

Snake Bites

A Motor City Viper Owners Publication

Day Trippin' with MCVO

Snakes Invade Shelby Twp.

3rd Annual Viper Smoke-Out

Mopars at the Red Barn

Cars, Coffee and Cows

Woodward Dream Cruise

Hagerty Photo Shoot

Cruise Nights

NVE4 Miami

Spring Brunch

Restoring Memories

GingerMan Track Day

Gear Heads Delight

Fish Fly Festival

Kalamazoo Air Zoo



Winter 2020 Spring 2021 ~ Volume 26 Issue 1

&

Summer 2021 ~ Volume 26 Issue 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



We set an all-time record number of MCVO members at 180! To those of you who recommended/persuaded Viper owners to join, Thank You! Welcome all new members! Please introduce yourselves at upcoming events.

We welcome ideas and any help to continue making MCVO the best car club.

Although we still have more than a few more events on the calendar, we are also starting to plan events for next year. If you have any suggestions, please contact us at the viper@mcvo.net email or call one of the Board members.

As most of the membership is aware, we have heavily subsidized events this year to make up for the cancelled events of 2020. This allowed us to provide most events at no additional cost to the members. To avoid “sticker shock”, we are planning on continuing this practice next year. Some events, which have higher costs, will have a minimal registration fee.

As we all hope this COVID pandemic slows down and starts to have less impact on our daily lives, we will continue to adhere to the current CDC guidelines to support the health and well-being of our members. If you have any concerns, please reach out to us and we will try to help.

I look forward to seeing each of you at upcoming events.

Mike Sutton



Cover photo: Diane Cipponeri improvising in 90+ degrees, with endless sun, hot asphalt, a V10 while moving very slowly. Not sure it was effective.

Credit: A. Rappaport

Editor's Message

After skipping an issue, due to lack of content, Snake Bites is back. Articles, which would have been published in that issue, are included here.

Events covered in this issue reflect the first year of the worldwide pandemic. I'm not sure what is in store for us in the future. But what is clear, is that MCVO has found ways to adapt and continue with a nearly full calendar of activities. As a Board we are *obligated* to plan things which err on the side of safety for everyone.

But all we can do is request, *it is all of you*, the members, who have chosen to follow our recommendations or complied when you weren't in agreement. You have allowed MCVO to flourish despite Covid 19. Check out the “Welcome New Members” section, MCVO keeps growing!



Ann Rappaport

snakebiteseditor@zoho.com

Club Calendar

October

- 7 - MCVO Club Meeting
- 16 - FrankenColor Cruise
- 20 - Cruise Night
- 23 - N. Indiana Color Tour

November

- 4 - MCVO Club Meeting
- 7 - Veterans Day Parade
- 13 - Fall Tech Day

December

- 4 - Holiday Party

January 2022

TBA

Motor City Viper Owners

Snail Mail: P.O. Box 685,
South Lyon, MI. 48178

Email: viper@mcvo.net

Officers:

President - Mike Sutton
Vice President - Gary Rappaport
Treasurer - Rick Reuter
Secretary - Rose Klutz

Directors:

Apparel - Lori Emerling
Club Advisor - Bruce Heckman
Newsletter - Ann Rappaport
Membership - Marty Heitkamp
Motorsports - Paul McClorey
Photography - Susan Andring
Social - Diane Cipponeri
Technology - Gary Rappaport

Advisors

Caravan Cruise Advisor - Bob Swartz

*Take a moment to go to the club's web site, look under the
Events tab, then choose Galleries.*

*There are lots of photos and a brief write-up
of the latest event.*

A nice recap especially if you couldn't attend

During the driving season often there are more events as well as changes to listed events. For the latest information please reference our club's calendar at www.MCVO.net thank you! 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 welcomed.

