

National Corvette Museum Report for November 2019

National Corvette Museum - Museum in Motion (NCM-MiM) SW Parks event: As you may recall, I promised last month to provide a report on the September NCM-MiM tour of the Southwest USA National Parks. This is my second tour with the NCM, the previous trip I was on was right here in the Pacific Northwest. The Museum in Motion events presented by the NCM are held in different areas throughout the USA (and in Europe in the case of LeMans) and are designed to provide opportunities for Corvette Enthusiasts to participate in NCM activities that are well outside of the traditional footprint of the Museum in Kentucky.

The Southwest Parks Tour Emily and I joined was officially September 15th – 21st (a second one was being held the very next week) and kicked off from Williams, AZ. Since we left from Seattle, we drove South spending time with family first in Eugene, OR, then on to the San Francisco area. We left San Francisco in the morning & headed South and East for about 400 miles to Barstow, CA, stopping to pay our respects at some Route 66 highlights that evening. The Historic U.S. highway 66, has been designated as an All-American Road and National Scenic Byway in the state of Arizona.



The Next day we drove some isolated sections of Route 66 from Barstow to Williams through the Black Mountains, stopping in for a high noon gunslinger's shootout in Oatman, AZ. We had no choice; they block off the road at both ends of the small town for a half hour while the shoot-out plays out. It's a fundraiser for local charities (take a look at the "cowboy hat" in the picture above for a hint) so if you happen to be in town at high noon you are part of a captive audience. Oatman is also home to many wild burros wandering the sidewalks and is known as the "Home of Gold Mines, Wild Burros & Tame Gunfighters". Then on to Kingman for a late lunch at the famous Mr. D'z Route 66 Diner. When traveling along Route 66, you're sure to find plenty of restaurants that offer a romanticized version of the '50s and '60s. This is one of those places. It was packed and served great food. We spent the night in Williams, driving first through the center of town along its Historic Commercial District and Urban Route 66. After dark it's Neon lights along main street resemble a small Las Vegas. We met the rest of the NCM MiM participants and leaders that evening at a welcome dinner at the Grand Canyon Brewing Company.

The next morning (Monday) we started the 6 days of the NCM-MiM tours. There were 14 Corvettes and 26 people on the tour, mostly married couples, although there were a few solitary men whose partners wanted to stay home. Of the 14 Corvettes, 4 were from TX (they all belong to the same TX Corvette Club), 2 from AZ, 1 from IN, 2 from MO, 1 from OH, 1 from HI (although they have a 2nd home in Salt Lake City and keep a Corvette there), 1 from PA (who trailered his Z-06 out), 1 from CA, and ours from WA. The oldest Corvette was a C-4, and it had a few problems (like it didn't want to start more than one morning). We had a ZR-1, several Z-06's, several Grand Sports and the remainder were base models. The NCM likes to keep these tours fairly small so it is a quality experience for all involved. The leader of this tour was one of the TX couples, Mike and Teri Krieger. They've led 20 or so of these tours in the past, typically doing 2 a year. They do these

tours as volunteers because they love sharing their knowledge about this area and these parks, and because the Tour helps raise some funds for the NCM.



Each morning after breakfast there was a drivers meeting to discuss the events planned for the day. Like most organized tours we each had a two-way radio along with us and were regaled with historical and informational messages from our tour leader from time to time as we drove along. And because this was a National Parks Tour, most of us had our Senior Pass to the National Parks. I remember going through the gate of one of the parks and one ranger said to the other “Just wave these Corvettes on through, they all have Geezer Passes”.

The first day, Monday, we drove out to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and spent through lunch there. While a half day at the Grand Canyon doesn't sound like a lot of time, our tour leaders had scoped it all out and were well versed in where to focus our attention. They knew where to park, which stops yielded the best vistas and ideal places to spend our time. Then onward to another stop at the Navajo Bridge and Marble Canyon where we crossed the Colorado river, arriving in Kanab, UT for three nights.



