



## June 2020

### The View from the Top.

#### June 2020

Well its June 2020!!! I hope everyone is doing well. Its been a different few months since we have all been together. We have been ordered to stay home for 80+ days now, But it time to break the cycle and have a WMCC meeting / gathering, it been too long since we have seen all of you. So with that said John Smith has planned us a Nice social distancing meeting, Thank you John & Cheryl! I hope to see you all there.

#### June WMCC Meeting Saturday June 6, 2020

For Junes Club meeting we will be having a cruise and cookout. Meeting will be Saturday June 6th. We will Meet at the McDonald's in

#### Membership Dues

This is just a friendly reminder.

Yearly membership dues are due, for most members, in January. If you joined the Club *before* July of 2019, your dues are now due. It's \$30 for a single membership and \$45 for a couple.

Dues may be paid at a club meeting or mailed to the WMCC Membership coordinator Shelley Crippin.

Please make checks payable to:  
"Western Michigan Camaro Club".

Mailing address:  
WMCC Membership  
C/O Shelley Crippin  
56055 Woodridge Drive  
Three Rivers, MI 49093

Comstock Park, Exit 91 on US 131, Just south of highway. We will be LEAVING the parking lot @ 1pm for a cruise north, ending at John & Cheryl Smiths's place around 2:30.

We will have burgers and Brats and a "Social Distancing" meeting in the drive way. Should be plenty of room to keep 6' apart, So bring your mask (wearing it is up to you), Favorite beverage, chair & come along. Should have a lot to talk about.

Thank you to John and Cheryl for hosting.

#### 2020 Fall Color Tour Info

The Plan right now is to spend the first night in Iron Mountain MI. on the 7th of October, this is a Wednesday. This will give us more time to explore things in the U.P. that we did not have time to do last year. Some of the things on the list would be the very western tip of the U.P., Lake of the Clouds, Copper Harbor, The Falls area, and Sault Ste Marie.

Cheryl and I were going to head up over Easter and lock down the Motels, This could still happen but with the current stay at home order not all the Motels are open.

The first chance I believe we can get some good intel. I will get the final package together and out to the club.

Thankx for your patience and be SAFE. John



Doug Warren, WMCC Founder  
1953-2010  
You will never be forgotten

## WMCC Member Corner

by: Anne Purdun

I saw the request from Gary and just couldn't resist... I am the new Member Profile Reporter. I am excited to talk to a different member each month to find out about your car(s), your hobbies, joining the club, and definitely about why you love the Camaro. If you want to volunteer, email me at [sshedvl@gmail.com](mailto:sshedvl@gmail.com) or call me at (616)293-8473. I can't wait to talk to old friends and meet new ones!!

About Me: I fell into WMCC at Camaro Superfest in 1998. I was so excited because I found my Camaro family. At the time, I owned my 1989 RS. It was my only vehicle. I drove it daily. I loved it and was proud of it!!

In 1999, I bought a 95 Z28. It was an awesome car!! I wanted to have more horsepower!! I drove that, only in the summer, until I sold it to Brent in 2004. My Z now lives in California with Brent and Kelly.

In August 2001, I bought my Berger SS. No one knew I was buying it except for Dennis Barker, Ron, and Amy. I showed up at the Gilmore Car Museum and surprised everyone!! It was awesome!!

Now, only a few years later, I have owned my 89 RS for 31 years and my Berger for almost 19 years. I have built hundreds of great relationships, gone to places I never thought I would go, become a DJ, sang the National Anthem too many times to count, and gathered numerous car stories from amazing car people!!

If there is one thing that has been the best part of being in WMCC, it has to be my 21 year friendship with Amy Kugel. Who knew that a car could bring me the sister, brothers, niece, nephew, Mom and Dad that I now have. All because of a Camaro and WMCC...

## HELP WANTED

As we move into the new year I would like to add a few New positions in WMCC and fill a couple of vacant ones. There are still several positions

available if anyone is interested.

### Events Coordinator(s)

This person would be responsible for our Calendar of events. This person would actively look for events for the club to attend, they would be the Club contact person for special events in the club.

