



# CLASSIC HEARTBEAT

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

June 2008

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Dallas, TX 75381

[www.DallasClassicChevy.com](http://www.DallasClassicChevy.com)  
Est 1976

Current Membership -149

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## Membership Information

Dues are \$25 per year,  
payable to

Dallas Area Classic Chevys,  
mail to the club PO Box.

To determine your renewal date,  
check your mailing label, the top  
right corner is the month/yr your  
membership expires.



DACC club members will hit the road on Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup> when we head west with our '55-'57 Chevys on Interstate 20 to historic Thurber, Texas for some good home cooking at the equally historic Smokestack Restaurant. We will meet at 11:30 at the Park-N-Ride parking lot located on the south side of Interstate 20 and Bowman Springs in Arlington (just west of the Parks Mall). We will hit the road at Noon from that location and caravan a group of Chevys west and along the way pick up the *Parker County Cruisers Car Club* who will join us for lunch in Thurber. This should be a great driving event and one you don't want to miss! After lunch we will spend some time checking out Thurber. The town began in the late 1800's as a major coal mining town, grew to be the largest town between Ft Worth and El Paso, then as coal mining subsided, bricks and oil became the dominant product of Thurber but that eventually faded and now with a population of 5 Thurber is a ghost town of it's past. The Smokestack Restaurant is housed in one of only a few buildings left from the boom times of Thurber. Check out the website for the Smokestack at [www.Smokestack.net](http://www.Smokestack.net). Plan to join us SUNDAY!

## Independence Day Parades on tap for DACC in July!

Dallas, Plano and Arlington to have  
Tri Five Chevy entries!

It's not too late to get in on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parades, Plano is full but the Dallas/Lakewood AND Arlington parades need more Chevys!!! To get your car in the Dallas/Lakewood parade call Dan Bunch at 972 270-0461, to get in the Arlington parade call David Graves at 214 738-5231. WE NEED MORE CARS so CALL TODAY for more details!

## Inside Highlights

June Feature Car	2
'Other Car' Feature	3
Lone Star XXVI wrap up	5
New Members	5



## DACC's Favorite Tri Five Chevy at the Lone Star XXVI Classic Chevy Convention

Each year our club chooses a 'Favorite' car or truck at the annual Lone Star event, this year this beautiful '55 was our club choice from Waco

## June DACC FEATURE CAR

Rex and Myrtle Buzan's  
1955 Bel Air Hardtop  
Henryetta, Oklahoma



DACC's Club Choice Award at the 2008 Lone Star Classic Chevy Convention went to this beautiful original restored '55 of Rex & Myrtle Buzan of Henryetta, Oklahoma. This Turquoise and Ivory two door hardtop has been restored back to the original showroom condition that includes a "numbers-matching" 265 engine and powerglide transmission. It has the original treadle-vac power brake booster, power steering, tinted windows and Wonderbar radio. It has the accessory front grill guard and fender guards front and back and it is equipped with the original style spiral shocks. There is a tremendous amount of attention to detail and originally. Most of the bolts and fasteners were salvaged and refurbished from the original car during restoration. Things that couldn't be restored were replaced with good ones from salvaged cars, no reproductions were used on this Chevy.

This car has been in some interesting places recently. It was one of 100 cars chosen to be displayed in the pavilion during the Oklahoma Centennial Celebration at Tulsa, when they dug up and displayed the 1957 Plymouth Belvedere 50 year time capsule in 2007. It also was chosen as the Best 1955 Chevy at the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the 1957 Chevy in Detroit last year. Rex recently won 1st at the Starbird Rod and Custom Show in Tulsa earlier this year.

Rex loves to drive his car, but he generally trailers it because he likes for his wife to go to the shows with him. Myrtle really enjoys the comfort of air conditioning, so she urged him to get their enclosed trailer so she and the car could both be comfortable.

Rex has a true passion for 1955 hardtops. He was in the Army, when he saw a brand new 1955 Turquoise and Ivory hardtop at the Chevy dealer and fell in love then

and forever. After his discharge in August 1955, he made a deal to buy a new one in Connecticut just like that first one he saw. Unfortunately there was a flood before he took delivery and he witnessed his '55 floating in the showroom window. Eventually he got a new Turquoise and Ivory 1955 two door hardtop which he drove until a drunk driver hit the car in 1958.

