

SONH CORVETTES

SO ME CORVETTES

# GENERATIONS

June 2025 Vol 5 No 6

## *This Months Articles:*

1. Hello June .....pg.2
2. Happy Birthday SONHC Co-Founder..pg.2
3. Your personal event invitation.....pg.2
4. Torque versus Horsepower ..... Pg.3
5. Our May events .....pg.3
6. A look back, Ogunquit, Me .....pg.3
7. FA The C5 Development .....pg. 4-5
8. DYK the story of the last c3's .....pg.6
9. Paint it Black or not .....pg.6
10. It goes 60 to zero in .....pg.6
11. It's black, its round and holds air .....pg.6
12. Our Partnering Professionals.....pg7

5<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
SONH CORVETTES

## Hello June!

One of the things this year, more so than normal, we seem to be constantly keeping one eye on is the pending weather forecast. Specifically, the upcoming weekend portion. With the vast majority of our events taking place on weekends, Sundays in particular, deciphering the forecast on the weeks we have events planned has become a part of our daily routine. A lot goes into the planning and holding of our events. We attempt to be as organized as possible and have in place contingency plans when something doesn't go as expected. We try and eliminate the variables wherever and whenever we can, so the events come together making them as enjoyable as possible for the people who place trust in us and come along. But obviously, we can't control the weather, which lately here in New England is about as predictable as the Red Sox... iffy at best.

Our responsibility is to first and foremost ensure a safe event and also one that is enjoyable to the participants. When we make the call to postpone and or reschedule something, it is always done so with these two things in mind.

With so many events scheduled over the next few weeks, maybe Mother Nature will decide enough is enough and start to bless us with some stretches of sunny weekend days, so we can worry less about precipitation and more about participation!

In the meantime, here's our June GENERATIONS for everyone to enjoy! This month we include a historical article on the C5's development along with sharing some uniqueness of the late generation C3's in our Did You Know section. We take a look at the differences between Performance and All-Season tires and Corvette 0 to 60 times but in reverse.

As always we appreciate and thank each and every one of our you, our members! and hope to see you at an event real soon... without the need for umbrellas!

## Happy June 5th Birthday to SONHC Founder Sharon Delano

We wish group Co-Founder Sharon Delano a Happy June Birthday! Nothing you see, hear, or have ever experienced at SONHC would have been possible if not for this woman. Since it's conception, Sharon has been here, and had her hand in everything SONHC & SOMEK related!



Happy Birthday Ms. Sharon!

## We've never attended a SONHC or SOMEK event!

*So, you either decided just recently to join one or even both of our Corvette Clubs... Or you've been a closet member for months or even years now... Yet, you haven't come out on an event with us. This begs the question, why? What is it that has been keeping you from coming along and experiencing something that is both very unique and also truly memorable. Owning a Corvette is such an amazing experience all on its own. Sharing that enjoyment surrounded by others who feel the same way, takes owning one to a whole new level. We encourage anyone who has yet to experience what being a part of a Corvette caravan feels like, to set aside any apprehensions or anxieties and get signed up to find out what you're missing out on! Our goal is to always make everyone's experience a memorable and enjoyable one!*

*But, we can't make that happen if you're not here!*

**SONHC**CORVETTES    **SOMEK**CORVETTES

*All event registrations can be found in one place on our club's websites*

<https://sonhcorvettes.org/2025-event-registrations>

<https://somecorvettes.org/2025-event-registrations>

Whenever we see the performance figures of a Corvette, one of the first things we always see listed is the engine Horsepower. And listed right behind it we also see the Torque listing. So, what do each these measurements truly mean and what is the difference between them and why they go hand in hand.

The term Horsepower was originally coined as a way to measure the power of a steam engine versus the power of a horse's leg by James White back in the late 1800's. Throughout the years the term "horsepower" stuck and even though the exact formula has been modified slightly, the original premise of using the term horsepower as of a way of measuring power has become the world's standard when measuring engines energy output levels.