### Club Photographer

This position is just what it sounds like. This person would be responsible for taking pictures at WMCC events and meetings and getting them to me for the newsletter.

### Columnist(s)

This job could be several people. I looking for people to write columns for the newsletter. They should be car related, how to's, new product offerings, or really just about anything of interest as long as its not politics.

If you are interested in any of these positions or have another position not listed that you would like please let me know as soon as possible. You can call text or email me.

*Gary Crippin*  
President  
269-506-0411  
[wmcamaro@gmail.com](mailto:wmcamaro@gmail.com)

## Cheryl's Smiths SS

*By John Smith*  
Just a little car story.

Cheryl's 97 SS was on loan last summer to our daughter because she needed a car to get back to work. It ended coming back home on a trailer, she thought she had blown it up but after inspection it was just no spark.

The mid 90's LT1's were known for the ignition module going bad especially if you had an oil leak. I had couple of leaks that I had been fighting and figured the module had went out.

Put it on the hoist in September and pulled it apart. The module is behind the water pump and harmonic balancer. Ordered the part and gaskets, seals, and an oil level sensor in the oil pan, ( one of my leaks). Doing Fall Color Tour, working 7 days a week, and playing in the snow I didn't get much done until late

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January I got the seals installed, 3 of them, water pump drive, ignition drive and crank seal.

That was it until Covid 19 came and I got time off work. I got the motor completed and was installing the hoses to the radiator when I noticed the 1/2 nipple I had repaired on the bottom of the radiator did not look right. I had managed to break it when it was new and re welded it back together. I had a few pin hole leaks in the composite so I put JB weld putty on it. Now it looked like it never set up. I peeled that off, cleaned the area with acid-tone and heated it up. Applied two part epoxy, now it looks a lot better.

Now for the part I thought was going to be the biggest pain. The Oil sensor, you see I had to remove the driver's side exhaust pipe from the manifold. Thinking I will probably break a couple of bolts, but when I had the motor rebuilt a few years back I had installed stainless steel bolts and brass nuts. It came right apart. I changed the sensor and was ready to finish it off.

Hit the key and WTH no spark. I started checking all the connections and then, It appeared I had forgotten one of the things I tell everybody else. LOOK FOR THE EASY STUFF FIRST.

It had a blown fuse in the box under the hood. On the bright side no leaks yet. Just a bruised EGO.

Hope this brings a little joy to you in this trying times and above all BE SAFE.

## [How an armored Camaro and a special forces officer kept civilians alive in war-torn Bosnia](#)

[Brendan McAleer](#)

05 February 2020

Imagine that it's 1993 in Yugoslavia. Night falls, and the indiscriminate shelling of a brutal civil war echoes in the distance. Amidst the remnants of battle, a flat black shape emerges from the shadows, tires crunching over rubble as it navigates a cratered road. It's low, menacing, armored, and rumbling with V-8 thunder. The War Camaro is here to help.

Nearly four years of fighting in what is today Bosnia-Herzegovina claimed an estimated 100,000+ casualties. As in so many civil wars, the civilian population during the Bosnian War bore the brunt of the suffering. However, from 1992–1995 a Danish Special Forces officer named Helge Meyer drove his Camaro into the eye of combat. Unarmed, he brought humanitarian aid to the people who needed it most.

Meyer's car is a 1979 Chevrolet Camaro, a

second-gen F-body [with the 5.7-liter V-8](#). In factory trim, this car was hardly the high point of Camaro performance through the ages. Its 350-cubic-inch V-8 produced at best 170 hp, and it had a 0–60 time of around eight seconds. This particular example, however, is anything but factory-spec. The floors and rear are reinforced with sheet steel, there are [Kevlar inserts](#) slotted inside the doors, and twin spare wheels and fire-extinguishing equipment are part of the build-out. U.S. Air Force specialists, working in their off-hours, removed all interior lighting, including those for the radio, and fitted a military-grade GPS. The forward headlights are augmented by infrared lights, and the driver carries IR goggles and a body heat detector. Tires are foam-filled to ward off ordinary flats or, at least, allow the Camaro to escape safely and swap in a spare later.