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

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



Brendan Blanchard	South Lyon	Nicklaus & Alaina Morand	Shelby Township
Andrew Danielson	Kent City	Armen & Kristin Nazarian	Plymouth
Rick & Pamela Ferrara	Warren	Patrick O'Hara	South Lyon
Tom Gale	Bay Harbor	Rick Passino & Lisa McCloud	New Boston
Dave Ignasiak	Grand Rapids	Alin Pataca	Oakland Twp
Jeffrey Johnson	Plainwell	Michael Pohlman Jr	Roseville
Chris Lesko	Washington	Jack & Nancy Selby	Lansing
Eric Lewandowski	Orion	Bruce Strainer	Whitmore Lake
Jeb Mathew	Shelby Township	Jason Stringer	Madison Heights
Emmitt McGowan	Belleville	Eric Trandell	Sterling Heights
Patrick Merz	Auburn Hills	Mark Yousif	Utica
Craig Miller	Olathe, KS	Darryl Wilson	Kentwood
Richard Bartlett	Chesterfield	Ryan Neuville	Shelby Township



MCVO Inaugural 2021 Cruise Night

Mike Cipponeri



Our first Cruise Night was held on April 21 at The 5th Tavern Bloomfield on Telegraph Road. The turnout was good with 18 attendees considering it had snowed that morning (Michigan weather, I guess!). On top of that, five of our brave MCVO souls drove their cars to this event. Good for you!!



The night began with some brief socializing outside followed quickly by all of us scurrying inside next to the fireplace, actually a video on the TV monitor, in our private dining area. All enjoyed some appetizers compliments of MCVO, coupled with their favorite beverage.

The staff at the 5th Tavern served us efficiently and courteously as we continued into the evening reacquainting ourselves with each other, meeting new MCVO members and discussing 2021 events to come.

NVE4 Miami

Susan Andring



April 2021 saw approximately 20 MCVO members make the trip to Miami for NVE4. There were some that trailered their Vipers down and others made the long drive and a few flew down. We had custom t-shirts made, for the MCVO members that attended, which were a big hit!

The host hotel, Hilton Blue Lagoon, was very nice with a shady section of the parking lot reserved for the cars. On Tuesday, before the official "Wednesday opening day", some early arrivals caravanned to Key West.



Wednesday was a day trip for lunch at the Hard Rock Café then a ride on some very cool speed boats. Our boat drivers gave a great tour as we got up to some impressive speeds, not as fast as we are used to in the Vipers, but it was a lot of fun. They pointed out some significant celebrity homes on the water, as well as the mansion that was used in the film, Scarface.



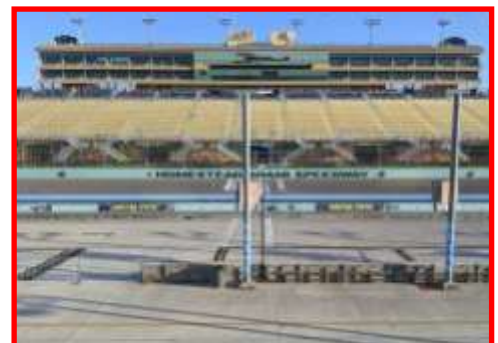
Thursday was the VOA scheduled drive to Key West but most of us had gone on Tuesday, so that turned into a "free day". A small group went to dinner together that evening and upon returning to the hotel, VOA had a wonderful poolside get together with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. The \$20 Mojitos were flowing and the bar sure made a lot of money that night. I can attest that the Mojitos were delicious and I may have needed an arm to steady myself to get back to our room.

On Friday we boarded a double decker bus and went to South Beach for a lunch at the Clevelander hotel then walked around, people watching and checking out the fabulous art deco buildings. The most notable one being the Carlyle Hotel that was featured in the movie The Birdcage.



Mike reported that the Saturday track day was fantastic even though it was quite hot and humid and everyone had a great day. No major car issues, which was a plus. For those that chose not to go to the track (mostly the ladies), we took a bus to the Frost Museum of Science and Aquarium. We at least got to be in the air conditioning.

Saturday's silent auction had some really great items, one being a beautiful VOA stained glass piece donated by our very talented Sam Milana. The closing dinner was tasty and it was a great chance to sit and relax from a busy week. When they announced that NVE5 was planned for Colorado Springs, CO, there was a lot of excitement from the entire banquet room. It will be spectacular and Mike and I are already planning on attending. Anytime we get to spend time "Vipering" is a great time.





Snakes Invade Shelby Township



Gary Rappaport

May 2021 has been a strange month for weather. The week previous to our event, it was warm and sunny with temps around 80. The day before, we had a lot of rain, with temps dropping to around 40's. Thankfully, on the day of our event, it was dry, with sunny skies, windy and temps approaching 60.

This year for our Third Annual Snakes Invade Shelby, we were hosted by The Godfather Cigar Bar and Bistro. I can honestly say, I've never been to a cigar bar, but I was visibly impressed with their facility. Also, from our initial conversations, all the way thru to the completion, our host, co-owner, Brandon, went out of his way to make sure our group was well taken care of. Brandon offered us discounts on our food, an abbreviated special Viper menu (as well as a full menu) with many great lunch options, and there were hourly raffle prizes.

