting to wonder why there is so much hullabaloo about road trips in the first place. All we did that day was drive straight through Oklahoma and into Texas. I can't possibly say it was a notewor-

**Kudos to Molly Heyen for writing this creative, fun story for "The Accelerator." Send your Corvette stories to the editor at [CNCCEditorial@comcast.net](mailto:CNCCEditorial@comcast.net).**

thy drive for me. After a 313.5 mile day I really began to miss that beautiful road we found just outside of St. Louis.

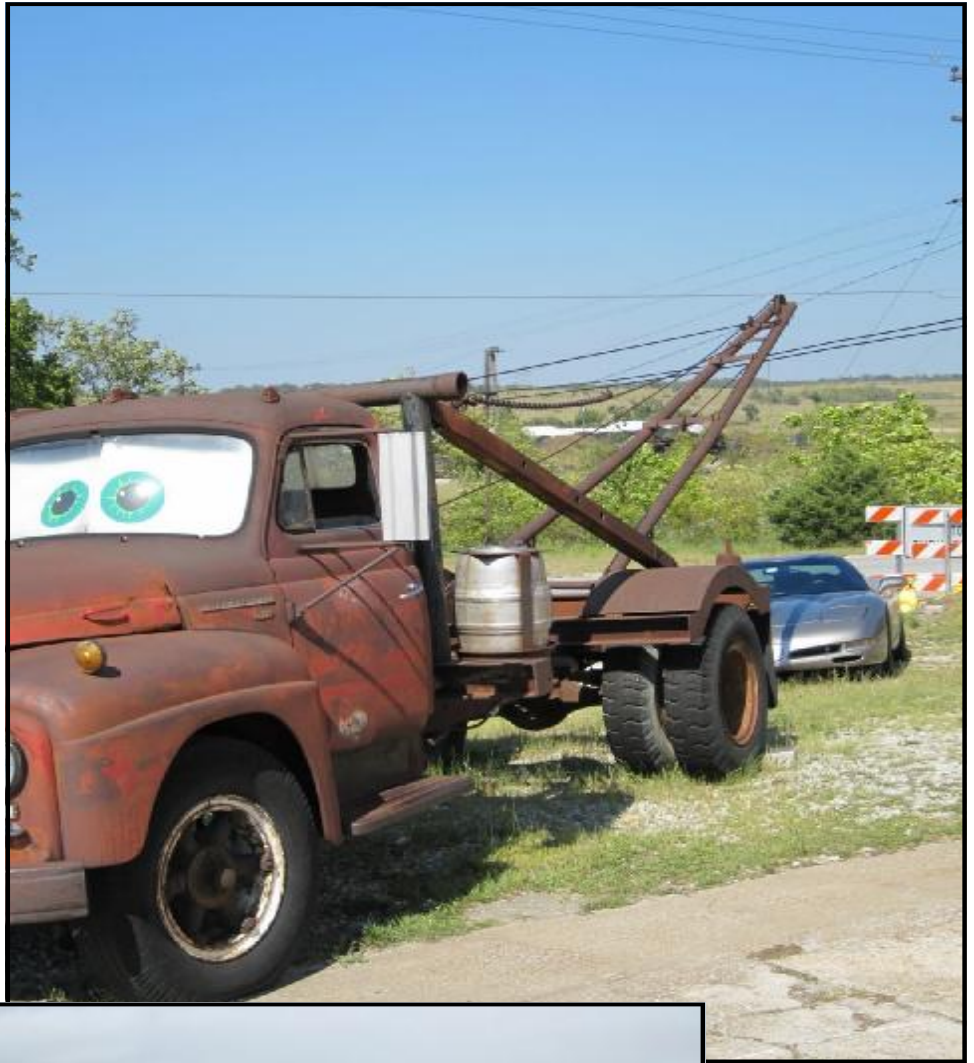
Luckily day five more than made up for day four! However, our first stop just about ruined it. My owners left me at the side of the road so they could go look at some old Cadillacs that had been shoved into the ground, face first. It was a truly gruesome site. I was contemplating going off on my own by that time. I had had it with the tom-foolery; pretending to give me antique gas, sitting me next to an old rusty tow truck, and then showing me those poor beaten down Caddies, I was quite sure they were taking me to my death bed.

Patience and dedication pulled me through and they gave me the surprise I was waiting for. We found a long stretch of open road with no other cars to be seen. As soon as I saw it I couldn't help myself; for the next few hours I knuckled down and drove that road for all it was worth, stopping only once for a break! After driving a total of 539.3 miles that day we found a hotel, and I purred the night away.

The next day was a lot like days three and four. Drive, stop, drive, stop, nothing very interesting to see. I was nice to my owners and they were nice to me, so I had no complaints for the 390.2 miles that we moved.