Escape was preferable, because for all his military equipment, the driver of this Camaro carried no firearm. Meyer kept with him a standard combat knife but effectively ventured unarmed into one of the bloodiest struggles of the modern era. And for all its *Mad Max* appearance, this '79 Camaro is still just a car. A coating of water-based infrared paint and a bit of extra power under the hood is no replacement for [a proper military-spec transport](#). There's a good reason the Army uses Humvees to get around and not black-painted, armored Camaros running nitrous.

As a former special forces officer he was hardly lacking in courage, and Meyer's exploits still defy belief. As improbable as it may seem, Meyer and his Camaro successfully avoided injury or capture over years of running supplies for civilian aid. A man of faith, Meyer credits his guardian angels for watching over him as he bravely navigated roadblocks and slinked away in the night to resupply.

"I bought the Camaro from an American soldier from the U.S. Rhein-Main Air Base, mediated through a German citizen," Meyer says, translated from his natural Danish. "From the start of the Balkan War in



1991, in Croatia later, and from 1992–1995 in Bosnia. I continued to run emergency aid after the fighting action ceased in 1995, into 2005 in Kosovo.”

Meyer’s wartime efforts appear to have been supported by military organizations but in a somewhat unofficial gray area. Supplies came from the U.S. Army and Air Force humanitarian efforts in the area (U.S. personnel helped him modify the car), and Meyer’s Camaro was particularly effective at getting into places the highly visible, white-painted U.N. supply vehicles couldn’t go.

There were plenty of close calls. Bandits were a constant problem, as was the possibility of hitting a mine in the lightly-armored Camaro. The car took small arms fire a couple of times, and once Meyer was hit in the helmet by a round that lodged there and fortunately did not hit his head.

The Camaro carried medical supplies, food aid, and even toys for the children in the area. Danish company Lego even donated to the effort. Later, when the war had ground to a stalemate but ordinary people still struggled to get by, Meyer continued his efforts, driving into the worst-affected areas on his weekends off. His humanitarian work in the area lasted more than a decade. When he was done, he drove his Camaro home.

If your German or Danish is up to scratch, Meyer has written a book on his experiences, called *Gottes Rambo*. The title, *God’s Rambo*, is the nickname he earned for being a sort of pacifist commando—for intense bravery without a weapon in his hand. The book is less about getaway drives than it is about his connection to people who were in desperate need of help.

In one excerpt, he describes coming across a family in the ruined city of Vares, in 1994:

*In the middle of ruins I examined the surrounding area with my detector, which reacts to body heat. It displayed body heat in the opposite ruin. I saw candlelight through the boarded up door. I knocked and the candle went out immediately. After knocking again and saying, “Mr. Meyer U.S. Army!” an old man opened the door and asked me inside. A young woman was present with her*

*newborn baby.*

*Everyone was dirty and clearly malnourished, and I got soap, water, food, and baby food from my Camaro. The young mother washed herself and her child and gave the newborn something to eat. We sat around the candle silent for a while. The old man read carefully in his Koran and I in my Bible, which is my constant companion.*

*Then I pulled back into my car, was about to slip into my sleeping bag when someone knocked on my window. It was the young woman who put her baby on my bare chest. I will never forget this moving moment in my life.*

Meyer still has his Camaro, now painted orange. Filled with a sentiment that will no doubt be familiar to some he says, “I still have my War Camaro, I love it very much and my wife hates it just as much. For her it’s just a lot of iron plates.”

There is, indeed, nothing strictly extraordinary about this old warhorse of a Chevrolet. It couldn’t repel bullets, it didn’t smash through barricades, and its success over the years could be prescribed, if you were so inclined, to dumb luck.

But even a cynic must admit that Meyer and his Camaro were a unique pairing of wartime heroes. They went where others wouldn’t dare. They reached out to assist those who were truly in need. During the years of conflict, Meyer and his car developed a reputation; people would hear the rumble of that Chevy V-8 and know that help was on the way.