The turnout may have been a little light due to the holiday weekend, but we still had an impressive showing of Vipers in his lot. We had 22 in attendance with 14 Vipers, and everyone seemed to be having a great time hanging out. We had a couple of beautiful examples: John Bieleniewicz came in his gorgeous Gen 5 green ACR, and John Wright came in his newly acquired classic Gen 2 GTSR.

Thanks again to our host, Brandon, and we look forward to our 4th Annual Snakes Invade, at The Godfather Bistro. We also want to thank Ann Rappaport and Sam Milana for the attached photos.



Spring Tech Day at Prefix

Tony Smith

Saturday May 15th was the perfect sunny spring day to kick off the 2021 Cruising Season with Spring Tech Day. Our longtime Viper partners at Prefix offered to lend a hand and host our group at their Rochester Hills facility with a turnout of over 30 Vipers!

This is always an interesting and well attended day as the Viper experts Scot Rickord (Prefix) and Dick Winkles (Google it) spent nearly 2 hours talking about proper maintenance of our cars, along with the history of the differences in engines across the generations, the tests, trials, and tribulations along the way. The Motor City Viper Owners provided the coffee and donuts, and we even made a strong attempt at recording this event so that it could be shared amongst members that couldn't be in attendance.



Thank you to all that attended, and to our gracious hosts for sharing their time and facility with us. For all of you that didn't make it this year, here is a Pro Tip - The entire event was worth attending just to hear Dick Winkles explain engine oils and filters, and why they are the way they are in our cars. This is a unique and tangible benefit to membership in MCVO. Many a spring or fall tech day has had presentations from the actual person who designed, tested and worked on the development of our cars.



MCVO Second Cruise Night

Mike Cipponeri

Our second Cruise Night was on May 19 at The Red Ox Tavern on Walton Road in Auburn Hills. There was a really good turnout of 43 members and 22 Vipers in attendance! It was a pleasant evening allowing for some parking lot socializing next to our beloved snakes. All enjoyed appetizers compliments of the club, coupled with their favorite beverage.

The staff at the Red Ox was courteous and helpful as they struggled a bit with the size of our crowd but the beverages were cold and the food was good as our orders got to us efficiently. MCVO president, Mike Sutton, brought the membership up to date on future event dates.

We also had a chance to say goodbye to Tony Smith in person. He's taken a new job and will be taking his Viper with him. He said he already misses MCVO, the events, people and good friends he's made.



Wishing Tony our departing Motor-sports Director all the best in his new position out state. You are already missed!



Spring Brunch, We're Back!

Diane Cipponeri

After not being able to celebrate often last year with our Viper club, your MCVO Board was able to make a plan to hold our annual Spring Brunch even in a pandemic.

It was at new location, but we had the same style brunch as previous years. We weren't able to hold the event inside because of Covid restrictions. So, the next best place was inside a huge tent! The tent had hanging chandeliers with lights and tulle throughout. It was every bit as pretty as a decorated hall. The food was tasty and presented very well. The wait staff was numerous, courteous, efficient and friendly. We had close to 100 people attend. There were plenty of gifts to be given out or won. There was a 50/50 raffle and a drawing for a stained-glass lighthouse created and then donated by Sam Milana.



We had the honor of acknowledging the 2019 and 2020 Members of the Year. Rick Jackacki was the person who arranged our Cruise Nights for many a year. He made sure each restaurant had the ability to accommodate our cars safely, our size of group and do it all over again the next month, while also trying to find locations that were in different parts of town, where he doesn't live and hasn't dined.

Not an easy ask, thank you Rick!



Marty Heitkamp has been our membership director for quite a while. Have you noticed the "Welcome New Members" section each newsletter? Marty has some kind of "membership mojo" as the list just keeps getting longer. We are at an all time high for number of members. Marty is always willing to reach out to non-member owners, typically before anyone on the Board has had a chance to refer the name to him. Marty you rock! Thank you.



We also had a silent auction with donations made to the club and a few things the club provided. Two members won highest bid and took home framed posters which were generously donated by local artist, Tom Hale. Ann Rappaport had reached out to Tom asking if he'd be willing to donate a copy of a poster, he had created for VOI2 in Las Vegas. Not only did Tom agree but he sent two of them!