The term "Torque" was first used by James Thomson in 1884 to describe the twisting force that causes rotation around an axis. In other words the Horsepower is the measurement of energy produced by an engine and the term Torque is the measure of that applied energy!

A high Torque engine is what launches the car quicker and the high Horsepower is what sustains it! Quick and fast is the results. So, when you see a Corvette listing 495 HP and 475 ft lbs. of torque, it tells you that the car can generate a lot of power and can also get that power to the wheels incredible fast, resulting a car that is both powerful but also extremely quick! You won't necessarily ever feel the engines horsepower, but you most definitely will always feel the resulting torque being applied!

Well it's a start! After a dismal April where we had to cancel literally everything! May ushered in slightly improved weather, (emphasis on slight) allowing us to finally get out and hold our first two events of the season! A Friday afternoon visit up to the NHIS for the first of the 5 scheduled Laps For Charity Events, which started out with clouds and a light mist, but by the time we hit the track, nothing but blue skies were overhead and the evening turned out to be perfect! Every attending member enjoyed taking a few laps on the Magic Mile!

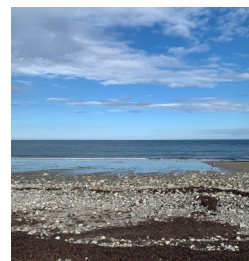
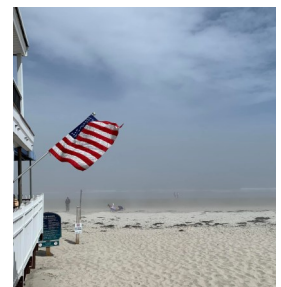
Sunday, our visit down to the 88 MPH Time Machine museum, was more of the same, as we started with clouds and while we never fully got to enjoy clear blue skies, the rain did hold off until after our visit. Yes, our drive home was wet but, the way the weather has been so far this spring, we'll still chalk it up as a successful fun weekend anyway!



### A LOOK BACK... OUR 2022 OGUNQUIT CARAVAN!

*We think it is fitting with all the lousy weather we so far encountered this season, that we look back on an event that shared some of that same weather and as the day turned out, it just added to the day's enjoyment. Anytime you visit the Maine coastline, there's always the risk of encountering a little fog and quickly changing conditions...*

*And that was what the day entailed for us, as we went in and out of the clouds, encountered some pretty steady rain on our drive over, a little coastal fog upon our arrival, then finally some beautiful sunshine breaking through to wrap up our trip. All in all it turned out to be another magical day spent together!*



**The C5 Development:** Let's talk about a car that almost never came to happen! The Beautiful Corvette C5! What first started out back in 1988 in what was just then the fourth year of the C4 production run, plans and ideas for the next gen Corvette were already starting to come to life! The original thought was to have the new C5 ready to be introduced to commemorate the 40th Anniversary in 1993! But... with GM, these plans like many others went right out the window! In fact, as plans for the C5 within the Corvette design team was slowly beginning to inch ahead, there were other departments within GM namely the finance department that was contemplating to completely eliminate the Corvette all together. These were some rough times at the world's leading car manufacturer. GM was facing mounting financial troubles for a myriad of reasons. From building cars that the public wasn't interested in buying, instead preferring the quality and overall size of the growing imports such as Toyota and Honda. To negotiating horrible company but very Union friendly lavish contracts with the UAW, to continuing to operate under the multi-level management style and multi divisions of the 60's and 70's.

All adding up to a profit and loss spread sheet that contained far more red than black! With the company going into survival mode, the last thing the accountants and shareholders wanted was to spend millions on developing a small niche-segment sports car like the new C5. So started the internal struggles for the Cars future.

Enter the very creative leadership of the then newly appointed CEO Jack Smith along with the help of Dave Hill, John Carfano (then Camaro Design Team Leader) Jerry Palmer and Tom Peters, who collectively together made the unprecedented decision to outsource the C5's development away from the prying eyes of GM itself and to an outside firm called TDM Inc. They piecemealed together enough funds from other GM projects to continue to move forward with the C5 development. Not a



single person at GM's accounting department was made aware of what was taking place and they certainly couldn't subvert or kill something they knew nothing about.

