

National Corvette Museum Report for March 2019 (2/14/2019)

A couple months ago I committed to feature the three co-located Corvette centered venues in Bowling Green Kentucky and started off in the January issue of “On Your Marque” with a detailed article about the National Corvette Museum, February featured the NCM Motorsports Park, and I’d hoped to feature the Corvette Assembly Plant this month. But since there is so much going on at the Museum I’m going to postpone writing about the Assembly plant until later. Besides, as most of you know the Assembly plant has been closed to tours since June 16th of 2018.

Originally it was supposed to be closed to the public for a year and a half, with the tours being shut down in order to give the facility a chance to conduct extensive changes to the factory. That deadline is well passed, and most of us know why. It is due to the development of the new Mid engine C-8. While General Motors officials reportedly refused to discuss future plans, the future Chevy has been spied repeatedly, clad in thick layers of camouflage that still can't disguise the new model's engine layout. It's also adding a new DOHC V-8 to the 'Corvette lineup and that engine is being assembled in Bowling Green. There are many renderings of what the new C-8 might look like and what engine options might be available. Most of us hoped for an unveiling of the all new Corvette in the Fall of 2018, then hoped for a debut at one of the early major auto shows in 2019. So far we are still waiting. So what's happening to keep us interested in the meantime? See below for more details.

Chevrolet introduces the 2019 “Corvette Drivers Series” special edition Grand Sport

In collaboration with the Corvette Racing team four versions of special edition Grand Sports with specific exterior colors and unique graphics packages inspired by Corvette Racing drivers will be available this Spring. “The Corvette Drivers Series celebrates Corvette Racing’s winning legacy, which is driven by a world-class team of drivers from around the globe,” said Steve Majoros, director of Chevrolet passenger car and crossover marketing. “Each driver worked with Chevrolet designers on the graphics for their respective edition, giving the cars distinctly personalized appearances.” Offered on Grand Sport 1LT, 2LT and 3LT trims, The Corvette Drivers Series packages are available this spring and have an additional MSRP of \$4,995 for 1LT and 2LT trims and \$5,995 for the 3LT trim.



The color and graphics packages for the vehicles include:

Tommy Milner Edition: Elkhart Lake Blue exterior with silver stripes and red hash marks, body-color mirrors, black wheels with red stripe and red brake calipers. Jet Black Suede interior (leather seats on 1LT) with red seat belts.

Oliver Gavin Edition: Shadow Gray exterior with Torch Red center stripe and Torch Red hash marks, Carbon Flash mirrors, black wheels with red stripe, red brake calipers. Adrenaline Red interior with red seat belts.

Jan Magnussen Edition: Arctic White exterior with Crystal Red stripes and gray hash marks, body-color mirrors, black wheels with red stripe and red brake calipers. Jet Black interior with red seat belts; red stitching on 3LT trim.

Antonio Garcia Edition: Racing Yellow exterior with “Jake” stinger stripe, red hash marks, Carbon Flash mirrors, black wheels with red stripe and red brake calipers. Jet Black interior; yellow stitching on 3LT trim.

Each edition receives a driver-specific interior plaque and other unique trim details, and models with the 3LT trim include carbon fiber interior trim. “Customers can select the version of their favorite Corvette Racing driver or simply choose the one with the color and graphics that appeals the most to them,” said Majoros. “And like the drivers they represent, each special edition is a winner.”

Similar to the Corvette Racing C7.R race cars, the Grand Sport-based Drivers Series models feature a naturally aspirated V-8 engine. The 6.2L LT1 engine is rated at 460 horsepower (343 kW), and also like the race cars features a dry-sump oiling system designed to support high-performance track driving.

National Corvette Museum adds 208 acres: The National Corvette Museum has purchased an additional 208.323 acres of land adjoining the NCM Motorsports Park. While the Museum has held an option on the property since January 2010, they decided to exercise the option in 2018 with the property officially closing on Wednesday, January 23. “We do not have any immediate plans for the land, but with a growing interest in activities offered at the NCM Motorsports Park, we wanted to secure space for any future expansions,” said Wendell Strode, Executive Director of the National Corvette Museum, which owns the facility. “Bowling Green is currently the fastest growing city in Kentucky and our goal at the Museum and Motorsports Park is to continue to enhance our offerings for both locals and visitors.” In the meantime, the property will continue to be utilized for farming purposes. The purchase of this acreage brings the total acreage available for development around and adjoining the Motorsports Park to 430 acres. Lots of room for more fun!

Museum Commemorates 5th Anniversary of Corvette Swallowing Sinkhole with 360 Degree Virtual Cave Tour: A little over five years ago, on February 12, 2014, car enthusiasts world-wide tuned in to a story that would simultaneously captivate them and make them cringe at the news that eight Corvettes had fallen victim to a massive sinkhole in Kentucky. In the days, weeks and years that would follow, the National Corvette Museum would recover and ‘make lemonade’ – rescuing all eight cars from a more than 30-foot fall while experiencing a 67 percent jump in visitation to the Museum.

