



NEWS

Volume 28 Issue 9

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

September 2020

Upcoming Events

- **CCM General Meeting**
Tuesday September 1
TBA
- **Bunch Brunch?**
TBA
- **CCM Board Meeting**
Tuesday September 15
TBA
- **The Lunch Bunch**
TBA
- **Mopar Shootout**
Saturday September 26

Cap City Mopars has cancelled all our events including the June Car Show and into October, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Future events are uncertain, so please be sure to "check in" with every event prior to coming out. Some health organizations are projecting we should continue to practice 'safe space' into next year. Other sources warn this may be the norm for as long as 18 months.

Please follow recommendations and stay safe.

Please watch the CCM Newsletter and website for future announcements.

*Even if we can't meet, it's important to stay in touch with your fellow CCM members by phone, e-mail, text. **Don't be a stranger.***

The History of the Dodge Charger

A Look Back Through The Years At Dodge's Venerable Muscle Car, courtesy Allpar.com

Would it shock you to know the Dodge Charger has been a sedan for nearly as long as it was a coupe? When Dodge re-launched the Charger nameplate in 2006, it got some flak from traditionalists for what it wasn't: a two-door muscle car like the iconic Dodge Chargers of the late '60s. Instead, it was a front-engine, rear-drive sedan with an optional V-8 in an era of boring beige boxes. As the 2021 Dodge Charger Hellcat Redeye proves, Dodge made the right call. So how did we get here? Let's take a quick look back at seven generations of Dodge Chargers.

The Chrysler Corporation had a big, two-letter problem in the mid-1960s: GM. Chevrolet, Pontiac, and Oldsmobile were putting out hot-selling "intermediate" muscle cars like the Chevelle, GTO, and 442 that were taking a bite out of Chrysler not only at dealer lots, but at dragstrips, ovals, and other racetracks around the country.

Taking its name and styling cues from two concept cars that had come before it, the first-ever Dodge Charger debuted in 1966. Riding on the Dodge Coronet's platform, the first Chargers featured a swept fastback roofline and four bucket seats split by a full-length center console.



A handful of V-8s could be found under the Charger's hood: a 5.2-liter V-8 making 230 hp; a 5.9-liter V-8 with 265 hp; a 6.3-liter V-8 with 265 hp; and, most importantly, a 7.0-liter Hemi V-8 with 425 hp and 490 lb-ft of torque, measured using the fairly generous SAE gross horsepower metric of the day. Transmission options included a three-speed manual, three-speed automatic, and four-speed manual.

In a 1967 road test of the Dodge Charger, MotorTrend wrote, "Competition-oriented Dodge built up Charger's image as a hot one on both the NASCAR and USAC circuits in 1966 and moves that image to the street with engine options including the 426-cubic-inch Hemi that sometimes terrorizes Ford on the super-speedways. The sound of the 425-hp Hemi

when fired up is unmistakable; it gives goose pimples to enthusiasts and fits to the competition. It isn't really loud, just powerful and authoritative. Only the Shelby GT 350 and 500 offer a comparable sound."

Odds are when you think of a vintage Dodge Charger, it's a second-generation Charger that comes to mind. The Charger's sophomore performance was a strong one. Designed partially in a wind tunnel, it had Coke bottle curves, a vinyl-covered fastback roofline, and a menacing grille with hidden headlights; the Charger was a presence on American roadways and racetracks.

Powertrains ran the gamut from a 145-hp 3.7-liter I-6 to a hard-hitting duo of performance V-8s—the 7.0-liter Hemi, and a 7.2-liter "Magnum" V-8.



