

CAMARO CORNER

FEBRUARY 2006



Celebrating
Great American Performance



THE VIEW FROM THE TOP

by Doug Warren,
WMCC President

Well, here we are, already starting the second month of 2006. You may think that this is the "slow" time of the year for a "car club", but that couldn't be farther from the truth, for WMCC. By the time you read this, we will have already seen the exciting new Camaro Concept from Chevrolet, and participated in the Grand Rapids Autorama.

So, now as we look forward to the rest of 2006, it's time for us to make plans for the many activities we'll be involved with through out the year.

February Club Meeting:

On Sunday, February 5, 2006 we will be meeting at the Famous Dave's BBQ restaurant on the East Beltline. We'll start our Club meeting at 1:00pm. The address for Famous Dave's is: 1501 East Beltline NE, Grand Rapids, MI. This is right near



In case you've been living under a rock and haven't seen the Camaro concept...here it is!!!

Knapp's Corner. We'll be talking about Camaro Superfest 2006 and the Berger Chevy All Chevy Show, as well as other activities for the coming year.

Camaro Concept Unveiling:

An event of epic proportions for the Camaro enthusiast happened on January 9, 2006. Chevrolet unveiled an awesome Camaro Concept car at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan. By now, I'm pretty sure most, if not all, of you have seen the photos in the paper, or on the Internet. It's been very interesting surfing the various Camaro websites, and reading the reaction this new car has generated. Even with a few people that don't care for the car, it seems to be getting an overwhelming positive response from the Camaro faithful. The Camaro enthusiast community has had to endure 3 plus years, with no new Camaro, and are now clamoring for this new concept to be rushed into production. We need our new Camaro, NOW! :)

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Club members at Autorama

L to R: Doug Warren, John Smith, Cheryl Smith, John Falkenhagen, Jim Smith (barely visible), Christi Falkenhagen, Dennis Mykols, Ronnie Selby, Gary Crippin, Dave Kemp, Tammy Loudon, James Hoffman, Gib Loudon, Tim Drooger (way in back), Angie Kemp, Kathy Ogradzinski, Carl Lins, Anne Kohler, Mike Noonan, Timmy Murphy (in front), Al Boyer, kneeling: Alan Boyer Jr., Jan Boyer, Marge Drooger, Teresa Lins, (missing) Steve Ogradzinski, Matt Murphy

I feel very fortunate that Anita and I were among a very limited number of Camaro enthusiasts invited to be on hand at the Camaro Concept unveiling. Members Gib & Tammy Loudon along with Matt & Dale Berger and Matt Murphy were some others closely associated with our Club that were there as well. My dear friends, Mats Karlson & Ove Sjöholm from Sweden, also made the long flight across the Atlantic to witness this spectacle first hand. And, what a spectacle it was! GM/Chevrolet really knows how to do things with a lot of flash and excitement! It was truly something special to see.

Robert Bostelaar, a Canadian automotive writer for the Ottawa Citizen, interviewed us, and we've included his article here for you to read. It is a little strange reading about myself in the paper, but I think Robert's observations and insights were very interesting.

We wanted to have the rest of the Club see the Camaro Concept, too, so we scheduled a group outing for January 22. Once we gathered in the lobby of Cobo Hall, we made a bee line for the Chevrolet display, and the Camaro Concept. It was a very exciting moment, and we spent quite a while just staring at the car. Most members agreed that the car looks better in person, than in photos. We talked the spokesperson into taking a group photo of us by the Camaro. From there, we split up, each one taking their own tour of the show.

I make it a point to go to the NAIAS every year, and I remember thinking last year that it was very odd that the coolest cars in the GM area were Cadillac's and there was no Camaro. But, I didn't feel that way this year. Our beloved Camaro seems to be back, and the car has drawn many special awards and has created the biggest buzz at the show. All I can say is, it's about time! Take a minute to look over the photos from the show, the Camaro represents a great turn around at GM, it's "Muscle for the 21st Century"!

