



NEWS

A Car Club for the Chrysler Corporation and American Motors Enthusiast (est 1992)

Volume 27 Issue 6

June 2019

Upcoming Events

- CCM General Meeting
Tuesday June 4
Hot Dog BBQ !!
- CCM Board Meeting
Tuesday June 18
Planning for the Show
- CCM Day in the Park XXVI
Saturday June 22

CALLING ALL CLUB MEMBERS



Mopar Day in the Park is Saturday June 22nd, less than 3 weeks away!

We need all members to participate with this event. Why? Well - you did join the Club! And because the car show is fun, your friends need you, and you get free doughnuts and coffee. Also... HemiBurgers!

We need to set up the day before. This is first making a run to the storage locker, then setting up our pop-ups, securing all our banners to them, marking out the "yard" for parking, unloading the supplies and food, setting up tables and chairs, and getting it all "just right". We have someone to camp out in the park overnight to make sure our stuff doesn't walk off.

The day of the event we need people to help register and check in all the cool cars. Then the parking squad assists the drivers with getting their 200-odd show cars parked properly and in the correct place. Parking starts at 8am and finishes at 10.

We need raffle ticket sellers and raffle booth people, food ticket sellers and someone to keep the ketchup bottles full. And more. Whatever you do, please stick around after the show and help clean up - if everyone does, we can be done in an hour. (otherwise it's a big job if there's only a few of us picking up). We will have some guests this year in the form of the Sacramento Area Mustang Club, who are going to help with judging. No one can say these guys are partial to any one Mopar! They'll also chip n wherever we need - this'll help make it easier from everyone, so let's show 'em how friendly us Mopars are. In return for this, we'll be looking for a like number of volunteers to help out with their Mustang Show in September.

Call or text our CarShow guy Tom at 916-849-7582 to let him know what we can count on you for. The sooner you do, the more likely it is you'll get to do what you want. If all our club members (and spouses and spices and kids too) hit the grass to help, it'll be easy for all of us too! And... HemiBurgers!!



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Club Information

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DeSoto led the way at Indy 60 years ago



They don't call it the "Greatest Spectacle in Racing" for nothing. Much like non-football fans who still watch the Super Bowl every year, plenty of non-motorsports fans likely caught a lap or two of Sunday's Indianapolis 500. Some of us watched all 200.

Indy's allure was even stronger this year for the 100th running of the race, which was first held in 1911. A sellout crowd of 350,000 attended the race at the famed 2.5-mile oval. Race officials announced earlier in the week that due to fans' overwhelming response, the traditional local-television blackout was lifted for the first time since 1950 so the entire state of Indiana could watch the race live.

When then-Speedway President Carl G. Fisher used a privately owned Stoddard-Dayton passenger car to lead the field around the track to the waiting flagman for the start of the inaugural race in 1911, it is believed to have been the first mass-rolling start for any major automobile race. The list of brands that have paced Indy is long. It includes Stutz, Packard, Marmon, National, Duesenberg, Cord, Cadillac, Lincoln, Chrysler, Ford, LaSalle, Hudson, Buick, Studebaker, Nash, Oldsmobile, Mercury, Dodge and Chevrolet – and those were all before 1956.

That year – exactly sixty years ago on May 30th – a gold and white DeSoto Fireflite convertible led the field. The car featured gold wheel covers, gold grille and gold medallions, as well as a gold-trimmed interior that was later used on the DeSoto Adventurer. Powered by a Hemi V-8 engine mated to a 3-speed push-button transmission, the DeSoto was chosen by Indy officials because of its "outstanding performance and superb handling characteristics." It had a claimed top speed of more than 140 mph.

DeSoto management called the special-edition pace car the Pacesetter. It is believed that fewer than 500 were built; some believe that number is closer to 100. Base price was \$3,565, the equivalent of about \$31,463 in today's economy.

The 1956 DeSoto Fireflite pace car could be had with a new-fangled Highway Hi-Fi record player, but we're guessing the actual car that led the Indy field skipped it. Sorry about that, but why not listen to the racecars instead?



How DeSoto went from sitting pretty to utter doom in just three years

DeSoto was killing it in 1957. People loved their stunning styling. Fins and flash were in, and Chrysler's line of affordable sedans offered plenty of both. DeSoto enjoyed healthy sales—178,594 in all—even as its rivals struggled.