Member: Association of California Car Clubs & California Automobile Museum

GENERAL MEETING

September 1, 2020

Board of Directors

Officers

President - Bob Berry
Vice President - Mike Allen
Secretary - Cindy Lenz
Treasurer - Norm Benedict

Directors

Car Show Coordinator - vacant
Editor - Mark Perry
Membership Director - Richard Teerlink
Activities Coordinator - John Riordan
Web Master - Anthony Garcia

Staff Members

Sales - John Riordan
Competition - Michael Moore
Legislative Coordinator - Horace Tutt
Sunshine Coordinator - Cindy Lenz

Property Manager - Norman Benedict -
Publicity - Norman Benedict
Historian - Norman Benedict
Member(s) at Large - John Gerson
Steve Archer

Call Meeting to Order: 7 PM

Roll Call

Introductions: New Members and Guests

Guest Speaker:

Minutes: *Secretary*

Reports:

1. *Treasurer*
2. *Newsletter Editor*
3. *Membership*
4. *Web Master*
5. *Legislative*
6. *Competition*
7. *Activities*
8. *Car Show - vacant*

Club Business:

OLD:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

NEW:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

TABLED:

1. Car show coordinator position - vacant
- 2.

Announcements:

- 1.
2. **Mopar Day in the Park 27 - Sat. June 26, 2021**
- 3.
4. Shriners toy run - collecting all year

Open Forum / Bench Racing

Raffle

Adjourn

*This months
meeting is
cancelled due
to Museum
closure and
COVID 19*

2020 Calendar
(tentative)

Jan. - Happy New Year

Feb. - Brunch Sun 23

March - Brunch Sun 15

April - Brunch Sun 19

- ACCC Conference,
Wed-Thur, 22-23

- CCM host lunch Wed 22

- Lunch Bunch Wed 29

- Nevada City / Empire Mine
cruise Sun 26

May - Maxwell car show, Sat 16

- Brunch Sun 17

June - Mopar Day in the Park 27,
Sat 27, 2020

July - cancelled

Aug - cancelled

Sept - Mopar Shootout, Sat ?

Carmichael park picnic, Sun 13
- cancelled

ACCC conference, Wed-Thur ??

Oct - Poker Run, Sun ??

Nov - CAM potluck, Sun 29 ??

Dec - CCM Holiday Party, Sat 5 ??
- Shriners Toy Run, Sun 6 ??

Lunch Bunch - 11 am Last Wed
each month ??

Transmission options included two different three-speed autos, a three-speed manual, and a four-speed manual.

American automakers had an outsized focus on NASCAR in the late '60s, and Dodge—and its sister brand Plymouth—were no exception. After the Charger failed to live up to expectations in 1968, Dodge offered up the Charger 500 in 1969. Based on the Charger R/T, this homologation special featured a revised rear window that was flush with the rest of the roof and had a 1968 Dodge Coronet grille grafted to the Charger's nose to reduce lift on NASCAR's banked ovals. Power came courtesy of either the Magnum or Hemi V-8s.

(A "homologation special" is a car built in limited numbers and sold to the public solely to satisfy the homologation rules of a racing series, which require participating racecars be adapted from road-legal production cars and not purpose-built for racing.)

The Charger 500 wasn't Dodge's only NASCAR homologation special for 1969. Taking things further was the Charger Daytona. Distinguishable by its fiberglass wedged-shape nose cone and towering rear wing—and powered by either a Magnum or Hemi—Chrysler's new "aero cars" (the Plymouth Superbird was virtually identical to the Charger Daytona) dominated NASCAR. They proved so dominate that NASCAR would first restrict their engine outputs and then would later ban both cars from competing in NASCAR, essentially freezing racecar development in the series to early 1970s technology.

The third-generation Dodge Charger was a bit of a pivot for the nameplate; depending on your perspective, either the '71-'74 Charger was a two-door version of the Dodge Coronet platform, or the Charger was specifically the coupe version of the Coronet sedan. Featuring a distinctive split grille and semi-swept roofline, the third-gen Charger would nevertheless prove popular with customers of the time, even if it isn't necessarily held in the same regards as the second-generation Charger by modern enthusiasts.

Although the Hemi wouldn't last past 1971—a victim of increasing emissions regulations—Dodge offered the 3.7-liter I-6, a 5.2-liter V-8, a 6.3-liter V-8, and the 7.2-liter Magnum V-8.

Notable performance variants were the 1971 Charger Super Bee—inherited from the Coronet lineup—and the Charger R/T. Dodge also offered the Charger 500, but unlike years prior, it was little more than a badge and sticker package rather than a true high-performance vehicle.