New to our Brunch this year is the "Viper Garage Sale". After so many years of being in the club and Mike being a Team Viper original member, our basement had more memorabilia than we could display. We were able to donate a lot! Also available were many items donated by Pat Gall. Her husband, Joe, had collected a large amount of Viper memorabilia, she knew Joe would have been very pleased that it raised funds for the club and is in a MCVO member's home. I know what you are wondering about, YES there's more! If you are interested, please contact me.

Another feature added to our Brunch this year was Haig Jewelers from Rochester. They offered many types of jewelry available for purchase and also donated a beautiful "Viper logo" necklace as a raffle gift. Members were very positive about this, ok, actually it was the women who were very pleased to have a jeweler there. I'll keep Haig on the list for next year's Brunch.

I received many compliments on our event this year, from the venue to the food. If you weren't able to attend, believe me, you missed a good time. The weather Gods were on our side, what a beautiful day to drive our cars and actually socialize with our Viper friends. Another great event for the record books! See you all soon at our next event!



Day Trippin' with MCVO MOPARS at the Red Barns, Gilmore Museum

Bob Swartz

Did you know that the Gilmore Car Museum is North America's largest auto museum with more than 400 vehicles on display? There aren't enough superlatives to describe this event. Our members brought their Vipers to show, in hopes of winning a trophy.

Additionally, members and their guests were treated to what Gilmore Car Museum does best: display a HUGE number of cars in equally impressive buildings which makes for a fantastic event.

Acres of MOPARS; new and old, stock and modified; rare and commonplace, where else would you see a Model T, Rolls Royce, Pierce Arrow and a K-Car each presented with the same consideration? Plus, their over-the-top Museum of hundreds of classic, antique, muscle, famous marque, historic, fun, supercars, limos, micro, movie props, and hundreds and hundreds - maybe thousands - of automotive artifacts. It boggles the mind! Oh, yeah; many housed in antique and collectible barns from around Michigan. It seems like it never ends - way cool.

While you may want to see it all, read the facts, figures, stories, legends and questionable truths on display, you just can't do it in one day. Maybe in a week, maybe. Next year we'll have to book some hotel rooms and pack extra pairs of shoes so we can stay till we've seen it all! LOL

MCVO covered admission for this enjoyable day.

Congratulations Marty Heitkamp for taking home the Sponsors Choice Award.



We have a new Motorsports Director, Paul McClorey. Normally I include something to introduce a new Board member. This issue is pretty full. Look for it in next issue. Ann



GingerMan Track Night

**Lisa & Matt Tufts
Bob Swartz**



We have no idea if any of us were first or last, but it was a BLAST at *Track Night in America* at GingerMan Raceway. This wasn't a club event as it was a last-minute decision to attend. But we want you all to know what fun it was! Vipers were made for this, even if we were not, the Viper is hands down the star of the show!

Matt put it very well "it was more fun than I expected and always felt safe and controlled!" Never having had his car on this type of track before, he had no idea what to expect. "From the well managed registration to the professionally organized and informational driver meetings all the way to the highly respectful drivers, there was not one moment I felt unsafe out there. I could 'push it' to a pace I felt comfortable with knowing I was running only against myself". The organizers put it best when they said, "there are no trophies, you're not being timed, this is not a race, the only trophy you get is the wristband on your wrist".

Lisa was in heaven being able to join Matt in both sets of the Family and Friends ride along pace laps, walking around chatting with the staff and other drivers "but watching those boys have so much fun was definitely my highlight!" There were three track sessions of 20-minutes of (exhausting) fun, plus a generous "paced session", including a passenger, of 10 or more minutes. That's a lot of high-performance driving for a weekend warrior. And an excellent step up from Autocross.

SCCA does a super professional job making these safe, organized, helpful and all for FUN. NO racing, NO timing, and Controlled passing. They do these events to get people started and/or energized into putting their car on the track, daily drivers included! Mustangs, Corvettes, BMW's, Porsche's etc. and mostly of the performance packages - but regular street cars, nonetheless. The GingerMan sessions run pretty much monthly as well as at several tracks around our area and the whole country. Think about it. Maybe you would like to get out on the track with other MCVO buddies! Yummmm, the smell of exhaust, tires, and brakes; Viper Breath!





Cars, Coffee and Cows

Jon Block



On a beautiful day, at the end of July, we drove our Vipers to see the amazing collection of MCVO member Greg Ornazian. His parking lot held 31 Vipers, but it was the inside the building that people came to see and all were stunned!



