



CLASSIC HEARTBEAT

April 2005

Volume 29, Issue 4

NEWS OF '55, '56 AND '57 CHEVYS IN NORTH TEXAS AND BEYOND



PO Box 814642
Dallas, TX 75381

www.DallasClassicChevy.com
founded 1976

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CLASSIC CHEVY DRAG RACING! Texas Motorplex, Ennis April 10th, Sunday Sunday Sunday!!!!!!



This coming Sunday we will meet in Ennis for a day of drag racing along with other area car clubs for the Texas Muscle Car Club series event at the Texas Motorplex. ALL Classic Chevys may participate in this event! Just some of the clubs that participate in this series of races include the N TX Mustang Club, Dallas Mopar Club, Dallas Area Pontiac Association, Lone Star Corvette Club, HOSS Impala Club and many more! The gates open at 8AM and will start off with time trials and you will have plenty of time to make runs down the quarter mile to determine your 'dial in". Be sure and check out the website for this series and review the rules at www.TMCCC.org. Entry fee is \$30 per car/driver and \$12 for spectator. This should be a lot of fun and we will see you at the Plex on SUNDAY!



May Classic Chevy Spring Cruise to Dublin / Dr Pepper! Sunday May 1st

We will meet at 10:30 AM at the QT gas station located at Hwy 67 at Cockrell Hill Rd in Duncanville and leave at 11:00 for Brownwood to Underwood's Cafeteria for a famous BBQ sandwich that is so big it takes a fork and knife to eat or perhaps their golden Chicken Fried Steak! After lunch, we will make our way back to Dublin, Texas - home of the world's oldest Dr Pepper plant (and the only bottler that makes DP with real pure cane sugar!). Here you can get shakes, malts and floats made just like they did in 1891 when the plant opened. Other favorites are the Dr Pepper Cake and Dr Pepper pimiento cheese! This should be a great day trip to make in your Chevy!! We hope to be back home by 5:30. For more info on Underwood's go to www.UnderwoodsBBQ.com, and for more info on the Dr Pepper plant in Dublin, go to www.DublinDrPepper.com.



MEMBER'S PRIDE

Dean and Audrey Schmidt

1957 Bel Air 2dr Hardtop - Plano, TX



I HAD TO HAVE A CAR LIKE THIS!

My search began after the 1996 Houston Autorama for a classic 1957 Chevy after missing out on a "For Sale Car" that won the class for modified cars that year. After contacting several members of the local Houston club I was referred to a private party who might have a 57 For Sale. I located my car in far south Houston sitting in a barn/garage for the previous 23 years and made an offer and bought the car that day.

The car had 2 previous owners and the only change from original condition had been the installation of a 327 V-8 many years back. The mileage was 58,000 and the interior and paint were original to the car. It took 2 days to get the car drive-able after doing a brake job, replacing the hoses and belts, and some minor carburetor and



fuel line changes and adjustments. The inaugural road trip to Austin to visit my son was an unforgettable ride.

My wife Audrey hid inside the car as best she could because there was no way she wanted to be seen in public in this horrendous excuse for a car. The color of the car, the style, and the raw exhaust (from leaks not found on the initial inspection) combined with an engine that consumed over 10 quarts of oil on the round trip was almost too much for her.

I did have a plan though, and that included the installation of a ZZ4 crate motor, replacing the transmission with a TH700R4, the addition of Power Steering, and Vintage Air A/C. These plans mind you only developed after the car was bought and paid for. I drove this car for several years in this condition until I decided to do some more "upgrades". In the fall of 2000 I contracted with Global Restorations in Houston to make the car right.

We started out by doing what I thought was going to be "just" a paint job but somehow the body came off the frame and of course that frame had to be powder coated to match the new body. After blasting the body, several areas needed to be touched up including rust inside the inner wheel wells and some damage in the right rear quarter panel. The car became more right each day and I thoroughly enjoyed my weekend visitation rights.

I don't regret having done the full body off restoration as the final product turned out real nice and I got my car back in about 9 months which I understand is a relatively short period of time when I compare "stories". The transformation did wonders for Audrey's attitude towards this thing I bought 9 years ago and we have enjoyed many Saturday night car shows together and club activities with the car. We are regulars to the Saturday night car shows and enjoyed an awesome Hot Rod Power Tour last year driving the complete tour.

