

# ***Snake Bites***



**Illinois Michigan Fall Tour**

**WPCM Farewell Tour**

**Chelsea Autocross**

**Tech Day**

**Stahl's Auto Museum**

**VOA Bucket List**

**Cruise Nights**

**Bocce Ball**

**Conner Ave Plant Tour**

**Pick Up Party CAAP**

**Road Atlanta Days**

**Holiday Party**

***Volume 22 Issue 1***

***A Motor City Viper Owners Publication***

***Fall 2016***

## President's Corner:

2017 is an important year for the Viper. It is the twenty-fifth (and last) birthday of the car. Before the summer is over we'll have a chance to celebrate with national VOA members from all over right here in Detroit. The exact date has not been set yet, but stay tuned for this landmark event.

2017 also brings in our new MCVO Board of Directors. The new faces include Gary Rappaport as Secretary, former President Mike Cipponeri as Club Advisor, Diane Cipponeri as Social Director and Bill Gill joining Dick Winkles as Co-Motorsports Director. Also new this year is the practice of using Assistants to help the Directors with the implementation of our active schedule of events, publications and computer based content. Serving as Assistants are Susan Andring, Jim Bur, David Colletti, Ed Gatt, Ted Gray, Cari Lambert, Marianne Peggie, Bob Swartz and Garry Tripp. Thanks to all these members for rolling up their sleeves and pitching in. If you have an interest in volunteering to assist Club activities, please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the Board.

We ask you to bear with us as we update and revamp our Club computer based features. These efforts are under the direction of Jason Pontello, Technology Director, who in real life is a member of the IT Department at Baker College. We will be updating our public face (website, Facebook, e-mail) as well as our internal operations (database, financial records, calendar, etc.). Everything will be up and running soon. We're also looking for an Assistant for Jason. If you have an interest and experience with internet based applications please contact either Jason or me.

Finally, I like to recognize the efforts of some of our long standing members who have recently stepped down from our Board of Directors. Zach Thompson had served on the Board in several capacities, most recently as Website Director. Maureen Hackney had also filled several roles, including most recently Club Advisor. Sandi White has had a long association with the Board, including her recent positions as Social Director and Apparel Director. And last year Jim Bielenda stepped down after filling various roles, including being President two different times. All of these people gave their heart and soul to the Club and helped us be the outstanding organization we are. It's gratifying that they can now relax and enjoy the fruits of their efforts by being "ordinary" members. My hat's off to them for a job well done!

*Bruce Heckman*



## Editor's Message

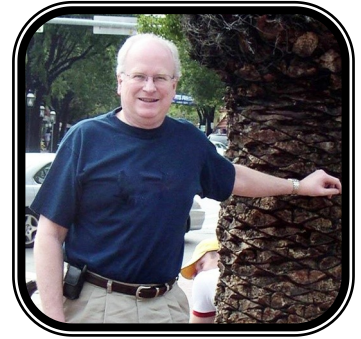
After the last election I was pondering how Gary and I ended up so involved with the club. We joined MCVO in the fall of 2009, attended events, had lots of fun and enjoyed spending time with new friends. We got soaked a few times while driving the Gen 1 (despite having put the soft top on) which pointed us towards a Gen 2 coupe owned by member Roe Green. Fair to say we like Vipers and value MCVO.

Then in 2014, I volunteered to take over producing Snake Bites. Last year Gary volunteered to be Secretary. In just 5 short years we went from newbies to Board and Executive Members.

My point is if you participate, there's no telling where the road will lead. The only sure thing is you'll be driving a Viper!

*Ann Rappaport*

SnakeBitesEditor@zoho.com



# *Calendar of Events*

## **February**

2 -MCVO Club Meeting  
15 -Cruise Night  
24-26 -Autorama\*  
25 -Winter Party

## **March**

2 -MCVO Club Meeting  
11 -Karting  
15 -Cruise Night  
25 -Bocce Ball

## **April**

5 -MCVO Club Meeting  
19 -Cruise Night  
22 -Fast & Furious 8

## **May**

4 -MCVO Club Meeting  
7 -Spring Brunch

During the driving season we often have more events than shown here, please check the website calendar for the latest information. Please note: details for club events are emailed to members.