The collection is simply the best of the best. The best Classics, Hot Rods, Muscle cars, Super cars, motorcycles, and even rare bicycles, models with the best original options and all in absolutely perfect condition! Greg has 3 Vipers, including a rare GTS-R. All were encouraged to take individual photos, but for security, not to take overall shots, and understandably to NOT to post anything on social media. This is a private collection, and MCVO was fortunate to be able to experience it all. Greg is a widely sought-after Concours Judge, who



regularly judges these “top drawer” events east of the Mississippi. His knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for spectacular automobiles showed! If you could not make the event, Greg said that we were always welcome back! He was the most gracious host along with his wife Robin, they accommodated everyone with ease.

The visit to the Ornazian Collection ended too soon but driving Vipers and the promise of food made it easy to motivate the group. We were off to lunch at Leo’s Coney Island, located on Livernois south of Walton. It is rare these days to find a restaurant who would welcome 72 in a group for lunch, but Leo’s said no problem! How a restaurant can have such an incredibly varied and extensive menu is difficult to imagine, but Leo’s is the place!

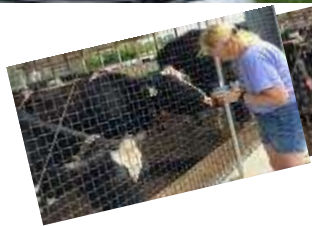


Then, thanks to President Mike Sutton and V.P. Gary Rappaport for validating the Tour route, the group headed north into the hinterlands of Oakland County, finally away from traffic and civilian drivers!



The “pit stop” was at Cook’s Dairy Farm, located north of Clarkston. They have huge Holsteins, milk the cows, process the milk, make ice cream and serve it in one location. Talk about fresh! Cowpuccino, Utter Butter, Cow Pie, Blue Moo, and Tractor Trails are among the favorite flavors! Everyone had the chance to pet the cows! Refreshed and full of delicious ice cream, the tour then continued through Holly and eventually ended back in Pontiac.

Beautiful weather, sensational, rare cars, a scenic tour, delicious ice cream, and a day with our Vipers!



On a side note, Greg mentioned he is seeking to hire a couple young people possessing positive attitudes for a career in the Tool and Die industry. On the job training and benefits included. His email address is in the club directory if you or someone you know is interested.

3rd Annual

Viper Smoke Out

Alison McClorey



It's hard to believe we're on the 3rd year hosting the club at our home for the day! It was great weather again, which truly was amazing.



Leading up to the event, Paul was more than concerned about the route to our house, as the county had chosen to do some major resurfacing, without notifying us. I guess you get your notification when you drive on it! Other routes were not feasible as they involved more problematic road surfaces. But the people at the county road office went above and beyond keeping Paul informed about the status and true to their word, the road surface was a non issue.

After the group gathered at the meet point, they were off on a wonderful drive put together by Bob Swartz and led by Mike Prudhomme.



The drive included a stop at Spicer's Orchard. I was at home tending last minute details, but Paul shared it was great pulling into Spicer's and seeing long rows of Vipers!

I took a break to watch the cars arrive, it was so cool seeing all those Vipers pull in to our driveway! I think there were over 30, with around 70+ people total.



Parking Security provided by Rambo





We chose a menu which consisted of ribs, brisket, smoked salmon, smoked chicken, pork tenderloin, and smoked sausage as well as salads, corn bread and those yummy cheesy potatoes. We also had some desserts, carrot cake and brownies.

Paul smokes all the meat in our very own smokehouse. He really enjoys doing this and everyone enjoys eating it!

I don't think anyone left hungry!



Rambo also helped with "clean-up"



Hagerty Drivers Club Magazine

Marty Heitkamp



In early June I was contacted by a Hagerty representative asking to help him find 3 Vipers for an upcoming magazine article. The article was to commemorate the 30th anniversary launch in 1991 of the 1992 model year Gen 1 Vipers. They wanted to write about the different generations during the Viper production life.

They specifically requested a Gen 1 RT-10, a Gen 3 SRT-10 and a Gen 5 ACR. Because the photo shoot was scheduled for a Thursday at GingerMan Raceway I decided to focus on retirees in the club.