Work and family diverted his attention until 1976, when his 14-year-old son was nearing driving age. Rex convinced son Marshall that a '55 Chevy was the neatest car to have. They found a '55 four-door sedan with every possible option except air conditioning. But soon after buying it, they found a '55 two-door hardtop and Marshall was as crazy about it as Rex had always been. They restored it and painted it Gypsy Red and Shoreline Beige. A few years later he built another one just like it for his daughter... a dad's got to be fair! Remember this is three '55's and counting

In late 2003 Rex was recuperating from a broken leg, minding his own business, when a neighbor found this original 1955 Turquoise and Ivory two-door sedan for sale. Rex asked the owner to hold it until he could walk again. In 2004 he began renovating the car that we saw at the Waco Lone Star Convention. He credits Gene Shockley of Tulsa with helping him immeasurably with the details of the restoration. Also Pete Sawatzky of Route 66 Restoration Supplies in Stroud, OK for finding him all the parts he needed. Rex trailed the car body on a roll away frame to Gary Robbins in Virginia for the paint and body work. Meanwhile, Rex did all the rest of the work on the frame, suspension, etc. himself, including building the motor and rear end.

**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE CLUB WEBSITE FOR MORE PHOTOS OF THIS ALL ORIGINAL 1955 CHEVROLET BEL AIR HARDTOP FROM OKLAHOMA!**



## 'Other Car' Feature Story

*Larry Rollow  
2008 Corvette*

In August of 1968, I went into a Chevrolet dealer in Pensacola, FL with the idea of purchasing a Z28 Camaro. A couple of hours later I drove out in a new Corvette! To fill in, I had graduated from college on June 10th of that year and was commissioned an Ensign in Uncle Sam's Navy the next day. I had completed OCS during the previous two summers and reported in to the Naval Aviation Schools Command to start pilot training few weeks prior to the Corvette purchase. So began my life as a Corvette owner and enthusiast. The '68 was the first of that body style and it had some problems. While driving out to an outlying field to practice FCLP's (field carrier landing practice), the water pump shaft sheared, letting the fan/clutch assembly loose in the engine compartment. Luckily, it lodged in between the fan shroud and the radiator, doing little damage. Then the hood separated from the hinge assembly. I also had problems with the rear alignment. So after a couple of years, I sold it and bought an El Camino so I could haul my off road motorcycle around. In spite of the problems I had with my '68, I still had great enthusiasm for Corvettes and checked out each new generation as they came out.

Before I purchased my 1957 Chevy, I considered buying a Corvette, but with a young child, it didn't seem practical; 3 people, two seats. The irony of that situation is that I didn't finish my '57 until my daughter was driving and probably wouldn't want to go with us anyway! In late 2007, I began to think about purchasing a Corvette. I talked it over with my wife, Jan, and she gave me her blessing to buy one. But she also suggested looking at used Corvettes, saying: "Let someone else take that first year hit in value". That made some sense, but after reading up about the improvements made to the 2008 Corvette, my mind was made up.

I started shopping in earnest. I joined the Corvette forum on the internet and contacted a couple of dealers through the forum for their prices. I contacted David Graves, President of the Dallas Area Classic Chevy club about the deal that the club has with Reliable Chevrolet. I went over to Reliable and drove two Corvettes, a 6 speed automatic and a Z-51 equipped 6 speed manual. After more research, and decision making as to options and trim level, I ordered a Corvette from Reliable Chevrolet. The car I ordered is painted Jetstream blue (a new color for 2008), has the 3LT trim level (which includes the HUD, heated and powered memory seats, telescoping and tilt steering column and more), 6 speed paddle shifted automatic transmission, dual mode exhaust, navigation radio (with Bose speakers and satellite radio), magnetic ride control (which includes Z51 brakes), two tone seats (ebony and titanium gray), performance axle ratio and polished aluminum wheels. I also signed up for option R8C. This is a delivery program offered by the National Corvette Museum, located in Bowling Green, KY, which is across the street from the Corvette assembly plant. When I contacted the museum I also found out about the Corvette Buyer's Tour. This is a program whereby you, the purchaser, go down the assembly line watching your Corvette being built. This would require two trips to Bowling Green, one to watch the car get built and then 2 weeks later to accept delivery from the museum. The wait time is because the car has to undergo numerous tests and the PDI (pre-delivery inspection). The PDI is done by the museum guys, and they do a superb job in preparing the car for delivery. If a problem shows up, they just call across the street and a factory technician will come and make the repair.