Club Board Meetings are on the 1st Thursday of each month. Please check the website for time and locations. Everyone is welcome.

\* Event of Interest

## **Motor City Viper Owners**

Snail Mail: P.O. Box 311, Bloomfield Hills , MI. 48303

Email: [viper@mcvo.net](mailto:viper@mcvo.net)

## **Officers:**

President - Bruce Heckman

Vice President - Sam Milana

Treasurer - Tim Sutherland

Secretary - Gary Rappaport

## **Directors:**

Membership - Bob White

Motorsports - Dick Winkles, Bill Gill

Club Advisor - Mike Cipponeri

Technology - Jason Pontello

Newsletter - Ann Rappaport

Social - Diane Cipponeri

Photography—Lori Emerling

Apparel— TBA

Snake Bites is a Motor City Viper Owners publication. Subscription is included in the membership fee. Editorial contributions are invited, but we are not responsible for the return of unsolicited materials. Submission of materials implies the right to edit and publish all or in part. The opinions and experience of the author, of the article, does not necessarily reflect FCA US, LLC opinion, recommendation or approval. Reproduction whole, in part, or by electronic storage of Snake Bites (printed), Snake Bites Electronic Editions or Snake Update is prohibited without the expressed written consent of the editors.

**Advertising is available in Snake Bites, please send a request for further information.**



## Meet the newest members of the Board



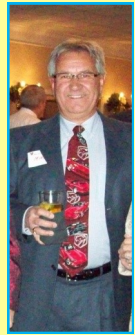
### Motor Sports

Bill Gill

Hello, I am looking forward to Co-Directing the Motor Sports activities for MCVO! Recently I purchased a 1998 GTS and over the years I have owned a total of 9 Vipers. I have been a member since the club started in the early 90's, although I've been inactive for a few years.

I worked at Chrysler in the carburetor lab in the 70's and 80's and went on to own a carburetor shop and restoration business. Over the years I combined my love of speed with flying and have a multi rating. Along with speed drag racing, my current hobby is my AC Cobra that runs in the 9's. Being a mechanic all my life I do my own work as well.

I've been married 53 years to my lovely wife Sally and have 3 daughters.



### MCVO Club Advisor

Mike Cipponeri

Mike Cipponeri and his wife, Diane, have been MCVO Club members since 1997. Mike has served in various Club leadership roles beginning as Treasurer, Vice President, and then President from 2007 through 2008. He enjoys touring in his 1994 Dodge Viper R/T10 Roadster with either Diane through the Michigan Thumb area, with a few other cars or as part of a larger, exciting MCVO event. He claims it just feels great to be on the road, no matter what the setting, in his 'GR8 LYF' Viper.

Mike retired from Chrysler in December, 2007 after 36 years working within Chrysler Engineering on various assignments. He feels very fortunate to be part of the first 'Team Viper' Group from 1989 through 1996 serving as Electrical Manager under Viper's first Chief Engineer Roy Sjoberg. Mike was involved in the launch of the 1992 Viper Roadster at New Mack Assembly Plant and the 1996 Viper Coupe at Conner Avenue Assembly Plant.

Mike and Diane live in Washington Township, Michigan, have two adult girls and three grandkids. Mike always promises that he will stay well under the speed limit (of the car) when driving his grandkids in the Viper. Mike is excited and thankful to be back in a more active role as Club Advisor with the MCVO Club.

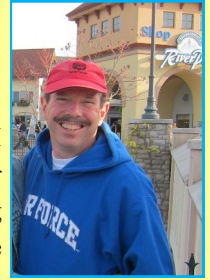
### Secretary

Gary Rappaport

I'm very excited to be the new MVCO Secretary. I recently retired from Chrysler after 30 years, and prior to that spent 10 years working for various engineering companies. My entire career at Chrysler was in the Advance Manufacturing Engineering Group working with Product Engineering to develop new vehicles and components for future models, making them "manufacturable". Additionally we created tools and processes, so the plants could assemble the vehicles at a rate of 70 per hour!

I started in Robotics, but found I enjoyed all aspects of In-Plant Vehicle Testing and Rolls Booths for many of our popular products. In 2006, I joined the Viper Team to launch the 2008 model. I was on the Viper Team until recently and then at Toledo for the Wrangler and Cherokee.