In the twilight of the third-gen Charger, customers were increasingly opting for more luxury-oriented versions of the coupe than performance. For the fourth-gen Charger, Dodge took that as a mandate to move upscale. Like most American luxury cars of the late '70s, the results are very underwhelming to

modern tastes.

Sporting a hood ornament-topped upright grille, bug eyes, and a landau faux-convertible top, the Charger had become what American automakers of the time called "personal luxury coupes." Inside, buyers had the choice of vinyl or "premium cloth" seats and all the faux wood trim you could ever hope for.

Powertrains include a 5.2-, 5.9-, or 6.6-liter V-8, ranging from 150 to 225 hp. Transmissions included your choice of three-speed manual or auto, or a four-speed manual. With gas prices continuing to rise through the '70s and sales plummeting, the Charger went out of production for the first time at the end of the 1978 model year.

The modern Dodge Charger has four doors, but at least it doesn't have front-wheel drive. Designed and engineered by Chrysler's European arm, the fifth-generation Charger debuted in 1981 riding on the Dodge Omni's platform.

The Charger's standard powertrain, interestingly enough, was a Volkswagen-built 1.7-liter I-4 making 70 hp. Paving the way for whatever Stellantis is, it'd be replaced in 1984 by a Peugeot-built 1.6-liter I-4 making 64 hp. A 2.2-liter I-4 with 94 hp was also available.

Although it was based on an economy car platform, Dodge hoped its reborn Charger would be able to go toe-to-toe with the Chevrolet Camaro and Ford Mustang of the era, and so it offered up a Carroll Shelby-tuned version called the Dodge Shelby Charger. Featuring a modified 2.2-liter I-4 with 107 hp and 127 lb-ft of torque, it backed up its more aggressive body work with performance tires, upgraded shocks and springs, and even relocated brake and gas pedals to allow heel-toe shifts. In 1985, the Dodge Shelby Turbo Charger was added to the lineup, which featured—you guessed it—a turbocharged 2.2-liter under the hood that produced 174 hp.

Before the Charger went out of production again at the end of 1987, Shelby purchased the final 1,000 Turbo Chargers and converted them into the Dodge Shelby Charger GLHS (Goes Like Hell Some-more). These mono-spec black Charger GLHS' that Shelby sold had 175 hp and 174 lb-ft of torque.

In 2005, DaimlerChrysler (the result of a merger between Chrysler and Mercedes-Benz parent company Daimler) unleashed the Dodge Magnum and Chrysler 300 onto the market. The Magnum wagon and 300 sedan were traditional front-engine, rear-wheel drive, full-size cars. Buyers and the media couldn't get enough of the Magnum and 300, and after a 2005 Car of the Year win for the Chrysler, DaimlerChrysler saw fit to give Dodge dealers a sedan of their own to go with the Magnum.

It was called the Charger. Borrowing

as bit from 1999's Dodge Charger R/T Concept, the new 2006 Dodge Charger rode on the automaker's new rear-drive LX platform, giving the new sedan proper muscle car proportions. Up front, the Charger featured Dodge's menacing crosshair grille, while a walk along its side highlighted its fastback-like roofline and Coke bottle curves that highlighted the rear-driven wheels.

Unlike the last attempt at a Charger, the new version had the engines to back up the name on its rear deck. The top-dog was the Charger SRT8's 425-hp 6.1-liter Hemi V-8. A rung below it was the Charger R/T. Featuring a 5.7-liter Hemi V-8 of its own, it was available in a variety of different tunes depending on the year and options. Power ranged from 340 hp on early Charger R/Ts to 372 hp on later R/Ts with the Road/Track Performance Group. Dodge also offered up two V-6s on the Charger, a 178-hp 2.7-liter unit and a 3.5-liter engine with 250 hp. Transmissions consisted of either four- or five-speed automatics, and all-wheel drive was available on V-6 and R/T models.

Free of Daimler-Benz, the 2011 Charger, a heavily refreshed version of the first Charger sedans, would debut featuring more elegant styling that pays homage to the legendary second-gen Charger, while also featuring a more refined, higher-quality cabin.

Powertrains at launch consisted of Chrysler's new 292-hp 3.6-liter Pentastar V-6, an upgraded 5.7-liter Hemi V-8 with 370 hp, and a new 6.4-liter Hemi V-8 with 470 hp in the Charger SRT8. Although a five-speed auto carried over, it was quickly replaced by an eight-speed automatic.

