

# Newsletter

December, 2022



## Message from the Chairman

The leaves have fallen and the nights are getting chilly. The holidays are approaching and it is time to reflect on our chapter's busy succession of events.

March and April brought a pair of educational technical presentations by Joe Tripoli at BGT Automotive (C1 and C2 VIN tags, trim tags and spare tire locks) and Glen Atamanchuk at Hillside Corvettes (C2 brake assemblies) with good attendance.

In June, the chapter hosted our 3<sup>rd</sup> Corvettes & Coffee at the Woodbridge Community Center. A nice turnout included individual Corvette owners and a number of local Corvette Clubs featuring a field of many different colors and models of Corvettes. Lots of good coffee and car talk was shared by the group.

September included our annual Chapter Picnic, hosted by the Cimilluca's and the Morgan's. The delicious Bar BQ was preceded by a chapter judging session, featuring a thorough pre-judging of Craig Anweiler's beautiful '65 big block convertible. The picnic was well attended, and it was good to see a number of new members in attendance.

Our chapter meetings at the Elks in Hightstown all included technical/judging presentations as part of the evenings. Pappy shared photos and the story of the complete restoration of his 1951 Chevy Belair in June. Pat Fullam presented the ABC's of the current CDCIF judging system in October. Marvin Burock gave an interesting review of the evolution of the C6 ZO6 and engine technology.

November 5th and 6th marked our chapter judging weekend. On Saturday afternoon the legendary Al Grenning was our guest speaker at the Woodbridge Community Center for a 2 1/2 hour judging presentation and lengthy Q&A on Corvette certification and documentation, illustrating Corvette trim tags, VIN stamping and paper documentation. Sunday at BGT Automotive was our annual Chapter Judging Meet where 8 NCRS member Corvettes were put to the test.

Quite a number of our chapter members, led by Chapter Judging Chairman Vito Cimilluca, participated in the judging meet. Special guests included National Judging Chairman Dave Brigham, along with the '53 to '55 National Team Leader Greg Picconi and '65 national Team Leader KC Strawmyre.

As the holiday season approaches, the chapter has recently joined together to celebrate another holiday season at our annual Chapter Holiday Brunch at KC Prime. It is a time to celebrate together and to take part in the annual Toys for Tots program to provide books, games and toys for needy children. This is our chapter's last activity for 2022.

It has been nice to resume a varied and full schedule of events in 2022. Our Board will be meeting in January to plan our 2023 calendar of events. We welcome any and all ideas for future speakers, vendor visits, technical/judging sessions, and chapter activities in the new year.

Thank you to the Chapter Board and the membership for such a full and active 2022. Best holiday wishes and a healthy and prosperous new year in 2023.

Joe

# Tech Session



## The Tale of a Small Scratch

By Pete Loscalzo

Around April 1, after a nice outing on a beautiful top-down day of cruising, visiting friends, etc., in my 63, Silver Blue convertible, we ended up at the Spain 2 Restaurant Asbury, NJ. After a relaxing dinner, as I was backing up, somehow, I didn't see one of the handrails in front of the restaurant and managed to put a relatively small scratch in the left, rear quarter panel, right on the belt line.



I'm still not sure how it hit the car, and completely missed the bumper (such as they are on a C2), but it did. After considerable wailing and gnashing of teeth, we went home, and I commenced on a "select a body shop" saga, as my original painter/restorer was no longer in business. After asking members of our chapter for recommendations, I proceeded to visit 6 of them, all highly recommended, to get estimates. Since I had Hagerty insurance, with zero deductible, I wasn't too worried about cost. Mostly I was concerned with quality of the shop's product, and overall impression of their professionalism. For better or worse, I picked one of them, and am now praying they are as good as I think. Here's a quick summary (sometimes too much information is a bad thing!) of the places I saw, and their estimates. BTW, they all

said that since it was a base coat/clear coat paint, they could have to clear coat then entire rear panel from side to side and top to bottom, since there is no way to bland in clear coat, so they were all estimating the same work. I've not listed the actual names of them here, because I didn't want to recommend or trash any of them with my opinion in print. If any of you want to know who they were, so you can form your own opinion of who you might need to repair your Corvette, I'd be happy to pass the names along privately. They were all within a 40-mile radius of my home, in Lebanon Borough, NJ. Also remember, there was no fiberglass work involved, as you can see from the photo above, it was only paint and top coat sealer (Slick Sand) under the base color coat that was damaged.

Vendor 1. Besides being recommended, I knew the owner, because I used to work in the town as an outside sales engineer (1 of 5 that worked out of that office), and he did good work on the many crashes we brought him over the 17 years I worked there. He said he had done a "couple" of Corvettes, and gave me a verbal quote of \$1200, said he could take it in 2 weeks, and it would take 3 to 4 days. He didn't give me a written quote, and his process for giving me the verbal estimate was to look at the car for 5 minutes, and spit out a number. Sounded good, but a little too off the top of his head, and I wanted to check out a couple more.