The next morning, we all left for majestic Zion National Park, where we were able to spend all day if we wished. The key feature of Zion is that you are actually down in the canyon, rather than on the rim like the Grand Canyon. A hop on-hop off bus runs throughout the canyon and there are plenty of hiking trails too. Most of us left together around 3pm and stopped for pie and a cup of Joe at the Mt. Caramel Café, where the waiter had a white C-4 parked in the parking lot and was thrilled to see all the Corvettes pull in. Wednesday morning we departed for Bryce Canyon where the main features were something I'd never heard of or seen before called Hoodoos. A hoodoo is a tall, thin spire of rock that protrudes from the bottom of an arid drainage basin or badland. Bryce Canyon is full of them. Here too we were mostly on the rim looking down from various vantage points. We spent all day in Bryce, meeting up for a group dinner in Kanab at Houston's Trail End.

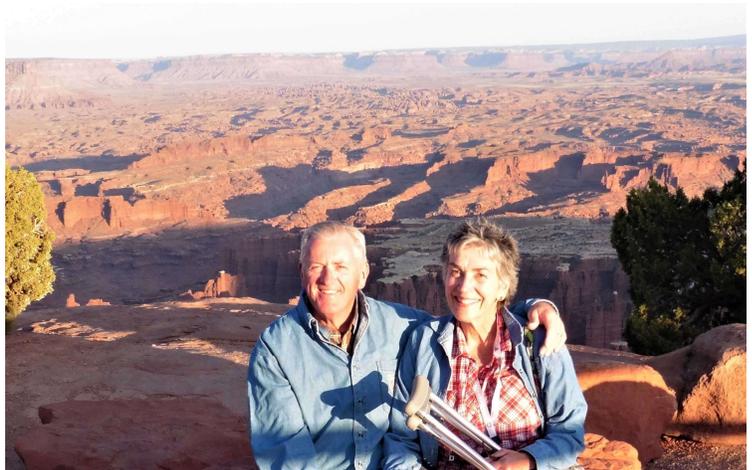


Thursday was moving day so with all of our Corvettes packed up we departed for Moab, UT. We stopped along the way at the Glen Canyon Dam near the town of Page. The 710-foot high dam, built by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) from 1956 to 1966, forms Lake Powell, one of the largest man-made reservoirs in the U.S. We stopped for a group lunch at Goulding's trading post on the vast Navajo Reservation in Olijato-Monument Valley. Following lunch we went on bumpy guided jeep tours (built to carry 12 or so people in an open back end with bench seats) of aptly named Monument Valley, lead by a Navajo Guide who explained over a loudspeaker the various monuments we were viewing, told stories about the many western TV shows and movies filmed in the area, and sang traditional songs. There were a few shopping opportunities for traditional Navajo crafts at a couple stops along the way. Finally we departed for our Hotel in Moab.



Friday morning we departed for Arches National Park. There are no on-off busses here so most of us split up and stopped within the park where we wanted. Our tour leaders told us where the best stops were. There are many hiking options here to a wide variety of arches (there are 2000 in the parks!). This was my favorite park. We spent most of the day here, then met back at the Moab for an early BBQ dinner at the Broken Oar

Restaurant. This was basically our “Thanks for coming and Goodbye” dinner and a chance to visit with everyone one last time. The tour wasn’t quite over however, because after dinner we took a cruise to some cliffs with ancient Native American petroglyphs, then on to enormous Canyonlands National Park for a sunset vista, followed by night sky star viewing. The milky way was gorgeous. It was a perfect evening to pop the top off the Corvette and to top off our tour.