Ann and I have been members for about 6 years and own a 95 Roadster and a 98 Coupe.



### Social Director

Diane Cipponeri

Diane Cipponeri and her husband, Mike, have been MCVO Club members since 1997. She claims that it is her husband's fault that she has become so involved and fallen in love with the coolest car ever. Diane's love of the car goes back to when she first saw the original Dodge Viper concept show car at Chrysler Engineering in 1989. This was during the time that the first 'Team Viper' group was just being assembled. She is proud of the fact that Roy Sjoberg, Team Viper's first Chief Engineer, came to affectionately refer to her as 'Mother Viper'.

Diane has served on the MCVO Board in various roles during the years. Diane is not sure why she agreed to take over as Social Director since she claims her therapist advised against it (just kidding). But she just couldn't stay away. Diane thanks Sandi White for taking on this role for the last year. She also sends a big thank you to Maureen Hackney for all the years that she has dedicated to the MCVO in this role.

Diane's goal is to strive to do as good of a job as they have and to hopefully carry on the tradition of offering many exciting MCVO events that we have all enjoyed through the years.





## Walter P. Chrysler Tour

Bob White



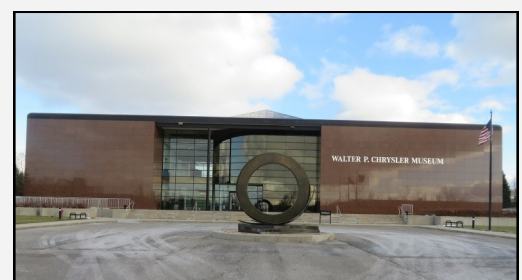
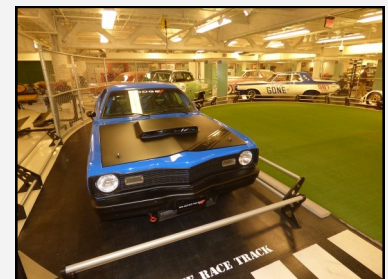
On Nov. 20, we gathered at the Walter P. Chrysler Museum to tour it, and the Viper Café for the last time. We had been disappointed to hear about its closure and conversion to office space, and thought our last visit should be with friends.

Some of us who have visited the museum before, spent more time with the volunteers this time. They could always bring displays to life with back stories not found in the printed material. One of my favorites is about the development of the 1957 Dodge Sweptside Pick-up which came to life in the truck assembly plant at the hands of plant employees, not engineers. They gathered parts from the Lynch Road Car Assembly plant nearby, constructed the truck and called Highland Park requesting a management review. It got the thumbs up and became an icon.

It was apparent how the volunteers felt about the planned closure. They've poured a piece of their hearts into the place and are left with an empty space, like our Viper Café.

It left us wondering what would become of the materials that have adorned the Viper Café for the last four years. An inventory had been done earlier and those who donated items have been contacted to see if they wanted them returned. Many, but not all of them did.

After a lot of picture taking, we left for an early dinner at Mitchel's Fish Market in Rochester, where the Christmas decorations and friendly discussions were much more festive.



## White Horse

### Sandi White

Our September cruise night took us to the White Horse Inn again. This is turning out to be one of the member's favorite places to meet and eat. They have a wonderful location in Metamora and part of the members take the time to meet and actually cruise to the location together. Their varied menu, much of it actually healthy, is much appreciated by many. This month 21 of us took part in the festivities.



## *Thank You!*

The recent elections brought new names and faces to the leadership of MCVO. The Executive Committee and the Board of Directors would like to take a moment to express our appreciation to these people who worked tirelessly through their past terms. Nothing done at MCVO is possible without members contributing their time, skills and efforts, these people, while no longer holding a position, are still active and helping to make MCVO the great club it is-

**John Wright, Maureen Hackney,  
Zach Thompson & Sandi White**



Photo: Kim Grant

**2016 Autocross at Chelsea Proving Grounds**

*MCVO extends a warm welcome  
to these new members:*

**Dan Gafencu - Livonia  
Bill Golling - Bloomfield Hills  
Gregg Wright - Waterford  
David Bronson - Ortonville  
Greg Farrelly - Pinckney  
Shafton Crosson - Southfield**

## JOINT ILLINOIS-MICHIGAN FALL CRUISE

**Bruce Heckman**



The group from MCVO rendezvoused at the Royal Oak Elks on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, for coffee and donuts before we set off for our Indiana weekend. From there we had a spirited run to a colorful and remote restaurant called Timbuktoo's in Fremont, IN.