Vendor 2. The owner said he could do it, but it would have to be him, not anyone on his staff, as they were not qualified to work on fiberglass. He also said it would be around \$3000, but he really couldn't do it, as he had to run the business, and it would take forever, slow his other work down, and generally hold both of us up for a long time.

Vendor 3. The owner had two Corvettes in his shop for body repair, had several other cars he was restoring. And seemed very knowledgeable about Corvettes in general. He studied the car for 10 to 15 minutes, took 4 or 5 photos, and proceeded to give me a written estimate (\$2650). He said he could get to it for 4 or 5 weeks, and it would take about 4 or 5 days to do.

Vendor 4. Owner came out, looked at the car for 2 or 3 minutes, gave me a verbal of approx. \$3500 to \$4000, and said he couldn't touch it for 2 or more months. He also said he didn't have time to give me a written estimate, unless I came back in a couple of days when he had the time. His shop was large, he also restores cars (mostly Corvettes) and in fact said he had two of Jim Loughlin's cars in his shop for refresh/put into top condition for a reason he wouldn't say.

Vendor 5. The owner looked at the car, took 4 or 5 pictures, and said he was too busy at that point to give me a written estimate (verbal of \$3500 to \$4000), but would email an estimate for insurance in a few days. After a week and a half, with me calling him twice, he finally sent me an email saying he couldn't do it, because NJ now required all insurance claim body shops to have a paint booth, and since he didn't, he could not quote me or do the work.

Finally, the owner of Vendor 5 above referred me to an associate who does plenty of, and excellent work, Vendor 6. The owner studied the car for about 10 minutes, took 4 or 5 pictures, and said he would email me an estimate. He had a rather large shop for restoration and repair, with at least 10 to 15 cars in various stages of restoration and seems to be the most qualified of all. True to his word, he emailed me an estimate in 3 days, for over \$8000.

Like I said, too much info will make you nuts. So, I had made myself crazy, thinking of all the recommendations, visits and estimates. Finally, I did what I was taught in business, throw out the lowest and highest quote, and pick from the rest. They were all qualified in my mind, so I went with my gut and picked Vendor 3, because he had the shortest wait time of them all. It's scheduled for the middle of

June, so I can get it back in time for the Metro LI NCRS Chapter Meet, for a Concours Stock Sportsman judging. I was going to miss-out on a Sportsman for our meet, but I figured no big deal.

Hagerty was incredible in their response to the claim. I spoke to an adjuster, gave them the details, emailed them a copy of the estimate and photos for their evaluation, and within a week, I received a check for the entire amount made out to me.

Whoever came to our chapter meet, will get a chance to see the finished product, and try to figure out how I could get estimates that range from \$1200 to \$8000, for the same work (I can't). I got a call from Vendor 3 on 5/17 (a Monday) saying he had an opening in his schedule and could do it now, without the pressure of a deadline for the Concours judging I wanted to attend hanging over his head, in case he ran into unexpected delays. I brought the car to him that afternoon, and he called back on 5/21 (Friday) saying it was done. We picked it up that afternoon, and it looked great. I couldn't see the color blend, even when he pointed it out to me. So if you can see it in the final photo below. There were additional charges, bringing his bill to a little over \$3000, that he got approval from Hagerty for, so his actual cost was right within the range of the three body shops I was considering.





# The Case of the Banging Rear Noise

By Pete Loscalzo

I have a 1963 Corvette, 327/340HP, convertible, 4-speed manual, with a 3:36 Posi traction rear. It took me 6 years to do a complete body off restoration, putting it on the road in June of 2016. It ran and drove fine. I have since put about 10,000 miles on it, with minor problems, which I fixed along the way. I even drove it to Greenville SC for the National, where it passed the final Operational test and I received my Founders Award.

As most of you know, because of Joe Barton kindly forwarding my call for help, around the middle of last summer, I started to hear a banging or thumping noise coming from the back of the car, the steadily increased in frequency, as I increased in speed. I took it to my regular mechanic (Hillside Corvette), and just like TV sets of the past, it didn't make the noise when he test drove it (on two separate occasions). I was pretty sure it wasn't the differential (but couldn't be sure, since it sounded to both Glen and I like it was coming from the center of the back of the car), because I had that rebuild by Bair's during the restoration. In desperation, I self-diagnosed it as a possible wheel/tire assembly out of balance. I was told by two local Mavis centers that the only way to balance a tire once it had miles on it, was to do a "Road Force Balance", and they did not have that machine. So, I located a tire distributor in Flemington that had a machine to do it, and drove down to get all four tires balanced.