The car now has about 23,000 miles on it and the big plan for this year is a drive to Minneapolis for the "Back to the Fifties" event this summer in June. Stop me someday and I will share my other story on why a "57".

Look for more photos of this month's feature car on our website



DALLAS AREA CLASSIC CHEVYS OFFICIAL 2005 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February 11-13 * Dallas Autorama,
Market Hall - Dallas

March 4-6 * Ft Worth Rod and
Custom Show, Will Rogers
Complex, Ft Worth

March 12 Saturday 2PM * DACC
Membership Meeting and 1st Quarter
Meeting, Reliable Chevrolet,
Richardson

**April 10 SUNDAY * DACC
Drag Racing, Tx Muscle Car
Club Challenge, Texas
Motorplex, Ennis, TX, gates
open 8AM, more info at
www.tmccc.org**

**May 1 Sunday * DACC
Spring Cruise, Dr Pepper
Tour, Dublin, TX**

May 13-15 * Lone Star XXIV Classic
Chevy Convention, Victoria, TX

**June 12 Sunday * 1st Annual DACC
Dyno Challenge and 2nd Quarter
Meeting, Speedtek Performance,
Haltom City, TX**

**July 10 Sunday * DACC Summer
Cruise, Pelican's Wharf at Lake
Texoma, meet with the Ok City Classic
Chevy Club**

**August 20 Saturday * DACC Show
Event, Christian Classic Cruisers,**

Haltom City

**September 17 Saturday * DACC 3rd
Quarter Meeting and Classic Chevy
Show, Reliable Chevrolet, Richardson**

**October 8 Saturday Night * DACC
Drive In Movie Night, Brazos Drive
In, Granbury**

**October 21-23 Fri-Sun * 12th Classic
Chevy Fall Foliage Tour , Wagoner,
OK hosted by CCC of Okla**

**November 13 Sunday * DACC 4th
Quarter Meeting and Annual
Elections, TBD**

**December 11 Saturday Night *
DACC Christmas Party, Dean and**

WELCOME TO DACC

The newest members to join the club are

#685
Joseph and Betty Helton
470 Mosswood
Highland Village, TX 75077
'57 210 and '57 Cameo

#686
Dennis and Laurie Gormley
6408 Cooper Place
Plano, TX 75093
'55 Pro Street

#687
Kenneth and Sue Taylor
3438 S St Highway 78
Bonham, TX 75418
'55 Bel Air hardtop

#688
Alan and Jodi Strong
4528 Ridgepointe Dr
The Colony, TX 75056
'57 150 sedan

#689
Phil and Jane Chancellor
5305 N Briar Ridge Cir
McKinney, TX 75070
'55 Chevy

#690
Ben and Gladine Weehunt
144 N Shadydale Lane
Coppell, TX 75019
'57 Bel Air hardtop

#691
Mike and Janet Bresler
2500 Trailwest Lane
Plano, TX 75025
'55 210 sedan

#692
Dennis and Phyllis Lind
600 Bridle Ridge Ranch Rd
Aubrey, TX 76227
'57 Bel Air hardtop

#693
Robert and Donna Brandenburg
5814 Plantation Lane
Frisco, TX 75035
'57 Bel Air

#694
George Johnson
2111 Valleycrest Dr
Arlington, TX 76013
'56 Nomad

#695
Stu Jacobs
2235 Timberwood
Carrollton, TX 75006
'55 Bel Air hardtop

#696
Carl and Charlsie Mitcham
4612 Bill Simmons Rd
Colleyville, TX 76034
'57 Bel Air hardtop and '57 Conv



2005

LONE STAR XXIV Classic Chevy Convention

May 13-15, Victoria, TX

Hosted by the Classic Chevy Club of Victoria

Host Hotel - Holiday Inn 361-575-0251

Room rate \$57 tell them your with the Chevys!

Registration \$30 with free meal tickets

police protection Fri and Sat nights

Car Show Saturday 10AM to Dark

For more info contact Frank Garcia 361-578-9749

or Joe Davis 361-578-0090

DACC will caravan down Friday, details to come,
watch the chat board on the web site



Ft Worth Rod and Custom Show in March found DACC members (left to right) Morris Stewart, Bill Preston and Sharkey Nelson displaying their Classic Chevys and representing the club. Thanks guys !!!!

June DYNO CHALLENGE and 2nd Quarter Meeting!

