

“PEAKING” IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

By Ken Peak, RCC Historian



HISTORY OF NATIONAL CORVETTE DAY

Each June 30th RCC members and Corvette aficionados everywhere can celebrate National Corvette Day, which is a wonderful opportunity to learn how it became “America’s Sports Car” and a part of automobile history through its technology as well as a symbol of industrial genius.

As you probably know, the Corvette was introduced on June 30, 1953, by the General Motors automobile factory in Michigan. Its unique design made it instantly popular. But it would not be until 2008 (the 100th year of GM operations) that the U.S. House of Representatives announced that that date would be commemorated annually as National Corvette Day.

Following is the resolution as it was introduced by Rep. John Shimkus (R-Ill.) and 55 stalwart colleagues:

"H. Res. 970

In the U.S. House of Representatives, June 26, 2008.

Whereas the Chevrolet Corvette is America's first sports car;

Whereas the first production Corvette rolled off a Flint, Michigan, assembly line on June 30, 1953;

Whereas the Corvette is now manufactured in Bowling Green, Kentucky;

Whereas the Corvette is the most widely respected production sports car in United States history;

Whereas the Corvette is truly a symbol of American pride;

Whereas General Motors is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2008;

and

Whereas the 30th of June would be an appropriate day to designate as `National Corvette Day':

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives supports the designation of a `National Corvette Day' to honor the Chevrolet Corvette."

The Corvette would soon become a cultural icon. “Dallas” and other television programs (“Route 66,” “Beverly Hills 90210”) showcased it and several movies had the Corvette in a role as well (see “Corvette Summer,” “Cleopatra Jones,” “Animal House,” “Terms of Endearment,” “Con Air,” “Star Trek,” and “Cannonball Run”). Famous drivers and owners of Corvettes include George Clooney, Michael Jordan, Jon Bon Jovi, Jay Leno (owning at least five rare Corvettes, including a 1963 split-window fuelie), and Matthew McConaughey. Furthermore, the Corvette has been sung about or has influenced many music genres. Even the earliest American astronauts drove Corvettes — leased by a Chevrolet dealer for \$1 per year.

For Corvette lovers, this day is one to enjoy with activities such as:

- **Visiting a car museum or exhibit**
- **Looking at some classic cars! (Of course, the ideal place would be the National Corvette Museum located in Bowling Green, Kentucky.)**
- **Enjoying a Local Celebration**
- **Chevrolet and GM dealers across the U.S. will honor this day by hosting open houses and events for people to see different models of Corvettes that might be on sales floors.**
- **Driving Your Corvette (perhaps the best way to celebrate the day).**



Photo credit: GM Authority