You'd never find it unless you had the address in your GPS or someone took you there, but it was worth the stop. It was also there we hooked up with the caravan from the Illinois VOA Region and shared lunch. After lunch we toured the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum and then subsequently the National Auto & Truck Museum, both in Auburn, IN. Needless to say, the quality of the vehicles in both museums was absolutely top notch and everyone was remarking about how glad they were that they'd come. At one point in the Duesenberg Museum we were looking at 14 cars in one room valued at over \$1.5 million each! We ate dinner at Shorty's Steakhouse, a small town institution in downtown Garret, IN, impressing the locals with our twenty-some Vipers in the parking lot. The evening was spent socializing at our hotel, getting to know our compatriots from Illinois. We had some fun organized activities and there were interesting giveaways.

After a joint breakfast on Sunday we toured the National Military History Center in Auburn. It was an impressive military collection, with a focus on stories of individual American military service and sacrifice. We left from there to go to Amish Acres in Nappanee, IN, where we had a terrific family style lunch and shopped at their little Amish village of shops. After shopping we went to the Recreation Vehicle and Manufactured Home Hall of Fame in Elkhart, IN. It was fascinating to see the evolution of wheeled recreation vehicles in all of their splendor. Then we finished off the day at the Super Heroes Museum, also in Elkhart. Most of us were musuemed out by the time we got to this shrine to comic book and TV heroes, but it was fun to see how they had evolved also. After taking in Superman, Wonder Woman, and other inspirational fictional heroes we all headed home.

The whole weekend event was an unqualified success. We got to meet new friends who shared a common interest in cars, we got to share our unique variations of Viper with each other, and everyone wound up exhausted and with a smile on their faces. The event was intended to be a substitute for the off year when we didn't have a Wine Tour and it fulfilled its mission quite well. Members from both states are enthusiastic about setting up more joint state events.



## **FALL TECH DAY**

### **Jess Hackney**

Our Fall Tech Day was held at HD Car Care in Troy. With twenty four members in attendance we started the day with coffee, donuts and as always lots of lively conversation.

The owner of HD, David Fermani then demonstrated a variety of car detailing products including, Opti Coat and Ceramic Pro. One of the products of great interest to everyone was the waterless car wash system. At end of the event everyone received a bottle for their own use.

We also had a discussion presented by Eric Muzzy of Sun Shade whose specialty is paint protective film. Erik brought two cars for us to see, a Viper and a BMW. The Viper had been entirely covered in the product and the BMW was covered in select areas. Everyone had a chance to closely examine the cars which were beautifully done. The shine on the completely covered car was unbelievable.

At the end of the session we held a raffle for a rolling tool seat which was won by Tim Joyce. We then moved across the street to Norm's Field of Dreams for lunch and of course lots more conversation; something our group never lacks!!



## **Cruise Night**

### **Sandi White**

In October we ventured over to Bahama Breeze for our monthly event. 25 of us enjoyed this new venue for the club. Much of the menu is devoted to Caribbean specialties and drinks. It was fun to see the many different dinner offerings, but difficult to choose one. Of course, dinner was secondary to being able to join in camaraderie shared by all the members. Many members stayed late to chat and socialize.

## Stahl's Automotive Museum & Collection

**Bob Swartz**

Outstanding place!

Want to go back!

Never knew it was there!

Special Weather which was a good thing this time

Wish I could have gone!

And a polka dance recital too!

Those are just the highlights of the feedback from the 27 MCVO members and guests visiting Stahl's Automotive Museum & Collection tour and Beach Party Pizza Picnic Lunch last Sept 24th.

Yes, the weather was perfect for the Flying Caravan Cruise. Everybody along the route joined the group from their chosen location- no long waits- no delays - no hassles. At the end of a pleasant drive we arrived right on time.

And Stahl's was "up" for us. The volunteer docents were helpful and full of information about the cars, collection, and the interesting owner of the place.

Throw in a continual concert from the 14 automated musical machines with Marianne and Liz doing the polka!

What Fun We Do Have in MCVO!