June 11th, 11AM at Speedtek Performance located

on Hwy 121 at Carson in Haltom City

682-647-0012 or www.Speedtek.net

3 pulls for \$35, minor adjustments allowed
between pulls, you'll get a graph of HP, torque,

RPM, speed and air/fuel ratio

AWARDS FOR BEST / WORST!



How much POWER do you really have?
Our DYNO will tell you!

PATE SWAP MEET April 28th to May 1st Texas Motor Speedway DON'T MISS IT!

Texas Muscle Car Club Challenge Series

Race #3

April 24th at Cherokee County Motorsports
Park in Rusk, TX

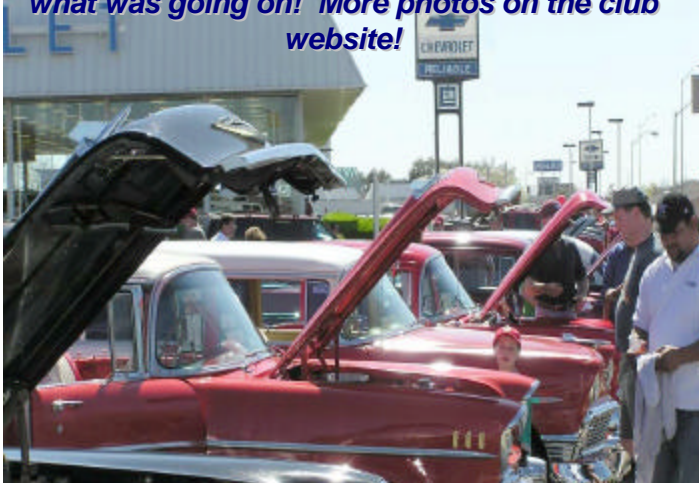
Race #4

May 1st at Redline Raceway
in Caddo Mills, TX

More info at www.TMCCC.org

If you miss the April 10th race, two more
TMCCC events come up in the next month!
Members can run in these events representing
DACC so make plans to attend. Rusk is 1/4
mile, Caddo Mills is 1/8 mile.

We had a GREAT meeting and show at
Reliable last month.. here is just a sample of
what was going on! More photos on the club
website!



'55 Chevy Turn's 50 years old!

On November 23, 1954 a glistening golden '55 Chevrolet rolled off the assembly line in Flint, Michigan. This Bel Air represented the 50 millionth production car produced by General Motors. Little did GM know that this car was destined to become a "Classic".

After nineteen years, Chevy was on the verge of losing the sales war with Ford. As the year ended in 1954, Chevy's production was 1,414,365 versus Ford's production of 1,394,176, a difference of only 20,189 cars. Ford had the young man's car and Chevy had the "Grandma's grocery getter". Just around the corner, 'The Hot One' was arriving. Chevy had declared war on Ford! This turned into Chevy's finest hour.

In 1952, GM realized that Chevrolet was losing ground to Ford and was quickly becoming an old man's car. High school parking lots were filled with Fords. If you didn't have a Ford, you weren't cool. Ford had the flat head V-8 while Chevy had the blue flame 6 cylinder. GM knew that it was just a matter of time before kids convinced their parents to buy a Ford. If they lost a customer, it would be nearly impossible to win him back and Chevy accounted for 75% of GM's profits. The look, the feel, the design and the engineering of Chevy's 53-54 models confirmed the division's conservatism. Chevrolet HAD TO CHANGE! The make had to reinvent itself and become the most exciting car ever to wear the bowtie badge. It had to have more sizzle from stoplights and more pizzazz in its styling. It was clear to GM that Edward "Crankshaft" Kelley, Chevy's chief engineer, could not make the division more youthful alone.

A committee comprised of the highest ranking men in the corporation: GM President Charles Wilson, Exec VP Harlow Curtice and GM's VP Operations Louis Goad called Edward Cole to Detroit to interview for Chevy's Manufacturing Manager position. Cole had made a reputation at Cadillac by spearheading the development of the 1949 overhead valve V8, an engine as revolutionary in its time as the Chevrolet V8 would become in 1955. In 1951, he was put in charge of GM's military tank plant in Cleveland, which had been pressed into service for the Korean War. In a matter of months he turned a vegetable warehouse from bean production to bulldog tank production. The Cleveland's plant efficiency, along with Cole's work on the 1949 Cadillac V8, impressed GM management. After the interview, they felt that this might be just the man to turn Chevrolet around, the sort of



ED COLE

young blood Chevy needed. The offered him the job. Edward Cole turned down the offer. He would later say, "I don't think the product was exciting enough". GM, knowing that Ed Cole was the one that could make the difference, offered him Edward Kelley's position as Chevy's Chief Engineer. Cole accepted with the condition that Ed Kelly became the Manufacturing Manager. Cole's first request was to increase the department from 850 to 2,900 employees. His request was granted. He tossed out virtually every program that Chevrolet Engineering had set up. Next, he put out a call for the best and brightest of GM's young engineers to join him at Chevrolet. They came in droves.