Yet the company was being squeezed from within and without, undercut by more luxurious Chrysler products, increasing competition from established brands like Chevrolet and an upstart called Edsel, and a slowing economy. Just four years later, Chrysler would kill the brand.



Walter Chrysler launched the brand in 1928 and named it for Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto. Chrysler wanted a line of cars to compete with mid-priced models from the likes of Oldsmobile, Studebaker, and Hudson.

The company sold 81,065 cars in 1929, an inaugural record that stood 'til 1960. Chrysler decided to make DeSoto a more upscale line of cars so as not to cannibalize sales from Dodge, and introduced the aerodynamic AirFlow and AirStream models in the mid-1930s. The cars were sleek and stylish, and the 1935 AirStream is probably DeSoto's most famous model, although its 1942 model is famous for its pop-up headlights.

As with all American automakers, DeSoto essentially stopped building cars during the War, and the 1946 models were merely reissued 1942 cars. It soon offered sleek, modern models like the Firesweep, Firedome, and Fireflite.

The lineup was redesigned in 1955 by Virgil Exner, who gave all of Chrysler's cars his "Forward Look." People loved the styling, especially the massive fins—with triple taillights—and snapped up the cars. DeSoto saw sales jump by 7000 in 1957.

The cars offered as much go as show. The hemi was good for 345 horsepower, or an impressive one pony per cubic inch. Torsion-bar front suspension, a new Torqueflite automatic transmission with push-button shifting, and a convertible model made the DeSoto Adventurer a particularly popular model.

DeSoto had some serious problems, though. The first was spotty quality control. Things got so bad Chrysler actually took the unheard-of step of shutting down the assembly line for a week to set things right.

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MOPAR Automotive History



DeSoto faced more pressing issues, too: the more upscale Chrysler Windsor was cheaper than anything it offered. It also saw increasing competition in the mid-priced segment from Ford, Mercury, General Motors, and Chrysler's own Newport lineup. Edsel also landed a serious blow when it introduced its first model in 1958, selling 60,000-odd cars in its first year.

All of this came about as the nation slipped into a recession that clobbered Detroit. DeSoto saw sales fall 60 percent in 1958, and Chrysler posted a loss of more than \$40 million. Eager to stop the bleeding, Chrysler merged DeSoto with the new Chrysler-Plymouth division and stopped



building DeSotos in a dedicated factory. It wasn't enough. DeSoto celebrated its 30th anniversary by selling just 45,700 cars.

Even as all of this was happening, Chrysler's so-called Special Car Committee started developing what would become the company's first compact cars, the Plymouth Valiant and Dodge Lancer. The automaker soon realized it couldn't afford five marques and develop the Valiant, so it dedicated a large portion of DeSoto's development, sales, and management resources to the new endeavor. DeSoto offered just two models, the Adventurer and Fireflite, in 1960.

Chrysler announced its decision to kill the DeSoto on November 19, 1960 and decided to produce a two-door and four-door DeSoto—neither car was given a model name—until it ran out of parts. Those 3034 cars were a hodgepodge of bits and pieces, with dashboards from the previous year's Dodge models and mismatched steering wheels and other pieces snatched from the Chrysler Newport parts bin. Anyone who'd ordered a DeSoto but didn't get it before the parts finally ran out received a Newport instead. In that way, sadly, the last DeSoto wasn't even a DeSoto.

Three for the road: Plymouth's customized Rapid Transit System muscle cars

In the early '70s, Plymouth's muscle cars and pony cars were taking checkered flags in NASCAR and Trans Am, and holding their own in quarter-mile racing in the NHRA. To help capitalize on the "win on Sunday, sell on Monday" mantra, Plymouth developed a plan to bring its racing knowledge to buyers and give them the parts and tune-up tips needed to get the most out of their cars on the track and strip—and enjoy some of the racing success that the

factory-backed pros did. Dubbed the Rapid Transit System, it would include advertisements featuring racers like Sox & Martin and Snake & Mongoose.

Most importantly, the Rapid Transit System included a caravan of specially outfitted cars that would show what a Plymouth muscle car could do. After all, "Anybody can offer a car. Only Plymouth offers a System."