Grand Rapids Autorama:

The weekend of January 13-15 saw our Club very involved with the Grand Rapids Autorama. We had a 10 Camaro display, the largest Club display in our long history at Autorama. A huge Thank You must go out to each of our members that volunteered to put their Camaro in our Club display. Each and every Camaro fit into our display perfectly and we had a great mix of Generations and colors. Someone observed that there was no red Camaro in our display this year. True enough! It's funny how things work out sometimes. So, to Matt Berger, James Hoffman, Gib & Tammy Loudon, Tim & Marge Drooger, Dennis Mykols & Ronnie Selby, Steve and Kathy Ogrodzinski, Carl & Teresa Lins, John & Cheryl Smith and Matt Murphy, thank you for your dedication and enthusiasm. Your willingness to be involved is what makes our Club something truly special. All of your hard work and dedication paid off as each car won a Class Award, Dennis Mykols 1980 Camaro won a special Street Performer award for his engine, and the Club won the Best Club Display again. Great job everyone!

Another big Thank You must go out to all of our members that helped put the display together; including gathering the extra materials we needed this year for our larger display. And, a thank you to all our members that worked in the Exhibitors Lounge. It's always an interesting place to "hang out".

I was impressed with the new show management and the more upbeat atmosphere that was shown for the entire weekend. I expect great things for the Autorama in the future.

Membership Dues:

Many of our members have already renewed their Club dues for 2006, and we thank you all for being so prompt. As a reminder to the rest of you: Dues are \$30 for a single membership, and \$45 for a couple. If you joined the Club prior to June of 2005, then your dues are due now. Thanks!

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March 2006 Meeting:

We will be holding our March Club meeting (March 5th) at the Sam's Joint restaurant at Gun Lake. 1pm will again be our meeting time, and we'll be having our "Second Annual Camaro die cast and collectible show". So, pick out which special Camaro item you want to share with the rest of the Club, or even scour ebay for something special. It was great fun last year, and I expect it to be even better this year!

Camaro Superfest 2006:

There has been much work on planning for Camaro Superfest this year. We're moving to a new hotel, and moving the show to a new location, in a park. We'll discuss all the exciting changes at the Club meeting.

Berger Chevy All Chevy Show 2006:

Well, we're also making some big changes to the Berger All Chevy Show, as well. We've decided to move the show from its traditional Labor Day weekend time slot, back one week to August 26th. This will coincide with the 2nd Annual 28th Street Metro Cruise. Last years Cruise was a phenomenal success, and we've decided that tying the Berger show in with this other event would enhance both events. And, we won't be doing a show at Berger two weekends in a row! We'll be discussing many of the details for these changes at this months meeting, so please attend and be ready to plan for another busy and exciting summer!

So, get yourself ready for another record breaking year of Camaro excitement, and we'll see everyone at the Club meeting on Sunday, February 5th!

--Doug



Carl & Teresa Lins' freshly restored '85 Berlinetta



The unveiling of the Camaro Concept from the NAIAS.



Side profile of the Camaro Concept from the NAIAS.



Here is a group photo of our Club outing to the NAIAS. L to R: Kevin & Ruthie Roberts, Dennis & Bonnie Edwards, Shelley & Gary Crippin (in back), Marge Drooger, Doug & Anita Warren, Tim Drooger (in back), Kenya Kugel, Angie & Dave Kemp (in back), Teresa Lins, Amy Kugel, Ray Cochran (in back), Anne Kohler, Carl Lins. Camaro Concept in foreground! We all want a new CamaroRIGHT NOW!

Western Michigan Camaro Club Monthly Club Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2006

Meeting at the Woods Lodge restaurant in downtown Grand Rapids

Attendance: Doug & Anita Warren, John & Cheryl Smith, Gary & Shelley Crippin, Dave & Angie Kemp, Amy Kugel, Dave & Gay Verburg, Teresa Lins, Tim & Marge Drooger, John & Christi Falkenhagen, Gib & Tammy Loudon, Al, Jan, & Alan Boyer, Steve & Kathy Ogrodzinski, Greg & Peg Gornick, Dennis & Bonnie Edwards, and Anne Kohler.