Knowing this is the final year of production for our cars, this photo seems particularly appropriate to publish.

It really sums up everything about buying and driving a Viper.



## **Pick-Up Party**

### **Bob White**

After one of our monthly MCVO Board meetings, Bruce bumped into Bill Golling who mentioned that he'd purchased a new Viper. Well, that set the wheels in motion. Soon Bill was an MCVO member and we had plans to celebrate with him at Conner when he picked up his car!

Seven of us from MCVO met at the plant and joined Bill, some of his family and guests, and Shawn Haley who was also there to pick up his new car. You may remember Shawn who was a member back in 2009. We gave him some arm twisting and hope he'll join us again for 2017.

Viper Plant Pick-Ups are organized much like a plant tour. We started in the media room being welcomed by Chad Quick, Plant Manager, and watching videos about the car and the history of Viper production. Then we toured the plant and gathered around the cars for the unveiling.



*Installing the Engine*



*Rolls Testing Sounds SOOOO Sweet*



*Rollcage Crawl*

We all know how it feels to get a Viper; kind of like a five-year-old at Christmas. It was fun watching the new owners try to maintain their composure knowing how they felt on the inside. When the covers were pulled, and we could see their artwork on wheels, cheers and claps punctuated the event as we all celebrated the happy moment.



*Chad congratulating Shawn*



*Chad congratulating Bill*

If you'd like to join us at future pick-up parties, just let Bob White or Jim Bur know and we'll add you to the list of possible celebrants.

## Chelsea Proving Grounds Autocross

### Sam Milana

Mother Nature was very kind to us on September 18<sup>th</sup> blessing us with partly sunny skies and 75 degree temperatures.

Unfortunately she wasn't as kind on Saturday when Bob White, Bob Swartz, Ed Gatt, Dave Buchesky, Jess Hackney, Garry Tripp, Mike Sutton, Wil Thorne, Chad Quick, and myself battled through the rain to get the autocross course set up. At the Chelsea Proving Grounds they call that open space Black Lake; it truly was a lake on Saturday. I want to thank these fine gentlemen for volunteering their time because without the support on Saturday, there would be no autocross on Sunday. A very special thanks goes out to Mike Morss who also came out on Saturday to help and wasn't even participating in the event on Sunday.



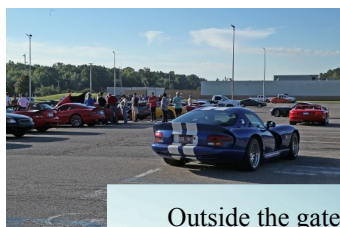
This year's course, at 1.34 miles, was a bit longer and more challenging than in the past and everybody seemed to enjoy it. We had 60 members/guest in attendance; 40 drivers and 35 Vipers participated.



Jess Hackney did an amazing job of keeping the line moving by consistently running four cars out on the course. Ted Gray and Maureen Hackney were tasked with keeping everybody's time straight. Bob and Sandi White slaved in front of the hot BBQ most of the day, cooking the burgers and dogs, to go along with Maureen's homemade pasta salad and cookies.



As always at the end of the day, it's a team effort to clean up and get everything put away. I also want to thank all the MCVO board members who came out early on Sunday to assist with the setup and last minute details.



Outside the gate



High Speed Oval & route to Black Lake



Lining up & parking



**Drivers Meeting**

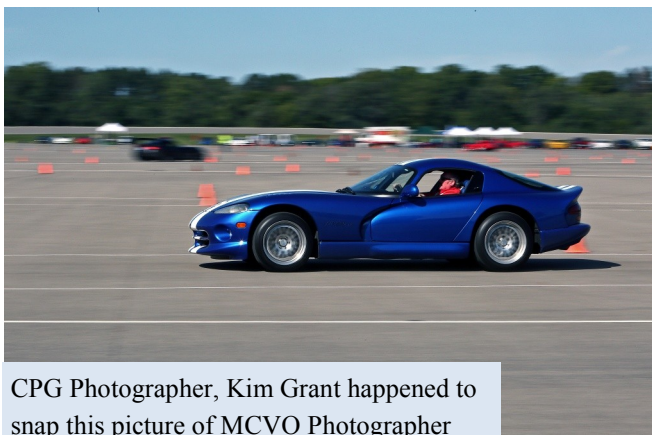


**Getting cars ready**



**Test drive**





CPG Photographer, Kim Grant happened to snap this picture of MCVO Photographer Susan Andring as she was taking the next picture at the Autocross.