In addition to showroom-fresh cars that were treated to Mopar's Direct Connection high-performance parts, a cross section of the lineup was sent out for custom body and



paintwork to truly set them apart and turn heads. Three of those specially modified Plymouths wound up in collector Steven Juliano's hands and will be available at Mecum's upcoming Indianapolis auction.

Immediately recognizable as something special, thanks to its custom grille and quad headlight conversion, the Rapid Transit Duster is Mopar's A-body muscle car offering. The compact and lightweight platform gave birth to some of the muscle-car era's hottest performers, and Mopar wanted everyone to know it. This version, customized by Byron Grenfel in 1970 and even more thoroughly to make a bigger impact for 1971, has outlandish muscle-car looks with custom graphics and the big-bore, 340-cubic-inch small-block and four-speed to back it up.

Plymouth's Road Runner was a low-buck, high-power muscle car that came with several flavors of big-block. This one happens to come with the best flavor, the Chocolate Malted Krunch of muscle car powerplants, the 426 Hemi. Of course, it breathes through an Air Grabber hood.

Initially modified for Rapid Transit System duty by Roman's Chariot Shop in Cleveland, it received custom paint with a big Road Runner graphic on each side, shaved door handles, flared quarter panels, a rear wing, full-width taillights, and a custom grille rectangular headlights. It almost gives it an Australian look, like some of the great right-hand-drive muscle that rarely made it to the States. It had only 1700 miles on the odometer but needed lots of cosmetic work when Ken Heckett handled its restoration in 2000.

This wonderfully preserved, 383-powered Road Runner is in its original, unrestored Rapid Transit System form, as customized by Chuck Miller at Styline Customs in River Rouge, Michigan. The list of modifications is long: the nose



was lengthened and sharpened, the decklid was lowered to create a tunneled wing, its door handles were shaved, and the side marker lights were capped with translucent 3D Road Runner heads, leading to the car's "chicken head" nickname. That's not all. The hood was also recessed, creating ram air intakes, and a custom grille partially shrouds the headlights. Its custom paint highlights the nearly flat tops of the Road Runner's wheel openings and still manages to look good in photos nearly 50 years later.

This car was said to be Steven Juliano's favorite, and it's easy to see why. It's a Hot Wheels car come to life, with whimsical cartoon novelty combined with a truly artful reinterpretation of Mopar's fuselage B-body. It's not easy to redesign a car's face, yet Chuck Miller's redesign still looks great and concept-like. The jewel of Steve Juliano's Mopar collection could bring the biggest price of the three, even though it doesn't pack the same wallop as a Hemi.

Chrysler's talking K-car was oh-so-1980s

Electronics infiltrating automobiles signals the start of the dark days for many enthusiasts, but there are certainly bright spots. OBD scanners are undeniably helpful for diagnosis, power windows and dual-zone climate control are welcome creature comforts, and bulky car phones are hilarious. But Hagerty forums user johnvukovichjr reminded us that other electronics could be ridiculous and silly too—like when Chrysler implemented the talking voice assistant in the 1980s. Think terrible, primitive version of Alexa. Of course, we're talking about EVA.

The Electronic Voice Alert (EVA for short) was a speech synthesizer that paired with sensors on an automobile to give the driver pertinent information while operating their luxurious K-car. Check out this short video of EVA in action to get the full picture. Nissan offered a similar system in the Datsun 810 (later renamed the Nissan Maxima) and



280ZX, which used a tiny, shock-proof phonograph as the audio source.

Chrysler offered two versions, including 11- and 24-command systems, that tied into the factory stereo. The 11-command system included reminders to fasten seatbelt, turn off headlights, and "don't forget your keys." The later 24-command system included warnings for oil and coolant levels, brake pad wear, and notifying the driver if a headlight or taillight went out. Thanks, EVA!

Paired with the digital dash, EVA gave the K-car a pseudo-futuristic feel that not all owners loved. Many either disabled the system by pulling a fuse or turned the system off using a glovebox mounted switch. If you want to be the hit of Radwood, better make sure your woody convertible LeBaron's EVA system is functioning tip-top. Because in 2018, we want to hear that baby sing.