I knew I wanted to do the museum delivery, but was unsure about the Buyer's Tour. As part of the Museum Delivery, you get a factory tour, so I thought why have two tours? I read all the posts I could find on the forum about both programs offered by the NCM and everyone said they were not-to-be-missed experiences. Ultimately, the chance to watch my car being built was enough to convince me to sign up for both. I must mention that the museum delivery and Buyer's Tour are not free. The museum delivery costs \$490 and the Buyer's tour, \$350. And of course, you must get there and stay overnight as well

Being a retired airline employee, I have travel passes so that helped ease the cost of making two trips to BG. But the flip side of using passes is that you do not have a reserved seat, you travel standby. I left Dallas the day before my Buyer's Tour and sure enough I got stranded overnight in Atlanta. I could still make it if I could get on one of the first two flights going to Nashville, TN which is the closest major airport to Bowling Green. Even though the first flight was showing full, I went to the airport to try to get on. Sure enough some people no-showed so I got a seat. Upon arrival in Nashville, I retrieved my rental car and drove to Super 8 motel in BG and checked in (the Super 8 is literally across the street from the museum). My tour started at 11:30 AM but I arrived at around 11 or so. It was good that I did as it turns out that non GM cars (I had a Dodge) must park in the back 40, quite a distance from the entrance for the tour. At the plant, I met Barry Smith, a retired Corvette plant employee who was my guide.

After a short safety video, we entered the assembly plant. Barry is about my age and a car enthusiast, so we hit it off well. The workers were just finishing lunch and heading back to work. We started with my engine coming down the line hooked to an overhead conveyer system. Various workers added components to the LS3 engine, such as wiring harnesses and head pipes. Barry had given me a copy of *Corvette Quarterly* and he got some of the workers to sign it as we progressed down the line. Soon, the engine arrived at the station to be connected with the rest of the drive train. The Vette uses a torque tube driveshaft and the transmission is at the rear integral with the differential. I got to sign and date the bell housing before it was installed in the car. Getting to do this is not an assured thing; it is dependant on many factors. If it happens, it will be set up by the tour guide, and probably should not be asked for. All the tour guides are fully aware that each person they take through wants to do this.

After the engine is connected to the drive train and suspension, it goes around the corner and the body comes down from the overhead and the Corvette "marriage" takes place. After the marriage, the car continues along the line getting more components added to it, such as the rest of the exhaust system, the hood, front fascia, tires and wheels, lots of weather striping, glass and so on. I was fascinated with all the various tools and machines that have been devised to do the different assembly jobs. Most of the wrenches are electrically powered. These have a preset automatic torque value for each socket used. The torque value is recorded on a computer for each bolt on each car so it can be researched later if a problem occurs. There are some pneumatic wrenches used for non-critical fasteners. Before I knew it, my car was rounding the final turn to the last section. Quality control is vital in today's auto manufacturing plants, and I saw plenty of it. For example, I watched no less than 4 different workers check the fit of the hood on my car.

To get a job in the Corvette assembly plant, you must apply from another GM assembly plant. No one comes in to this plant directly off the street. The workers here are quite friendly and many came up to me and thanked me for purchasing a Corvette. The pace of the assembly line is not fast, the workers have plenty of time to get their respective jobs done. I watched a guy installing driver's doors; he had it down to science. He was sitting on a chair working a crossword puzzle, but at a certain time, he jumped up, got the door from a fixture and using an overhead apparatus, moved the door over to the car and put it on, tightening all the fasteners. Then he would go back to his chair and work the puzzle until the next car came by. Obviously he was very experienced and was doing a proper job installing doors. Not all were so fast. There are some workers that report to an office each morning and are then assigned to a particular work station where someone is absent. These folks fall into the category of "jack of all trades, but master of none". They do a good job, but it does take them longer to do the job than the regular person would. There are quite a number of women working on the assembly line, doing the same jobs as the men.