### **This year's classification winners are:**

Gen I – Matt Swartz – 129.37

Gen II – Pete Halsmer – 123.02

Gen II w/ABS – Jerry Carrico – 127.07

Gen III – Jeff Lambert – 119.22

Gen IV – Eric Hallberg – 122.32

Gen V – Larry Kocovski – 122.04

Fastest Time of the Day – Ralph Gilles – 115.12

Fastest Female Driver – Mariann Litznerski – 167.60

Most Cones Killed – Tim Sutherland



## Fall Cruise to Past Tense Cider Mill and Frankenmuth

**Bob White**

On Oct. 23, twenty Vipers gathered at Great Lakes Crossing for a fall cruise (three others joined us along our route for a total of 23). With that many Vipers in a mall parking lot, it didn't take long for the gawkers to show up. While we were getting organized, there was a steady stream of picture takers admiring our cars. The mall security guys even drove by in their golf cart with their cell phones in hand. Others got out of their cars, took pictures and asked what we were doing.

I love it when people admire our cars. Even though some of our Vipers are over 20 years old now, the style has captured immortality and still look new in the eyes of our admirers. In addition to being surprised at the age of our cars, they're usually surprised that Vipers are still in production.

It was a beautiful, crisp day and the colors along our route were amazing. We made our way north up Baldwin Rd. then west and through Hadley MI, before turning east and making our way around Lapeer to the Past Tense Cider Mill. We had reserved parking and again drew a lot of attention. The crowd at the cider mill was a lot younger and they seemed very glad to see us.



After enjoying our cider, donuts and cookies, we toured the grounds. Past Tense is not just a Cider Mill with great cider and pastries. There's a restaurant and tea room, a building with arts and antiques, and a country store with a great collection of Christmas, home décor and Halloween goods. The Halloween stuff was actually a little freaky, so of course we spent quite a bit of time there.

MCVO Event coordinators always try to be good stewards of your dues monies. So, by the end of the year there's always a little extra left over that needs to be used up. Even though there was no charge for this event, the club bought the cider, cookies and donuts, and had a drawing for some freshly baked pies as well. We had a variety of pies to pick from, and as names were drawn from a pumpkin, members had their pick of the pies. Then we all loaded up for the next leg of our trip.



Like the trip to the Cider Mill, the next part of our cruise was about an hour long. We headed north on Lapeer Rd. about 13 miles before turning west through the freshly manicured farmlands and more beautiful fall colors.

When we got to Frankenmuth we parked in front of the Bavarian Inn Lodge, decorating their parking lot with what looked more like an Easter basket of color, than Halloween colors.



The Lorelei Lounge was reserved for our private use (it's usually closed on Sundays). The food and fellowship were both great. After visiting, and stuffing ourselves with the mouth-watering choices from the Bavarian Inn menu, some walked down the hill and across the covered bridge to stroll main street, while others headed home. It was a great day!





## Conner Avenue Assembly Plant Tour

**Bob White**



Is it just me or are some things changing at MCVO?

I was standing outside the entrance to the Viper plant talking to those who gathered there for the Conner plant tour and the talk was more about racing than in the past. One person asked me who to talk to about track insurance. He was looking forward to getting on the track for the first time. Another person was talking about going to the drag strip the next day. And when we got inside, Chad was showing videos of us at the previous week's autocross! The morning was turning into a celebration of Viper performance!

But maybe I digress. This is about our plant tour.

October 7th was a beautiful fall day and once again Vipers gathered on the lawn in front of the Conner Avenue Assembly Plant. We had coffee and juice by the main entrance, and were greeted by Chad Quick, the Plant Manager and Jenn Hazard, Manufacturing Operations Coordinator, before going into the video room to begin our tour of the Viper assembly plant.

There we saw Chad and Ralph Gilles' videos from our Chelsea Autocross and some now famous Viper commercials. Then Chad reviewed the history of the plant and gave us a briefing on the current state of Viper production. They were working nine hour days, six days a week, trying to catch up on delays caused by earlier supplier problems. And it seems that the last available orders for Vipers were filling the order system. It was a somber note compared to the celebration of the car that we had been experiencing minutes earlier. We reflected on the end of production momentarily before putting it out of our minds and continuing with the tour.