A facelift, featuring curvier front and rear ends would also signal the launch of the 6.2-liter Hellcat V-8 in 2015. 707 hp under its hood gave the big family car the ability to sprint from 0 to 60 mph in 3.7 seconds and through the quarter-mile in 11.8 seconds at 124.3 mph.

For 2021 Dodge, added the Charger Hellcat Redeye to the lineup. Previously only available on the related Dodge Challenger, the Charger Redeye has 797 hp, a 203-mph top speed, and features a wide-body package for extra grip.

While no replacement appears to be on the horizon before the middle of the decade, Dodge has signaled that it doesn't see a future without a Charger in its stable.



The Day Organized Drag Racing Was Born

The Story Of Santa Ana, The Birthplace Of Organized Drags, courtesy Allpar.com

What Happened In Santa Ana On July 2, 1950?

Organized drag racing celebrates its 70th birthday on July 2, 2020. On that day in 1950 the first “official” drag race took place at an out-of-commission Army airbase in Santa Ana, California. Soon that airbase was established as Santa Ana Drags, the world’s first commercial dragstrip. When it closed nine years later, drag racing had become a nationwide sport with established rules and classes, national championships, and a major sanctioning body. Today, drag racing has evolved into a huge worldwide motorsport—and it also still exists at a smaller grassroots level not much different from what those guys in Santa Ana were doing 70 years ago.

When Did Drag Racing Really Start?

To say when drag racing began involves a lot of speculation about an activity that, in all likelihood, has been around since the creation of the second automobile. In the April 1950 issue of HOT ROD magazine, editor Wally Parks (one year before establishing the NHRA) wrote an article describing “controlled drag races” as an alternative to the type of racing that hot rodders had been doing on the dry



lakes of Southern California since the '30s. Parks' description might seem foreign to today's drag racing fans, such as his explanation that the “number of entrants in each heat race

depends on the width of the course.”

This slingshot, the Nelson and Martin Master Dragliner, won its class at the Nationals in 1957 and returned to Santa Ana in September to win Top Time and Top Eliminator, running 127.12. By 1957, Chevy OHVs were running in dragsters such as this one, and the slingshot style, with the driver sitting rearward of the slicks (to improve traction) had caught on.

I figured that the best way to find out some facts about the birth of drag racing was to talk to people who were actually there. About 12 years ago, I got in touch with Leslie Long, one of Southern California's early hot rodders. Leslie was on a personal mission to chronicle the history of drag racing at Santa Ana, collecting race results and photos from the strip's short run from 1950 to 1959. He said if I met him at his favorite diner in Santa Ana and bought him a cup



of coffee, he'd tell me all about it.

We ended up having several meetings. Our conversation at the first one was the basis for a May 2009 Rod & Custom magazine article called “The Guys Who Invented Hot Rods,” about dry lakes racing before World War II. At later meetings, Leslie talked about drag racing at Santa Ana, sharing stories as well as the photos you're seeing here. These pictures, and the following information, originally appeared in the November 2009 issue of R&C.

Clues

Was Santa Ana really the first official drag race? In the spring of 1949, a year before Parks wrote that article for HOT ROD, rodders had gathered in Goleta, California, for a match race that some people call the first official drag race. And Parks' story refers to another location in Santa Ana where they were running two abreast, with one flagman at the starting line and another at the finish line a quarter mile away. Since that article predates the July 2nd races at the Santa Ana airport, Wally might be referring to a different military airfield called Mile Square. According to Leslie, that location was a practice air strip where pilots were trained to land on aircraft carriers—and where hot rodders raced until armed Marines ordered them out.

Frank Iacono's 1934 Ford coupe won on this day in February 1953 with a 109.89-mph top speed. Later in the year, he went 117 in the Chevy-engined Ford.

Soon after, the Southern California Timing Association (SCTA), which had organized racing on the dry lakes, held a drag race at a nearby blimp base. Chuck Potvin (the racer and speed equipment manufacturer) tried,

unsuccessfully, to convince the SCTA to continue with drag racing. “Nobody's interested in drag racing,” they told him.

