



WWW.SOVETTE.COM

P.O. Box 865 • Medford, Oregon 97501  
501(c) (7) Non-Profit Organization • Federal Tax I.D. #91-1819589

## Newsletter September 2019

### Elected Officers

**President:** Ron Howard  
**Vice-President:** David Allen  
**Secretary:** Paul Mitchell  
**Treasurer:** Carol Misner  
**Sergeant-at-Arms:** Patrick Smith  
**Membership:** Robin Miranda  
**Past President (2018):** Ron Howard

### Appointed Positions

**Sunshine:** Sandee Anderson  
**Activities:** David Allen  
**Event Reminder:** Pat Dobson  
**Internet Site:** Sharon Hook-Martino  
**Parade Coordinator:** Sheron Leigh, Kerry Razza  
**Natl Corvette Museum:** Len Atlas  
**Historian:** Group Effort  
**Photographer:** Group Effort

### October Birthdays

1 Florin Baldrige	11 Roxanne Plew
4 Tom Agee	19 David Raskin
5 John Peterson	22 Darren Clark
7 Marlene Dister	26 Ron Jones
8 Elizabeth Baldrige	24 Mathew Lounsbury
11 Aaron Markley	

### October Anniversaries

None

### SOCA Logo Apparel

Competitive Athletics, 105 NE 7th St., Grants Pass  
(541) 479-1001

### Next Club Social

The next club social on September 21 is at The Point Pub & Grill (upstairs), 311 E. Pine St., Central Point, 6:00 p.m.

**Please RSVP to Pat Dobson at:**

[pdobson0503@icloud.com](mailto:pdobson0503@icloud.com) or (541) 664-4506

### Why Join SOCA?

- Promote *esprit de corps* among Corvette enthusiasts.
- Create interest in the Corvette as a true dual-purpose sports car.
- Provide a means of technical information and service to members.
- Encourage dealer and manufacturer cooperation.
- Organize and promote events of a social nature and provide social gatherings for enthusiasts with common interest.
- Sponsor or participate in activities to benefit the community through recognized charities as selected by the members of the Association.

### Upcoming Meetings

**General Membership Meeting**, October 2, 2019, 7:00 p.m.  
Rogue River Community Center, 132 Broadway St., Rogue River

**Visitors are always welcome!**



<<< Ron Howard (L) and Tom Agee (R) interact with the Livingston, Montana, police on the way to the 25th Anniversary National Corvette Museum Caravan in Bowling Green, Kentucky

Sheron Leigh (L) and Paul Mitchell (R) >>> are truly at "the fork in the road" in Franklin, Kentucky.



### 2019 Southern Oregon Corvette Association (SOCA) Events

	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec 2019</u>
Club meeting (Wed.)	2	6	4

**SEPTEMBER**

Labor Day Festival	2 – Cave Junction Labor Day Festival parade
Sigel Show & Shine	14 – Jim Sigel Show & Shine, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (stage Corvettes at 8:15 a.m. at Banner Bank)
September Social	21 – The Point Pub & Grill (upstairs), 311 E. Pine St., Central Point, 6:00 p.m., bring pool cues

**OCTOBER**

October Social	19 – Si Casa Flores restaurant, 202 NE Beacon Dr., Grants Pass
----------------	----------------------------------------------------------------

**NOVEMBER**

Daylight Savings	3 – DST ends
November Social	16 – location and details TBA
Thanksgiving	28 – Thanksgiving holiday

**DECEMBER**

Parade	7 – Grants Pass Christmas Parade, details TBA
Social	15 (*Sunday night*) – SOCA Christmas Party, Grants Pass Golf Club, 230 Espey Rd., Grants Pass, details TBA

For additional events, information and links ... see the SOCA website "Events Page:" <https://www.sovette.com/events>



(L-R) Janet Peterson, Dora Moore, Marga Atlas and Elaine Ellis are busy preparing the August potluck social food. The day was also John and Janet Peterson's 54th wedding anniversary.



(L-R) Sharon Reasor, neighbors Jeanie and Arnie Thompson, Tim Kasdorf and Marla Kasdorf are ready, let the August potluck social begin!



## The Mystery of the Little-Known 1959 XP-719 Corvette Rear-Engine Prototype

Hot Rod Network Staff



© Courtesy of GM – 1959 Chevrolet Corvette XP719 Concept

The 8x10 inch black-and-white glossy photograph was stuck in a folder in the Petersen Photo Archive marked "1959 Corvette." But from its rear-three-quarter view the car looked like no other '59 Corvette we'd seen, more like a cross between an early C2 convertible and a Corvair. The print bore the markings of a GM factory photo: a frame number; photographer's name; and photo date, 2-1-60. On the back, someone had written, "The first mid-engine Corvette proposal 1959." We had to learn more.

We sent a copy of the photo to our friends at the GM Heritage Center, and a few days later they sent us a proof sheet with several photos of the car in various stages of development. They also sent us a copy of what they described as a "nearly blank" engineering record of the car. On that sheet was the car's code number, XP-719; its description as a V-8 rear-engine Corvette; the "Program Instigated" date of 6-4-59; the car's location, Advanced #4; and names of the engineers responsible for the car, "Renner-Hill."

So few words, so much sleuthing to do.

Zora Arkus-Duntov long yearned to develop a mid-engine Corvette, development that took off in a big way with his CERV I prototype, which was built right about the time this car was on the drawing boards. The XP-719's trim proportions, in fact, make us wonder if this was intended to be a body to slip over a production CERV frame.

There have been other notable mid-engine prototypes, including XP-880, aka the "Astro Vette;" the rotary-powered XP-892; and the XP-882, which started life with a big-block out back before a four-rotor Wankel replaced it. All those cars, though, were built in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

We could not find out much about one of XP-719's designers, Ron Hill. Carl Renner, though, had been involved with Corvette styling since its earliest days. In fact, his contemporaries believe Renner's designs had a big influence on the look of the first Corvette, though there's no way to confirm that now, because Harley Earl kept the project so secret and Renner passed away in 2001. We do know Renner designed the coves for the 1956 redesign and 1961's



"horizontal creased rear end" as he called it, a design cue found on XP-719 as well.

The GM Heritage Center said all these photos were of XP-719, but there are distinct differences between the mockups shot in 1959 and the 1960 version, especially around the rear quarters. Early on there were small ducts ahead of the rear wheels, and even the makings of a tailfin on the driver's side. Those ducts grew quite a bit taller by 1960, as designers likely recognized the need for additional airflow to the engine.

Along with the shots of the car came a fascinating series of photos that shows a two-dimensional operational mockup of a stowable hardtop for XP-719 that tucked under the back decklid.

None of our research books about Corvette mentions XP-719. Even Google drew a blank. We must guess, given the limited records in GM's archives, this project was stillborn fairly early on, as decisions were made to follow a conventional drivetrain layout for the C2 to come. It is still an interesting look at what might have been, had Duntov's dream of a mid-engine Vette come true nearly 60 years ago.



1959 Chevrolet Corvette XP719 Concept Rendering, Hill - Shinoda



**Disclaimer** - Discretion is advised. The preceding information may not apply to specific vehicles or all circumstances. Always refer to the manufacturer's specifications, service manuals, technical data and product information.