Day seven was great! We took the longest stretch of road from town to the top of a mountain. What a drive! My owners spent a lot of time doing what they do while I sat in the parking lot. It was a very crowded place. The van in front of me had a sticker that said Grand Canyon National Park. If you ask me, the drive to the top of the canyon was far grander than the parking lot, but what do I know? Total drive was 246.7 miles that day.

Nothing could have prepared me for day eight. The first place we stopped had reserved parking for Corvettes; as the



***A rusty old tow truck in Kansas, top.***

***Old Cadillacs shoved into the ground, center.***

***Day seven — the longest stretch of road imaginable, bottom.***



***The road to Oatman, Arizona, miles long and full of hairpin curves, left. Curving up, down, and around the coast of California on day 10, right.***

only one there, my ego felt great. After that we found a mountain road that twisted and turned all over, one side was a cliff and the other side was a mountain wall. The thrill was unspeakable! I tore through those curves like a Lotus drives on rails. I know my driver felt good, but I don't think my passenger was quite as grounded as the rest of us because she kept jumping back into her seat and gasping. The road was miles long, full of hairpin curves with nothing to hold you on the mountain but a few ropes. I would go back there any day! When that was over we continued west and came to Santa Monica, California. Boy did my owners pamper me there! I stayed in a garage with a reserved spot! After 496 miles of driving, I slept like a Buick Roadmaster with an LT1 engine.

The next week was nothing like the first week. For me it started with a nice hot shower, wax, and shine. I felt like a million dollar Ferrari Enzo, until we passed at least 12 super cars in less than an hour. After my shower we drove up

the mountains, took in some breathtaking views, and saw some of the largest houses I have ever seen in my life. It was early afternoon when we returned down the mountain and reached the coast. From that point to the rest of the week we headed north. On day nine we drove a total of 238.2 miles.

Day ten had us curving up, down, and all around the coast of California. The other cars were so polite to move to the side as I accelerated ahead of them, and believe me, I did! 225.6 miles later and a night in the creepiest parking lot, I questioned my own eagerness to get there. Luckily we started the next day earlier than any other.

We spent the morning in San Francisco and the rest of the day in Santa Rosa. We only drove 57.6 miles, but I didn't care, as long as we were out of San Francisco. My brakes couldn't take those hills!

We started day 12 with another beautiful mountain drive, this time through wine country. Just as I was starting to relax, because it seemed my owners were

done teasing me, they shoved me through a tree! It was such a tight squeeze that the passenger actually got out to pull in the side mirrors and to tell the driver how to steer! I will never understand the amusement in that, but at least they didn't scratch my paint. Driving the rest of the day through the forest was lovely, but I kept on the lookout for more hollow trees, in case my owners got

anymore bright ideas. After a 270 mile day we seemed to be past the worst of the giant redwoods.

Day 13 was a lot less exciting. As we continued north the weather turned cloudy and grey. We drove 296.6 miles and parked on the street in the rain. It seems my owners met a friend, because they were overjoyed, despite the weather. It was about this time when I started thinking of ways to tease them, after two weeks of their teasing me. I decided to mess with the climate control. I still let it work, but [heh, heh] I made it slow to turn on each morning.

My owners must have a thing for the northwest corner of the country. Day 14 was only 114.9 miles. We arrived in Portland at 11:43 a.m. and stayed for the rest of the night. I guess they knew more people or something. I just sat in the rain a lot. I still haven't decided if that was better or worse than day 15 when all we did was drive 357.1 miles through Washington on the highway.

Next we headed east. Knowing my owners didn't have a set route home, I decided to take this opportunity and fry the Garmin. My logic was that with old-fashioned paper maps, they might find something for me that was more adventurous than the straight, flat, expressway.

407.9 miles of expressway on day 16 had me wondering if it had been the right thing to do. Day 17 eased my concern a bit. It was more exciting anyway. We spent the better part of the day driving through Yellowstone National Park. I never knew how big the place is! It smelled funny, and we literally drove past a buffalo walking down the road. He was



at least a foot taller than me, which was scary, but my owners weren't expecting him either, so I was happy about that.

After 456.6 miles we drove down a small torn up, construction road in Wyoming to find our home for the night. I didn't appreciate the construction dust, but again, I don't think my owners were expecting it either.

By day 18 my oil was starting to get noticeably dirty. We were so far in the middle of nowhere that I wasn't sure what my owners would do; we powered on through the day and made the most of what we had. After showing myself off in a rock star parking spot at Mt. Rushmore they took me down Iron Mountain Road. Hot damn! It was like being a car in a roller coaster! I curved loops around bridges going up the mountain and zigzagging all the way back down. By the end of that 471.7 mile day I was ready to relax.

The next morning was fantastic. We drove straight to an oil change. On our way we drove through a town where people in the other cars stared at me, far more than usual, and one person took a picture. I felt like a lime green Lamborghini Murciélago!