Autorama:

Transportation: Trailers are set, we need a truck to pick up Matt Berger's car @Berger's. Al Boyer can pick up Matt's car in the afternoon. Stanchions are set, display plans are set, food is set for the hospitality room, and we have the sign-up list to be passed around today. When you work, you get a free pass to the show.

Championship Auto Shows has taken over Chevy-Vettefest in Chicago, they might possibly start a Camaro display. They have asked our Club to consider putting on a display there.

Camaroz28.com will have a live feed of the Camaro Concept unveiling available for 24 hours on Jan. 9th.

17 people reserved \$9 tickets for the NAIAS Club outing on Jan.22.

We are meeting at the Saleen display at the front lobby of Cobo Hall on Sun, Jan. 22nd @ 9:30.

February 5 meeting: Famous Dave's on Beltline and Knapp St. @ 1pm

March 5 meeting: 2nd annual die-cast car show @ Gun Lake Sam's Joint.

Benefit Car Show on Sat., May 20th, 11am to 4pm.
Put on by Anne's school in Ionia.

We need a new club photo. Can we make them into posters?

Superfest:

The Marriott is very cooperative, willing to work with us.

Do we want a food vendor change? There is a vendor available that will give us 20% of his profits.

There are 2 drive-in restaurants in the Ypsilanti area. These will be great places to get pictures.

Riverside Park: will the bathroom and park be redone by 2007? Should we go to the park this year or next? Yes, we need to make the changes this year. However, we want to ask about the renovations.

Cruise-in on Friday night to Depot Town in Ypsi.

Sponsoring the banquet to lower the price of the banquet is one possibility we need to check into.

If we can get the Camaro Concept designers as guest speakers, even without the car, at a reasonable price, many would still go to the banquet.



Matt Berger's Dick Harrell Supercar. The candy green paint on this car is awesome!

2006 EVENTS CALENDAR

(NOTE: Events marked with a * are Official WMCC Events)

WMCC MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

- *Feb 5 2006 WMCC Club Meeting – 1pm @ Famous Dave's BBQ, 1501 E. Beltline NE
- *Mar 5 2006 WMCC Club Meeting – 1pm Sam's Joint @ Gun Lake
- *Apr 2 2006 WMCC Club Meeting – TBA
- *May 7 2006 WMCC Club Meeting - TBA

ALL CAMARO / CHEVROLET EVENTS:

- Jun 9-11 2006 18th Annual Ontario Camaro Nationals – St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada
- Jun 23-25 2006 8th Annual Camaros at Carlisle/GM Nationals, Carlisle, PA
- *Jun 30-Jul 1,2 2006 15th Annual Camaro Superfest – Ann Arbor, MI
- *Aug 26 2006 7th Annual Berger ALL CHEVY SHOW – Berger Chevrolet, Grand Rapids, MI

OTHER AUTOMOTIVE EVENTS OF INTEREST:

- *Feb 4-5 2006 Kalamazoo Swap Meet – Kalamazoo County Fair Grounds, Kalamazoo, MI
- Feb 10-19 2006 Chicago Auto Show – McCormick Place, Chicago, IL
- Feb 19 2006 25th Winter Swap Meet @ Delta Plex, Walker, (Grand Rapids) MI
- Jun 3-10 2006 Hot Rod Power Tour 2006 – Florida to New Jersey
- Aug 19 2006 12th Annual Woodward Dream Cruise
- Aug 26 2006 2nd Annual 28th Street Metro Cruise



STORAGE AVAILABLE

12 x 24 garages in Byron Center and storage by Gun Lake.

Jay DeKleine
8375 Ridge Stone Drive
Byron Center, MI 49315
Phone: 616.878.4300 ext. 201
Fax: 616.878.4242
Cell: 616-437-7409
jay@dekleinebuilders.com
www.dekleinebuilders.com



Steve & Kathy Ogradzinski's '78 Z28



Tim Drooger's '68 RS/SS & Steve Ogradzinski's '78 Z28



Matt Murphy's '70 Berger 454 & James Hoffman's '85 IROC-Z

This is a copy of an article published in The Ottawa Citizen of Ottawa, Canada!