After Breakfast the next morning we bid everyone who was left goodbye and started North on our own. We drove from Moab to Salt Lake City and on to Ogden where we spent the night. Then the next day from Ogden to Boise, pausing at Twin Falls to admire the Falls, and at Pocatello to visit some of the Oregon Trail. We stayed in Meridian just outside of Boise which is sort of a posh suburb, and enjoyed an evening in an upscale outdoor mall. Then a very scenic drive from Meridian north on Hwy 95 to Coeur d’Alene, known locally as CdA. The road had lots of twisty curves through mountains alongside rushing rivers and with lots of long straight stretches through high valleys. Perfect roads for the Corvette. After spending the night in CdA we drove home to Seattle the next morning. Overall it was a 4500 mile trip over 15 days in the amazingly comfortable Corvette. This NCM MiM event was well worth doing. Hopefully you will consider joining one in the future.



I list all the upcoming NCM events in the NCM column of our newsletter each month. Read on for latest news coming out of the Museum:

2020 Stingray convertible debuts; offers the same storage as coupe, even with the top down: Open-air driving has always been a part of the Chevrolet Corvette’s heritage. In fact, when the Corvette debuted in 1953, it was available only as a convertible. The 2020 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray convertible builds off that heritage as the first hardtop and mid-engine convertible in Corvette history.

“We put the world on notice when we introduced the first mid-engine Chevrolet Corvette a few months ago, and now we’re raising the bar with the first-ever hardtop Corvette convertible,” said Brian Sweeney, Chevrolet U.S. vice president. “And the convertible will be priced only \$7,500 more than entry 1LT Stingray coupe.”

First and foremost, a convertible

The mid-engine 2020 Corvette Stingray was engineered first and foremost as a convertible. The convertible maintains the tunnel-dominant structure and use of high-integrity die-cast parts found in the Stingray coupe. The team engineered the hardtop to stow seamlessly into the body, maintaining the Stingray’s impressive ability to store two sets of golf clubs in the trunk even with the top down. The convertible also keeps the coupe’s front storage compartment, which can fit an airline-spec carry-on and a laptop bag.

The hardtop provides a quieter cabin, increased security and a cleaner look compared to the previous soft-top designs.



“Our goal from the beginning was to make sure customers didn’t have to sacrifice any functionality, performance or comfort when choosing the hardtop convertible,” said Josh Holder, Corvette program engineering manager. “We managed to keep the same design theme as the coupe, as well as the exceptional storage capacity and track capability.”

Like the coupe, the Stingray convertible’s design was inspired by fighter jets. The tonneau cover features aerodynamically shaped nacelles influenced by the housing used for jet engines. The nacelles, which were also used as inspiration on the Chevrolet Engineering Research Vehicle (CERV) I and II, as well as the Corvette SS and SR2 concepts, help reduce air recirculation into the cabin and provide a remarkably exotic profile with the top up or down. The tonneau also provides a rear power-adjustable window and a vent for mid-engine cooling.

The two-piece top can be activated at speeds up to 30 mph and retract in as few as 16 seconds. It is powered by six electric motors — a Corvette first — and uses encoders for precise control. Switching to electric motors from hydraulic systems helps increase reliability. A body-colored roof is standard, while Carbon Flash metallic-painted nacelles and roof are optional.

Careful attention was paid to make sure the engine could breathe when stored underneath the tonneau cover. The sheet-molded composite top stows in a compartment made from lightweight composite panels and heat shields to manage heat from the engine.

A divider glass window in the middle of the vehicle can be power adjusted with the top up or down. The glass has been optimized to reduce air recirculation and wind noise in the cabin for improved quietness. The roof system design, combined with the same rear spoiler used on the Stingray coupe's Z51 Performance Package, results in identical drag between the coupe and convertible with the top up.

Engineers tweaked the chassis for the convertible, with springs and dampers tuned specifically to provide nearly the same performance as the coupe.

Like the Stingray coupe, the convertible is powered by the next-generation 6.2L Small Block V-8 LT2 engine, the only naturally aspirated V-8 in the segment. It will produce 495 horsepower (369 kW) and 470 lb-ft (637 Nm) of torque when equipped with performance exhaust — the most horsepower and torque for any entry Corvette.