Just inside the plant we stopped near the quality audit area where Chad pointed out the now vacant Prowler conveyor line and generally described the plant layout. Then we walked across the aisle and admired the row of famous historic Vipers including the Gen 5 model which really looks like a car, not a giant chunk of painted clay.



We strolled by the engine assembly line and spent a few minutes admiring the historic engine bucks.

Then we proceeded to the beginning of the line. I've visited the plant many times but had never seen the "net, form and pierce" equipment in operation. This time we got to see it work! This really is quite a manufacturing marvel. The equipment adjusts surfaces and punches holes in their precise



location eliminating the variation caused by welding parts together that already have holes in them. By placing the mounting surfaces and holes where they should be, after welding, it's possible to mount the parts to the frame where they'll best fit.



Then it was over to the primary line where we watched two very skilled craftsmen install an engine in 17 seconds! Beyond their skill, the unusual thing about this is that most automotive engines are lifted up into the frame from below. Installing an engine directly into the engine bay is not typical, but certainly the way you'd like to do it if you were working in your garage.

(Continued on page 16)

Then we stopped by the wheel alignment equipment and watched them set a car. This is another special piece of equipment. Usually, the front suspension is adjustable while the rear suspension is simply made up of parts that have been welded together where they should be (which of course they never are because the results of welding can't be precisely predicted so they're just close, not exact).



Then we stopped by what I like to think of as the Go Kart area, where rolling chassis are staged while suppliers bring the necessary parts to finish them. I always wonder what it would be like to take one of these on a track. If you ever raced go karts, you know what I'm thinking.



We walked down the final assembly line, watching the body panels being installed and the last of the assembly completed. And there it was; a Viper, ready for some proud owner to treasure, just like we do.

Next was the museum. This part of the plant, at the south end of the building, should be encased in KL93 like the robot in "The Day the Earth Stood Still" and preserved forever. Here you can see the soul of Viper and the passion of Viperholics. Here's the car that started the firestorm, mementos from the gathering of the faithful and examples of what causes Vipermania. If we could, we'd all have this collection in our garage!



Chad finally pulled us away and we proceeded past the testing facilities and back toward the plant entrance. One thing that is a relatively new addition to the plant is the Engine Cleanliness Lab. This has been added to make sure that engine blocks are clean before assembly. I don't think you'll find this in any other automotive assembly plant on the planet!



Soon we found ourselves where we started, in the collection of special Vipers near the plant entrance. Chad Quick offered up an opportunity to start an ACR to anyone and Gary Rappaport jumped on it! After he negotiated the roll cage and managed to get seated, Gary cranked up the monster and let the whole plant know it was awake! When the thunder of the ACR was shut down, cheers were heard from the distant corners of Conner Avenue Assembly Plant. It was a celebration of Viper!

I always struggle with the end of these plant tours. I feel like a ten-year-old having to leave the amusement park. But once again it was over. We had seen where our cars were born. We had taken a glimpse of what was created to make sure they were perfect. And we had talked briefly with the craftsmen who committed their work life to bring Vipers to life. All that was left was wondering how this could possibly be allowed to end.



After saying our thank-yous and good byes, some of us decorated the parking lot at the Sterling Inn and sampled the menu at the Loon River Café. It was another great day of adventure and fellowship.

## **Bocce Ball at Villa Penna**

**Bob White**

On Saturday, Nov. 19, thirty-one of us gathered at Villa Penna for another evening of socializing and Bocce Ball.

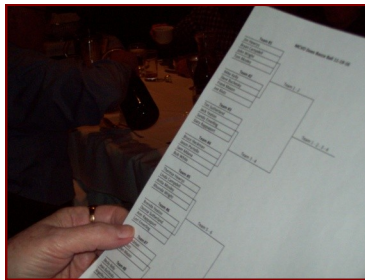
It was a damp and windy evening, but that didn't stop some of our die-hard members from bringing their Vipers. Because of the weather, we admired them through the windows, not up close in the parking lot like we do at many events.