Around the corner, a Camaro with cachet
When Chevrolet took the wraps off its revived pony car,
the faithful were there to celebrate

Robert Bostelaar
The Ottawa Citizen
Friday, January 13, 2006

DETROIT - Doug Warren is 52, with greying hair to his shoulders and seen-plenty eyes.

A liver transplant saved his life 15 years ago. His granddaughter has been in and out of a Chicago hospital for surgery. As a machine repairman at Delphi, the giant, bankrupt auto supplier, he worries he'll lose his pension.

Yet on this morning, he is quietly but unmistakably happy. Founding president of the West Michigan Camaro Club, Mr. Warren is among scores of Camaro enthusiasts bused in under a special arrangement to the Detroit Auto Show preview -- normally restricted to reporters and industry representatives -- to witness the rebirth of the car at the centre of their lives.

"I own four Camaros, all bought new," he explains. The first was a 1974 Z-28. The latest: a Berger Chevrolet Hot Rod Magazine special edition from 2002, the last year Chevrolet produced the Camaro.

Think that's a lot? Crowded in beside Mr. Warren and his wife, Anita, at a rope barricade inside the factory-sized Cobo Center are Tammy and Gib Loudon, owner of 20 Camaros. "Well, 19," corrects Tammy, "and our son has one."

To the Warrens' other side are Ove Sjöholm and Mats Karlson, representing a Swedish owner's club. Flying in for the unveiling was expensive, Mr. Sjöholm says, "but it was worth it. This was the chance of a lifetime."

Mr. Warren says he has friends around the world, their common ground the coupe and convertible that Chevrolet introduced in late 1966 as a pony car competitor to Ford's amazingly success Mustang.

Many marques have their followers, but the Camaro's are renowned for their loyalty, and like-minded in their practical appreciation for a car that in its best years never got the Mustang's recognition. They differ somewhat even from fans of the Camaro's late sister model, the Pontiac Firebird. "There's some sort of a common thread," says the matter-of-fact Mr. Warren. "It's a personality trait."

When he was hired 28 years ago, Delphi was a General Motors subsidiary. He didn't ask to be spun off, or to lose the benefits still collected by GM's line workers. But he still will own nothing but a Chevrolet. "Even now," he says, "I'm loyal."

General Motors made more than seven million Camaros and Firebirds. The most treasured may be those of the first three years, with their Coke-bottle silhouettes and round wheel wells that cried out for fat tires and

mags.

But it was the second series, stretching from 1970 to 1982, that made the strongest connection with the blue-collar middle-earners that were its chief market. Despite emissions laws and a gas crisis that nearly brought about the Camaro's cancellation, sales kept climbing.

And its buyers weren't just the young men who normally would be attracted to a sporty car, even one largely tamed by insurance pressure and pollution laws. The base Camaro Sport Coupe emerged as the top choice for female buyers, who were drawn to its stylish looks and Dad-pleasing record of reliability. In 1979, GM sold a record 494,000 Camaros and Firebirds.

The "Gino Camaro" of 1982-'92 would have its own popularity, but the later, plastic-bodied car, unadvertised and apparently unloved by General Motors, was a fading star. Too expensive for young buyers, too low and demanding for women, too coarse for the affluent males who might have owned earlier versions, it kept losing ground to Ford's Mustang, now rejuvenated after its own near-cancellation.

By 2002, sales had slipped to 28,404, and GM decided to cancel the Camaro and Firebird and close the Montreal-area factory that a few years earlier had inherited their production.

"One of the ironies," says Doug Warren, "is that we owe a debt of gratitude to the Mustang."

By redesigning its sporty car to mirror the best elements of the first, 1960s Mustangs, Ford has opened an unexpectedly rich vault of nostalgia. Mustang sales jumped 24 per cent last year to 160,975, the highest of any U.S. sports car. Chrysler responded by reissuing its Charger, and this week unveiled a concept Challenger that captures the pure (and Camaro-like) lines of its 1970 namesake.

As a relatively easy adaptation of a structure already supporting three Chrysler models -- and itself descended from the previous-generation Mercedes E-Class -- the Challenger should see production.