So, for the first time ever in history of the Corvette, the car was being secretly developed completely outside and away from the watchful eyes of GM accountants and even most top executives at a company called TDM inc. Headed up by a man by the name Joe Spielman, who earlier had run GM's Midsize Car Division and was responsible for 40 percent of the engineering and manufacturing of GM's model productions. First thing he did was create a "Decision Making" team that included himself, Carlisle Davis, John Cafaro and Dave McLellan. And under the cloak of total secrecy, they set out to develop and create the new C5.

One of the first ingenious things this team did was conduct market-research to seek out what the people wanted. Surveys were circulated to past and present Corvette owners, as well as owners of other manufacturers' sports cars, asking what they wanted out of the new 'Vette. The results of these surveys would go on to be the navigation system for the C5s development process.

As the process moved forward, three possible formats for the C5 Corvette were initially created.

The first format was called the "Momentum Architecture" that featured a stiff backbone, front engine, rear transmission, and an evolutionary body style.

The second was the "Mid-Engine," favored by McLellan and GM President Jack Smith. The 1990 CERV III wasn't just a dream car; it was built with manufacturing in mind, but was going to be complex and expensive.

The third format was "Stiffer and Lighter." This would be the least expensive and was pretty much a tweaked carry over version of the C4.

Fortunately, the team went with the Momentum Architecture plan... *Continued on next page*

*Continued...* Their plans were so secretive that ironically the first test mule C5's built were done so using existing C4 body panels in order for the car to be seen out in public during its testing and not raise suspicions about what GM was working on with the completely new styled Corvette.

In the end, the C5 was a complete departure from the recently introduced C4, as it had 1500 fewer parts, carrying over very few existing components. And for the first time ever, the car's frame would be built using a technique of hydro-formed steel tubes that were packed in balsawood-based insulation.



A real game changer in regards to performance capabilities. This frame design would lay the ground work for all future Corvette generations to come. Coupled with the brand new developed LS1 5.7-liter V8 engine and the C5 was not only an entirely new designed car, but one that was a truly world class capable sports car and able to compete against just about anything in the world!

When the final design for the new C5 was presented to the Gm executives, they loved it and plans were finalized to introduce the car in 1997!

After its introduction, Sales initially started off rather slow, with first year production having sold just under 10,000 cars, but quickly gaining momentum the following year selling over 30,000 cars.

In all told, GM would go on to build a quarter of a million C5's! Later on, in 2001 the platform would also re introduce a specialty model that had been missing for some 40 years! The Z06! A car that could outperform every Corvette up to that point in just about every category, less top speed! It's not a stretch to say that this car turned out to be a groundbreaking platform. GM was back in the performance market full force with the introduction of the C5 Z06! And even though the Corvette had sort of lost its way for a little while performance wise, with the emergence of the new C5 and later Z06 model, they've had come roaring back as a killer, budget-friendly world class performance machine!



And to think... that if not for the creative ingenuity of just a few people electing to keep everything away from their own company, that the car could have possibly gone on to join so many other discontinued models in the long storied history of GM.



And, BTW, This wouldn't be the last time that the Corvette was saved from the chopping block at GM by a few individuals who continued to see the vision and importance of this car to GM's brand legacy.

The C7 would also later on face a similar fate when it too was considered for deletion! But it too would also be saved by the efforts of just a few men who had the ability to look past a spread sheet and see the car for the cultural icon it truly is.