We pulled into a Chevy dealership just as the rain started to pour. They were very nice to me, fixed me right up, gave me a pat on the roof, and sent me on my way. As we stopped at a gas station on our way out of town I heard that we missed a hail storm while I was sitting inside the cozy garage. What luck! After a total of 320.6 miles of driving we arrived in Omaha, Nebraska. I



**Funny smells at Yellowstone, above.**

**The trip down Iron Mountain Road was like being a car in a roller coaster, below.**

spent another night in a warm dry garage. It was lovely to be back in urban sprawl.

The next day we continued east into Iowa and with the roads transforming to flat highways, I knew we were getting close to home. 262.5 miles took us to yet another home of my owners' friends. They tried to leave me on the driveway, but I think San Francisco killed my parking brake. I would have slipped right into the mailbox if my passenger hadn't insisted that they leave me on the flat ground. Phew!

Day 21 brought us home — eventually. We arrived in the north suburbs of Chicago in the late morning. Finally, knowing I could get there in less than an hour, I could feel my own parking space underneath my tires, but without skipping a beat my owners promptly stopped at Abt to browse for half an hour. Just as we started heading home, they suddenly turned east and went to Evanston! Knowing how they spend their time in Evanston, I was shocked when they left so soon. At 3:30 p.m., after a final day of 278.8 miles of driving, we arrived in my garage. It was an amazing adventure.

I felt so tired with a busted parking brake, busted air control, and those heavy run-flat tires still mounted on my wheels. Luckily, my owners really do love me. They fixed everything up in a matter of week, and now I am set to go again. Unfortunately, it's snowing. I guess I'll just have to dream of Iron Mountain Road while I hibernate this winter. ●

## Messages, Continued from page 1



**Barnet and Gary**

I am by nature a cynic and don't trust gas station tire gauges unless I have no choice. They get banged around a lot, and station owners understandably aren't going to invest in an expensive gauge knowing John Q. Public is going to be abusive or drive over it. My cynicism even includes Corvette's TPS system. I have caught it reading too high when three other gauges swear the pressure is correct. Corvette's TPS is relative in nature and not absolute. It will tell you virtual differences, but don't take it as Gospel; always question with a trustworthy gauge. Also, parking your Corvette for the winter on thin pieces of plywood under each tire dissipates the tire's contact pressure point.

Just before winter I always take my car into Stasek for its annual oil change because I drive about 8-10 thousand miles a year. Cold temperatures present enough of a challenge without circulating cold dirty oil through the engine block when lubrication is the most critical. I also have the cooling system, heater, and other potential affected components checked too. Even though I check these items routinely, I like a professional eye to confirm. I'm such a cynic, I don't even trust myself.

And this is the perfect time to have the battery, cables, and starting system checked even if the car sits all winter. When you store any car the alternator continually draws power, although a small amount, 8-10 milliamps (thousandths of an amp) from the battery. Coupled with the battery's chemical reaction, over extended periods of time this will greet you with an abused dead battery come spring. An investment in a trickle charger is wise — and the potential of a dead battery vanishes — because most batteries never recharge completely when allowed to run low for a long time.

If you can, it's always a good habit to start your Corvette in the winter and drive it on a dry street for 10 minutes to maintain seals, bearings, and tires for best fit. Who knows? You may take it out early and enjoy more of the spring. ●



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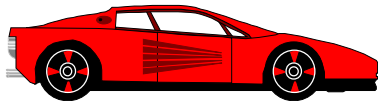
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## **What is Chicagoland North Corvette Club?**

Chicagoland North Corvette Club, established in 2006, is a not-for-profit, membership-based club of enthusiastic Corvette owners who are dedicated to the admiration, preservation, and restoration of all years of Chevrolet Corvettes. The purpose of the club is to not only promote the care, maintenance, restoration, and performance modifications of Corvettes, but also to provide opportunities for its members to meet, socialize, participate in group activities, and maintain a spirit of friendship and camaraderie.

The club plans a variety of events, including car shows, cruise nights, racing and autocross events, club outings (both vehicle and nonvehicle related), technical sessions (paint and auto body, mechanical topics, maintenance-related issues, interior tips, and other topics), and caravan road trips. We meet on the last Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM (join us for supper at 6:00). Please check the CNCC web site – [www.chicagolandnorthcorvetteclub.org](http://www.chicagolandnorthcorvetteclub.org) – for the restaurant where we will be meeting and a map of its location.

## **How Do You Join CNCC?**

It's easy to join CNCC.

Contact our Membership Chairman, Sharlene Wayman at 847-358-8872 or at [away1011@att.net](mailto:away1011@att.net). Club membership dues are \$30/year per household, due January 1. We'd really enjoy your friendship, so please contact us to join our club.