Each year the Museum has commemorated the anniversary of what could have been a devastating day, opening a special ‘Corvette Cave-In’ exhibition in 2016, kicking off the restoration of the 1962 Black Corvette in-house in 2017, and revealing the ‘62, good as new, in 2018. With three of the eight Corvettes having been restored, and most of the sinkhole having been filled (a viewing window over a 48” manhole as well as outline on the Skydome floor of where the sinkhole was are the only visible signs that remain of the hole), the Museum decided for the fifth anniversary to give the curious a better look at what lies beneath their feet.

Working with LifeLike Imageworks, a 360-degree interactive tour of the south side of the cave was launched on the Museum’s website. The tour allows virtual visitors to explore nearly every inch of the cave, and even utilize VR goggles. The 360-degree tour is free to access and can be found on the Museum’s website (www.corvettemuseum.org) by clicking on the Explore – Exhibits menu, then selecting the Corvette Cave-In link. “The sinkhole story is one that continues to captivate our visitors, and anyone who stumbles upon our security footage of the collapse online,” added Katie Ellison,

Marketing and Communications Manager at the National Corvette Museum.. “It’s a part of not only Museum history, but also Corvette history. We welcome visitors to come check our immersive displays out and learn that story firsthand.”

2019 National Corvette Museum Events: 2019 is turning out to be a spectacular year for NCM related Corvette Events! In addition to the August Caravan, here are some other NCM Corvette related events to consider for your vacation planning purposes. There will be more events scheduled, so keep an eye on this space. These are popular events and fill up fast! Some of these are already sold out (but you can typically still get your name on a wait list). There are both Museum in Motion (MiM) events and events at the NCM. You can find more details about these events and sign up for them here: <https://www.corvettemuseum.org/explore/events/>

- 2019 Bash Presented By Michelin @ National Corvette Museum: April 25 – 27, 2019 (Reg. Open)
- MiM: Tail of the Dragon Run & Biltmore (KY & NC): April 28 – May 1, 2019 (Registration Open)
- C4 Gathering at NCM May 16-18, 2019 (Registration opens soon)
- MiM: ‘Branson Experience’ June 4 – 8, 2019 (MO) (Registration Open)
- MiM: 2019 NCM Le Mans Tour (London, Paris & Le Mans) June 6, 2019 – June 18, 2019 (limited)
- 2019 NCM Le Mans Race Weekend at NCM June 15 – 16, 2019 (Registration opens soon)
- National Corvette Caravan at NCM August 28-31, 2019 (see article in Newsletter for more info)
- 2019 MiM ‘National Parks Tour’ (Grand Canyon South Rim, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Arches, Glen Canyon Dam, Monument Valley, and Canyonlands), September 22 – 28, 2019 (opens soon)
- MiM 1-Lap of Kentucky 2019 Tour (1); Sep 30 – Oct 5 (Registration late spring 2019)
- MiM 1-Lap of Kentucky 2019 Tour (2); October 14 – October 19 (Registration late spring 2019)

NCM Corvette Raffles for now only available in Kentucky: As many of you know the NCM Corvette Raffles help fund the NCM so it can fulfill its mission of “Celebrating the invention of the Corvette; preserving its past, present and future; and educating the public about Corvette”. Over the years many of you have purchased tickets from me for these raffles, or on line at the NCM website. As of right now because of a recent interpretation of the NCM gaming license the NCM is only selling raffle tickets to visitors at the Museum, by phone to residents of Kentucky, or online to purchasers located in Kentucky.

Wendell Strobe, NCM Executive Director in a communication to Club Ambassadors stated: “The best way I know how to explain our situation with raffles is (1) our gaming license is from the State of Kentucky, (2) we are investigating how many other states recognize our Kentucky Gaming License and how many do not. (3) For those that do it should be a simple and timely process. (4) For those that don't, we will investigate the process and cost involved to obtain needed approval. (5) This includes (a) online sales in other states, (b) telephone calls/sales from residents of other states and (c) sales by volunteers and Ambassadors in their respective states. It's going to take some time but we are on it. We will let you know as we know more. Thanks for your understanding”. This will no doubt change in the future so stay tuned. The raffles were a great fundraiser for the Museum.

Did you know? The NCM can provide you with a copy of your build sheet and a reproduction window sticker for your post 1981 Corvette? The National Corvette Museum offers build sheets and window stickers for Corvettes assembled in Bowling Green since the GM Plant opened in 1981. Paper Build Sheet - \$50 (members \$40). Window Sticker/Build Sheet Combo - \$100 (members \$85) Lamination \$5 extra. Extra copy of build sheet or window sticker \$15 each (\$12 members). Go to this website for information: www.corvettemuseum.org/learn/library-archives/build-sheets-window-stickers/ The Library & Archives also offers commemorative build sheets/window stickers on slate, tempered glass or aluminum; dealer brochures and the Corvette Black Book!

That’s all for now – Save the Wave!