Harley Earl, GM's styling chief and Clare Mackichan, Chevy's design studio chief, were the central designers of the "Hot One". Harley began his career on the West Coast making custom cars for movie stars. He was recruited at the age of 32 by GM's Lawrence Fisher to help design the 1927 Cadillac. He moved on to Buick and eventually founded GM's school for styling. Clare was a graduate from the school and worked with Harley in styling the '47-'50 Buick line. Around June '52, serious design work got underway at the GM Styling building in Detroit. Harley Earl, like Cole, had turned to the best and the brightest young minds. Behind blacked out windows and misleading names on doors, thousands of preliminary sketches boiled down to a handful. These final designs were then rendered into full scale side views. The '55 Chevy was unquestionably a Harley Earl design. He successfully combined a number of his favorite ideas into the car. The 'sweep sight' wraparound windshield was the one he created for the first Corvette. The dipped beltline was on his Cadillac and Buick designs. The Ferrari like egg crate grille was spotted on one of his summer visits to Europe. When a particular group got bogged down over a fender, grille or interior trim, Harley said he would walk around the car and make some crazy or irrelevant observation and then leave. Exasperated designers would spend many a night and weekend trying to determine what Earl wanted to change. Because Earl was

Continuation of the history of the '55 Chevy on it's Golden Anniversary

6'4", some engineers would strap blocks of wood on their shoes to try to see what Earl was observing. Little did they know that all he wanted them to do was to start exercising their imaginations. New ideas would soon pop up and they would move on. In two years they created a masterpiece that erased Chevy's old image.

When Ed Cole took over the Chief Engineer position, he made the tough decision to throw out the V8 engine under design by the previous Chief Engineer Ed Kelley. It was too heavy and too costly. He then found that he had only 15 weeks to design a new engine. General Motors had already scheduled the old design to be sent to their machine tool builders and the schedule could not be altered. He promptly asked his friend Harry Barr, an engineer at Cadillac, to become assistant chief engineer. Together they crafted an engine so good that it stayed in production for more than 40 years. The engine ended up being released for tooling directly from the drawing boards. Cole would later say, "I worked on V8 engines all my life and I knew I could do it". After the design was decided, the development of the engine would take approximately 24 months. It was complicated by the fact that Ed Cole wanted to make the engine lighter and more economical to build. This would involve a number of new engine innovations that had never been tried before. The most important was a reduction of permanent cores used for the block. The Cadillac V8, which Cole developed, used 22 cores just to make the block. All these cores were held in place with steel rods. It was widely known that the more cores and rods the more chances for the cores to shift when molten metal was poured in. To compensate for core shift, the cylinder walls had to be cast thicker and later corrected by machining. Harry Barr's engine group was able to develop a green-sand thin wall casting process that reduced the cores to 12 and eliminated the core supporting steel rods. The process was so successful that the wall thickness was cut nearly in half. This made the engine 41 lbs lighter than the Chevy's old Blue Flame six and 50 lbs lighter than Ford's flat head V8.

The all-new '55 Chevy had a chassis that complemented the V8 engine beautifully. Ed Cole's concept of the car was to build it around lighter components. The torque-tube drive was thrown out and replaced with a Salisbury type axle. He went to a ball joint independent 'Glide Ride' front end suspension with coil springs. Lighter tubular framing was used, yet it was stronger than the frame it replaced. The last major innovation was to incorporate "Outtrigger" rear springs mounted outside the frame. Ed Cole's visionary concept was now in place.

... more to come...





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We are located in Rockwall, Texas just east of Dallas. Our 14,000 square foot shop contains all the necessary facilities to produce the complete vehicle. Our staff not only focuses on the artistic aspects of a project, but the function, safety and serviceability as well. We are a full service shop, capable of helping you with everything from a complete build up to simply an upgrade or alteration on your current street or show car or truck.