## DID YOU KNOW...

The 1981-1982 Corvette included several firsts for the Corvette in its long-storied history. The 1981 was the only Corvette in history that was briefly built in two different production plants at the same time. A total of 40,606 cars were built in 1981 and production was split between



the St Louis MO. plant (31,831 built) that closed on July 31st while the brand-new renovated Bowling Green plant that started building 81's on June 1st (8,895 built) led to Corvettes being

produced simultaneously in two locations for all of 60 days! The 11th digit in the vin number signifies if it was a St Louis build (#4) or a Bowling Green build (#5) The type of exterior paint that was applied to the cars was also completely different. St Louis cars were painted using lacquer while the cars built in Bowling Green received enamel paint in the brand-new paint shop. Interestingly, there were also 80 two tone painted 1981 cars produced as a dry run for the upcoming 82 year in which the two tone was to become a standard paint option. Also, as a nod to the 80's culture, in 1981 you could even order your Corvette with an 8-track player or even a CB radio! The 82 Collector's Edition was the first Corvette to ever be priced above \$20,000, coming in at \$22,537! A few thousands more than a standard base 82 model! The Collectors model was also the first Corvette to come equipped with an opening standard rear glass hatch. A much-needed improvement for storing and accessing cargo in the back of the car. The 82 cars also was the first Corvette to be offered only as an automatic with no standard transmission option since 1955. And *Now you know!*



## We must be all color blind

Most everyone has now seen the new Roswell Green Metallic and Blade Silver Metallic exterior colors GM has released for the 2026 C8 model year. This follows up last year's release of Competition Yellow Metallic and Hysteria Purple Metallic. So why has GM elected to stray away from the "normal" color palettes with these new flashier paint options. While on the surface it would appear to be straight forward in wanting to bring to more definitive unique color options to each production year. Perhaps the real reason lies a little deeper. Since the conception of the C8 in 2019, 10 of the original the 14 color options GM originally introduced have remained available every year. and, beginning in 2022, each year GM has added a few unique new colors to the lineup while also removing a few colors as well, making those unique to just one or two years production.

There has to be another motivation behind these constant yearly changes... and there may just be!

It's called money and marketing! Given the expensive nature of the paint that GM uses on these cars there is always a breakeven point on the number of cars that must be first ordered and then produced in order to justify the expense of adding that specific color and then keeping it in the available lineup from year to year. Torch Red, Artic White, Black and several other core colors are never a concern because so many returning Corvette customers continue ordering their new cars in these basic iconic colors!

However, there is a whole team of marketing experts at the Bowling Green plant that do nothing but analyze color as a way to reach out and appeal to potential first time Corvette buyers! When Gm elected to go with the rear engine C8 design, clearly one of their motivations was to try and target younger Corvette owners. Let's face it, none of us that have owned several Corvettes over the generations are getting any younger, so GM needs to keep appealing to and attracting younger first-time buyers with the exterior color as being an influential way of reaching them. So, if you are a current Corvette owner, the new Roswell Green Metallic probably wasn't added to entice you, but instead your much younger neighbor down the street who is looking to replace their Lexus, BMW or other make personal daily driver with a new Corvette. Are we just a few years away from Frozen Berry Metallic... Time will tell!



## GIVE ME A BRAKE!

Most everyone gasps when it comes to Corvette zero to 60 times! Under 3 seconds to reach 60 miles an hour is certainly impressive stuff and is only matched by world class supercars and newer model EV's that have 100% instant power. But something that is always less talked about but in many cases carries far more importance, is the amount of time it takes to stop from 60 MPH. Stopping from 60 MPH is something that people will certainly utilize far more often than just occasionally launching the car! Interestingly enough the Corvette has always been one of the fastest braking cars in the world, but is not near the top of most industry charts that measure stopping distance. As braking distances is something that European cars have always seemed to place a greater emphasis on than most US automakers.

There are several factors that play a role when it comes to a vehicles stopping distance. The initial speed, road conditions (e.g., wet or dry), tire quality, braking efficiency, and vehicle weight.... Along with the biggest influence... A driver's reaction time.