Mike Cipponeri had the Gen 1, Steve Urbanski had the Gen 3 and I had the Gen 5. Except for the torrential rains on the trip out to GingerMan (Mike and Diane got soaked, Steve's wipers decided not to work, and my ACR tires had me hydroplaning like crazy) the shoot went very smoothly.

Jack Baruth, the article writer, drove each car on the track at speeds which were a tad unnerving for each of us. After a long 8 hours at the shoot we were allowed to drive on the track as quickly as we wanted, which I certainly took advantage of. After the article was published we were all given the pictures that were taken for our private use. It was a long but fun day.



Thursday Night Member Dinner



Woodward Dream Cruise 2021

Diane Cipponeri



After months of trying to find a location for this event, we finally able to secure a lot on Woodward Ave for both of our traditional Dream Cruise events. We had hoped we would be able to return to the 2019 location, but the building's owners had rented it to a Corvette Club. How dare they do that!

Thanks to the efforts of Marty Heitkamp, Rick Reuter, Bruce Heckman, Mike Cipponeri, Gary Rappaport and Dick Winkles we were able at the last minute to find our venue. As it turned out the weather was on our side and we had 99 members attend in 53 Vipers.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious catered meal.



Dream Cruise Saturday

Marty Heitkamp

The 2021 Woodward Dream Cruise (or crawl depending on the location) is in the rearview mirror. After having to cancel the 2020 get-together due to you-know-what, we were anxious to put on the event for this year. Due to unpredicted circumstances, we weren't able to rent the lot we'd had in previous years so we searched and found this one a couple of miles further north.



For Dream Cruise Saturday, the weather was just about perfect and the new location had plenty of shade for everyone to enjoy as we watched the cars rumbling and sometimes racing by. We had roughly 80 cars and 120 people there to enjoy the show as well as come and go as they pleased.

Although we were a little farther from the main action further south, I think this lot was a great find and may be our new home for future Dream Cruise Saturday's.



**With 2021 coming to a close, just a reminder that 2022
re-enrollment started on October 1st**



For all the VOA members you should have gotten an email for renewing your membership already.

You may have also gotten an email from the VOA regarding their financial status. With that said, at this time your MCVO Board is recommending to the VOA members *PLEASE DO NOT* renew until we have a better understanding of the national club's financial standing going forward.

For MCVO ONLY members, rest assured your local club is on strong financial footing, so go ahead and renew as an Associate Member with us. If you have any questions, please reach out to me or Mike Sutton.

Marty Heitkamp
Membership Director

**READ THIS
INFORMATION**

Day Trippin' with MCVO

Sunny Toledo

Bob Swartz



Fun in Toledo is possible; if you're with MCVO! Fifteen intrepid MCVO'ers in seven sweet Vipers caravan cruised the scenic backroads (mostly) across the border for some fun in Toledo.

First stop: Lunch at world renowned Tony Packo's. Amidst the hundreds of celebrity-signed hot dog buns, we downed coney and great German food. Yum!

Next: a few blocks away we enjoyed the National Museum of the Great Lakes, big boats and history. From a fantastic array of artifacts, lake-faring mementos, dioramas, displays, nautical information and stories; to the Great Lakes tugboat "Ohio".



Next was the 677-foot-long bulk freighter "Col James M Schoonmaker", we couldn't get our fill of sights and sounds. We strolled, clambered through and over a wealth of displays and real, live lake boats. Side story: cooks on the very well-equipped freighter galleys had to be either great cooks or great swimmers - according to Great Lakes lore. Sadly, we only had one day so off we went to the venue.



Last stop: Ft Meigs a war of 1812 icon. Here was a well-presented museum of the fort, war, and participants - British, Native Tribes, and Americans. The real fun was the actual fort tour led by a West Point grad and Engineer. Ft Meigs was cutting edge tech for forts of its day. From its surroundings to stockage to buildings to "traverses" (protection from cannon fire) it was deemed "impregnable" by a captured British officer. And the Brits gave it up after a brief siege. Our guide treated us to a test firing of the antique musket he carried with him. We were well protected that day! The blast, noise, flame, and smoke would've scared the socks off any foe.

Restoring Memories at

RM Motorsports

Bob Swartz



For once it was really nice weather for the 18 Day Trippers who came out to see the new facility for R M Motorsports. In total 12 Vipers pretty much filled the lot, with an additional Viper arriving just before we were leaving.

First things first as former/semi-retired owner Bud Bennett explained, R M Motorsports is a racing team. And race they do. Fielding 5 or so cars to weekend or week-long series of races of Vintage Cars.