The evening started with a great dinner with an assortment of different types of pizza and pastas. We had choices for desert too, including some of Jim Hawrys' birthday cake that Theresa brought for us to share.

After dinner, we divided up into eight teams and started playing Bocce Ball. Teams were generally made up of four players, so between the two courts we had about half the group playing while the other half watched. Some competitors demonstrated from the beginning that this was serious business, so hoots and hollers were not uncommon.

At the end, members of the winning teams got their choice of a bottle of white or chocolate wine. Then names were drawn from a hat for an assortment of other gifts that the club provided.

As is so often the case with our events, for many, getting together with friends was the most important reason for being there. It was closing time before we knew it and another great evening came to a close.



## Holiday Party

**Bob White**

This year's Holiday Party was held at the Gazebo Banquet Center in Warren. It was a nice sized group; fifty-three members came out for the evening.

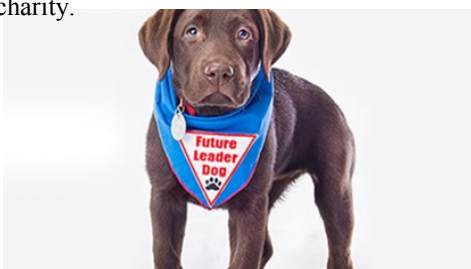
When we entered all the ladies were given a gift of either ear rings or a bracelet. There was a drawing for the guys later in the evening. If they didn't win either of the big prizes, (a rolling tool chest or laser light decorations) they received a gift certificate to Harbor Freight.

Each table was adorned with holiday decorations and Chocolate Covered Strawberries! The food was great including appetizers, a huge buffet and deserts. Even after desert we had a table full of cookies (which was mostly packed up and taken home since we were all stuffed).

As usual with this group, the beautiful facility, the decorations, the gifts and the food were not as important as having time to spend with friends. The event was filled with hugs and laughter making it another MCVO success.



During this time of year we feel like giving, so we held a 50/50 raffle with the proceeds going to Leader Dogs for the Blind. The winners of the drawing gave most of their winnings back to the club so we donated \$235 to the charity.





### National Club News

Just before New Year's, on Dec 29th, 2016 - the VOA achieved its 2000th membership. This is a big day for the club and a huge milestone for all of its members and enthusiasts who support it. Thank you to all of the leaders, volunteers, and members who make this club what it is.



## VOA 2017 Bucket List



### TAIL OF THE DRAGON

JUNE 1st-4th, 2017 (NORTH CAROLINA/TENNESSEE)



### TUSCANY & MOTOR VALLEY TOUR

JULY 16th-23rd, 2017 (ITALY)



### NEW ENGLAND LOBSTER ROLL

SEPTEMBER 16th-18th, 2017 (NEW ENGLAND AREA)



### TEXAS VIPER ROUNDUP

OCTOBER 19th-22nd, 2017 (TEXAS)

### VIPER 25th ANNIVERSARY / END OF PRODUCTION

TBD Summer 2017 (DETROIT)



### Road Atlanta High Performance Driving Experience 2016

#### Bob Swartz

If last year's VIR was 'Freaking Awesome', this year R. A. was a Freaking Challenge! Three blind turns (one high speed and downhill) with 3 straights (the longest of which was 0.8 miles) ending downhill into a pair of 90° turns. Loved it! The tires loved it by saying "WHEEEEEEEEE" and leaving about 1/2 of their tread there. Nine, that's 9! track sessions for the 2-days. Life is good. My adrenaline is still tapering down. Vipers are AWESOME beasts with super class.



### Twisted Rooster

Sandi White



This month the membership (24 total) traveled out to New Baltimore for the opportunity of trying another new venue for us, The Twisted Rooster. This is a Hip-yet-casual eatery featuring American fare prepared in unusual ways & drinks with a lively vibe. The menu was difficult to understand, but everyone did their best to pick something new and/or exciting. Some worked well and some not so well....but it was definitely a new experience for the group.

**Photo Credit Lori Emerling**

# VIPER Viper



**Photo Credits:**

Susan Andring, Lori Emerling, Gary Rappaport, Bob White, Cari Lambert

Jason Pontello, Bruce Heckman, Ann Rappaport, Ted Gray

**A special thank you to FCA photographer Jim Richards**

**& CPG photographer Kim Grant**