In 1950, CJ Hart, Creighton Hunter, and Frank Stillwell met with Santa Ana city officials to get permission to use that Santa Ana airfield for organized drag racing. On July 2, the first races were held there.

Were They Really The First?

Leslie claimed that the first Santa Ana drags actually took place a month earlier. “CJ Hart ran two races that nobody knows about,” he told me. “People have told me they didn't happen. Creighton Hunter told me I was crazy. But I was there. Word got out among the racers that they were taking place—they were only for the racers.”

Those two June races, like the races in Goleta, at Mile Square, and other locations (including the streets) were grassroots activities. What was different about July 2 in Santa Ana was that the races were scheduled, organized, and official. And they were publicized.

The Berardini Brothers, Pat and Tony, ran the Berardini Muffler Shop and raced at Santa Ana in this well-known 404 roadster, driven by Pat. It ran a 296ci Mercury, built by Howard Johansen; The 404 name is taken from the Isky Flathead cam used. This photo was taken in June 1954, the day Pat ran 107.89. We've seen it used as an example of early flames.

“There were hundreds of spectators at those races,” Leslie said. “In later days there was a small grandstand, but in the early days spectators lined up along the strip, sitting on the front of their cars or standing. Telephone poles on the ground along the strip kept the spectator cars away from the racing. People were supposed to stand behind the poles, but they would sit on them. A lot of people would just sit in their cars.”

Rolling Starts And Perilous Stops

“For at least the first three years it was all rolling starts—and it was more than a quarter mile. The racers started back against the fence, and it was actually even a little bit downhill back there. CJ would stand out in front. The cars would accelerate together, CJ would drop the flag, and they'd have a race.

“The strip was wide—200, maybe 300 feet. It looked





great to the spectators, but once you crossed the finish line, you'd better be ready to slow down.

It turned into

a very narrow road that only went for about 500 feet and curved to the right, with a drop-off on the left. If you couldn't get stopped, you dropped off the end of the curve, and you were in the tall weeds waiting for somebody to come get you. I plowed through them a lot of times."

Elapsed Time Vs. Top Speed

"In the early days, it was all about top speed. They didn't have e.t. lights. They had electronic timers at the finish line—with a photo cell on each side to time miles per hour. Some racers didn't understand how they could lose a race even though they had a faster car. I was 'the college student,' so guys would come up to me and ask me, 'Look, I just went 2 miles an hour faster than that guy, and he beat me. How could that be?' I'd explain that it's not about top speed, it's about elapsed time. The race is won or lost right off the line. Later on, they put in e.t. lights."

Tony Berardini drove this '29 roadster 103.69 mph on September 28, 1952, the day of its first win in the Open Gas category.

The Beginning Comes To An End

By the mid-'50s, Hunter and Stillwell were no longer involved at Santa Ana, but Hart continued until the last race on June 21, 1959. By that time, drag racing had spread across the United States. Today, at age 70, drag racing is bigger, quicker, faster, more expensive, more commercial, and more popular than anybody could have imagined. Computer-equipped Top Fuel dragsters running at multi-million-dollar arenas are clocking mind-blowing elapsed times in the mid-3-second range at top speeds way beyond 300 miles per hour. And it all started with a bunch of hot rodders trying to beat each other to the finish line at an out-of-commission airfield in Santa Ana.

How Did Drag Racing Become A Quarter Mile?

We've always heard it had something to do with horse racing—or the distance of city blocks. Could it be that 1,320 feet became the first official distance of a drag race by accident?

In defense of the horse racing theory, we can point to Gray Baskerville's 2001 Rod & Custom story, "The Legend of the Car That Raced the

Horse." According to that story, the standing quarter mile became the original dragstrip length because of an unusual race in 1944 between Pete Henderson's 1932 Ford highboy and a quarter-horse (the car won). Leslie Long's recollection from Santa Ana suggested a more random reason. "When they finally started to have standing starts at Santa Ana, the cars had to move away from the fence (where they had previously lined up for rolling starts). The distance that was left was a quarter mile. So it was really an accident. It just happened to be the length of the runway."