In the final stage before the car leaves the assembly line, it goes into a sort of tunnel with a lot of very bright lights. This is a paint inspection station. Then it goes to the end of the line and is finally ready to roll on its own tires. The car has been carried or put on a conveyer belt prior to this



point. The man working in this station came over to me and asked if I would like to start my car. By the way, I never did see when they added gas, brake fluid, coolant and charged the air conditioning system. Barry told me when it was being done, but I did not see it actually happen. I hopped in and Barry took a few photos of me sitting in the car. He then handed me the camera and I took a couple of shots of the odometer reading zero. The technician came over and instructed me as to how to start the car. Of course, it started immediately, eliciting a big grin on my face. Then I had to get out so he could drive it over to the wheel alignment bay. When he pulled it out of that bay he asked me to get into the passenger seat and we drove into the test cell. He hooked up a large plug to the OBD port. A big screen dropped down in front of the car that gave him various prompts as to what to do. He operated every system in the car and then ran it up to 70 MPH, (the rear wheels are on rollers), and set the cruise control. A computer ran 800 tests on the car in about a minute and a half. Then a big green light came on indicating it had passed all tests. The next test was the water leak test. Tourists do not get to go into where they do this test. The car is pulled into what looks like a single car garage. Then many, many water jets squirt water from all angles and the technician sitting in the car looks for leaks. You lose sight of the car when the water is turned on!

After my tour ended, I headed back to Nashville and flew home. I really enjoyed watching my car get assembled. As I said, I was fascinated with all the specialized equipment and tools used to make the car. I feel I gained a greater appreciation for the Corvette and for American cars in general.

On Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, Jan and I flew to Nashville, rented a car and drove to the same Super 8 motel as before. The museum has two delivery times, 7:45 AM and 11:30 AM, each weekday except Friday. We arrived at 7:30 AM on Friday and were greeted by Al, who was our guide, as well as some of the other museum staff. Al is retired from the Air Force, owns a Z06 Corvette along with some other cars. When picking up the car, the buyer must have proof of purchase, proof of insurance, a driver's license and a temporary license plate. I handed these items over and then we, along with several others who were also picking up their Corvettes that day, watched a video showing the history of the car along with some safety rules. Then off to the plant for the tour.

Since I had already done the factory tour, I was not quite as enthusiastic as the others in our group. But, as it turned out, having a different guide meant getting another perspective on the car's assembly as well as some information that I did not get on the Buyer's Tour. It was definitely worth to me to have done both tours. As we approached the final portion of the tour, Al asked me if I wanted to start up a Corvette. I said no, but asked if Jan could do it. She got into a new Corvette and started it up just like I had on my Buyer's Tour. She also got to ride into the test cell and watch the test procedure, and, as it turned out, it with the same GM employee who had taken me through the test cell 2 weeks before!

We returned from the tour and had lunch at the local Wendy's; then back to the museum. There were about 10 new Corvettes lined up waiting for delivery in the museum. I had received an email from Lori, of the museum staff, earlier in the week telling me where my car was positioned in the museum. They have webcams positioned to view each car and one can go to the NCM website and view their cars. I had sent out the link to several of my friends so they could see the car. David Graves was watching when I actually picked up my car and captured about 18 photos of that process. Thanks, David, they are really neat and I am glad to have them. But I am getting ahead of myself. After lunch, Al gave Jan and me a personalized tour of the museum. If you have not been there, I urge you to make the trip. It is great, there are many Corvettes to see, and tributes to those who designed, built, developed and raced the car. They even have old Route 66 videos playing!

Finally, it was time to accept delivery of the car. Of course, there was

some paperwork, but not too bad. Then Al took us to the car and gave us a very thorough walk through of the car and how to work all the features and accessories. By now, it is getting close to 3 o'clock and I am getting concerned about the return of our rental car. We were done, so Al pulled the car out for the requisite photos in front of the museum. Then my wonderful wife, Jan, gets in the rental car and heads back to Nashville while I took a few more photos and said goodbye to the museum staff. I left soon after that to pick her up; we had planned to head south to out of Nashville to Lynchburg, TN, wanting to visit the Jack Daniels distillery the next day.

The owners manual states that the car should be kept under 55 MPH for the first 500 miles as well as varying the speed. Ever try to keep a 436 horse power car capable of 190 MPH below 55 MPH? It isn't easy, but I did the best I could. Soon after getting on I-65 south, I noticed a truck ahead of me with flashing lights. I finally caught up with the truck, but I could not see the truck very well since the Vette sits low and there was a car between us. After a short while, the car ahead changed lanes and, much to my chagrin, the truck had a sign on the back saying "Caution: salty brine being applied to road". I could not believe what I was seeing, but quickly changed lanes and went around him. Here I am in my brand new Corvette, with less than 20 miles on it and it is getting salted. Needless to say, a trip was made to the coin car wash for a thorough cleaning, especially the undercarriage. I have no idea why they were salting the road, the weather was good.