The LT2 is paired with Chevrolet's first eight-speed dual-clutch transmission, which provides lightning-fast shifts and excellent power transfer. This transmission is uniquely designed to provide the best of both worlds: the spirited, directly connected feeling of a manual and the premium driving comfort of an automatic. The double-paddle de-clutch feature even allows the driver to disconnect the clutch by holding both paddles for more manual control.

When combined, the advanced propulsion system, revised chassis tuning and retractable hardtop make the 2020 Stingray the most no-compromise Corvette convertible in history.

Interested Stingray shoppers can now build and price their own Corvette coupe or convertible on the 2020 Corvette visualizer at [Chevrolet.com](https://www.chevrolet.com).

A dedicated Chevrolet Corvette Concierge team will provide 2020 Corvette customers with answers about the vehicle discovery, buying and ownership process. The team can be reached by calling 866-424-3892.

Customers can also live chat with a Corvette Concierge by visiting [Chevrolet.com](https://www.chevrolet.com). The team is available from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. EDT Mondays through Fridays.

The 2020 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray coupe goes into production at GM's Bowling Green Assembly in late 2019, with the convertible following in late first-quarter 2020. A right-hand drive version of the convertible will be available in select international markets at a later date.

Current Corvette Raffles: The Corvette raffles at the NCM are a major fundraiser that helps to keep the museum operating. I typically mention these at our monthly meetings and in the Newsletter. All you need to do to enter a raffle for a chance to win one of these fabulous Corvettes is go to the NCM Raffle web page:

([https://www.corvettemuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Raffle-Ticket-Request-5.2.19-](https://www.corvettemuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Raffle-Ticket-Request-5.2.19-Ambassadors.pdf)

[Ambassadors.pdf](https://www.corvettemuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Raffle-Ticket-Request-5.2.19-Ambassadors.pdf)), download and print a form, fill it out & send it in to the NCM with a Credit Card number, and they will purchase the tickets for you and enter it into the raffle drawing right there in Kentucky! Note this form has a line for "ticket sold by". You would put my name in there so our club gets credit for the order. Also, please let me know if you send in an order (kevinwilson@q.com). If you would prefer to purchase tickets with cash or a check you will need to bring your form to a CMCS meeting, and I can get it processed. Here is the current Raffle line-up:



2019 Shadow Gray Corvette ZR1 Coupe Limited to 1500 tickets - Price: \$300
Drawing: November 21, 2019 - 2:00 PM.
This is a fully loaded 3LT high wing model!



2019 Torch Red Corvette Coupe Limited to 1500 tickets - Price: \$100
Drawing: December 19, 2019 - 2:00 PM.
This is a Red “Merry Christmas” Model



2020 Black Corvette Coupe Unlimited tickets - Price: \$20
Drawing: April 25, 2020 - 2:00 PM.
Here are the lowest priced Raffle Tickets by far!

Current National Corvette Museum Events: With the year winding down the NCM is busy planning some great adventures both on the road and at the museum for the next year, so be sure to keep an eye on this space for additional upcoming trips to consider for your future vacation planning purposes. You can find more details about these events and sign up for them here: <https://www.corvettemuseum.org/explore/events/> . Here are the events currently posted by the museum:

- Vets ‘n Vettes presented by Mobil 1 @ NCM; Nov 7-9 (Registration opens soon)
- NCM President Wendell Strode Retirement Dinner @ NCM Nov 7 @ 5:15 pm – 8:00 pm
- Welcome Reception for new NCM President Dr. Sean Preston @ Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce Nov 11 @ 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
- Michelin NCM Bash @ National Corvette Museum Apr 23 – Apr 25, 2020 (Registration end of 2019)

Did you know? The National Corvette Museum was named ‘Best Museum’ in Kentucky recently by Kentucky Living Magazine? And remember, Kentucky has several Bourbon and whiskey Museums too! “We are thrilled that so many of our fans supported us by casting their votes,” said Katie Ellison, Director of Marketing and Communications for the NCM. “Visitors travel from all over the globe to visit the Home of Corvette, and we are proud to represent Kentucky as the Best Museum.”

That’s all for now – Save the Wave!