<https://www.hagerty.com/media/automotive-history/armored-camaro-kept-civilians-alive-in-war-torn-bosnia/>



## **CAMARO ZL1 1LE ADDED TO AREA 27 PERFORMANCE DRIVING SCHOOL**

As unfortunate as it may be, most of us won't be the next Dan Gurney or Bruce McLaren out on track. That being said, that doesn't mean that we can't go out and hone our on-track skills to a respectable level. One of the best ways to do this is to attend a driving school, like the ones available at Area 27 Motorsports Park. For fans of muscle cars, the school offers a 2.5 day long course focused around the Chevrolet Camaro. For the first time however, the company is now offering up learning sessions in the ultimate track-day Chevrolet: the Camaro ZL1 1LE.



For those who are unfamiliar with Area 27 Motorsports Park, let us get you up to speed on this gorgeous circuit. Located just five miles outside of Oliver, British Columbia, this Canadian playground of speed is just 20 minutes away from the Washington border. As such, much of the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest is on full display at the racetrack. The beauty isn't limited to the surroundings either, as the facilities at the track are also modern and well-designed. But perhaps the best part about Area 27 is the track itself, which was inspired by the classic grand prix circuits of yore. Famous sections like Eau Rouge, 130R, Ste. Devote and Parabolica all helped 1997 F1 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve design the circuit back in 2017. This is where students will develop skills such as trail braking technique, optimizing brake pressure for corner entry, finding apex speed,

position, and steering angles in search of faster lap times.

Area 27 remains the only motorsports park to offer a driving school that exclusively utilizes the Chevrolet Camaro 1LE models, ranging from the turbo 4-cylinder, V6, SS, models and now the mighty ZL1. Not a bad lineup when you consider that the Camaro Driving Academy has only been around for two years now. Along with the addition of the 650 horsepower track-focused muscle car, Area 27 is also now offering a single day advanced lapping session that utilizes Chevrolets Performance Data Recorder to help develop areas in which students need improvement.

Like any driving school, the price for some time at Area 27 Motorsports Park doesn't come cheap. Opt for the full 2.5 day Camaro Driving Academy session, and you'll pay between \$3,395.00 to \$4,195.00 Canadian depending on your choice of ride. Pricing is not yet available for either Camaro ZL1 1LE experience, but it might just be worth it for the views alone. Visit Area 27 Motorsport Park's website for booking information.

<https://www.area27.ca/product/camaroacademy/>

### **COURSE HIGHLIGHTS**

Up to 16 students with Area 27 and GM Canada provided Camaro 1LE track cars

Academy instructors provide FIA certified curriculum

2-hour in class theory session with comprehensive course handbook

Review of Camaro 1LE performance features  
Challenging corner set-up, entry, and exit phases

Track safety and flag definitions

Controlled short-course lapping lead follow and open lapping

Controlled full circuit lapping with one-on-one instructor's critique and feedback

Graduation certificate of completion



**Don't miss the next  
WMCC Meeting  
June 6, 2020  
At John & Cheryl Smiths  
In Sand Lake, MI  
See Newsletter for Details.**

### **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 weekend of each month. Times and location vary, so see the Newsletter or check the club's web site or face book page for specific times and locations, or call one of the officers.

### **WMCC Officers**

President: Gary Crippin 269.506.0411  
Co-Vice President: Carl Lins 269.795.7878  
Co-Vice President: John Falkenhagen 269.795.7612  
Secretary: Bonnie Edwards 517.765.9929  
Membership: Shelley Crippin 269.506.0901  
Newsletter Editor: Gary Crippin 269.273.5051  
Club Archivist: Ray Cochran 616.403.3941

### **Club Sponsor**

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### **Website**

[www.wmcamaro.org](http://www.wmcamaro.org)

### **Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/westernmichigancamaroclub/>

Watch [www.mifbody.com](http://www.mifbody.com) for the latest info on upcoming **WMCC** events.

### **Camaro Corner**



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Three Rivers, MI 49093**