The rest of the trip home was uneventful; however we found it amusing that the Jack Daniels distillery is located in a dry county. In fact they couldn't even make the stuff for many years after prohibition was repealed until a special law was passed allowing it. So at the end of the tour you got to sample lemonade or coffee! Once we passed the 500 mile mark, I picked up the pace. We came to a long, straight length of road with no other cars around so I eased on the gas pedal. I looked down after a few seconds and we were doing 100 MPH, but the car was very smooth and quiet. Later on, we were getting back on the interstate, and I noticed that there was a lot of traffic in my lane coming up on us very quickly, so I punched it to merge. Wow, was I surprised at the performance; it really set us back in the seats.

Now being home I drive it every chance I get, in fact, I make excuses to drive the Corvette. I still love to drive my '57 Chevy, but it now has a competitor when we want to go out for a nice Sunday drive!



*Photo of Larry and Jan Rollow taken from the live video stream from the Corvette Museum website as they picked up their new Vette!*



## **WELCOME New Members to DACC!**

**808**

**Geoff & Kristen Sebastian  
1010 Muirwoods Dr  
Allen, TX 75002  
'56 150 Sedan  
'56 150 Wagon**

**809**

**Jerry and Lisa Jayroe  
1301 Laurence Dr  
Heath, TX 75087  
'55 Bel Air Sedan**

**810**

**Randy & Charlie Dee  
1929 Horseshoe Dr  
Nevada, TX 75173  
'57 Bel Air Hardtop**

**811**

**Irv & Peggy Engelbrecht  
116 Hilltop Loop  
Lufkin, TX 75904  
'55 150 Sedan**

**812**

**Carolyn & Joe Wright  
19844 Hwy 271  
Winona, TX 75792  
'55 Bel Air Hardtop**

**813**

**Tom & Mary Greene  
PO Box 1063  
Mineral Wells, TX 76068  
'57 Chevy**

**814**

**Larry & Darlene Freeman  
6 Doral Ct  
Frisco, TX 75034  
'57 Convertible  
'56 Convertible**

## ***Lone Star XXVI is in the books!***



A short drive and a beautiful, relaxing weekend with great hospitality sums up the Lone Star XXVI Classic Chevy Convention. It was hosted last month by the Heart of Texas Classic Chevy Club of Waco at the Czech Inn of West, Texas 13 miles North of Waco, which was filled to capacity with 60 tri five Chevys along with about 15 other year model Chevys.

With a leisurely schedule, we were able to check out local German restaurants, antique shops and the quaint town of West. Friday night we were served Polish Sausage, Weiners and Chili and and lots of desserts by the local club. They provided water, soft drinks and beer the whole weekend.

There was an assortment of nice raffle prizes, plus several live auction items. Lucky Don Andre bought one raffle ticket and won an assortment of tools. Jo Andre bought 20 tickets and didn't win anything! Awards were presented at 5 pm Saturday. Then most of us went next door to KD's Smokehouse for dinner and a live band. Many of us went into Waco Saturday night to the monthly cruise-in to take a look at a variety of local cars and get more thumbs-ups from our Classic Chevys.

Next year the Lone Star XXVII Classic Chevy Convention will be hosted by the Houston Classic Chevy Club on May 8-10, 2009 at the Omni Houston Hotel. The club is preparing programs for the ladies, judging and more so expect a good time in Houston next year! With plenty of rooms, we don't expect to have issues with getting rooms but you can reserve your room now by calling the Omni at 281-558-8338. Room rate is \$86.

### **DACC Members winning Sponsor's Picks:**

Sandra & Mike Reeves' Silver 1957 Convertible  
Sonny & Nancy Poteet's Turquoise & White blown 1955 2-door Hardtop  
Carolyn & Joe Wright's 1955 Red & White 2-door Hardtop  
Bill & Diane Preston's 1956 Pearlescent Ivory Nomad

### **DACC Club Favorite Award**

Rex & Myrtle Buzan's 1955 Turquoise & White Original 2-door Hardtop (Henryetta, OK)

### **People's Choice Award**

Runner Up-James & Trish Sparrow's 1956 Red & White 2-door Hardtop

### **Other DACC members attending:**

Larry & Melanie Rogers, '57 Red Sedan  
David & Marlene Graves, '56 Cascade Green Corvette  
Don & Jo Andre, no car  
Larry & Dianne Epperson, '57 Red Hardtop  
George Johnson, '56 Turquoise Nomad  
Greg & Nick Hedum, '55 Burgundy Hardtop





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