On the way there, the car started bucking and back firing, stalled and wouldn't start. I was fortunately able to pull off the road, and into a parking lot. I call AAA for a tow, and I had it towed the rest of the way to the tire store (3 miles) while I checked with Hillside to see if I could have it towed there next. No answer on his cell phone, for two hours. Finally, in desperation, I had it towed to another well recommended shop (BGT in Rahway), got Butch, and had it towed there when the wheels were done. Butch fixed the back firing problem (shorted wire in the distributor) and replaced the mufflers (one of them had blown up on the final back fire), and then went to work trying to solve the rear banging. After he replaced the right wheel bearing, and skin cut the rotor due to what looked like an out of round rotor, he was unable to fix it, and told me he would not be able to work on it for another 6 to 8 weeks, as he was in the process of selling the building, and had other cars he had promised he would get done. So, I drove the car (thumping and all) to Hillside.

Finally, this being my third trip to him for the same problem, he heard it loud and clear, and thought it wasn't the differential, but instead, the right wheel area. Just to be sure, he had his differential rebuilder come in and listen to it, and he confirmed it wasn't the differential, but some where in the wheel area. For the third time, Glen put the car on the lift, supporting the trailing arm, and ran the rear wheels, listening and watching the suspension. Still found nothing except the rear disc brakes squealing with each revolution. He pulled to rotor, skinned it, to straighten it, and that didn't fix the squeal. When he took it for a test ride, it didn't fix the banging either. Finally, he put it back on the lift and looked very closely at each and every component in the area, and noticed the outer bushing on the ends of the right strut rod was loose and "squished" to about half its usual thickness. FYI, when I restored the car, the strut rods were put on new. I bought them from Van Steel, and they only offered them with rubber (no urethane option) bushings, and only as a set of two (which was fine, as both were bent), with no hardware included. Since I had sand blasted and plated the hardware, I didn't even think of replacing that. What I didn't know was that the car was missing the inner strut rod bushing spacer, so when I assembled it, I didn't know to get them and put them in. That caused the inner rod support bracket (bolted to the differential) to be bent in when I torqued the bolts and not do a very good job of supporting the bushings or the strut rod end, and that's why they also wore out prematurely. I bought

replacement parts from Zip for both strut rods (including a replacement power steering rod end urethane grommet kit, as the new rubber one installed during restoration was crushed beyond belief). Glen installed everything, aligned the rear wheels, and took it for a 20-mile test drive. He said he heard the angels singing "Hallelujah", as the banging was gone. You can see the evidence of all the bushings before and after in the photos below.

So, I don't know about you, but since I like to drive my car (I try to put about 2,000 miles a year on it), in addition to all prep for 3-to-4-month storage over the winter in an unheated garage, I will be checking **all** rubber bushings at the end of each driving season from now on!

**Bent inner rod strut support bracket**



**New urethane bushings installed**



**Worn rod strut bushings**





**Destroyed steering rod end bushings**



**Inner rod strut end worn bushing**



**Finished product**



# Leather Steering Wheel Restoration

By Lou Romero

Within my 10,000 ongoing projects, I decided to restore the interior of my 1987 Corvette. This included restoring the door panels, seats, and carpeting. Rather than buying a new steering wheel, and leather seat covers, I decided to restore them.

This article will cover the restoration process of the leather steering wheel and the products I used.

Like any old leather steering wheel, it was in pretty bad shape, but with a little TLC, tenacity and elbow grease, I think it came out pretty good – so you be the judge (do I get a ribbon?? 😊)

Step 1 – Clean the leather with warm water and degreaser to remove all the grease and grime, use a toothbrush to get in all the crevices.



Step 2 – Use leather filler with a putty knife to fill in all the cracks and crevices. You may need several applications. The leather filler is water based and sand with 400 or 600 sandpaper to create a smooth finish.



Step 3 – After sanding the steering wheel smoothly, I airbrushed it with black leather dye. I gave it several coats and waited 24 hours between coats.





Product Information – Leather World Technologies provided exceptional help and guidance. They can color match any color. I sent them a piece of my interior and they match the plastic dye exactly to the door panel.



Product Information  
Leather World Technologies  
<https://leatherworldtech.com/>  
(877) 293-1723



# Judging Meet



November 6, 2022

BG Automotive







***Congratulations to everyone !!!***



## **Welcome to new members**

We like to welcome our new members and new friends !!

John Leso (68770)

Mike Moschella (67246)

Frank Cubelo (8674)

Mark Denno (69004)

Nelson Lopez (30747)

Ron Keegan (12584)

Peter Freund (65104)

Harvey Cohen (29936)

Stephen Gansky (37182)

Al Sokerka (38190)

John K. Griffith, Jr. (66031)

Robert Loring (68043)

Anthony Toto (68387)

John K. Griffith III (69817)

*Wishing everyone the best of the Holiday Season  
and look forward to planning our 2023 events.*