June 6, 1925 - Chrysler is formed



On this day in 1925 Chrysler was founded by Walter Chrysler when the Maxwell Motor Company was reorganized into the Chrysler Corporation. Chrysler was hired by Maxwell-Chalmers, an ailing automobile brand, in hopes of him being able to save the company, much the same as he had recently done for Willys-Overland.

The first Chrysler automobile, the B-70, also known as the Chrysler Six, was launched in January 1924 under Maxwell and the six cylinder cars were a huge success. It was an advanced, highly engineered vehicle that featured many innovative features, including a carburetor air filter, full pressure lubrication and a replaceable oil filter. Throughout the first few years many more items became standard on the early Chryslers. One of the most important being the first practical, mass produced four wheel hydraulic brake system.

After the initial success of the six cylinder Chrysler the Maxwell brand was dropped in 1925, thus forming the Chrysler Corporation. That same year a lower price four cylinder Chrysler was introduced, although it was simply a rebadged Maxwell. However, thanks to the great engineering feats on the early Chryslers, including the brakes, rubber engine mounts and edged wheel rims, the cars flew off dealership lots. By 1936 they held the title for second highest sales of a US car brand, a title it would last hold in 1949.

Car & Boat Club

DOWNTOWN Lincoln CAR SHOW

Saturday
JUNE 1ST 2019

HOT AUGUST BITES

AUGUST 11TH

**MUSIC BY JAX HAMMER • CAR SHOW • FOOD TRUCKS
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This is our own Steve Archer (standing at left) watching the tire warm up prior to the run. The car is Steve's, driven by his son. Steve has quite a racing history, ranging from Autocross to Drag Racing to Hill Climbs, and much more. Ask Steve, he's got some good stories!

2019 HEMMING'S MOTOR NEWS GREAT RACE

RIVERSIDE, CA TO TACOMA, WA

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OLYMPIA, WA

Longview, WA

VANCOUVER, WA

Hood River, OR

BEND, OR

Crater Lake, OR

GRANTS PASS, OR

Brookings, OR

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GARDNERVILLE, NV

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LUNCH STOP MONDAY JUNE 24TH



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June 14

July 12

August 9

September 13

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5pm to 9pm

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Goodguys 26th Summer Get-Together June 1-2 in Pleasanton

TO THE GOOD OLD DAYS,

WHEN WE COULD MAKE FUN
OF EACH OTHER WITHOUT EVERYONE
GETTING THEIR PANTIES IN A BUNCH!

ROADIN' ANGELS CAR CLUB PRESENTS
20th ANNIVERSARY
Cruisin' the Pines
CAR SHOW
Sept. 7-8
NEVADA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
GRASS VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

This Year's Dates:
Sept. 6, 7 & 8, 2019

General Admission:
\$5 - weekend admission,
with kids under 12 free
with adult,
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**Fairgrounds charges
parking**

The 20th Annual Roadin' Angels Car Club's Car Show will be revving in shape for 2019 and we it will once again be on the best classic car show in Northern California. Ch



out what's **New This Year** and the all time favorites all held at the beautiful Nevada County Fairgrounds in Grass Valley, California.

AUG Marysville Elks Lodge Annual Car Show

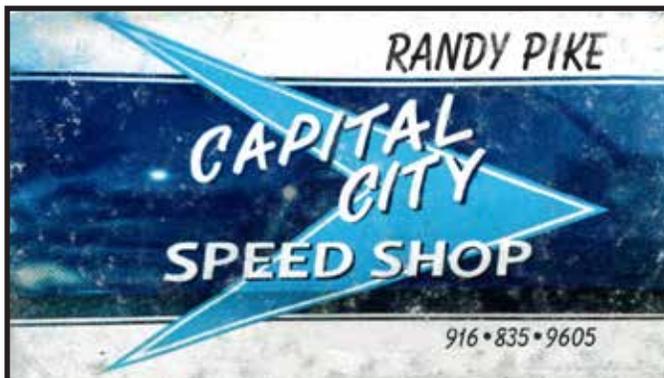
Saturday, August 3, 2019 at 7:00 AM - 2:00 PM PDT



Event Schedule (club events in bold)