When not at a track, Bud works for his son, Craig, sometimes putting in 12-hour days. Not much of a retirement! RM works on high-end vehicles; McLarens, March, Jaguar, and more automotive icons; plus, they built the Tomahawk Viper powered motorcycle! Diverse for sure. In the process they restore, store, and fabricate parts and sometimes the whole car.

It was a real treat when Bud also shared with us stories about the cars. Along with many lessons learned racing and restoring these cars. We were all intrigued with stories of rust in unlikely places; clever techniques in fabrication; the ethos of a race team; their rule that if parts don't fit perfectly as they are assembled, they're no good till they do.



Their new facility is much larger with plenty of space and lifts to store cars which will be worked on, floor space to spread out and lots of space for the necessary cushions, rugs and beds used by the employee's dogs. It's always "bring your dog to work day"!

It's obvious that everyone at RM Motorsports has a positive "can do" attitude backed up with real world extensive knowledge. A reflection of Bud for sure. We left in awe of everything they do and have accomplished. We're privileged he shared so much with us.

Next on our agenda- lunch!





Gear Heads Delight
Day Trippin' with MCVO
Bob Swartz



“Unique” would be a good word to describe what 17 MCVO folks felt when we visited Ka-Wood Gear and Machining in Madison Hts. This was a tour of a real factory which manufactures specialty products, specifically gears. We toured on two different dates allowing for smaller groups. This was safer on the factory floor as well as it made it easier to see and hear all the good sights, descriptions, stories, highlights, and technical insights of the owner, Joe Kloka.



Joe’s grandfather founded Ka-Wood Gear over 100-years ago. Something unique for this business is the atmosphere there. The work is serious and intense and the shop is carefully organized. Cutting oil is being used throughout the place, but the floors are super clean and there’s NO unpleasant oil mist in the air.



There are machines which may date back to Joe’s grandfather and ones which are state of the art. Each has a necessary function to create the unique products Ka-Wood supplies. Ka-Wood is able to recreate a gear without the original schematics and end up with something as good as or better than the original.



Speaking of the atmosphere, Joe treats his customers, employees, guests, and suppliers all the same. Fairly, honestly, with courtesy, and concern.

Here is what some of the members shared:



Rich Macconi: *I was truly impressed by his knowledge and work ethics as well as a true sense of loyalty to his customers and employees.*

Al Fields: *It reminds me of the spirit that existed with the Original Team Viper. Dedication to doing the best and integrating new methods into [proven] technology to create the best version of what is needed at the time.*



Steve Urbanec: *A shop with emphasis on employee well-being and 100% customer satisfaction. Very diverse. Reverse engineering old gears then to one of their gears landing on Mars in Perseverance. Very small (size of a BB) to very large (4 or 5 feet), splines, internal/external, helical, hypoid, worm, planetary, and prototype gears.*

Also overheard: *This is the best tour I’ve ever been on!*





Joe is a gracious host who is very knowledgeable in this business. Needless to say we all enjoyed the tour and Joe sharing his time with us so freely.



By the way, lunch at the Wavel Royal Castle restaurant in the American Polish Cultural Center was really good too!



Fish Fly Festival and Vipers

Susan Andring



With last minute notice, I was able to get Dodge Vipers approved as an entry in the New Baltimore Fish Fly Festival parade on Sunday, June 27th. We were limited to 120' of "space" which came out to be 10 cars driving side by side down Green Street in New Baltimore. After contacting a few other owners, Mike and I decided to make a day of it with food, friends and family.

We had everyone meet at our home, as the check in with the staging area just outside of our subdivision. Cars were arranged by generation and though there were threats of rain that day, we felt nary a drop. In fact it was another hot Michigan day!

Angelica Milana and I were "walkers", leading our group and it was pretty cool to hear the spectators, mostly the men and boys, get excited about the cars as the drivers revved up the motors.

The parade had different classifications of entries and we won 1st place for our category! All we got was a fancy certificate, but it's still a nice honor. As Mike Cipponeri said..."it was a great small town USA parade". Afterwards we gathered back at our home for burgers, hot dogs and ice cream. What a nice way to spend a Sunday!



Photo Credits:

Ann Rappaport

Tony Smith

Alison McClorey

Bob Swartz

Mike Cipponeri

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Susan Andring

Nick Morand

Bruce Heckman

Gary Rappaport

Sam Milana

Mike Doljevic