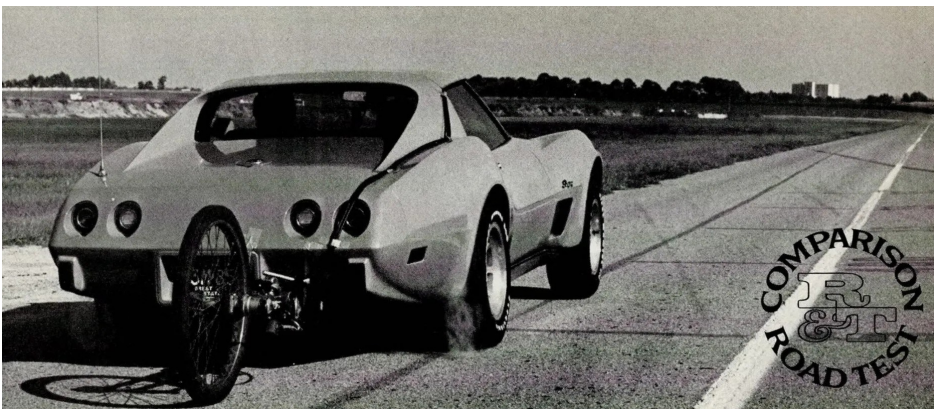
Tests have shown time and time again that it is the drivers reaction time that is the biggest influence when it comes to stopping distance. A car at 60 MPH, travels *88 feet every second*, which is about the equivalent length from home to first base on a baseball field! Every 10th of a second before a driver initiates the braking process adds an additional 8 ft of distance before being able to fully come to a stop.

A professional driver who conducts these stopping distance tests, with very few distractions will always display shorter stopping distances than someone out in the real world, distracted by everything and anything around them. So, everyone's real true stopping distance will always be far greater than those of the results of the controlled environment tests. (BTW...Distracted driving is the number one cause of accidents on US highways).

There only a difference of 3-4 ft between the top cars in the world and the 20th rated car. (One exception, the Ferrari F2004 that stops in a ridiculous 53 ft) But in an emergency situation and a panic stop every foot counts! It can literally mean the difference between life and death!

As far as our beloved Corvettes, the C6, C7 & C8, have all recorded some of the shortest stopping distances ever recorded and the current C8 does appear on the current top 20 list, however there are some interesting statics, such as that it takes 7 more feet to stop a C8 from 60 MPH at 97ft than it does a C7 at 90ft! (19 C7 ZR1 takes 88 ft) A C6 required 93ft to accomplish the same feat!

So, the next time you're checking out the beautiful C8's and talking with the owner and you have a C7 or C6, there is one area that you can bring up and brag to them that you can still outperform them on... stopping distance!



## The difference between All Season Tires and Performance Tires

**Simple answer:** Compound and tread depth! No matter the make of tires you have on your Corvette, they all share the same philosophy when it comes to defining if the tire is considered to be a straight summer performance tire or an All-season tire. And more than anything, it's defined by the operating temperature you're going to be driving the car in.

Summer tires or performance tires use a completely different compound than All Season tires and are best when road temperatures are 55 degrees and up. The warmer the day, the stickier the tire becomes. Most summer tires have less rain grooves or sipes as they are called, but are more intricately designed to effectively channel the water away between the tire and road surfaces in the event of wet roads. The tread compounds on summer tires therefore will wear a little quicker as they are designed to remain stiff but flexible in warmer temps.

All season tires on the other hand are designed to work effectively in a larger range of temperatures starting in the 35-40-degree range and still remain effective in providing grip and comfort all the way up to 90 degrees plus temps. The compound on All season tires is designed to be softer so they can remain flexible in colder temps and to also not only move water away from the roads surface but can also traverse light snow while maintaining a limited amount of traction. And if you happen to be one of those that drives your Corvette year-round, there are true snow tires available in all sizes to fit your specific Corvette too.



# Our Season-Long *Partnering Professionals*

We wish to acknowledge and thank each of these incredible companies who have signed on to partner with us for our 2025 season!



**AMERICAN MUSCLE**



*Thanks for reading our April GENERATIONS*