The Camaro, GM claims, must prove its own business case, with public reaction a key factor in any decision by the struggling automaker to make the necessary huge investment in tooling.

In reality, the Camaro already is a strong candidate to debut a new global rear-drive platform that was reportedly destined for a new flexible-manufacture plant in Oshawa, Ont. GM said earlier this year it was cancelling the platform, and followed with the announcement that it would close an existing Oshawa assembly line, despite its awards for quality and efficiency. Given the pressure on GM to retain American jobs, the move seemed more political than economic.

The Camaro won't be built in Quebec. The Ste. Therese plant is gone, and GM says it has honoured any commitment to not simply move Camaro production elsewhere at the time of the closing. Canadian Auto

(Continued next page)

Workers president Buzz Hargrove's disingenuous suggestion to produce it at Hyundai's mouldering Bromont, Que., plant will go nowhere.

But could it go to Oshawa? GM vice-chairman Bob Lutz, standing on the Cobo Center floor, not a block from the United Auto Worker's training centre, is quick to say "probably not."

Doug Warren is less concerned about where the Camaro will be built -- it certainly won't be at his Delphi plant -- than what it will look like. He's already seen the sneak shots on the Internet, however, and at a GM dinner the night before watched the video that will play during the introduction. He knows that the Camaro, unlike the Mustang and Challenger, will have edgier, more contemporary styling. That's fine. "I would rather not see a totally retro car."

A high school marching band pulsates down the runway, its rhythms as vital and stirring as a tribal ceremony, leading a parade of snorting 1969 Camaros that fill the air with the smell of half-burned gasoline from their big-block, carburetor-fed V-8 engines.

And now the Camaro tribe members are stretching their necks and holding their cameras up as the new car glides past, its tires impossibly big, its grille an exaggerated V, its straight-up flanks more modern Corvette than vintage muscle car. Yet in the Super Scoop hood, knife-blade roofline and curving rear fender vents are unmistakable traces of the 1969 Camaro.

"I can definitely see the '60s in it," says a cheering Mrs. Warren.

And her husband? "I'm a little surprised about the independent rear suspension," says the ever-practical auto worker.

But does he believe the Chevrolet engineers and designers did a good job? He studies the Camaro.

"I think they did."

Detroit Auto Show

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NEW MEMBERS

Marshall Elliott

1160 Piper Ave

Muskegon MI 49445

Phone: 231-744-1167

Blood FT-End Clinic

E-mail: blackhawcamaro@verizon.net

He owns a 1967 Camaro Rally Sport

Brian Totter & Cynthia Armour

308 W. Candlewyck Drive #1616

Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Home: 269-207-2112

Employer: Kodak

E-mail: Malcommoose2@yahoo.com

They own a 1969 Camaro

BIRTHDAYS:

4th, Terianna Boss

10th, Dennis Mykols

11th, Tim Drooger, John Falkenhagen

16th, Dave Kemp

ANNIVERSARIES:

4th, Tim & Marge Drooger

6th, Dave & Gay Verburg

23rd, Gib & Tammy Loudon



Dennis Mykol's '80 & Matt Berger's '02 Dick Harrell



John Smith's '00 Berger SS & Gib & Tammy Loudon's '02 ZL1



Matt Murphy's ultra rare '70 Berger SS454 at the club display at Autorama.

Don't miss the February WMCC Meeting at Famous Dave's BBQ, 1pm, 1501 E. Beltline NE.

The Western Michigan Camaro Club

is dedicated to the enjoyment, preservation and promotion of the Chevrolet Camaro as the premier four passenger sports car ever. The club was formed in 1975.

Meetings

The WMCC holds monthly membership meetings on the first Sunday of each month. Times and location vary, so see the newsletter or check the club's web site at www.wmcamaro.org for specific times and locations, or call one of the officers.

WMCC Officers

President: Doug Warren 616.531.7482
Vice President: Gary Crippin 269.273.5051
Secretary: Anne Kohler 616.527.2432
Treasurer: Anita Warren 616.531.7482
Membership: Tammy Loudon 989.871.3586

Club Sponsor

Berger Chevrolet

Website

www.wmcamaro.org



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