Leslie's explanation is confirmed by a Wally Parks interview in the Southern California Auto Club's Westways magazine. In that interview, Parks claimed that the quarter-mile dragstrip distance was not from horse racing, but from test runs and races at airport runways. Publicity in HOT ROD magazine (edited by Parks) and other magazines helped establish the quarter mile as the drag racing standard.



CHECK FIRST

Many CCM and other events have been cancelled or postponed due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing orders in place. Please do not assume any event appearing in this month's newsletter is happening as scheduled or announced. In ALL cases, check with organizing or sponsoring personnel before you come out to any event. Stay Safe.

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MOPAR Shootout III
3rd Annual

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WEST COAST 10.5 INVITATION

OPEN TO ALL BRANDS

For More Info/Vendors/Sponsors
Randy Pike 916-835-9605
musclecarshootout@yahoo.com

TESTING FRIDAY NIGHT SEPT. 25TH
Gates Open 5pm
Racing 10pm
Car Show 10pm-12pm
1st Addressed 8:30 when the flag waves

OVERALL PERFORMANCE



Here's our updated event schedule, for what it's worth. Almost all car show/events have been cancelled for the foreseeable future, due to the COVID-19 shelter in place rules.

We've also heard that many car clubs have cancelled club meetings and gatherings due to concern surrounding this modern plague.

Cap City Mopars has cancelled most meetings through July. As future events are uncertain, the rest of the schedule remains. However please be sure to "check in" with every event prior to coming out. Some health organizations are projecting we should continue to practice 'safe space' pretty much indefinitely.

Stay safe and happy motoring.

date	event	location	more info / contact
Sept 26	Mopar Shootout, Sat	Sac Raceway	Randy Pike
Sept...	ACCC conference, Wed-Thur	CA Auto Museum	Bob or Norm <i>tentative</i>
Oct...	Poker Run, Sun	TBA	Norm <i>tentative</i>
10/10/20	Rods-n-Relics	Lincoln	www.rodsnrelics.net <i>new date</i>
11/29/20	CAM potluck	CA Auto Museum	Bob or Norm <i>tentative</i>
12/5/20	CCM Holiday Party	Carmichael Elks Lodge	Bob or Norm <i>tentative</i>
12/6/20	Shriners Toy Run	Shriner's Children's Hospital	Bob or Norm <i>tentative</i>

Stellantis is Coming

Finally, it was announced today that when the 50/50 merger between FCA and PSA (Peugeot) is complete sometime next year, the new company will be named Stellantis.

STELLANTIS

The announcement of the new name included the following details.

"STELLANTIS is rooted in the Latin verb "stello" meaning "to brighten with stars." It draws inspiration from this new and ambitious alignment of storied automotive brands and strong company cultures that in coming together are creating one of the new leaders in the next era of mobility while at the same time preserving all the exceptional value and the values of its constituent parts. STELLANTIS will combine the scale of a truly global business with an exceptional breadth and depth of talent, knowhow and resource capable of providing the sustainable mobility solutions for the coming decades. The name's Latin origins pay tribute to the rich history of its founding companies while the evocation of astronomy captures the true spirit of optimism, energy and renewal driving this industry-changing merger."

The people who dislike change are likely to hate the name, as it is fairly unusual and it really doesn't reflect the identity of either company. However, as long as the Dodge, Ram, Jeep and Chrysler favorites continue on, people won't care about the name of the parent company.

Joe Giuntini

Regional Account Representative
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

message regarding all events

Many CCM and other events have been cancelled or postponed due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing orders in place. Please do not assume any event appearing in this month's newsletter is happening as scheduled or announced.

In ALL cases, check with organizing or sponsoring personnel before you come out to any event.

Stay Safe !

DMV Help Line (916) 657-6560



**Next
CCM
Meeting
to be announced**

Here's a few interesting websites to check out:

<https://www.jeepatriot.com/>

<https://www.lxforums.com/board/>

<https://www.300cforums.com/forums/>

<https://grassrootsmotorsports.com/forum/>

<https://www.ram1500diesel.com/>

<https://www.wranglerforum.com/>

<https://www.4btswaps.com/>

<https://www.chryslerforum.com/forum/>

FCA to become Stellantis

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