June	6/1/19	Rodsrelics Lincoln show	1975 & older 7-3
	6/4/19	CCM General Meeting	California Auto Museum
	6/3 - 6/4/2019	Good Guys	Pleasanton
	6/15/19	Goodie Bag Assembly	Assemble goodie bags for show
	6/9/19	29th Mopar Alley Rally	DeAnza College, Cupertino
	6/18/19	CCM Board Meeting 7pm	NEW LOCATION Round Table Pizza Carmichael 4005 Manzanita (at Cypress)
	6/21/19	Mopar Car Show Set up 2 p.m.	Hagen Park, Rancho Cordova
	6/22/19	Mopar Day in the Park	Hagen Park, Rancho Cordova
	6/24/19	The Great Race Lunch Break	Grass Valley 10-3
July	7/7/19	Stockton Swap Meet	Stockton Fair Grounds 6-3
	7/12/19	Auburn Cruise Night	Lincoln Way, 5-9pm 1972 & older
August	8/3/19	Marysville Elks Car Show	Marysville Elk's Lodge 7-2
	8/6 - 11/19	Hot August Nights	Reno NV
	8/10/19	Hot August Bites	Rusch Park Citrus Heights 9-2
September	TBD	CAM Car Club Cavalcade	Calif Auto Museum
	9/6 - 9/8/2019	Roamin' Angels Car Show	Grass Valley, NV CoFairgrounds
	9/7/19	Mopar Muscle Car Shoot Out	Sacramento Raceway
	9/15/19	Mopar Picnic	Carmichael Park
	TBD	Poker Run	Somewhere with wineries
October	10/12/19	Sacramento Swap Meet	Cal Expo \$12 (+\$10 parking)
November	11/24/19	CAM Tree Trimming	Calif Auto Museum
December	12/2/19	Shriner's Hospital Toy Drive	9am Meeting Location TBA
	12/8/19	Mopar Holiday Party	Carmichael Elks Club

CCM member Randy Pike has made some cool Mopar inspired metal signs and drinking accessories—all designed in the fashion of your favorite corporate logo, of course! Contact Randy through the website or catch him at a monthly meeting for details on how to make them yours!

The Capital City Mopars is a proud member of the Association of California Car Clubs and the California Automobile Museum.




SACRAMENTO, CA

Guest Speaker Ideas Wanted

We are looking for ideas and suggestions for guest speakers to appear at our monthly General Meeting. In the past we have had insurance agents, oil industry experts, DMV officials, an expert from the WPC museum, and various others. These speakers provide information and entertainment for the meetings and are always appreciated.

Joe Giuntini

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How about a "Gearhead" membership to the California
Automobile Museum? Several membership options are
available. Membership information and an application
form can be downloaded from the CAM website at
calautomuseum.org.

Mopars in the Park
XXVI
Saturday June 22
Come One, Come ALL !!



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Capital City Mopars
PO Box 340426
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www.CapitalCityMopars.com

What We're All About

Capital City Mopars (CCM) provides a place to share your enthusiasm and knowledge about Mopars and enjoy the company of other Mopar enthusiasts. CCM membership is open to anyone interested in Chrysler Corporation or American Motors vehicles who are eighteen years or older and have a valid drivers license. Annual membership dues are \$36 for regular members and an additional \$6 per co-member. One co-member is allowed for each regular member. The co-member must reside in the same household and be eighteen years or older. All members and co-members are required to participate as worker/chairperson in at least one function per year, and everyone must work at the annual car show.

The Lunch Bunch

Several CCM Members have been meeting for lunch at various locations in town, on the last Wednesday of the month - next one will be June 26. They call themselves "The Lunch Bunch". This is an open invitation for anyone interested in attending. Time is usually 11am. John Riordan is the organizer and you can call him at 415-823-7009 to get on the list.

John will call a few days before each to let you know to what restaurant the group will be going.

Donate Raffle Prizes

Got any items that you don't need? Something you bought and never used, or won at a previous raffle? Consider donating them to the Club, as raffle prizes for the General Meeting or the annual Car Show.

DMV Help Line (916) 657-6560

Note: Complimentary car club member passes to the California Auto Museum can be obtained from President Bob Berry or Treasurer Norm Benedict. Passes can also be mailed with your newsletter when requested.

CCM Members!

Got a business?

Provide a business card and it will be printed in the pages of CCM News - free!

Next Meeting

Tuesday June 4

7:00 pm

California Auto Museum

2220 Front Street, Sacramento